

Rhydymwyn Race Course

Roy Francis, Heswall.

Rhydymwyn Race Course was situated next to the Antelope Hotel, which is now the Antelope Industrial Estate. The Wirral Hundred Motor Club obtained permission to use the site from the owners of The Antelope in 1949. It then held motorcycle racing and car sprint events until 1962. As there were few places to go racing in the area in the early fifties it proved to be very popular with competitors, attracting entries of around 150 and was also popular with the public with large crowds commonplace.

In its heyday there were four motor cycle race meetings and two car sprints per year. The course was the narrow concrete road that pretty much followed the perimeter of the site and was not altered in any way for racing. Club volunteers erected fencing for the spectating areas and put straw bales in front of hazardous obstacles around the track as a safety measure.

The facilities were very basic and included a glazed wooden hut on the start line for the Timekeepers, Lap Scorers and other officials. Also, there was a hut and a small caravan sited in the paddock. During the week it was used for cattle and sheep grazing, so there was always the odd cow pat to be avoided!

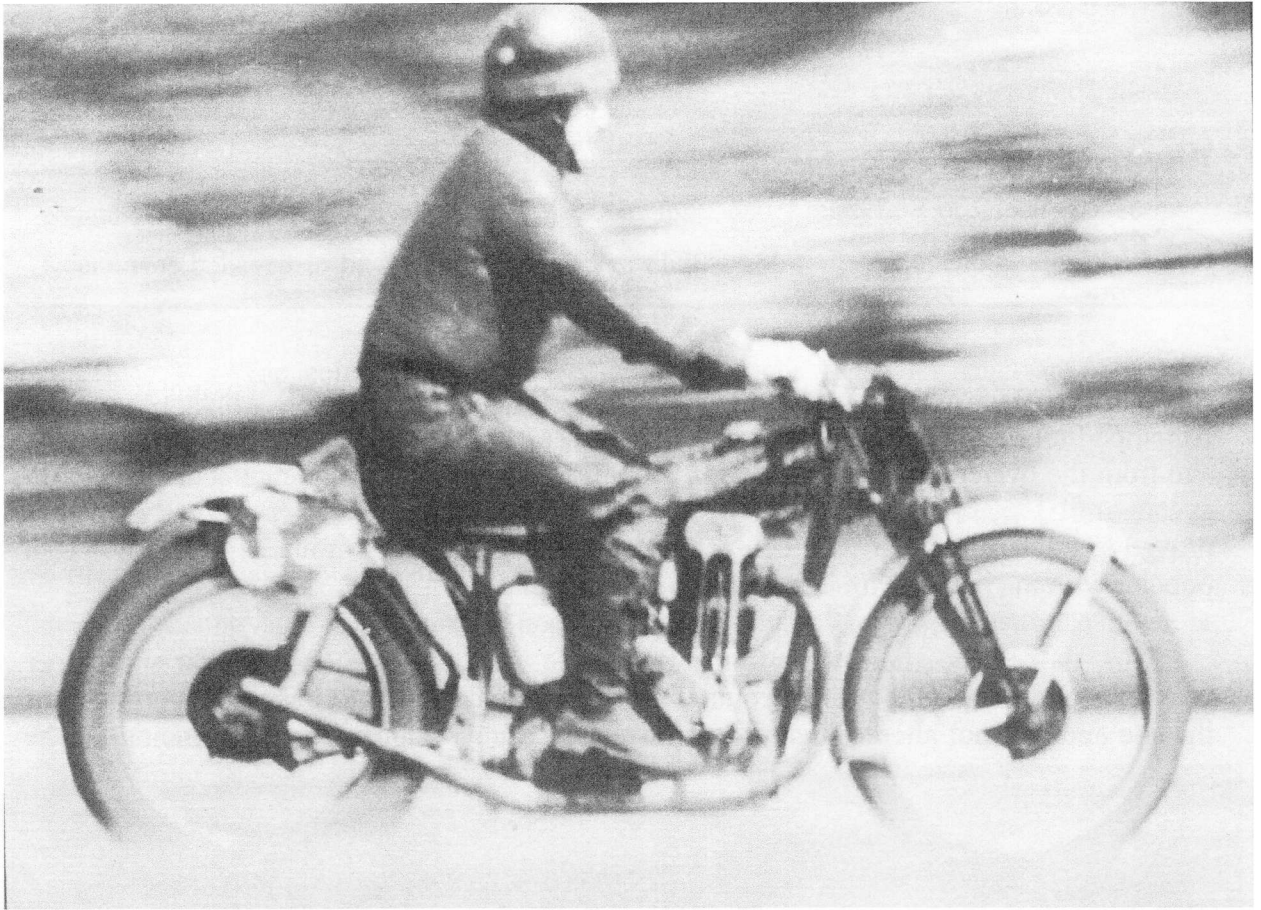
The track was half a mile long and sixteen feet wide. The motorcycle lap record in 1956 for five laps was 3 minutes 8 seconds. Motorcycle races were five laps for a heat and eight laps for a final. Because the track was narrow it was difficult but not impossible to overtake.

