

Jock Leyden

1908 - 2000



Born: 1908, Grangemouth, Scotland Died: 2000, Durban, South Africa

He was born in Grangemouth, Scotland, and settled in Durban with his parents in 1926 which was to be his home for the rest of his life.

Jock attended part-time art classes at the Natal School of Art, Durban, and he decided to advance his studies in Britain by taking lessons in drawing and painting at Heatherleys School of Art, in etching at the Central London School of Art, and in anatomical drawing at the Royal Academy in the mid-1930s.

Jock was an internationally acclaimed cartoonist, particularly in the field of sport; but he was also much admired for his theatre and political cartoons. He was singled out by Time magazine as one of the top six newspaper cartoonists of the 20th century. His work was first published in 1927 in The Natal Advertiser which was to become the Natal Daily News in 1936 and The Daily News in 1962. He made a major contribution towards the popularity of this Durban daily newspaper.

Just about every sport received Jock Leyden's attention as a cartoonist and illustrator but motor sport and in particular motorcycle racing were his great passion. He was the Patron of the Natal Motorcycle and Car Club for many years and it was during this time that he contributed several articles and illustrations to the club magazine covering early motoring events, in particular the DJ.

Jock studied art in SA and England and became a freelance illustrator in 1930. In 1933 he reported on the Isle of Man TT races and then stayed on in London with his work appearing in various publications including "The Autocar".

Jock returned to SA in 1937 and after working for various newspapers, in 1939 he moved to the Daily News/Sunday Tribune where he remained until his official retirement in 1981. However, his work continued to appear in newspapers and magazines until he eventually vacated his office and into a final retirement at the age of 81. In 1981 his work was recognised by the award of the South African Cartoonist of the Year but his reputation went further than SA and he was selected by Time Magazine as one of the world's top six cartoonists of the 20th Century.

Jock passed in 2000 at the age of 91.

Jock having lived through the 1920s, 30s and 40s knew just about all the leading riders personally and was able to obtain their recollections at first hand. When they were published originally from 1962 to 1966 these great stars were about to leave or had already left the scene.

Any of those lucky enough to have been illustrated by Jock will know how accurate he was in making a faithful depiction, as they say, warts and all. When it came to the technicalities of bikes and cars he was equally accurate and he enjoyed his work less as the mechanical details were streamlined away.

A tribute to Jock Leyden

A famous Scottish poem, Alison Rutherford's *The Flowers of the Forest*, contains the following lines:

*I've seen the Forest adorned the foremost
With flowers of the fairest – most pleasant
and gay
Full sweet was their blooming – their scent
the air perfuming
But now they are withered and a' wede
away.*

There can be no doubt that world-famous cartoonist Jock Leyden, who died at his Glenwood, Durban home on 28 February at the age of 91, was among the fairest and foremost flowers in the Forest, whether in his native Scotland, where he was born at Grangemouth on 21 November 1908, or his adopted South Africa.

A kindly, helpful gentleman in the true sense of that word, he had an endearing humility and refusal to take himself too seriously that made one feel he considered one a friend.

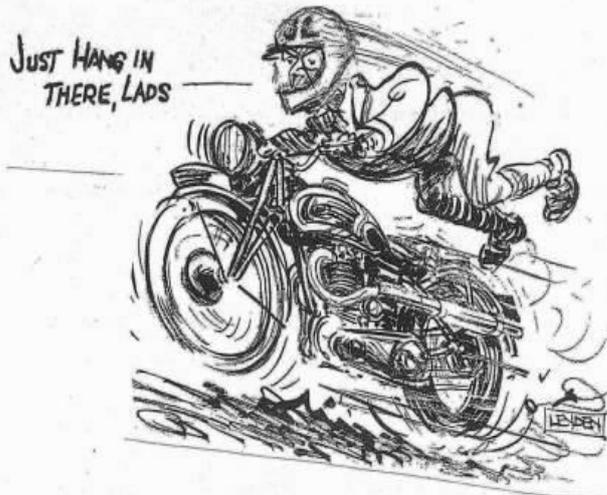
It was typical of his sense of humour that he told a former journalistic colleague recently, in the Scottish accent he never lost, that "I am now in the referee's optional time".

That his sense of humour frequently served as a means of couching a far deeper meaning is obvious from the accompanying cartoon, contained in a recent Christmas card to his friends.

It's been said that a Scotsman's road to fame and fortune lies south. To say that Jock (christened John Michael) has become as much a South African motor sport legend since his arrival here in 1926 as those drivers and riders he immortalised is perhaps stating the obvious. His cartoons have enhanced publications both here and overseas since the 1920s.

Such is the enduring appeal of art that I'm sure they will continue to do so, hopefully to the delight of those of less mature years because they capture an integral part of South African, and international, motor sport history in a unique way.

