

**Wigton Motor Club Ltd**

# **Start Line**

Issue: 11/14

[www.wigtonmc.co.uk](http://www.wigtonmc.co.uk)

November 2014

## **Packed October!**

**October was a month packed with WMC Events! Starting with the Kames Classic Sprint we then moved onto the Copeland Canter, the Solway Historic and Solway Targa which made up the Solway Autumn Classic Weekend.**



### **Kames Classic Sprint**

Report and photos in this month's edition of Start Line!



### **Solway Historic Rally**

Full report and more photos in next month's edition of Start Line!

**JLT MSA Club of the Year**

# Diary

Club events over the next month or so

## November Autotest

November 9th

At Maryport

**TO ENTER** Call Robert, Mandy or Brian Iveson on 01931716334 evenings or weekends or email Robert on [robrobiveson@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:robrobiveson@yahoo.co.uk)

Entry forms on the website!

## Festive Autotest

December 28th

At Maryport

Run by Steve Palmer & Family

Entry forms on the website.

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# Talking Point

## Topical comment from the world of motoring

We wrote to members a few weeks ago asking them to write to Allerdale Borough Council in support of the planning application for the major expansion of M Sport at Dovenby Hall. Quite apart from the motorsport connection Malcolm Wilson's proposed development of an evaluation centre and technical facilities for developing special road cars for manufacturers and the associated test track, has to be good news for Allerdale and Cumbria as a whole.

When Malcolm decided to set up M Sport in his home area there were those that thought it would not work and that any business of that type needed to be in "Motor Sport Valley" but they have been proved wrong. Even now I suspect that if M Sport were to suggest a move south they would find the Milton Keynes Corporation putting out the red carpet for them!

At a time when the last vestige of steel making is about to be killed off in Workington and coal mining is long gone, we really need a base of high tech and high profile businesses in the area. It would bring much needed trade and high quality employment and help to keep graduates in the county. In due course there would no doubt be spin off businesses as there is in motorsport valley.

M Sport is also seen as an important stepping stone on the career ladder. Our son started off there as a design engineer and is now with Red Bull F1 and I understand that all the UK based F1 and rally teams have ex M Sport staff along with others in related businesses. It may be that in time the University of Cumbria will be able to offer motorsport related courses. All good for employment and the local economy.

Of course you get the usual NIMBYs talking about increased traffic and noise but they invariably show their ignorance of the facts. Motorsport has steadily reduced it's noise levels over the last fifteen years and in some cases standard road cars have failed MSA noise tests. Indeed you often read in the motoring press that race and rally cars are now too quiet!

The planning application goes before ABC this month and we will be keeping our fingers crossed for a positive result.

What a great turnout for the Solway Historic and Targa with a full entry 6 weeks before the event and lots of folk disappointed at not getting a run! We also had an excellent turnout of marshals. The response of face Book and the rally forums have been full of praise for the event and the slick way it was run. There was also a lot of good "craic" as well. It's a measure of the event that the organising team are already talking about next year!

GTF



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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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# PG Tips

Did anyone notice the deliberate mistake last month? No? I had accidentally on purpose sent Graeme last October's PG Tips so everything would have seemed a little odd for anyone who reads the column and knows what I ramble on about from month to month. As I was the only person who noticed, I can only assume that no one has the first idea what I'm on about! Anyhoo – next month I will write a brand new column, in the meantime here's a slightly re-jigged version of the one I wrote for last month.

Winter is pretty much upon us, but I can't complain because we had an excellent summer. Only August really let us down....which is a shame given the date of the Cumbria Classic Show. The weather undoubtedly had an effect on the attendance at the show which on paper was massive, but in reality produced lots of gaps – a lot of whom were clearly too precious to take their cars out in a bit of summer rain. I will stop now before I upset anyone (else!).

On the subject of the show – I had the great privilege to set up on the Friday with Stuart Turnbull. I know there have been a lot of tributes to him and I didn't know him that well but his generosity and good humour shone through during the afternoon as he gladly let me rag around in his Landrover Discovery. I turn into a teenage boy when put behind the wheel of a car I'm not familiar with in an unfamiliar setting, so having the chance to drive up and down the grassy slopes of Dalemmain playing with the high and low ratios of a 4wd (barely ever driven one) made my afternoon. Stuart never batted an eyelid and even encouraged me to do whatever I wanted with it and laughed at/with me - a true gent who will be missed by many.

It's been busy this month for me on the car front...I now have my new Citigo and it's fair to say it's great even if it could do with another 25bhp/25lbs for overtaking at speed. It averages about 50mpg and feels like a much bigger car both inside and in terms of ride quality and refinement.



I also almost bought another old Skoda and travelled all the way to Northumberland to view it. It was none other than a Skoda S110r coupe. No you've probably not heard of it – but they were built from the early 70s to 1980 and are now rare, quite sought after and quite pretty (I think so as do the classic car press at any rate!). The Ebay advert said “fully restored” and on the pictures it looked it (see what you think) but when I rang the chap and started discussing it he admitted he had merely recommissioned the brakes without replacing them at all.....in a 34 year old car that has only covered 3000miles....so apparently the original 34 year old

pads, discs and pipes. Nevertheless he assured me he had stripped the wings off, welded and repaired all rust and wax oiled it to within an inch of its life. I wasn't keen on the black wheels or bumpers but figured they would be easy enough to cure.

As I drove up the drive of his house the car looked brilliant...but as I walked up to it, it was clear it had not been near a professional bodyshop. The new paint was so thin it was virtually see through and you could see filler and blemishes everywhere. The formerly chrome bumpers had been blasted and painted black....but he hadn't bothered to fill any of the blemishes left by corrosion so looked messy. As I had travelled all that way it was rude not to take it out for a drive and found it drove well....the engine was super smooth and quiet and the suspension compliant and rattle free. Sadly that 'full restoration' by someone with little more ability than me and the £3000 start price were all too much. I politely declined to buy it and went to look at his collection of 2 stroke Wartburgs!

Very interesting they were too. All in all an enjoyable day out and if someone gives me £5000 in the near future I might just blow it on that S110r and forget the obvious loss. In the meantime I will concentrate on Snotty's engine rebuild.

By the time you read this I will have had another navigator outing with Paul Eastwood on the Solway...so more vomit inducing mishaps to talk about there no doubt. I am confident we will have won the event after our practice run on the LDC.....OH LOOK....A FLYING PIG!

Peter

## **Auto testing for beginners - Part Three - Doonhamer September 21st 2014**

**“Never let the truth stand in the way of a good story”**

I love a challenge – anyone who has ever met the husband will understand that statement. But ratchet straps? What's all that about? No matter which way you thread them up it is always the loose end which gets shorter. It's even worse when you're tired. So, not only were we signed up for the Doonhamer, a daunting prospect in itself, but it required the transportation of the Midget on a borrowed trailer complete with the mandatory use of the aforementioned straps. Not to mention the embarrassing attempts required to reverse said trailer whilst attached to the Agricultural Integrale - that's posh for Landrover for those of you who don't know.....