Eric Cheers, who raced there, is quoted as saying he geared his bike to be first off the line and kept his elbows out and the rest behind!

Car sprints attracted all types of cars from family saloons to Formula Racing Cars such as Cooper, HRG, Frazer Nash, Allard, Lotus, Connaught and even Bugati! and, later, Jaguar E Type.

Quite a number of competitors on two, three and four wheels started at Rhydymwyn and went on to be well known in motor racing, one being Mike Hailwood. He was about 17 years old at the time and turned up with a 125 MV Augusta plus a spare bike, at the time when most riders who be likely to have a BSA Bantam. He had a tremendous talent and went on to be four times 500 cc World Champion and a similar champion in other classes. Also a famed TT rider with twelve wins by 1967. He then went on to race cars, including Formula 1 and was awarded the George Medal in 1973 for pulling Clay Regazzoni from his burning car in the South African Grand Prix.

Lots of other riders went on to do well, such as local riders Ernie Wood, from Bagillt, Eddie Williams from Mold, Eric Cheers from Mancot. Bill Smith, Terry Shepherd



1952 E Wood of Bagillt riding a 498 BSA/JAP.



1952 E Cheers of Mancot, 499 Rudge.

and Frank Perris also competed there. Frank Perris was Team Manager of the John Player Norton Team from 1972 to 1977.

Racing drivers such as A E (Tony) Marsh, unmatched six times winner of the British Hill Climb Championship and Formula 1 and 2 driver, was also successful there.

On a personal note, I went to Rhydymwyn with my parents and my brother. My dad was Secretary of the meeting or sometimes Clerk of the Course and an enthusiastic member of the Wirral Hundred. Mum lap scored and also made lots of tea! I was just a year old when I attended my first race meeting and went to most of them until racing stopped in 1962. Unfortunately, I believe, this was as a result of a dispute regarding the land.

I have very happy memories of Rhydymwyn race course and I am sorry if I have missed anyone out, but it was quite a while ago!!

LENGTH OF THE COURSE 880 yards.
WIDTH OF THE COURSE 16 feet.
FIVE LAP RECORD (Motor-Cycle) 3 mins. 8 secs.
Made by J. Eckhart on 6th Aug., 1955 riding a 349 c.c. Norton.

CAR CLASS RECORDS (2 Laps—Standing Start):

Sports Cars—

Up to 1250 c.c. ... 1 min. 19.6 secs. A. E. Marsh (Cooper).
1251—1500 c.c. ... 1 min. 24.0 secs. J. H. Brooks (Cooper M.G.)
Over 1500 c.c. ... 1 min. 22 secs. J. P. Chapman (Mercury).

