

THE HENRY LONG COLLECTION

Part 6 - U.K. YEARS, 1948 - 1952

1948

Buddy Fuller and Henry Long arrived in the UK in the European summer of '48 and the SA National champion Fuller was roped into the depleted Div.3 Hastings side. They routed the Coventry Bees 60-24 with Fuller one point short of a paid max. 10 days later Henry Long was given a reserve berth with Div.2 Sheffield Tigers in a Challenge match against Cradley Heath, (lining up against Alan Hunt in his very first UK ride.) The outcome was a 48-all draw. He achieved a second-half win in his third meeting and a match heat win a month later, and continued to hold down the No.8 position until his September departure home.

1949

Seven South African riders competed in the UK in 1949, Mssrs. Boshoff (Plymouth), Quick (Edinburgh), v.d.Vyver (Leicester), Wills, (Liverpool) and Doug Serrurier (Liverpool) joining Fuller and Long. But this time Henry crossed the Pennines to make a pitch for a Division 1 place with the famous Belle Vue Aces in Manchester. He endured a month of only second-half rides before being given a reserve slot in a couple of Challenge matches against Div.2 sides, then it was 2 months as a Belle Vue 'Reserve Lge.' rider, (a 4-heat, 2-man, 2 rides, second-half competition,) in which role, with one exception against Wembley reserves, he conceded just 2 pts to the opposition in 20 rides. This and his patience was finally rewarded with a first team place in the Aces team in September and in his 4 matches, - 2 National Trophy and 2 league - , he totalled 14+2 pts before returning to the Union.

1950



Four days after his wedding in Johannesburg, Henry Long, watched by his bride Maureen, was riding at No.2 in Belle Vue's opening fixture of the season at New Cross London, (They are seen left on his JAP, departing from Jo'burg the day following the ceremony.) Henry held a first team place throughout the bulk of his second season in Manchester, scoring over 200 points in 42 matches. In the Home & Away matches against Bradford on Whit Monday he had his best meeting to date with 3 wins in the Belle Vue leg, bettered by a 12pt maximum at Birmingham in July, this in turn topped by a 5-ride paid max, (13+2) at home to New Cross at the end of July. The British season ran through to the end of October and to the Aces inter-divisional Challenge match at Coventry, where Henry was again in double figures, 11pts, conceding to the opposition only in his last ride of the night and of the season.

1951

It was late April and Belle Vue's 6th meeting when Henry Long arrived back in the UK in 1951. He won his first ride at the Zoological Gardens, the track's location in Manchester amid the famous amusement park and exhibition complex, and against the same Odsal opposition 2 weeks later in the double Whitsun holiday fixture, scored a paid max (11+1) on the 370yd. Bradford track. After a place on the rostrum (3rd.) in the following week's individual meeting he endured his worst result of the season at Bristol with a single point then 8 days later topped the score chart with a full 12pt. maximum against West Ham. The World Championship qualifiers were staged throughout the summer but with just 13pts from his 2 Championship Round meetings any aspirations for Wembley and the Final were ended.

Henry was selected for the Overseas team's international against England at Belle Vue, making 7+2 points, and in the Aces match against a USA team notched his highest score of the year with a 14 paid 16 total in the Aces 67-41 win. The home season closed the following week with HL again on the rostrum of the 100 Guineas Trophy meeting, having dropped just one point to the winner, - his skipper Jack Parker.

cont'd

1952

1952 was a milestone year for Henry. He had swept all before him in the SA summer, and it had not been his intention to race in England in '52, but with Belle Vue missing both himself and Parker at the start of the year the Aces were languishing at the foot of the table, having been runners-up the preceding 3 seasons. After many phone calls a deal was secured in June to fly the new South African Champion and his family to England, though too late for the Whitsun H&A Odsal matches in which he'd previously excelled. Against Wimbledon Henry made a dream return, topping the score chart with double figures and winning the Scratch Race Final, but alone could only hold the Dons to a draw. He was to be Aces' top scorer in many further matches, and only 4 times in the season did he not win at least one heat in every meeting, home or away.