Funny, isn't it, how a tiny movement of the steering wheel by the driver (yes, it was me) can result in a massive jack-knife of the trailer. Neighbours thought it was hilarious anyway. I was evicted from the driver's seat and clever clogs (the husband) gave it a go. No significant improvement, I am delighted to report, but eventually, between us, we were ready to go.

Half an hour into the journey and a big sign on the M6 notified us that the A75 to Dumfries was closed – no offer of a diversion – just “closed”. Full scale panic ensued as we re-planned the route, desperate to avoid any further use of reverse gear. And so we arrived safe and sound at Barony, found a good place to park, which involved only minor damage to the rear light board, and prepared for scrutineering. Signing on followed with the customary supply of a whole tree's worth of A4 sheets designed to reduce the faint hearted to tears of abject misery. Fortunately, Chris Hunter wasn't with us on this occasion so we pretended we knew what we were doing and got on with the job in hand. Someone had thoughtfully included two pages of absolute gibberish which, on further inspection, turned out to be car anagrams, the solution of which proved to be both diverting and distracting in equal measure. Lots of friendly banter was exchanged while the opposition was sussed out, the coffee drunk and the bacon sarnies despatched. Nerves started to kick in as David (Agnew) and Alan (Jackson) provided some moral support while Colin (Rose) and the ever serene Bob (Shearer) made us feel like old hands.

Too soon, the first test was underway and everyone was ashen. Nothing to do with an adverse reaction to breakfast – more to do with the clouds of dust billowing around – and the roof was already off the Midget so no refuge there. Another bad hair day for quite a few of us, then.

Test 2 and the familiar upbeat voice of Steve Palmer, accompanied by son Jack, lulled us into a false sense of security before the full horror of Test 3 was unleashed upon us. Signs for Mossburn Animal Centre seemed innocuous enough but didn't prepare us for the hell on earth that was Rammerscales. Just as well most of the test wasn't visible from the start line. We stared at what was, quite obviously, a wood yard. The GT6 of Micky Ball and Derek McCrae disappeared into the distance – and then – nothing. Several minutes later and the marshals were dashing about with fire extinguishers – crikey –

in a wood yard? Should we make a hasty exit before the whole place went up? No, of course not, let's wait with morbid fascination to see what damage had been done. Fortunately, (slightly disappointingly, if I'm honest) vehicle and occupants emerged unscathed so it was our turn to run the gauntlet.

Now, as I said earlier, I like a challenge. I hadn't, however, planned to navigate Sodom & Gomorrah land. Massive piles of wood chippings interspersed with towering stacks of timber and a monster Tonka toy thrown in for good measure. All of this appeared a bit too quickly for my liking but I kept my head down and shrieked instructions as the husband gamely chucked the Midget around the course grinning like a Cheshire cat. I discovered later that an attack of cramp was responsible for the grin rather than any actual enjoyment factor.

Tests 4 & 5 passed relatively easily without too many distractions despite the best efforts of the laughing Geordie policeman at Eastriggs. My ill-advised comments about his truncheon are probably best left to the imagination – this is a family club, after all.

Test 6 at Kingans looked straightforward enough but, of course, it wasn't. "Left of C" I shouted. "We've passed F" the husband shouted whilst ear holing around what he thought was G and what was, in fact, C. "Wrong Test" appeared on the time card followed by an icy silence as the husband realised which of us had dropped the proverbial spherical object – that's right – HIM! Oh, joy! The moral high ground is SUCH a good place to be!

Lockerbie lorry park, (followed by the best lentil soup ever) provided a bit of spectator sport as folk hurtled about on their door handles and then it was the turn of Fingland Fell to do its worst. Not so much an autotest, this, more of a test of nerves. A quick calculation took place as to which ditch it would be best to upend ourselves in order to minimise any damage (to the car, obviously). The husband thought he was Malcolm Wilson (yeah – dream on) – I was relieved my seat was still attached to the floor. We got the slowest time of the day as a reward.

The rest of the afternoon came and went in a blur of recriminations, close encounters with concrete bollards, petulance, another visit to the edge of darkness, more dust and finally, relief, the end was in sight. We escaped with damage only to the husband's ego (not to mention my hair) but two Mk 1 Escorts came in for a battering – one with a rather modified back wing and another on three wheels – blimey – THEY must have been "gieing it laldy"!

So, all in all, another great day, due, as ever, to the unstinting efforts of the organisers and the marshals – what an incredible bunch.

Just leaves me with one small question – from the anagrams, anyone any idea what vehicle is a "boilhamringcouchant"? It's still got me stumped.....

Cheers!

*Marian Sloan (aka Maz)*

(and John aka "the husband" who has just won his first tarmac autotest at Maryport RE – SULT!!)

## **The Gallop**

**8/9/10th May 2015**

**Based in Peebles at the Peebles Hydro Hotel**

**Entry forms on the website**

**Or contact Ron Palmer**

## Phoenix Stages 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2014



On the build up to the event I rebuilt the 309's gearbox with a limited slip diff and a couple of other minor jobs were completed. We then used Willie and Angela's autotest as shakedown, we soon learnt the 309 really isn't suited to autotesting so a poor result. So on the Saturday me, mum, dad and Heather traveled down to Fullbeck near Newark which went ok apart for the road works on the A1 causing some delays. When we arrived scrutineering went without a hitch then off to the local premier inn for a good nights kip and a decent breakfast. While we studied the maps and had a second breakfast, dad fueled up and mother did the tyre pressures.

Stage 1 went ok apart for going sideways and almost backwards into most corners! Back in the pits the tyre pressures were redone, thanks mum. Stage 2 was a repeat of stage 1 so we knew where to go and where the rough parts were. Fullbeck is a disused airfield so most of the surface is tarmac/concrete with a few small gravel sections. The next batch of stages went well getting quicker and getting use to laughing coming down the intercom. What was quite surprising was each time we went back to the pits there were more cars been loading onto trailers. The trusty old home built 309 soldier on, the service crew parked next to use found it amusing that every time we came in we sat round doing not a lot whilst they were busy changing wheels and unnecessarily tinkering. I think dad actually had a put fuel in the car at the lunch halt but that was the only thing done to the car all day.

