

# THE HENRY LONG COLLECTION

## Part 15 – 1960/61

Having staged what can be regarded as 'pirate' meetings for the previous two seasons, Fuller formed the National Dirt Track Association (NDTA) and then obtained official sanction for his operations by simple expedience, - South African NDTA riders and tracks were licenced by the Motor-cycle Union of South Africa (MCUSA) who, via the RAC at Cape Town, were affiliated to the ACU (London). The MCUSA had not been responsible for speedway racing in the Union since the early post-War years and this move drew a swift response from the SCB to reiterate that it was only they who had jurisdiction for speedway racing. The embers of 1956/57 were being fanned! However, such threats from a moribund body did not unsettle Fuller and he went ahead and opened a track at Vereeniging in January 1961. Several meetings were held at this Transvaal track and with riders such as Henry Long, Doug Davies and Neil Mortimer displaying their skills crowd levels were encouraging. An overseas side led by Englishman Reg Duval toured the Union in March/April and though attendances were satisfactory the quality of the team was mixed and certainly not to the standard of previous tourists. In retrospect the decision to import a touring team was ill-advised for South African speedway was not sufficiently re-established for such a venture. The Springboks comfortably won the series 2-0 but with the SCB continuing to assert their claim of responsibility for the jurisdiction of speedway racing the touring riders faced potential sanctions for riding on NDTA tracks. The reactions of the various national bodies of the tourists were varied, – the German and Holland federations granted permission whereas Austria suspended Luther and Holoubek for two years. Combined Europe's captain Duval was reported by the SCB to the UK SCB but no action was taken by the latter.

The 1st Test at Wembley on 24th March 1961 was significant for a reason nobody realised at the time, – it was the international swansong for South Africa's greatest ever rider, Henry Long. Henry rode in the first post-War international South Africa contested and then raced against every touring side to visit the Union and many of the world's finest stars, Moore, Briggs, Williams, Crutcher, Nygren, Fundin et al.

The SA Match Race Championship held by Long but not staged since 1957 was briefly revived with Doug Davies challenging the holder in a best of three races contest at Wembley in March. Henry Long defeated Davies 2-0. The season drew to a close with Wembley hosting the South African Championship. Doug Davies was the victor defeating Trevor Blokdyk in a run-off after both finished with 13 points. Henry Long ended the night on 11 points but could be considered unlucky as a mechanical problem resulted in three dropped points in his first ride.

### 1960/'61 season's Roll of Honour

Test Series:

- S Africa 2, Combined Europe 0,

SA Championship @ Wembley:

- Doug Davies,

SA Match Race Chmpshp E.o.Season Holder:

- Henry Long.



# BOARD<sup>1961</sup> STILL CONTROLS SOUTH AFRICAN SPEEDWAY

Writes FRANK BENNETT<sup>1961 Jan. 28, SS&N, UK</sup>

ON page four of "STAR-NEWS" dated December 17, 1960, under the heading "S.A. wants Dutch Speedway Team": The S.A. Board is unaware of any such negotiations regarding this move, and can only assume that such arrangements would be conducted by a promoter outside their jurisdiction and that the British speedway authorities should be reminded of a Court of Enquiry regarding British riders that toured South Africa some years ago.

The S.A. Speedway Control Board, although in temporary recess due to official speedway inactivity, is ready whenever necessary to perform and enforce the Rules and Regulations of Speedway (Appendix "J") for the promotion and goodwill of this sport throughout the country.

## NO JURISDICTION

Therefore do not be misinformed, the Motor Cycle Union of South Africa has no jurisdiction of Speedway Racing. The Motor Sport of Speedway Racing is conducted under the jurisdiction of the Royal Automobile Club (South Africa), and under the proper control of the S.A. Speedway Control Board.

Further, the troubles that led to speedway's decline in 1957 has NOT been settled. The S.A. Board has extended its hand of friendship and co-operation to those concerned, who have, regrettably, scorned the gesture of the Board which would still welcome with open arms the revival of this sport in South Africa under its proper control.

SPEEDWAY STAR & NEWS, February 18, 1961

# No overseas team for S.A.

## Buddy Fuller still fans favourite

SPEEDWAY at Vereeniging has proved to be popular with the fans (writes FARLEY SPENCER). Henry Long, Toby Boshoff and Doug Davies have proved themselves to still be in the top flight and have done much to keep the turnstiles turning.