In July he successfully worked through the initial rounds of the World Championship and in August went through the card unbeaten, match and scratch races, against both Bradford and Norwich. His form was coming to a peak, and Henry's two meetings at West Ham and Harringay in the last World Championship rounds and his resultant 23 points delivered what was to be the zenith of his racing career, - a place in the World Final at Wembley! In the first year that the Final was broadcast live on British TV, Henry Long became the first South African to appear in a speedway World Final, and his 7 points confirmed him to be amongst the top flight of the world's riders, not just at home in the Transvaal but in the international spotlight.

----- 1952 was Henry Long's final year of riding in the U.K. -----

Henry Long's UK Performances, 1948–1952

		Matches	Points (+bonus pts)
1948 – Sheffield Tigers Nat'l Lge Div.2 (July – early Sept.)	Anniversary Cup	7	16+9
	Nat'l Lge. Div.2	4	4+4
	Challenge	2	6+1
		13	26+14
	36 rides	= 4.44 CMA	
		Date	Rides
1949 – Belle Vue Aces Nat'l Lge Div.1 (May – Sept.)		May+ June	Second-half rides.
		June	2 Div.2 Chall. match resrv.
		Jn,Jly,Ag.	10 Resv. Lge. matches.*
		Sept.	2 Nat'l Trophy team resrv.
		"	+ 2 N.L.Div.1 matches.
	12 rides	4	14+2
		= 5.33 CMA	
		Matches	Points
1950 – Belle Vue Aces Nat'l Lge Div.1 (April – Oct.)	Nat'l Lge. Div.1	23	109+10
	Nat'l Trophy	4	21+3
	Spring Cup	6	29+1
	Challenge	9	39+5
		42	198+19
		= 5.17/mtg	
1951 – Belle Vue Aces Nat'l Lge Div.1 (April – Oct.)	Nat'l Lge. Div.1	30	214+19
	Nat'l Trophy	1	11+2
	Challenge	9	80+6
	International	1	7+2
		41	312+29
		= 8.32/mtg	
1952- Belle Vue Aces Nat'l Lge Div.1 (June – Oct.)	Nat'l Lge. Div.1	21	184+9
	Nat'l Trophy	1	15+1
	Challenge	8	56+4
		30	255+14
		= 8.97/mtg	

* 1949 NL1 'Reserve Lge' = 4 hts, 2-man teams, 2 rides/mtg.

Gilbert Brown Saw Long Get 11 Points

Wednesday
August 23, 1951

Mr. Gilbert Brown, general manager of Wembley Stadium, returned to the Union by air last night after his business trip to Britain and Europe. Mr. Brown told the "Rand Daily Mail": "I hope to make a statement on some of my activities after I have consulted with my directors." African Theatres take over the lease at Wembley on July 1.

Last week Mr. Brown went to Belle Vue (Manchester) and was among a crowd of 30,000 who saw Henry Long, South African speedway rider compete in an Open meeting for the Supporters' Trophy. Long scored 11 points out of a possible 15. He beat Aub Lawson, the Australian champion.

Among those riding against Long were such well-known names as Val Morton, Dent Oliver, Jeff Lloyd, and Jack Parker.

Mr. Brown was able to meet Long after the meeting and talk over South African speedway prospects.

Speedway star to join Long in Britain

Tuesday
June 19, 1951

Bob Serrurier, the national speedway champion, leaves for Britain to-night to join fellow South African Henry Long at Belle Vue, Manchester. When it was first suggested that he should have a season on English tracks the intention was that he should join Sheffield, which was under the same management as Belle Vue.

With conditions altered at Sheffield he may remain at Belle Vue, in which case he will get experience with some of the best riders in Britain. Long, who has been having his best season with the Belle Vue league team, has already obtained all the equipment for Serrurier and is certain to put him on the right road.

In spite of beating experienced riders like Fred Wills, Buddy Fuller and his brother Doug, in the South African championship, Bob has no illusions about the hard road he will have to travel. For this season, at any rate, he is intent upon picking up all the knowledge he can gain among international stars like Jack Parker and Aub Lawson.

Improved rider

Tuesday June 21, 1951

HENRY LONG, the South African international speedway star, is having his best season on English tracks and on his present form is in line to challenge his Belle Vue team-mate, Jack Parker, for his match race title.