Whilst we had lunch the stages were rearranged for the final 4 stages. The 1<sup>st</sup> pair went without a hitch but the final 2 stages were 7.5miles which meant it was possible at the merge to meet other cars. On the final loop of stage 9 at the merge we meet with a Nissan Micra which refused to let us past and insisted on keeping to the middle of the road! Never mind bite tongue and carry on the next stage will be better. Stage 10 the final stage maximum attack time, all going very well until the merge on the final loop, yes the Micra again! Down the straight they were hogging the middle of the road, the red mist was starting which almost ended at the chicane where there was almost contact. Down through the fastest corners of the stage they were still holding us up by this time Heather was pressing the horn and shouting very unlady like language. Eventually I got brave and with a wheel on the grass and wing mirrors almost touching pushed past.

In the end it didn't effect our class position but due to reliability we crept up the lead board to a happy 3<sup>rd</sup> in class and 29<sup>th</sup> overall from 55 starters. All in all a great event, 50 stage miles, nice weather, well organized and a pot to bring home for the cabinet.



I also marshaled at the classic and motorsport show which seems to get better each year, if only we could sort the weather. Next event is the Thor Hammer Stages at Driffield on the 21<sup>st</sup> September

Robert Iveson

## **Autojumble**

**Buy, Sell, Exchange, Give!**

**Free to members**

**Fuchs Silkolene 20/50 classic oil 5 litres for £14.95**, Titan 10/40 4 litres for £14.95. 1 litre of diff oil £4.00, Water Wetter to aid cooling £12.00. Classic oil filters for MGs, Minis etc £3.50. Competition car safety stickers sets £2.00. Diesel engine cleaner £10.00. Red rotor arms and condensers for classics - solve your ignition problems £6.00 each Windscreen wipers for classics £2.00 each. Competition numbers 50p each. Ring Graeme on 01900 825642.

**Barn storage:** £50 per quarter. Ring Graeme on 01900 825642. 1 space available.

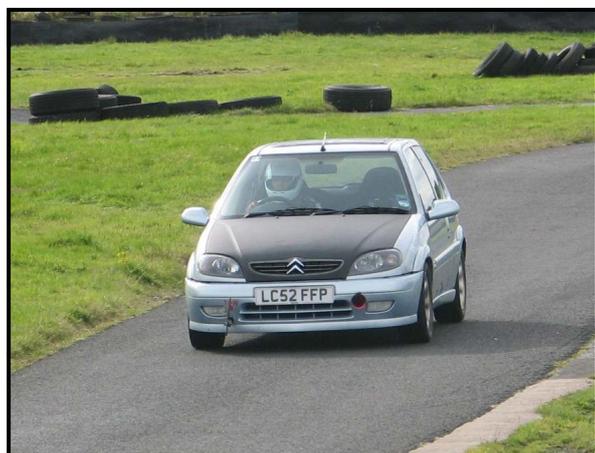
For sale due to bereavement: **MG B Roadster 1978 blue** , MoT until 4/5/2015. Please ring June Smith on 01576470666616

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# ***Brockbanks Solicitors Cross Border Speed Championship***

## **Kames Classic Sprint**



We were blessed with good (dry) weather for the final round of the Brockbanks Solicitors Cross Border Speed Championship and we managed two practice and three timed runs by around three o'clock. We had an excellent turnout of marshals which included several drivers who were unable to compete for various reasons. Darren Coleman and James Wiggins did a great job in the paddock getting cars up to the line and with the number of marshals we had we were able to move them from post to post after each run so most got experience of doing the start.

As well as our series we had a good turnout from the Lowlands Championship and it was one of the, Mark

Scoular who was fastest in his OMS, about four seconds up on second placed Mark Purdham who took top BSCBSC points in his Hossom-Bouler.

Paul Bowness was flying in the MK Indy to do an 86.07 and pip Kames expert Melvyn Hartley in the Gemini. Les Golding was on his own in RS1 but goes quicker each time out in the Caterham. Bill Kirkpatrick was double driving in the Midget and the Saxo and was flying in the MG to easily win the combined classic/historic class.

The road cars now seem to make up the biggest proportion of the entry and Ronnie MacGregor won R2 in his Honda although Chris Harris is getting quicker all year in the Lotus to be runner up. A further four seconds down was Alex Thornton, this time in the Proton he had driven up from Berkshire ( 700 miles for an event is dedication!). he was a fraction in front of Wiggy was won R1 and Dave Exton, who was as enthusiastic as ever in the MR2 he shared with Kevin Hamilton who was about half a second down.

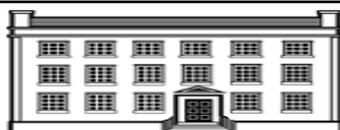
Bill Kirkpatrick was sharing Steven Holmes' sax and beat toe owner by three seconds. Peter Sewell was on his own in C2 with the MG and running on road tyres to get a 107.11

Douglas Anderson and Angus Buchan shared the Austin 7 special which certainly did not disgrace itself to get round in under 110 seconds with the drivers separated by 0.06 seconds. Re Shimizu shared Alex's Proton and made the biggest improvement on her runs, knocking twelve seconds off her first time.

Jim MacDiarmid looked to be an FTD contender but a gear broke on his second run while Colin Birbeck was a non starter.

The run home down the A74 was punctuated by heavy showers which had fortunately missed Kames during the day.

Well that's the last WMC Kames for the present but certainly does not mean that we are not giving up running speed events in the future. Watch this space.....



**Brockbanks  
Solicitors**

Whitehaven, Cockermouth, Maryport, Workington and Keswick (as Oglethorpe & Broatch)

# Kames Classic Photos



# Elderly Utterances

## The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say



Having been a member of the Historic Rally Car Register since 1990, when the club was a mere six years old, it was nice to get involved in a celebration of their 30th Anniversary on 27/28th September with Charles having entered us in the 'Classic 30' two day road rally in his 1962 TR4.

There is a wealth of rally names and experience among the HRCR membership, Paddy Hopkirk is their President, and they publish the excellent bi monthly magazine 'Old Stager'. Their 'Autosessive HRCR Clubmans Rally Championship' is coordinated by Andy Gibson, a wise old head with nothing to learn about navigation and organising, and he was to be the clerk of the course for the Classic 30 and the resultant roadbooks and paperwork had his

stamp of super efficiency all over them.

The Holiday Inn at Corby was to be the base for the event and involved a 500 miles round trip for us. We would not usually travel that far for a one day rally but this two day event was a bit special and taking place in an area where we don't usually compete.

We presented the car for pre event scrutineering and documentation on Friday evening and the start was at 9am Saturday. A celebration dinner was held after the first day's competition on Saturday evening and this was followed by a humorous presentation by an on form Paddy Hopkirk with photographs and clips of his past exploits. Afterwards there was an auction of rally related parts which were donated by Jean Chmura from the garage of her late husband Warren in aid of charity. Over indulgence at this dinner would have been unwise as a full day awaited us on Sunday before our return drive home.

