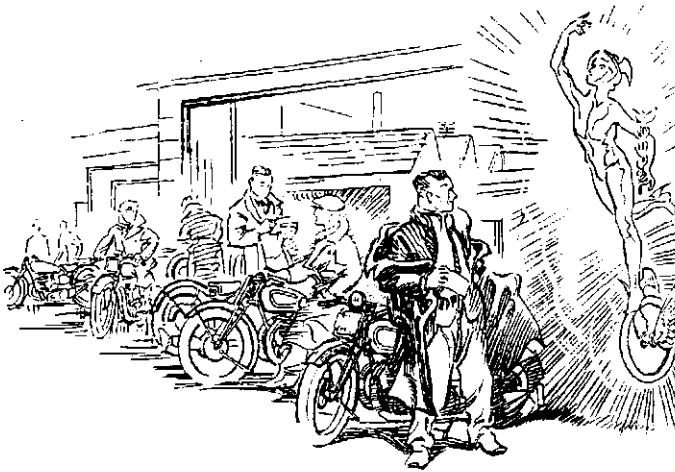


# PACEMAK



## How a Young Rider was Given the Job of Breaking-up a Fast Rival : A Tale of T.T. Tactics

By "IXION"

A HANDSOME fair-haired lad sat at the desk in the running shed, making out in triplicate his report on the ninth brand-new 500 c.c. motor cycle which he had tested that day. Thousands of youngsters all over Britain would have given their cars for his job. Good pay. Constant open air. Continuous riding of fast models, with an occasional chance in a trial. But Arthur Waite's brow was like thunder, and his heart was boiling with suppressed rage.

Ever since as a small boy he had pushed and craned in the crowd which gave a Senior T.T. winner a civic welcome on his return from the Island, Arthur had cherished a passionate ambition to ride in the T.T. and ultimately to win it. Against considerable parental opposition he had secured his first motor cycle—for £3, and tenth-hand; forced his way by mingled importunity and audacity into a job at the Hurricane works; wangled his way into the running shed; got himself taken on as a tester; hourly, daily, and weekly persistently outrode and outdared every other tester on the staff. And yet when the T.T. team was announced he was not even a spare man.

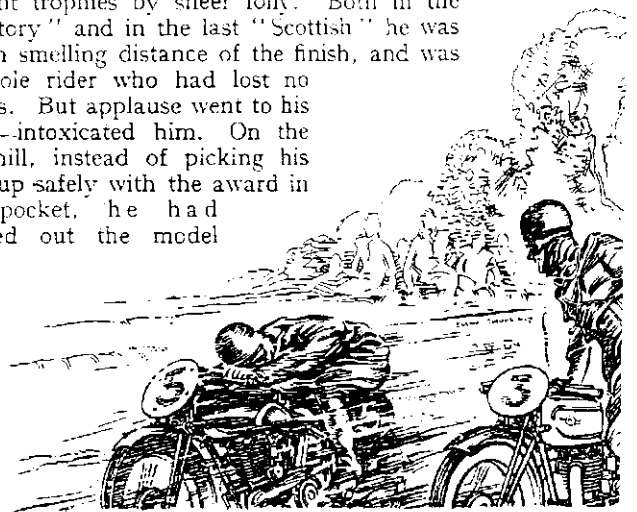
### Just Testing

True, one of the three was an outside rider—Jimmy, the invincible, hero of a hundred victories on the roads of all nations, retained at fantastic cost; and Teddy, the firm's veteran, was so crafty that he could never be left out; but Bill, the third string, was only a tester like Arthur—and Arthur could knock spots off him any

"We want you to go baldheaded until the model bursts..."

old day, whether up a freak hill, or in a scramble, or when a few of the boys went mad on empty roads as soon as the sun was high enough for you to see where you were going at a hundred.

