

The 2007 NG Road Racing Season Review

The full 3006 word story.....

"Bevan in '07 championship heaven"

After coming close to the overall NG Road Racing Club title a couple of times when he rode his 996 Ducati, Phil Bevan finally grabbed the much coveted top title this year... 7 years after taking his first NG crown...the 2001 Sound of Thunder. The former UK BMX Team rider, Bevan now on the Team STP GSXR 1000 Suzuki took the **Fraser's of Gloucester Club Championship Open** with, in fact one round still to spare. Early on in the season though, that has seen us travel through seven different venues Bevan was not the pacesetter. Gary Teague it was who kicked off the year on form with his now 6 year-old Teague Tuning Suzuki before having to hand over the lead due to work commitments. Paul Allen on the Slipstream R1 and Darren Neal with his new for '07 blade group CBR RR then looked set to fight it out as we hit mid season... with Bevan languishing down in 6th in the points standings. However the 38 year-old from Cardiff was about to make his presence felt by taking the next 7 race wins on the bounce eventually taking over the series lead at his beloved home circuit of Pembrey. A frustrated Darren Neal was sat back in Swindon after being unable to get time off work.

When everyone left the final Thruxton meeting in September after the now traditional end of year gig by Darren Neal's band Nova the look back on the year started, and almost to a man agreed it had been one of the best for years.

A lot of young riders have come through the Mini-Moto ranks over the last few seasons and this year it was the turn of 12 year old Corey Lewis to make the jump up to the **NG Formula 125** on his NW Powerpoint Aprilia. Corey only had 3 non-podium finishes and that series consistency saw him reel in early season top men Josh Murdoch and Adam Shelton, although Josh and Adam gave Corey a bit of help. Josh had his Aprilia suffer a few mechanicals, notably at Brands with no points all weekend and Adam suffered an off-road training injury to his wrist which put him out for a couple of rounds, leaving the door wide open for Corey to take advantage.

Sticking with the 125's but now the **DTR Racing Spares 125 GP** series and it was a head to head between Roo Cotton on the DTR TZ and Freddie Nickless on his Tri State RS. The chase went right down to the final round with Freddie finally getting the nod. Experience was on Roo's side as the 23 year old won the series in 2003 and finished runner-up to Daniel Cooper in 2002. He drew on all that experience to put pressure on young Freddie at Thruxton final round decider. Nickless's Honda cracked a cylinder head in the mornings qualifier and although the bike was back together for the final, Freddie was on the back row of the grid and the bike not in a full state of tune. Cotton set about his job and along with Jay Lewis dragged away from the opposition. Lewis had the pace to take the race and secure third in the title chase with Cotton second. It was an agonising wait for Nickless's team as they waited for him to come through..... in 9th..... but those points were just enough to take the DTR 125 crown..... by one point !.

The **Dara Brady Racing 400cc** class has gone through some troubled times this year with pre-season favourites Chay Newton and Steve Jones not completing the year. Jones sold his TZ and hung up his leathers mid season after a troubled year with saw him loose his father to illness. "Rocket" Ron was an ever-present figure with the spanners around Steve's bike and the paddock lost a great character. Chay on the other hand suffered almost endless mechanical failures and unfortunate meeting with circuit tarmac and had to draw his season to an early end with a bad arm injury. That left the was open for a new name on the trophy, and early on Tony Davies was setting the pace, but it was former streetstock champion Paul Lumb on his newly acquired Ken White/AK 2 stroke TZ 250 that came through. Lumb had to wait until round 14 to rack up his first win but with a strong run of consistent top three finishes took the class after nearest rival Russell Hynes crashed out at Pembrey.

George White 600cc class new boy Rich Bearcroft surprised many this year with his performances on the new GSXR600. The 2006 overall champ from the Formula 400 was really up for his new challenge in the bigger class and stated that top 5 in his first year on the 6 was his target. So three race wins and runner-up spot in the title chase was an eye opener for the class regulars, and a warning for next year. Charlie Bishop though on his PBM/Phoenix R6 had things pretty much under control but still had to ride very hard to keep the good results flowing, eventually taking the title ahead of Bearcroft and more youngsters Dean Jones and Jonathon Dickson.

