

Some pictures of a cycle speedway event were identified recently as being taken on a bomb-site on Balsall Heath Road. Further investigation revealed the club is still going today!

The origins of the club go back to 1947 when Charlie Humphrey who lived in Balsall Heath Road and attended Dennis Road School was shown a cycle speedway bike by one of his school friends and began laying the outline of a track on a bomb-site in Balsall Heath Road. Charlie and his friends raced against each other on the basic track and the best of the pioneer riders was Ray Goode whose father, Frederick Goode, took an immediate interest and set about organising a club which, in 1948, joined the Birmingham and District League. The intention was to call the club Balsall Heath Panthers, but Mr Goode thought the name too parochial and so they became Birmingham Lions instead. The track was levelled and surfaced with rolled cinders, with a circumference of 118 yards and the team developed into a major force in local racing.



Although the Balsall Heath Road track was on a bomb-site, the circuit soon boasted a safety fence, public address system, and floodlights with Sunday morning fixtures attracting large crowds.

The Balsall Heath Road track was lost to redevelopment in 1961 and so the membership reconstructed a disused circuit in Kent Road, Quinton. There were soon more problems when Halesowen Council refused permission for it to be used for cycle speedway and the club were homeless again. Another disused track was soon located at Oldbury a few miles outside the City in Old Park Lane.