There was a great variety of cars entered with only 1 Ford Escort and 1 Porsche 911. Rare appearances were from a VW 1600 Notchback (shades of the early '60s RAC Rally) a Porsche 914, Volvo PV544, four big Healeys, MB 300SE, XK150 Jag, two Porsche 356, Lotus Cortina Mk11, Alfa 1750 GTV, MB 280SL, Ford Zephyr Mk11, Rover 2000, plus nine MGBs and plenty of Minis.

The rally format consisted of longish jogularity sections in all their forms interspersed with tests which were scored on a class improvement basis. Thus if you were consistently quickest in your class on the tests it was possible to get a zero score and then only the regularity penalties would determine the result. To be consistently good at both regularities and tests is rare so this format can be a great leveller. Lowest penalties on the tests incurring a zero were Keith Davies and Andy Pullan in a well driven MGB GT and a B is not usually the winner in this discipline. Second on the Tests was Dermot Carnegie/Paul Bosdet Mk1 RS 2000 on 3 seconds with us being equal with them also on 3 seconds all three cars being quickest in their respective classes.

The roadbook for Day One was issued at documentation and the one for Day Two, 30 minutes before the Sunday off. Clerk of the Course Andy Gibson knows the art of rally navigation as well as anyone and he produced faultless route instructions and documentation. Rally Secretary Ali Green is a significant driving force in the HRCR and has responsibility for their ever growing Tour Series. Ali organised



the administration of the Classic 30 and was MC at the awards presentation. Although Jogularities can be the simplest form of regularity Andy constructed them in such a way as to ensure everyone incurred penalties and at the finish Tony Newman/Tony Davies Cooper S were the class of the field, nine seconds ahead of the second man on 26 penalties and we were sixth on road penalties with 38 seconds. The penalties from the two disciplines are added and Charles and I were delighted to find we had won overall with total penalties of 41 nar-

rowly ahead of Duncan Wild/Steve Skepper Mini Cooper on 49 and Mick Briggs/Matt Fowle Riley Elf on 51.

Over the two days we visited several attractive venues and consumed some tasty food including pie at Melton Mowbray (what else?) and glorious slabs of home-made carrot cake. We enjoyed glorious views across Rutland Water although it was strange to us to look over such an expanse of water without seeing steep hills rising up on the opposite shore, not at all like the Lakes.

The finish was at the Sywell Classic 'Pits and Props' Festival where acres of classics, hot-rods, dragsters and stunt aircraft all made it the ideal finish venue where a meal was served followed by the awards presentation by Alec Poole. All in all a memorable weekend for us and the TR4 behaved impeccably.

By the time you read this the Solway Classic will have taken place and I am rolling the years back and sitting with Robin Murray in his '65 Cooper S for this one. The following week Charles and I are heading to Buxton for the start of this year's 'Rally of the Tests' which finishes in Bristol – a fitting end to an enjoyable competition year.

Ron

Photos from: KPBPHOTOGRAPHY

# Classic Column

## News from the Classic Scene

### Major dates for 2015:

<b>Lake District Classic</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>5th</b>
<b>Cumbria Classic Weekend:</b>	<b>August</b>	<b>22nd/23rd</b>
<b>Solway Autumn Classic</b>	<b>October</b>	<b>17/18th</b>

We are already looking at the plans for the Classic & Motorsport Show. We always have a theme of anniversaries and/or invited clubs to be the featured marques. If any member has suggestions on this we would be pleased to hear from you, particularly if you are a member of a club that would like to be "featured".

We are also looking for a volunteer to take on the administration of the club displays at the Show. Stuart Turnbull built this side of the show up in the past few years and we have full documentation for anyone interested in taking that roll on.

# Gates Tyres Northern Historic Rally Awards

## Doonhamer Classic Rally, September 21st, 2014.

South of Scotland MC's Doonhamer Classic Rally (the penultimate round of the 2014 WMC "GATES" Challenge) provided a splendid battleground for the "Gates" contenders and ensured that their results on the Solway could be crucial to this year's final placings.

Now a well established event running in the Lockerbie – Dumfries area, the organisers had laid on a wonderfully sunny early autumn day and 16 tests with everything from classic forest roads through to smooth tarmac. With a tantalising variety of cars and 34 starters, many of NESCR0's finest among them, the day was set for some vigorous competition.

Unable to travel to the event this year, 2 or 3 storylines soon emerged from the results. Almost inevitably, Archie and Richard Simmonds, MkII Escort RS, were quick out of the blocks but Archie was challenged all day by Tom Hall/Steven Jackson's rapid Riley Elf. With 8 tests completed the lunch-time results showed that Archie had established a small but vulnerable lead over Tom of 11sec's. Through Tests 9-13 Archie continued to pull ahead beating Tom on 3 tests and tying on a 4th. But, test 14 proved to be a nightmare for the Simmonds and they dropped 35s to Tom. With only two tests remaining there was no scope for Archie to pull back the lost time and Tom had simply to go clean and keep pedalling hard. Tom put all his many years of autotesting to good use and came home with a convincing 23s lead over Simmonds' Escort.

Of the "Gates" contenders, the storylines divide nicely into the battle between the ever improving Colin Rose/ Bob Shearer, Midget, and the formidable Porsche 911 of Dave Agnew/Alan Jackson. Dave started well and was closely pursued by Colin over the first 5 tests but on Test 6 Dave appears to have had brain fade and dropped 19s to Colin. With only two more tests to the lunch halt the flying Porsche crew could only limit their losses and the midday results showed Colin ahead of the Porsche by 7sec's. During the afternoon these two crews traded times and Dave was pulling back the lunch-time deficit especially with his outright quickest time on Test 14, but ..... on the final test he dropped 13s to Colin (grandstanding, perhaps??). So, finally, Colin lead the Porsche home by 14s (Phew!) and the two crews took 3rd and 4th respectively overall.

Further down the entry, John & Marion Sloan, Midget, were having their own battle with Brian Bradley/Paul Makinson, Mini. They were seconds apart until Test 4 when Brian/Paul dropped 16s to the Midget but the smiles in the Midget soon evaporated when a WT was incurred on Test 6 costing the Midget crew 62s (!) relative to the Mini. Consequently, the midday interim results had Bradley/Makinson comfortably ahead of "Team Sloan" by 52s. After a "suitable" team talk, the Midget set off in a determined pursuit of the Mini: 5 sec's gained on T9, 20s gained on T10, 1 sec gained on T11, 5s gained on T12, 27sec's gained on T13 (Brian must have nodded off – Paul: never let your driver have anything other than a very light lunch!), by T 14 John was flying in the Midget and would have been 4th quickest on the test apart from a 10s cone penalty but he still gained 9s, a further 4s gained on T15 and 9 sec's on the final test. After a sterling effort during the afternoon, Team Sloan had pulled back the deficit and finished 18sec's ahead of Brian/Paul's Mini and these two crews took 23rd and 24th respectively overall.



