



# BRIGHTON SPEED TRIALS 2004

For the ten days prior to the Speed Trials we all were checking the long range weather forecasts and all was certainly not looking good, the Eastern Seaboard of the States was dealing with hurricane Ivan and good old blighty was due to cop the tail end of that the same weekend as the Speed Trials, it looked as if wet weather tyres and umbrellas were going to be the order of the day. But what a surprise, on the day the Met Office had managed to forecast to their usual high standard and got it all wrong, a cloudy start followed by sunshine and blue sky's with a light tail wind straight down Madeira Drive, what more could we have asked for? A new course record maybe?

We did not suffer the same chaotic problems as last year with a very confined paddock, Tony Johnstone took the decision to move the start further along Madeira Drive, further to walk for us in the bike paddock but a small price to pay for the luxury of a non-crowded paddock with in which there was definitely room to swing a cat. It certainly improved the atmosphere within the paddock and made the day more enjoyable for the riders, drivers and pit crews as well as the spectators walking in the paddock and certainly a whole lot easier for the paddock marshals.

I thought that maybe we would be down on numbers this year as there were other major speed events on over the weekend, but yet again the attraction of the Speed Trials won over and the programme showed a full entry of 55 riders and machines from Chris Illmans 1923 Zenith through to Andy Martin on a brand new Kawasaki ZX10, loaned to him by Power House Motorcycles of Ashford, Kent, due to him having engine problems with his Suzuki GSXR. Once again the Speed Trials attracted a small foreign contingent, Mick Hueby made a welcome return with his Kawasaki, NOSfeartu, to defend his class win of 2003. He was joined this year by Manfred Rauscher from Austria, of [www.dragrace.cc](http://www.dragrace.cc), riding a Kawasaki ZXR1100. On the strength of last years class win and further development of the Turbo Kawasaki, Mick had plans to make it in to the top six bike run-off, unfortunately this was not to be. In practice Mick had problems with the NOS system, on the first of the timed runs the battery lead came adrift, on the second timed run he had problems finding traction. However this run was good enough to get second in class for Mick. It was great to finally meet Manfred at the Speed Trials, he had a bureaucratic nightmare to get a licence to run at Brighton as the Austrian Motorcycle Governing body, the OSK, do not run sprints or drag races hence he could not get a licence. Finally at the eleventh hour, with help from our ACU Steward Brian Bonny and the folks at the ACU, the OSK granted him a one-event licence. If you saw the grin on Manfred's face at the end of the day it was obvious that it was all worth the effort, he has all ready approached me to see if can ride again next year. If there were an award for distance travelled he would be up for it!



The consistency class has become somewhat of challenge to the riders of the older machines and this has given rise to some very closely fielded competition between them all. But how do you beat somebody like Ted Reading who put down three runs all within 0.01 of second and 3mph on the terminals, not unlike his winning runs back 2002 when he last won this class, I guess the only way is to be absolutely perfect, some hope. Both Richard Morgan and Barry Rapley tried bravely and gave Ted a good run for his money with time differences of 0.07sec's and 0.09sec's respectively, nearly perfect!

Our own Sprint Section Chairman, Rhett Fisher, who had been burning the midnight oil for a number of nights preparing his Bultaco for the Speed Trials unfortunately had what can only be described as a complete and utter disaster of a day. Three failed runs due to carburettor problems and a very embarrassing low speed get-off, too much front brake whilst turning, not a good idea, sorry to remind you Rhett. But still he went home smiling and he tells me that he had a very enjoyable day even though he did not make it to the Black Rock Paddock. Better luck next year Rhett. Our previous Chairman, my father Phil, made a long awaited return to two wheels, a great cheer went up when he appeared at the start line on his latest machine, unfortunately, or fortunately I am not sure which due to the fact that his flat hat was not an ACU approved crash helmet, he and his electric scooter were turned away from the start line, otherwise I am sure he was going to make an attempt at the electric powered paddock scooters course record. The Old Fella would like to thank Dave Holland for the loan of the scooter, it saved him no end of walking and gave everybody a great laugh, it was greatly appreciated.



In the three-wheeler class the competition was as strong as ever, both John Renwick, with his well turned out Vincent, and Dave Woodard, with his REA Suzuki, not in the mood to take prisoners. John put in excellent second run of 10.65sec's at 111mph but he was knocked back by Dave's second run of 10.23sec's at 134mph to take the win in the three-wheeler class. Even though both machines are purpose built for this type of competition and are heavily modified you must not lose sight of the fact that Vincent engine dates to the early fifties and the Suzuki engine dates to the late eighties. I am sure that both will be back to do battle again next season.