In his last three national league meetings Long has scored 31 points, eight against Bristol, 12 against West Ham and 11 against Wimbledon. Ronnie Moore, the 17-year-old Wimbledon rider, has been tipped as a likely opponent for Parker. He beat Parker in the league match, but he could not beat Long or his times.



H. Long.

Belle Vue are at the top of the league, four points ahead of Wimbledon, with two matches in hand. Long, who was partnered by Parker last season, and at the start of this season, has been promoted to a heat leader, but he still has plenty of regard for what Parker tells him. In fact he has based his style on that of Parker, and English critics say that he is a second edition of the England captain.

Long has hard task in world speedway

Monday July 2, 1951

From Our Correspondent

London, Monday.

THE draw for the second round of the world speedway championship finds the South African rider, Henry Long, having to travel to Ashfield, Glasgow, and Cradley Heath tracks for this stage of the contest.

In each case he will meet opposition from star English and Australian Test match riders. Among the competitors he will meet at Glasgow on July 10 is Merv Harding, now first choice for the Australian Test team, and spectacular Arthur Forrest, who rode in the English Test team at Bradford on Saturday.

Long also has to meet Wembley star Frank Williams—brother of the world champion, Freddie Williams—and by a stroke of ill fortune Long and Williams meet both at Glasgow and Cradley Heath. Among his other rivals at Cradley on July 16 are the Australian Test rider Bob Leverenz, West Ham Test star Howdy Byford, who rides consistently well both in England and Scandinavia, and two men from Birmingham's Division I team.

BIGGEST DANGER

Long's biggest danger at Cradley, however, is likely to be the Swedish ace Olle Nygren, who has just been signed on by the crack London side, Harringay.

Altogether 136 riders figure in the second-round meetings, and of them the 54 top-scorers go forward to the remainder of the championship. Long is riding well enough to qualify for the next stage, but the names of the 54 remaining will not be known until after the last second-round meeting, which is on July 21.

SERRURIER BEATEN

The first speedway match between two South Africans riding in England took place at Belle Vue, Manchester, on Saturday, when Henry Long, who is fast becoming a speedway star in England, defeated Bob Serrurier. The match had no official recognition and only came about when Long suggested that a meeting with Serrurier be arranged as a show for the Belle Vue spectators in the absence of their best riders in the Bradford Test match.

ENGLAND WIN

England beat Australia by 59 points to 49 in the second speedway Test in Bradford on Saturday to level the score in the five-Test series, reports Sapa-Reuter.

Fred Williams, of Wembley, was top scorer for England with 13 points, while Eddie Riggs, of Odsal and Jack Parker, of Belle Vue, each got 12.

Jack Young, of Edinburgh, scored 16 points for Australia. Jack Blegs, of Harringay, was next best scorer with 11 points.

Long meets Test riders in next two rounds of world speedway championship

Tuesday
July 31, 1951

From Our Correspondent

London, Tuesday.

HENRY LONG, South Africa's sole challenger for the world speedway championship, meets his stiffest opposition yet in the penultimate stage of the fierce competition for the plum British speedway season at Wimbledon on August 13.

Long supplies a South African element to an international field which includes stars from England, Australia and New Zealand.

His biggest hurdle at this meeting will be Jack Young, the sensational second division star, whom Australia made their captain at the recent Wembley Test and who is now a firm favourite to win the title.

At the same meeting Long will also have to face "Split" Waterman, one of England's leading scorers in Tests, Norman Parker, the Wimbledon captain, who will be riding on his own track, and Geoff Mardon, a New Zealander, who, in his first season in England is making a big name for himself with Aldershot.

Long's other meeting is at Birmingham on August 18. Here

he will be called upon to meet the reigning world champion, Freddie Williams, together with Australia's Test selector, Aub Lawson, and England star Alan Hunt, who will be riding on his own track.

A cheque for £50—apart from prize money—is awarded to the top scorer at each meeting, and at the conclusion of the round, which ends on August 31, the 15 leading scorers qualify for the final at Wembley on September 20.

During the past two seasons the championship round has been run over three meetings. In 1949 the top man averaged 12.66 points and the 16th man nine points. Last year the comparative figures were 13 points and 8.66 points.