With only the Solway remaining, the updated “Gates” table shows that David/ Nicola Agnew are in the strongest position for overall honours but a couple of WTs or a DNF on the Solway could hand that over to the flying Midget of Rose/Shearer. If the “Agnews” prevail, the contest for 2nd, 3rd and 4th will also be very close so quick, clean times are going to be crucial for all the crews. David and I will be trying to mitigate our rally withdrawal symptoms (the twitching is becoming more and more noticeable) by coming along to marshal. And, I’ll be trying to put together a report from something other than the Results sheets – so please feed me all your anecdotes during the event.

Mike Garstang.



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# BYGONES

## Anecdotes

Motorsport is a unique sport in that we don't have many permanent venues to play on. Partly this is historical in that the many forms of motorsport actually rely on a variety of terrain and road surfaces. However in recent times this has come back to bite us as the venues we did use are no longer available.

Looking at our own activities over the years, there was a time when there was no problem in getting a grass field for an autotest, autocross or a production car trial. Farming methods have changed and getting a field is extremely difficult now.

Much the same applies to car parks for autotests. At one time they were plenty and permission was easily gained. Seven day shopping put paid to superstore car parks and now many businesses work seven days a week while the dreaded H&S has put paid to other businesses' car parks.

In the eighties stage rallying was our most popular type of event. We ran six stage rallies a year. A quick count and we had eight venues we could use as a single venue and at least the same again for multi venue events, and that's not including the forests. All have now gone. Now, over the whole country there are very few stage venues available via informal agreements.

The same issue has hit speed events in the last 15 years or so. In Scotland and northern England we have lost: Crail, East Fortune, Knockhill, Ingliston, High Auldgirth, Shap Wells and Baitings Dam. As a club we ran events at East Fortune, Knockhill as well as getting the first use of Teesside and of course at Kames.

Very few of the existing venues are 100% secure, perhaps only Harewood and Kames. There is a constant question mark over Aintree where the golf course may be extended while "commercial" venues like Teesside, Three Sisters, Croft and Anglesey are run for profit and motorsport does not, or cannot, pay as well as other uses. Hence sprints are bottom the pile when dates are allocated. When we revived the sprints at Knockhill we had to run on a Saturday in April (when it always seemed to rain), because that was when we could afford to run there and we had to look at 90 cars to pay the bills. Even then the fee went up by 10% every year until we cried enough!

For many years we have been working on having a venue of our own, perhaps modelled on Kames. A lot of time and effort has been put into this. We have built up quite a bit of capital and we have looked at a number of potential sites, we have even had noise and traffic assessments done at some and have bid at auctions for likely venues. Sadly the MSA is about the only sports governing body that does not have substantial grants to help clubs buy land and we simply can't go forward on our own resources in the present financial climate. However that does not mean we have given up. There are always irons in the fire although we have to be very cautious in what we say. The other option is using closed public roads when the legislation comes in next year. That is not going to be easy either as first you have to find a suitable length of road and then get permission to use it. We could also go down the route of "demonstration events" which are proving popular in other parts of the country as they are usually fund raising for local charities and thus have local good will. If you know any potential venues or lengths of road please let us know.

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## Fantastic cars and great entertainment at Prescott speed hillclimb.



For the fifth year in succession Carol and I took the Buckler to Prescott near Cheltenham which is owned and run by the Bugatti owners club to compete in the “Autumn Classic” Just as Bugatti’s are precision engineered and lovely to look at the venue is in exactly the same category it is a permanent venue and has the bonus of optional track layouts made possible by a of figure of eight track arrangement midway but certain track layouts are retained for specific events such as VSCC ones so that recorded times are valid year on year as events have been run at Prescott since the 1930s.

With a magnificent clubhouse & bar, permanent timekeeping facilities, commentary boxes, toilets, merchandise shop, marshals club hut and even a Bugatti museum and spare parts building it is one of the best motorsport venues anywhere in the world and all this set in a wonderful orchard setting, very vintage and classy indeed.

The Autumn Classic is an American themed weekend with the world famous Demon Wall of Death, hot rods, muscle cars, and dragsters that give demo runs or parade up the hill, live bands and entertainers are great to watch and even American styled food is being served in the clubhouse. With all this free entertainment going on the vast crowd had plenty to keep them interested but on the track a full and varied entry of 140 cars each day were trying hard to win the classes, beat personal bests and win awards so a few spills were fairly inevitable but nothing too serious fortunately either to a person’s health or wallet as some of these cars are worth fortunes.

Some Bugatti’s are valued at over two million pounds each and the cheapest is probably over two hundred grand but their value doesn’t slow the drivers down at all they are out for serious competition. One Bugatti owner was telling me a hilarious tale about pulling out another Bugatti owner who had ended up in a ditch en route to the event and he was just driving to the venue, you meet some real characters when you go to these events.



The chap amusing me with the stories has two Bugatti’s and a couple of Austin 7 Ulster’s, he drove the car to the event from his home over 100 miles away, stayed in the same B&B as us on Saturday and was driving home on Sunday. On 8th November he is competing up to Cumbria and competing in the VSCCs Lakeland trial, he does all his own work on the cars and had a couple of traction engines previously. It just amazes me how enthusiastic these characters are and the chap will be 70 or so not a 30 year old.

Again I entered the “Flathead” class which was run on the Sunday i.e. sidevalve engines as I find this class is full of interesting people who either

build their own cars, obtaining many of the parts from America, not only great fun to be with but very knowledgeable as well. I really fancy building a similar V8 car although just for starters I ended up agreeing to buy an Austin 7 based car in bits from one of the Allard drivers who is also coming up to the Lakeland Trial again with his Austin 7 Ulster.



The competitor next number to me was from Newcastle and had seen a famous racing car built in 1939 for oval racing on an American website for sale so bought it specially to compete in this event. He told me parts are really cheap over there, for instance a piston for a model "A" Ford is 70 dollars and a con rod 55 dollars which is great value. These cars generally have either 4 cylinder 3300cc engines or the more favoured V8 engines which start at 3900cc and these sound really wonderful.

The weekend runs as two separate events and I like to compete on Sunday which is the biggest and best day having by far the biggest Bugatti entry with 16 cars

this year lining up for the thrash up the hill. I spectate on Saturday and just generally enjoy relaxing and looking at the articles for sale in the motoring related pop up shops as well as trying to work out the best lines for my relatively low powered car where one tries not to scrub off speed too much or rely on brakes pulling up in a straight line as the rods and cables take up play at different rates and this can be a bit interesting at times especially if it's wet!

A very wet Saturday morning gave way to a lovely warm afternoon and Sunday was perfect, sitting chatting in the sun then going up the hill on a timed run and continuing back down the return road back to the paddock which is a really great system as cars can be set off about every 20 seconds or so. Results and all split times are available as cars ascend the hill and can even be printed off on the bank of computers in the paddock, very efficient indeed.