Racing Cars—

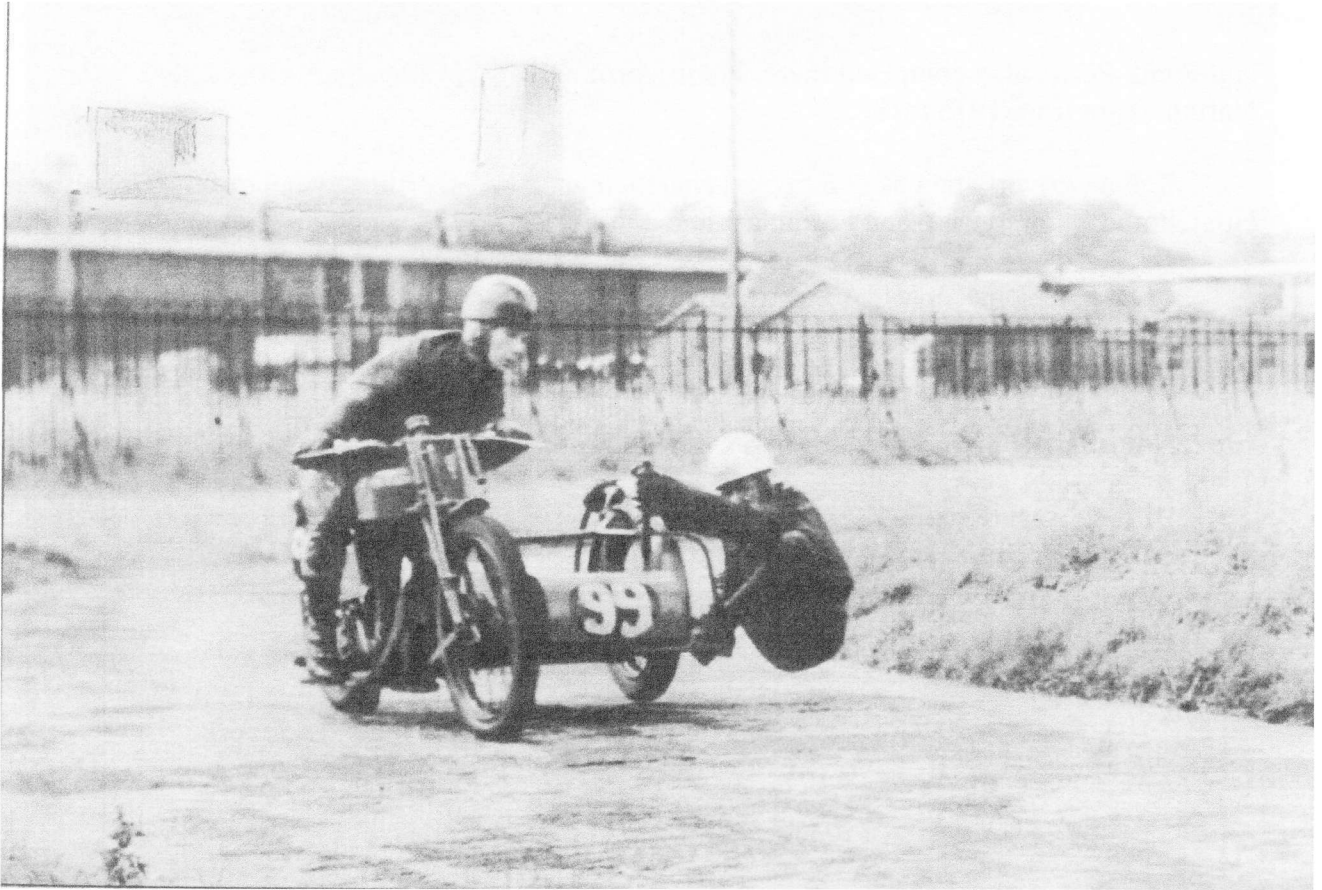
Up to 500 c.c. ... 1 min. 17 1-5 secs. G. A. N. May (Cooper),
501—1250 c.c. — 1 min. 15 secs. A. E. Marsh (Cooper).
1251—1500 c.c. ... 1 min. 19 1-5 secs. P. B. Reece (Cooper).
Over 1500 c.c. ... 1 min. 19 2-5 secs. J. Berry (Bugatti).

You are present at this Meeting entirely at your own risk and on condition that all persons having any connection with promotion and/or organisation and /or conduct of meeting, including owner of land, drivers, owners of vehicles, and passengers in vehicles are absolved from all liability in respect of personal injuries (fatal or otherwise) to you or damage to your property howsoever caused.

FORTHCOMING WIRRAL HUNDRED EVENTS

WALLASEY SAND RACES 1st September, 1956.
RHYDYMWYN CAR SPRINT ... 6th October, 1956, 1- 0 p.m.

Regulations from: R. W. FRANCIS,
9 Wesley Avenue,
Wallasey, Ches.



