

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

Start Line

Issue 07/18

www.wigtonmc.co.uk

August 2018

Dusty Northern Dales Fun



Charles Graves and Ron Palmer in Charles' RS2000, a car that Ron sold to a customer in 1973

95 Years of Affordable Motorsport

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Wigton Motor Club Ltd Officials

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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

Things are gradually changing at the MSA under Dave Richards chairmanship. There is certainly a sense of reality coming through that all is not well in the sport. Statistics have been produced giving the average ages of all the different types of licenced officials, clerks, scrutineers, stewards etc as well as marshals. It makes grim reading in that virtually all are over 50 and the majority over 60, in some cases around 80%. Of course this does mean that there is perhaps thousands of years of expertise there as many have been in action for 40 years or more. On the other hand in ten years or so, there is going to be a massive shortage of marshals and senior officials.

This is a problem not just , of course, confined to motorsport but to all other sports, voluntary bodies, parish councils and charities. Look at the way worthy bodies like Round Table and Rotary are dying out. The reasons that people are less likely to be involved in voluntary work and organising things are a matter for greater minds than ours.

On the other hand, could we turn this to our advantage? Events run on weekdays? Motorsport has always been at weekends other than the longer rallies but many other sports run on weekdays. Horse racing takes place on 364 days a year. People obviously take days off to attend. White soccer matches take place on evenings, fans have to take at least afternoons off to get to the venue. In motorsport track days are usually on weekdays.

Generally track hire is much cheaper during the week with greater availability. Thus if the officials and marshals are free and many competitors, would other drivers be willing to take a day off to change shifts in order to compete? Perhaps it is time for some “out of the box” thinking?

Continuing on the age theme, I was watching the Le Mans Classic on live streaming a few weeks ago. Many of the very fine cars taking part are owned by mature gentlemen who have had a plentiful number of business lunches! This made the Le Mans starts quite amusing, no Stirling Moss style sprints, more shuffles and waddles!

GTF



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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

August Pub Run:

Wednesday August 1st

Start at the lay-by at the north end of Cuddy Lonning where the B5302 meets the A596 to the west end of Wigton We have about 55 miles planned out, about 2 hours run time, ending at the Ship Hotel in Allonby. Cost is 6 pounds per head from the pub - payable to us at the start - please bring the correct money- for chips and sandwiches. I need to know **numbers 1 week in advance** and I Have been asked for a deposit at that time which we will pay. Entertainment by the Allonby ukulele group is free on the night as it's also their club night!

To enter contact: tim.newell@btopenworld.com.

Breakfast Meet

At

Gilcrux

From 0900

Sunday, September 30th

More details in the next issue.

HAGERTY
CLASSIC CAR INSURANCE

Partners with Wigton Motor Club – please call 0844 824 1135 and don't forget to mention your club when you do!

Cumbria Classic Weekend

'Rose and Thistle' one day tour.

Saturday 18th August,

Starts at Brewers Fayre, Premier Inn, Cockermouth and visits the Lakeland Motor Museum en route. Entry forms available now from Ron or Wigton MC website now. ronpalmer777@hotmail.com or 01228 575153

Cumbria Classic Weekend

Cumbria Classic & Motorsport Show

Sunday, August 19th

All the usual classes plus featured classes for Sprites/Midgets,

Land Rovers, Escorts and Citroen 2CV

This year there is a specific entry form for the WMC club display for competition cars and exceptional cars. This is so we can plan the display in advance.

Entry forms on the website.

Marshals needed as always

PG Tips

I feel like I ought to be touching some wood right now because the cars are (as I type at least) all going like a dream. After sending off the ABS ECU from the Saab to the company I found on t'interweb it returned 2 days later fixed and since then I've had no flashing light display and all is well. In fact the Saab looks decent and goes like a train in the mid-range. It's a bit unruly at low speed if I floor it, due to the ancient Vauxhall chassis matched to a 270 bhp Saab turbo engine. Now it's all working I need to fettle the suspension a little and enjoy....at least I will if I keep it. Last week I bid on a Formula Pacific single seater (sort of Japanese Formula ford) on Ebay – a cheeky late night post-wine kind of bid which should never have succeeded....so you know where this is leading! The auction ended with no other bids and the seller had put a ridiculously low reserve on it. So far my emails to the seller have gone unanswered. I initially thought it was because he was thinking of ways not to sell me the car at the very low price, but I've rung their number and it appears they are away. I first spotted the car at auction last year where it needed re-commissioning, although it did have an MSA log book. Earlier this year it was on Ebay in the same state and sold for less money than last year. The current place that have it bought it (for slightly more than I am supposed to be paying) are a classic car restoration company and have re-built the carb, tuned the engine and set the suspension geometry, polished it and put it back on Ebay. This all makes me think they probably won't actually let it go for the amount I am meant to be paying and I expect some excuses and no sale. To be honest I won't be that bothered – it's in Wiltshire (which is half way to France!) and I will need to sell the Saab, that I've only just got working, in order to pay for it. I do like to get myself into situations! I quite like the look of the car and it has a Subaru flat four 1600cc engine, so whilst it won't be a ballistic missile it should be nippy and old enough for some of the classic race car classes at hill climbs. Time will tell if I ever actually get my hands on it.



