Is it the Original?

I started collecting Speedway programmes in 1963 and then badges in 1965, so I was around when, as far as I know, the first reproduction programmes were produced in 1963, followed by badges about 1966/67.

When it comes to buying something, you would expect to pay less for a reproduction, but like all areas of collecting, whether through ignorance or downright dishonesty, some will try to sell the repros as the genuine article.

Based on my own experience (yes, I've been stung a few times also!), the following identifies some of the differences I know of between the original and the remake, together with some general guidelines.

As I specialise in mainly pre-1960 stuff, this is the area mainly covered. Obviously my knowledge is not fully comprehensive and any additional feedback is welcome.

BADGES

A good starting point would be to compare with someone who already has the genuine article & with the advent of the Web, you could even get your friend to e-mail you a JPEG if you cannot see the original in the flesh. Alternatively, you could view the Old Badge Gallery on this site to see if an original is displayed and described.

Some general pointers to remakes of pre-1960:-

Quite a lot of the remakes were advertised in Speedway Star Classified Ads during the 60s & 70s, so if you have access to such old editions, you will have some indication as to which badges were copied.

If you come across a badge with the date bar lugs filled in with metal, then it"s a remake. This occurred in the late 60's/early 70's with quite a few of the repros produced. Some fraudsters tried boring holes but generally these were crudely done and either the hole made broke the outer ring or the hole was uneven in shape. Some even broke the lugs off so look for filing marks and treat with suspicion.

W Reeves & Co Ltd did not produce Speedway badges prior to 1970s at 30 or 30/33 Tenby St, so if you are offered a pre-1960 stamped with Reeves on the back (e.g. 1949 Tamworth) it's a repro!

Likewise, Gladman & Norman who produced badges post-1945, changed works address from Spencer St to Tenby St in 1968. Therefore, any badges with the Tenby St address claimed to be for earlier dated badges (e.g. 1951 Cardiff, 1960 Liverpool) are repros.

Pre-war badges produced by Caxton had the stamp Caxton Name Plate Co London, or Caxton Name Plate Co Westminster. In the late 50's the works moved and badges were franked with Caxton Kew Surrey. This resulted in production of repros in the late 60's such as 1935 Hackney lapel, which had the Kew address on the back.

A lot of repros are missing the makers name or have the wrong name and/or works address.

Of course, not all badges had a makers name to start with, so this sometimes made the task more difficult, but one tell tale sign on a lot of the earlier remakes was the presence on small raised blister/bump on the back of the badge which probably occurred during the casting process (e.g. 1930 Stamford Bridge, 1962 Neath).

With the advent of some reproductions stating “copy”, “reproduction”, “remake” etc. on reverse, some fraudsters have tried to conceal this by various means, so always closely check for such doctoring.

The latest "con" I've noticed is that genuine relatively modern badges are having old date bars attached & advertised as "Vintage" - e.g. a 1984 Birmingham badge with a yellow 1947 date bar recently.

Over time, unless badges have been stored in a controlled environment, expect to see some form of tarnish and/or verdigris appearing on the reverse bare metal. Therefore takes this into account when offered a gleaming version of a badge which is supposed to be more than 50/60 years old.

Known Remakes:-

Unless otherwise stated, the badges referred to can also be viewed via the Old Badge Gallery.
Only badges which were **not** franked "copy", "remake", "reproduction", etc, are described here.

1950 Aldershot (pin) - This is one where you require to look at the fine detail of cannon by comparing with an original. I seem to recall the absence of date bar lugs on the remake

c.1947 Birmingham Perry Barr (pin) - the colours on the remake are different and centre brass a bright yellow and thicker in texture than the normal bronze appearance of the original

c.1952 Birmingham Perry Barr (pin) - one of the remakes has solid filled in date bar lugs

c.1960 Birmingham Perry Barr (pin) - one of the remakes has solid filled in date bar lugs

1947 Bradford Odsal (pin - Fattorini) - the remake either has no maker's name or another maker's name on reverse for instance a remake produced by Gladman & Norman appeared in the late 1960s & is now being a advertised on eBay as genuine 1947!

