

Eddie Rigg's Lifeline

By Trish Gorman

Eddie's granddaughter appealed on the site recently for information about Eddie's career. From the information she received, added to what she already knew, she's put together these key milestones in Eddie's life. She'd love to hear of any additions or corrections and is particularly keen to see articles about Eddie. She can be contacted at trishgorman@aapt.net.au



Eddie (third from left) with the Aces of '58

1919

- Born in Burnley, Lancashire.

1936

- Apprentice Butcher.

1940

- World War Two - joined the RAF as an Air Frame Fitter within the maintenance of aircrafts.

1941

- Married Ruth.

1943

- First son David was born.

1944

- After six months David passed away to an infection of gastro-enteritis and died in January.

1947

- Started riding for Bradford.
- Rode in second half races after main meeting and at Monday night training school.
- Debut for Odsal at West Ham on 12 August and scored 9 points and it was also his first ever visit to London. By end of season he had scored a total of 23 league points and according to Peter Morrish in his book British Speedway Leagues 1946-64 "another bright spot was the undoubted promise of young Eddie Rigg".

1948

- Was now established member of team of Bradford and scored a total of 88 league points but the team finished bottom of the league and according to Morrish "Rigg again made sound progress"

1949

- Scored 182 league points for Bradford.

1950

- Debut for the English international speedway making his first international appearance against Australia in June at Belle Vue with a total of 12 points.
- Raced for England in the England vs Australia @ Sydney twice, Adelaide, Bathurst and Brisbane (Toured Australia) Scored 193 league points and was fourth scoring Odsal rider during the season.
- Selected for the trip to Australia for the series of unofficial test matches, during the second test at the Sydney Sports Ground on 5th January 1951 in the final heat he was involved in a fatal crash in which the Aussie rider Ken Le Breton, aka The White Ghost, was killed. After his crash Eddie was a passenger for the rest of the test series.

1951

- First World Individual Final coming in 7th at Wembly scoring 8 points. In his first race he beat both Jack Young and Split Waterman who in the end finished first and second after a run off.
- Raced for England in the England vs Scotland @ white city in Glasgow.
- Won the Brandonapolis cup @ Coventry.
- Rode for Tudors and scored 285 league points.
- Top Rider for the Tudors - According to Morrish "it was fortunate that Eddie Rigg was around to carry the side".
- Test appearances at Bradford.
- Test appearances at Birmingham.
- Test appearances at West Ham.

1952

- Raced for England in England vs Scotland @ Motherwell.
- Scored 250 league points.
- 2nd Best Odsal rider and according to Morrish "Rigg and Forrest held them together".
- 1 Test appearance at Harringay.
- 4th in the Cussens Trophy on 11th September 1952 at Sheffield, he scored 12 points in 5 rides (2,2,3,3,2).

1953

- Raced for England in England vs NZ @ Wimbledon.
- Raced for England in England vs Scotland @ White City, Motherwell and Edinburgh.
- Scored 114 league points.
- 2nd Best Odsal Rider.
- 1 Test Appearance at Birmingham.

1954

- Birth of Son Richard.
- Raced at West Ham, Belle Vue and Bradford in England vs Australasia.
- 2nd World Final Appearance coming 7th at Wembley.
- Scored 277 league points.
- Top scoring Odsal rider according to Morrish "three fine heat leaders Eddie Rigg, Arthur Forrest, Arthur Wright carried Odsal to third place".

1955

- Scored 148 league points.
- 4th in Odsal averages but I believe that he missed a number of meetings due to injuries.

1956

- Birth of Daughter Glenys.
- Scored 28 league points.
- Announcement made that he would only ride in home meetings.
- Announcement of retirement.
- Retired from Bradford.

1957

- Recruited to Belle Vue Aces.
- Scored 28 league points.

1958

- In his final year of riding Eddie scored a total of 82 league points for the Aces but the season was not without its problems as according to Morrish "problems with SCB (Speedway Control Board the governing body of the sport in UK) said they were too strong and blamed Eddie Rigg a few weeks later Rigg was allowed back due to changed circumstances".

1959

- Own and ran a corner shop in Mirfield before moving to Australia.

1965

- Moved to Australia, arriving in Sydney with the last shipload of British migrants.

1966

- Got a job with QANTAS as a ground support maintenance engineer in Sydney.

1979

- Moved to Perth, where Richard and Glenys were now living.

1984

- Granddaughter born.

1986

- Few months before the 45th Wedding Anniversary Ruth died after her battle with cancer.

1990

- During some exploratory surgery doctors found his liver and other organs were untreatably affected by cancer.

1991

- Nursed by Glenys until the final resting date.

We always welcome and value any feedback from our visitors. If you'd like to comment on this article then please fill in our feedback form at <http://www.speedwayplus.com/EddieRiggLifeline.shtml#feedback>