

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

Start Line

Issue: 02/12

www.wigtonmc.co.uk

February 2012

Champions All!



Eileen Horsfall 2011 Club Champion



Angela Jones 2011 Field Champion

WMC - Ahead of the pack

Diary

Club events over the next month or so

Winter Pub Run

Sunday February 5th

Starts at 10.00 at Rheged and finishes at
the George in Penrith

Ring Charles Graves on 01768 776551 to book your place

Entry fee £7.00 per person

Wine Tasting

at the Skiddaw Hotel

7pm Wednesday 22nd February

£15.00 per person including Pate and Cheese Platter

Ring Charles on 01768 776551

WIGTON MOTOR CLUB LTD

Officials

President:	Stuart Turnbull	
Vice Pres.	Stan Glaister, Ron Palmer & David Turnbull,	
Chairman	Jim O'Neill	01768 870236
Vice Chair	Graeme Mactavish	016973 44542
Sec/Editor	Graeme Forrester	01900 825642
Treasurer	Debbie Rushton	01900 824831
Memb. Sec.	Liz O'Neill	01768 870236
Social Sec.:	David Agnew	01946 841455
Child Protection	Alan Jackson	01900 828428

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Lynda Graham.	01228 534483
Andrew Graham	01228 534483
Ron Palmer	01228 575153
Charles Graves	01768 776551
David Wiggins	016973 49488
Peter Garforth	016973 21762
Chris Leece	01768 867576
David Rushton	01900 824831
Roger Pope	01900 827181

Talking Point

Topical comment from the world of motoring

It seems that in today's society you can be rewarded for being stupid or talentless, certainly if "reality" or "talent" shows on TV are concerned. Indeed the idea of rewarding folk has reached epidemic proportions. Children are rewarded for good (normal) behaviour at school and if you go on a work course you may well get a certificate for being there.

Sport seems to be no different with every type of sport have all manner of medals, certificates and rewards for the smallest "achievement". Motorsport is no different of course, look at any rally championship and the chances are that if you do enough rounds you will get a pot at the end of the season regardless of whether you actually beat anyone else. In speed events we have innumerable classes for essentially very similar cars that do very similar times.

Much of the reasoning behind this is of course getting folk to do the events by making it easy to achieve some sort of status at the end. You might be "British Novice under 25 Lady navigator in a Group N5 car Champion" but how many other folk were trying to win that "title"? On the other hand you can go to your sponsor and justify their input by telling them that you won a title. But is there any real satisfaction by effectively winning something by default? Would it not be better to just hand out finishers awards of some sort? With the number of folk able to afford to do a full season in a championship declining due to the economic situation we will see some of the more capable drivers lose out in terms of awards to those who can afford to do all the rounds, albeit at a much slower pace.

On a related subject I get a bit fed up when reading the motor sporting weeklies about "Fred Bloggs, Formula XYZ star driver" and the like, all about folk I've never heard of. Everyone is a star nowadays! It will no doubt emanate from press releases they put out themselves but does it seem everyone likes being a big fish in a small pool. Talk about ego massaging! Of course I can justifiably claim to be the star racing driver in Blindcrake!

Can I make an important plea on behalf of our membership secretary and all our event entry secretaries? Please do write (print) your details clearly on any form and do fill in all the sections on them. This makes their lives so much easier and saves so much time. So often email addresses are difficult to read and as you will know these have to be typed in perfectly in order for them to work. Also please do send your form (membership or entry) to the right person and not rely on one committee member to pass it on to another which of course may take until a committee meeting to happen.

There will soon be plenty of events to enter so do please help us by entering in good time and not at the last moment. A) we need to know the event has enough entries to be viable and b) there is a lot of printing, organisation, ordering rally plates and awards - all of which depend on the actual number of entries.

GTF



**Editor: Graeme Forrester, Clints Cottage, Blindcrake, Cockermouth,
Cumbria, CA13 0QP. 01900 825642**

Email: gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk

The opinions expressed in this issue of Start Line are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Club

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Let's Go Karting for Kids

The **Solway Classic Weekend** of 2010 supported the supply of new information boards in the car parks in Cockermouth. The 2011 event is supporting Let's Go Karting for Kids at the Rowrah circuit. This will take place sometime in the Spring. We need to collect a list of names of un15 year olds who are interested in the taster karting sessions. Firstly we are asking members and friends if any family members are interested. If so please email gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk.

Adults are also welcome but they will have to pay.

Classic Column

- Just to correct the details in the January edition re the FBHVC survey. The worth of the classic vehicle hobby is over 4 billion pounds per annum.
- This month's Race Retro Show at Stoneleigh will feature Porsche 956 and 30 years of Honda Racing as well as racing MG Bs of course!

Brockbanks Solicitors Cross Border Speed Championship 2012

Nation	Round	Club	Venue	Date	Day	Event
S	1	EACC	Kames	April	15th Sun	Sprint
E	2	York	Teesside	June	4th M	Sprint
E	3	KLMC	Barbon	June	16th Sa	Hill Climb
S	4	SoSCC	High Auldgirth	July	22nd Sun	Hill Climb
E	5	Longton	Three Sisters	Aug	5th Sun	Sprint
S	6	MSCC	Forrestburn	Aug	26th Sun	Hill Climb
E	7	BARC	Harewood	Sept	23rd Sun	Hill Climb
S	8	WMC	Kames	Sept	30th Sun	Sprint

In the event of a round not taking place the hill climb at Harewood on September 22nd will be included. The best six scores to count.

Regulations and entry forms are on the website.

Advertising

We can now offer advertising space in Start Line
This can be monthly or specific periods, whole pages or banners
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Kenyan National Cross Country Championship – Round 2

Thought you might be interested to hear about the Cross Country Rally at the weekend. I was navigating for Simon Sharpe again in his 400+bhp platz. A two day rally. The first day had a 80km stage and then the second had a 70 and a 40.

We were seeded car no. 2 on the road on the first day. We overtook car no. 1 within 6km from the start. The navigation was tricky on the first half of the first stage. We didn't get lost due to (if I say so myself) some clever work on Google earth however it appeared that those who did get lost didn't do a loop and so one car was quicker than we were. No matter. Two river crossings. lots of charging through mud, very wet!! It was only on the next day did I notice I had two roof vents to close rather than the one I could see with my helmet on, so no wonder I got wet!

We were going OK until about three quarters of the way through where we wrong slotted and lost about 4min. However when we got back on the road, Sharpie got his bit between his teeth; I didn't call a single caution in the notes which turned out to be a huge ditch. The car was handling a bit funny (it turned out later we had lost a rear arm bush and were running with a rear axel which had +/- 10 deg of variable toe in/out...)

We hit this ditch at speed and were launched in the air so that it felt like we were going to do a forward roll, Sharpie yelled hang on and nailed it, so the car accelerated, however we were accelerating off the road into the bush at about 60 - 70mph... We landed and bounced and then hit a bush, BANG, hit another bush BANG (each bush had big rocks in them) we came to a halt and the car was making a racket... Sharpie jumped out and said, it's fine it's only got a puncture. We changed that and then jumped back in, No joy! Lots of banging and the front wheels were not moving! After another look we realised the front prop had sheared and was jamming the front wheels. After lots of abuse on the car we got the prop loose and headed 1.5km into the intermediate control, the marshals told us the car was leaking fuel and were keen we stopped!! They had heard us coming and then heard a big bang!

It turned out the broken prop had snapped the brake pipes, severed the oil cooler pipes and put a hole in the sump. After about 2 minutes in the control sucking our teeth, the next car on the road caught us up (we must have been leading by 10+minutes before we wrong slotted) We spent the next 30 mins or so fixing the car to drive out of the stage, however sharpie (whose day job is running a rally garage) managed to fix it! I changed another tire (its rim was dented and catching on the caliper - the other puncture was caused by a 3" dent to the front rim) - In we get helmets on and off we go! - No brakes and hole in the sump!