Jock, of course, did not confine his pen to depicting motor sport, although that remained his first love. His political cartoons, including the pipe-smoking Wilbur, graced Durban newspapers for 58 years until his retirement from the staff of the *Daily News* in 1997 and he immortalised



theatre celebrities and achievers in many different sports.

In doing so, Jock garnered many honours. World famous for his motor sport cartoons in the 1930s, he earned world acclaim during World War 2 when his superb wartime cartoons toured with a Commonwealth Cartoonists Exhibition throughout the Allied countries.

His work hangs in Buckingham Palace and the White House among others, *Time*

magazine named him one of the top six cartoonists of the 20th century and his work has been exhibited at cartoon festivals in Scotland, Wales, Canada, Italy, Germany, Belgium and Yugoslavia, and a retrospective exhibition of his work was held at Callander in Scotland in 1997. A devout Catholic, Jock was awarded the Papal Cross in 1986.

Honours also came his way in South Africa. In 1977 the Pietermaritzburg Turf Club held a special meeting at the Scottsville course to mark his 50 years as a cartoonist, the main feature race being the Jock Leyden Jubilee Handicap, and in 1989 the Durban City Council bestowed civic honours on him.

Jock Leyden may have "wede away", but that surely is only in a physical sense. To borrow a phrase from Scottish clergyman Lord George MacLeod of Fuinary, such a man "can't really be dead".

Jock's wife, Annabel, died in April 1996. We extend condolences to daughters Lucille, Marilyn and Rosemary, son Murray and their families.

Ken MacLeod



Three legends ... Jock Leyden at the Roy Hesketh circuit in 1978 with world motorcycle champions Kork Ballington (left) and Jim Redman (right). Picture: Ken MacLeod

Many thanks to Hector Pollard for his help in compiling this obituary. A more detailed sketch of Jock Leyden appeared in *Classic Car Africa*, volume 3 no 3.







A DAIRY FARMER, ROY'S SPORTING ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN DIVIDED BETWEEN HORSES AND HORSE POWER.

RIDING AT A GYMKHANA AT COMPENSATION, HE COLLECTED 5 FIRSTS & 2 SECONDS OUT OF 8 STARTS.

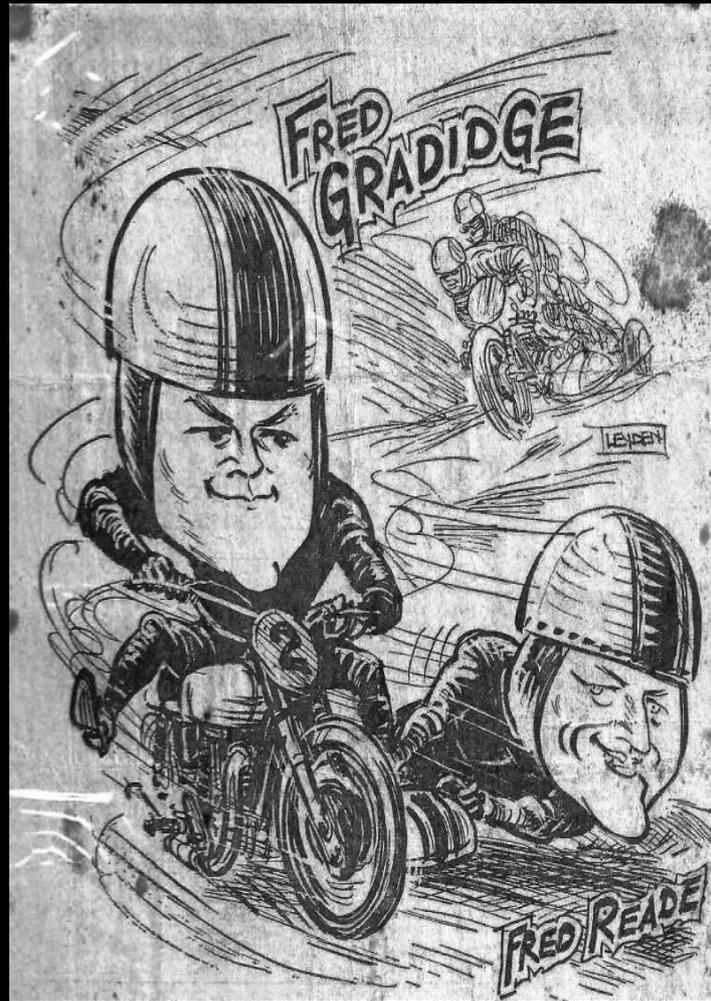


AT THE P.M.B. SHOW IN 1949 HE WON THE OPEN, AND THE MEN'S JUMPING EVENTS.



JUMPED INTO PROMINENCE IN THE MOTORCYCLE WORLD WITH 5 SCRAMBLE WINS IN SIX STARTS.