Long crashes in world speedway

Tuesday August 14, 1951

From Our Correspondent

London, Tuesday.

A SPECTACULAR crash robbed the South African speedway rider, Henry Long, of valuable points in the Wimbledon round of the world speedway championship last night.

Long, who is South Africa's sole representative in the contest, will as a result now have difficulty in qualifying for the final at Wembley next month.

Long was fighting out a thrilling duel with the experienced English rider Geoff Pymar and as they entered the last straight, with Pymar inches in front, Pymar fell heavily.

With no chance of avoiding a collision Long ran into Pymar's machine and both men disappeared in a cloud of cinders and sprawling cycles.

Long staggered to the side of the track and collapsed and a stretcher party carried off Pymar, who was later said to have concussion.

PUSHED MACHINE

Meanwhile Long, apparently only dazed, recovered sufficiently to realise that there was still at stake a vital point for third finisher in the race and he managed to push his machine 70 yards to the post in time to qualify for that point.

Riding well, Long lost ground early in his first race, but recovered to lose only by inches to Frank Lawence. In his second race Long was pitted against the Australian star Jack Young and the South African was not disgraced in coming second.

Two hard races in succession obviously tired him, however, and it was after gaining only another second that his spill came in his fourth race, while in his fifth and final race he was beaten for third place by Wimbledon's own rider Ronnie Moore.



H. Long

NOT ENOUGH

Long collected only seven points, which does not yet give him enough to take him on to the final. He has one more meeting—at Birmingham on Saturday—in which to qualify, but he will have to get well into double figures if he is to ride at Wembley.

HENRY LONG ANSWERS BELLE VUE'S "SOS"

TWENTY-FIVE-YEAR-OLD Henry Long, South Africa's speedway ace, flies to Britain to-morrow in answer to an "SOS." He will rejoin Belle Vue—and the Manchester First Division team's telephone account is increased by £42 (writes ERIC LITCHFIELD).

The "SOS" came from Miss Alice S. Hart, Belle Vue's team manager and the first woman "chief" in British speedway. Her team, runners-up in Division I last season, and for many years one of the leading combinations, is now struggling at the foot of the table.

Stars missing from the first "six" include 43-year-old Jack Parker (injured during the close season) and Henry Long, who had decided not to return to Britain until just before the opening rounds of the World Championship.

Every day for a week Miss Hart telephoned Long at his Alberton home. "Her persistence reminded me of a newspaper reporter," chipped Long yesterday.

Long's "Yes" came after the Belle Vue manager had used seven six-minute long-distance calls at £1 a minute.

Then came Number Two problem: Could Long reach Manchester in time for a heavy week-end programme? Always officials found a seat for him on an aircraft which is due to arrive in Britain less than ten hours before the start of the Belle Vue-Wimbledon league match.

Accompanying the South African champion will be his wife, 15-month-old son, and his father, Alf Long.

Meets Mardon

One of Long's opponents in his first match will be Geoff Mardon, 24-year-old New Zealander, who toured the Union with Ken Middleton's overseas team last season.

Mardon, transferred from Aldershot (Third Division) for a fee of £1,000, has been a consistently high scorer in the First Division. A month ago he scored 11 points in Wimbledon's 47-36 win against Belle Vue.

Overseas report read: "Mardon unselfishly sacrificed the chance of gaining his first maximum in top-class speedway by nursing team-mate Reg Trotter into first place in the final heat."

Belle Vue and Wimbledon ride a return in London on Monday night, and the Manchester men stay overnight to ride against West Ham on Tuesday.

Long becomes hero at Belle Vue speedway

From Our Correspondent

MANCHESTER, Wednesday.—Manchester speedway supporters have made Henry Long, the South African rider, their hero after his performance here on Saturday.

Long stepped straight off the plane from Johannesburg at the airport and motored to Belle Vue speedway stadium, where he turned out for the famous Belle Vue Aces and finished the evening as top points scorer.

He won the last heat, which enabled the Aces to draw with Wimbledon, 42 all. Long had flown specially from Johannesburg in answer to an SOS sent out by Miss A. S. Hart, manager of the Aces.

