

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

Start Line

Issue 02/17

www.wigtonmc.co.uk

February 2017

Rift Valley Rally



**WMC members get everywhere!
Crispin Kennedy's report inside**

Motor Sport For All

Club Officials

Wigton Motor Club Ltd Officials

<i>President:</i>	<i>Charles Graves</i>		
<i>Vice Pres.</i>	<i>Stan Glaister, Ron Palmer & David Turnbull,</i>		
<i>Chairman</i>	<i>Peter Garforth</i>	<i>016973 21762</i>	<i>petergarforth@btinternet.com</i>
<i>Vice Chair</i>	<i>Jim O'Neill</i>	<i>01768 870236 j</i>	<i>imoneill023027@gmail.com</i>
<i>Sec/Editor</i>	<i>Graeme Forrester</i>	<i>01900 825642</i>	<i>gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk</i>
<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Susan Eastwood</i>	<i>01697 323693</i>	<i>sweezyeast@gmail.com</i>
<i>Membership Sec</i>	<i>Maggy Bateman</i>	<i>016973 49919</i>	<i>wmcmemsub@outlook.com</i>
<i>Social Sec.:</i>	<i>Marian Sloan</i>	<i>01900 85833</i>	<i>mazsloan1@outlook.com</i>
<i>Child Protect.</i>	<i>Alan Jackson</i>	<i>01900 828428</i>	<i>bigwalk1@gmail.com</i>
<i>Equipment Officer</i>	<i>Graeme Mactavish</i>	<i>016973 44542</i>	<i>gmact123@gmail.com</i>

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

John Graham	01228 534483	jlg86mpa@hotmail.co.uk
Lynda Graham.	01228 534483	jlg86mpa@hotmail.co.uk
Andrew Graham	01228 534483	andy-lake3rec@hotmail.co.uk
Charles Graves	01768 776551	charles.graves@armathwaite-hall.com
David Wiggins	016973 49488	michellewiggins137@btinternet.com
Chris Leece	01768 867576	chris_1lowtherview@yahoo.co.uk
Paul Eastwood	01697 323693	paul.eastwood@carrsgroup.com
John Sloan	1900 85833	johnsloan02@outlook.com
Ron Palmer	01228 575153	ronpalmer777@hotmail.com
David Agnew	01946 841455	DAVIDWAGNEW@aol.com
Geoff Bateman	016973 49919	geoffbateman@hotmail.com

Visit the Facebook page for the latest news or the webpage at
www.wigtonmc.co.uk

Talking Point

Topical Comment from the world of motoring

As many of you will know I have been without the internet for over a month and it has only just been sorted. Needless to say the level of customer care from EE has been dreadful given they eventually discovered that one of their servers had changed lots of passwords.

It does underline just how dependant we are on the internet and emails etc. Quite apart from the administration of WMC and other things that I am involved with, there is social medial, internet shopping, internet banking, booking holiday flights and parking and many other things we accept as the norm. That's without all the newer things that younger folk run their lives with via "apps".

If I was a terrorist, or Mad Vlad in Moscow or Dodgy Don in Washington, and I wanted to bring a country down the easiest way must be to interfere with its internet system. It would just about bring civilisation to a halt!

On a similar theme we are increasingly reliant on "sat-nav" to get about and according to reports most under 40s don't own a map and don't know how to use one. That is incredibly sad and they must miss out on so much by just going from point to point. A number of folk in the tourist industry have stories about tourists and their sat-navs and the fact that they expect every location to have a post code while having no concept of distance. One group wanted to go from Cockermouth to Cartmel for lunch and were astounded when their host suggested they allow 90 minutes for the trip as they had no concept of the size of the Lake District. All these people will lose out on seeing the views and enjoying walks in all our back roads (yellows as any rally navigator will tell you).

You can buy a new road atlas of the UK very cheaply these days in the likes of Aldi when they have them but it is surprising that maps and atlases are difficult to find in garages and motorway services these days. But if there is no demand there is no need to stock them?

Given that we may be using self driving cars by 2025 which use sat nav and forms of internet to guide them around, what happens if that failed or was tampered with? If Nasty Nic of Edinburgh in her demands for independence, was able to do that them that form of transport would be brought to a halt quite literally!

On the other hand that could be great for most of us whom own older cars, have a set of OS maps and are able to use them - the roads would be empty and we could have some great journeys!

GTF



Editor: Graeme Forrester

Email: gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk

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

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Forthcoming Club Events

Jack Frost Autotest

February 12th

At

Maryport Business Centre

Round 2 of the Club Championships.

Entries have been emailed and are on the website.

Film Show & Club Night

February 15th

Doors open 7.15 and starts at 7.10

“The Man, le Mans”

Free admission. Bar etc

Midweek Meander

February 22nd

Coffee at the start and lunch,

Free entry

Contact Ron Palmer

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PG Tips

January.....dull, wet, not even any snow where I am, and dark – really dark. It's not great motivation to get out to the garage or do anything...but cars can't stand still for too long (or they go rusty!!) so I have plugged on with the brakes on the yellow Rapid and made a break through with the orange Rapid from the barn of doom. I have now made my own barn of doom tag come true because the orange Rapid is now more. I attended the barn on the first weekend in January, hauled it onto my trailer with the help of Paul Eastwood and Ben Clark and dumped it outside my garages before setting to with sockets, spanners, hammer and an angle grinder. The mk1 variety of Rapid is super rare (8 now in the UK with only 3 on the road) and quite a few of the parts on it are unique to the model such as the gearbox, so my garages are properly bursting at the seams with parts! I took the remains and every other last piece of metal I had lying around to the crap yard at Flimby and got £50 for it which wasn't bad. Scrapping such a rare vehicle (that I'd bought assuring the previous owner that I would restore it!) caused a bit of consternation amongst old Skoda die hards so as a mark of respect for the national club chairman who sold me the car I donated the money to his nominated charity and then everyone seemed much happier.

I have a handy kit tip now....in last month's ramblings I talked about making brake pipes and the torture of having a cheap Chinese kit that didn't work very well...well I now have the British made wonder tool that someone recommended and it is amazing! This is it -



It makes a perfect flare every time with little effort – simple and precise, I can't imagine using anything else now. If you have to make brake pipes it is worth the £35 asking price. With the pipes all made I then once again came into conflict with the Chinese! Having replaced the rest of the braking system I felt it only right to replace the master cylinder with a new one I had on the shelf....until I found it didn't work on one half of the brake circuit. After seeking advice and trying everything I could think of I assumed it was new ancient stock and had rotted in its packaging so ordered a new one from the UK specialist old Skoda part supplier. It arrived (same make as the other one) and also didn't work in exactly the same way. I tried everything and I think I may have brake fluid flowing round my body now...I know the bloody garage was awash with the stuff. As a last resort I dug out a used original Skoda cylinder (circa 1985) and bingo – lots of brake action and after a bit of bleeding a very nice pedal. Since then I've found out the new cylinders are sold by a Czech company but they are manufactured in China....and they don't work!

The results are in for Snotty now too....the new straight inlet manifold made a truly astonishing difference....from 125bhp to 145bhp! Incredible and very pleasing given the time it has taken. It looks likely that the rear suspension upgrades will save another 20kgs in weight now as well. So far so good and I can't wait to get it back and see how different it feels.

