



Shoptorque

Classic Motorcycle Club of Natal

Founded February 1981

April 2025

Chairman's Chatter

Greetings to all our members and your families.

Our First quarter is now up, as we head into Autumn, and begin to enjoy the cooler, less humid and hopefully drier weather that makes biking in KZN and South Africa such a delight! The 2025 iToo D-J regularity rally was held in mid March. Thankfully the route was largely dry and cool. Well done to every entrant who completed the course. Special congratulations to the CMCN members who finished and to those who took home silverware. As a Club we did really well on the trophy winning front, claiming 9 trophies in total!!

Doug Watson – Our highest placed member came 11th overall.

Richard Hyson won the Forte Velvet trophy for motorcycles over 500cc and the Ian Brodie Trophy for being the youngest rider to complete the course

Hans Coertse, and his daughter Camilla Hyson won the Harley Davidson Trophy – for Side Car Combinations and the Duckhams Trophy for the oldest motorcycle to complete the course.

Roellof (Piet) Coertse won the Cyril Richmond Trophy for best performance on a motorcycle between 351 and 500cc and the BMW Trophy

Terry Chesterton won the Valvoline Trophy for the best performance on a motorcycle between 251 and 350cc

Hennie De Jager won the Tony Woodley Trophy for the best performance on a Triumph Motorcycle.

Clifford Le Roux won the Angelo Bernadi Trophy for the oldest rider to complete the course. (He is 87)

We have our Century Run scheduled for slightly later this year, due to the Easter weekend. We look forward to good club participation, and a fun day for all who are able to come along and ride. More details to follow.

This year's Framgram Natal Classic is well under way. Our dedicated rally Committee has been busy behind the scenes getting things prepared and finalised. As we have opened this event up to classic cars as well, we are anticipating a bumper turn out, and an awesome event where bike and car enthusiasts can meet and share the memorable countryside together, as well as providing a variety of machines for spectators to view along the route, and at lunch / tea stops.

If you haven't entered as yet, the dates are the 6th and 7th of June. Entry forms are on our face book page, as well as website.

A reminder to all our members, as an incentive to members to enter rallies, the Club will sponsor 50% of the rally entry fee if you wish to claim this.

For any D-J entrants who may wish to make use of this, it's not too late. Please submit your details to Marcia, and we will make an eft payment to your account.

Thank you to everyone who brings bikes along to the club for our "Bikes on Show" each month. We appreciate your efforts to get your bikes cleaned and down to the Club to display. Please continue to bring them along, it is always terrific to see what is on display, and hear some stories about the restoration process or acquisition process that went into each bike. Safe riding to you all.

Jayson



Vice Chairman Derek Pirie at the start of his amazing 33rd DJ Motorcycle Rally. Finishing a very respectable 35th place despite numerous stops to change sparkplugs

CLUB CONTACT DETAILS:

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Chairmans Chatter
Bike of the month categories
Editorial
Competitions
SAVVA Competition Licence
SAVVA Dating

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Banking Details:

Banking Details: Standard Bank Bluff

Banking Code: 051001

Account No 05-155-629-4

New Members:

We welcome new members: Edwin White, Camila Hyson, Harold Barnes, Via Coetzee, Quintin Snel, Dave Cobbledick. We trust you will have an enjoyable and long association with the Club.

Those We Remember:

Liz Mathews, Brian Botes our sincere condolences to the family.

Bike of the Month Competition Categories

January:	Best of British including best AJS / Matchless
February:	Golden Oldies (Dec 1936) & Golden Years (1937- 1945) Trophy
March:	Day of the Rising Sun
April:	BMW – Dave Turnbull Trophy
May:	Tiddlers & Scooters
June:	Classic Bikes (1946 – 1995)
July:	Concourse Competition
August:	Post-Classic (1996 – 2010)
September:	European – including Spain, Holland, France, Belgium, Germany (excl BMW), Italy, Czechoslovakia and Russia
October:	Racing Bike & Classic Off Road
November:	Modern (2011 – present day)
December:	AGM – No Competition

Bike of the Month Competition Guidelines:

Members are reminded that to qualify for the competitions:

They must be a fully paid up member.

The bike entered in the competition must be owned by them.

The bike must comply with the category entered.

The bike must be a runner.

If a non-runner is entered then it will be for display only.

The same conditions listed above apply to the Concourse Competition.

Our sincere thanks to Paul Ward of Startline for his very generous sponsorship of prize money.

The Opinions expressed in Shop Torque are not necessarily those of the Chairman, Editor, The Committee or other contributors

Editorial

Greetings Everyone

Looking at the general condition of motorcycles sales globally it appears new motorcycle sales are on the downward slope. This is probably not surprising given the state of the global and political economies. Many countries are experiencing a slowing economy with disposable income becoming very tight. China's economy is said to be slowing and this will have some serious knock on effects.

We see that the German power house of car manufacturing could be in serious trouble. VW, who delivers a fair share to the German economy is starting to wobble. Whereas China used to be a net importer of German cars like VW, BMW and Mercedes, they have now becoming a net exporter of their own Chinese made cars. Even on the South African market we see customers switching from German made cars to buying Chinese cars. This will likely have a similar effect on German motorcycle sales such a BMW where buyers will opt for a cheaper brand. Already a few BMW showrooms have closed down. We see further dismal news of not only Harley Davidson but also KTM Motorcycles struggling to survive. Seemingly small capacity motorcycles used for commercial activities are keeping the bigger manufacturers alive.