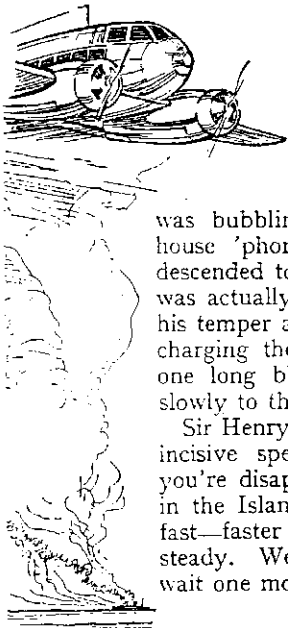
"Favouritism!" said Mabel, Arthur's fairy from the accounts department. But everybody in the Hurricane factory except poor Arthur himself knew the true reason. Arthur was a nothead. Excitement always robbed him of his judgment. Twice he had thrown away important trophies by sheer folly. Both in the "Victory" and in the last "Scottish" he was within smelling distance of the finish, and was the sole rider who had lost no marks. But applause went to his head—intoxicated him. On the last hill, instead of picking his way up safely with the award in his pocket, he had opened out the model



"Jake identified him at 100 m.p.h. with a grin barely purged of malice"

# ER'S LUCK

to earn the music of an ovation from the crowd; and twice he had been unable to master the machine at such speed, and crashed. No wonder the directors didn't trust him; "perhaps in a year or so," they said, nodding sagely, "his blood will be cooler." So practice had started far away in the Island, and Arthur was just testing roadsters at home.



The door of the running shed opened, seven stone of make-up and impudence blew in, and a pert, high-pitched voice enquired, "Mr. Waite gone yet? Oh, Mr. Waite, the gov'nor wants you!" Two years ago Arthur would have shot out to the managing director's office like a diving gannet; but to-day he was bubbling rebellion and defiance, and the house 'phone rang imperiously before he condescended to answer the summons. His slowness was actually self-defence; he was afraid of losing his temper and giving in his notice; afraid of discharging the rage which seethed within him by one long blast of sustained abuse. He stalked slowly to the door, knocked and entered.

Sir Henry, the managing director, was a man of incisive speech. "Sit down, Waite. I expect you're disappointed we didn't give you a try-out in the Island this year. We know you can ride fast—faster than Ted Brown. But you're unsteady. We all are at your age. I meant you to wait one more year. But now I hear from Elkins

(Elkins was the racing manager) that Jake, on the Tornado, has got us beat. He must be absolutely confident, because he is not camouflaging his practice laps, as he did last year. He is doing two laps a morning without a stop, so that anybody can time them, and his speed is round about 88. Jimmy has done his damnest but can't touch that speed.

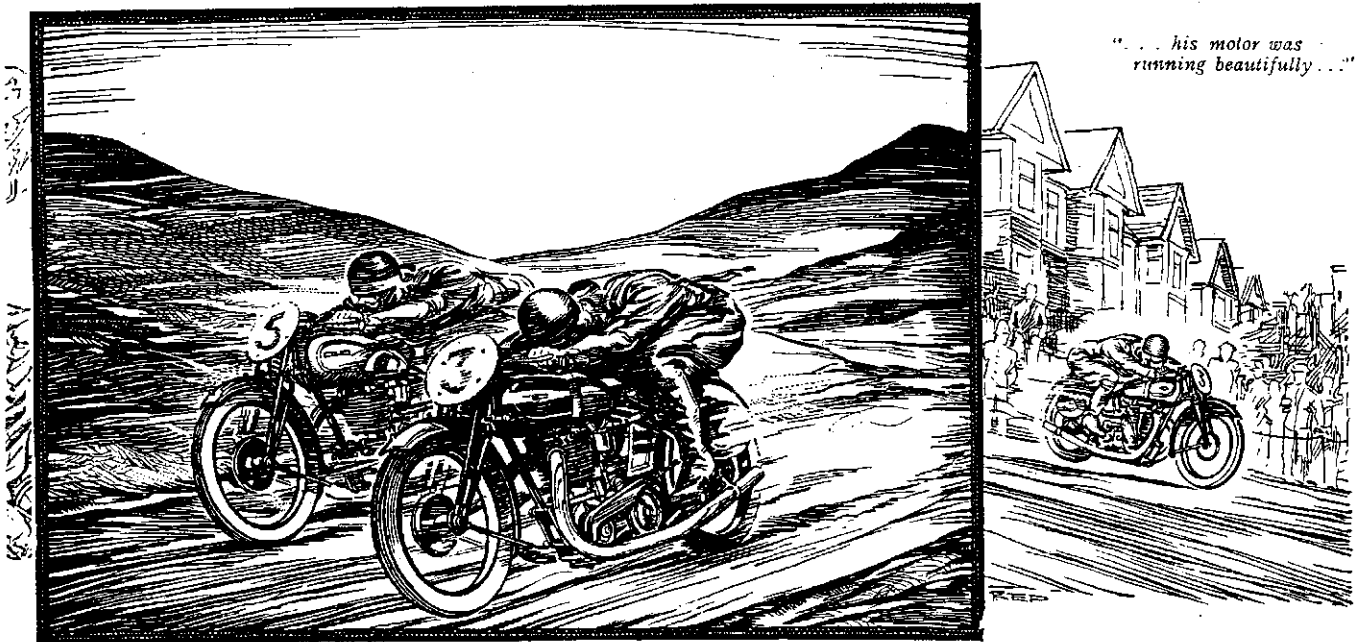
"I am sending you over by 'plane to-night. You can't win—don't get a swollen head about that. Elkins is going to hot-up one of the Senior machines for you—hot it up so that it wouldn't last seven laps anyhow. We're nominating you to start No. 3—Jake is No. 5. We want you to go baldheaded until the model bursts, and there's just a chance that Jake will chase you a bit too hard, and blow up too.

