

Tiger News No 90

Edited by Bob Cossey

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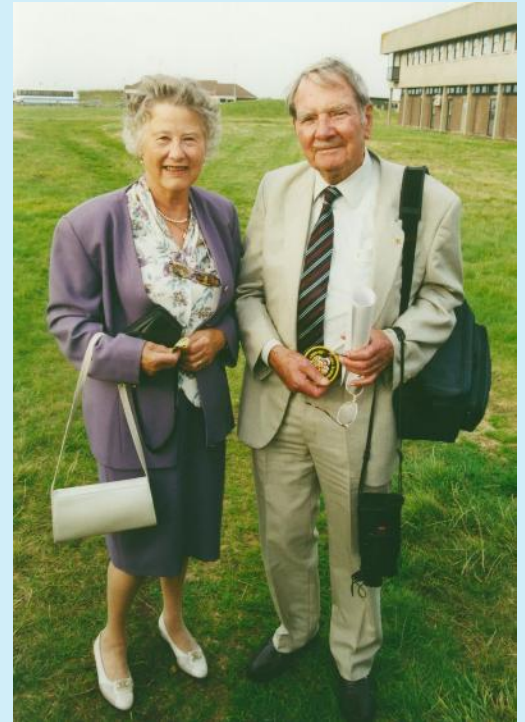
Air Marshal Cliff Spink CB, CBE, FCMI, FRAeS
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Tony Clay

The 2026 Reunion will be held over the weekend of 27th – 29th March with the reunion dinner on Saturday 28th March. Your committee would like to thank members for their feedback after the Bedford reunion this year and have thus chosen a new venue close to many of our original reunions in Stratford upon Avon. The Welcombe Hotel lies in attractive grounds a couple of miles outside Stratford on the Warwick Road. Full details will be available later in the year.

A Sad 25th Anniversary.

25 years ago, on September 22nd 2000, No. 74 (F) Tiger Squadron disbanded for the final time at RAF Valley where it had been undertaking a training role since 1992 having relinquished its Phantom FGR2s at RAF Wattisham. The disbandment parade was led by our then Association President AVM Boz Robinson. Members of the Association were in attendance - there'll be some you'll recognise in the following photos - and our guest of honour was 74's Battle of Britain pilot Johnny Freeborn. Other Tiger Squadrons sent aircraft and crews to share the day and no doubt commiserate on the loss of the RAF's Tiger Squadron, keenly felt by so many as 74 was one of the three founding members of the NATO Tiger Association back in 1961 at RAF Woodbridge.





Tigers at Gan. An evocative photo of Tiger Lightnings at RAF Gan taken 54 years before the Valley disbandment when the squadron's Lightnings transited through in August 1971 on their way back to the UK after their disbandment at Tengah. *With thanks to Ian Simpson.*



Tiger Gamebird GB1.



Phantom Tiger **Dave Best** explains:

The Gamebird is one of the aircraft I teach on at the Empire Test Pilots' School (ETPS). In this paint scheme it's definitely worthy of honorary 74 Squadron membership I think. This one is owned by Steve Jones (of Red Bull and flying through a hangar in formation fame) and we use it at ETPS for a few weeks each year to teach things that we can't do on the school fleet (such as inverted stalling and inverted spinning).

It's a pretty fun machine; +/-10g and 400 deg/sec roll rate. Since QinetiQ require us to wear military flying kit, including helmets, when we fly it, we have to put a woolly hat over the helmet to stop it scratching the canopy when we're doing the rapid rolling test points!



Victory in Europe

While all the emphasis has lately been on VJ Day, earlier in the year we were of course remembering VE Day. As part of that commemoration, **David Ketcher** photographed this replica Spitfire II marked as flown by Sailor Malan in Highworth near Swindon.



Czeching In

Marek Podmanický lives near Bratislava in Slovakia and is interested in the history of display teams, particularly those that flew during the period after the end of the Cold War. 2026 will mark the 35th anniversary of the first visit of the Czechoslovakian Air Force to the International Air Tattoo at RAF Fairford in 1991. Indeed it was the first air force from the Eastern Bloc to send display aircraft. Of interest to the Association is the fact that as the Czechoslovak aircraft crossed into British airspace they were met and escorted in by 74 Squadron F-4s.

The 1991 International Air Tattoo was significant for 74 for another reason too as it was the year the Tiger Meet was held in the UK as part of the tattoo. **Graham Clarke** was OC74 at the time and he put together a four-ship display team which performed on each day of the Meet.