Research is showing that the younger generation is buying the motorcycles that their parents rode back in the 70's and 80's. On top of their list, amongst other Japanese bikes, is the Kawasaki KZ 1000. I guess as generations roll on, so do their perception of what they want to collect. Whereas at one point a 650cc British bike would be highly sort after by collectors now it's the Japanese superbikes of the 70's and 80's. Even smaller capacity Japanese bikes are in demand. Let's face it today's youth would far rather have a Yamaha DT175cc that their parents rode back in the day than a BSA Bantam that they have absolutely no connection with whatsoever. Even the 50cc 'Buzz Bikes' are top of the list for collectors. Sidecar sales are up. Ageing bikers need a third wheel and extreme sports like riding around the bush on an off road bike attached to a sidecar is certainly appealing

So where does this leave us as a club. Well I would say we are definitely heading in the best direction that we can go and that is to include classic bikes of all makes and years. I can remember a time in the club where Japanese bikes were categorized as 'Jap Scrap' (later changed to a more appealing description of 'Rice Burner') and they were renegaded to the back of the club house. The 'True Blue Park' was reserved for 'proper' classic bikes from Britain, Europe and America. How times have changed, and our best strategy is simply to move with the times.

On a lighter note. Years ago I walked up to an old guy standing next to his car and asked him what size motor he had in his car. He replied 12 volts. Puzzled I repeated 12 volts? Yes he said the starter motor is 12 volts but if you want to know what size engine is in my car then it's a 1500cc. He went on... in a car you get a petrol engine and an electric starter motor. Not a petrol motor and an electric starter engine. In the electrical dept you will find motors. In the mechanical dept you will find engines.

John Booth Editor. Keeping the wheels turning.

ELIZABETH “LIZ” MATHEWS



Born in January 1949 in Gwelo after her parents emigrated to Rhodesia after the war. She Lived in Gwelo until 1953 then moved to Salisbury, to a small government house in Braeside, as her father was working as a Civil Engineer for the Rhodesian Government.

She Attended Nettleton Junior School in Braeside ... her mother was the school secretary at Nettleton for 19 years so had to work hard! Family moved to a flat in Baines Avenue in Salisbury in 1960 and Liz started high school at Girls High School, finishing with GCE Matric in 1965.

She worked for many years at one of the biggest liquor outlets at the time called Phillips Central Cellars in the city center. She met Michael in 1967 and married on 1 st February 1969 – they celebrated their 55th anniversary in 2024. In 1980 they moved with their children Lisa and Simon to South Africa and purchased their house on Marine Drive in 1981, where they lived up to the present day.

Liz worked at Dorbyl Marine in the harbor for a while then gave up work and became a housewife. By this stage Michael was very involved with the bike club and Liz started by helping him and then took over all of his duties in running the club.

Liz's father was a keen stamp collector and when he died she took over his collections and became very interested in stamps. Becoming a member of the KZN Philatelic Society and ultimately responsible for the SPS section. Both clubs were very important to her and she really loved being involved, even though sometimes she may not have shown it!

A very sad loss for our club. My thanks to Bridget for sending this to me, Liz was without doubt one of the greats in our club. Ed

Vintage Motorcycle Show October 2025

A Vintage / Classic motorcycle show is planned for October 25 at St Agnes church Kloof. This is a joint venture between the church and our club. There will also be a Mods and Rockers fashion show organized by fashion designer Karen Monk Klijnstra. Karen's late father Jimmy Monk was a long term member of our club. We see this as an excellent opportunity to display our motorcycles, get our club known, attract new membership and make some money for the club. More details will be available in the coming months and we ask members to support this initiative.

The church will get the permissions to host the show, run the ticket sales and arrange the parking. The club members will bring their bikes and set up the various displays. There will be a club table to attract any potential new members.

During the event Karen will hold a Mods and Rockers fashion show. The entrance to the both the fashion show and the motorcycle show will be R50 per person this is a flat rate, no pensioner discount. Children under 12 will get in free. The money from the ticket sales will be shared between the church, the club and the fashion organizer. We need your support by bringing your motorcycle on the day. We want a spectacular show and our club to shine.

There will be a 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes for best display. So get your thinking caps on and design a superb display. This could be a military display, a racing bike display, 50cc buzz bike display, a two stroke display or any other motorcycle related display. This competition is open to all club members and their immediate families. The public will vote so there is no bias and the top three who score the most number of votes counted will be the winners. Each display will be given a number so that the public can vote accordingly. We want people to come from all over the country to a show to be remembered.

The church will be opened on Friday 24th October and at 7am on the Saturday for members to bring in their motorcycles and the show will start at 9am. Therefore all displays must be done by 9am. The winners of the displays will be announced at 2pm and the show will end at 3pm. In the coming months please let a committee member know if you want to enter the display competition or you are just bringing a few motorcycles to go on show. Marcia has a list, she will then allocate you a display number if you are entering the display competition. Please if possible put on a write up on your motorcycle or display. People love to read the history or fascinating facts about your bike. More information to follow.



