



THE BRIGHTON SPEED TRIALS 2018

Well that was the running of the Frosts National Speed Trials for 2018 and what an event, the largest motorcycle entry that we have ever had, some 75 machines and riders in all. As always we had a diverse selection of machinery from the likes of the 1926 Bayley-Coles 500cc Douglas Sprinter, ridden by Chris Illman, through too a much modified 2017 production machine, a 1745cc supercharged Harley-Davidson ridden by Richard White. Not only did we have an outstanding entry but we had great weather to boot, which always helps to make the day better. On walking through the paddock it was obvious to me that there was greater number of spectators strolling about and down at the start line, as well as viewing the event from high up on the main road overlooking Madeira Drive. It's good to know that cars and bikes can still attract a crowd on the seafront even though we don't have the luxury of the raised terrace anymore, maybe one day B&HCC will find the funds to repair it.

At this point on behalf of the VMCC Sprint Section Committee and its riders I would like to thank both Frosts Cars for their continued assistance with the Brighton Speed Trials and Brighton & Hove Motor Club for their continued invitation for us the VMCC Sprint Section to provide the motorcycle entry. On behalf of the VMCC Sprint Section I also wish to thank all the track and paddock Marshals, Medics, Fire and Breakdown crews, Timekeepers, MSA and ACU officials as well as club members from B&HMC for giving up their time for this event as it is these people that make the Speed Trials one of the most admired Sprint events on the years motor racing calendar!

If you read your programme you would have seen that I mentioned John Newson and his 1000cc NorLake and that it would be an interesting machine to see run at Brighton, well unfortunately the gremlins set too. John passed through tech' ok and proceeded to push the bike through the paddock for noise testing. It passed fine, as there was no noise at all! Loads of sparks, but no life in the engine, an absence of fuel being the culprit, John tried in vain to get the big vee-twin running but to no avail, bike back in the van sit back and watch the day go by, well there is always next year. As for Wali Taylor he managed a practice run, only to spit out a valve collar, break a guide and drop a valve! That was his days racing over with, but he put his time to good use and pulled the motor apart ready for repair when he got home. After Andy Forwards success last year came disappointment this, he brought out his new supercharged Triumph for only the second time this year to find that on his practice run it was massively over fuelling, unable to fix the problem in the paddock and not wishing to destroy the engine he graceful retired. The bad run of luck didn't stop there, the Bayley-Coles Douglas had a little bit of drama to, it managed to throw a push rod, further damage as yet unknown, hopefully not too much. All being well we will see all four back next year. It wasn't all bad news in Class 1, the top three places were remarkably close, Clive Hurst made two passes within 0.05 seconds, Tony Madgwick two passes within 0.04 seconds and Roy Robertson who managed two runs within 0.02 seconds, as well as putting in the fastest time within class, 11.74 seconds, with a terminal speed of 138mph. A well-deserved win and now the holder of John Rich Memorial Trophy for the next twelve months

As for Class Two the fight for first and second place carried on from last year between Neill Curtis and Andy Embling. Neill's timed runs this year were, 11.85 & 12.03, both fractional quicker than last year's 11.94 & 12.17. Andy's best this year was 12.71 followed by a 13.22, close but not close enough for the honours, a little more work on the bike and a little more practice and he may just pip Neill next year.

It was all change in Class Three this year Martin Newton wasn't to have it all his own way. Martin has taken the class win for the last three consecutive years on his 1992 CBR 400 Honda but this year had to be content with second in Class. Martin's best time of 12.52 seconds with a terminal speed of 113mph was a good half a second to slow! Alistair Bury on the 1984 RG 400 Suzuki managed to place a very clean run at some 12.03 seconds with 120mph terminal to take the Power Tools Trophy for Class Three.

Class Four certainly showed of things to come. We had no less than four riders put in eight 9 second runs, two of which were set in practice! It was pretty obvious from the outset that metaphorically speaking the gloves were off. One Kieran o Driscoll was not here for the craic and was certainly not going to take any prisoners. As you can guess by his name Kieran hales from the Emerald Isle, back home friends and family said he was mad to come for the Speed Trails just for three runs, but as it turns out it was well worth it. Practice, 9.92s @ 151mph, run one, 9.31s @ 160mph, run two, 9.74s @ 172mph and then the top six run off, with a run of 9.54s @ 154mph. I take my hat off to the man, first time here at Brighton and he put in 4 blistering sub 10 second runs and took the class win and the trophy from Stuart Donald, last year's class winner. I know Stuart and the rest of the guys congratulated him but I also know they will want to take the trophy back. If that wasn't enough if you check the results you will see that as far the Brighton Speed Trials is concerned Kieran with his run of 9.31 seconds was placed 2nd overall, Craig Mallabone was 1st, and Stuart Donald 3rd overall. Kieran well done but look out now, you have shown your cards the other riders will be chasing you down in 2019.

In Class Five this year we had the welcome return of Nick Cutmore with his BSA Rocket Sidecar, unbelievably for Nick it was the first time in his racing career that he had run a chair with no passenger only ballast. Unfortunately for us all it was to be a short lived return. Nick took the outfit down the track for practice, it was looking good but then the BSA decided that enough was enough and politely seized up, that was Nick's day finished. Hopefully we will see Nick back next year and he and the BSA will have a better day.