I now have a full HANS and helmet combo bought on a budget. The helmet is a plain white unbranded thing with the correct safety grading....the box came emblazoned with MADE IN CHINA on it which fills me with dread given my comments above about other Chinese made products but does seem to be fine after close examination (thankfully). I picked up a new but opened set of posts (they attach to the helmet and allow the straps to connect to the HANS for those who don't know) at a discount and finally the actual HANS itself at a significant discount due to being a run out model. What a horrible thing the HANS is too....like a plastic horse collar that sits on the shoulders.

The sizing guide had me down as medium but from internet gossip everyone said to go bigger – which I did and at least it isn't too tight around my neck. With the straps attached, sideways movement is severely restricted and the whole set up feels wrong! I have no idea how I am going to fit it in the car, which means at a warm summer event I will have to fit it all before I get in and then sweat it out if there are start line queues – oh the joy! I can't ever imagine a scenario when I'm going to need the infernal thing because speed events aren't actually that fast in a 1400cc Skoda (even a quite fast one!) except on the odd event with a big straight where people tend not to crash. I've decided I am more likely to need it on the drive to work where the chances of an accident that gives me whiplash are much higher.....I'd imagine I would get some funny looks sat in my Citigo with that kit on though.

Peter

Club Championships 2017

Overall Club Championship:

Counting Events: All WMC competitive events with not more than 5 from one discipline.

Scoring: 25, 24, 23 etc on **Overall** positions. The first counting event to be the Festive Autotest in December 2016.

Autotests: Points are awarded to drivers only.

White Heather Tests, Lake District Classic and Solway Classic: Points will be awarded to driver and navigator.

Event organisers and marshals: Will be awarded 10 points per event to go towards their overall championship score.

Autotest Championships:

Counting Events: Two events less than the total number of events held.

Classes: Overall, Front Wheel Drive Autotest, Rear Wheel Drive Autotest, Front Wheel Drive PCA, Rear Wheel Drive PCA and Specials Autotest.

Scoring: 25, 24, 23 etc in Overall and Class championships. The first counting event to be the Festive Autotest in December 2016.

Event organisers and marshals: Will be awarded 10 points per event to go towards their overall championship score.

Ladies Championship: Awarded to the highest place lady in the Overall Club Championship.

External Championship: To a club member(s) who has competed successfully outside the Club events. (Decided by committee)

Enthusiast of the Year: To a member who has shown considerable enthusiasm as a competitor, organiser or marshal or a combination of those. (Decided by committee)

Newcomer of the Year: To the member in their first year of motorsport who has impressed the committee with their efforts. (Decided by committee)

Stage Rally Champions: To the member(s) who has achieved excellent performance on stage rallies. (Decided by committee)

Championship Coordinator: Geoff Bateman. geoffbateman@hotmail.com

016973 49919

Festive Autotest – December 27th 2016

You know that feeling you get when a hangover of industrial proportions means you can actually “hear” daylight? Well, judging by the appearance of several people at the Festive autotest, two days after Christmas, there was a lot of it about. Still, at least it wasn't icy - unlike November's event when we had had to buy out the entire year's supply of table salt from Lidl in order to melt the skating rink surface. We marshals had spent most of the day walking around carefully as if our knees were tied together and trying not to end up on someone's bonnet. No, the day started well with the usual breeze blowing straight off the Irish Sea – the one which always finds the gap where the many layers of clothing have parted company whilst marching purposefully around the test arena pretending to know what 's going on. Of course, if you hale from north of the Border one tee shirt is more than enough and who needs sleeves anyway? Drew (McLean) obviously doesn't.

Mr Palmer had introduced a few “new” rules for us marshals to master to keep us on our toes and produce a mild panic – a rolling start and two courses for the price of one, to suit both PCA and autotest entries, were explained several times to those of us still asleep. Deep breath and all ready for the off when marshal Fiona was heard to utter the immortal words “ Give me 50 quid and I'll give you a good time”.....A stunned silence followed whilst this information was digested and a tumbleweed went rolling past in the background. Some took on a glazed expression, some perked up considerably at the prospect and some made an unseemly dash for their wallets. And then it dawned... not THAT sort of “good time”..... So we all fell about laughing and the start was delayed so that calm could be restored and trousers dried. Yes, no depths have been left unplumbed in the writing of this article.....

Our good friends from Scotland had arrived with their “Maximum Attack” logos and Team Wigton got into the spirit of things with a suitable response. “Tactical Retreat” seemed to be the only answer according to Mr Chunter - and he should know. All the results appear in January Start Line but suffice to say Gordon (Glendinning) in the Stryker and Murray (Walker) in the Nova Special were mesmerising – had to check at one point that they weren't actually on castors – it was a foregone conclusion that they would be the victors. Drew (McLean), hair all up and fierce, produced so much heat and smoke from his MX5 rear tyres at one point that we thought we might plug him into the National Grid. No wonder he doesn't need a coat.

Not to be outdone, our boys put in some noteworthy performances mostly too numerous to mention and provided some great entertainment. Young Sam (Trotter), out for the first time in the Mini Special under close supervision and encouragement by the delightful Richard (Cook) improved steadily over the day. He clipped the same cone in successive tests which meant yours truly had to sprint over (sprint? me?) to reposition it. A thinly veiled threat as to what might happen if he did it again next time around had the desired effect – Sam came back grinning with a very respectable time. He went on to win the Junior's award for the day – well earned, young man.

Chief Mollusc, Brian (Bradley), had managed to glue a tiny red Santa hat onto the snail mascot on his bonnet in festive fashion – sadly it was to make no significant difference to his times but it might prove a challenge to remove without spoiling the, er, paintwork. Good luck with that, Brian.

The entire Iveson family turned out en masse – the motor club's very own answer to the Von Trapps in the Sound of Music. Brian's Mark 1 Ford Escort, built, so he says, in the garden shed, sounded superb - Mandy went blank in the sea of cones but still managed to laugh in the face of adversity all the way to the end. Rob almost ended up in the rear foot well when the back of his seat gave way, Jacqui kept mentioning the lack of a previously promised knob on the steering wheel and Megan, who hadn't really wanted to be there at all, walked off with First Lady anyway.....

Round of applause to everyone who braved the cold to organise, marshal or take part and to Helen and Abbey for making the lunch – the crack was great and the hangover’s much better – thanks for asking!

Cheers!

Marian Sloan (aka Maz) and, apparently, everyone’s favourite Geordie..... Thanks for that, Mr Marsland – your turn for the tenner!

Adopted Charity for 2017

We would like members’ suggestions for local charities or charity that we can support during 2017. During 2016 we raised around £2,500 from various events and collections for three different charities: Hospice and Home, Children’s Heart Unit at the Freeman and the Big Pink Cancer Charity.

If you have a charity you would like us to consider please let us know by email by the 18th of February.

Autojumble

Members sales and swaps

Silkolene 20/50 oil, in 5 litre containers. £16.00 each

Fuchs 10/40 Semi synthetic oil for modern cars. 5 litres for £12 or 2 for £20.