Some Mods back in the day

Motorcycles at the VCC Kloof

The VCC Car Club members were intrigued by the interesting display of motorcycles from all years as displayed by our club members at their regular club meet:



DJ Motorcycle Rally 2025

A very wet start to this year's DJ, but our sincere congratulations to all those brave rides who entered whether a finisher or not. Hard luck to those who didn't start or had to pull out. There will be a next time. Please see the results below

2025 Durban to Johannesburg RALLY

Position	Name	Comp No	Day 1	Day 2	Final
1	GAVINWALTON	15	151	138	289
2	ADRIANHOLLIS	70	179	149	328
3	MARTINKAISER	43	289	122	411
4	MIKEVENABLES	18	285	188	473
5	RYANDUNCAN	13	332	143	475
6	KEVINWALTON	14	319	267	586
7	MIKEWARD	81	460	163	623
8	GRAHAMKENDALL	69	372	290	662
9	RYANVAN HEERDEN	45	342	321	663
10	JUSTINSEAGER	32	417	296	713
11	DOUGLASWATSON	57	562	283	845
12	DAVIDPITCHFORD	79	477	385	862
13	ROELLOF(PIET)COERTSE	67	426	464	890
14	HANSCOERTSE	4	370	542	912
15	JUSTINLANGLEY	31	646	315	961
16	KEITHKENDALL	68	670	294	964
17	GERHARDBOTHMA	25	491	577	1068
18	MARKPALMER	37	755	324	1079
19	RICHARDHYSON	66	898	201	1099
20	GAVINHOLLIS	71	518	871	1389
21	TIMHAMMERICH	63	861	559	1420
22	HENDRIK PETRUSDE JAGER	64	1253	388	1641
23	KEVINKOHLER	42	463	1391	1854
24	TERENCECHESTERTON	60	1007	988	1995
25	JOHANFLEISCHER	51	1504	606	2110
26	ANDREOTTO	35	1607	530	2137
27	BENITAPALMER	36	1411	749	2160
28	MARKMACLEOD	30	1244	974	2218
29	LESLIE GLENNYOUNGMAN	77	1192	1042	2234
30	GARY ALBERTBARNES	33	1412	1031	2443
31	TREVORBINDER	24	2113	459	2572
32	ANDRE O'NEILOTTO	34	2025	696	2721
33	BILLYTHOMAS	11	1596	1194	2790
34	GAVINYOUNGMAN	78	1592	1489	3081

34	SAVINTOUNGMAN				
35	DEREKPIRIE	59	2367	876	3243
36	DETLEVBORNER	17	2988	627	3615
37	BRIANBONTEKONING	53	3365	576	3941
38	RUSSELLGREEFF	65	2207	1805	4012
39	HELENNICOLAU	22	2087	2006	4093
40	GEOFFJOHNSON	54	3829	266	4095
41	VICTORMATTHEWS	41	3996	719	4715
42	HENKROSSOUW	38	242	5052	5294
43	KEEGANWARD	83	502	4974	5476
44	KEITHVAN HEERDEN	46	3163	2525	5688
45	IANMCKENZIE	49	2565	3270	5835
46	NEVILLENICOLAU	23	4498	1418	5916
47	BEVJACOBS	40	5635	326	5961
48	BRADLEYMCEWAN	12	11002	907	11909
NF	TREVORHALL	19	448	12519	12967
49	CLIFFORDLE ROUX	56	5257	7917	13174
NF	CLAUDEOBERHOLZER	75	1194	17952	19146
50	GREGORYCANNY	72	13181	6923	20104
51	HAROLD GPORTMAN	52	19316	1889	21205
51	BRIANLANGE	20	1815	22800	24615
53	LLOYDWEBER	1	22765	4411	27176
NF	ALLANCUNINGHAME	82	276	22800	23076
NF	ANDREW ALANMATHER	61	22800	2755	25555
NF	WILLEMLE ROUX	21	3521	22800	26321
NF	CECILBESSINGER	39	16219	22800	39019
NF	PETERGILLESPIE	16	17140	22800	39940
NF	TOMLINLEY	74	17699	22800	40499
NF	MICHAEL JOHNBUCHAN	73	18479	22800	41279
NS	LLOYDWEBER	2	22800	22800	45600
NS	ROBERTCANTWELL	3	22800	22800	45600
NS	BILLLANCE	10	22800	22800	45600
NS	TAMARINSKEAD	26	22800	22800	45600
NS	ROBIN (JNR)MCDONALD	27	22800	22800	45600
NS	ROBIN (SNR)MCDONALD	28	22800	22800	45600
NS	CANDICETRUDA	29	22800	22800	45600
NS	NEVILLESMTIH	47	22800	22800	45600
NS	JASONLE ROUX	48	22800	22800	45600
NS	JAYCEEVAN ROOYEN	50	22800	22800	45600
NS	GRANTVACY-LYLE	55	22800	22800	45600
NS	TREVORDAVIDS	58	22800	22800	45600
NS	JAYSONANDERSON	62	22800	22800	45600

DJ Prize Winners



Congratulations to
Terry Chesterton Class A award.