c.1947 Bristol (pin) - a similar version was produced for 1960 season, you have to examine the proportions of the gloves & goggles to see the difference. I seem to recall that the remake appeared with a maker's name on reverse, possibly Gladman & Norman

1951 Cardiff Penarth (pin - Gladman & Norman) This original has a red bud at top of stem and lettering is uniform, whereas the remake (also by Gladman & Norman) produced in late 1960's has a green bud at top of stem, and a elongated "T" in SUPPORTERS. A further remake with a red bud was produced but also had a mishaped "T" & had Gladman & Norman's address as Tenby St, instead of Spencer St on reverse.

c.1930 Crystal Palace (lapel - A.E. Poston) - remake colour was paler & no maker's name

1948 Fleetwood (lapel) - the green on the remake was paler and red darker than the original and the lightning streaks, shield, & wings were of a different size

1949 Glasgow Ashfield (lapel) - remake inner "G" has a filled blue inner instead of a gold outline and might also have the tell tale raised blister on the reverse. as well as straight pin fixing, instead of a clasp or buttonhole

c.1935 Hackney (lapel - Caxton Nameplate) - remake had Caxton Kew instead of Caxton Nameplate on reverse.

c.1947 Harringay (pin) - quite difficult to tell unless comparing with original, I recall some remakes appeared with a maker's name on reverse, also lettering is larger on the remake

c.1950 Harringay (pin) - quite difficult to tell unless comparing with original, I recall some remakes appeared with a maker's name on reverse

c.1953 Harringay (pin) - quite difficult to tell unless comparing with original, I recall some remakes appeared with a maker's name on reverse

1948 Hastings (pin) - the remake was a slightly deeper red outer circle and there is only 2 horizontal bars between back of rider's leg & rear wheel, whereas original had 3 horizontal bars (need a magnifying glass to check this !)

c.1929 Lea Bridge (pin - Pullen) - remake either had no makers name or one different to Pullen, possibly Davis or Caxton Kew Surrey, on reverse.

c.1937 Leicester Stadium (pin) - prior to this being sold in mid 60s (when Leicester was not operating), none of the badge collectors I knew had come across this badge, which was offered as red & green versions in either chrome or bronze finishes,with the tell tale solid date bar lugs. The one I acquired was from a long term acquaintance from Leicestershire some years later. It might be genuine (the 1937 date bar is exactly the same shade of green as the badge), but I have my doubts.

1949 Liverpool Stanley (pin) the blue in the remake is more tourquoise than original & might not have date bar lugs

1960 Liverpool Stanley (pin - Gladman & Norman Spencer Street) - remake had white outer circle instead of blue, and some were produced in bronze, instead of original chrome Some blue outer circle repros produced, but franked Gladman & Norman, Tenby Street on reverse, however G & M moved to tenby street north many years after the Liverpool track closed.

1962 Neath (**no Gallery image available**) original has no maker's name on reverse and was only issued at time with a **lapel** fixing. The remake is pin and might also have the tell tale raised blister on the reverse.

1947 Norwich (pin - A. Roden) - remake does not have the correct maker's name and was produced in chrome instead of bronze.

1948 Norwich (lapel - Mingware) - remake does not have the correct maker's name and was produced in chrome instead of bronze.

c.1949 Norwich (lapel - Mingware) - a pin fixing with no maker's name with similar colouring, but slight differences in shape, was issued later. The remakes colours are markedly different, & bar holes might be solid.

Also there is a gold & navy blue version which was a colour scheme invented for this remake!

c.1930 Sheffield Twin Headed Riders (as per cover of 1929 Sheffield programme), blue, red & white. - original was stamped with maker's name of Fattorini on reverse.