The next route note was wrong and we spent a while getting lost before we found the route and tootled to the finish... We saw a couple of tortoises on the way and I mentioned to sharpie there might be a moral in the story after all!...

Because the notes were wrong, lots of people didn't get to the finish from the right direction and so accrued penalties. Even though we had driven the last 15km via a 15km detour at slow speed we managed not to do too badly!

We made it to the rest halt, I jumped out and plotted the route for the next day and sharpies mechanics set about fixing the; Sump, front prop, brakes, panhard rod, oil cooler, gps power cable, the anti roll bar clamps had sheared and we were sporting a huge dent in the 4mm 3" steam pipe bull bar. Next morning I ate a croissant for breakfast, anymore and I would be sick - nervous.

Got into the car at 0715 and queued up in a row of cars for a convoy to the first stage. It was only then that sharpie noticed the steering wheel was at the wrong angle... Convoy moves off with out us... In the time it took for the convoy to move we had one of the mechanics to the car, brought out the wheel gun with the right socket, sharpie buzzed the nut holding on the steering wheel,



wheel off. nut on and we joined the back of the convoy...

They are used to fixing cars!!

We started car no. 3 on SS2 and were up to 1st in about 15km, we wrong slotted lost 3 min and took another 10km to get back into the action then we lost the road and we lost a further 6 mins. We started to claw back some places and we chasing the leading bikes when the back end started getting loose! very loose!! We carried on for about 5km before sharpie stopped and realised we had a puncture which had dissolved the rear tyre to shreds - Another tyre change!! Burnt my fingers on the tyre! - Next time will put gloves in the glove box - it is what its there for!

Back in the car and 6km to the finish...

We had only lost about 5-7 mins but when we stopped noticed that the two spare tyres had bounced out of the back; thankfully it was not me that had not tightened them down...

Our mechanic once again set about fixing the car, service was extended and so after 30min the car was ready to go again, I had charmed a lady into donating one of her spare tyres to the cause ("I am sure we will not have to use it" (we had smashed three rims, shredded one tyre, and lost a tyre and two rims in the past 24 hours)

Back in the car and 5km transport to the next stage.

We started number 9 and had overtaken everyone at about 30km into the stage. We were having problems though, the gearbox had overheated and melted our speedometer sensor so we had no rally computer and the GPS was not designed to do what we now wanted it to do! We had also lost the intercom, - or so I thought, it was only afterwards that sharpie told me that his was still working and he was being deafened with me shouting at him.

We made a nav error and then noticed that there was smoke in the cabin, I looked down and saw a black line develop on the painted white floor; the time card had also slipped onto the floor and was starting to smoke, "I think we are on fire?" Sharpie stopped the car. Normally when there is a problem I stay in my seat all buckled up while he has a look. This time I was out that car like a rat out a drain pipe! "No no we are not on fire.... hang on... YES WE ARE !!"

Sharpie yelling at me to get the fire extinguisher, grab it, pull the pin and put some blasts onto the fire. Sharpie pulls out his (which nozzle was missing) and empties the entire thing in half a second! - I am like a snowman covered in sherbet, but at least I know I am out!

Rally over... Or so I thought. How far is it to the end? 5km. After a few minutes we get back in the car and head off. We find the route and tootle into the finish control. Again no brakes.

We end up finishing 7th car 1 hour after the leaders. Not bad considering we have had;

Three flat tyres (all on the left hand side of the car)

One 'off' which put a big dent on the left hand side of the bull bar.

One fire on the left hand side of the engine (notice any pattern developing..)

Competed for 25km+ with no brakes.

Electrical gremlins cause the GPS to fail on the first day, and the rally computer to fail on the second day!

Crispin Kennedy

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PORTUGAL, Oct 12/25 2011

by Kirk Rylands

Someone suggested we drove down to the Historic Race Meeting at Portimao which sounded like fun but, with a bit of brain fade, I had confused it with Porto where there have been races in the past. The difference is an extra 600 miles. Not a problem but a fair hike in an old car simply to watch other people having fun. Portugal is worth seeing though so we had our own little jolly with some chums in their "Peter Jaye" C type. This is not some plastic look-a-like with independent suspension and 15" wheels but a perfect copy complete with FIA papers so, for all practical purposes, the real deal. We took our XK140 roadster which has done many long trips including Jordan and New Zealand.

The ferry from Portsmouth to Santander is highly civilised and arrives at lunchtime leaving plenty of time to cover the 130 miles to Oviedo on the most outstanding roads through the Picos Mountains avoiding motorways. Perfect surface, fantastic scenery, long sweeping bends that you can 'straight line' without lifting off and following one of the most desirable Jaguars. The main hazards being goats and pilgrims but happily we avoided both.

We spent two nights at the Parador in Santiago de Compostella, now a beautiful hotel right beside the Cathedral but originally a hostel and hospital for the pilgrims dating from 1499. Apparently the roads were plagued by bandits and if they didn't get you, the chances were that fellow pilgrims would beat you up and steal your cash. Given the implausibility of the St James burial in Santiago de Compostella, it is difficult to see how such a place became a centre for pilgrimage but I suspect that I am somehow missing the point. Nevertheless, a beautiful and interesting city well worth seeing.

The roads down to Porto were nothing special and there is a lot of real grot along the coast. Alanah (wife) is a very good navigator but our map was 10 years old which doesn't usually matter but the area is criss crossed with new motorways that were not shown - all built with EU money I suspect.

Central Porto is not unlike many other European cities but perhaps a little more down at heel. However the river side is splendid. There are two magnificent bridges built by Eiffel - as in Tower - that span the gorge. They are in fine condition but what is so good is that they have not fallen victim to some prat from 'ealth 'n saefty'. With the greatest of ease, you can caste yourself into oblivion from the top deck and end it all or perhaps stepping backwards under a train might be more to your taste. I simply strolled into the centre of the bridge and admired the view over the city and the river at night. Either way, your safety depends on common sense unlike in the UK.

Other attractions were the Transport Museum that was worth seeing but more for the building than the contents, the original but restored trams and the famous Port houses like Cockburns, Croft, Dow, Sandeman etc. Having been comprehensively drunk under the table as a youth on port, I have always been rather wary of it but our visit to Taylors with all it's history was surprisingly interesting and well presented. That evening, we had dinner outside on the quayside beneath Eiffel's illuminated and magnificent bridge, a sight I shall long remember.

Both the C type and the 140 were going well although my brakes were irritating in that they were sticking on for a few seconds after each application, so I tried to avoid using them. We set off from Porto to follow the River Douro valley which is full of olive groves, vines and fruit trees. The river is navigable pretty well right up to the Spanish border but there were some tricky rapids for the boats to negotiate laden with barrels coming down to the famous port houses. The boats are still there but the wine now comes by tanker.

Obidos is understandably one of Portugal's jewels and consists of a 12th century walled village with a castle at one end, now a Pousada where we stayed. A delightful place and I shall long remember the sense of history as I watched the sun go down, whilst sipping a brandy on the battlements, after dinner. Commercialism is slightly rampant in places epitomised by a shop with a willie fixation - mugs with willies for handles and lollipops similarly shaped but there were nice shops too. There are various ruined castles in the area but we never really discovered who they expected to fight.

Next stop was Belmonte with another 12th century castle but here ‘ealth ‘n saefty’ had managed to ruin it - smooth steps more suited to a public loo and one is not allowed to walk round the walls or go up the main tower so a complete waste of time. We stayed in another pousada – a converted ‘convent for men’ which I found confusing although beautifully restored with magnificent views. Next stop was Braganca with another castle. This time very well preserved, unlike the rest of the old town, and with a definite purpose in warding off the marauding Spanish. Quite by chance there was serious military activity culminating in parachutists dropping out of the sky and landing in the town square which added to the general air of excitement and coincided with the first rain we had encountered on the trip.