Congratulations to
Hennie de Jager Best Performance by a Triumph



Congratulations to
Doug Watson highest placed CMCN rider
1934 Norton Model 18 500cc



Congratulations to
Richard Hyson: Best Performance over 500cc and Youngest Rider
1924 Indian Scout



Congratulations to
Hans Coertse and Daughter Camila: Harley Davidson Shield for best sidecar
and Duckhams Trophy for Oldest Motorcycle to finish.



Congratulations to
Clifford Le Roux (87) Oldest rider 1936 AJS 18
Receiving the Angel Berardino Trophy



Motoring in Durban

DJ 2025

890. Hans Coertse, together with his daughter Camilla Hyson entering her first DJ, were the first in the sidecar category, finishing 14th overall with a score of 912. Hans' 1921 Harley-Davidson Model J 1000cc was also the oldest motorcycle (104 years) to complete the 2025 DJ rally. Richard Hyson finished 19th overall on his 1924 Indian Scout, scoring 1099. Hendrik de Jager finished in 22nd place on his 1935 Triumph 3/1 with a score of 1641. Terry Chesterton was 24th overall with a score of 1995, finishing on his 1935 BSA B35. Billy Thomas, on his 1934 BSA Sloper, was 33rd overall with a score of 2790. Russell Greeff finished 38th on his 1928 Royal Enfield 355 OHV, scoring 4012. In 49th overall was

Clifford le Roux and his 1936 AJS 18, with a score of 13174. Also from Durban, riding his 1922 BSA under the Veteran Car Club of South Africa's banner, Derek Pirie finished 35th overall with a score of 3243.

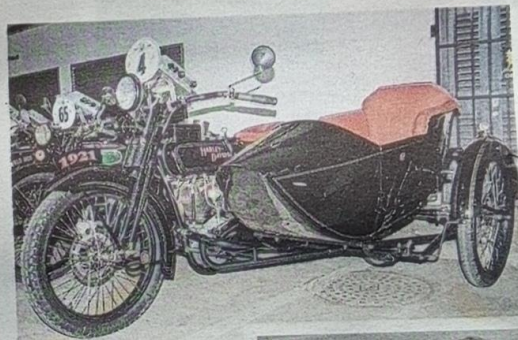
Whatever the outcome, the DJ remains an event of endurance for man and machine. Next year it will be the 113th year since the first DJ race took place - running for 23 years before road racing was banned on public roads in 1936. In 1970, the event was revived as a regulatory rally, and in 2026, the 'youngest' motorcycle competing in the DJ rally will be 90 years old. Long may these beautiful motorcycles remain running and upholding the legendary tradition of the DJ.



Passing down tradition ... Doug Watson with his son Reece do last minute preparations to the 1934 Norton Model 18 before the start of the DJ. Doug was the first man home among the entrants of the Classic Motorcycle Club of Natal, finishing 11th overall. Photo: Thuligraphy Images.



Piet Coertse from The Classic Motorcycle Club of Natal, gets the thumbs up at the DJ scrutineering with his 1928 BMW R52. Both man and machine finished this year's DJ in a respectable 13th overall.



Camilla Hyson and her dad Hans Coertse during scrutineering, and (above) the 1921 Harley-Davidson Model J they finished 14th on, and was the oldest motorcycle to complete this year's DJ. Hans has many DJs behind him, and in 2014, won the 6,400km endurance Cannonball Motorcycle Rally in the United States.

Photos: Noreen Perryman





Motoring in Durban

Dramatic



Brian Lange sets off on his trusty 1928 AJS with an excited Pat Daisey getting a taste of his first DJ in the sidecar. Both from Port Shepstone, although Brian still rides for VVC Jhb, the Lange family has DJ fever in their blood. Brian's late father, Arthur Lange competed in 40 DJs and Brian's brother, Ralph Lange, won the DJ in 1976, 1979 and 1987. The AJS got Brian and Pat to the end of the 2025 DJ with a score of 24615. Photos above and below by Thuligraphy Images

Noreen Perryman
noreenp@dbn.caxton.co.za

A horrendous storm the night before the start of the 2025 Durban to Johannesburg (DJ) regulatory rally, ruined many DJ motorcyclists' anticipation to start this year's event on their pre-1935 motorcycles.

Although the sun was shining for the 06:00 start in Hillcrest on Friday March 14, the aftermath of the storm left destruction and flooding on many roads in the Pinetown and Upper Highway areas. Of the 70-odd DJ entries, 13 did not start and 11 motorcyclists did not make it to the finish in Johannesburg, after nearly 700km over the two-day event.

The weather for the rest of the DJ played along with just some mizzle around Drummond on Friday and some mist up Majuba on the Saturday.

First home on his 1936 500cc AJS was Gavin Walton from Johannesburg, equalling the late Kevin Robertson's record of seven DJ wins. Watson recorded a score of 289.

Among the Classic Motorcycle Club of Natal's (CMCN) members to finish the 2025 DJ regulatory rally, first home was Doug Watson on his 91-year-old Norton Model 18, scoring 845 to finish 11th from a total of 53 finishers this year.

The other CMCN riders to complete this year's DJ were:

Piet Coertse on his 1928 BMW R52, 13th overall and scoring



Completing his rebuild in time for the start, Billy Thomas, a member of the Classic Motorcycle Club of Natal finished the DJ on his 1934 BSA Sloper.