Many OS maps for the North and Wales from the early 50s in excellent condition £10 each all to charity.

MG ZR lowered spring front and rear. £20. MG ZR 4 door rolling shell (no engine) - Offers.,

Alpine ICE power pack: Offers.

Contact Graeme Forrester on gfm@yaho.co.uk

Barn storage: 1 place available at £50 per quarter.

Contact Graeme Forrester on gfm@yaho.co.uk

Club News

Welcome to the following new members and we hope that you will enjoy our events and social activities.

Terry and Helen Schraider of Bracknell Fred and Frances Wakeling of Welwyn Garden City
Bill and Celia Limbrick of Cheltenham Max, Deborah and Davey Fuller of Aspatria
Jim and Zoe Wright of Beckermeth Graham Millar of Crofton
John James Monkhouse of Welton Charlie Noble of Berrie
Malcolm and Janet Hetherington of Annanwater Harold and David Martin of Penrith

For most of you this will be your first magazine and we really hope that you will enjoy reading it.

For any changes or queries about membership please contact Maggie Bateman on 01697349919

or by email at wcmemsub@outlook.com

Marshal Force

Marshals are the life blood of our activities

Marshals' Championship:

Counting Events: All WMC events (competitive and non-competitive). All events where WMC are requested to provide a marshals team.

Scoring: 10 points for a full days attendance and 5 points for a half day.

Any marshals attending events can contact the Championship Coordinator to ensure their attendance has been registered, preferably by e-mail.

Championship Coordinator: Geoff Bateman. geoffbateman@hotmail.com
016973 49919

Marshaling Requests

Feb 12th Jack Frost Autotests at Maryport
Contact Nigel Moffat. moffatnigel@yahoo.com
Sign on at 10.00

March 4th White Heather Tests at Kirkbride.
Contact: Duncan Kellett 07713 784785
duncankellett@gmx.com
Sign on by 10.00. Marshals will get a post event meal

March 31st Flying Scotsman: Contact Ron Palmer

Elderly Utterances

The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say

Having finished 1966 with six years of navigating under my belt in all the various disciplines available – stage, road navigation and even the dreaded complexities of events north of the Border - everything that is except pace notes which hadn't yet been introduced and regularities which I certainly never encountered in those days, I started the New Year with the optimism of youth. 1966 had finished well with a good result -22nd -on the RAC with Robin Murray and a win on the Northumbrian Motor Club's 'Guy Fawkes' on 10th December with Malcolm Wright in the 1275 'S' HAO286D. This was a well organised event with good selective sections and tight timing.

January 1967 kicked off for me on 14th/15th with the English Electric (Fylde) Motor Club's Lightning Rally on Maps 88 and 89 in the southern Lake District. This was won by Frank Davies / Bob Redhead with Bob Lamb / Tony Mason second. Malcolm Wright piloted me again on this one with a resulting 5th place after what had been a hard night's work.

The following weekend I partnered Robin on the Tynemouth and District Motor Club's 'Three Rivers' rally. This ANECCC Championship event was a 300 mile all night thrash which we managed to win in the 1293 'S'-DJH999B. There was no shortage of variety on these events with several stages thrown in to spice up what was basically a well established road rally. To round off January Robin and I tackled the Cumberland Sporting Car Club's Keswick Rally on 28/29th. This was on home territory and again used 300 miles of roads in the northern Lakes many of which alas are no longer available to press-on road events. Another win resulted in the trusty 'S' followed in second place by John Beatty/ Laurie Lancaster in a Cooper and 3rd was Bob Eaves/John Vipond in another 'S' having travelled up from Garstang. All in all not a bad start to 1967.

For those of you who enjoy browsing an OS 1:50000 map (drivers may think this is a sad pastime but navigators will understand) I can't help but regret the passing of the days when we used some great whites on local events in the '60s and '70s which are either not now permissible or have become impassable. Just some on map 85 run through the following map references.

378468 from Gaitsgill to Lime House School 384476 from Gaitsgill to Brackenhov

308417 Through Waverhead Farm.

322575 from Thurstonfield north.

250440 From Bolton New Houses east.

355556 from Little Orton to Prior Wood.

345447 thro Ewelock Hill

Walking boots or cycles only these days I think.

If you are fortunate to be amongst the retired classes or at least be able to snatch the odd day off I am organising a Midweek Meander on Wednesday 22nd February which will be free of any entry fee. It will be only about 60 miles long and will start and finish at Dobbies Garden Centre at Orton Grange, Dalston. En-route there will be a visit to a venue of interest for those who wish with a small entry fee payable. See the notice elsewhere in February's Startline. Thanks for entries already received.

Ron

Gates Tyres Historic & Targa Awards 2017

2017 WMC/Gates Challenge Rounds (best six scores from nine rounds to count):

1. March	4th	White Heather Tests	WMC
2. April	29th/30th	Berwick Classic	BDMC
3. June	25th	Lake District Classic	WMC
4. July	23rd	Northern Dales	H&DMC
5. August	13th	Blue Streak Classic	SMC
6. Sept	17th	Doonhamer Classic	SoSCC
7. October	7th	Devil's Own	KLMC
8. October.	21st	Stocktonian	DMC
9. October	22nd	Solway Autumn Classic	WMC

We are discussing with the Stocktonian to see if the class of dates can be resolved.

Advertising in Start Line

We can offer a year's advertising along the bottom of a page (as per the Gates advert below) for just £60 per year for an advert 5 cm high. If you know of anyone who might be interested please contact any committee member or email me on gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk



Lost British Marques - Berkeley

The Berkeley automobile was a collaboration between designer Lawrence "Lawrie" Bond and the Berkeley Coachworks factory owned by Charles Panter, which at the time was one of the largest manufacturers of caravans in Europe.^[1] It was an ideal project for Berkeley, who had developed considerable skills in the use of Glass-reinforced plastic^[2] (GRP), and were looking for something to fill the gaps in the very seasonal caravan market. What Panter and Bond wanted to achieve was "something good enough to win World 750cc races... but cheap, safe, easily repairable and pretty."^[3]



The early cars were an immediate success on the home market, and several derivative models were spawned over the four years of car production. Export markets, most notably the United States, were exploited and the cars earned a reputation for fun, if fragile, sports motoring on a budget. Recognising the threat posed by the newly introduced Mini and Austin-Healey Sprite in the late fifties, the company started to develop a more conventional model with the support of Ford.

The caravan market collapsed towards the end of 1960, and Berkeley's poor cash flow forced the company into liquidation on 12 December 1960, taking its car manufacturing activities with it. After having produced about 4100 cars of various types, the workforce was laid off shortly before Christmas that year. An attempted sale of the company to Sharp's Commercials Ltd (manufacturer of the Bond Minicar) came to nothing,^[4] and the company's assets were liquidated in 1961.



The factory was later used by Kayser Bondor Ltd to make women's underwear, but it was demolished in 2002 and the site turned over to housing. A road named 'Berkeley Close' in the housing estate provides the only obvious link to the car factory. Today there is an active owner's club (the Berkeley Enthusiasts' Club), which provides a range of parts and services aimed at preserving the remaining few hundred cars known to survive worldwide.