On leaving Braganca, we stuck to the most obscure roads we could find and crossed into Spain up a cobbled village street no wider than a garden path, before winding our way up into spectacular mountain scenery. Whilst there is almost no traffic out in the wilds and the roads are little more than single track, the surface is usually very good but when it’s bad, it means it. Our destination was Fuente de, about 60 miles from Santander and deep into the Picos Mountains. We got caught in some proper rain. The decision is do you stop and put the hood up, which is not quick and easy on our XK, or do you try to keep above 40 mph when most of the rain goes over you – easier said than done on those convoluted mountain passes in poor visibility and with every chance of coming round a corner into a herd of cows complete with bells.

The C type was leading when they spotted a tiny bar in the middle of nowhere that looked deserted but there was a light on so we stopped for a quick coffee. Inside it was stuffed with drunks having a great time so our women had a stiff ‘fundador’ to chase down the espresso and we were soon involved in a most animated conversation in a language none of us speak with people who clearly thought we were potty. The paradors at Fuente de is perfectly adequate if a little soulless being largely modern but this is more than made up for by the stunning location ten miles up a cul de sac in a huge natural amphitheatre with towering cliffs on three sides. An easy run to Santander the following morning via the inevitable super market that is unavoidable and even though I point out the lack of space, “management” always manages to squeeze in endless bottles and smelly cheeses. Sitting on the dock in pouring rain behind the C type made us glad of our hood. They were huddled under our umbrella looking particularly miserable so the loading crew took pity and we were both swiftly waved on board.



A great trip which was easy to arrange – one phone call to Britany Ferries - the ticket cost £500 with a cabin for two and a call to the UK agents for the Paradors and Pousadas which cost roughly £1500 for 10 nights including the geriatric’s discount that starts at 55 so about £75 per person per night for some pretty posh hotels. On top of that, there is drink, dinner and petrol which add up but a lot less than many of the continental rallies I see advertised. We covered 2529 miles home to home at 21.58 mpg. A modern diesel would

make more sense but a lot less fun and you miss so much of the scenic grandeur in a closed car. We have RAC European cover which is reassuring and served us well when the Bentley clutch flew apart a couple of years ago. Spain and Portugal have their grotty bits heaven knows, but they are easily avoided and both countries contain some fantastic driving roads in the most historic of places that are easy to get to.

Kirk

Elderly Utterances

The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say

For 2012 the Gallop is heading north to the Lowlands of Scotland with two nights at the Old Mill Hotel at the New Lanark Heritage Centre. The three day touring event has attracted almost a full entry already with numbers now limited by the remaining available accommodation at the hotel. So if you are interested in a run act now. We have some interesting venues to visit with lunch on the Saturday being taken at Knockhill Racing Circuit and that afternoon we visit the Falkirk Wheel, a modern day heritage experience not to be missed. And there is much more... Call us on 01228 575153 or e-mail ron-palmer777@hotmail.com for full details.

The Lake District Classic Rally will run this year on the 15th July and the route is already finalised with three straight forward regularities, simple but varied navigation with ample plotting time and fourteen 'forward only' tests. Whatever classic car you have should negotiate the tests without the need for reversing and if you only want to do the tests and leave the navigation for others we have the event for you. We have downgraded the need for an MSA competition licence so that for this year you need only to be a member of Wigton MC. This will no doubt increase our entry over last year as the need for a licence in 2011 apparently created a problem for some potential entries then. Everyone is most welcome to this year's event.



Those of us fortunate enough to own a classic will no doubt be somewhat taken aback by the world record price paid for a 1955 Austin Healey 100/4 at auction in the summer. This rather worn example (see photo) of an ex works prototype BN/1 registration number NOJ393 realised the sum of £843,000 at the Bonham Brooklands sale. Described as in barn-find condition its big attraction was the provenance that was attached to this machine as it was the Le Mans car that was involved in the disastrous incident at the 1955 race, when driven by Lance Macklin, which claimed a huge number of lives and changed the course of the race for ever. H&H Auctions have a date in February at Buxton when they have two versions of the 100/4 for sale, a 1954 model with an estimate of £40,000/£50,000 and a 1955 version at £25,000/£30,000. All of this will no doubt put a smile on the faces of both Stuart Turnbull and Keith Graham who both have nice examples of this Healey, but

what a huge difference the provenance of a car can make.

Those of you who know of Philip Young will have been aware of his latest epic the London to Cape Town World Cup Rally which by the time you read this will have finished having spent twenty nine days in January completing this great adventure. There are those who scoff at those taking part in these jaunts but if you and I had a spare pot of gold wouldn't it be nice to undertake a real adventure with our motor cars. I do not propose to give a blow by blow account of the event because if you were interested you

PG Tips

Happy New Year to all and it is with great pleasure that I can announce a car change after my thoughts last month! No more diesel for me, just good old petrol V6 power attached to one of the least reliable French cars of the modern era (Laguna 2) – so its high fuel bills and lots of visits to the garage for me this year probably....the up side is that it sounds absolutely phenomenal!

I've been buying a lot of tyres of late for one reason or another and it's fair to say there is a massive differential in the cost of them. The range starts with suspicious Chinese brands that you've never heard of such as Nang Wong Ditchfinders and then moves to mid range things such as Firestone and Toyo and finally onto premium brands such as Continental and Avon. The gulf in price between premium and budget is always vast – normally one premium tyre will buy 2 budget tyres and in sizes that are widely used prices for different sized wheels seem to be the same too. So if you have a supermini on 14" wheels, budget tyres start at around £50 and premium tyres start at around £100. If you have a rep mobile on 16" wheels the prices are the same, which was the oddest thing of the lot for me, because the 16" tyre must contain a lot more material than the 14" tyre. In terms of performance I believe the gulf between premium and budget is as big as the price difference with braking distances at 60mph being up to 10 metres different according to a recent test in Evo magazine. None of this has stopped me from consistently buying the cheapest tyres known to man for my road cars, after all if I had really good Continental tyres I would be able to go a lot faster, brake later and accelerate harder thereby getting me into more trouble and probably adding points to my now clean licence. That's what I tell myself anyway!

I read GFs column last month - having a pop at Nissan for making cars that he doesn't approve of and I would like to rally to their defence and say that I think the Juke is a damn fine looking vehicle, unusual admittedly, but if they were making ordinary looking cars I've no doubt they would be getting slated for being bland! The fact that the Duke has sold like hot cakes and there is a lengthy wait to get a new one supports my position I think. Far too many modern cars are very blanda lot of cars are starting to look quite samey and even the French appear to have given up producing weird stuff like they used to a decade ago (Vel Satis, Avantime, Clio V6 anyone?) probably because they lost loads of money on every car! Having said all that I am not so old that I have my rose tinted specs on and remember cars from my youth as hugely interesting vehicles that all looked different. If you look at cars of any era lined up together they do all tend to have similar design cues and characteristics and badge engineering is nothing new either – think of the Spridget or any number of 1960s and 70s Fiat clone cars. Some cars do cut a dash for their era and stand out from the crowd – I'm thinking of the VW Beetle, Ford Sierra, Citroen DS and many others over the years but by and large changes are slow and small. By its nature as a competitive money making industry most manufacturers don't want to rock the boat and stand out. As far as I can tell this hasn't changed over the years and talk of bland cars is nothing new so if Nissan want to buck the trend and make unusual cars then good for them I say.