Steve Wood with his Suzuki Hayabusa had his best ever run at Brighton, he managed to put down a 9.66sec run at 147mph, this equalled his best ever run to date, but more importantly for Steve he qualified for the top six bike run-off, well done Steve. It was he who asked me if he could have a ride at Detling not that long ago! Dave Hughes was to be riding this year after rebuilding his bike after last year's mishap, but unfortunately in testing he had been having handling problems. Dave finally tracked this down to a problem with the bearings being misaligned within the headstock late on the Thursday prior to the event and so was not able to rectify the problem in time, Dave did come along to cheer everybody along and to see that his course record was not broken. The other Dave, Dave Holland was out to get under 9.00 seconds this year and take the title away from Dave Hughes. Dave put in a blistering first timed run of 9.11sec's at 164mph covering the first 64 feet in 1.74 seconds, plus he put the bike vertical, I do have photographic proof, if it had not been for this wheelie Dave would have gone under 9.00 seconds for sure. You can imagine by now that Dave Hughes was getting a little concerned. Dave Holland determined as ever did not let this worry him as had yet another chance with his second run, however luck was certainly not with Dave, just as he dropped the clutch for his second run he lost all drive, the final drive chain and or final drive sprocket and carrier broke, what ever the problem that was the end of his second run. There was one more chance as Dave had qualified for the top six bike run-off with his first run, some very hasty repairs were required back in the paddock. Whilst all this excitement had been going on a new rider to Brighton, Phil Wood on his Big CC Suzuki Katana, had been working away in the background and had put down two storming runs, 9.37sec's at 174mph and 9.18sec's at 175mph, you could not call his practice run slow at 9.81sec's with a 163mph terminal. Phil's pit crew watched every move he made and tweaked the bike each time he went out so that he could get the best from his machine, this paid off as he qualified seconded fastest for the top six bike run-off, now it was going to be a head to head with Phil and Dave.



The qualifiers for the top six bike run-off very sportingly dragged their feet as they made their way to the start, so as to give Dave Holland's pit crew all the time they could to repair and prep the bike for his run in the top six shoot out, it paid off as Dave could be seen making his way to the start line. Steve Wood, Roger Simmons, Jeff Dowsett, and Craig Mallabone all put down very respectable times but it was down to Phil and Dave to try and get under 9.00 seconds. To my complete surprise Phil Wood I have to say put down one of the best runs I have ever seen at Brighton, he settled at the line, waited for the green light and just dropped the hammer, the bike spun the rear wheel for nearly the full quarter mile, not once did he lift the front wheel and he did not deviate off his line at all, it was absolutely awesome, the first 64 feet covered in 1.77sec's followed by a time of 8.87sec's at 178mph, what a run and a new outright course record. The spectators just shouted and yelled at this result. The pressure was now really all on Dave Holland to better Phil's time. Try as he could, he came out the gate clean, but could not keep the front wheel

down, Dave still managed a 10.86sec's run at 134mph, it was not the run he wanted but with what had gone earlier in the day it was a valiant effort.

Congratulations must go to Dave Holland and his pit crew for very well deserved win with the fastest time of day in the main event, "The Brighton Speed Trials", 9.11 seconds at 164mph, plus all the effort they put in so as not to disappoint the spectators and return both bike and rider for the top six bike run-off.

Congratulations have got to go to Phil Wood and his pit crew for an absolute cracker of a run and winning the top six shoot out, 8.87 seconds at 178mph, woooha, and getting the outright course record too boot, the spectators cheered and clapped in appreciation as he returned, if only Phil could have heard the crowd at the start line and along the course when his time came up.



Way to go guys, a brilliant day from you all, thank you all. See you again next year for the Centenary Event.

Juan V Manzano  
Secretary of the meeting for the Motorcycles  
e-mail: [juanvmcc@btinternet.com](mailto:juanvmcc@btinternet.com)

Web: [www.vmccsprint.co.uk](http://www.vmccsprint.co.uk)  
(The results have been posted on the web site)

We have photographs taken off the start line of competitors at the 2004 Brighton Speed Trials – 5” x 7” colour prints £5.00 each inclusive of postage and packing. 10” x 8” enlargements may also be ordered at £10.00 each inclusive of postage and packing. Once initial costs have been covered the proceeds will go to help assist the sections funds.

Order from J.V. Manzano. Make cheques payable to J.V. Manzano.

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