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## From Marvellous at Mallory to Stymied at Snetterton

The weekend of the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of July saw the Team split into two divisions, Chris (Toffa) had a date with the next round of the Lansdowne Series at the new Snetterton 300 circuit whilst the rest of us were at Mallory Park for the Festival of 1000 Bikes.

The experiences of each division were a true juxtaposition. Toffa arrived at Snetterton with a skeleton support crew thankfully Andy Molar was available to provide assistance with the preparation of the 500 Manx. It was the first time

Toffa had ridden the new 300 circuit so there was to be a steep learning curve over the weekend.



### Race 1

Toffa qualified in 6<sup>th</sup> which was a good position to be in given that qualifying was the first time he was able to run at race-pace on the new circuit. He started well and was in touch within the first lap but unfortunately one of the foot pegs sheared-off and he was forced to retire.

### Race 2

Toffa had an okay start and was in contention throughout the race, unfortunately lacking in top speed and therefore having to brake late in order to catch the leading group into the bends. Additional issues with the bike setup, it wasn't transitioning as expected. Toffa finished 5<sup>th</sup>.

### Race 3 – Sunday

Toffa changed the gearing to try and assist with the top-end speed; the start was good but halfway into the race the Tank-strap mounting bracket snapped and Toffa found the tank pivoting towards his face..! He caught it and then rode the rest of the race effectively one-handed with his left arm resting on the tank to stop it moving. Somehow Toffa managed to finish in 4<sup>th</sup> an AMAZING result under the circumstances.



## Race 4

With the gearing, tank and foot peg issues behind him Toffa lined-up on the start line for the last race of the meeting. Unfortunately the wind picked-up considerably as the race began, the net effect of this meant that the gearing was now wrong for the conditions and Toffa struggled to keep up the pace. As is usual with Toffa he battled to the best of his ability and managed another 5<sup>th</sup> place.

## Summary

We struggled with the new circuit, setup and unusual component failures, Toffa did the best he could and all things considered his results were quite amazing given the various issues. Next round is at Brands Hatch (Indy circuit) where Toffa will be trying out another Manx Norton to see if he can improve his results. It is a shame that the 'Indy Circuit' is not a power circuit but I have full confidence that Toffa will rise to the occasion. Small Red Gorilla are providing an HD bullet cam for Toffa for this event, if all goes well we will have some interesting footage for your perusal in the near future.

Currently we are sitting 7<sup>th</sup> in the Championship which is an amazing result given the scoring system and the various issues that we have had to face.



## 500cc BONHAMS BRITISH HISTORIC GP CHAMPIONSHIP

2011 Snetterton

[NEXT](#)

Position	Riding number	Rider	Points
1st	29	Luke Notton	186
2nd	4	Steve Tones	169
3rd	7	Duncan Fitchett	145
4th	68	Mike Russell	141
5th	1	Glen English	135.5
6th	5	Chris Palmer	123
7th	42	Chris Firmin	114
8th	17	Stuart Tonge	106
9th	21	Andy Reynolds	62
10th	27	Derek Bunning	52
11th	19	Vanni Jenson	32
12th	67	Gordon Russell	29
13th	16	Roger Munsey	27
14th	125	Mike Farrall	26
15th	31	Richard Thirkell	25
16th	22	Dennis Bunning	24
17th	57	Jack Scrivener	17
18th	3	Nick Bedford	16
19th	66	Richard Ellis	13
20th=	12	Ian Bain	10





## Festival of 1000 Bikes



What an event, I know I have said this every year since it moved to Mallory Park but without reservation James and his Team continue to grow this event every year. We caught the morning ferry from Douglas arriving alongside the Liverpool berth just before ten. The journey to Mallory was uneventful notwithstanding the frequent heavy downpours. Our plan was to arrive around 1pm as when we arrived in 2010 (at about 21:00hrs) there were significant volume of exhibitors, riders and clubs and it took some time to get into the pits. So as we turned into Kirkby Mallory we were very surprised to be met with a traffic jam, yes there were already that many people arriving.

Cut-forward to 19:00hrs when the rest of the team had arrived (well except for Rob who would be arriving later) and we had set up. We were sitting down in the marquee watching the near constant stream of individuals arriving, in awe at the sheer volume. It defiantly WAS going to be a busy weekend!

For this year's event we had invited three time TT winner, Honda Endurance rider and road racing specialist Alex George to ride for us. This was the first time Alex had been at the Festival of 1000 Bikes and both the Honda Owners Club and Alex's own Supports Club had shown considerable interest and over the weekend they were in full attendance.