A HILL CLIMB STAR HE TOOK FIRST AND SECOND PLACES IN THE BURMAN DRIVE CHAMPIONSHIPS IN 1948, AND AT PRESENT HOLDS THE NOVELTY AND SCOTT ROAD RECORDS. IN ROAD RACING HE WAS THIRD IN THE 1951 S.A. CHAMPIONSHIPS, 4th IN 1946 BLUFF 120, & 4th IN NATAL 100 (1946)



TO THE VICTOR - THE LAURELS - ALL OF THEM!



WHEREAS THERE MIGHT BE SOME TRUTH IN THE STATEMENT THAT ALL RACING BIKES LOOK VERY MUCH ALIKE NOWADAYS



NOBODY COULD SAY THAT ABOUT THE ROADSTERS WE SAW AT HESKETH

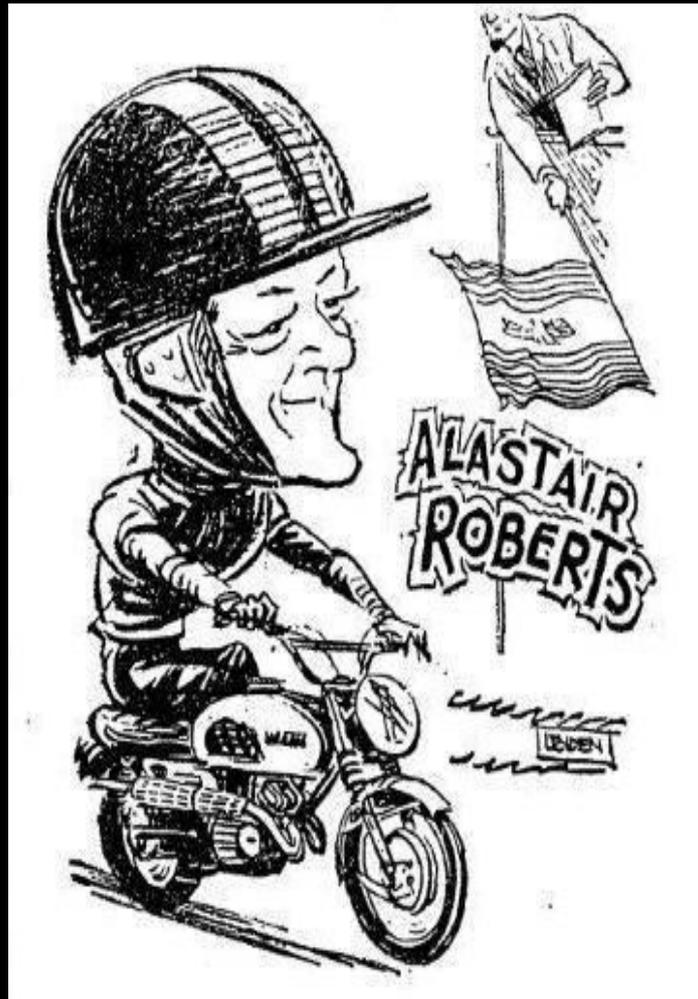


SOMEBODY TOLD US AGO LOOKED ROUND EVERY LAP AT BEACON BEND TO SEE IF GILLIE CRUSE WAS STILL FOLLOWING HIM: WELL - WELL!