2005 Powerbike champion Joe Symonds was not a happy man during his '06 title defending season and wanted to make amends this year. Symonds on his R1 set about regaining that **Phoenix Powerbike** crown. Paul Allen on the Slipstream R1 made the running in the early rounds until one or two big crashes put paid to his progress. That left Symonds and Phil Bevan to duke it out toe to toe with the final Thruxton showdown going the way of Symonds. Beva did all he could, but with Malcolm Ashley (Team MAR) and Pete Jennings (Crescent Suzuki) turning up at Thruxton and Bevans only hope of the title being a race win he was up against it from the word go. A strong third for Bevan but a safe ride around for Symonds equalled the series win.

The **A and R Racing Formula 400** was another class that went down to the final race with 2006 series runner-up Lee Tyack and the experienced Tony Meredith still in the frame. Tyack was all set to wrap up the class one meeting earlier at Pembrey but an inspired tyre choice by Meredith on his TM Racing ZXR 400 saw him take the fight to Thruxton. Tyack admitted that the pressure

was getting to him, especially after his No1 motor blew at that Pembrey meeting. So Thruxton saw the top two joined by Pete Thomson (T-Sport) and Andy and Steve Palmer (Raven Performance). Meredith had to win, but Chris Beverley soon put a stop to any thoughts that that might happen as he left the field for dead. Tyack tracked Meredith in the early stages... and even put a pass on him later in the race to cross the line relieved and the champion. His keep fit race regime was to end that night as the drink flowed and a large kebab was consumed !.

Some of the best racing of the year came in the **Team Spidey Sound of Thunder**. With a variety of bikes on the grid the sound was as good as the sight. Ducati's 998, 999 and even 1098, mixed it with Aprilia Factory Milles and 675 Triumphs, throw in a few SP1's and TL1000 along with Ricky Ross's Benelli Tornado and I think you get the picture. After early season favourite Mark Compton was ruled out after (yet another!) big accident Chris Richardson saw his chance on the blindingly quick Motorapido/Dirty dealer 999 Ducati as he put a points gap on his rivals. Steve Tomes took a hat trick of mid season wins on the RLR Motorsport 675 but as a non-championship regular Richardson was happy to pick up solid points. Graham Goodyear on his new 1098 and 2005 champ Andy Peck with his Spiderman Aprilia were Richardson's main rivals and in the later few races had a series of wheel to wheel dices.... But by then Richardson's title was secure and you could see his broad grin getting bigger and bigger as he enjoyed the close racing. His biggest grin came at Pembrey round 15. It was his 49th birthday and the injured mark Compton snuck down onto the grid prior to the race with a 6 foot tall cardboard cut out of a scantily clad telefonica movistar grid girl. She stood there waiting as Chris rolled down to take his pole position.....It really was a weekend to remember. And if there is any class that enjoys it's racing it's the Thunder boys.

Ducati finally broke the SV650 Suzuki grip on the **Front Row Motorcycles Mini Twins** class this year as Nigel Wright on his all black twpracing/Olly Moore 800SS Ducati took the crown. Nigel suffered though at the hands of startline jump start judges on a number occasions....but somehow that only seemed to add spice to the races.....even if Nigel (understandably) got a little irked at the situation. The reason for the startline infringements was the nature on the Ducati clutch.... When it wants to go it has to go !. However it was Nigel's racing exploits that eventually came out on top and the final championship table tells the story. A 100% finish record with 5 wins and never out on the top 4 as he got the better of Max Watson, Eddie Grace, Ray Bentley and the rest of the Suzuki SV challengers.

The **Bike Sport News Junior R6 cup** was launched by Rob McElnea last November, and although numbers on the grid for this unique racing opportunity were a little down on expected the racing was far closer that we could have ever predicted. Charlie Bishop and Jonathon Dickson put on wheel to wheel and elbow to elbow action at almost every outing. Bishop though almost always seemed to just get the upper hand when the flag came out with Dickson just dipping out. So the statistic Bishop 10 wins v Dickson 5 with the one other going to Aaron Ridewood, doesn't tell the full story..... You had to be there to witness how close it was. Ridewoods win though was one of the highlights. Aaron looked destined to be supporting cast and perennial third-man with 11 3rd placings from 16 rounds. However in the wet at Pembrey Aaron mastered the tricky conditions with the control Pirelli Diablo Corsa III tyre to make his mark and take the win and returned to the paddock close to tears... but with a very big grin. So the series prize of a Virgin Yamaha supplied and prepared bike went to PBM/Phoenix rider Charlie Bishop.