On a final note can I just say how much I have enjoyed writing my 4 columns so far and if anyone has any feedback then please feel free to contact me, but no swearing, that's rude!

MG Cumbria **Roof of England Challenge**

Sunday 1st April 1st 2012

130 miles in the Pennines visiting places of interest.

Entry forms available on the website

Or ring Graeme on 01900 825642

would have all the information by now. Suffice to highlight but two items the first being the amount of information which it is possible to sent back to an interested audience – me - from remotest Africa. By the end of each of some 29 days the full results were available on line in the greatest detail before I went to bed. In addition a report was available by breakfast the following morning in addition to some great pictures. It was also possible to access the blow by blow accounts of individual Those of you who know of Philip Young will have been aware of his latest epic the London to Cape Town World Cup Rally which by the time you read this will have finished having spent twenty nine days in January completing this great adventure. There are those who scoff at those taking part in these jaunts but if you and I had a spare pot of gold wouldn't it be nice to undertake a real adventure with our motor cars.

I do not propose to give a blow by blow account of the event because if you were interested you would have all the information by now. Suffice to highlight but two items the first being the amount of information which it is possible to sent back to an interested audience – me - from remotest Africa. By the end of each of some 29 days the full results were available on line in the greatest detail before I went to bed. In addition a report was available by breakfast the following morning in addition to some great pictures. It was also possible to access the blow by blow accounts of individual crews posted by them on their own individual blog. Secondly the most remarkable performance for the first 12 days was the outstanding performance by Owen Turner and Matt Fowle in an MG ZR – an aging Rover 25 by any other name who had consistently lead the event against much more expensive and modern machinery.

Ron

From The Top

News from the Committee



The January committee meeting saw considerable discussion on the future plans for the Classic Show and a number of options were discussed to ensure it's long term future. Ways of promoting the club were also discussed in order to bring our activities to a wider view.

The emailed version of Start Line was proving popular and we were buying a new lap top to replace the current one for event results etc.

Plans for the awards dinner were finalised. The raffle money would be split between the Air Ambulance and the Motor Sport Safety Fund.

Debbie announced that she would like to stand down as treasurer.

Details of the Speed and historic championships were finalised. The MSport visit for marshals would be on Feb 16th at 5pm.

The venue noise test would take place on Jan 21st

We agreed to buy 12 fire extinguishers for use on special tests etc.

Marshalling: Fellside's Northern Trial

MGB50

The MG marque has endured a fairly tortuous history under many owners, several of whom were not enthusiastic about maintaining its heritage. Under the BMC banner the Austin lobby were keen to promote the Austin Healey over MG and then under Leyland Lord Stokes wanted Triumph to replace MG as the sports car brand.

The B was conceived in the late fifties when it was realised that the “A” needed a modern replacement. The A like most cars of its time had a separate chassis but the need was for a cheaper to make car with unitary construction. The B appeared in September 1962 and was based on the EX214 prototypes.

The first B (later known as Mark 1s) had the enlarged BMC B series engine of 1798cc with three bearings and a three synchro four speed non overdrive gearbox. The Pininfarina MG BGT arrived in 1965.

In 1967 the car (both roadster & GT) was updated with a four bearing engine, wider transmission tunnel, all synchro gearbox and optional overdrive.

The MG C & CGT ran from 1967 to 69 but only 9002 cars were built.

Under British Leyland the car was “Leylandised” with different trim and a recessed grill which did not go down too well. These changes were reversed on the Mk111 upgrade in 1971/2 which included an upgraded interior.

In 1973 the MG B V8 GT was produced (no roadsters were made as V8s) using the Rover V8 engine. This version also continued under the later rubber bumper form until 1978 with 2,591 cars being made.

The Nader US safety laws caused the rubber bumper models to be introduced in late 1974 with raised the ride height and the weight with the lengths of metal in the bumpers. The car continued until 1980 but some were sold in 1981. The Americans loved them and a high percentage were exported as they were to other countries.

In the seventies the MG design team were looking at a replacement model but were constantly stamped down by Lord Stokes. There were several very advanced prototypes including a mid engined car which was not given approval but the body design was used on the Triumph TR7 which of course looks as though it should have the engine at the back but was on a Dolomite pan.

The MG B was the biggest selling sports car and of course was revived with the MG RV8 in the nineties and just about every part is still available.

The B had a considerable competition career, there were rally class wins but it was never going to get outright wins once the Mini Cooper came on the scene. However there was many notable racing successes with an 11th at Le Mans in 1965 just one place behind the Graham Hill/Jackie Stewart Rover BRM. In fact it was the last time a genuine mass production car did well in the 24 hour race.

Of course the B was an icon of British sports cars, like the Jaguar E type, but more affordable, as it is to day and a remarkably high percentage are still on the road and lots are still racing.

If you want a modern version Frontline are producing one based on a Heritage shell with a MX5 engine and five speed gearbox, modern suspension, power steering, air conditioning and updated interior. Yours for £50k and only 50 are being made.



MSA News

GENERAL NEWS

MSA designates 2012: The Year of the Motor Club

The Motor Sports Association will increase its support for its registered Motor Clubs this year, as it looks to assist the sport at grass roots level through challenging times, says MSA Chief Executive, Colin Hilton.

The governing body's support will come in the form of increased financial grants, a substantial ring-fenced fund, and a new impetus from the Go Motorsport campaign to help clubs grow their membership.

The MSA Board last month approved a one-off grant of £200,000 to the Club Development Fund, on the understanding that this money would be specifically allocated for club development activity and the improvement of safety at events.

As a result, the Board has agreed to double the amount that the Club Development Fund can award to MSA-registered clubs from £2,500 to £5,000 per application. It has also been agreed that in exceptional circumstances, further grants could be made available for some club projects. As in the past these grants must be match-funded by the club, but the MSA is confident that this funding can make a substantial difference to clubs' ambitions.

"In the 15 years since it was established, the Club Development Fund has granted almost £1m to enable projects with a total value of nearly £5m," says Colin Hilton. "Last year, for the first time, we awarded more than £100,000 to assist 66 projects and with this increased commitment to the level of funding, that amount is certain to be eclipsed this year. We recognise the essential investments that clubs have to make on an on-going basis, so we try to assist them where possible through the Fund."

Go Motorsport 2012 to focus on Club development

As part of the MSA's commitment to helping its 750-strong club membership, the Go Motorsport campaign will this year evolve to focus much more on helping clubs with their marketing and promotional efforts.

Through the MSA's network of nine Regional Development Officers, dedicated assistance will be available for clubs that have demonstrated their commitment to developing their membership. These 'Development Clubs' will work with the RDOs to instigate local marketing activities, including putting on regular novice-friendly events to bring new people into the sport.

The RDOs will continue to take the motor sport message to schools and colleges in their regions, but again this will now be done in association with a representative of a local motor club or motor sport venue.

"In order to maintain a strong sport, we have to help clubs to grow their memberships," said Ben Taylor, MSA Director of Development. "We recognise that some clubs are better at this than others, while many are too busy organising events to be able to think about where the next generation is coming from. If we can provide clubs with additional resource to help them with their recruitment activity, we can start to make a real difference to the growth of the sport. We have already seen some great examples of this in action during last year's National Motorsport Week, so now we want to spread the benefit even further."

Taster Events:

Motor Sports Council approved new regulations that permit MSA-registered clubs to organise taster events to encourage first-time participation in motor sport. This was considered to be of great importance to the growth of the sport's grassroots, in line with the MSA's Go Motorsport campaign to encourage involvement at all levels.

Speed Events:

Competitors in Speed events are reminded that they are required to wear FIA homologated overalls from 1 January 2012. These can be either 1986 or 2000 FIA Standard.