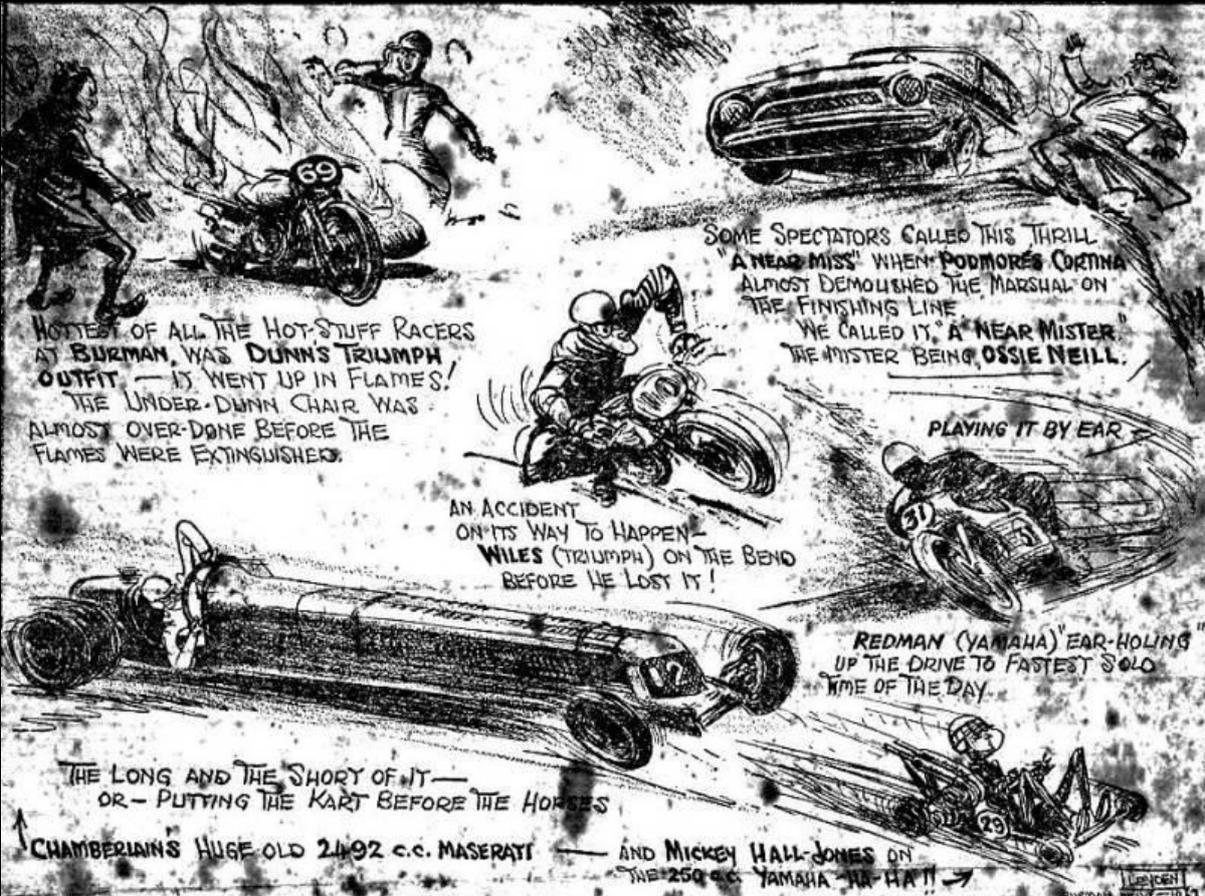


WE CERTAINLY DIDN'T SEE PETER AITKEN LOOKING ROUND TO SEE IF READ WAS FOLLOWING AT ANGELS ANGLE - IF YOU FOLLOW US!

SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE ANGELS & THE ANGLES, WE BELIEVE **LEADER** FEB 70







HOTTEST OF ALL THE HOT-STUFF RACERS AT BURMAN, WAS DUNN'S TRIUMPH OUTFIT. — IT WENT UP IN FLAMES! THE UNDER-DUNN CHAIR WAS ALMOST OVER-DONE BEFORE THE FLAMES WERE EXTINGUISHED.

SOME SPECTATORS CALLED THIS THRILL "A NEAR MISS" WHEN PODMORE'S CORONA ALMOST DEMOLISHED THE MARSHAL ON THE FINISHING LINE. WE CALLED IT, "A NEAR MISTER" THE MISTER BEING OSSIE NEILL.

AN ACCIDENT ON ITS WAY TO HAPPEN — WILES (TRIUMPH) ON THE BEND BEFORE HE LOST IT!

PLAYING IT BY EAR

REDMAN (YAMAHA) "EAR-HOLING" UP THE DRIVE TO FASTEST SOLO TIME OF THE DAY.