### Off to the Island

"If you can do an 88 or 90 practice lap, so much the better; it'll put the wind up Jake before the start. If Jake bursts chasing you, there's £50 for your trouble; and anyhow you shall be in the team next year if you do your best now. My chauffeur will run you home to pick up your gear, and then out to the airport. Obey Elkins to the letter. Good luck and good-night!"

There were no sour sulks in Arthur's innards four hours later, at 1,000 feet over the Irish Sea. For one thing, he was too sick, for the 'plane had been bumping a hundred feet at a time. His stomach was in a state of violent rebellion, but his heart was singing with incredible joy. Between the two, when they landed at Castletown he could hardly stand.

(Below) "The mad procession surged on . . ."



"... his motor was running beautifully..."

**Pacemaker's Luck—**

Elkins was waiting with the staff car, and rushed him off to the start. A big glass of Horlicks, laced with brandy, and he was ordered to trail Jimmy round the course, and warned that he would go home on the next boat if he passed Jimmy. And Jimmy, so Arthur thought, was *creeping*. He was rather surprised to hear, when they got back to the tents, that they had lapped round about 70 m.p.h.

Just time for one more lap—a shade faster this time—then back to the hotel for breakfast and five hours' sleep. Then three laps of the course in a car with Jimmy as cicerone—occasional stops and reverses at sticky places like the Craig, where Arthur memorised the line, the gear changes and the braking points. Then back to bed.

Next morning there was a lap close behind Jimmy, and then at long last the first lap on his own. "But if you crash," snarled Elkins, "it's the next Liverpool boat for you!" He didn't crash. He lapped as near as no matter at 80. The next morning he did about 83—and the morning after 85. Then Elkins produced a spare machine with which he had been playing for days, and Arthur lapped on it at 88.36 m.p.h.

The whole Island was buzzing with the name of this tyro who was putting the wind up Jake and the Tornado crowd. Arthur showed signs of strutting, for by now the lad was walking on air. Elkins took him aside and talked to him like a Dutch uncle. "See here, lad—keep your head and you'll win a Senior some day. But you *can't* win this year. That bus you're riding is good for three laps, maybe four; not more. I strip it every day while you get your second sleep, and I have to do a whole lot to it.

**Camouflaged Laps**

"All you can do this year is to tease Jake until he blows up and lets Jimmy in to win. Next year you shall have the new supercharged four—it'll be ripe then; and I promise you shall ride your own race then. But this year you'll ride *our* race, or I'll flay you.

"You've got to keep just ahead of Jake's Tornado on time until you burst. If you blow up first it's not your fault; he may blow up a lap later, and if he does Jimmy wins!"

The next excitement started from Jake's end. The Tornado started camouflaging its laps. Jake would dismount somewhere at the back of the Island, pretend to tinker for a minute or two, and then come on. Had he dug out some extra horses? The Hurricane stable sent their spies out with chronometers. No! Jake's maximum along the Sulby Straight had not risen; Ramsey Town to the Gooseneck—just the same; a three-mile stretch including Hillberry, as you were. Just bluff. Eighty-eight is his limit right enough. So Elkins thankfully abandoned dark schemes of lightening the innards of Arthur's machine a little more dangerously, and took him off the course to a quiet straight, where they practised pit stops—the braking, the replenishment, and the crashing getaway with a hot engine. They'd done all that was mortally possible. The rest lay in the lap of the god of speed.