Durban's Derek Pirie with his 1922 BSA. Derek entered his first DJ Rally in 1978 and has over 30 DJs in the saddle. His 103-year-old motorcycle has been in his family from before he was born. Photo: Noreen Perryman

Monthly Competitions

Golden Oldies

1st 1922 BSA 557cc H2
Derek Pirie



Golden Years

1st 1937 Francis Barnett 250cc
Seagull
Paul ward



Day of the Rising Sun

1st 1977 Honda CB550
Andy Paulsen



SAVVA Indemnity Forms and Cards:

Indemnity Forms and Indemnity Cards

The form is available for download on the SAVVA website under Forms .

Indemnity forms are legal documents. Both sides of the forms must be completed, signed and witnessed, and after the number of the indemnity card issued has been recorded on the form, the original forms should be posted to the SAVVA Secretary, or brought to the SAVVA AGM each year. Clubs are encouraged to keep copies of the forms.

SAVVA Indemnity applies to all events, socials, fun runs, displays, nothing excluded, organised and promoted by a club affiliated to SAVVA.

The onus rests upon the Club to ensure persons listed in Section 5 of the Handbook complete the forms.

Indemnity Cards It is suggested that when a new member joins a club that an indemnity card be issued to him/her and spouse immediately.

Every single person involved with a SAVVA competitive event where a permit has been issued shall have in their possession an Indemnity Card issued by the Club on behalf of SAVVA, that is all drivers, navigators, passengers of participating vehicles, all officials, marshals and their assistants, including drivers and passengers of tender vehicles and in modern vehicles who are part of the event, and persons representing sponsors, the press, SAVVA or the host club who will be present on the event or who may travel in competing vehicles.

Thus, as Club Members wishing to participate in any Club organised event, please ensure that you have a SAVVA indemnity card, which is issued when you join, and that your Bike is SAVVA dated. Rod Thomas can assist in this regard, as he's the Club Dating Officer.

Items for Sale/Wanted:

No Listings



DATING OF MOTOR VEHICLES

Many of our Members are not taking the opportunity to have their Vehicles Dated.
Dating of a Vehicle serves two things.

The First is so that you can Enter the Vehicle in a SAVVA Sanctioned Event like, the D-J ;
Natal Classic ; Magnum ; Fairest Cape, to name a few.

Many enter an Event "PENDING DATING" and never do have the Vehicle Dated.
Vehicle Dating is a requirement.

Secondly a Dated Vehicle adds Authentication to a Vehicle when being sold.

Dating Forms can be downloaded from the SAVVA website.

It is up to the Person applying for the Dating of a Vehicle to furnish all the necessary
Information required, not the Club Dating Officer or SAVVA.

Information on you Vehicle can be found on the Web or from s Mark Specialist for your
Vehicle

ROD Thomas is our Club's Dating Officer and he can be contacted by Message on.
Cell : +27 73 365 6494

List of recommended suppliers by club members

Business Name	Service Provided	Contact details
Startline	Motorcycle Parts	031 7050715
Camtech	Camshaft repairs	Gerald 011 6181823
Ram Trading	Zinc Engine Oil	011 4219300
Dave Wigston	Seat Covers	Dave 082 368 4749
Springrite	Springs and shim stock	031 7053515
Speedick Durban	Sprockets and Chain	031 5792260
Talent Auto Upholstery	Auto Upholstery	Talent 082 356 2187

AH Designs	Custom Painting	Andrew 082 709 5141
VS Motorrad Technik PE	BMW Spares	082 555 3197
Bright Blast JHB	Vapour Blasting	Daniel 076 567 5675

The Dave Collins Saga, by John Hyam



Dave Collins has the rare distinction of having ridden in speedway Test Matches for both South Africa and for England, having started riding speedway in the Union but being UK-born. These included both sides of the 1956/'57 series after England lost Alan Hunt and he was reallocated from the SA squad to the visitors team. He had winter spells in Europe during the '50s and '60s, riding in Holland, France, Spain and Gt.Britain, and he captained the winning England side in an unofficial 3-match series at Goodwood Showgrounds, Cape Town, in 1967. Now at 88, Dave Collins lives in Munster, KwaZulu-Natal. The foregoing article follows from an interview a few years ago by British speedway journalist John Hyam, and published jointly here and on the Defunct Speedway website in August 2015. . PART ONE As a schoolboy, Dave Collins used to sneak in at pre-war West Ham meetings. After World War Two service in the Royal Navy, he emigrated to South Africa to work as a gold-miner and earned enough money to buy a speedway bike. When he left his London home in late 1947 for South Africa it was to find fame and fortune as a gold miner. He never found that elusive pot of gold, but he did find fame as a speedway rider and for some 20 years was a well-known figure in the sport in the Republic. Collins, now in 2015 is 88 years old and living in Munster, South Africa, recalls: "Before the war, I was a keen West Ham supporter and from around 1937 used to sneak myself into the Custom House Stadium without paying. That was naughty of me, but that sort of thing was a way of life then for East End kids." The 1938 world champion 'Bluey' Wilkinson was Dave's big hero, although there were other pre-war West Ham stars he admired including the Canadians Eric Chitty and Jimmy Gibb, and the England ace Arthur Atkinson. Dave Collins was born in Plaistow in London's East End, and in the closing years of World War Two saw service in the Royal Navy. "When I came out of the forces in 1947, I tried to get into speedway racing but just could not afford it. I was wondering what to do with my life when I saw an advert in an evening newspaper for gold miners to work in South Africa. In March 1948, I started an eight-month stint working underground at 10,000 feet - that's nearly two-miles. It was