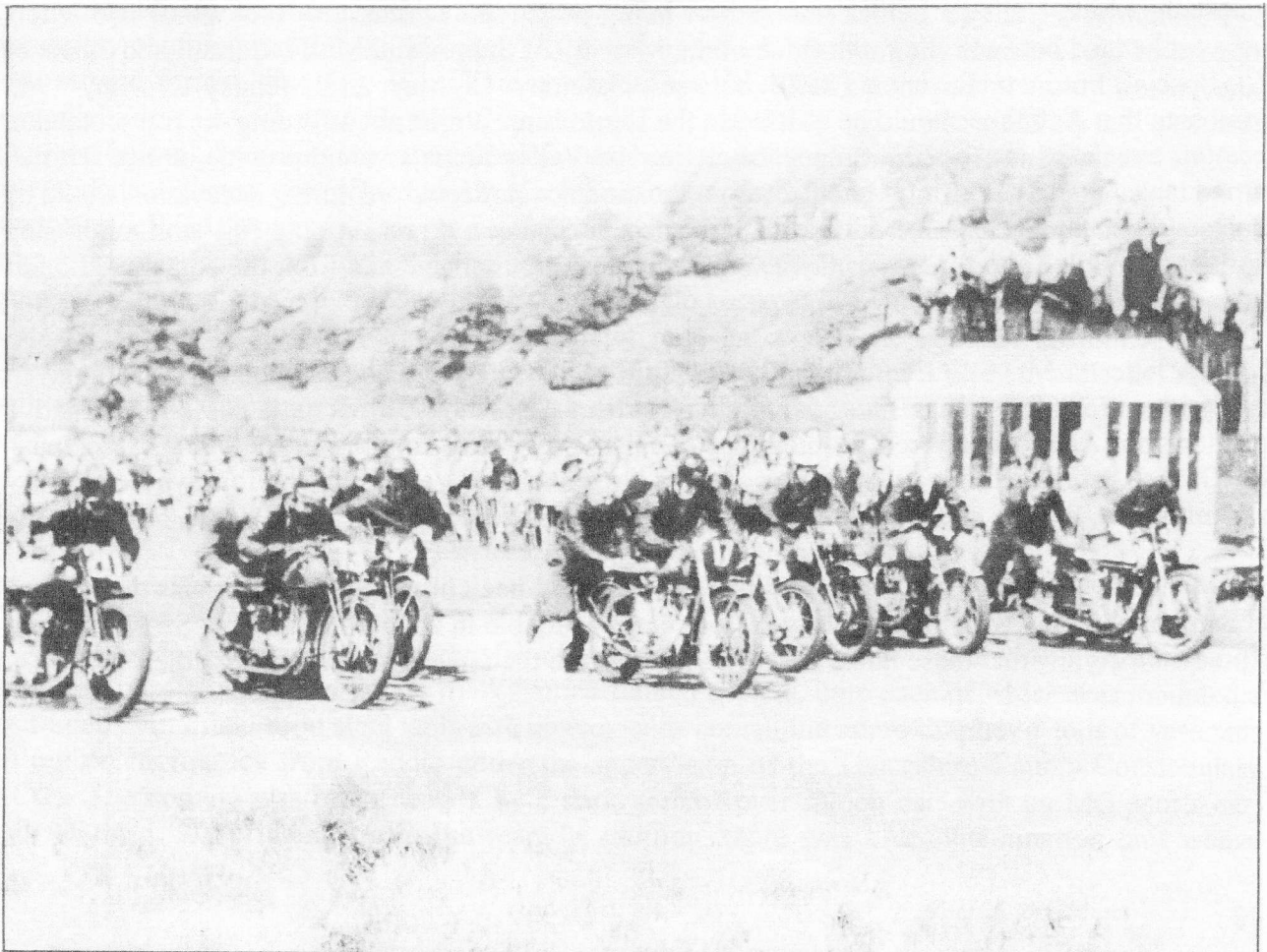
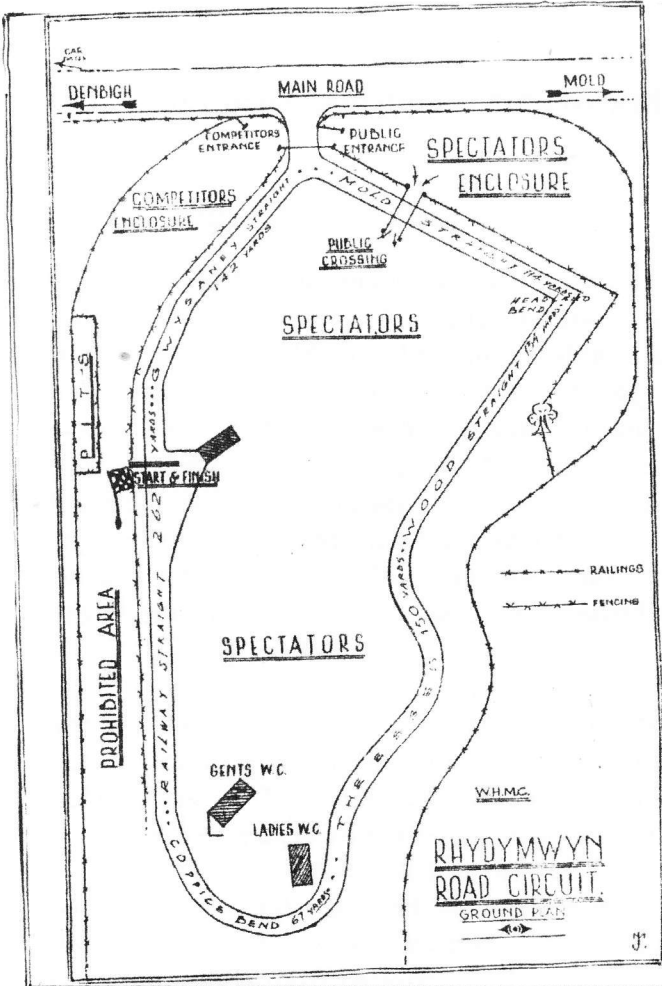
1952 K Warburton 490 Norton and sidecar.
Notice the M.O.D. buildings in the background.