For 1961 the intention was to move into the mainstream sportscar market with the Bandit designed by John Tojeiro.^[5] This was to be powered by the 997 cc Ford engine (as in the 105E Anglia) with Berkeley-designed MacPherson strut front and independent rear suspension. The car had a complex sheet steel chassis, braced by a GRP floor which was riveted to it, and boasted 8in diameter Girling disc brakes at the front. This made the design more conventional than earlier models, but still retaining a distinctive design and relatively light weight.

The cost of the development programme exacerbated the financial difficulties facing the company at the end of 1960, and despite active involvement in the project from Ford the Bandit failed to survive Berkeley's insolvency. Only two prototypes were produced; the original Motor Show and press car registration number 700CNM, which has since been restored, and a second prototype car registered YRX292, which had a 1340cc Ford Classic engine.

Mantle spent the remainder of the 1940s and the 1950s establishing the Mantle Group to include dealerships for cars, caravans and mobile home parks in the Home Counties.^[1] A man prepared to innovate he worked with Sam Alper to improve and develop touring caravans making them more stable and easier to control through chassis, suspension and wheel design

In partnership with Sprite Caravans he established a world towing endurance record at Monza in Italy. This involved a Ford Zodiac towing a Sprite caravan around the aerodrome at Monza for 24 hours at an average speed of 70 mph.^[2] Mantle enjoyed rallying caravans and was good enough to win the Caravan Road Rally four times during the 1970s.^[1] In the Mid 50's Mantle was part of a team of engineers led by Lawrie Bond of Bond Cars notoriety who developed the Berkeley, a small sporting vehicle powered by an air-cooled motorcycle engine. Berkeley Cars were manufactured at the Berkeley Coachworks owned by Charles Panter in Biggleswade. The fibreglass structure proved an advantage and for some years the Berkeley won some important races including one at Goodwood in September 1956 where it was driven by Stirling Moss.^[1] Mantle was behind the wheel in the Netherlands Tulip Rally when the Berkeley engine failed whilst he was in the lead. Mantle's association with Berkeley lasted until the firm was liquidated in 1960.

Living in that area at the time my father was a friend of Ian mantle through their shared interests in motorsport and caravans and I remember going to the factory and also seeing Ian autotesting. The car being small and nippy was ideal in times before Mins and Midgets.

Mantle was a good enough rally driver to win a number of important races including the BTRDA Flather Star Autotest Championship in 1956. Autotesting involves a series of tests, generally around traffic cones, to measure precision driving skills and Mantle excelled captaining the England team in the Ken Wharton Memorial Five Nations championship on BBC Grandstand during the 1960s.



The Bandit was a very pretty car for the time, the "Frogeye" Sprite was quite new at the time and the MG Midget/Mk2 Sprite was still a few years away. Ford had an active involvement in the project but could not save the project.

GTF

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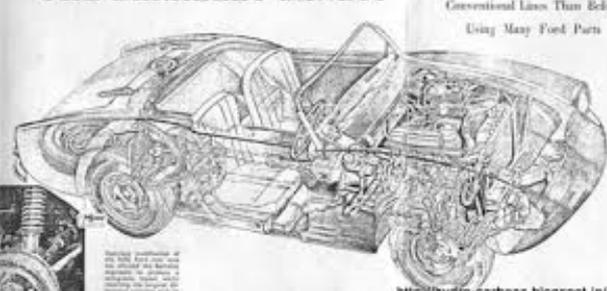
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Monte Carlo Rally, a successful event for Cumbrian cars and people.

Congratulations to local boy Malcolm Wilson and everyone at M Sport in winning the Monte Carlo Rally with an M Sport car that was built and developed at Dovenby, driven by Sebastian Ogier, what a fantastic achievement. M Sport very nearly had another car in second place but engine problems on the last two stages robbed Ott Tanac of this position but he still managed to finish on the podium in third. Another M Sport car, that of Elfyn Evans was sixth, well done to everyone at M Sport.

Not a lot of people know this as Michael Caine might have said but another lad with strong Cumbrian connections was fifth overall in a works Citroen. Scott Martin who is in his early thirties was brought up in Dean near Cockermouth, he went to Dean school and started his rally career navigating for Willie Jarman before co driving for Mathew Wilson then many other top drivers finally becoming a full works co driver for the Citroen works team. He now lives in Carlisle. Well done Scott.

Graeme and Helen Forrester also have reason to celebrate a fantastic result in this rally with Toyota but I will let Graeme enlighten us more accurately than I can but congratulations to Paul and the Toyota team for getting a car into second place.

The world's most famous rally the Monte Carlo was started in 1911 in order to encourage and persuade wealthy people to make the journey to the south of France in winter to boost trade. Beginning their journeys from starting points all over Europe to widen the appeal Glasgow was often the British starting point.

These days you need just as much money if not more just to compete in the event but to win it needs superb preparation, colossal financial outlay, the world's best drivers, co- drivers, mechanics, logistics support, management teams, personal trainers and chefs to name but a few of those involved. There are many more ingredients such as ice recce teams, software engineers and a myriad of other things but one thing you do need but you have no control over and that is luck. This ingredient is often the one that seems the most elusive yet often is the most critical factor.

This year's rally had many twists and turns, not just on the road but metaphorically too, taking away leading positions from cars and crews, handing it to other competitors then just as cruelly taking it away from those as well. It was at various times sad, exciting, frustrating, euphoric, emotions varying from elation to deep despair in some instances.

The saddest thing on the rally being the death of a spectator when a rally car went off the road on a fast corner, shot up a very high bank and hit a spectator who then dropped down onto the road very seriously injured. He was airlifted to hospital but died from his injuries. What a tragedy for everyone, this will no doubt have repercussions for future events and rallying all over the world for years to come.

Cars are so fast these days, traction and handling is amazing, acceleration is F1 like, braking matches the acceleration but the terrain can be so unforgiving. Rock faces, trees, massive drops from roads clinging to the sides of cliffs even deep lakes in the bottom of these valleys leave absolutely no room for error or failure either mechanical or human, the people hurtling along in such machines have to be superhuman these days.

Not many of us that enjoyed competing years ago against works teams albeit on a much lower level could even envisage competing in such events these days even if we were multi millionaires. The skill, fitness and commitment required is much more than the likes of Roger Clark, Ari Vatanen and Hannu Mikkola needed. Many of us can remember some late nights in the bars of hotels on the "Scottish International Rally" in particular chatting to works drivers and co drivers, maybe we were only just on soft drinks but lots of them could down a few pints or whisky's yet it didn't seem to affect them at all, they were still winning the next day. How times have changed.

So congratulations to the winners they definitely deserve it but its soul destroying for losers having put in just as much effort and been robbed of the spoils by lady luck. In rallying those that have succeeded have had just as many hard times as well as good ones. Someone once said to me it's called character building. I can think of other adjectives but it's great to see sometimes things do work out.

The 2017 Monte Carlo Rally will certainly be one that will be remembered for a very long time, it's very nice that it was a great event for Cumbria and Cumbrians.

Well done guys enjoy and savour it and best wishes for the future.

Keith Thomas.