Still with Class Five don't they say you should never say never again, well Mr. Woodard you should take heed, for only last year he was telling me that he was going to hang up his crash helmet and retire the Suzuki Superside, well he lied, as he was back! He now tells me that this year is his last! Do I believe him no I don't. Dave's practice run by his standards was a little slow at some 117mph with a time of 11.98s, ok so I know he can do better but hey that ain't slow by most people's standards. With his first timed run all looked good on the start line and it started well but then it all went downhill rapidly, I thought he had blown the motor, but no as it turned out it was a problem with the nitrous system. Undeterred back in the paddock Dave disconnected the nitrous system on the Suzuki Superside and made the decision to do his second timed run with no giggle gas. Was it the retirement run? I think not! Dave managed a very respectable 10.87s @ 131mph. Personally I think he will back next year with the outfit and the nitrous system sorted so that he can put in what he thinks is his true retirement run. I guess we will just have to wait and see, won't we Dave.

In Class Six it was a little like Class Two in that last years first and second place men, Steve 'The Rainmaker' Walton and Fred Grainger were battling it out yet again. Again this year Steve just had the edge on Fred. Steve's best time was 10.30s @ 146mph, while Fred's best was a 10.71s @ 154mph. Watching them down the track you could see that Fred had the speed at the fast end but was just not able to get the power down at the start. However they must not sit back and think they have it all their own way as sitting in the wings you have Paul Burke with his 1000cc GSXR Suzuki and Farid Mehr with his 1700cc Yamaha V-Max both of which are really knocking on the door of a 10 second run. Paul's best was 11.02 @ 147mph and Farid's was an 11.03s @ 142mph.

Class Seven was well supported once again with some 18 riders. We welcomed the return of Dave Holland with you guessed it, a 1300cc Suzuki Hayabusa Turbo. Dave told me that up the bike had only just been finished that week and that he had only done one practice launch! The practice run down Madeira Drive was going to be a real baptism of fire for him and the bike, 10.06s @ 146mph that's some baptism! Richard Albans with supercharged Hayabusa was in a similar position, he had a problem with his bike on the dyno earlier in the week and had to do a complete engine rebuild only to run it up on the dyno again a blow the head gasket, engine out again and replace the head gasket on Thursday! Talk about dedication. Craig Mallabone returned with his mechanic Wayne Little, Craig has won the Dolphin Trophy and taken FTD for the last four years and wanted to see if he could make it five years on the bounce. Craig had to work hard as Roger Simmons, Dave Holland and Richard Albans were chasing him down and fighting hard. All four riders were running 9 second runs but at the end of the day Craig managed 9.14s @ 177mph to take the Dolphin Trophy and FTD for the fifth year in a row! Well done Craig and good work with the motor Wayne.

The only way I can put it is 'they were on it', the top six riders that is. On it is an understatement, they were all out to prove a point and there was no backing off. If there was a trophy for the wildest ride then Richard Albans is your man, the bike was up, down, left, right and then up again, let alone minus 3mm of rubber off the rear tyre as he spun it up down the track. He showed no mercy and banged in a run of 10.64s @ 121mph, good but with all the acrobatics not good enough. If you look at the results you can see that the 6 riders all meant business, just look at their 64 foot times the slowest was 2.02 sec's and the fastest 1.76 sec's. The award for the best improvement over their earlier best run went to Dave Holland with an index of 1.030, Dave's time was 9.47s @ 173mph. Craig managed to put in what was probably his best launch of the day, the bike ran clean over the 64 feet and then as the power came in so the front wheel just lifted, he took full advantage of the rubber laid down and ran a blistering run of 9.00s dead with a terminal of 179mph, for his efforts he took home the Phil Manzano Award for the fastest time in the top six run-off.

I have included with this newsletter the results for the motorcycles. If you wish to see a complete set of results for both the cars and motorcycles, then please visit Timing Solutions Ltd web site where you will be able to download the complete results booklet.

<https://www.tsl-timing.com/event/183581>

I know I thanked everybody earlier but it would be amiss of me if I did not take this opportunity to thank those people who make my life easier on the day running the motorcycle event. My thanks go to Andy & Debbie Forward and their team (Tech Officials), Roger Brown and his crew (Noise Testing), our ACU Clerk of the Course Dave Massam, our Assistant ACU Clerk of the Course Jayne Standing for dealing with the days paper work and assisting me with the commentary throughout the day, Karen Roseman for pre and post event secretarial help, our Chief Paddock Marshal, Alex Champion and his team of marshals and finally Paul Standing, our Section President, for his support and wisdom. As I have always said this event is a real team effort and this year as in other years was no different at all, so again I say thank you all.

Don't forget that if you wish to purchase any further photographs, be they standard size prints, enlargements, calendars etc. you can by visiting our official photographers web site where you can see all the photographs taken by ESA Photography at Brighton and a number of our past events.

https://esaphotos.photoshelter.com/gallery/180901-BRIGHTON-2018/G0000WfGK09_Wbg/C00005Eq75lxKn44

Next year's event is already in the diary, it is Saturday September 7th 2019. If you would like an invite to apply for the 2019 event to be sent out to you when the regulations and entry forms are available (May 2019), then please help me out by sending a large SAE (minimum size C5) to me, Juan Manzano, address below.

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Best regards,

Juan Manzano
Entries Secretary for the Motorcycles