THE LONG AND THE SHORY OF IT — OR — PUTTING THE KART BEFORE THE HORSES

↑ CHAMBERLAIN'S HUGE OLD 2492 c.c. MASERATI

— AND MICKEY HALL-JONES ON THE 250 c.c. YAMAHA "HA-HA II" →

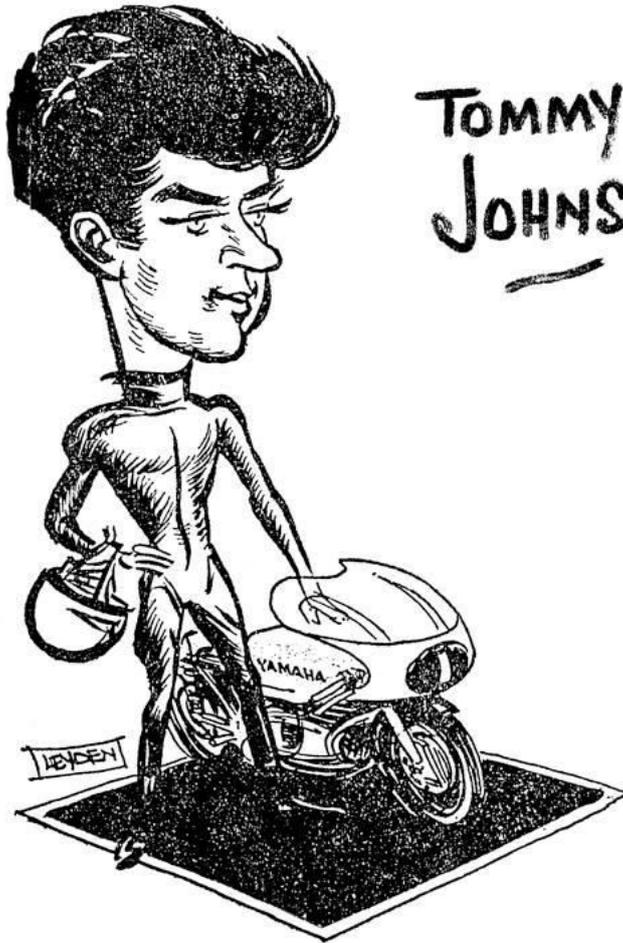
LEITCH
1961







TOMMY
JOHNS



DICKIE BOUGHT HIS FIRST MOTORCYCLE IN 1945, WHEN HE WAS 18, TO ENABLE HIM TO GO HOME TO LINCOLNSHIRE AT WEEK-ENDS FROM THE R.A.F. CAMP WHERE HE WAS STATIONED. HE STARTED GRASS TRACK & SHORT CIRCUIT RACING IN 1947, & WON THE 250 MANX GRAND PRIX IN 1948.

STARTED RIDING "WORKS" MACHINES IN 1950, FIRST NORTON, THEN GILERA, M.V., MOTO-GUZZI & LATELY B.M.W..

IN 1956, RIDING THE FABULOUS V-8 GUZZI HE TOOK THE WORLD'S RECORD FOR THE KILO & MILE (S. START)

AMONG HIS GREATEST ROAD RACING SUCCESSES ARE THE SPANISH & ITALIAN GRANDSPRIX, THE CIRCUIT DE FLOREFFE, & THE GOLD CUP £1000 RACE AT IMOLA.

FINISHED 4th IN JUBILEE T.T. IN 1957.

BROKE BOTH ANKLES IN A 100 M.P.H PILE-UP IN THE DUTCH G.P. OF '57, & WALKED AWAY WITH THE E.GERMAN, & CZECH G.P.'s THE NEXT YEAR.

THIRD IN WORLD'S CHAMPIONSHIP IN '56 & '58



7-12-59

THOUGH A MEMBER OF THE "CONTINENTAL CIRCUS" TEAM OF PROFESSIONAL ROAD RACING MEN "PADDY" WAS BORN IN JO'BURG & WENT TO SCHOOL AT MICHAELHOUSE.

HE STARTED HIS MOTORCYCLE RACING IN 1953 ON GRAND CENTRAL CIRCUIT - RIDING A 350 MANXMAN.

LATER HE BOUGHT A CASTELLANI NORTON, CHALKING UP HIS FIRST BIG WIN IN 1957 AT GRAND CENTRAL, & A 3rd IN PMB.

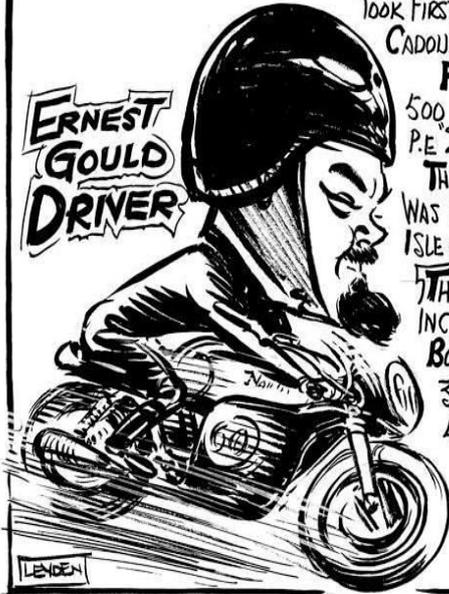
ARMED WITH TWO NEW NORTONS IN '58, HE WON THE 350 GRAND PRIX OF AUSTRIA, & WAS 4th IN THE 500 CLASS. HE ALSO TOOK FIRST PLACE IN THE CADOLUX G.P. SENIOR RACE.

FINISHED 1st IN THE 500 CLASS OF THE '59 P.E. 200 WITH A LAP AT 106.

THE SAME YEAR HE WAS 6th IN THE SENIOR ISLE OF MAN T.T.

THIS YEAR HIS BAG INCLUDES A WIN AT BOURG, 2nd AT METTET, 3rd IN THE SAAR G.P., 4th IN THE ITALIAN & C.SLOVAK G.P.s.

**ERNEST
GOULD
DRIVER**



K. Ballington

**KORK
BALLINGTON**



WORLD 250 & 350 CHAMPION





RACE RECORDS WERENT THE ONLY THINGS THAT WENT SKY-HIGH AT THE 3rd DAILY NEWS T.T.

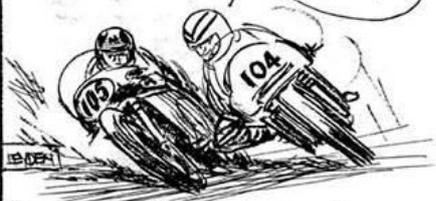


HERE IS MIKE GRANT OF PIETERMARITZBURG WHOSE WINNING RIDE IN THE 250 CLASS SET THE BALL ROLLING. MIKE IS DUE TO RACE OVERSEAS SOON.



