

## YOUR COMMITTEE

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## NEXT BRANCH MEETING

16<sup>th</sup> September 2003



[www.noc-tv.co.uk](http://www.noc-tv.co.uk)

### Branch Runs to Shiplake and Long Sutton

An extra branch run has been arranged on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> September to the VOC at the Plowden Arms, Shiplake. Meet 8p.m. at the Cricketers. A Branch run to meet up with the Solent gang has been arranged two days later on September 11<sup>th</sup>. Meeting point is at the British Car Auction entrance on the A30 at 7.30pm for 8 pm. The ride is then to the Four Horseshoes at Long Sutton (just outside Odiham).

*Barry Stickland*

(The report in the July issue on the Branch run in June to the Fox and Goose at Greywell was wrongly attributed to Mark Benians. It should have credited to Ian Verrinder. Sorry gents! Ed)

### Montlhery Or Bust - PART 2

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May



A brilliant sunny and warm day, ideal for the ride over to Sussex to join Tim and his Commando for the weekend foray to Montlhery, the longest trip so far for the newly rebuilt bike. 100 miles later and just pulling into Uckfield, my destination and the left exhaust starts rattling. Luckily I had wired the finned nuts and this held the bits together sufficiently well to complete the journey but this would mean taking a huge C spanner with us in case this occurred again (it didn't). This Thursday happened to coincide with the Sussex NOC club night and so off we went for a quick blast over to the 6 Bells. Unfortunately the Nortons were outnumbered by Harley Davidsons at least initially until some of 'them' left and more of 'us' arrived. We had to leave early with a crack of dawn start the next day but it was interesting to meet some Noccers from another region, much the same as my region.

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> May

The next morning dawned, but only just and of course it was raining. So not only was my sparkling pride and joy about to embark on its biggest challenge yet, it was also going to get wet! So on with the waterproofs and off we went to find Harvey who would complete the threesome for the weekend and provide much appreciated Triumph luggage space for the two Commandos. We all set off for Folkstone to catch the earliest Eurostar possible and get down to the event in good time. Best laid plans and all that, it seemed that everybody had the same idea and Monza was attracting large numbers of bikes all of which took the places we planned to take. At last our booked time arrived and we squeezed on to the train and the crossing was remarkably smooth.

Our route through northern France had been chosen to avoid tolls and we were soon out into scenic countryside and the rain was holding back. Three petrol stops and a lunch stop later we were skirting Paris, becoming increasingly lost when the first of many helpful locals pulled up, this one on a very trick Honda cruiser. He had spotted us from the other side of a dual carriageway, gone down to the next exit and looped back to give us assistance. Tim managed to break through the language barrier and we were soon off in the right direction and eventually arrived at the track at 8:30 in the

After filtering past the initial queues the two Nortons were waved in to the track leaving Harvey to fend for himself outside. We all eventually came together having located the NOC centre of activity and decided to call it a day and head for the accommodation and food, which is another story in itself.

### Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> May

The big event. We had decided not to fight the early influx and make a reasonable start after the trials and tribulations of the day before and eventually joined the queue about two miles from the circuit and then reaped the benefits of getting the lay of the land the previous evening. Travelling on the two Nortons we were straight in to the infield and in the thick of it, surrounded by countless tents, bikes, stalls and of course the magnificent banked circuit with a variety of machinery already circulating. For the rest of the day we wandered round taking in some unique sights and sounds.



In the 'superstars' area we bumped into Sammy Miller sitting on the Moto Guzzi V8 signing autographs next to his Norton Kneeler on which we later saw and heard him complete a few laps of the spectacularly banked autodrome. It is a real shame to see the only remaining fully banked circuit fall into disrepair and possible redevelopment. Giacomo Agostini was very much in evidence with a posse of autograph hunters following him round where ever he went. Mick Hemmings was out on his ex Percy Tait Triumph and very happy to spend time talking about it. Phil Read was initially circulating on an MV Agusta and then on his new Gold Star based racer which looked very smart but promptly broke down and had to be pushed home by a volunteer from the crowd! We thought who is that guy in a Phil Read replica helmet and only realised later that it was himself.

BMW were very much the largest contingent and it was hardly possible to turn around without tripping over one. BMW clearly contributed considerable resources to the event with huge stands and large areas dedicated to the marque. It took a couple of hours for the French organisers to shepherd the 2000+ German bikes onto the track for their turn on the circuit with everything from modern C1s to vintage racers going round together.

The auto jumble was a little disappointing but probably to be expected with mostly Japanese parts on offer. The odd stall offered some Norton parts but the only serious one was from the UK anyway. We managed to limit the expenditure on goodies but were very disappointed by the facilities with food, drink and loos being totally inadequate for the size of event. By the end of the day we felt we had seen all there was to see and decided to set off for a leisurely ride home the following morning. We had all thoroughly enjoyed the event, particularly Harvey who met a few long lost friends and managed to speak to just about everyone there!

Mark Benians

*To be continued*

## **2003 Events**

<b>Thames Valley NOC - Branch Events Calender</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>September</b>			
Tues 9 <sup>th</sup>	Thames Valley extra-club run to the VOC at the Plowden Arms, Shiplake	Mick Hunter	Confirmed
Thursday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Thames Valley extra club run to the Four Horseshoes at Long Sutton (just outside Odiham)	Barry Stickland	Confirmed
Tues 16 <sup>th</sup>	Thames Valley NOC clubnight - Cricketers	Ian Verrinder	Confirmed
Sat 20 <sup>th</sup>	Thames Valley track day at Chertsey	Barry Stickland	CANCELLED
<b>October</b>			
Tues 7 <sup>th</sup>	Thames Valley extra-clubnight run to the VMCC at the Cricketers at Pirbright (7.30p.m. Cricketers)	Ian Verrinder	Confirmed
Tues 21 <sup>st</sup>	Thames Valley NOC clubnight - Cricketers	Ian Verrinder	Confirmed
<b>November</b>			
Tues 18 <sup>th</sup>	Thames Valley NOC clubnight - Cricketers	Ian Verrinder	Confirmed
Mon 24 <sup>th</sup>	Thames Valley NOC branch AGM	Ian Verrinder	To be confirmed
<b>December</b>			
Tues 16 <sup>th</sup>	Thames Valley NOC clubnight - Cricketers	Ian Verrinder	Confirmed