Ned Kelly remembers the Czechoslovak's visit :



One of 74's Phantoms escorting a Czechoslovak MiG-29 Fulcrum. Photo via **Marek Podmanický**

I was flying with Graham Clarke for the IAT display on July 20th and 21st 1991 and was with him as well when we met the visiting Czech aircraft as they arrived in UK airspace on the 17th. My recollection of events is as follows:

16th	XV401	WG CDR CLARKE	
17th	XV401	WG CDR CLARKE	
17th	XT891	WG CDR CLARKE	
18th	XT905	WG CDR CLARKE	
19th	XT905	WG CDR CLARKE	
20th	XT914	WG CDR CLARKE	
21st	XT905	WG CDR CLARKE	
22nd	XV401	Ft Lt WALSH	

Intercept 2x MiG 29, 1 MiG 23
 ESCORT - " - " - to FAIRFORD
 IAT PRACTISE
 IAT PRACTISE
 IAT DISPLAY
 IAT DISPLAY
 RTB → WTM
 IAT PRACTISE

Ned's logbook entry for intercepting the Czechoslovaks, IAT display practice and the display itself.

The Czechoslovak Air Force aircraft arrived on the edge of UK airspace in two elements. The first was a Tupolev Tu-134 Crusty leading two MiG-29 Fulcrums and a MiG-23 Flogger. (Marek explains that this was called the Blue Group). A second formation (the Red Group) consisted of an Antonov An-12 Cub and two L-39 Albatros's. 74 Squadron launched two aircraft to meet the first formation and a second pair to meet the Cub and L-39s to escort them/show them the way into Wattisham. The crew of the lead Tu-134 spoke excellent English and seemed very comfortable with dealing with UK air traffic control and UK procedures. The fast jet pilots spoke very limited English and their aircraft only had a limited number of preset radio frequencies that could not be changed in the air. Our dilemma was how to get such a mix of aircraft, that have very different approach speeds and patterns, on the ground in an orderly manner. The solution was to get the fast jets to follow us and to leave the Tu-134 to make his own arrangements.

Thankfully the weather was good and despite the distraction of a 56 Squadron aircraft barrelling through the formation in the opposite direction, for a bit of a laugh it seems, the plan worked. I recall that the intruding 56 Squadron aircraft was flown by the world's fastest man on land, Andy Green (Dead Dog as he was known) with some poor junior navigator in his rear seat, unsure of what was happening, but he got a shock when he saw three former Soviet type jets passing close by at speed! The two MiG-29s formed on Graham and myself and the MiG-23 formed on our No 2, followed us to Wattisham and landed uneventfully off a run and break into the circuit. Wattisham Air Traffic used one of the preset frequencies for two-way communications and all went fine. The Crusty and the Cub followed shortly after and landed off straight-in approaches.



The Flogger and Fulcrums safely down at Wattisham. Photos by Bob Daniels

The Crusty was carrying the aircraft support groundcrew and some additional personnel, including a translator. The Cub was supposedly carrying aircraft spares and support equipment, although when we were invited to have a look at the aircraft (coincidentally whilst it was being cleared by UK Customs officials) it seemed to have more beer (Budweiser) and vodka than anything else on board! Thankfully, the Customs



officials recognised the significance of the occasion and turned a blind eye to the staggering amount of alcohol which was being brought into the UK to further international relations between our two nations ☺!

For the transit from Wattisham to RAF Fairford Graham and me had come up with a plan to fly as two fast-jet formations and pulled together all the aircrew involved from both nations for a briefing. No problem, except that as mentioned the MiG pilots spoke very little English and the translator who was provided had no flying knowledge or experience and did not understand aviation terminology. So we decided to keep the plan really simple along the following lines.

1. The Crusty and the Cub made their own arrangements (which they did very competently).
2. All fast jets involved would stay on a single frequency. At a nominated time, three F-4s would start and taxi in front of the MiG-29s who would then follow the first formation onto the runway, get airborne, circle the airfield until the second formation of three F-4s led by Squadron Leader Dom Riley and the MiG-23 was airborne, and then follow the lead in two loose echelons at 2,000 feet AGL to Fairford. Wattisham ATC cleared all nine aircraft to take off with a green flare - very World War Two! The weather was fantastic with clear skies, no cloud cover and unlimited visibility. Our visitors really did get a good view of England's green and pleasant land. Thankfully, 56 Squadron stayed out of the way so there was no confusion.