Through the Windscreen

(another report by Stu sometimes sideways but forcing forwards)

From Helmsley it Started - a report on the 2011 Roger Albert Clark rally

After the experience of the snow/ice bound 2010 event we decided to enter again in the hope that conditions would be more normal & we could put on a better performance.

Whilst our car is still good in the 6 years since we built it it has covered about 1050 endurance selective miles & 650 forest stage miles & would benefit from a full check over/rebuild for the R.A.C. Well it did not happen. For a variety of reasons the final one was Linda's Mum being admitted to hospital & them passing away in early November.

We had planned to enter the Malton Forest rally as a shakedown of the rebuilt car & the various mod's we had intended to do but as we had not done an event since Greystoke in July & as distraction from the past events we fortunately still entered. I say fortunate because apart from the usual checks the only work done to the car was fitting a newly reconditioned gearbox which lasted about 10 miles before syncro expired on 3rd gear & by the end of the event 2nd gear syncro had expired as well !! (I must point out that this gearbox although overhauled by a specialist company was not done by the friends who have usually done our normally trouble free gearboxes).

So preparation for the event was another gearbox change (this & our spare overhauled by Jim Belt & worked perfect all event), the usual general checks & the only mod carried out was the fitting of round Group 4 turrets & anti tramp radius arms to the rear axle. This did involve many late nights working on the car & 2 days before the event we both said & meant it that we wished we were not doing the rally.

Our local friends Mick Smith/Paul Osmond had entered the Open rally in their 1000 Micra so we combined organisation arrangements. Geoff Jones Motorsport agreed to do Main Service (which included snacks & hot food for us & the chase crews), Mick/Paul engaged locals Wayne Smythe/John Sutton for management/chase whilst we used our good friends from Classic Rallying Mike Garstang/Dave Marsden (both of red Cortina GT/Lotus fame) for our management/chase with local Malc Skilbeck making up the team & driving Mick's van loaded with tyres etc.

As in previous years cars in the Main rally up to 1300cc ran at the front with the pre 68 Historic cars & this year it was extended to include the new Formula 1000 class in the Open rally which suited us well as it meant Mick/Paul started only 5 cars behind us.

Because of our problems prior to the event we only had one proper meeting with Mike/Dave to organise their backup but with their considerable ability/experience at rallying we were confident all would be OK. In fact within a couple of days of receiving the detailed maps/road book Mike (the organiser/navigator) had all the meeting points/times etc. sorted & Dave (Ford mechanic/driver) had the Galaxy lined out for the spares & coloured flashing lights for night time identification fitted & thereafter just liased with Linda – brilliant.

Several boxes of heavy spares & one set of wheels were delivered to Mike ready to be loaded into the Galaxy on Friday morning & the tyres for Croft & some bulky spares went into Mick's van. Snow tyres & other bulky items went into our Frontera tow car (about the only thing we had not got was a spare body shell & engine – we left them at home – I jest not)

It had been the intention to run on all S/H tyres but in a rash moment I ordered 4 new Dunlops which with the 6 S/H ones I had should be more than enough – with the snow tyres & Croft tyres we had 20 wheels !!

The Start venue was Duncombe Park near Helmsley which appeared to be ideal with a large grass showfield for the service area but it soon turned into a mud bath – fortunately estate tractors were to hand to tow people in/out.

Scrutineering/signing on usually presents no problems but our scrutineer picked up that the newly turreted rear had not been added to the cars competition log book or Historic Identity & it seemed to cause him considerable concern. The Eligibility scrutineer was summoned (with whom we are

friendly from BTRDA events & he is on our Msport Xmas card list – I'm not totally daft) who after a quick inspection just said OK & advised we get the cars paperwork amended ASAP after the event.

Duncombe Park also hosted a 2.5 mile stage which was used 4 times – 2 on Friday & 2 on Saturday and we took the opportunity to walk most of it – a good stage part gravel but mainly concrete roads made very slippery with leaves from the many trees .

After last years bumper entry the organisers had hoped for about 100 this year but no doubt due to the recession etc. numbers were down & there were only 3 foreign crews. Less than 50 cars in the Historic section & 12 in the Open event for more modern cars plus various supporting events covering part of the route the main one of which was the KallKwik rally with 22+ entries.

The pre 68 cars plus us & the F 1000 group made up 10 cars in our section & we were seeded at 2 behind Bob Bean in his Lotus Cortina – we would have preferred to be further back but you are re-seeded each morning so anything can happen.

Darkness fell & eventually Start time came & we were off – nearly had an “off” when grip was non existent braking for the second corner a 90 L then OK to the main spectator point – a downhill 90+ R then steep downhill to a hairpin L – just held it on the 90R but despite a slowish approach we spun on the hairpin so the finish board was a welcome sight ! Bit disgusted with myself but the video clips I have seen show many cars having trouble not least David Stokes who wacked a tree

So on to Dalby – we knew the first couple of miles which helped, felt we went OK & really enjoyed it, met our chase crew at the end, all OK then back to Duncombe Park for service – all OK & out to do the 2 stages again – no spins or frights this time but on the way back to service we ran out of petrol. We tend to work out our fuel requirements for each section of a rally – service to service plus a 2 gal buffer. For some reason we did not do this for Friday night – started with about 6 gals, added a gal after service but obviously not enough – our chase car arrived after a 5 min wait – because of the service area quagmire our full jerry can was still in the Frontera & Mike's two 5 litre containers had yet to be filled – the mad dash back to Pickering to fill the cans seemed to take ages then we had difficulty getting the car to restart & with only 15 mins max lateness it looked like we could go OTL. Eventually the engine burst back into life & then it was flat out where possible all the way back & we booked in with 5 mins to spare – not the way to start a long rally, we survived but a lesson learnt..

Results were in the capable hands of Tyneside Computer Services & interim results were available whenever you returned to service & we were pleased to see we had finished the first section in 27th place O/A & 1st in class. Mick/Paul were 6th O/A in the Open & also 1st in class. Overall leader was Gwyndaf Evans/John Millington over 1 minute in front of Paul Griffiths/Sam Collis followed by David Stokes/Guy Weaver then local crews Tim Piercey/Neil Shanks & Charlie Taylor/Steve Bielby needless to say all in BDG escorts

Saturday dawned to a dry cold morning & as daylight arrived came the promise of a good winters day.

Reseeding saw Bob & ourselves unchanged but Mick/Paul had moved up to 3rd. Start time was 07.51 with an hours run out to a 7 mile Langdale stage. Me, the car, Linda's map reading we all just seemed to click together & we had confidence to attack the stage & boy did we enjoy it. Met our chase as planned – all OK then of to Gale Rigg greeted by the familiar smiling faces of Tracey Cook and Graham with Commander John Roberts not far away & no doubt countless YMC members throughout the stage. Again really enjoyed the stage with no dramas, checked in with our chase then back to Duncombe Park.

Results showed that we had held our 27th place but what was a surprise was that with the exception of Tony Ginns (who we did not know) & was later to go off & drop down the order we were beating the other 3 class C2 1600cc cars which we know well & have never beaten before in our C1 car. Mick/Paul held 6th but dropped to 2nd in class the main leaders were unchanged.

Two runs of the Duncombe Park stage next then a rerun of Langdale & Gale Rigg. 1 sec slower on Langdale was put down to having to lift off due to the bright sun on two sections but were an unexplained 18 secs slower on Gale Rigg where the C2 cars beat us but with retirements we moved up to 25th O/A & had thoroughly enjoyed the morning. No changes to Mick & the leaders

50 road miles to Croft race circuit for two 4 mile stages where we expected our fortunes to change. Although I have always enjoyed the few tarmac stages we have driven I am more at home on gravel & all this talk about racers, inters, cut inters & wets just baffles me – I have tyres – gravel or road. I decided to use some half worn Silverstone 505 gravel tyres that I used before going onto Dunlops which have quite a close block pattern tread plus I want to use them up to liberate the rims. I therefore expected that our times would be very slow. Well we had a laugh – bit sideways here & there – wishing we had the power to hold it sideways – the tyres hung on well – no major lock ups for the tight chicanes – no one caught us & all very enjoyable – yes we were slower but not by much – the C2 lads beat us & so did Mick in the little Micra but we held our 25th place Felt chuffed & relieved at the same time.

