

# **Was Dublin First?**

## **By George P Kearns**



### **WAS MOTOR CYCLE SPEEDWAY FIRST INVENTED IN DUBLIN, IRELAND**

**And not as is taken for granted by so many, in Australia?**

**Asks George P Kearns,**

**Author, Writer and Dublin City Local Historian**

To Whom It May Concern,

In my research into the history of Motor Cycle Speedway racing in Dublin I came across two very interesting articles on two completely different Internet websites and I feel obliged to pass on this information to Speedway enthusiasts by way of the SpeedwayPlus Website.

First I would tell you that while browsing through the Website, entitled “Where did Motor Cycle Speedway begin in the World?” I clicked into its Personalities section and found an article within, written by the late Johnny Hoskins, the Father of Speedway, which was entitled “ Heartbreak Sent me to West Maitland, and as the title implies he tells the reader on just how and why he arrived in Maitland.

According to Johnnie he had thrice visited Sydney with high hopes and a few bob in his pocket, but each trip had resulted in heartbreak. With two bob left in his pocket he arrived in West Maitland and having made a success of running a number of charities stalls and sports programmes in the town he applied for and secured the position of Secretary of the Annual Agricultural Show and proposed a motor cycle sports on the Showground. This idea was rejected, but he persevered and having gathered a bunch of lads to race their motor bikes on the Showground’s Trotting Track he finally managed to convince his employers that the idea of a Motor Cycle race was a good one and soon, having changed the name to “Speedway”, he was running weekly meetings which began in the Summer of 1923. This happening is accepted by many as being the invention of Speedway,

But if being the first in the World to run a Motor Cycle race on a towns Cinder Trotting track credits a person or group as being the inventor of Speedway, then I will

have to put forward the Motor Cycle Union of Ireland as a serious contender for that title as they, having formed on April 7th 1902 in Dublin ran their first Motor Cycle Race on the cinder track of the Ashtown Trotting track, County Dublin on October 18th 1902.

The recording of this event can be viewed on a Website of the Motor Cycle Union.

I am in the process of putting together a booklet on the history of Speedway in Ireland and I would appreciate receiving any interesting tit-bits of information / or stories etc in connection with same, photographs for use in my publication would be most welcome.

While I am not a Speedway enthusiast, I do have a little knowledge of same and as a retired person, time to research same. I have already published two books on Old Dublin cinemas in recent times, together with some writings on other historical happenings.

You can contact George on [georgemamie@eircom.net](mailto:georgemamie@eircom.net)

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