During the thirty-minute transit to Fairford we were joined by approximately ten other aircraft at different times, who saw a very strange formation including MiGs flying through UK airspace. We were joined in close formation by various numbers of Tornado F3s, Tornado GR4s, Hawks, a pair of F-15s and even a singleton F-111. On arrival at Fairford we broke into the circuit in two formations, with the F-4s leading and overshooting to allow our visitors to land. Once all the MiGs were down the F-4s landed and joined our distinguished guests for a cold welcome beer (or two).

Ian Hargreaves (Hagar) didn't accompany the Czechoslovaks on the way into UK airspace but escorted them out on the 26th July with Iain Walsh (Buster) in the back seat.

JULY	20	PHANTOM FGR2	XT 905	SELF	LOVERIDGE	DISPLAY IAT FAIRFORD	.25
JULY	21	PHANTOM FGR2	XT 905	SELF	LOVERIDGE	DISPLAY IAT FAIRFORD	.25
JULY	22	PHANTOM FGR2	XV 445	SELF	LOVERIDGE	DISPLAY IAT FAIRFORD	.30
JULY	23	PHANTOM FGR2	XV 445	SELF	LOVERIDGE	TRANSIT WATTISHAM	1.00
JULY	23	PHANTOM FGR2	XV 401	SELF	LOVERIDGE	2x2 DAY TACTICS+AA	1.55
JULY	25	PHANTOM FGR2	XV 401	SELF	FLT LT MANWARING	TRANSIT RNAS CULDORE	1.05
JULY	25	PHANTOM FGR2	XV 401	SELF	FLT LT MANWARING	TRANSIT WATTISHAM	.55
JULY	26	PHANTOM FGR2	XV 445	SELF	FLT LT MESTER	PAX RIDE. PD BLOUGH	1.10
JULY	30	PHANTOM FGR2	XT 907	SELF	FLT LT WALSH	HIG 29, 23, CUB, CRUSTY, ALBATROSS	1.10
					FLT LT CASTLE	ESCORT CZECHS.	
						1v1 ACT + DAY TACTICS+AA	2.05

The entry in Hagar's logbook shows his and Buster' participation in escorting the Czechoslovaks out of UK airspace. All the Czechoslovak aircraft had reassembled at Wattisham to facilitate this after their participation in the Chivenor and Brawdy air shows (see below).

Hagar writes:

I do remember the Czechoslovak Tigers. They were a great bunch fresh from release from the Warsaw Pact and the Cub was full of Czech Budweiser and slivovitz! We displayed a 4-ship at the Air Tattoo. A real privilege for me as a Flying Officer to be part of the team as Baz was going to the Red Arrows and Dom had just come off the Reds.



74's IAT 1991 Display Team

1. Graham Clark and Ned Kelly
2. Ian Hargreaves and Martin Loveridge
3. Baz Cross and Shaun O'Brien
4. Dom Riley and Mark Manwaring



The Phantoms stand ready to perform at IAT 1991



The Fairford Tiger Meet sported the usual spectacular schemes.



The Czechoslovak Tu-134 Crusty



The Czechoslovak fighter pilots who brought their aircraft to Fairford. Left to right MiG-23 pilot Major Miler, unknown but believed to be USAF, and the MiG-29 pilots Captain Hackel and Lt Col Vašek.

After Fairford, all the Czechoslovak aircraft flew to the RAF Chivenor Air Day where one of the L-39s participated in the airshow. After Chivenor they all moved to RAF Brawdy where the MiG-29 performed in the air show. Weather and technical problems had unfortunately affected the entire second part of the tour but despite this the visit was a great success.



Photographed at Brawdy, the An-12 Cub (left) and one of the two L-39s.



In September 1992 the largest aviation event ever held to date in Czechoslovakia took place in Bratislava. The Czech and Slovak International Air Fest was the first time that display teams from the UK, France, Spain and Italy as well as aircraft from American Tiger Squadrons flying F-111Es, F-15s and F-18s performed in the Eastern Bloc. After the division of Czechoslovakia in 1992 into the Czech Republic and Slovak Republic, an era of major aviation events began in both new states, the foundations of which were laid by the visit of the Czechoslovakian Air Force to the International Air Tattoo in 1991.