Back to gravel & 6 miles of Hamsterley, it was dark, cold & raining. We did not enjoy this stage, don't know why & Linda had difficulty reading the map – up to now she had done well. Talking to others later it seems that most crews felt the same. We had been warned by Fred (of incredible stage knowledge fame) about a corner about 2.5 miles in which is tighter than it looks on the map & you are deceived by a fire break that goes straight on so no problem for us – thanks Fred but the video's show Phil Collins/Nicky Grist in the Ascona going off & rolling out of the rally on this bend & others had trouble.

The last stage of the day was Shepherdshield – back in the groove & really enjoyed it – we met Mike/Dave at the end of both stages who by now left the tool chest shut & just did the drive in windscreen service bit & kicked the tyres. Maybe another time they could expand to a full wash & valet.

Half an hours run to an early finish of 9.00pm at Carlisle racecourse. Service conditions were no better here – you had metalled roads between the grass parking areas but most areas had big puddles of water. Car checked over OK front tyres good but back changed. Enjoyed the hot food Geoff's wife Moira served & we arrived at our B & B about 10.30pm. We all had a drink in the licensed lounge before retiring close to midnight all feeling optimistic.

Results were available – our Hamsterley time was 19th quickest – 11 secs quicker than Steve Perez in the Stratos !! & Shepherdshield was only a bit slower which all helped to move us up to 22nd O/A – not bad for a single carb 1300 & still no changes to the top 5. Mick/Paul were up to 4thO/A & 1st in class in the Open .

To be continued

Jaguar Racing

Solway Jaguar invite WMC members to the Stoneybeck inn
to hear this talk by the director of Jaguar racing
20.00 on Feb 7th

'Lowland Gallop' 18th–20th May 2012

**Based in New Lanark
Full details and entry forms are available
now from Ron Palmer at
ronpalmer777@hotmail.com**

Inside the Industry

Paul Gilligan keeps us up to date

Electric Cars

My regular reader may remember that I covered this subject a few months ago. My opinion then (which hasn't changed) was that potential sales were extremely limited due to high initial cost, limited range, lack of charging points, unknown but probably very high depreciation, and unknown but probably very high cost of battery replacement. In 2011 only just over 1000 electric cars were sold in the UK, mostly I understand either in Central London or to (supposedly penniless) public sector bodies.

However our leaders disagree with me about the reasons for this dismal performance. According to our Transport Minister Norman Baker none of the problems I've identified are hurting sales: "It is the availability of qualifying electric cars rather than the public appetite for them that is the main challenge we face in developing the electric car market." With someone with such a clear view of the situation in charge of UK Transport, what can there be to fear? I stand corrected!

2011 – Tough Year Gone

The final results show UK car sales dropped by just over 4.4% last year compared to 2010. However whilst fleet sales were over 4% up, the more profitable sectors fared less well with small business sales just about static and retail (private) sales down a whopping 14%. Top winners were Lexus (+33%), Alfa Romeo (+31%), Audi (+14%), Mini (+14%), and SEAT and Skoda both +9%. Of these 6 3 are from the VW Group which seems to be making unstoppable progress.

Worst losers were Subaru (-32%), Mazda (-31%), Saab (-29% and now in bankruptcy), Renault (-28%), Fiat (-22%), Honda (-21%), Mitsubishi (-19%), Jaguar (-16%) and Peugeot (-13%). Those Japanese manufacturers without UK factories suffered badly, which makes the Honda result more difficult to explain? Also a very bad year for the French. Renault have responded by cutting the model range and terminating one-third of the dealers, which just might not be the best way to sell more cars?

BMW won the battle to be top prestige manufacturer, eventually selling just under 3000 cars more than Audi. Both were trying very hard right to the end of December, and in early January I was offered quite a few unsold BMWs that had been registered on December 31st at much higher discounts than is normal!

2012 – Tough Year Ahead

The motor industry is full of optimists, I suppose had they had a more balanced view they would have done something different with their lives. Even then it is difficult if not impossible to find anyone in the industry who thinks 2012 will be any easier than 2011. I've asked quite a few senior executives and while many will say that the new products their manufacturer is due to launch will bring them success, all agree that this will be at the expense of their competitors rather than an increased market. Everyone is of the opinion that retail sales will be tough whereas there will be some increase in the business market, the availability of credit will be an inhibiting factor for both retail and company customers, fuel consumption and emissions will become even more important. Certainly the manufacturers have been quicker off the mark with attractive offers for the fleet market than is normal. It often takes to the second half of January for things to liven up, this year my inbox started to fill up with manufacturer offers as soon as January 3rd.

When I sent seasonal greetings to the MD of a well-established medium size vehicle leasing company I asked what he hoped for from 2012. He replied "Happy New Year Paul – although I don't think it will be! My hope for 2012 is that some of the other b*****s go bust!"

One MD of a major dealer group has already announced significant job cuts for 2012 and bluntly stated: "There will be two kinds of motor dealer in 2012, the quick (to cut costs) and the dead!" Happy New Year indeed.

Bentley and Royce on Oriental Rolls

You may have noticed in spite of all the doom and gloom that both Bentley and Rolls-Royce announced record sales and profits. In both cases this was almost entirely due to dramatically increased

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sales in China. I'm not sure when these two first starting selling in that country, not very long ago I would suggest. For the first time in 2011 China was the second biggest market for Bentley, but for Rolls it was even more important with China taking more of their cars than the US!

Nice to end on good news!

Paul Gilligan

pg@gvcontracts.co.uk

Adverts

For Sale: Peugeot 205: 4x 1.6GTi Alloy Wheels: 1x 1.9GTi Alloy Wheel: Ferodo Rear Brake Pads (1.9GTi): Front windscreen rubber surround.

Vauxhall: 2.0 16v Engine and gearbox from Omega rear wheel drive, complete with electrics and injection system, ideal for Caterham / Westfield / kit car. Still in car so can be fully tested. LPG tank and complete injection system

MGF: Original throttle body (believed new) from 1.8l
Front indicator units

Contact Tim Oliver on 07899 992830 / tim.oliver@hotmail.co.uk

As new books for sale at half price:

Motor Racings Strangest Races by Geoff Tibballs £3.50

The Mechanics Tale by Steve Matchett £ 4.00

Eddie Jordan Autobiography £ 5.00

Hill Climbing & Sprinting (Guide) signed by the authors £10.00

It Beats Working by Eoin Young (HB) £ 8.00

All Arms & Elbows by Innes Ireland (HB) £10.00

How to Modify your Mini by David Vizard £10.00

Ring Graeme on 01900 825642

Red Rotor Arms for the Lucas W25 and W45 distributor as used on most classic cars of the 60s and 70s.
£6.00 each

Quality condensers for the Lucas W25 & W45 distributors, long or short wire versions. £6.00 each.

Red Line water Wetter to help solve over heating: £10.95 a bottle.