Chris Beverley had a first season to remember as he took the win in all but 2 of the 16 rounds of the **Century 200 400cc Streetstock** series on his France and Li Asia CBR 400 Honda. Only Adam Molloy on his RGV250 and Lee Newitt on the Two Wheel Technics ZXR took wins apart from Beverley..... and that was only because he DNF'dfrom the lead on those races. Chris not just won the races and set new lap records most times out, but won in some cases by over 20 seconds and on a couple by over 30 seconds. I am sure that the opposition are glad that he is looking at a new challenge for 2008. Newitt must be pleased with his strong runner-up spot though after finishing 6th last season taking 10 race runner-up race positions this year.

Metzeler Racetec took over the backing of the Streetstock series this year and the competition logistics team were present at each meeting to provide riders with the series control tyre. The new rules really have given us some close racing. In the **700cc Metzeler Racetec** class the experience of Stuart Holloway on the Protint UK GSXR 600 told as he adapted to the new tyre very quickly, and although his bike was an old K1 model the combination really worked well. Another experienced rider Mark Russell started the season well but a lack of points in the second half of the season allowed others to come through. Two newcomers Andy Hayes and Mark Long saw this as an opportunity to make a name for themselves, and Hayes especially on the Team MLF R6 leaned a lot from racing at close quarters with Holloway. Holloway lifted the crown in what looks like relaxed fashion with 10 wins but Hayes, Long and Adam Parker kept him on his toes.

The **1300cc Metzeler Racetec** class saw three riders battle most season. Lee Keeble, Dan Kift and Les Vallender were away at the front at most races and all pretty evenly matched with Keeble and Vallender on R1's whilst Kift had a new mount for '07 in the shape of a Protint UK CBR 1000RR. It looked like these three, who all had a turn at the top of the points table would take the fight to the end of the year, but at Pembrey Vallender was sidelined with a shoulder injury. Kift had had a good mid season run and had eeked out a slight advantage and Keeble knew that he had to regroup and get back on top form. Only a straight series of wins to the end of the year would do if Keeble was to get the series lead back. Kift is a very experienced rider and campaigned a TZ 250 at national level for many seasons, but Keeble kept pegging the points back. The two went into Thruxton with just six points between them and Keeble was in no mood to let it slip away from him again. Kift on a below par CBR after his Snetterton crash rode the wheels off the bike to pile on the pressure and took the race win.....however Keeble knew second behind Dan was enough and duly took that runner up spot and the with it the title.

Richard and Michael Swift the 2006 **Open CSC Sidecar** champions title defence didn't start well...five rounds in and no points. That allowed Michael Lines and Mike Aylot to grab a commanding lead in the Open on the F2 outfit as they got the better of all the big outfits. Paul Riley and Roy Farmer on the Somerset Superbikes outfit was the only big outfit making an impact on the little Honda. However by round 6 the gremlins that were pestering the Swifts was tracked down to a cam shaft sensor... the change in machine fortune though coincided with Michael Swift being hospitalised with a shoulder operation. First Shellie Smithies and then Kees Endevelde deputised on the SFB LCR Suzuki as the team piled up 4 wins 4 runner-up sports and a couple of thirds in the rounds that were left to finally take the **CSC Open Sidecar** title for a second time. Rumour has it though that a hoped move to world competition has been shelved along with any chance of racing in 2008.... The money has simply run out for the SFB team in a year that cost in the region of £50,000 plus....ouch !.