dreadful - no place for human beings really, but I needed the money. When I left the mines, it was just as a boom for speedway was starting and I bought a bike on hire-purchase terms from Buddy Fuller, who was promoting and riding in South African meetings. "My first competitive meeting at Dunswart in 1949 proved a disaster. In my first ride I hit the safety fence and broke my collar-bone. But I persevered and established myself in South African speedway. Before leaving for England at the start of the 1951 British season, I sold my bike to another rider who promised to forward the money to me in England. I spent most of the summer waiting for the cash to arrive, and just as I was doubting if it would ever come, it was deposited in my bank account just as the British season was coming to an end. By then I was the owner of a bike reputed to be a Vic Duggan 'Black Duck.'" I always doubted the authenticity of this, but it was a very fast bike and served me well when I returned to South Africa." As a rider in the South African League, Collins rode for the Johannesburg-based Wembley Lions, Randfontein Aces, Boksburg Bees and Springs Stars. "There was also a very fluid guest rider system operated by Fuller, You could be a regular for example with Springs, but also be called into action for any of the other teams if a need arose. Over the years, the South African League was very competitive. Riders like Ronnie Moore, Barry Briggs, Trevor Redmond, Freddie and Ian Williams, Alan Hunt, Ron Mountford and Basse Hveem were just a few of the European stars who rode in it. And of course South Africa had its own big stars like Henry Long, Doug Davies, Buddy Fuller, Doug Serrurier and Trevor Blokdyk proving their worth over the years. At its peak, the sport probably equaled what was being seen in Britain." Collins added: "For most of 1951, I did second-half rides at various British tracks. The sport was very competitive and it was hard to get chances. But when they came along, you never turned them down. I remember taking my bike and gear on the tube from Plaistow to Liverpool Street, then pushing the lot across London to Paddington just to have a second-half ride at Cardiff." The end of the British season saw Collins return to South Africa. "There the 'Black Duck' lived up to its Vic Duggan-legend and I did very well with it," he commented. Collins was back in England for the 1953 season. "At the start of the season I was given second-half rides at two London tracks that could not be more different, the 262-yard New Cross and the 440-yard West Ham track. From these tracks I signed for Swindon and again was confined to the second-half. Desperate to get more experience, when the offer of 10 meetings in Spain came along I jumped at the chance. I later heard that had I stayed in England, I would have been given a team chance with Swindon. It's academic now and the only person who might have confirmed it was Norman Parker's wife Jean who ran the track office." Before going to race in Spain, Collins was involved in a Phil Bishop-managed tour of Holland. He said, "I really enjoyed that venture. Besides Bishop, others who raced in the Dutch meetings included Howdy Byford, Pete Lansdale and Roy Craighead - all of whom had won big reputations over the years with various British teams. "We appeared in three wonderful stadiums - the Olympic Stadium in Amsterdam, at the Feyenoord Stadium in Rotterdam, and at Hengelo, which is up on the Dutch-German border." He recalls of the period spent in Spain. "The British organiser was Ted Gibson who rode for several British tracks during the late 1940s. Even now, the mention of his name and how he handled the tour sends my blood pressure up a couple of notches. Gibson's role was to

organise things like getting us accommodation and to the meetings. The promoter was a former German Luftwaffe pilot Hans Fabry. He owned a Piper Tripacer aircraft and used to fly from Barcelona to meetings in Majorca while the riders froze on the deck of a rust bucket ferry ship.” ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ PART TWO: JOHN HYAM writes about Londoner Dave Collins who went to South Africa in 1947 to work as a gold miner, started his speedway career there, then came back to race in Britain and Europe. In late 1953, South African-based English rider Dave Collins was part of a British team that went to pioneer the sport in Spain. He has an amusing recollection of the racing-manager Ted Gibson who fell out with the riders over delays in paying their wages and hotel expenses. Collins said of Gibson: “He could not see anything without his spectacles. When we were in Tarragona one rider - I think it was Jimmy Wright - hid his glasses. It left Gibson forced to wear his special racing goggles - these also had lenses like ‘the bottom of a Coca-Cola bottle.’ Passers-by used to stop and point at him.” Collins vividly recalls trying to race speedway on the bull rings in Barcelona, Tarragona and Majorca. “The racing was exciting and, with no straights, falls were frequent - usually after the race! Initially, the Spanish people were disinterested but they soon became very excited by the racing from us who they dubbed ‘El Suicidos’ - it was magic.” When the tour ended, most of the British riders needed financial help from the British Consul to get home. Collins said: “I was not involved as I managed to get a lift back to England with the New Zealand road racing star Ken Mudford and he took me to Plumstead where he left his bikes for tuning at the AJS motorcycle factory. I then made my way onto Romford. “There is no doubt, this Spanish speedway tour was a disaster financially, but did provide some interesting insight into the Spanish way of life which, even being then under the government of General Franco, was a virtual paradise and from that aspect I really enjoyed myself.” It was not until 1962 that Collins again tried his luck in England. He explained: “My mother was seriously ill and I stayed in Romford for 10 weeks. In that time, I was given the use of a bike owned by the former Birmingham rider Doug Davies, who had left it with the engine-tuner Victor Martin. Davies gave me permission to use it while I was in England. “I was signed to ride for Plymouth in the Provincial League, but they closed after I spent two weeks with them. Then I signed for Leicester but before I really got started I had to return urgently to South Africa.” Leading promoter Mike Parker was the next person to entice Dave Collins back for another try in British speedway. Collins recalled: “Parker wrote offering me a team place at Sunderland. As my pal Vic Ridgeon was also racing there, I jumped at the opportunity and travelled over with my wife Val. “It was not a happy experience. I never really got on with either Parker or his copromoter Bill Bridgett. Out of the blue, they just closed down Sunderland and Val and I were stranded. “We decided to ship our Commer Caravan to the continent and travel around, eventually reaching Gothenburg in Sweden on the night of the world championship final. That was a highlight of speedway spectating for me.” Just before setting out for Europe, Collins raced in a meeting at Rayleigh who were then in dispute with the Control Board. As a result, Collins and the other starters at the meeting were branded as rebels. This verdict soured him permanently against continuing in British speedway. He said: “After 1964, I soldiered on in South African speedway. The most memorable part of that period was in 1967 when I was invited to captain the British team in a test match in Cape Town.