Barbon national took place earlier this month, it was once more a scorching hot day and I entered the pre 1987 classics class along with Paul Eastwood. The day passed without much drama for me and whilst I led the class all day. The Chevette 2.3 that I'd narrowly beaten in June went 0.14 seconds quicker on the final run of the day to steal my victory. Paul had a bit more drama, or should I say disaster – he over revved his Alfa and came back to the paddock with an unhealthy sounding rattle/knock that sounded like big ends on their way out to me. I may not have won the class but I did pick up the scrutineers choice trophy for Snotty – I did wonder earlier on why the head scrutineer came over and began cracking about old Skodas and how he had worked on them back in the day. All was revealed at the end. Despite there be-

ing a lot of chat of the overall hill record being broken due to the hot weather, in the end no one got that close (not in hill climbing terms anyway) although some of the class records did go. My best time up the hill was 31.04 – failing to achieve my goal for the day of going under 31 seconds.

The following day I made it to the breakfast meeting at Lingholm near Keswick, organised by Ron Palmer. Having failed to properly read the instructions I turned up early and got a prime spot on the lawn and enjoyed a bacon sandwich before having a quick peruse around the (by then) gathered vehicles. What the meet showed for me is the diversity of vehicles in the club – there were cars from almost every age, right up to the modern era. Sadly I had to run away early due to children once more ruining my life (I love them really!) so I didn't hang around for as long as I'd have liked.

Championship News

2018 Club Championships Positions at the end of July

Club Championship Overall

1.	Peter Wright	139 pts
2.	Rob Iveson	102 pts
3.	Phil Hodgson	93 pts
4.	Craig Stamper	75 pts
5.	Chris Hunter	72 pts
6.	Geoff Bateman	71 pts
7.	David Agnew	70 pts
8.	Geoff Rae	65 pts
9.	John Holliday	61 pts
10.	Fiona Tyson	58 pts

Ladies Club Championship

1.	Fiona Tyson	58 pts
2=.	Jacqui Raine	46 pts
2=.	Esther Bowness	46 pts
4.	Maggy Bateman	43 pts
5.	Marion Sloan	32 pts
6.	Abby Palmer	31 pts
7.	Karen Wright	23 pts
8.	Sarah Steel	22 pts
9=.	Heidi Garstang	20 pts
9=.	Karina Maclean	20 pts

Autotest Championship Overall

1.	Peter Wright	95 pts
2.	Phil Hodgson	71 pts
3.	Geoff Rae	65 pts
4.	Rob Iveson	56 pts
5.	Terry Peat	49 pts
6.	Jack Palmer	47 pts
7=.	John Holliday	40 pts
7=.	Craig Stamper	40 pts
9=.	Geoff Bateman	38 pts
9=.	B. Iveson	38 pts

FWD Autotest Championship

1.	Peter Wright	73 pts
2.	Terry Peat	50 pts
3.	Craig Stamper	45 pts

RWD Autotest Championships

1.	Geoff Bateman	69 pts
2.	John Holliday	47 pts
	Chris Hunter	25 pts

FWD PCA Championships

1.	Geoff Rae	49 pts
2.	Steve Palmer	46 pts
3.	Ben Rae	44 pts

RWD PCA Championship

1.	Phil Hodgson	70 pts
2.	Rob Iveson	49 pts
3.	B. Iveson	48 pts

Specials Autotest Championships

1.	Terry Peat	50 pts
1.	Willie Keening	25 pts
2.	Murray Walker	24 pts

Marshals Championship Overall

1.	Graeme Forrester	55 pts
2.	Steve Fishwick	50 pts
3=.	David Agnew	45 pts
3=.	Eddie Parsons	45 pts
3=.	Maggy Bateman	45 pts
6.	Mary Parsons	40 pts
7=.	John Sloan	35 pts
7=.	Marian Sloan	35 pts
7=.	Ron Palmer	35 pts

Well, July has seen quite a few changes to the various tables with the running of the Lake District Classic and Targa rallies and the Whins Farm Autotest. I must apologise for not having updated the June tables to include the LDC results but the event just missed the copy date.

The overall championship is still headed by Peter Wright who is now 37 points clear of last year's champion Rob Iveson. Phil Hodgson looks a pretty safe third place at the moment despite his attempts to remodel the MX5 during the Lake District Classic. I am sure the revised body work will only enhance the aerodynamics of the car and that Phil will be going even quicker for the rest of the season. Meanwhile the next four places are only separated by 5 points so it looks as if the second half of the season could be quite interesting.

It's good to see a good number of ladies competing in events and so, in the interests of equality, the ladies championship tables have now been produced for the first 10 places, the same as the overall. Fiona Tyson has moved up in to the top spot with Jacqui Raine and Esther Bowness currently tying for 2nd place 12 points behind with Maggy just a further 3 points adrift. Marion Sloan is progressing rapidly up the table and now lies in 4th place.