1952 Ooops! E R Williams of Mold and his 499 Rudge.

LIST OF COMPETITORS

No.	Competitor and Club.	Machine	c.c.
1.	R. FAY (Liverpool) W. 100	B.S.A. 350, Norton	500
2.	E. W. COLLINS (Liverpool) W. 100	Triumph 150,	200
3.	D. WEBB (St. Helens) Warrington	Velocette	250
4.	H. DUGDALE (Aivanley) Runcorn	D.M.W. Jap	344
5.	A. DUGDALE (Aivanley) Runcorn	Triumph 150, D.M.W.	200
6.	C. MURPHY (Liverpool) S.L.M.C.		B.S.A. 350
7.	K. BARFOOT (Liverpool) W. 100	Hartley Ariel	347
8.	J. POWELL (Liverpool) W. 100	Matchless Jap	498
9.	B. BALL (Bebington) W. 100	Velocette 248, Ariel	347
10.	G. PENNINGTON (St. Helens) W. 100	A.J.S.	350
11.	W. A. SMITH (Chester) Chester	Excelsior 249, B.S.A.	349
12.	K. ALLEN (N) (Ryecroft) W. 100	Norton	348
14.	P. D. LYMPANY (Liverpool) W. 100	Triumph	500
15.	E. FISHWICK (N) (St. Helens) W. 100	E.A.F. Sp.	250
16.	G. H. BROCKS (Runcorn) Runcorn	N.S.U.	247
17.	A. E. WEAVER (Ormskirk) W. 100	Jap	500
18.	A. R. CLARKE (Wavertree) W. 100	Norton	348
19.	G. GREGORY (N) (Rock Ferry) W. 100	B.S.A.	348
20.	R. JONES (Shrewsbury) W. 100	Triumph	249
21.	H. HALL (Liverpool) W. 100	Velocette	248
22.	F. C. PUSEY (Maghull) W. 100	B.S.A. s/c.	500
23.	L. J. McLOUGHLIN (N) (Wallasey) W. 100	Norton	349
24.	H. R. HUTCHINSON (Bakewell) W. 100	Ariel Jap	350
25.	A. HIGGINSON (Lancaster) W. 100	B.S.A.	348
26.	R. SUTTON (Frodsham) W. 100	B.S.A.	348
27.	M. E. WARD (Moreton) Wallasey		B.S.A. 348
28.	A. G. SWALLOW (Liverpool) Saxon	Velocette	250
29.	G. A. DEVLIN (N) (St. Helens) W. 100	Norton	348
30.	J. A. OWEN (Maghull) W. 100	A.J.S.	249
31.	H. W. BOWMAN (Wallasey) W. 100	B.S.A.	500
32.	J. A. LENEHAN (Liverpool) S.L.M.C.	Norton	348
33.	H. A. PRESTON (Adaston) Crewe	A.B.C.	250
34.	E. WOOD (Bagillt) W. 190	Triumph	509
35.	H. IRLAM (Eccles) Manchester 17	Velocette	248
36.	W. WILLIAMS (N) (St. Helens) W. 100	B.S.A.	250
37.	B. LINDFIELD (N) (Davyhulme) W. 100	B.S.A.	348
38.	D. EVANS (Liverpool) W. 100	Norton	348
39.	J. W. LEATHER (Allerton) S.L.M.C.	Velocette	250
40.	F. P. GLOVER (N) (Knowle) W. 100	Velocette	248



'And they're off!' 1952.