“Cape Town is 900 miles from where I was living in Johannesburg. I finished work at 5pm, rushed to the airport on my Laverda motorcycle to catch the 6pm flight. When I arrived in Cape Town, I was met by car and rushed to the outside of the stadium, then flown into the arena by helicopter. It was a great experience.” Racing in South Africa, Collins rode three times for England in the 1949-50 test series and again for England in 1967. He also rode in three tests for Overseas against England in 1953-54 and for the British team against South Africa in 1971. Besides racing for a variety of South African league teams, Collins also partnered Australian star Junior Bainbridge when they won an International Pairs tournament at Randfontein in the 1954-55 season. After retiring from speedway, Collins was keen to get involved with a training school being run by former Wimbledon rider Peter Murray. “That was soured for me when I heard somebody mutter something about ‘old riders who will do anything to get into a meeting for nothing and are out to get themselves noticed.’ At first, I thought it was a joke but the guy concerned turned out to be serious. I never went to another practice session.” Even away from speedway, Dave Collins still sought adventure and excitement. “In 1972, I joined the South African Volunteer Reserve Squadron and flew as a pilot with them. When I left in 1984 it was with the rank of captain, so I feel that was also something of an achievement. “But nothing can ever recapture the magic of the years in speedway. Despite quite a lot of injuries, I would race all over again.” John Hyam.oooooooooooooooooooooooo

Young collectors are taking the motorcycle market by storm



1970s Japanese bikes like the Kawasaki KZ1000 are the biggest beneficiaries of the rise of younger

collectors. Over the last year, we have seen the entire world change. That includes the part of the world that collects motorcycles. Our annual update to the [Hagerty Motorcycle Price Guide](#), which we've just published, reveals that collector motorcycles, like collector cars (not to mention lumber, [used vehicles](#), housing, and much more), have become more expensive. The big story, though, may not be the price increases but who is driving them. Millennials and Gen-Zers are taking the collector motorcycle market by storm.

As we've noted [previously](#), collector motorcycles are generally more accessible than collector cars to young buyers, for reasons that are pretty obvious—bikes are relatively inexpensive and easy to store, even if you live in an apartment (or with your parents). Yet the spike in youth interest we're seeing now is unprecedented: In 2020, the share of young people (millennial and Gen-Z) calling us for a quote on motorcycle insurance increased 5 percentage points. In contrast, young people's share of quotes in the collector car segment only increased about 1 percentage point (which still makes them the fastest growing demographic there).

This is all positive for the long term sustainability of the collector motorcycle market. In the near term, though, this infusion of new interest (and cash) means lots of change.

Those Seventies bikes

People buy what was cool in their youth, supposedly, but that's not the case for younger buyers. They want to go back to the '70s even more than their parents. Out of every 10 quotes on insurance from a millennial or Gen Z buyer, four will be for a 1970s motorcycle. This is versus only three for a Gen-X or Boomer buyer. More than two thirds of these 1970s motorcycles are Japanese. In fact, for every millennial buying a '70s American motorcycle there are 4.6 Millennials buying a '70s Japanese bike. That is more than twice the ratio of Boomers, where for every '70s American buyer there are only 2.2 '70s Japanese buyers. (If you're a dealer looking for a young audience, adjust your inventory accordingly...) No surprise, Japanese bikes are the ones seeing large increases in value, too, with the average #1 value in the [Hagerty Motorcycle Price Guide](#) increasing 23 percent in the last year versus only 3 percent for American models.

Mom and dad still spend more

Although demand from young collectors is clearly pushing prices higher for certain bikes, it's important to note that these collectors aren't themselves paying as much as their elders. The median value for a motorcycle added in the last year by a millennial or Gen-Z buyer is \$5,600. This is up 11 percent from a year ago, but still 31 percent and 35 percent below the median value of motorcycles added by Gen-Xers and Boomers, respectively. No, they're not low-ballers. Rather, it appears young enthusiasts tend to pick up motorcycles as they are passing by on their way from cheap to collectible. They also are more likely to buy a bike in less-than-perfect condition. The price sensitivity of younger collectors also helps explain the popularity of '70s Japanese bikes, which remain quite attainable, even after the recent appreciation, relative to older motorcycles. The average #1 value in the price guide for a '70s Japanese motorcycle is \$5,000 and the #3 value up to \$2,900.