11 cars were in my class and it was run on handicap system with your fastest previous time being your bogey time or fastest practise time if your first event. Most drivers were posting times that were very consistent, for instance I had a 4th in class this year and my best time of 65.24 was .15 of a second slower than my fastest time ever, my runs being less than 0.24 seconds apart and the slowest run when trying hardest! David Loveys drove really well in a 4400cc Allard and won with a run of 58.03secs being 1.82 secs under his bogey, a time he should find difficult to beat in future by any appreciable margin or at least we hope so but the system does work really well.

Prescott being such a popular venue only about 10 miles east of the M5 and so well run it attracts big entries so much so that events tend to be oversubscribed and a selection panel decides which cars will be accepted for each event. A similar event, La Vie Bleu on 23/24 May 2015 is a French themed weekend featuring the very best in French voiture design, French invited clubs and super racing and this is another fantastic event according to those who attend.

VSCC and the British Hillclimb championship are also regulars and with a race driving school, breakfast clubs and charity events where for a fee you can drive your car up the hill as fast as you

wish but untimed for insurance purposes. The club is very well supported, it hosts lots of a more social type gatherings too, picnics, barbeques and visits to Morgan and other works, watermills and historic houses so it offers great value to Bugatti members lucky enough to live reasonably near. You don't have to own a Bugatti to join and for £35 you can join as an associate to test the water for a year. Junior membership is only £15 per year, youngsters are given every encouragement to be involved and many juniors were marshalling under supervision of course. I was told that it was a snooty place which put me off for many years but I have to say we have found it exactly the opposite during our visits.



I gather many turned their noses up five years ago when the American themed event was first mooted but most who have experienced it should have a very different view now. The standard of preparation of many cars has to be seen to be believed, they sound wonderful, the “woofle” of the big V8s doesn’t even hurt your ears as so many other competition cars do.

I have already booked our B&B again for next year so hope I get an entry, camping, caravans and motorhomes are charged only £5 per night and sited adjacent to the track, with good deals on advance tickets it makes it very good value indeed. Being set such a lovely area it’s a great place to spend a bit of time and see a totally different culture, car wise to what we are normally accustomed to, a “must do” event now for very many people.

Every sporting make of car must have been represented I’m sure, very similar to the recent Shelsley and Boness classic meetings, some cars do all the events of course but Prescott is easily reached by many more people so an even more interesting entry list was assembled. It is great to see many young drivers taking over cars that have obviously been in families for decades, values of cars are unfortunately increasing rapidly being bought as investments by people who have little or no interest in motoring but even so this type of motorsport is not in decline but booming so buy a suitable car, hopefully it will hold or increase in value but most of all use it and enjoy it and in doing so many other people will enjoy it too.

KEITH THOMAS

## Solway Photos

A few shots from Rowrah—a full report next month



# RACING LINES

News from the Circuits

## Ladies Only Race - The BWRDC Race for a Record

This race is being organised by the British Women Racing Drivers' Club (BWRDC) in association with the Historic Sports Car Club (HSCC) and Silverstone Circuit.

The race "The BWRDC RACE FOR A RECORD" will be open to female competition licence holders driving a closed wheel car. The race will be a handicap race overseen by an Official MSA Handicapper, to ensure fairness for all competitors.

The event has been scheduled for Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2014 on the Silverstone National Circuit in Northamptonshire during the Walter Hayes Trophy Meeting.

We aim to have up to 40 ladies racing on track at the same time in their own cars. (This is the maximum permitted at Silverstone on the National Circuit.) The Club aims to demonstrate that a great many women are taking part in motorsport, and that they are competent and professional.

There will be awards for the first 3 finishers overall, as well as other awards, including one for highest placed competitor in their first year of circuit racing in recognition of the 2014 MSA Year of the Newcomer. The Club also aims to demonstrate that off the track, as well as on it, women are very much

involved in the sport, by becoming Marshals and Officials, mechanics and engineers.

At this event we also aim to have at least 1 female Marshal on every marshal post round the circuit.

**Good luck to Michelle Kirkpatrick in this event!**

## Rally Torque

News from Road & Stage

An outstanding result for Richard and Edwin Cook who pedalled the Subaru to fourth overall on the Mull Rally. This means they are April on the famous Mull calendar!

Sadly following the loss of SMC's Countdown Rally last month I now hear that the John Robson Hexham Historic Road Rally has been pulled due to a shortage of entries. It seems a lack of navigators is the main problem these days. This does mean that there are now no road rallies run in the ANECCC area. Given that these events were the backbone of local motorsport in the past and we and most other clubs ran some wonderfully entertaining events over the years, it is another nail in the coffin of club motorsport.

Coming up this month we have Rally GB in north Wales. With the organisers, IMS under new leadership we can expect a more friendly event and also for the first time in many years we have two British drivers capable of running in the top ten. Kris Meeke has been around for a while and got a reputation of being fast but liable to crash out but his Citroen drive does seem to have settled him down. Meanwhile Elfyn Evans in the M Sport Fiesta has huge potential and has spent this year learning the events and getting quicker all the time. On home territory he may well be in the top five. Hopefully the media coverage will be better now we have a couple of top drivers again.

# Inside the Industry

Paul Gilligan keeps us up to date

## **September Sales Boom**

September brings the second registration plate change of the year, therefore it is the second biggest volume month of the year after March, so very important to the industry as a whole. This year sales (or rather registrations) totalled over 425000, over 5% up on last year and the biggest September total since 2004. Some of the biggest winners were those doing badly this time last year, like Renault, Mitsubishi, and Volvo. Some were new entrants like Dacia and Infiniti. BMW were again beaten by Audi and were almost 10% down on last year in a market that was 5% up. Mercedes were 10% up on last year and almost caught BMW. It seems that the plan Merc set out two years ago to catch and overtake BMW and Audi by the end of 2015 may well be achieved. There must be some very worried people in Munich just now, and their sleep patterns won't have been helped by the imminent arrival early next year of the new Jaguar XE which will give the 3 Series some serious competition.

A BMW dealer told me recently that the manufacturer isn't now looking at their own performance, only at what Audi and Mercedes are doing!

## **Boom At What Cost?**

The range of incentives poured into the market in September seemed wider than ever. Manufacturers seemed to have a bottomless pit of money to throw at both dealers and customers to achieve the sales volumes. Dealers I know were offered registration bonuses of up to £17000 in addition to normal margin on some expensive cars, and an extra £1300 on an £8000 car at the other end of the scale. Customers could obtain discounts of over 30% on some cars as a result, so why not buy a new car?

As ever dealers were forced to take drastic actions to achieve the sales targets set and therefore be paid the vital bonuses that result. One large local dealer registered nearly 50 unsold cars at the end of September to get to target, that's about £750,000 worth which shows you how big the bonuses are!