KORKIE BALLINGTON SET THE EYEBALLS ROLLING WITH HIS 1000 cc. RACE WIN. KORKIE ISNT GOING OVERSEAS YET. HE JUST LOOKS AS IF HE'S GOING OVERBOARD.

"Climb upon my knee Ago-boy! You're only on an M.V. Ago-boy!"



WHOEVER SAID TWO'S COMPANY- NEVER SAW AGO & RAY PICKRELL (104) IN CLOSE COMPANY UP BEACON HILL. IT LOOKED MORE LIKE A CROWD TO US.



WE MUST CONFESS WE EXPECTED MORE OF TREVOR VAN ROOIJEN FOR IF ANYONE LOOKED TO BE ON HIS TOES, IT WAS TREVOR.



TONY CLAASSENS DAILY NEWS PRODUCTION CAR RACE WINNER
 "AGO" WINNER OF THE DAILY NEWS S.A.T.T.
 IAN SCHERTER FORMULA FORD WINNER

JAN - 1972

LEIDEN P.M.B. 14.12.59



MY GOODNESS! HOW MOTORCYCLE RACING HAS CHANGED. WE CAN REMEMBER THE DAYS WHEN THE MACHINES WERE STRIPPED FOR RACING - NOT THE SPECTATORS!



IT WAS LEFT TO WOLSON TO SHOW US WHAT A MOTORCYCLE LOOKS LIKE IN THE NUDE. THIS DARING YOUNG MAN ON THE FLYING TRAPEZE ALSO SHOWED HIS BRACES!



BERGSTROM STRONGLY DENIES THE RUMOUR THAT HE LAID THAT SMOKE SCREEN SO THAT RIDERS COULD KEEP THEIR MINDS ON THE JOB!



SYD VAN DER WEVER REALLY WAS GOING PLACES IN HIS COOPER-ALFA (EQUIPPED WITH SNORKEL APPARATUS EXHAUST LEST HE MIGHT BE BLAMED FOR DURBAN'S SMOG MENACE?)



"Here! Lemme see!"
 BUT WE DID FEEL SORRY FOR THE KIDS WHO STILL THINK "P. DRIVER" WAS A MISSPRINT. THEY SWEAR IT WAS FATHER CHRISTMAS IN DISGUISE!

At the Hesketh Circuit





With a sketch book at the Pietermaritzburg Moto-Cross.