So far, the proposal to bring a team of overseas riders to the Union seems to have been abandoned, for this season at least. However the new wave of enthusiasm for speedway now that Buddy Fuller has regained control, is proof that only he really knows what the Springboks speed fans want to see.

Fuller has never lost his placing in the affections of South Africans. The S.A. Control Board operates only in name. The Motor-Cycle Union of South Africa is the governing body of speedway to all intents and purposes.

It is known that Fuller intends to put speedway back on the map in a big way. The Springbok Control Board lost many friends because of its suspension of riders in 1956-57, and the return of Fuller to the scene has been welcomed everywhere.

There is a future for South African speedway provided it is governed by the right people. As most support, fans and riders alike, is for Fuller, it seems he has been voted as that man by those with a practical interest in the sport.

# A BIG HEADACHE FOR FIM

writes

## Buddy Fuller

South African Speedchief

<sup>1961 April 22, SS&N, UK</sup>

IT has been hard going trying to revive the sport at eleven South African centres after five years of comparative inactivity for speedway here. The results are very gratifying and crowds have supported the National Dirt Track Association throughout the country.

The Overseas team are too weak in international matches against a very strong South African side. I feel that the Springboks are stronger than they have ever been. The line-up is Henry Long, Doug Davies, Roy Bester, Neil Mortimer, Trevor Blokdyk, Howdy Cornel, Claude Warne and several up and coming youngsters. So far both internationals have been won comfortably by South Africa, with Reg Duval (England) and Erich Luther (Austria) the only real opposition. Reg, in particular, has been the star of the side and as the fans in England know, he is always popular on and off the track. In fact speedway could do with more like him.

At the Durban international, Reg would have got the lot, but for losing a chain and being involved in a nasty looking collision with Neil Mortimer. He broke the track record twice, setting a new time of 56.4. Ronnie Moore did 56.2 in 1952.

Reg tells me that he has not yet made up his mind as to

which track he will join when returning to England next month, but I feel that he is now riding better than ever before and should be a worthy asset to any team in the National League.

Erich Luther and Otto Holoubek, both from Austria, have been informed that they are suspended for two years for riding on unlicensed tracks in South Africa. The K.N.M.V., controlling body in Holland, like the Austrian Board, affiliated to the F.I.M., have granted permits for their riders Thei Bisschops and Gerrit Jonker to appear at all meetings organised by the National Dirt Track Association.

Reg Duval has also had a letter from the almost defunct South African Control Board that he has been reported to the British Speedway Control Board for competing on unlicensed tracks. Kurt Pieper of Germany has received permission from his National Federation to ride on all South African tracks under the jurisdiction of the National Dirt Track Association.

# THE F.I.M

All five Continental riders are in possession of valid international licences, issued by the F.I.M. Reg Duval is now riding with a licence issued by the Transvaal Motor-cycle Union.

The true position here is that the South African Control Board has nothing to control! It only has a Chairman who just will not say die. All South African riders and tracks are licensed by the Motor-cycle Union of South Africa, who are affiliated to the R.A.C. at Cape Town, via the A.C.U. in London.

These suspensions on the Austrians, and Duval's being reported to the British Speedway Control Board, are problems that the F.I.M. will have a lot of trouble trying to sort out.

Plans for 1961-62 are going ahead. I hope to make the trip to England sometime in July to contract a team to visit South Africa for the season to open in November.



Erik Luther & Reg Duval of 'Combined Europe' Test team.



1961 By JOHN BUNTON

**D**OUg. Davies, the new South African speedway champion, is still anxiously awaiting news of New Cross' offer. He has heard nothing beyond what has appeared in the *Speedway Star & News*.

Trevor Blokdyk leaves shortly to ride for Ipswich and is taking his pal, George Glen, with him. Glen hopes to get some rides in England and will help Blokdyk with his machine. Trevor, who was beaten by Davies in the run-off for the S.A. title, hopes to ride in one or other of the World Championship rounds.

The present touring team is probably the worst ever to visit this country. So bad are they that the three Hollanders have been sent home and the tour has been curtailed. The last speedway meeting of the season took place at Wembley Stadium on Friday, April 21.