Midweek Meander

Date :- Wednesday 22nd February 2017

Arrive 10am for coffee. Start 10.30

Start and finish venue:- Dobbies Garden Centre, Orton Grange, Dalston,

CA5 6LB MR 85/354515

Distance approx 60 miles. Visit one venue of interest en route.

Entry :- Free of Charge - £0 Entrants pay for venue cost and refreshments.

Route instructions by simple tulip diagrams issued at the Start.

Please advise your entry to Ron Palmer by e-mail, if possible by 20th February

To :- ronpalmer777@hotmail.com or 01228 575153

Dream Garage

This months selection is made by **David Agnew**; I suspect David will need little introduction to you; he's a very active member of Wigton's committee, and a seasoned and tough competitor in the Clubs rally championship, as well as acting as 'Clerk of the Course' on club events.

David tells me that when I first asked him to participate in the 'Dream Garage' article, he was in two minds whether he should; he wasn't sure if he would have anything interesting to say.

I'm pleased to say that he decided to contribute; but, to use his own words, we should 'prepare to be bored'!

David tells me that his involvement with all things motoring began a long time ago; living on a farm, he was always interested in mechanical things, whether they were tractors or muck spreaders. He was fascinated by how things worked; and having used them from as soon as he could reach the pedals, reckons that this must have encouraged his interest.

His first legal forms of transport were Vespa scooters, and then a Bond 3 wheeler; which he remembers was 'pretty useless; but great fun for a 16 year old, when it was running.

He graduated to 4 wheels when he purchased an ex GPO Morris van for £5; the low price due to the fact that it didn't have an engine! This was 'soon sorted' by the purchase of an A35 engine from a Mr Kenny Wilson, whose other claim to fame (apart from supplying parts to David!) is that he is Malcolm Wilson's father!

David's relationship with Kenny Wilson grew, over the following years, largely based on a need for parts for a succession of different cars; until, like many enthusiasts at the time, he bought the first of many Minis; which he tells me was soon 'rally prepared'!.....well; at least it was fitted with a sump guard and spotlights, and he was ready to 'have a go at this rallying malarkey'!

But life, as we all know, doesn't always go to plan; marriage, two beautiful daughters, two businesses, and 20 years passed in a flash. without a competitive wheel turned!.....

But then, David spotted an article in his local paper written by a certain Graeme Forrester, talking about the 'Cumbria Classic Caper'; which coincided with the recent purchase of a Triumph Stag (David had never lost that urge to 'tinker' with things mechanical).

This resulted in an entry for the 1989 Cumbria Classic; he's been involved with Wigton Motor Club ever since, either competing, or organising events to this day.

As for his six cars; David tells me that he found this quite difficult. To choose a car based on looks alone does not appeal to him at all; there must be a practicality; a 'useable' quality to his cars; so here goes!

1) Mercedes AMG G-TS. As seen on the front of the F1 grid



2) Ford Mustang



3) Chevrolet Camaro



4) Bugatti Brescia



5) GN Spider



6) For his sixth car, David tells me that he could go for 'the most expensive super car in the world, whatever that is'..... but he would choose not to have this car, because he 'couldn't use it'.....Instead, he would pick a Ford Raptor pickup, with a 6.2 litre V8 engine.....



So, quite a contrast in Davids choice of cars; there does seem to be a healthy passion for large capacity V8 muscle; balanced with the engineering purity of the GN and the Bugatti.....certainly not boring (especially with all that power on an icy night in Cumbria!). I'm not sure that he'll be able to get parts for any of his cars from Kenny Wilson's, however.....!

For next month, I've invited Ron Palmer to contribute.....

Michael Marsland

Rally in the Rift ?

10 – 12 December 2016, - “Rift Valley 1000 Classic Rally”, 3 days, 793km of stage mileage, entry fee GBP 240... - Sounds interesting?

On moving to Kenya in 2008 I soon became involved in motorsport, having cut my teeth on navigating my father in his MGC in the Wigton and NESRO events, I was invited to take part as navigator on this new classic event.



The rally was the good idea of some local rally enthusiasts – (although the actual implementation was undertaken by their parents!), Being organised *for enthusiasts by enthusiasts* (- and with some of the organisers actually competing.) The officials took a rather pragmatic approach to safety; while helmets were required, the organisers left it up to the competitor to decide if they were *more* likely to require a fireproof overall, or due to high temperatures (39C) they would dehydrate unless wearing shorts and T-Shirts. Interestingly while around 50% wore fireproof overalls, almost all competitors chose to use HANS devices - and fireproof boots were shown to be less likely to melt than trainers!

The event was organized in an area around 4 hours north of Nairobi, based at Lake Bagoria in the Rift Valley. I was involved with the Savage Rallying Team, (father and 2 sons,) navigating for the elder son (who was also my driver on my Stag night...) Our team comprised of two Datsun 240Z, and we were in a 180B. The entry list of 39 cars was quite eclectic and along with the usual Escorts and 911s, there was also a good showing of interesting motors with a Ferrari, Mercedes 450, a few ultra-competitive TR7s with V8s, some V6 Capris an RX7 and Francis Tuthill in a VW Beetle. The weather at this time of year is hot and dry and so we thankfully did not have to contend with the lottery of the black cotton mud although cabin temperatures were quite snug! Cars were spaced out at least 3 minute intervals with everyone accommodating seeding changes for safety and sport and so even though sometimes the *fesh-fesh* on the road was a foot deep, it was rare to be caught up in someone else’s dust.



Action started at between 0600 and 0700 each morning and with no scheduled service times it was a case of cracking on, grabbing 20 minutes or so on the road sections to meet your service team to do a quick spanner check, rehydrate, refuel and replace knackered tyres, but otherwise it was just check into the controls and get on with it.

The roads varied between smooth gravel to rough rocks, the temperature was generally hot although there were a couple of stages in Cedar forests at 8,000ft where things were fresher. We even had a 50km tarmac section on a

179km special stage to keep things interesting. With no recce permitted, rather than use tulips to warn of dangers, as there were so many, the organisers gave out road books with Danger Notes. We were told not to use them as pacenotes even if they were presented as such! They did work though, with only one car suffering a significant accident (at the flying finish of the last stage – sod’s law!). Safety was paramount through with a helicopter on standby and real time vehicle tracking available to organisers and spectators throughout the event.



We soon fell in with some arable farmers from the south east of the UK, who while they had competed in the East African Classic Safari Rally a couple of times were baulking at the 2017 entry fee of USD 39,950. They, like several others had hired a local car (Mk2 Escort) and service team – and as everyone knows - almost nothing goes as fast as a hire car! (they came 5th!)

We had a fun event; on the first day we had three punctures which dropped us down the rankings, my driver had not driven competitively for 4 years and was getting back into the swing of it. Changing tyres in the burn-

ing African sun is not the most pleasant experience, although the local herders were very keen at lending a hand.

The second day we were on the ball – on the pace but not too quick, then on the last stage (179km) we had a rear trailing arm shear 30km from the end. We managed to bodge it together with ratchet straps and made it out of section losing 39minutes. I am not sure if ratchet straps are considered a ‘period modification’ but we managed to keep going and had a spare arm in the service barge at the end of the stage. Our team had a bit of struggle changing the part, and so once fitted we had to ‘press-on’ to make our time at the final control of the day 100km away.