Meanwhile Elkins nursed Arthur as if he were in the finals of the men's singles at Wimbledon. No alcohol.

No tobacco. Regular meals. Long hours abed; and, of course, lots of physical training. Stripped for his shower he looked like eleven stone of catgut masked by white satin.

Came the weighing-in. The Hurricane stable were curious about Jake. The Tornado people had secured three numbers—5, 18, and 26. Would Jake elect to take No. 5 as provisionally programmed, start one minute behind Arthur and judge the pace for himself, possibly seeking to egg Arthur on to a spill or a blow-up? Or would he mount one of his firm's later numbers and get exact pit signals about his position, as could easily be managed if the officials would let Jake change numbers with No. 26?

**Cool as Ice**

There was talk of a wangle. However, Jake arrived at the tents displaying a huge "5." Elkins rubbed his hands. "They are sure scared of you, laddie," he said to Arthur. "The great Jake is going to catch you and show you how to ride!"

There was a tactical council that night. Elkins was all for Arthur's starting easy, waiting for Jake, and then trying to play the pass and repass game. Jimmy at first suggested that Arthur should dash off with a wet sail; he'd got what was practically a Brooklands bus under him, and Nos. 1 and 2 were outsiders. Let him try to lap at 90; then Jake would open right up, and if he couldn't find him in a lap or two laps would get anxious, and start to burn up the roads.

Elkins demurred. "Jake is as smart as a cage full of ferrets. You bet he knows just what his bike can do, and what it can't. If he can't catch Arthur at 88 he'll settle down to his own speed and hope for a blow-up."

So the riding orders were framed. Arthur was to try to hit off laps as near 88 m.p.h. as possible, on the chance that the Hurricane with the filigree engine would last three laps, and that by that time Jake would get impatient and try to do something about it. Arthur did not sleep much that night.

\* \* \* \*

Oddly enough, there was something quite steady about this sacrifice business. If Arthur had been riding to finish or to win he would have been all of a fever and a fidget at the post. But as he was gleefully, almost maliciously, resigned to being marked up with a big red "R" on the giant scoreboard before half distance he felt no nervousness at all. His brain was just a little pan of ice. Keen and amused are the terms which best describe his mental attitude.

"Gosh! that youngster's cool," remarked a veteran Pressman on the gridiron. "To look at him, who'd guess that half the Island count on him to win and disappoint the Tornado crowd? There isn't a twitter in him. He might be queueing up for twopenn'orth of fish and chips!"

CRASH! Ebby heartlessly despatched No. 1, who, though never a star, got a cheer which was actually a release of the crowd's pent-up excitement. No. 2, another slow man, got a cheer because it would have been hard luck on him if he hadn't. But Arthur, No. 3, got an ovation because he was a green youngster challenging one of the historic cracks, and with every paper chance of licking him. No. 4 departed almost unnoticed, and

**Pacemaker's Luck—**

then Jake, as No. 5, got the counter-cheers of all the fans his brilliant riding for the past ten years had deservedly won for him.

Watches were snapped on the dial signals, and, as ever, proved nothing. A low buzz of tense chatter rustled over the packed stands. Exclamations greeted the flick of an index to "C"—No. 3 has reached the Craig! Gosh, it is going to be a fast lap. Arthur's red lamp shone out, and almost simultaneously the low mutter of his exhaust arrived from Governor's Bridge. It deepened to a snarl—the snarl turned to a roar—the roar to an impact on the eardrum, and with a shattering crash of sound a black blur flashed across the serried colours of the stationary concourse.

Ten thousand necks jerked right a few seconds later as No. 5's red lamp showed, and innumerable watches clicked as the Tornado imitated the Hurricane's defiance of space and time. Nobody trusted amateur timing. Impatient men stared at Chronograph Villa—abused the Boy Scout with his time card.

At last! "Arthur's done 88½—here's Jake's time—he's eight seconds behind. Multiply eight by seven laps—Waite can win by best part of a minute!"

A perfect babel of speculation and dispute broke out during which many first-class riders shot through almost unnoticed, including cool, astute Jimmy, who, if the crowd had only known it, was sitting pretty to win.