Her team had been weakened by an abnormal crop of injuries. He had no rest from the time he landed in Manchester until the time he went on to the track for his first ride, before 30,000 spectators.

81 Bid For World Speedway Title

LONG QUALIFIES FOR NEXT ROUND

S.A. Sports Parade

HENRY LONG, the South African champion, who rides for Belle Vue (Manchester), is among the 81 riders left in the world speedway championship. For the second year in succession he has reached the Championship Round from which 16 riders qualify for the final round at London's Wembley Stadium.

Long, who scored 21 points in his two meetings, was among the 61 qualifiers from the International Round.

These qualifiers join 20 selected First Division riders (including Jack Young, "Split" Waterman and Jack Biggs, first three in the 1951 final) at the last hurdle before the final round.

Long's two International Round meetings were at Motherwell and Coventry and his aggregate of 21 points (11 at Motherwell; 10 at Coventry) gave him the joint 18th place.

Other qualifiers included: Ken Middleton (25 points), Geoff Mardon (23), Peter Robinson (21), Jack Grierson (18) and Sune Carlsson (17)—all of whom have ridden on South African tracks in recent years.

Reg Duval and Trevor Redmond, members of last year's Overseas touring team in the Union, failed to qualify.

Sune Carlsson, of Sweden, who toured the Union last season, is now riding for New Cross, the London First Division team.

Henry Long, who answered an SOS when he flew to Britain to join the out-of-luck Belle Vue team, is enjoying his best-ever season.

He has been a consistently high points scorer—frequently heading the scorechart. He totalled 15 points in Belle Vue's 59-49 National trophy win against Birmingham last week.

Bob Serrurier Has

Wrenched Leg

Bob Serrurier, the 1951 South African speedway champion, is recovering from a fractured right leg sustained in the Natal championship meeting at Hoy Park. His leg is in plaster, but he hopes to be fit in time for the opening of the new season.

LONG DRAWN AGAINST WORLD CHAMPION

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

Saturday Aug 9 1952, MANCHESTER, Friday.

HENRY LONG (Belle Vue) will oppose the reigning champion, Jack Young, in the World speedway championship round—the last round before the final—at West Ham on Tuesday and at Harringay on August 29. The leading sixteen riders in the Championship round qualify for the final at Wembley Stadium.

Long, the South African champion, who outscored 21 opponents to qualify for the championship round, has been given a tough task. Yet he is in such form that he could easily go through to the final where just over £2,500 prize money is waiting to be picked up.

Among the men Long has already beaten on the road to Wembley are England's Test men, Bob Oakley (Wembley) and Ron Mountford (Birmingham).

Tough Field

Now the bustling Henry goes against a really tough field which includes Young, Wally Green, runner-up in the 1951 world series, Besse Sivem (Norway) and Olle Nygren (Sweden). This will be Long's first ride of the season at West Ham.

When Long goes to Harringay on August 29 he again meets up with Young and Green. Also in the field will be "Split" Waterman, runner-up last year, Jack Biggs, third in 1951, and Dirl, of Austria.

The last time out at Harringay, Long topped the Belle Vue scorecard with ten points out of a possible 12.

This world series season will call for really smooth-running motors and the man who looks after Long's equipment is his genial father, Alf Long, three times winner of the gruelling Durban-Johannesburg road race.

Alf Long is an expert tuner. On Monday he stripped Henry's motor down before the National League match with Odsal and Belle Vue's Springbok speedman went through the card unbeaten, scoring 18 points and collecting almost £65 prize money.

To Meet World Champion

Saturday August 9, 1952



Henry Long, the South-African speedway champion, who will be trying to enter the final round of the world championship when he rides at West Ham on Tuesday and at Harringay on August 29. Long will meet the men who finished in the first three places in last year's competition during the two days' riding.

Long within reach of two premier speedway titles

From Our Correspondent

Tuesday Aug 12 1952, London, Tuesday. THE TWO PREMIER TITLES in speedway racing are now within the reach of Henry Long, who is this season the only South African riding regularly on British tracks.

The first of these is the world championship, a vital round of which is to be ridden at the West Ham track tonight. Long will be meeting the reigning world champion, Jack Young, and Sweden's outstanding challenger Olle Nygren.