The final day comprised three stages one of 45km and the others at 100km. We were taking 4s per Km out of our team mate and hoped to have a top 10 finish, however we were a bit slow on the last section and had to settle for 11th! Savage Senior came 3rd O/A, behind local national rally competitor Raaji Bharij (Mk1 Escort) and Geoff Bell (240Z).

All in all a great event. Already there is talk about the next event in spring next year! Come and visit!

Crispin Kennedy





So it's a New Year and we all try and turn over a new leaf...unless of course it's a Nissan Leaf, which you sort of press a button...and that's it, cos its electric fugly and a bit dull....I am guessing!

To be honest most new cars are a bit dull and it's not because I am old (!) or out of touch (!) or set in my ways (!)

NO, it's the fact that at the legal limits prescribed on UK roads, 99% of the time, all cars are perfectly adequate at the very least, most are more than capable and the rest are like going for a quick pastie at Greggs in your North Face gear.....hopelessly over specified for what's being asked of them.

At the risk of repeating an old tale, I once drove one of those Audi S6's with the Lambo V10, just after they were released at an Audi driving day, it only began to excite at the speed of 142mph, which by then I was in prison territory, you can't do that every day can you?. I actually preferred the 3.0 diesel Quattro Estate...it just made more sense.

Now a friend of mine will, as I type, be being flung around Croft in the ballast seat on the Jack Frost stages, only his second event reading the maps (pppppft, maps...Croft...pfft) and all power to him, I love cars, love rallying, I am fairly good on the maps...but, I would never do it while the cars moving.....nooooo, moi give up the heroic flashy bit? Never, I am a born driver, that's what I am.

But I have massive respect for anyone who can sit next to a deluded narcissist like myself and do that job. It does take a certain type of character, a certain physical makeup as well and that's even before you get to the aspects of chemistry that make a team actually work.

It's an important aspect that, the element of trust, at club level where many of us are out for a bit of fun, ultimate pace is limited by many factors, you can pick these up in the chat at any club rally, costs are a big factor, making the car and its bits last through an event or a season have many facets, I am sure I am not the only one who factors in the cost savings of a wet event as you keep more of your tyres, less strain on other components it's a Chapmanesque virtuous circle of gains for the less well-heeled or mindful competitor as others with more cash to flash see their extra power evaporate in tractionless steam clouds.

It's closer to the argument about making F1 relevant to the man on the street than you would initially think, I know that arguments that cloud F1 are usually based on cost, that saving resources, whether its fuel or tyres or engines or gearboxes have no place in F1, which is bizarre when you think that every other motoring sport or activity is hampered by those exact same restrictions, yes there are exceptions, but everyone has their limits.

Maybe one answer is not to limit how much you can use, but rather the price of what you use?, yes you can have cheaper tyres and use as many as you like, but there will still be an optimum number versus time lost in the pits... Budget rallying/autotesting has the odd (!) competitor

Actually I think I will just leave that sentence as it is, but yeah there are some that bring a level of spending to club events that can be out of place and sometimes it works, but they are rare, often transitory and sometimes laughable, but the majority of competitors are there for the fun of it, most advantages bought and paid for can be completely out done by a heavy right foot or a brain that has faded after too big a lunch. Most successful crews have worked at their teamwork, gained experience over many years and yes, they can sustain their performance (fnarr) it doesn't always rely on cash spent.

It's the joy of completion and driving and usually in an older vehicle.

For all the advances in technology, we seem drawn to machines that we can influence rather than those that have set parameters, even the most basic mechanically minded of us can't resist a fiddle every now and again (please!), we move things around, take things out, replace and upgrade, have special bits for special days.....

You can't help thinking we have handed over the pinnacles of our sport to a generation who like to fiddle with different things (quiet you lot in the cheap seats) I have never been in a wind tunnel, even if I have caused a few drafts, but I doubt I would get any fun from setting the old PC up for a weekend of sorting 1's and 0's into a CFD festival, that's not likely to produce any fun for anyone, despite sounding like it would have camping, beer and a headline slot by The Kaiser Chiefs, CFD or computational fluid dynamics is the way aerodynamics are being increasingly done....Barnes Wallis and JR Mitchell would be....well they would be impressed, but that's not my point!

There will come a point where some of us are going to have to make a choice, to stick or twist, our new car is either going to be the connected, autonomous able, EV or we stick with the oil burner we currently have. We will have to forgo internet on the move, linked up navigation, cameras recording those that transgress against us (rendering court appearance's superfluous) ease of ownership, less punitive taxation, maybe even owning the vehicle at all!

Sweden is giving tax breaks to those that repair stuff, will those that choose to snooze in the headlong rush to mass congestion convoys, will they be rewarded for keeping old wrecks like the 2017 Audi R8 on the road through mechanical repairs? Or will they be shepherded into Nissan Cube alikes? Litigation, fear of driverless cars gaining priority and their fantastic emergency braking powers, tax breaks and painless ownership forcing us one by one to just give up?

Well not me, there's one very important point missed in all this.....while I am sat in my cute little comfy travel capsule, climate to my liking, the hi-tech fabrics soothing my questionable girth, taking away all need for me to do anything other than command where I want to go, I may look at the entertainment on offer as the tech endeavours to take me wherever I want to go, its only then I may flick open an i-pad and open up that months digital version of Startline, commence reading and within two miles will have thrown up all over its birch and castanet interior! Didn't think that one through did you Mr Google! There's a reason I don't sit in the silly seat you plonker!

Alan the fowl mouthed Fox!



M Sport Dominate Monte Carlo Rally



It was a dream start for M Sport to this year's WRC campaign with first third and sixth for the team. It was nearly first and second until an engine problem hit the second placed car.

Former M Sport employees were also involved with the return of Toyota who were elated with second place. Other ex M Sport employees on the event included Kris Meeke who retired and Scott Martin who partnered Craig Breen to first place in a Citroen. Obviously M Sport is a great place to start!



The team celebrates before getting back to work for the Swedish Rally in February

Social Scene

Annual Awards Dinner



The main award winners in front of the banners



Jack Palmer receives his club champions award from Peter Garforth

A great time was had by all present. A few folk were unable to be present and we have kept their awards or passed them on to friends to deliver.

The awards are mounted wine glasses so not something we can post so we will hold onto them until early March so that you can arrange collection. Please let us know ASAP

Inside The Industry

Paul Gilligan has his say

Big Road Tax Increases Coming

New car buyers battered by price increases since the £ started dropping last year are now going to be hit by significant hikes in road tax from April 1st. In 2001 a new system was introduced basing the tax on emissions, or perhaps I should say “claimed” emissions? In 2001 the average new car emissions were 178 grams of CO2 per km, now its 125 grams. In 2003 it was announced that cars emitting under 100 grams would pay no road tax at all, and this has become a high proportion since then.

The EU target is average emissions of 95 grams by 2020, so Government revenues from Road Tax, having already fallen sharply, are to fall further still. Eventually the Treasury have decided enough is enough, so a new system comes into effect on April 1st. The first year rate on a 99 gram car goes from zero to £120, and then to £140 from the second year on. £140 is the rate from year 2 on all cars, but those emitting more than 255 grams get a Year 1 rate of £2000 against £1120 currently.