Silkolene W20/50 classic oil. 5 litre cans: £14.50

Ring Graeme on 01900 82562

MINI COOPER 1600 petrol. Reg May 2010. Colour B.R.G./Black. Extras in excess of £3500 including Xenon headlights, Chili pack and TLC package. Mileage 3995 at time of writing. Immaculate in and out. For sale at £10,000 NO OFFERS. This vehicle is due to be traded in in March, so be quick!
Contact Stan Glaister on 01228 529660

Annual Awards Dinner

January 28th

At the Skiddaw Hotel

7.00 for 7.30 start

Raffle prizes welcomed

Raffle for the Motor Sport Safely Fund and the Air Ambulance

2011 - A Novice Year

Part Two of Two
Ronnie MacGregor

Teesside 30/05/2011

Wet day. Having run with far too much fuel in the car previously, it was time to play these obsessive fuel measuring guys at their own game. Normally I would fill a tank to the brim on the basis that you have maximum range before you have to do it again. Now it was time to turn into a notepad and pen wielding anorak, noting litres and miles in a bid to calculate how much fuel to put in the thing in order to arrive at an event with just the right amount left in the tank. The fuel light had been on for ages. I had no idea how much range that gave me, but with jerry can of fuel in the back I could risk finding out. I stumbled on a red GT6, who I now know to be Ben Whitely, some miles from the track, and thought I could follow him to the track. He didn't know where he was going either !!!

I think this track is primarily a kart track. To say that this day was wet and slippery would be an understatement. An emulsion of water and rubber must approach the slipperiness of ice. Great entertainment watching cars shoot off down the first straight only to perform a bit of ballet and ballroom dancing on entry to the first right hander. It was obvious that they were overcooking it !! Then it was my turn.

Steady does it now. We don't want to join the over-cookers now do we? Well I have to say, that even with the advance warnings, nothing could have prepared me for the sheer lack of grip as the brakes went on at the end of the first straight, and I proceeded to draw my own heart beat on the track with the back wheels, and again through the esses!!! Thankfully things did slowly and gradually improve through the day, but slippery just doesn't do it justice.

Having performed my first obsessive fuel measuring ritual prior to practice, the first timed run caught me a little off guard. Not to worry. Green light. Foot down, hard swing left, second gear then nothing Somebody seemed to have stolen my engine !!! The embarrassment, the shame, the humility, the delight on the R2 Wigton guy's faces as I was towed back into the paddock with not even the fumes left in the tank !!! The times went up on the board, and I was reliably informed that DNF means "Did Not Fuel" !!!

A 60.92 on run 2 was enough to take class second place to John Coppin. Run 3 produced a 60.88 which was good enough to beat the R2 Wigton guys if not John's previous time. Was John Coppin within reach?

Run 4 seemed a good run, nice and smooth until the exit of the final sweeping right hand hairpin, where the tail stepped out and just kept going. This is the Dave Exton technique of going through the timing beam backwards, with a bonus point for collecting some of the timing gear on the way. Head hung low, slinking back into the paddock, sorry about the delay for the next run guys. Would my time count ? Amazingly it did, 59.91, this was now only 0.35 slower than John's best, and kept me in the lead of the Wigton R2 pack of five.

The track was finally drying, a few folk were packing up, but we had a bonus run. I knew we would have more grip, but maybe after a little incident it is natural to be a little tentative. I certainly didn't want to do the same again, and was beginning to question just how friendly the back end of an S2000 actually was. A 58.65 was more than a second faster, but guess what, not fast enough, and I was suddenly relegated to 5th place on the day, and 4th out of the Wigton guys. Chris Jackson, Dave Exton and Alex Thornton taking the top three Wigton slots, and only half a second or so separating the top five.

Lessons learned? Well fuel is required to make your car go! Always try to match closely to changing track conditions. Both valid lessons, but no Somehow I had collected a slight door and sill dent on run 4, and the lesson that I learned here is that event scrutineering is so much easier to get through, than the scrutineering that you now have to endure when the car gets home !!!

Barbon 18/06/2011

A bit of a grey day, but it stayed dryish. This is a track that looks deceptively straightforward. I spent the whole day trying to figure out the best gear to be in for the sweeping left hander, essentially the second bend of only three. Running out of revs meant changing up to third before this bend, but easing off for the bend meant losing oomph. My benchmarks, Colin with consistent high 31s to mid 31s, and Dave managing a 32.67. After much deliberation, and deciding that I needed the high rev push out of this troublesome bend, and with a conscious change down at bend entry, I managed to take more than a second off my previous best, but a 33.15 was still nowhere near good enough. This track looks simple, but I have to say that it is one that has provoked a disproportionate amount of thought and analysis.

So an uneventful day? Well I suppose it was. At least until it was time to pack up. Time to get out of the racing gear, and back into a pair of jeans. A discreet 30 second job at the back of one's car with the boot lid up. Everybody is front

side of the car. That is until a tractor and trailer from the bale collecting team trundled down the road just behind the car and the trailer load of what could only be described as "strapping farm girls" provided a crescendo of cheering at the sight of one handsome Scottish semi-clad derrièr !!!

Much laughter from all, but not content with a single pass, prize-giving was interrupted by a very vocal trailer load waving and calling out for more action. It seemed only polite to wave back, and being farm girls I thought better of only using one or two fingers !!!

Aintree 25/06/2011

This is the longest haul event of the season for anyone north of the border, so it was a Premier Inn stop arriving late the night before, with a couple of other suspicious looking cars in the car park including a trailered Stratos.

This one is a different ball game. A wider faster circuit that requires judgement to achieve a good racing line. Having achieved a 59.13 on the first timed run, runs 2 and 3 bogged down at 59.30. and 59.31 as I forgot to change down for the last sweeping right hander on one run, and had a bad wheel-spin start on the other. Final run, with an effort to carry more speed through the bends, paid off with a 57.35.

This was just 0.27 behind the slowest of a trio of hot Cleo's to be fourth in the event class on the day, but good enough to beat Dave on 59.04, Alex on 60.01 and Mike on 61.96.

This event had me thinking about the need to get home afterwards, and how difficult that would be if one had a bit of a prang. A trailer had to make sense. Leather cosseted, quiet, background music, air conditioned heated seat comfort of a Discovery 3 has to preferred to the high revving noisy jarring ride of an S2000 on a long trip. The key benefit though, remove the "get me home" concern that must lie at the back of the sub-conscious, and I reckon that a trailer must be good for 0.50 seconds a run !!

Forrestburn 27/08/2011

Brakes make you go faster. Seriously !!! Buying a second hand car and using it straight away means you don't have time to do much preparation. Any second hand road car is likely to have rusty back discs, and the fronts might not be much better. This was certainly true of this S2000 which looked as if it had coasted gently up to every junction in its life. Normal use will soon sort it out I thought. Well not too bad for the fronts, but the back discs were beyond redemption. Driving home from Teeside I had a stone chip squeal near side rear, and investigation showed that one pad was down to 2mm and the tell tale wear warning strip was my squealer. Quick cure at the time, break the strip off. I knew I had to do something soon, so prior to Forrestburn I put new discs and pads on all round, and spent a day cleaning up and freeing off callipers, filing the rust off the pad seats and generally sorting things out in a way that no routine garage service would ever do. So new brakes for Forrestburn.

Cold damp grey day. Forrestburn was fun !!! This is a daunting circuit with many twists and turns. Look at it on a map and you really don't appreciate the terrain and gradients involved. Having entered in "Marque Road Sports Cars" as being best fit for a non fit car, I was separated from the normal Wigton R2 guys, and instead sandwiched between David Parr in his Morgan Roadster and Colin McLatchie in his Morgan 4/4.

These two guys were very friendly and helpful. David was behind me in the running order, and held back a little so that he could watch my run up the first gradient. Very useful feedback on the tell-tale flicker of brake lights etc.. These guys were also very guilty of “egging me on”. While being cautious with “what you should be able to do” advice, and wondering if they just wanted to see a good accident, it did give me useful insight over and above just learning the track as you go. Second timed run of 66.55 was a 4.67 second improvement over 71.72, with a further 4.41 seconds shaved off for a 62.14 third run. So “*another four seconds*” they said before the final run. I wouldn’t have believed it was possible, but the car felt smooth and fluid through the esses and another 3.61 seconds came off to provide a 58.53. I was gobsmacked !!!