Resisting that Old World charm?



You

won't find the famous black-and-gold of a Vincent motorcycle in many millennial or Gen-Z garages. *Mecum*

A Vincent may be *the* quintessential vintage motorcycle, its black enamel and gold pin striping a common sight in the garages of top-tier collectors. This appeal might not extend with the younger Millennials, though. **In fact, British bikes, in general, don't seem to resonate.** Of all the Vincents added to policies in the last year, only 4 percent of them were added by millennial or Gen-Z collectors. You might be thinking this a function of the typical Vincent's age—the company went bust in 1955—and yet 14 percent of the '30s and '40s-era Harley Knuckleheads added to Hagerty policies in the last year were for millennial and Gen-Z collectors. The lack of interest from young buyers in Vincents is already rippling through the price guide, with most Vincent values flat and the #2 value of a Vincent Black Prince and Black Lightning dropping 10 percent and 15 percent respectively. Lest we overstate things, note that the [#1 value of a Black Shadow](#) is up 7 percent.

The Baby Boom is still booming

The tastes of millennial and Gen-Z collectors are having big impact now and will only grow more important as time passes. It's important to remember, though, that they are hardly the only people collecting bikes. Older collectors are still extremely active and, more specifically, are still searching out new stuff. Take, for instance, [1980s dirt bikes](#), which are almost universally appreciating. You'd expect this to be coming from thrill-seeking twenty- and thirtysomethings. Nope. Seventy percent of the people who called Hagerty for insurance quotes on these bikes last year were Baby Boomers. (The big winners were [1980s Honda XRs](#) and [Kawasaki KXs](#), whose #1 values increased 100 percent–400 percent since last year.)

Is it farewell to Harley Davidson – loss of sales – What happens now?



Harley-Davidson, the famous motorcycle manufacturer, has had to deal with tough times over the past few months

The company has seen its sales drop dramatically after making some decisions that have generated a lot of controversy. Its Q3 2024 earnings report revealed a grotesque drop in revenue (at least the 10%!!), which has left many wondering about the future of the brand.

The company said its dealers experienced “a reduction in customer flow in the region” due to high interest rates and economic uncertainty.

What is the reason for this decline?

According to the study, global retail sales also fell (by 13% compared to the previous year). And its motorcycle shipments decreased by 39%!!

The motorcycle giant has not had any luck either, as the spare parts and accessories unit also fell by 6% because, according to reports, they have had less customer traffic. Despite all this, the company managed to increase its income thanks to clothing, which increased its accounts by 13%.

What about revenue?

Harley-Davidson's operating income (which is the profit left over after covering all of the company's expenses) has also felt the weight of the current situation.

In this last quarter, the company only managed to earn \$106 million, which represents a surprising 49% drop compared to the same period last year. This decline not only reflects the challenges facing the brand, but also resonates with the sentiment of many fans who see their beloved Harley rolling through tough times.

Jochen Zeitz, CEO of the brand, in his statement confessed that they had been working throughout the quarter to mitigate the economic impact that the losses were having

Right now, the Federal Reserve has its interest rate set between 4.75% and 5%. At its meeting on September 17 and 18, the Fed decided to reduce the rate by 0.50 percentage points, (marking the first decrease in four years to help ease economic pressure).

This reduction could benefit borrowers, which in turn could boost future sales of Harley-Davidson motorcycles.

A not-so-rosy future...

Recent challenges have led Harley-Davidson to adjust its global sales and shipment projections for 2024. The company now anticipates a drop in retail sales of between 6% and 8%, a significant revision from its previous forecast of a small 3% increase. In addition, Harley expects its wholesale shipments to decline between 16% and 17%, rather than the 7% to 10% decline it had previously forecast.

Jonathan Root, the brand's CFO, is hopeful that these reductions will be true, as its shares have already risen since last Monday (up 3.75% and trading above \$33 per share!)

What was the controversy with Harley-Davidson?

This performance comes after their customers put them under pressure for supposedly "conscious" policies. What is this? That activist Robby Starbuck (very conservative) accused the company of having

a total commitment to diversity.

Why might this affect anyone? Well, we don't know, but Starbuck stated that the company supports policies and events based on the LGBTQ+ community for its employees, that the company signed a CEO Action Commitment for Diversity and Inclusion and that the company is actively working to have “fewer white workers.”

The post (published on X) went viral, getting almost 3 million views, and many consumers threatened to boycott the brand for supporting these initiatives...

Harley-Davidson clarified that they have cut the “DEI function” and that they will adjust several policies for the future.

What are these new measures?

This means ensuring that its corporate resource groups are dedicated solely to professional development, networking and mentoring. In addition, the company has decided to remove any socially motivated content from its employee training. It has also announced that its sponsorships and partnerships will be subject to a review process, and will only be approved and managed directly by the company or its foundation.

For its part, the company responded in X that it remains very committed to listening to all members of its community.