At long last, Henry Long has lost his claim to being the country's unapproachable speedway star finishing only third in the championship. A loose tappet nut really put him out as he dropped three points in his first ride and

## S.A. CHAMP AWAITS N.X. OFFER

*Doug Davies wins South African Title*

1961 May 6, SS&N, UK

was then only beaten by Davies in his other appearances.

The Test in Johannesburg between S.A. and "Europe" was a great draw but the S.A. championship crowd was far from what the promoters expected. Some country districts and the city of Durban have pulled in good crowds but as forecast at the beginning of the season before talk of the tour, South Africa is not yet ready for a speedway revival. Now there is talk of a Russian team coming here next season but this seems unlikely to materialise.

Henry Long's long reign as unchallenged king of the South African speedway circuits came to a sudden end when he was ousted into third place. In fairness to Long it must be mentioned that he dropped three points at the beginning of the meeting when a loose tappet put paid to his chances but Davies had to ride the track spare in his first race



and dropped two.

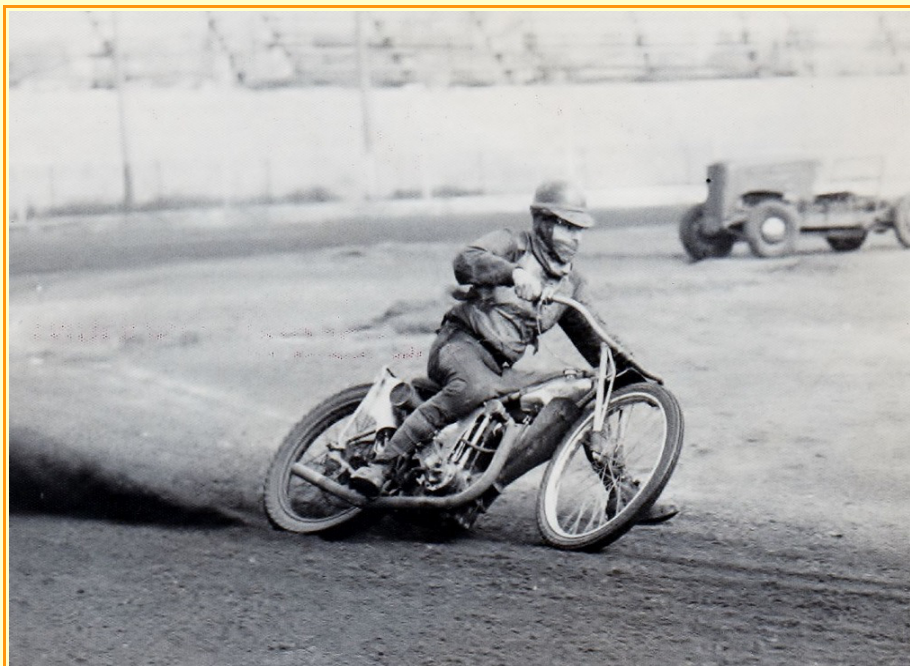
Trevor Blokdyk went through the meeting right up to the final heat undefeated. The final stanza saw Long, Browning, Davies and Blokdyk come to the gate. A much smaller crowd than had attended the test match saw a fantastic race with Blokdyk making the gate followed by Long, Browning and Davies. On the first turn Davies took Browning and then went after the other two. On the last lap he went round Long and then he and Long dived under Blokdyk on the

last bend for Davies to take maximum points in this event.

This meant a run-off between Doug. and Blokdyk but Davies had the Krugersdorp flyer well taped and went on to win with plenty to spare to become the new S.A. champion. The Overseas riders just have not shaped on this tour with the exception of young Luther and three of the men, all Hollanders, have been sent home with a month or so left.

Duval has broken a collar bone and there is much loose talk of suspension of some or all of the visitors but it is believed that this is unlikely to eventuate.

**SCORERS:** D. Davies (South Africa) 13, T. Blokdyk (S.A.), 13, H. Long (S.A.) 11, E. Luther (Austria) 11, R. Bester (S.A.), 10, T. Boshoff (S.A.) 10, J. Garder (S.A.) 8, R. Browning (England) 7, H. Cornel (S.A.), 7, T. Edwards (S.A.) 6, J. Meade (S.A.) 6, K. Pieper (Germany) 5, G. Glen (S.A.) 3, G. Jonker (Holland) 3, G. Aldsworth (S.A.) 2, O. Holoubek (Austria) 2. Davies won deciding race.



A practice ride at Wembley Stadium