Note. The Czechoslovaks and the 211th Tactical Squadron were participating at Fairford as observers before two years later being voted in as Honorary Members of the NATO Tiger Association. They attend Tiger Meets across Europe these days flying their Saab Gripens.



No. 1 Squadron of the Slovak Air Force based at Sliač Air Base is a probationary member of the NATO Tiger Association. Its MiG-29 Fulcrums are currently being replaced with F-16C/D Fighting Falcons.



Marek has completed this memorial plaque which, after being symbolically presented to the pilots of the display aircraft which came to the UK in 1991, will be presented to the museum at the former Žatec air base in 2026. Zatec was where the Czechoslovaks departed from in 1991 but which closed in 2002. A translation of the plaque reads:

Czechoslovak Air Force in the Free World

From 17th to 26th July 1991, the Czechoslovak Air Force was the first country from the former Eastern Bloc to conduct an international tour.

From the take-off point of the Czechoslovak Display Team from the Žatec air base, it flew along the route RAF Wattisham - RAF Fairford - RAF Chivenor - RAF Brawdy with the aim of presenting the capabilities of equipment and pilots from Czechoslovakia in Great Britain at the historically largest air event, International Air Tattoo 91 in Fairford, and at the first meeting with the NATO TIGERS squadrons.

The flight and static displays of the Czechoslovak display team consisted of:

2 x MiG – 29A “Fulcrum”: Col. Ing. Václav VAŠEK and Lt. Col. Ing. Alojs HÄCKEL

1 x MiG-23ML “Flogger”: Maj. Ing. Josef MILER

2 x Aero L-39ZA Albatros: Lt. Col. Bohumil TROJAN, Col. Ing. Jan BUDÍNSKÝ, and Maj. Ing. Josef HLAVA, Col. Ing. František HLAVNÍČKA

1 x Antonov An -12BP “Cub” and 1 x Tupolev Tu-134A “Crusty”: Alexander UJBANYAI and Col. Metoděj KRAHULEC

The entire Display team could be seen by almost 400,000 spectators during three air events.



74 Squadron were still in Cyprus in the autumn of 1958 as recounted in Part Five.....

Because the 'brave and courageous' fighters of EOKA were at that time showing their mettle by shooting women, children and servicemen in the back, the security situation meant that we were for long periods not permitted to leave the camp to enjoy the beauties of the island. So, for four volatile fighter squadrons the only relaxation possible was attending the cinema or playing bridge, poker etc in the mess and drinking large quantities of Keo lager. This inevitably led to occasional riotous behaviour late in the evenings and some aggressive confrontations with the officers of 70 Squadron and the local admin staff. The senior Provost Branch Officer (the nearest thing to a service policeman in the mess) was Sqn Ldr Cannon. Needless to say whenever he appeared in the bar late at night there would be a loud cry of 'Fire the Cannon!' One of our tricks was to pour lighter fuel into a channel that ran along the front of the bar down to where the 70 Squadron crews sat looking miserable, then light it. The flame ran all the way to where they were congregated and caused general pandemonium amongst them. When Sqn Ldr Cannon's deputy - a Flying Officer like ourselves - threatened to report us all for disorderly conduct we sat on him until he relented. Next morning we were all summoned by our Boss to give evidence with a view to a Court Martial being held. 'Just make sure you all tell the same story!' he said and gave us a few hints. For some days we went about in fear and trembling before getting the good news that the Kiwi Station Commander, one Bill Tacon, had decided to take no further action in the matter. Everybody became somewhat better behaved after that incident.

Not long after, we were given permission to travel off camp. We could drive our Land Rover through the streets of Nicosia and across the mountains to Kyrenia provided we carried a Sten gun and personal sidearms. Such trips were a tremendous boost to our morale and we revelled in the freedom to strip off and bathe in the sea and sunbathe in the confines of the fort next to the harbour. There was also The Harbour Club where one could eat and drink in safety while enjoying the view over the beautiful harbour with the Turkish coastline vaguely visible in the distance. One day we had set off for Kyrenia in our local hired car and were passing through Nicosia when there was the most almighty explosion nearby and almost immediately we were stopped by an armed Army patrol and ordered out of the car. Roddy Mundy was driving and he, being quite swarthy, was suspected of the crime! I thought they were going to shoot him on the spot, and all three of us with him began to shout loudly that we were RAF officers - still with our hands in the air. Happily all then became calm. EOKA had set off a bomb in the next street in an unsuccessful attempt to kill General Kendrick, the military commander. Naturally our arms and our ammo were closely monitored and woe betide anyone losing even a single round. On one occasion, one of our party, the late Mike Cooke, demonstrating his theory that with only a single round in the correct chamber of his pistol there was no likelihood of an accidental discharge, fired a bullet through the ceiling of the tea house just outside the fort! A neat hole appeared above us and a look of surprised concentration and alarm crossed his face as we all fell about laughing. Fortunately the round had lodged in the floor above and no harm was done. We none of us learned how he managed to convince the armoury back at base to let him get away with the loss of one bullet, but he did.