GEOFF DUKE

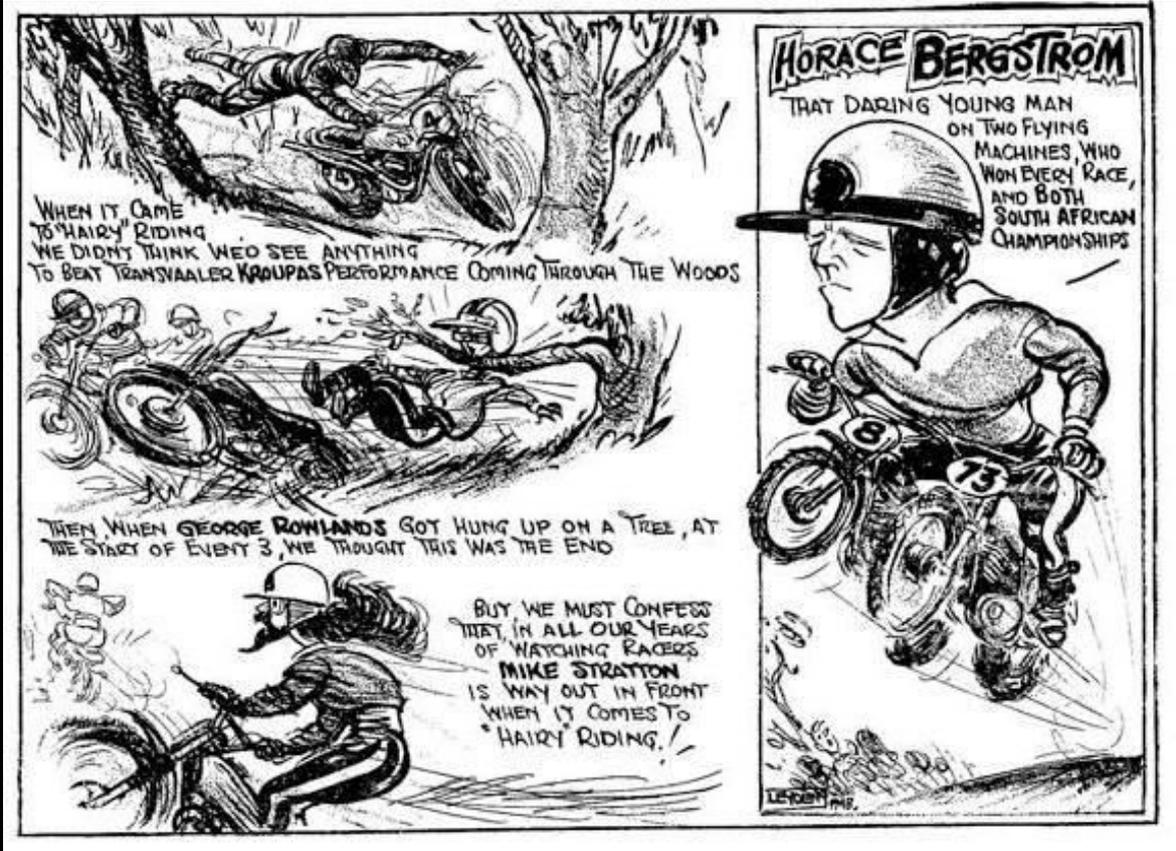
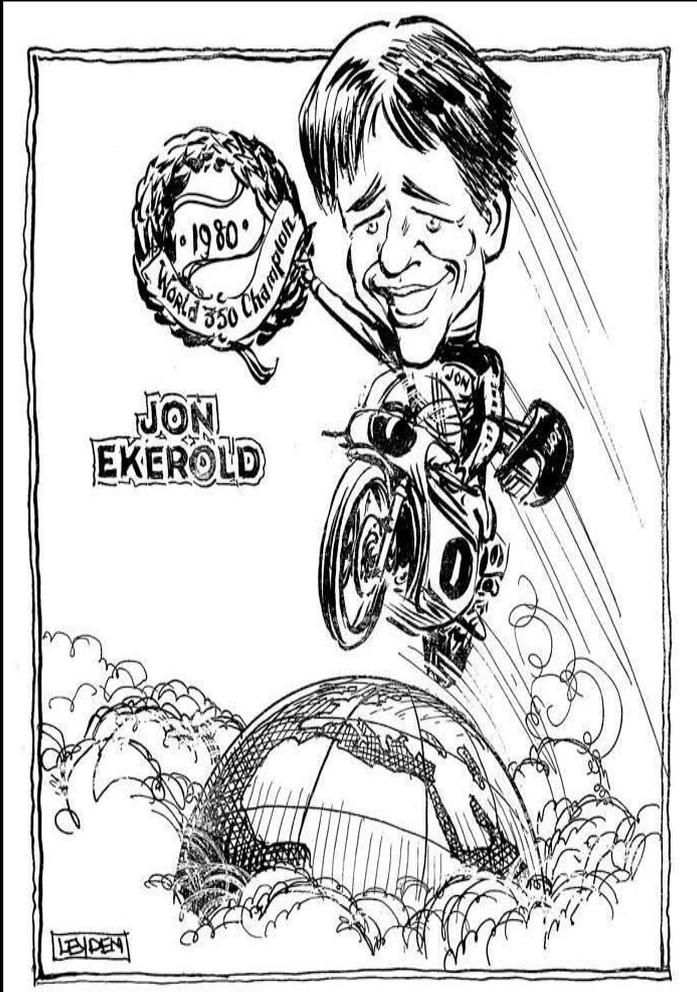
(ENGLAND)

WORLD'S CHAMPION 1951.
in 500 & 350 c.c. CLASSES

WORLD'S 500 c.c. CHAMPION
1951-1953, 1954

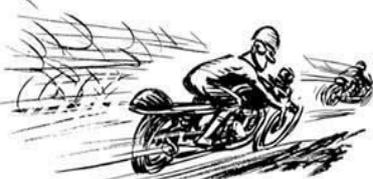


Geoff Duke









WE WONDERED WHY HASEBIER SAT SO FAR FORWARD ON HIS MANXMAN, TILL WE NOTICED HIM GOING THROUGH THE SWEEP BEND WATCHING ANXIOUSLY FOR THE SCRATCH MAN TO PASS HIM.

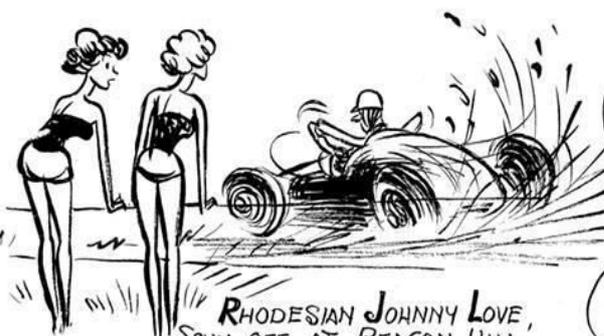


"Hocking lapped me six times. I tell you it was hair-raising."

THEN IT WAS OBVIOUS WHY THE MORE EXPERIENCED RIDERS USE HAIR CREAM TO KEEP THEIR HAIR DOWN.



SYD VAN DER VYVER COMES IN TO THE PITS TO TELL HIS MECHANICS WHAT HE THINKS OF THEM (IN BOTH OFFICIAL & SEVERAL UNOFFICIAL LANGUAGES) AFTER THEY HAVE TRANSPOSED THE PLUG LEADS ON HIS LOTUS.