The elephant in the room is a glut of used cars which has been building up in the trade for some months now. You'll see many manufacturers now nationally advertising that their dealers are holding "Used Car Events", with special offers designed to encourage more people to buy used cars. Manufacturers are only getting involved because dealers are generally overstocked with used cars, therefore they are less eager to take any more part exchanges, which hurts the new car sales the manufacturers want. The auctions are full of cars, they literally don't have space for any more. And of course the cheaper new cars become the less attractive a used one looks. It's all a balancing act and it looks like it's out of balance just now! – which will bring used car bargains for the rest of this year at least.

## **Death Of The (Car) Salesman**

Many car buyers hate the buying process, and in particular the salesman they are forced to deal with. Increasingly they do their research on the internet, but eventually most will go to a showroom, although I know some who don't. I have a customer in London who's on his 4<sup>th</sup> Porsche Cayenne and has never ever been to a Porsche dealer for sales or service. Everything is done for him by remote control.

This month one manufacturer (Hyundai) and a large dealer with 6 sites in Yorkshire have announced they will shortly be opening showrooms with no sales people employed. The Hyundai showroom is at the Bluewater Shopping Centre where footfall is 27 million visitors a year, so won't be a small investment! Staff will be available but are strictly to answer customers' questions NEVER to attempt to sell. Hyundai's research has confirmed that many customers find the sales process they are subjected to in dealerships both intimidating and very unpleasant.

The Yorkshire dealer says that sales people are simply "Not needed" as customers have done all their research on the internet and know what car they want before they ever arrive in the showroom. The

dealer provides “guides” who will assist in providing any further information required. They intend to replicate the way Argos operates.

Whilst it seems likely that many customers will prefer this approach, there is on every big benefit for the dealer. Sales people are expensive and “guides” will be much cheaper, helping dealerships improve their thin profit margins, so perhaps both dealer and customer will win. Not the sales people though!

### **Hard Times For Small British Sports Car Manufacturers**

Aston Martin, Lotus, and Morgan have all released bad news recently.

Aston announced a £25M loss for the last year. Less than the £36M for the previous year but still not good for a company strapped for cash to develop the new models they desperately need. As the only global luxury maker not owned by a large manufacturer it seems more and more likely that AM will end up being owned by Mercedes, who already hold a 5% stake.

Interesting that over 20% of the loss was £5.2M spent on a “Concept Car”. Who authorised that in a company losing money and short of cash I wonder?

Lotus have announced that the business needs to be “restructured” to “build a strong and sustainable future”. That means a 25% reduction in staff with compulsory redundancies not being ruled out. It seems that Lotus, like Aston, needs a relationship with a large manufacturer to survive. Without that new model development costs will be unaffordable, and the result sadly inevitable.

Last year Morgan dismissed Chief Executive Charles Morgan, a shock to all and a move not welcomed by many loyal customers. The reasons have never been made clear and Mr. Morgan has remained silent. It is clear now that this is for legal reasons as in their latest accounts Morgan have been forced to make a financial provision of £320,000 to cover a “legal dispute with an ex-employee”.

Another famous British motor sport name experiencing bad times is Cosworth. Losses of £7.6M last year meant that the company breached the terms of its bank loans, and the US owners were forced to pump in over £14M in loans to keep the company afloat. Withdrawal from F1 has hurt badly, but it is said that many new large contracts have been won and the business is on the way back to good health. Hopefully so!

### **Vauxhall Drop Lifetime Warranty**

Early last year Vauxhall announced their cars would now be covered by a warranty that lasted for as long as the first owner kept the car up to a maximum of 100,000 miles. New car warranties that not that long ago were limited to 12 months and 10000 miles have been lengthening with 3 years and 60000 miles now about the minimum, and some manufacturers offering 5 and even 7 years cover.

Now Vauxhall have reverted to the 3 year/60000 mile norm. The official Vauxhall reason is that because so many buyers both private and fleet change cars after 2 or 3 years to fit in with their finance agreements very few customers actually benefited from the deal.

However sources tell me the real reason is that the fleet industry, not being stupid, took advantage. Where cars and vans were likely to cover over 60000 miles during their 3 year life Vauxhalls were chosen. I know one leasing company that ONLY quoted Vauxhall when the customer was asking for a total mileage of over 60k in the contract life. Thus the future warranty costs Vauxhall were facing were simply unaffordable, and they have had to pull the deal. Not the brightest idea ever perhaps, and there are still lots of bills to come stretching into 2017.

### **All Change at Ferrari (Almost)**

The exit door has been pretty busy at Maranello lately. First the top F1 engine man went, paying the price for his 2014 creation being 80 bhp down on the Mercy. Then his boss the Team Principal went presumably for the same reason, to be replaced by the man in charge of Ferrari

sales in North America. Next Ferrari's longest serving senior figure, and the MOST senior, President of the company Luca di Montezemelo announced his departure. Clearly not his choice but over 25M Euros in compensation clearly eased the pain, and Fiat boss Sergio Marchionne took over, for the moment at least.

Amidst all this high level turmoil there is one very senior Ferrari executive that has remained, in fact he's been employed there for almost 50 years now and Vice President for 26 of them. So low profile he's almost invisible, the clue's in the name, Piero Ferrari, Enzo's illegitimate son. He owns 10% of the shares in the company (Fiat own the rest), but his power and influence goes way beyond that. He is, and has been for a long time, the "bridge" between Fiat and Ferrari. Of course it wouldn't be his decision that di Montezemelo (his boss officially) should go. But he would have been consulted by Fiat, and it seems he perhaps was responsible for finding an elegant solution to a difficult situation.

L di M is as high profile as Piero is low. 25M Euros is OK but he wanted to be seen to be moving on to a new and big challenge. It's not officially announced yet, but it seems almost certain he's to become Chief Executive of Alitalia, Italy's struggling state airline. It is also rumoured that Alitalia will soon be taken over (rescued may be a better word) by Abu Dhabi's Eithad airline. Which is owned by the Abu Dhabi royal family and is part of the same group of companies as Mubadala. Which company was brought into Ferrari 8 years ago as an F1 sponsor by one man and one man only, Piero Ferrari. For a time they were a major shareholder, which gave Fiat cash it desperately needed at the time, and Fiat bought the shares back as agreed when they could afford to. All this and the purchase of the bankrupt Piaggio aero company by Mubadala were his work.

So, it is said, were the concepts for all the low volume super cars, F40, F50, and La Ferrari. And he's thought to have a greater influence over who gets to drive the scarlet single seaters on Sunday afternoons than anyone else, including the Team Principal. So perhaps Piero's currently grappling with whether or not Fernando Alonso is next through the exit door, and if so who replaces him.

