

Speedway on the Eastern Seaboard of the U.S.A.

By Tom Marriott



In the mid 1930's speedway was all the rage in Great Britain but it was also thriving on the Eastern coast of the United States of America.

Many tracks in the New Jersey and New York area were a thriving concern under what was known as the "Night Speedways" as the racing was under lights!

On Wednesday October the 2nd in 1935 the League's premier event, The Eastern Championship was held at the Tri-City Stadium, called such as it was billed as being in Irvington, Union and Hillside area of New Jersey.

To add credence to the "Night Speedways" a certain ex rider by the name of Lloyd "sprouts" Elder was the official A.M.A. Referee of the meeting.

In the programme a tribute to Elder states that he is The "Babe Ruth" of racing and that the reason that he no longer races was due to the fact he crashed a California State Police bike at 70 MPH going through a mountain pass in 1934. The injuries sustained in the crash forced him out of the sport.

The Championship was held under the 20 heat format with every rider meeting every other rider once during the meeting. Scoring being 4-3-2-1 but a rider had to complete four laps to score points.

Usually the Championships was open to Eastern riders but in this particular meeting Eric Chitty, who had been racing in the Chicago area, was added due to injuries sustained to Mark Porter and being the Champion of the Chicago district he took his place in the meeting.

What is unusual about this meeting was the large contingency of Canadian riders in the field. While the bio's of many were listed as being Americans (the exception being Eric Chitty) they were born in Canada and moved to the States at relatively young ages. Out of the 16 rider field 6 were born in Canada.

In true Hollywood fashion the outcome was decided in the 20th heat where two Canadians, Jimmy Gibb and Emerson "Crocky" Rawding both tied on 16 points fought it out for the title. After four grueling laps Gibb edged Rawding for the title in the fastest time of the night 69.4 seconds.

All in all a great night for the Canadian riders who as well as finishing 1ST and 2ND they also finished 4TH Eric Chitty, 6TH Goldie Restall, George Matheson 10th and 15TH William Restall (Goldie's younger brother)

In the later 30's all the Canadians rode in the UK with varying results with Eric Chitty and Jimmy Gibb being World finalists.

Earlier in the article I mentioned the final being in "true Hollywood fashion" do you know why I said this?

Answer: Winner Jimmy Gibb resided in Hollywood California

Goldie Restall	4	1	3	2	2	12
George Matheson	3	0	3	0	3	9
Crocky Rawding	4	4	4	4	3	19
Fred Toscani	3	3	4	0	2	12
Bob Artman	3	0	N/S	N/S	N/S	3
Jimmy Gibb	4	4	4	4	4	20
William Restall	1	1	1	2	1	6
Benny Kaufman	2	2	3	2	1	10
Lou Wilson	1	3	0	2	3	9
Don Smith	0	1	2	1	3	7
Muf Kelly	2	3	4	0	4	13
Joseph Udisky	0	2	2	3	2	9
George Lannom	2	4	1	1	0	8
Gordon "Dutch" Schautz	4	3	3	4	4	18
Eric Chitty	3	4	2	4	4	17
Henry Sieck	2	2	0	3	3	10
Jack Parr (res)			1	1	1	4

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