RHODESIAN JOHNNY LOVE, SPUN OFF AT BEACON HILL, WHEN LEADING IN THE FAIRFIELD "100". IF HE SAW WHAT WE SAW THERE, WERE NOT SURPRISED!



THE DAYS MOST SUCCESSFUL RIDER - DICKIE DALE (ENGLAND)

WINNER OF THE 350 c.c. SCRATCH RACE, & THE FAIRFIELD 20 2nd IN THE 500, & 3rd IN THE 250 SCRATCH EVENTS.

BRUCE JOHNSTONE (S.A.) WINNER OF THE FAIRFIELD "100" THE MOST EXCITING CAR RACE EVER SEEN IN NATAL.



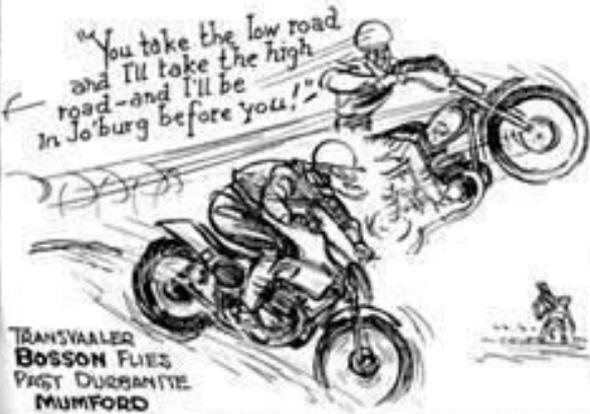
COOLING DOWN WHILE HE WARMS UP - HIRSCHBERG, FROM CAPETOWN, BEFORE THE START.



U.D.I. AT ISIPINGO! SALISBURY'S BRIAN TOWNSEND TOOK THE LEAD IN HIS FIRST RACE, AND REFUSED TO GIVE IT UP.



"HOLD HIM DOWN - YOU ZULU WARRIOR!" GEACH OF EMPANGENI

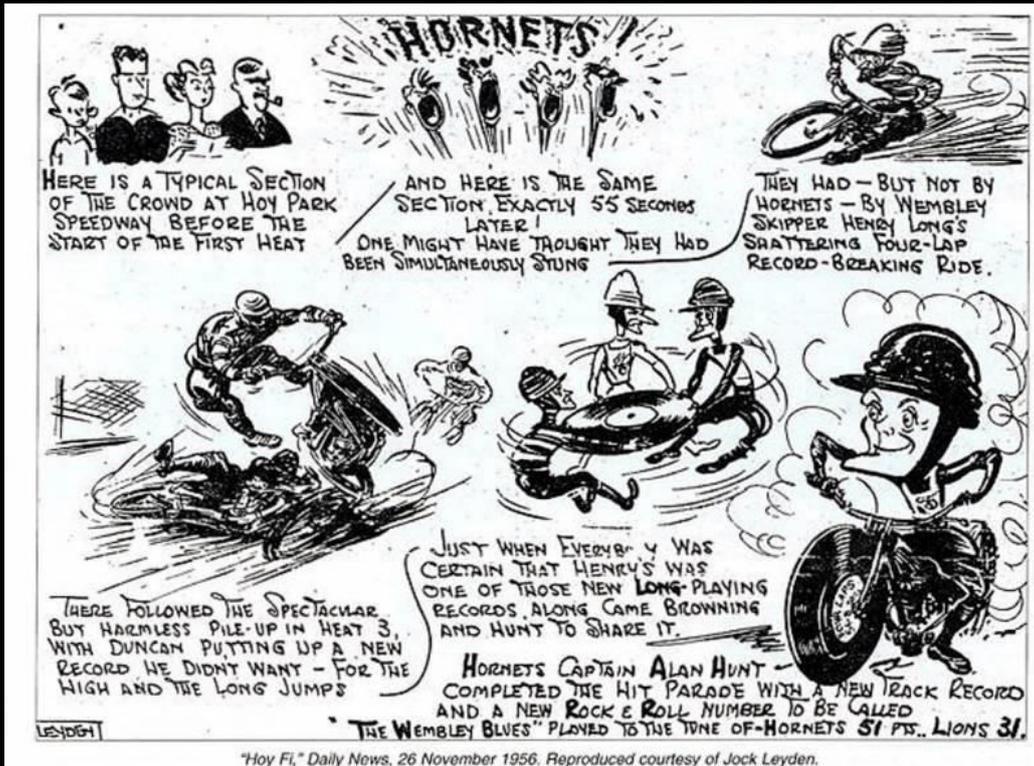


"You take the low road and I'll take the high road - and I'll be in Jo'burg before you!"

TRANSVAALER BOSSON FLIES PAST DURBANNE MUMFORD



STARS OF THE MEETING, HORACE BERGSTROM (DURBAN) & RAY MILSON (PIETERMARITZBURG)



"Hoy Fi," Daily News, 26 November 1956. Reproduced courtesy of Jock Leyden.



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