It was that Lines/Aylot crew on the Steam and Gleam Shelbourne F2 600 Honda that took the **CSC F2 Sidecar** crown though in very impressive style winning 7 rounds and beating off the challenge from Nick Falconer and Shaun Parker. The Lines/Aylot outfit benefited from a much better power to weight ratio than the previous season as driver Michael Lines shed 8 stones in body weight in his new regime over the winter....which could be when the pairing made some of the best starts of any crew, invariably being first to turn one. They also have the distinction of finishing second in the Open series, the best ever performance by an F2 outfit, as week in week out they bettered most of the bigger outfits.

Class dominance in your first year in the sport doesn't usually happen but Chris Beverley's record in the **Louigi Moto 400cc Newcomers** reads as follows....7 starts 7 wins.... 3 lap records and 90 points clear of his nearest rival. Chris on the France and Li Asia trading CBR400 Honda also picked up the rider of the meeting award at Cadwell Park. Rumour has it there will be a switch to the 600 class in '08. Kerry Blyth, Lee Newitt, Anthony Mulrine and Jonathon Stenning had no answer to Beverley's riding.

The **Steve Lynham/Gary Vardy Open Newcomers** class was in total contrast to the small class very tight. So tight in fact that even after the end of the race the mathematicians had to check and double check. Adrian Shaw went into the final round knowing third place would give him the class, but whilst in third and exiting Hatchets Hairpin at Pembrey the front end on his ZX10 reared up... smacked him in the face.... and knocked the ignition off.... His race was over. That left David Thomson, Joshua Day and Andy Hayes in the frame. They all crossed the line less than 1.5 seconds apart with Mark Long also in the pack. The final points say Thomson on his Alive Computers ZX6R 104 points...Day 103... and Hayes 102... with the luckless Shaw back on 89. There were so many different permutations of ifs and buts that night, the most crazy being that if Andy Hayes hadn't been passed by Mark Long by 0.35 of a second on the run out of the final corner then the extra 3 points would have given him the series. He effectively lost a 7 race series by half a bike length. However justice was done and Thomson who had more race wins in the year anyway deservedly took the win.

With already talk of who is doing what in 2008 we look forward to the Awards presentations in November.... Followed by the long winter nights preparing for next year..... I for one can't wait

Russ Gardner

The 2007 NG Road Racing Season Review

The in brief 738 word version !.....

16 championship rounds over 9 race weekends at 7 different circuits during 2007, that was the challenge set before the riders, and one that was sure to throw up the best all round riders in each on the 17 championship classes.

Silverstone, Pembrey, Darley Moor, Cadwell, Brands, Snetterton and Thruxton were the venues starting in March going through to September.

After many years Ducati mounted, the switch to the Team STP Bevan Trackdays GSX-R 1000 Suzuki finally brought Phil Bevan the clubs main title, the **Fraser's of Gloucester Open**, beating rivals Joe Symonds, and Darren Neal along with early season pace setter Paul Allen.

Teenage sensation Freddie Nickless held off the challenge from the more experienced Roo Cotton on his Tri State Motorcycles RS125 Honda in the **DTR Racing Spares 125cc GP** series. Whilst in the NG Formula 125 class we saw 12 year old Corey Lewis crowned champ over Josh Murdoch, whose run of bad luck certainly dented his challenge.

Paul Lumb switched from a streetstock 250 Aprilia to a full-blown attack on the **Dara Brady 250 GP** class on a TZ 250 backed by Ken White and AK 2-stroke in '07. After a steady start to the year he improved round on round as he found his feet on the TZ, eventually taking the series by the scruff of the neck at Pembrey with a double win to secure the crown. Pre season 250 hot-tip Chay Newton had a season to forget with incident and accident dogging his year.

Charlie Bishop took both the **George White 600cc** and **Bike Sport News Junior R6** cup titles on a pair of R6 Yamaha's in Paulton Builders/Phoenix backed bikes. Rich Bearcroft was the main challenger in the 600cc whilst in the R6 Cup Jonathon Dickson made him fight till the end after some very spirited rides.

Joe Symonds regained the **Phoenix Powerbike** title that he last won in 2005 on his JC Symonds R1 beating off the challenge from Phil Bevan, Darren Neal and Gary Teague. Symonds had had an awful title defense in '06 saw was doubly happy to get the crown back this year.

