

On Some Things We'll Never Agree

By Robert J. Rogers

The question of who run Speedway first is interesting, and open to argument.

With Mankind always ready to challenge its self, as soon as you get something to move, then you try to prove yours moves faster, and if you can put that challenge in an enclosed condition, i.e. a circuit, and charge for the public to watch this, you have motor sport, and therefore you have Speedway.

Here in East London, there is a record of Motorized Bicycles, racing on an oval track, on the memorial ground, E.15 in 1906.

There are many records of the same sort of thing in various parts of the world, with America having a form of Long-track racing back again in the early 19 hundreds.

I think it is fair to say that Johnnie Hoskins was the first person to 'Market' the sport, and being the great Showman he was I can understand his claim to have 'invented' the sport.

I meet John a couple of times, and yes he was larger the life, to see him 'hold court' in the West Ham pits while talking to the fans, you knew you had met a great man.

High Beech is the official Home of British Speedway because it was the first to hold an official recognised event by the ACU calling it Dirt track racing.

Manchester claims it was first in 1927 in England, but again it was not formally recognised by the ACU as Dirt Track.

Having gone to the 40th Anniversary meeting at High Beech, I must claim High Beech as the home of racing!

In the early days of boom or bust for Speedway in this country, there were many tracks which came and went, and many others that were never formally authorised by the ACU for racing, so another argument of which club was which.

Brian Collins wonderful site on test matches, has found a China vs. England match, now that is definitely one for the Supporters Quiz nights in the long cold winter!

Like who is the greatest ever rider, the answer to 'who was first?' will always be an argument, which will never be answered.

I cannot even agree with myself, was Ove Fundin or Barry Briggs or Ivan Mauger, the greatest?

You can see I am a child of the 1960's, with older fans putting forward Bluey Wilkinson, Tommy Price, Jack Young, and today's fans with the likes of Jason Crump.