Long's other world championship meeting is on August 29 at Harringay, and there again he will meet Jack Young, "Split" Waterman and Jack Biggs, who were second and third respectively to Young in last year's final, are at the same meeting, which means that Long is in for a formidable run in the scramble for points. The top 16 scorers from these meetings will qualify for the final at Wembley on September 18.

MATCH RACE CHANCE

The other major prize in which Long has a chance to qualify is the match race championship also now held by Young. This is a monthly event between the holder and an officially selected challenger, and now Long, by reason of his fine recent performances, is

being considered by the selectors for that capacity.

Since Long arrived in England in June to rejoin his old team at Belle Vue, Manchester, that side has been rejuvenated and Long's own performances have been outstanding.

Over the Bank Holiday week-end Long dropped only two points against the powerful Harringay side and two days later rode unbeaten against Bradford. He requires only to maintain this form to be given a chance against Young for the match race championship.

He will be a member of the Belle Vue team to visit Sweden in October and his father, who is also in England, may accompany the team as technical adviser.

Long scores 11 points in world speedway

From Our Correspondent

Wednesday Aug. 13 1952 London, Wednesday.

MACHINE TROUBLE robbed the South African speedway champion, Henry Long, of valuable points in the world championship first round at the West Ham track last night but nevertheless he managed to finish fourth in a star-studded international field in which the winner was the reigning world champion, Jack Young.

Long's first ride was against Young and he wisely let the champion go while he battled for second place points with the local boy, Wally Green, who was second in the 1950 final. Only inches separated Green and Long at the finish but the South African had to be content with third place.

In his next ride Long had to meet the Norwegian star, Basse Hveem, and the Swedish champion, Olle Nyren. For over two laps Long chased Hveem—the sensation of the meeting—and at the same time cleverly kept at Nyren. Then the South African's motor spluttered almost to a stop but he managed to keep it going in time to stagger home for another third place.

THREE FIRSTS

Long more than atoned for his early failures by winning each of his three remaining races in brilliant fashion and in his third showed the way home to his Manchester Belle Vue teammate and England test rider, Ken Sharples.

In his fourth ride Long had little difficulty in beating Harry Edwards and the New Zealander, Harold Fairhurst. The best of the Englishmen was Alan Hunt, but he too was well beaten by Long in the last race of the night.

In a field of 18 Long totalled 11 points to be behind Young (15 points), Nyren (13 points) and Hunt (12 points). A similar performance in his next meeting which takes place at Harringay on August 20 will put Long among the top 16 riders to battle out the final at Wembley next month.

LONG TURNS DOWN AUSTRALIAN TRIP

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

Thursday August 28 1952 LONDON, Wednesday.

HENRY LONG, the Springbok speedway star, has turned down the invitation to join the British speedway touring team which flies to Australia in November. "The Australian offer was very attractive and I tried to persuade myself to accept it, but the idea of missing a season's racing in South Africa was too painful," said Long to-day.

Long will sail for South Africa on November 10. "This is going to be the Union's biggest-ever speedway season," he predicts. Using a 350 c.c. Velocette, hustling Henry is also to try his hand in Open circuit competition on the eight-mile Nigel track.

Needs 11 Points

But before his South African season starts, Long, with 11 qualifying points already on the board, races at London's Harringay Stadium on Friday night in the last world series eliminating round.

Long needs to score at least another 11 points here if he is to qualify for the world championship final at Wembley on September 18.

The South African ace will not have an easy task getting those 11 points. His opponents include the present world champion, Jack Young, home track stars, Biggs and Waterman, the Austrian champion, Dirl and captains of Stoke and Glasgow Ashfield teams.

If he qualifies he will be the first South African ever to reach a world final.

The full field at Harringay on Friday is: S. Waterman, J. Biggs (Harringay); J. Young, W. Green (West Ham); S. Semmens, L. Lazarus, W. Wilson (Glasgow Ashfield); E. Williams (Wembley); H. Long (Belle Vue, Manchester); G. Jackson (Rayleigh); K. Adams (Stoke); D. Campbell (Edinburgh); F. Dirl (Austria); A. Payne (Birmingham); I. Powell (Aldershot); P. Pawson (Norwich).