But there’s more! Should your new car have a retail price of over £40000 then a surcharge of £310 will be payable for each of the first 5 years. So effectively a 255 gram car priced at £40000+ will cost £4110 for 5 years against £3180 currently.

Cars registered by March 31st are unaffected for all of their lives (currently!) so there will be a rush to buy in March followed by a very quiet April. And cars pre registered in March, particularly expensive ones, will be much in demand. That of course is if people are aware of these impending changes – a recent survey showed that only 8% of potential new car buyers are!

The Treasury expect that as a result of these changes they will be pulling in an extra £1 billion a year by 2020, good to know that all the money raised will be spent on repairing pot holes – if only!!

Toyota Say “No Reason” Amazon won’t Be Selling Cars Soon

Speaking at an industry conference recently a senior Toyota GB boss said that they (TGB) fully expected Amazon to be selling cars soon. Many buyers he said “crave” the simple Amazon buying experience while they “strongly dislike” the treatment they get in car showrooms.

Meanwhile Peugeot have launched “Order Online by Peugeot” which enables a customer to complete the purchase of a new car within 30 minutes at one sitting if they wish. Once they have “built” their ideal car they can secure a guaranteed part exchange value (underwritten by Manheim auctions), obtain finance quotations, agree finance, and order the car. The customer can then choose whether to have it delivered or collect from a dealership. Within 12 hours of the system going live the first car was ordered.

I think we have a generation of car buyers growing up who are used to the internet being not only the source of all the information they need before making a purchase decision, but also the means by which they make that purchase when ready. If their current car is going back to the finance company at the end of a PCP or PCH agreement, or they’re happy to use We Buy Any Car (see below), then the part exchange problem goes away. The only thing these buyers need the dealer for is a test drive, which a surprising number don’t bother with. Strange that whilst accepting all this to be true, the same manufacturers are still forcing dealers to build multi million pound showrooms?

Tesla Hits 1000 Charging Points

Electric car manufacturer now has over 1000 charging points in Europe. 270 of these are the “Supercharger” rapid charge stations which are mainly situated on motorways and are the World’s fastest vehicle recharging facilities. These can put enough charge in a Tesla in half an hour to give a range of more than 150 miles.

None of this investment comes cheap, further evidence that Tesla are serious, and as I’ve said before when their £30000-£35000 car arrives later this year the only thing that can hold them back is lack of productive capacity. Unless that is one of the industry giants buys them and starts building Teslas in Detroit, or Stuttgart, or Munich? I wouldn’t bet against it.

We Buys Hits One Million Deals

We Buy Any Car has just bought its millionth vehicle, 10 years after it was started in Manchester. With 200 sites nationwide employing almost 500 staff this company that didn’t exist in 2005 is now very much part of the industry.

Now owned by British Car auctions, which is of course where all the vehicles go, the company has become much more professional under this ownership, and much of the criticism levelled at it is a thing of the past. Again customers like the simplicity of the approach as opposed to showroom hag-gling. That’s a million transactions that the “traditional” trade didn’t get. And now there are others competing, most notably We Want Any Car to add to the numbers.

2016 Sales Joy in UK and Europe

Almost 2.7M new cars were registered in the UK last year, an all time record. As ever within this there were winners and losers. BMW regained their position as top German prestige manufacturer with 182000 “sales” against Audi on 177000 and Mercedes 145000. As ever BMW had massive registrations in December, the results of which are now littering the forecourts of BM dealers all over the country as pre-registered bargains.

Elsewhere Jaguar were up 45% on the back of XE and F Pace, Abarth 44%, Bentley 41%, Land Rover 19%, Mercedes 17% and Kia 14%. Losers were Mitsubishi 20% down, VW -7% (but Skoda were up 8%), Vauxhall -7%, Fiat – 6% and Ford -5%. For all of these to be down against 2015 in a market almost 2.5% up is serious stuff.

Sales across Europe recovered to give a total of over 15M, second highest ever. VW Group remains top seller but failed to increase sales in a market 6.5% up. Renault put in a stonking performance to take second place achieving a 13% sales increase. Taking European sales as a whole Mercedes beat both Audi and BMW, I think it’s only a matter before this is the case in the UK also.

How the European market will fare in 2017 is anybody’s guess just now. If it continues to strengthen then the manufacturers will have less need to send cars to the UK which because of the weakness of the £ is now a less profitable market for them. However if European sales stall, and the UK weakens as forecast we’ll be back to too many cars chasing too few customers, nightmare for those who make and sell them!

People Queue Up For VW’s Money

VW have agreed a settlement with their 650 US dealers who will now receive a compensation payment of on average £1.5M each in recognition of the damage done to their businesses by the diesel emissions scandal. VW will pay this money, a total of £964M, over the next 18 months. Dealers will also be allowed to delay capital improvements like new showrooms for two years.

Very fair most would say. No doubt the dealers' businesses were damaged. They lost sales, the value of their used cars and demonstrators dropped etc etc. Of course that applies to VW dealers in the UK and the rest of Europe too. Their compensation is zero. Which is completely unfair. VW seem to be relying on the fact that we are a less litigious society to keep their wallet firmly shut as far as European dealers are concerned. Shameful!

Same applies to the people who bought the cars. 500,000 US owners have already been guaranteed compensation. In Europe VW have promised to "fix the cars free of charge", but no mention of compensation. Now a class action is being mounted to seek compensation for UK and European owners. Currently £3000 per car is being demanded, which if agreed will cost VW another £30M. I look forward to seeing VW defend in open court their view that US customers deserve compensation but UK and European ones don't.

Where Do Diesel cars Go From Here?

This is a very hot topic just now. It seems diesel cars, vans, and trucks are under fire from all sides based on the pollutants they produce. Whilst the tree huggers would have them banned overnight it isn't of course that simple. There are currently around 10 million diesel cars on the roads of the UK. Plus a great many vans, buses, and trucks. It is simply not realistic to imagine these can be replaced with new petrol cars overnight. The capacity to produce all those extra petrol engines simply doesn't exist. A long way from all 10 million owners have the financial capability to buy a new petrol car. And what are the Greens going to do with 10 million diesel used cars? Scrap them? That's hardly good for the environment.

Of course those numbers are far higher if applied to Europe as a whole, so the task becomes even more impossible. For commercial vehicle applications where heavy trucks demand 500 bhp and enormous torque petrol engines to do the job simply don't exist, and if designed will do 2-3 mpg.

As I've discussed before most new cars and vans in this country, business or private, are now acquired on some sort of finance plan whereby someone (manufacturer or financial institution) guarantees the second hand value of the vehicle. That probably applies to 3-4 million cars and commercials in the UK under 4 years old. If you scrap all diesel cars the manufacturers and banks will take a hit of maybe £50 BILLION. So that wipes the car makers and the banks out. Which means that there's nobody to produce the cars and nobody to fund them. Never mind with the financial system non-existent people might just realise there are more important problems to solve?