I’d managed to open a 2.44 second gap between me and the next fastest Wigton R2 contender Alex Thornton. I know that Colin Sutherland likes Forrestburn, and with his vast experience turned in an out of reach for me 56.43, and it was a pleasure to watch him come up the hill.

Brakes make you go faster !!

Harewood 17/09/2011

A Trailer makes you go faster. Rain makes you go slower. With my latest purchase, it was time to switch to trailered mode for Harewood. With the weather looking bleak, and the expectation of a wet track all day, it looked as if this event was one to take easy and just use the opportunity to learn the track. Having spent a day in 2010 spectating from every possible vantage point, this was the track that I felt that in theory, I knew best in my head. Driving it, as always, is another matter entirely.

Oh No !!! Kevin Hamilton has popped up in R2, having sold his old car mid season, a perfect time to do it, and not for the first time either, or so I am told. His new road going Saxo looks about as standard as Mr Wiggins’s road going 205, and this is certainly going to put the cat among the pigeons.

The start at Harewood was very very slippery. Even a gentle start produced copious wheelspin in first and again in second. With four timed runs, the order of the day was Wet, Less Wet, Wet, Less Wet. Considering the conditions, Kevin set what to me was a blistering 72.74 and the best I could do was 3.36 seconds slower at 76.10. He seemed to be using a secret afterburner technique though, and fire extinguishers were required to cool him down on a couple of occasions !!!

Harewood 18/09/2011

Weather threatening, but dry-ish at the start. The first cold practice run of the day showed more grip than at any point on the previous day. Kevin had retired during practice with further afterburner problems, and despite offers to help cut off his oil soaked exhaust heat wrap he had already notified the officials, and the spirit was gone.

The first timed run of the day was for me a 2.11 second improvement on the day before at 73.99 but would you believe it, as I departed the start line on run two, drops of rain were appearing on the wind-screen. Straight away I eased off, unsure of the reduction in grip that would result. Back to 75.19. Dave with his greater experience knew that the grip would still be there at that stage, and running two cars behind me with the same rain spots, improved his first run time by 0.52 of a second giving him 74.96. By that time the dark black clouds had rolled in, and the heavens opened and for the last two timed runs 10 seconds or more had been added to our times.

Still A good day, and a good weekend, and very pleased to have survived Harewood.

Kames 02/10/2011

Oh No !!! Kevin’s back in R2. Oh No Oh No !!! Mr Wiggins with his R1 205 four seater family saloon has been merged into R2. Two cats amongst the pigeons !! The weather was torrential rain on arrival, to the extent that I wondered if the event would run. Pretty much soaked to the skin unloading the trailer. A bit foggy for the initial runs, with wipers and lights required. It did however improve, with only slight further hints during the course of the day.

Alex Thornton very kindly tried the psychological warfare technique of asking how I was looking forward to being back at Kames. Thanks Alex !!! There is no doubt that a certain wariness of a certain bend prevailed, and with this caution was a determination to keep it smooth and nicely controlled. The track was probably never completely dry, and with running water across it at the top of the rise it was “interesting”. Dave was frustrated by increasing handling problems, and Alex had turned up with a new weapon for his season grand finale in the shape of a Lotus Excel.

So I managed a 105.41 and was pleased that this was only 0.56 slower than Mr Wiggins at 104.85. Kevin turned in an impressive clear gap lead at 102.87

Seasons End

The one thing that has struck me in the course of this first novice season, is the friendly relaxed atmosphere, the friendly banter, the humour. A great bunch of people, and I'm slowly getting to know more of them. Everyone seems to have a willingness to advise and help. It has been great fun, it has been a great laugh, it has been great company. I don't understand why I didn't do this years ago.

For next year I need a roll cage. That has to be worth negative seconds as a result of weight, but safety is a consideration. A proper seat and harness is also on the hit list. That might be worth a bit of time just by preventing any sliding around in the seat and being better able to feel what the car is doing. I hope I have time to do it, but regardless, next season can't come around fast enough !!!

A heartfelt thank you goes to everyone who has made me feel welcome, provided help, advice, cups of hot chocolate, and copious opportunistic gentle slagging. It has been great !!!

Ronnie



A blast from the past! Who? What? Where? When?

Membership Renewal for 2012

Most members have renewed but there are still a few who have not.

Please do not leave it until you want to do an event!
Sadly if you do not renew in the next couple of weeks your details will be deleted from the files and you will not get any more Start Lines.



Andy's Armchair

Andy Armstrong takes an irrelevant look at motoring and motorsport

We all know you can get into bother if you don't keep an eye on the depth of your tread and general condition of your tyres. Now the other day I was talking to an acquaintance and happened to notice his near side front looked a bit soft. I had the pressure gauge in my car and said if he liked I'd check it for him. Anyway, to cut a long story short, I checked all four which he reckoned were meant to be 29 psi. The readings were as follows - front 15 and 24, rear 8 and 29, not good! Now he'd just come back from a 200 mile round trip and was about to do another the following day which if I hadn't intervened would have been tackled on the above pressures.

Is this legal? It's quite scary when you think about it; there you are on the motorway surrounded by people who spend more time ordering pizzas than ensuring their car's safe for the road. I can't help wondering how many accidents are caused by such gross negligence as after the tyre's blown and the car's crashed into you there's no evidence to show what the pressure was. Surely to goodness it's as dangerous as using a mobile phone on the move but I've never known a purge on it. - Maybe a few spot checks with a fine for those dramatically "out" would be in order.

It was very sad to lose Dan Wheldon and Marco Simoncelli recently but the way in which the motorsport community reacted was so sensible and respectful. A minute's silence was impeccably observed at the following Grand Prix and tasteful funerals held.

The football world on the other hand, descended into "mawkish behaviour" when Gary Speed died. We had grown men who'd never met him weeping and wailing on the terraces and clapping sessions were held because those involved can't be trusted to be silent. All this particularly when the man in question didn't die through illness or accident but apparently by his own design. I do feel sorry for his family, very sorry, but what went on was dramatically "over the top" and made me grateful I'm involved in motorsport rather than football.

Ends

AA

Marshal's Call

Marshals are needed for the Fellside A.C.'s
Northern Trial

On Feb. 18th (p.m.)

As usual we are manning the longest test of the
day, at Sandale.

If you can help please ring Graeme on 01900



What's On

WMC events and other events we are invited to

February

3/4th	MSMW	North West Stages (Blackpool)
5th	WMC	Winter Pub Run
12th	S&DMC	Croft Historic Rally (NESCRO)
18th	FSAC	Northern Trial (Marshals needed)
22nd	WMC	Wine Tasting
24 - 26		Race Retro at Stoneleigh

March

3rd	Trio	Malcolm Wilson Rally
4th	SRC	Saltire Historic Rally (NESCRO)

April

1st	MGC	Roof of England Challenge
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Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a well preserved body, but rather to skid in sideways, chocolate in one hand, wine in the other, body thoroughly used up, totally worn out and screaming "WOO HOO what a ride!"

**Visit the website for all the latest news
Forum Log in: wigtonmc. Password: marshals
News Blog: <http://wigtonmc.wordpress.com/>**

Please only phone club officials between 19.00 and 21.00 in the evening.

Careers at M-Sport Limited

See all our vacancies online at

www.m-sport.co.uk

To apply for any of these roles, please forward an application form & medical history (available on the website) along with your CV, to Rachael Hook at M-Sport Ltd., Dovenby Hall, Dovenby, Cockermouth, Cumbria CA13 0PN