1931 Stamford Bridge (lapel - Caxton Nameplate) - absence of makers name &/or tell tale raised blister on reverse where indications of remakes

1949 Tamworth (pin - MingWare) - apart from shade of turquoise being different, the remake does not have correct makers name on reverse

1949 Walthamstow (pin - Davis) - the original was bronze, a chrome version appeared and was touted as having been produced for the unsuccessful proposed reintroduction of Speedway at Walthamstow for 1960 season

c.1960 Yarmouth - possibly the first remake to appear in the mid 60's. Was in chrome instead of bronze & fish + helmet was of slightly different shape to original (pin)

Recent Misleading Offerings:-

Since 2000 - 2016, the so-called or implied "rare" versions of old Supporters Club badges have diversified into other variations as follows:-

Retrospective Productions:-

These are newly designed badges, privately produced in small batches recently, that are indicating they were issued from an earlier era, usually for tracks that were closed a considerable time ago. They do not copy an original design, but will incorporate the club colours and name. There have been several West Ham retrospectives produced since 1990, and the most recent example is an orange & black small New Cross race jacket, complete with attached 1960 date bar. New Cross closed in 1963 and I knew several of the keen London badge collectors of the mid 60s and the only badge they bought at the track for the sixties was as per the shield type displayed in the Old Badge Gallery.

Dipped/Stripped/Unenamelled:-

Although chrome and gilt versions of track badges have become increasingly commonplace since the mid 1960s, the vast majority of Supporters club badges previously issued at tracks were of a single metallic background. There were some that were produced in both chrome and gilt versions, such as the pre-war Wimbledon flying "W", 1937 WestHam (large hammers), pre-war Bristol double header, 1953 Edinburgh.

Also individual supporters of various Midland tracks, such as Birmingham, Coventry, and Leicester had their gilt badges electroplated locally to a chrome finish, which they considered enhanced the appearance of the badge.

However, there are now appearing chrome versions of old original supporters badges that were only sold as gilt versions at the tracks, and likewise gilt badges that have had the original chrome coating electrochemically removed. These are being offered as "rare" versions - as they were never sold as such at the tracks and were subsequently altered privately, should they now be considered "rare"?

There are also unenamelled originals being offered as "rare" versions.

As far as I am aware the only unenamelled badge that was directly sold from a track was the New Cross Maltese Cross design, produced by different manufacturers between 1934 - 53. For 1946, apparently due to immediate post-war material shortages, an unenamelled version was sold, together with an unenamelled 1946 date bar.

There have also been some surplus unenamelled defunct track badges which have been acquired directly from badge manufacturers and sold on to collectors, so whether you consider these to be "rare", is a matter of personal choice.

However, it appears that some old original badges are having their enamel chemically removed and then being offered as "rare" versions, and in some instances, to further enhance their "rareity", they are subsequently electroplated in chrome.

It is up to the individual collector to decide whether or not they wish to buy such badges and how much they are prepared to pay, but I hope the above information will help in making a decision.

PROGRAMMES

Apart from the Ringwood referred to below, I was told the others were given away with the magazine - Speedway Graphic, in 1963

Ashfield vs Edinburgh 4/9/1951 - the copy is missing "Printed by McNAUGHTAN & SINCLAIR LTD., GLASGOW" on back page

Glasgow White City : Scottish Championship 17/10/45 - original printed on non-gloss paper and has "Printed by JAMES W. BELL LTD., Printers, 45 Renfrew Street, Glasgow, C.2" on front page

Motherwell vs Edinburgh 30/5/1952 - on page 3 the ad for F. Mills is missing the horizontal music lines through the name in the copy also the date on front cover, the "3" in 30th is incomplete

Plymouth vs Exeter (Devon Derby) 1954 ? - this was also reprinted but that's all I recall

Wigan: Promoters Trophy 24/6/1960 - the red print of the original is darker and the paper is non-gloss

Warsaw vs Belle Vue 23/10/1955 - the original was poor quality paper, typical of Polish programmes of 50s/early 60's whereas replica was printed on better quality paper (might have been semi glossy)

Ringwood vs Rye House 12/9/1954 - copy was produced in 1974 by a Midlands Printer and was smaller than original's size and was in green print on white paper, whereas Ringwood's were black print on either either pink/buff/pale blue paper.

Fleetwood vs Edinburgh 13/4/1948 First Ever Meeting - This was distributed with the Fleetwood defunct Track booklet around 2010 - 15. The original has stiff paper front & back covers and pages 5 -12 were printed on pale green paper. Furthermore, on the front cover, the whole of the bottom green band sits behind the red centrepiece in the original. You can view the image of the original on the Old Programmes Gallery.