Long rides brilliantly to qualify for world speedway final

From Our Correspondent

Saturday Aug. 30 1952 London, Saturday.

THE THREE BRILLIANT WINS at Harringay last night gave the South African speedway champion, Henry Long, sufficient points to qualify for the world championship final—the first South African ever to appear among the select 16 to compete for speedway's premier prize.

A faulty clutch was responsible for Long making poor starts in his first two races, but his mechanic-father worked feverishly upon it to set Henry eventually on his way to the big Wembley final on September 18.

Long was somewhat fortunate to get two points for second place in his first ride for he was running third when the local favourite, "Split" Waterman, fell when in the lead, allowing Long to finish just behind Jack Biggs, the eventual winner of the round.

Long met the reigning champion, Jack Young, in his second race, but here the South African was kept into third place by Willie Wilson, the up-and-coming Scot. Three points from two races was not enough for Long, who found himself in the position of having to win his remaining three races to make sure of the 12 points which would see him through.

SPECTACULAR RACE

With the slipping clutch repaired, however, Long went out against the English stars, Wally Green and Eric Williams and the three of them provided the race of the night. Shoulder to shoulder they rode for three laps with Long riding perilously close to the fence in repeated attempts to pass. On the last lap he slipped through on the inside and gained a lead of inches in a desperate dash for the last bend. Long hung on grimly and roared past the finishing line in one of the most spectacular races of the season.

Long had the Australian test star Arthur Payne as his chief rival in his next heat in which he shot away from the gate, opened up a two length lead out of the first bend and held it to the post.

It was as well for Long that his last appearance found him with moderate second and third division riders and he could afford to take it easy as he cantered in for the remaining three vital points. Long's 12 points brought his aggregate up to 23—enough to put him definitely in the last 16 out of the 80 men who started the round with visions of speedway's most glittering prize.

THE FINALISTS

The 16 finalists, reports Sapa-Reuter, will be B. Oakley (28); J. Young, S. Waterman, R. Moore and F. Williams (27); R. Howe (26); D. Bradley and C. Roger (25); A. Payne, J. Lloyd, A. Forest and B. Crutchers (24); D. Close, B. Roger and H. Long (23); and one of the following five who, with 22 points will run off the decider for 16th place—T. Redmond, A. Hunt, B. Hveen, G. Warren and D. Forsberg.

Speedway trial for Long tonight

From Our Correspondent

LONDON, Thursday. — Henry Long, the South African finalist in the world speedway championship at Wembley next week, is to be given an opportunity of getting the feel of that track in a special event at Wembley tonight.

Long's fellow finalists, Brian Crutcher and Derek Close, ride in the second division and do not normally appear at Wembley, while Arthur Forrest of Bradford and Long himself, though both first division men, have had little or no experience of the Wembley track this season.

Long did not return to England until after his Manchester team, Belle Vue, had paid their first league visit to Wembley and has not ridden there this year at all. These four riders, therefore, have been invited to appear in one race only at Wembley tonight in order to give themselves an opportunity of trying out the atmosphere of that big stadium in readiness for the main event.

Long best "outsider" in world speedway final

Wednesday Sept. 17 1952

From Our Correspondent

London, Wednesday.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN CHAMPION, Henry Long, should be able early on to estimate his chances of winning the world speedway championship at Wembley tomorrow for three of his five races are scheduled for the first half of the meeting.

Of the 20 races Long rides in heats 3, 8, 10, 13 and 19 and in three of them he clashes with a highly fancied candidate. It would have been better for his chances had he met all three in a single race.

Long's first race is a "League of Nations" heat for two riders opposing him will be the Australian J. Young, and D. Forsberg, a Swede. Young is the reigning champion and it will be a great surprise if he loses to Long.

Long is capable of winning heat 8 from the Australian test star Arthur Payne, the latest England sensation Dick Bradley and the unpredictable Wembley rider

Bob Oakley, but in heat 10 he will probably play second fiddle to the 1950 champion and local Wembley star Fred Williams.

LAST-HEAT SCRAMBLE

"Split" Waterman will be riding with an injured knee in heat 13. A fit Waterman would win but in the circumstances Long has a distinct advantage. Long's last ride brings him up against the teenage cyclone Ronnie Moore, a popular tip with the prophets. It will be the last race for each of them and, particularly in the case of Moore it may be a desperate scramble for vital points.