By late October the Middle East situation had calmed somewhat and we were scheduled to return to Britain in November. I was also appointed deputy Flight Commander of A Flight. Before leaving we took the opportunity to carry out some well briefed four v four dogfights with the other squadrons. That was immensely exciting training and as we were so closely matched there were some long and arduous battles with aircraft closing right up to each other sometimes missing collision by a matter of a few feet and a colossal closing momentum. It gave us a real taste of genuine air combat with gun armed fighters and really was for me the highlight of the whole Cyprus detachment. Thereafter, apart from having to land an aircraft on fire during an air test, there were few other notable flying incidents to record in my logbook which reveals that on the 3rd November we crossed the Mediterranean to El Adem then on to Malta, reaching Horsham St Faith and a much lower temperature on the 4th, followed by three weeks leave.

Armament Practice Camp

1959 saw far-reaching changes begin in my life. The year started in routine fashion with everyday air defence activities. Keeping up to date with instrument flying in the Meteor T.7 and Vampire T.11, flying the Meteor F.8 as target for air gunnery practice and carrying out Practice Interceptions under the control of Neatishead or Boulmer. Toward the end of January I drove my battered Standard Vanguard saloon north to RAF Acklington for what was called Armament Practice Camp. This involved a spell of concentrated air to air firing practice against the banner target after working up with cine practices which were assessed each day by the Pilot Attack Instructor (PAI). The squadron engineers were still coming to grips with the radar ranging system which arrived with the Hunter 6 and efforts to achieve the sort of high scores we had earlier obtained when flying the Meteor 8 were far less successful despite the much-improved modern advanced technology. The Boss however was determined that we should achieve what other squadrons had already done, namely to get the system running efficiently, and so we all set out to fulfil that ambition with a reasonable degree of success. My own score rose from a disappointing nil on the first sortie to 28% after a week. We were flying the quarter attack profile consistently in order to make sure that we used only radar ranging so as to improve the system's efficiency and it began to show encouraging results. It may seem very primitive and a far cry from today's fire-and-forget missile systems but for us at the time it represented the start of a new era and we were sceptical but accepting that technology could change our well-tried methods from WW2.

One day when the weather was particularly bad, as it could often be up there in the north, a pair of us with me leading finished off our cine practice against the flag and were told by ATC that recovery conditions were very poor with a strong crosswind on the main flooded runway. However, we did not have sufficient fuel left to divert so I made the decision to send my No 2 home first because he had even less fuel than me and I would follow a minute later so that we would both be able to carry out individual landings. Landing as a pair in a strong crosswind was always possible but to do so on a relatively short (2,000 yard) flooded runway increased the risk of collision or aquaplaning owing to the higher landing speed needed. Singleton landings therefore were more prudent. In the event my No 2 landed hot and managed to burst a tyre while braking, effectively blocking the main runway and leaving only the little-used 1,400 yard runway for me to attempt a landing. By this time I had precious little fuel left with the gauges showing under 600lbs as I overshot the blocked runway, made a hard turn right and lined up with the short strip, trying all the while to keep the speed as low as possible to maintain visual contact with the airfield which was by now almost completely covered in low cloud and to give some chance of stopping before the end of the runway. I was about 500 yards out and lined up for landing when two airmen started to walk slowly across the runway threshold. Clearly they had not looked up the approach and had seen no need to do so because that runway was rarely used. They must have had a nasty shock when a Hunter 6 at full power passed close over their heads. To have tried to land over them would have been too risky so I had to make a turn left to make another circuit but without using too steep an angle of bank for fear of uncovering one of the fuel tank booster pumps that were now my lifeline for survival, and using the minimum power setting possible for the same reason. I glanced at the fuel gauges when I was in a downwind position and they showed me with under 300lbs left to complete the circuit and landing. This time there was no sign of the airmen and I was able to plonk the Hunter down on the very end of the runway and start judicious braking while trying to avoid maxaretting and shutting down the engine to reduce residual thrust. By those means I was just able to keep the far end of the runway in front of the aircraft. So the rain-soaked ground crew then had two aircraft to tow back to dispersal but both of them were undamaged except for my No 2's burst tyre.