And of course these figures are UK only, try multiplying them up for all of Europe, may be 6-8 times bigger? So first it has to be agreed that diesel is bad news for the environment. And I'm conscious that the same scientists and governments now decrying diesel were encouraging its use as "cleaner" a few short years ago. Then once that's decided to whole process of changing over fuels has to be MANAGED. What works for large cities may very possibly not be the correct answer for less heavily populated and rural areas with less people and much lower traffic density. I think the likelihood is that diesel will not be replaced by petrol, but that both will, over time, be replaced by electric and/or hydrogen vehicles.

Whatever there are still compelling cost arguments for diesel, like they use less fuel so are cheaper to run. Changes will come but won't be overnight. Although there's lots of talk we're having a busy January with both our private and business customers. But we haven't received an order for a petrol vehicle yet?

Paul Gilligan

pg@gilliganvc.co.uk www.gilliganvc.co.uk 07785 293222

Inside the Industry Late News!

Ford Slammed Over Mustang Safety Concerns

Sometimes it seems that motor manufacturers can't help making obvious PR disasters. Whilst VW are still reeling from the emissions scandal (see below) now Ford have made what could be a very expensive error. When they brought the Mustang to Europe last year (and for the UK in RHD) it got a great reception and long waiting lists resulted with over retail price being paid for a quick delivery for a while. Ford in their wisdom presumed that because the car had passed all US crash tests it wouldn't be tested again in Europe.

So in an incredibly cynical decision to reduce costs Ford decided to REMOVE from the specification of cars destined for Europe some of the safety equipment standard on US cars, equipment with which the cars passed US safety tests. These US tests are not as stringent as European ones.

The Mustang has now (to Ford's surprise) been subjected to the European NCAP tests. The vast majority of new cars now get a 5 star rating, or at least 4 stars. The Mustang scored 2 stars, the first time such a low rating has been given to a new car since 2008! Ford say an updated model will be available later this year with some added safety features, but NCAP have already said that they doubt these will be enough.

So what do you feel like if you put around £40,000 on the table for a new Mustang last year? And if you decide to get rid of it because you don't want to drive a high performance sports car that's been judge to be unsafe what might it sell for? And might you be looking to Ford for some compensation?

Paul Gilligan

pg@gilliganvc.co.uk www.gilliganvc.co.uk 07785 293222



Club Championships

<u>2017 Club Championship Overall</u>					
Pos	Driver	Car	Class	Festive A/T	
				Pos	Pts
1	Murray Walker	Nova	AS	1	25
2	Gordon Glendinning	Stryker	AS	2	24
3	Drew McLean	MX5	AR	3	23

<u>2017 Autotest Championship Overall</u>					
Pos	Driver	Car	Class	Festive A/T	
				Pos	Pts
1	Murray Walker	Nova	AS	1	25
2	Gordon Glendinning	Stryker	AS	2	24
3	Drew McLean	MX5	AR	3	23

<u>2017 FWD Autotest Championship</u>					
Pos	Driver	Car	Class	Festive A/T	
				Pos	Pts
1	Stephen Dixon	Corsa	AF	1	25
2	Jack Palmer	Ka	AF	2	24
3	Rob Iveson	Fiesta	AF	3	23

<u>2017 RWD Autotest Championship</u>					
Pos	Driver	Car	Class	Festive A/T	
				Pos	Pts
1	Drew McLean	MX5	AR	1	25
2	John Sloan	MG Midget	AR	2	24
3	Chris Hunter	MX5	AR	3	23

2017 RWD Autotest Championship

Pos	Driver	Car	Class	Festive A/T	
				Pos	Pts
1	Drew McLean	MX5	AR	1	25
2	John Sloan	MG Midget	AR	2	24
3	Chris Hunter	MX5	AR	3	23

2017 FWD PCA Championship

Pos	Driver	Car	Class	Festive A/T	
				Pos	Pts
1	Peter Wright	Mini	PF	1	25
2	Willie Jarman	Peugeot 205	PF	2	24
3	Megan Iveson	Ka	PF	3	23

2017 RWD PCA Championship

Pos	Driver	Car	Class	Festive A/T	
				Pos	Pts
1	Angus Cowan	Escort	PR	1	25
2	Ron Palmer	MX5	PR	2	24
3	Brian Iveson	Escort	PR	3	23

2017 Specials A/Test Championship

Pos	Driver	Car	Class	Festive A/T	
				Pos	Pts
1	Murray Walker	Nova	AS	1	25
2	Gordon Glendinning	Stryker	AS	2	24
3	Richard Cook	Mini Spec	AS	3	23

Andy's Armchair

Andy Armstrong takes an irrelevant look at motoring and motorsport

The BBC recently ran an internet poll to find out which of the drivers who have won the World Championship once was the most popular. Now considering those involved in the voting were probably predominantly British it's no great surprise that the winner was Nigel Mansell and that the "no hoppers" included Farina, Phil Hill and Hawthorn who all achieved their wins before most of those voting were born, quite likely before their parents were born come to think of it.

Anyway it got me thinking and I came to the conclusion that it would be just as interesting if not more so to run a similar poll of drivers who should have been world champion but for one reason or another failed to achieve the ultimate prize. I guess we know first place already as it's got to be Stirling Moss, but then it gets more interesting when you consider the following and start to try and place them into a league table, so here goes, a list of my almost but not quite champion racers. Chris Amon. Bruce McLaren. Ronnie Peterson. Gilles Villeneuve. Philippe Massa. Wolfgang Von Trips. Mark Webber. Peter Collins. Tony Brooks. Jackie Ickx. No doubt there are others who could be included and could replace those listed above but sticking to my list who would be the Wigton Motor Club "Champion of the non Champions" It'd be nice to know.

Changing the subject, I see that car sales peaked again in 2016 but that the SMMT are saying they expect them to fall this year by about 5%, presumably a drop that can be achieved if they simply stopped pre-registering cars themselves so they can win some pointless race against their main opposition. It's also no doubt effected by the fact that there's only a finite number of buyers (renters) and once you've tied them into a four year deal then they're out of the game until their present contract is up. By the way on the subject of leasing I saw an advertisement for BMW where the annual contract mileage had dropped to six thousand miles with any extras charged at 10.1p per unit. You've got to be pretty stupid if you can't see their ploy is to keep the monthly payment down then to claw it all back by setting such a low distance limit - shiny paint and a posh showroom seem to make people lose all sense of reason!!

Finally, I see that the wheels are starting to turn in the saga of compensation for VW owners in this country. As far as I understand if you think you're in the position to make a claim you can join the queue on the internet and there'll be a court case which will deal with all those involved in one fell swoop. It seems that Chrysler and Fiat are next in line to get into a spot of bother with their emissions technology. At the moment they're denying any "jiggerypockery", so I suppose we'll have to wait and see what happens, but they do say there's no smoke without fire.

Ends

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What's On

WMC events and other events of interest

February

12nd	Sun	WMC	Jack Frost Autotest
15th	Wed	WMC	Film Night
18th	Sat	FAC	Classic Trial
22nd	Wed	WMC	Midweek Meander
24-26			Race Retro (Stoneleigh)

March

4th	Sat	WMC	White Heather Tests
11th	Sat	Trio	Malcolm Wilson Rally
19th	Sun	WMC	Novice Autotest

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