Long should score about 10 of his possible 15 points—a total

which may make him about sixth in the list of 16 riders. Although he is not tipped to carry off top honours no expert leaves Long's name out of the reckoning, while the London "Sunday Dispatch," sponsors of the competition, rate him as the biggest danger to the three most fancied riders, Williams, Moore and Young look the likely first three.

The ultimate winner will be earning money at the rate of £100 per minute, for each start is worth £3 10s, each point £5, and there is a top cash prize of £500, with £300 for the second and £200 for the third. A Wembley race averages 71 seconds.

All the 93,000 tickets have been sold and the meeting will be broadcast and televised. The awards will be presented by Field-Marshal Sir William Slim.



R. Moore.

Long makes bad start in world speedway but finishes sixth

From Our Correspondent

Friday Sept. 19 1952 London, Friday.

IT TOOK THE SOUTH AFRICAN RIDER, Henry Long, two races in which to warm up in the final of the world speedway championship at Wembley Stadium last night. By the time he had got the feel of the track, however, all Long's chances of winning speedway's biggest prize had gone and his final total of seven points for the night's racing left him in sixth position.

FATHER PLEASED

Long's father Alf, who also acts as his mechanic in the pits on these occasions, said last night that he knew his son was thrilled at having been one of the 16 riders battling before such a crowd for the world speedway title.

"It was one of the finest exhibitions of speedway racing I have ever seen," he added and he was proud his son had been able to take part in it.

Young had only a point to spare from Freddie Williams, the 1950 champion who finished second with 13 points reports Sapa-Reuter. Then came Bob Oakley with 12 and Ronnie Moore with 10 points.

MEASURE OF TRACK

After that, however, it was a different story. Long now had the measure of the track and chased Williams hard in his third race in which he fully deserved the two points he gained. Long might have won the next race in which he held the lead for two laps but in the last burst he was passed near the end by Arthur Forest.

In his last race he was passed only by the Australian teenage rider, Ronnie Moore, but by then the championship leaders had piled up too big a points lead to be affected by Long's performance. Finishing sixth Long was by no means disgraced for the standard of riding was higher than for many years.

Long's father Alf, who also acts as his mechanic in the pits on these occasions, said last night that he knew his son was thrilled at having been one of the 16 riders battling before such a crowd for the world speedway title.

Young had only a point to spare from Freddie Williams, the 1950 champion who finished second with 13 points reports Sapa-Reuter. Then came Bob Oakley with 12 and Ronnie Moore with 10 points.

Australian is Friday World Speedway King

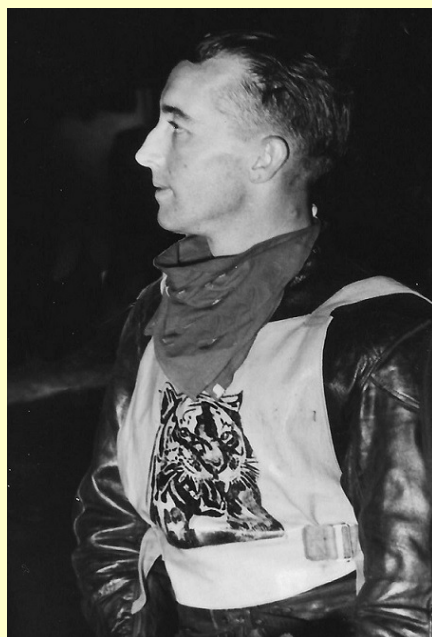
LONDON, Thursday. — Jack Young (West Ham and Australia) became the first rider to win the World Speedway Championship in successive years. Nearly 100,000 spectators saw him retain the title at Wembley Stadium to-night when he scored 14 out of a possible 15 points. Henry Long of South Africa was only able to gain seven points and came last.

Henry Long in his
Sheffield colours;

- in his Belle Vue
race jacket;

The Belle Vue
team, 1952;

World Final
turnout, Wembley
Sept.18 1952



Danny Forsberg SW, Basse Hveem NY, Henry Long SA, Trevor Redmond NZ.