Having notched up a few more Meteor hours towing the banner for the other guys I drove back to Norwich again for what turned out to be my last few weeks on the squadron. After a slow and anticlimactic winter with lots of bad weather and only that brief spell of excitement during the Armament Practice Camp at Acklington I left 74 after logging over 600 hours on single and multi-jet fighters, after successfully achieving high standards of survival and rescue training, aircraft recognition training and above all cine and air gunnery standards as a deputy Flight Commander. On Friday 6th March 1959, after leading a Hunter four ship formation as a last gesture, I said a very fond goodbye to Norfolk, not to return until 1962 when, after three years with the Oxford University Air Squadron, I started the PAI Course at RAF West Raynham.

William Couper Goudie

As ever, interesting stories, questions and photographs drop into my inbox on a regular basis. I recently heard from **Alex Rae**.

I write with reference to my great-grandfather, William Couper Goudie, and 74 Tiger Squadron. My late grandfather never knew who his father was. It was only through an ancestry website and DNA testing that I learned the truth last year. Having noticed some unfamiliar matches, I contacted a distant relative in Canada who helped me piece together the puzzle. We concluded that William Couper Goudie met my great grandmother while serving with the RFC. My suspicion is that she met him while he was at Castle Bromwich aerodrome which was in the vicinity of her house at the time. When they met, my great-grandfather had only been married some three months prior in Canada. He likely returned to Canada unaware that he had fathered a son.

I have been fortunate to find a few photos of William Couper Goudie. I also found the photos of his cap which were incredible to see. I wonder if you have any other photos of my great grandfather or the men he flew with? I am keen to find out as much as possible, so that I can share information with my family.

This evocative photo of 74 Squadron at Halluin in northern France after Armistice Day in November 1918 is in the Association archive. William Goudie is in the back row third from the left. Below right - William's flying helmet worn when with 74 Squadron in 1918



Right. William Goudie in later life.

**Also in the archive.
74 Squadron C
Flight France 1918.
Back row left to
right -
Lt. Matthiessen,
Captain Glynn,
Lt. Shoemaker.
Front row left to
right - Lt. Gordon,
Lt. Adamson
Lt Goudie.**



Dave's Uber-Hawk

Dave Roome writes - I enjoyed reading David Taylor's Phantom Pharewell, about the final Wattisham departures in Tiger News 89. Of interest, the Hawk from which **Rick Brewell** produced the excellent photographs below was being flown by me. After the Phantoms had landed at Coningsby, I returned Rick to Wattisham to his car and then flew my Hawk taxi back up to Coningsby. That take off was the final fixed wing take off from RAF Wattisham and my last trip that day was to fly John Allison from Coningsby back to Hatfield, from where we both drove back to Bentley Priory. A day to remember.

Year 1992		AIRCRAFT		Captain or 1st Pilot	Co-pilot 2nd Pilot Pupil or Crew	DUTY (Including number of the night landings as 1st Pilot or 2nd)
Month	Date	Type and Mark	No.			
						Tanks brought forward
OCT	20	WANTON	XX 349	SELF	WECAR 100K	CHIV - HATFIELD
	20		XX 349	SELF	RUL	HF - WYTON
	30		XX 285	SELF	GRUHLAND	WYTON - HATFIELD
			XX 285	SELF		HATFIELD - WYTON
	31		XX 285	SELF	BOENHILL	PHOTO CHANG LAG 200 PRACTICE 1000 + CORSAIR - WYTON - CHIV
NOV			XX 285	SELF	BOENHILL	CHIV - WYTON - LAG 1000 PRACTICE 1000
			XX 285	SELF		WYTON - CHIV - LAG 1000 PRACTICE 1000
			XX 285	SELF	JOHN ALLISON	CHIV - HATFIELD
	2		XX 285	SELF		HATFIELD - CHIV
	3		XX 285	SELF		CHIV - HF
	10		XX 285	JOHN ALLISON	SELF	HF - WYTON
			XX 285	SELF		WYTON - VALLEY
			XX 285	SELF	JOHN ALLISON	VY - HF