Lee Tyack took his Lynham/Vardy FZR 400 Yamaha to glory in the **A and R Racing Formula 400** after an anxious last few races that saw misfortune seem to follow him, allowing Tony Meredith to keep the pressure on. A good ride at Thruxton though saw Tyack make the title safe.

The Alide 999 Ducati with Chris Richardson went one better in '07 to take the **Team Spidey Sound of Thunder** with still 3 rounds still to go despite a spirited late season charge from Andy Peck and Graham Goodyear. Whilst sticking with the twins, this time the **Front Row Motorcycles Mini Twins** Nigel Wright made the series his own on the 800SS TWP Racing/Olly Moore Ducati with a 100% finish record and never out of the top 4.

The **Century 2000 400cc Streetstock** Chris Beverley really staked his claim with 14 wins from the 16 rounds...the 2 he didn't finish on the France and Li Asia CBR 400 were dnf's.... and from the lead of each race. The **Metzeler Racetec 700cc Streetstock** was a rout early season, by Protint UK GSXR 600 rider Stuart Holloway amassing a good lead, with the second half of the year developing his new bike comfortable in his points lead. Whilst in the 1300 class Dan Kift and Lee Keeble battled season long with just 1 point separating them at the end of the year with Keeble on his CTS R1 Yamaha having that slender advantage.

The **CSC Racing Sidecar** series saw Team SFB LCR Suzuki pair Richard and Michael Swift retain their crown before announcing their retirement at Thruxton. They will concentrate on helping some of the up and coming crews. Michael Lines and Mike Aylott grabbed a highly creditable open class runner-up spot on their F2 outfit (the best ever result for an F2 in the Open) as well as the overall Formula 2 crown.

The year's top newcomers were Chris Beverley, who ended the year unbeaten in the **Louigi Moto 400** dominating on his France and Li Asia 400 Honda. In the **Steve Lynham/Gary Vardy Open Newcomers** class though it was a very even affair with the top three separated by just two points in the final table with David Thomson and his ZX6R Alive Computers Kawasaki taking it by that smallest of margins.

Russ Gardner

The 2007 NG Road Racing Season Review Or.... in a 326 word nutshell !.....

16 championship rounds over 9 race weekends at 7 different circuits during 2007, that was the challenge set before the riders, and one that was sure to throw up the best all round riders in each on the 17 championship classes.

Silverstone, Pembrey, Darley Moor, Cadwell, Brands, Snetterton and Thruxton were the venues starting in March going through to September.

Phil Bevan came out top in the big **Fraser's Open** class with his STP Suzuki, with the Phoenix Powerbikes going the way of Joe Symonds on the JC Symonds R1. Charlie Bishop bagged himself two classes as he won both the **George White 600cc** and the **Bike Sport News Junior R6 Cup** on PBM Phoenix Yamaha's. Lee Tyack overcame end of year nerves to lift the A and R Racing F400 on his Lynham/Vardy FZR. The **DTR 125 GP** went to Freddie Nickless and his Tri State RS125, with 12 year-old Corey Lewis lifting the **NG Formula 125** aboard the NW Powerpoint Aprilia.

Chris Richardson's 999 Alide Plant Ducati outpaced his rival in the **Team Spidey Sound of Thunder**, while in the Front Row Motorcycles Mini Twins Nigel Wright proved that you don't need an SV650 for success as he took his Twpracing/Ollie Moore 800SS Ducati to the crown.

Chris Beverley took his France and Li Asia 400 Honda to the **Century 2000 400 Streetstocks**, whilst Stuart Holloway and Lee Keeble held aloft the 700 and 1300cc **Metzeler Racetec** crowns come seasons end.

Team SFB LCR Suzuki crew Richard and Michel Swift retained the **CSC Racing Sidecar** Open class title that they won in '06, whilst the F2 division was dominated by Michael Lines and Mike Aylott on the Steam and Gleam Shellbourne Honda.

The year's top newcomers were Chris Beverley, in the **Louigi Moto 400** on his France and Li Asia 400 Honda and in the **Steve Lynham/Gary Vardy Open Newcomers** class it was a David Thomson and his ZX6R Alive Computers Kawasaki taking it.

Russ Gardner