

The Laurels, South Africa

Match reports of the 4 known S.African "Laurels"
speedway competitions, 1956, '57; 1992, '93.

1956: "Nygren seizes The Laurels." (Speedway News, London, 25 Jan 1956)

Olle Nygren pulled of yet another big event in winning the "1956 Laurels" at the **Pretoria** Speedway track. He won all five races in which he competed, scoring 15pts and his nearest rivals were Rune Sormander, champion of Sweden with 13pts, and Alan Hunt, captain of Birmingham, also with 13 points.

There were more than the usual number of crashes and two overseas riders had to retire from the competition. Dan Forsberg in his second outing crashed in the straight and skidded 20 yards on the cinders. He damaged a knee and late last night was still hobbling about with difficulty. Basse Hveem, who has won the championship of Norway and Europe on different tracks 28 times, crashed heavily and has a suspected fracture of a rib. His mishap was caused by a collision between Roy Bester and Sonny James when Bester rode over James's foot. As these two went down on a bend Hveem, who was travelling at great speed, tried to get between the fallen riders, but James's machine was in his way, with the result that he hurtled through the air and fell on the kerb. Alan Hunt lost ground in his third heat when he could not pass Toy Edwards and came in third. Later he beat Rune Sormander to come back in the running, but neither could overhaul Olle Nygren, and when the Pretoria Eagles star beat Sormander late in the programme he made sure of winning the trophy. The track dried out quickly, resulting in slower times, but the meeting as a whole was of a high standard, with each rider fighting hard for points.



Scorers: Olle Nygren 15, Rune Sormander and Alan Hunt 13, Neil Mortimer 11, Trevor Blokdyk and Toy Edwards 10, Doug Serrurier 9, Roy Hester and Sonny James 7, Toby Boshoff 6, Pat McKenzie 5, Harry Serrurier 4. Basse Hveem and Jimmy Scott 3, Charlie Branders 2, Cliff Raats and Theo Nel 1, and Dan Forsberg 0.

"Fiery Swede Olle Nygren, (left) is making them all sit up in South Africa where he is just about riding everybody else out of the picture. His latest success was at Pretoria where he outpaced a hot international field and collected the 1956 South African Laurels. Redmond says he will be a future world champion."

1957: "Briggs wins Laurels", Pretoria, Transvaal. (Sp.Star, London, 16 Mar. 1957)

Barry Briggs won "The Laurels" at **Pretoria** on February 22 with a fifteen point maximum. Runner-up was Trevor Redmond, who scored fourteen points (reports I. N. Taljaard). This was undoubtedly Redmond's best performance this season. It was only in the last heat that Redmond saw the title vanish from his grasp when Briggs beat him. Fastest time of the meeting was recorded by Barry Briggs with 59 seconds dead. Fastest time in the event last season was by Basse Hveem at 60.3 seconds. Nygren won the title last season.

Scorers: Barry Briggs 15, Trevor Redmond 14, Olle Nygren 13, Frank Johnson 10, Ron Genz 10, Ray Cresp 10, Howdy Byford 8, Trev Blocdyk 6, Dennis Newton 6, Howdy Cornell 6.

1992: "Shock Winner" from Ken Macleod in South Africa. (Sp.Star, London, 1 Feb. 1992)

Rye House reserve John Wainwright was the shock winner of the Springbok Scaffolding International Laurels meeting at the **Corobrik** circuit in Germiston after a night of upsets and superb racing. Wainwright had to beat Hungarian internationals Robert Nagy and Robert Csillik in a run-off to take the honours. Richard Knight, Nigel Leaver. Deon Prinsloo and South African Champion Warren Meier shared fourth place and Gary Havelock, despite being only two points behind the winner, managed only eighth place. Knight set the pattern for the evening when he beat Havelock in the first race. Wainwright and Prinsloo notched two wins apiece but then came the first real upset when Csillik defeated Knight. Nagy, who had bent the forks of his bike in a multiple crash in Heat 3 involving all four riders and was forced to miss a ride, kept his chances alive with two wins. Leaver also scored two wins in succession, one of them at Havelock's expense.

After victories from Knight and Csillik came a brilliant ride by Meier to win Heat 13 ahead of Leaver and Csillik. Nagy, Knight, Havelock, Meier and Csillik won the following heats before Prinsloo prevailed in a dramatic Heat 19 which saw Knight, out on Meier's spare bike, finish last. Nagy sealed a fighting comeback by heading Havelock in the final race after a tremendous battle in which they swapped places from start to finish.

Scorers: J.Wainwright 12, R.Nagy 12, R.Csillik 12 (after run-off), W.Meier 11, R.Knight 11, D.Prinsloo 11, N.Leaver 11, G.Havelock 10, N.Naude 6, C.Stonehewer 5, G.Prommel 4, G.Foley 4, R.Tilbury 3, J.Martin 3, I.Van Niekerk 2, D.Baldwin 2, I.Richter 1, R.Duke 0, K.Richter 0.

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1993: "Fine Win for Nagy in South Africa." (Sp.Star, London, 13 Feb.1993)

Robert Nagy scored a brilliant win in the Lazer Helmets Laurels meeting at **Corobrik** in Germiston at the weekend, - postponed twice due to heavy rain - , when he romped to a maximum, writes Ken Macleod. Deon Prinsloo put in a hard-fought, workmanlike performance to finish runner-up and World Champion Gary Havelock took third ahead of Jozsef Petrikovics by virtue of having more heat wins.

Glasgow's Nagy signalled his intentions from the off when he took early leader Warren Meier and held off a hard challenge from Chris Louis in Heat 1. Prinsloo followed suit in Heat 2, passing early leader Petrikovics. Havelock scored an easy win in his opening ride, pulling clear of the battle for second place between Scott Lamb and Denzil Kent (riding with sternum and rib injuries). Claus Jakobsen led home Franz Leitner in Heat 4 after a superb tussle. Prinsloo took his second win after a hard battle with Leitner, Petrikovics won Heat 6 and Havelock Heat 7 after a race-long challenge from Louis. Kent launched an early challenge on Nagy in Heat 8 but the Hungarian held him off to his second victory. Petrikovics scored a sensational win over Havelock, beating him to the finish line by a tyre's width after the World Champion launched a late onslaught. Win number three for Prinsloo came in Heat 10 ahead of Kent, Louis scored an easy Heat 11 victory and Nagy notched his hat-trick after a fierce Leitner challenge. After his fourth victory, Nagy looked to the final heat to clinch the title. He faced challengers Prinsloo and Havelock but made no mistake from the tapes to finish unbeaten.

Scorers: R.Nagy 15, D.Prinsloo 13, G.Havelock 12, J.Petrikovics 12, F.Leitner 11, C.Louis 10, D.Kent 9, W.Meier 8, C.Jakobsen 8, S.Lamb 7, M.Theobald 5, N.Naude 3, K.Lechky 2, R.Duke 2, L.Varga 1, A.Szilagyi 1, I. v. Niekerk 1, G.Foley 0

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