*Paul Gilligan*

pg@gvcontracts.co.uk

## Welcome to the following new members:

**We have pleasure in welcoming the following new members to the Club and we hope that you all enjoy our events and social activities.**

4769 Guido Endelein –

Lamplugh

4771 Dan Charlson -

Morecambe

4772/3 Ray & Lorraine Bennett -

Barrow

4774/77 Philip Hodgson & family Armathwaite

4778 Richard Littlewood -

Penrith

**For most of you this will be your first magazine and we hope that you enjoy it and that you will take part in many of our activities.**

**Awards Dinner**

**January 17th**

**At the Skiddaw Hotel  
Keswick**

**More details next month**



# Andy's Armchair

**Andy Armstrong takes an irrelevant look at motoring and motorsport**

It's been a busy time in F1 of late what with the Bianchi crash, Alonso quitting Ferrari and starting a game of musical chairs and Hamilton winning four on the trot and presumably denting Rosberg's confidence as a result.

Taking Bianchi first. It just goes to show that no matter what improvements are made you can never make motorsport completely safe, and if a certain set of circumstances come together then tragedy can result. I do hope knee jerk reactions aren't rushed in and also that it doesn't end up with the threatened re-start from the grid instead of a safety car period. Surely this change would prove more dangerous than anything.

Alonso leaving and Vettel going to Ferrari, seems fair enough until you consider Sebastian is having a season where he's trailing round behind his young team-mate Ricciardo. From where I'm sitting Vettel wins when the car suits his style but when it doesn't he finds it hard to adapt. Now Ferraris aren't really that easy to drive, ask Kimi, so are those at the top of the Fiat empire shelling out a fortune to employ some-one who's not up to the task.

Three races to go and it's beginning to look like the double points on offer at the last event could be very much the deciding factor. Just think, Hamilton wins the next two with Rosberg second or third so they reach Abu Dhabi with Hamilton well ahead. Now under normal scoring he's already the champion, but in the last race he retires through no fault of his own and Rosberg wins and therefore with fifty points extra takes the title. Seems daft to me, and everyone else I've talked to or read about. I can't imagine even he could consider himself the real winner but his name would go on that illustrious list, a bit like Andretti beating the bold Ronald in 1978 but that's another story.

The BTCC series is finished with Turkington taking the crown for West Surrey Racing and BMW even though the other teams have been trying to hobble the cars with rule changes all season. Overall I've quite enjoyed the TV coverage except the number of adverts. Some of the support races have also been really tedious, particularly the Porsches. The final rounds at Brands Hatch produced a cross between dodgems and a demolition derby in the main events with half of the field apparently unable to work out how to keep on the black stuff. It's strange really but the levels of ability in these races range from world class to "wally class" with the latter being responsible for umpteen safety car laps and consequently ruining the spectacle.

Leaving motorsport behind for a while I was reading a road test recently where an electric Golf was put up against a similar BMW. Now I'm not really a fan of these cars so I started the article with a biased view. After I'd read it nothing changed I still don't like them, but to add insult to injury the projected residual value after three years was only 30% of the original cost which puts these products of so called premium brands right down at the very bottom of the retained value league. Another nail in the electric vehicle coffin.

Ends

AA

# What's On

## WMC events and other events of interest

### November

8th	VSCC	Lakeland Trial
9th	WMC	<b>Autotest at Maryport</b>
13/14	MSA	Wales Rally GB
14-16		NEC Classic Motor Show
16th	DDMC	Croft Rallycross
22nd	FDMC	Grizedale Stages
28-30th	RACC	RAC Rally

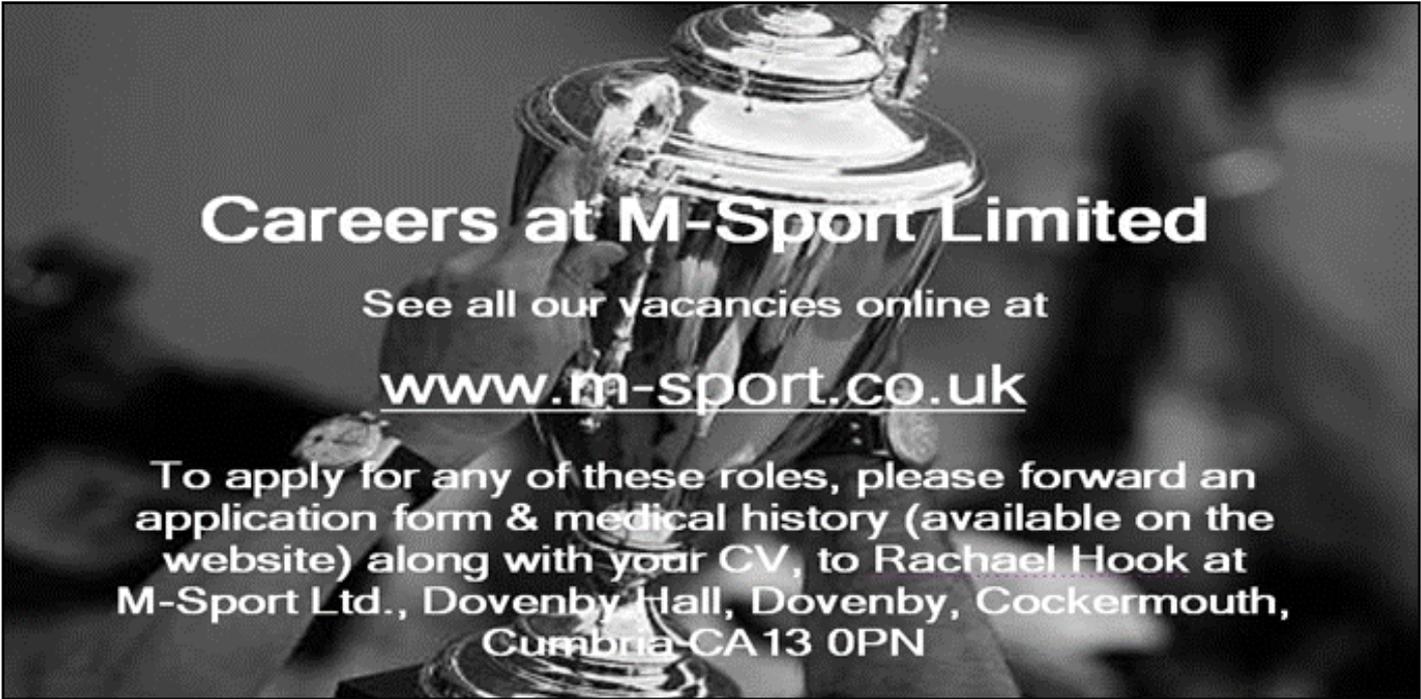
### December

6-9th	HERO	LE JOG
7th	MGC	Christmas Cracker Run
28th	WMC	<b>Festive Autotest</b>

Visit the website for all the latest news

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