The mad procession surged on. Half-way round Jake was shown a board, rigged by 'phone from a private house. It bore the letter "H" chalked at the bottom. H being the eighth letter of the alphabet, and being written at the foot of the board, meant he was led by 8 secs. He cursed, and instinctively began to ride a tiny shade harder.

**Nothing to Lose**

Arthur meanwhile, 68 secs. ahead on starting time, could not of course ride to any close speed schedule. Not even Woods and Guthrie can do that. His motor was running beautifully, and felt so well within itself that he decided he was not going hard enough; and warming to his task, he too accelerated fractionally. So when the crazy reel bisected Douglas again Arthur was actually 19 secs. ahead of the whole field on corrected time; and when poor Jake next sighted that fatal blackboard the chalk was along its lower edge, and this time showed *two* white letters—A I—instead of one.

It was at this moment that Jake's judgment deserted him, for the first time since he became a mature racer. He *ought* to have said "My engine won't stand any more thrashing; and I'm not safe if I cut things any finer. I'll chance this kid piling up."

What he actually said was "Damme if I'm going to be outridden by a greenhorn." So he began to scream the motor on its lower gears, to delay his braking, to wrench his corners, and generally to ignore all the racecraft which ten years had given him. Meanwhile Arthur, with nothing to lose, genius surging within him and a rather perforated Brooklands engine beneath him, was doing ditto very merrily. And on Lap 3, when Jake sighted his damnable blackboard out in the hinterland for the third time, it read—B.G.

A sizzling oath escaped Jake's tight lips. "Twenty-

seven seconds ahead, is he? I'll show him!" And he went berserk. So much so that a trade magnate at Hillberry who had fluttered a fiver on Arthur laid a saver on Jake when that worthy shot the corner like a 15in. shell on flat trajectory.

Meanwhile the outwardly imperturbable Elkins, whose heart was secretly jammed somewhere in his Adam's apple, remained dumb in response to all questions and congratulations, and merely showed Arthur a regular "Hold it!" signal on every lap. The tactics might not work. Jake's engine might stick it, of course; but anyhow he had done what he meant, and Arthur was a marvellous lad and worth his weight in gold.

Came a hush—that atmosphere of tension which heralds a disastrous announcement at T.T. headquarters. The anxiety became articulate when a girl squeaked "Isn't No. 3 late at Kirkmichael?" He certainly was!

**Mixed Tactics**

A T.T. leader rides in the noise and sensation of an explosion produced to infinity; and when that shattering roar changes without warning to the scrunch of disintegrating metal one is taken aback and bewildered. Luckily for Arthur he remembered Elkins' final hissed warning: "Keep your hand on the clutch lever and listen for the scrunch!" Arthur was a trifle late declutching, but he got the wrecked engine freed from the back wheel just in time to avert a fatal and uncontrollable skid. He coasted to rest, hopped off, felt for his fags, and peered up the road for Jake, who identified him at 100 miles an hour with a grin barely purged of malice by incredulous joy.

"No. 5 has passed No. 3 near Kirkmichael" blared the loud speakers all round the course. Chatter. Thrills. Commiserations. But Elkins leant against his pit, impassive, speculating. When Jimmy passed on the second Hurricane, Elkins gave him the "Hold it!" signal almost casually.

Jake, of course, eased off now; he was three minutes ahead of Jimmy, and could afford to muse happily, for now that he could cut out the hot stuff the race felt almost like touring. He was on velvet; but gosh! that youngster had scared him.

He quite enjoyed the next lap, but suddenly near Glen Helen his face went grey like the face of an old, old man; he was quicker than Arthur in whipping out the clutch but he liked that warning "SCR-R-R-R-UNCH" a whole lot less; for you see it had figured in Arthur's tactics; but not in Jake's.

\* \* \* \*

When the Governor handed Jimmy the Senior Tourist Trophy at the Villa Marina that evening there were the usual yells of "Speech!" Jimmy had heretofore always dodged that speech with his bashful, disarming grin, but his pals, to their amazement, saw that he was actually going to say a few words for once.

"I want to thank Mr. Elkins for all he did to ensure my win," he said. "And above all I want to thank the man who broke up faster men in front of me—young Arthur Waite. . . ." In the applause that followed they suddenly saw that Jimmy had not finished. They quietened down; and when he concluded—"my pacemaker, and next year's Senior winner!" you could almost have heard their yells at Liverpool.