Saturday's activities were predominantly filled with public engagements as we were not scheduled to run the bikes in any sessions. For those of you that have been to Mallory you will be keenly aware of the size of the Pits and the limited access thereto. Well I am not exaggerating when I say that it was like walking down a busy high street on Christmas Eve... IT WAS RAMMED!

We had agreed to hold a photo shoot on the Start/Finish line at 6pm, by then the crowds were abating and the participants, exhibitors and plethora of other bike-minded individuals were making their way across to the VMCC Marquee for some well deserved liquid refreshments and to hear the bands. Steve from Small Red Gorilla Photography took the usual 'still' shots but then asked if I could add some commentary. I am not going to comment but you can check this out for yourselves (if you do wish to comment, please be kind ;o)



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=z1wwKw61-FI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z1wwKw61-FI)

We were up early on Sunday and set about ensuring that everything was prepared for the day's activities. With the Bol d'Or Classic just around the corner the Festival was an ideal opportunity to try some setup changes and also to review the refuelling and fuel consumption. In addition to this Rob is very familiar with Mallory having raced there for over 10 years which meant that he could really assess the performance and handling.

Rob had a shakedown session before Alex took over for the Past Masters, Rob rode the first lap conservatively, however what followed was a proper test, the best way to describe it was that 'Rob was riding like he stole it'. According to reports from Edwina's and the Hairpin, Rob was getting huge roar as he weaved in and out of the traffic.



Now for Alex's turn... the grid for the start of the Past Masters was like a 'who's-who's' of the best racers of yesteryear. The smell of the Castrol R, sound of open mega's, the snarl of 'Screaming 4's', if you haven't been then you REALLY should. As they left pit lane the crowds around the circuit were four (or more) deep, the atmosphere was electric. Alex put the 'Works' Honda RSC engine through its paces giving the gathered spectators an audio/visual treat. The Past



Masters demonstration is more like a full-on race but without any prizes (I guess that once a racer ALWAYS a racer...!).

With the session over we met Alex in Pit Lane (away from the masses) for a quick debrief and to take the bike from Alex before he was swamped by the public, getting into and out of the Past Master's Marquee was a mission, with Rob manoeuvring the bike and me cutting through the crowd it still took 10 minutes to get the bike back to its 'home' in the Past Master's Marquee.

Every year the Festival has a surprise (or more) for us.. This year a gentleman introduced himself to us, he was just back from working in Italy for the last seven years as Marco Melandri's Engineer. It transpires that he built the Spondon Frame that Peter Darvill had designed, he gave us valuable insight into the thought processes behind the design and the exacting direction that Peter insisted upon. We also met Peter's partner in the 1967 Barcelona 24hrs race onboard a Velocette a Mr Howard German. Howard retold how he loathed getting onboard after Peter's

'stint' as they would have to hammer the clip-ons back to the correct position, the strength that Peter had in his forearms meant that he would bend them back as he hauled the Velo around the Montjuich circuit. We also had a lovely conversation with John 'Moon Eyes' Cooper, John wanted to come a pay his respects and he retold some fantastic stories of his experiences with Peter.

The most beneficial meeting by far was with 'Big' George Rawlingson. George was the Senior Engineer at Honda for a number of years, working and developing the 'Works Honda' RCB and RSC RS1000 engines (to name only a couple). We spent many hours discussing the engine, setup and it transpires that George also worked with Peter and the Team at the Bol d'Or in the 70's at the Paul Ricard Circuit. I would like to thank George and his wife for making the effort to come and meet us and we are hoping that we can arrange something more 'formal' for the Bol d'Or Classic next year.



**And finally.....**

It was a real roller-coaster of a weekend, we had updates from Toffa detailing his endeavours and frustrations whilst we were enjoying a rather relaxed and rewarding time at Mallory. That's racing....!

The Darvill Spondon is off to West Country Windings to have two new generators made for the Bol d'Or, then it's back to PDQ to fit the new 'works' 4:2:1 RCB exhaust, another dyno session and possibly the RSC carbs. We are also having new Disc rotors and carriers made by Spondon and hope that these will be available before the Bol?

We have some exciting news regarding the Manx GP 2012. We have agreed to support a newcomer in 2012 Les Liney. Les is a good friend of Rob's and a local 'Bucks' lad (I used to live a couple of miles from his business in Kingsey) with many years racing under his belt Les is looking forward to racing on the legendary road circuit. Les will be campaigning a 2009 CBR600RR next year with support from Darvill Racing. I will give you all a more detailed update as we progress this but suffice to say we are all keen to return to the Mountain.

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- James Hewing – VMCC
- Alex George
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Yours Sincerely,

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