The Overall Autotest Championship sees Peter Wright dominating with Phil Hodgson 24 points adrift in 2nd place with Geoff Rae, Rob Iveson and Terry Peat making rapid progress up the table.

FWD and RWD autotest classes are being led by Peter (again) and myself (surprisingly), respectively, with the PCA classes being headed by Geoff Rae (FWD) and Phil Hodgson (RWD).

Recent competitor Terry Peat has taken over the specials championship in his modified Clio and is making this his own after excellent performances in the last 2 events.

Geoff Bateman.

Sam Gets A Class Win and Driver of the Day at Donnington!



Sam Kirkpatrick won his class in the MG Trophy race at Donnington and was awarded Driver of the Race as well!



Diversions



David Roberts entered his 1939 Rover 14hp Drophead Coupe into the Rover Sports Register annual rally at Ripon on 24th June. The car won the cup for best pre-1950 car. The car was sold to a Northern Ireland resident in January 1939 and was returned to England by David in 1991, and then fully restored; including a Re-bored engine in 2017. The car has travelled widely in Europe including to Sorrento and Dubrovnik.

For Sale



Lucas FT37 Restored spotlight, suitable for a variety of pre war cars, including Bentley, Singer, Rolls Royce. £250.00

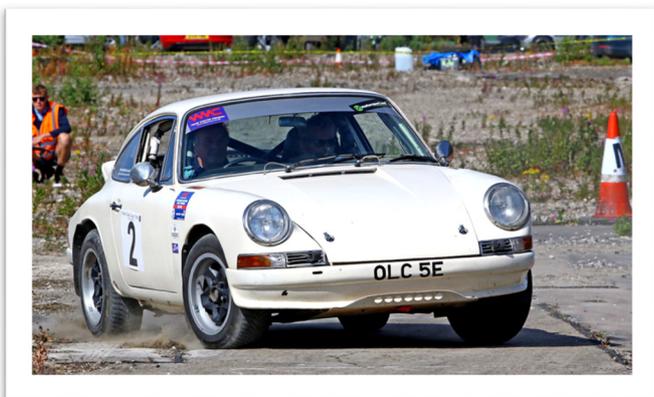
Purchased as a restored item for a renovation project which is no longer being done.

Contact Andrew on 07795334009 and andrewjturney@gmail.com

WMC/Protyres Challenge 2018, Round 4. Northern Dales Classic, July 15th.

With the long hot spell of weather set to continue, competitors at this year's Northern Dales were in for a hot and dusty day. The venue was in the old Eastgate cement works just west of Stanhope in County Durham. All the buildings and infrastructure were demolished on this large site some years ago leaving a network of site roads, gravel/crushed stone tracks and the smooth concrete bases of the previous large industrial buildings.

Ed Graham and his team had laid out four large tests which would be slightly rearranged during the lunch break. With three runs at the four tests in the morning and a further two runs in the afternoon twenty tests were available.



A good entry of 48 included 36 Targa and 12 Historic cars; and, a big showing of auto-testers and road rally crews from the North East. With the exception of Tom Hall (Riley Elf), Mick Stead (Buckler Mk6), Peter Metcalfe (Mini Mk1 1275), Ian Dixon (MGB GT), Martin Oglesby (Opel Kadett which sadly wouldn't start on arrival) the remainder of the Historic crews were WMC/Protyres contenders. In addition, 4 WMC/Protyres Targa crews had entered and were chasing valuable points in the Challenge.

The event started promptly at 10.00am and after Tests 1-4 (unanimously declared very slippery) the

WMC Histories lined up behind Peter Metcalfe who'd recorded 272s: Team Sloan (Midget) 278s, Marsden/Garstang 286s (Escort Mk1), Short/Heath (Escort Mk2) 291s, Graves/ Palmer (RS 2000 Mk1) 312s, David Garstang/Matty Alexander (Fiesta 1300) 313s, Agnew/Jackson (911) 321s and Bradley/Marsland (Golf) 354s. Charles Graves had brought out his RS2000 for its first competitive shakedown and navigator Ron Palmer was enjoying being back in a competitive Escort. Tom Hall, a demon auto-tester from the North East, had a WT on T2 but put in competitive times on the other tests and would fight back strongly throughout the day. In the Targa class, Chris Hunter/Fiona Tyson (MX5) started quickly with 263s, Helen Harkness/Barry Lindsay (Corsa) 286s, Philip Hodgson/Ian Giles 287s, David Winter/Michael Pears 292s.

Round 2 saw a bit of a shake up in the order: Tom Hall propelled his Riley Elf to 252s, Peter Metcalfe kept up his very good run with 266s, David Agnew got his act together to head up the WMC contenders with 273s from Team Sloan on 274s, Dave Short had settled down with 291s, Dave



Garstang had taken the Fiesta to 294s, we had 297s, Charles Graves on 311s and Brian Bradley picking up his pace on 315s. Chris Hunter was flying in the MX5 with 261s, Philip Hodgson 270s, David Winter 274s and Helen Harkness 288s.

On the 3rd run through the first group of tests Tom Hall was pulling back the time lost from his WT penalty with some sensational times recording 251s and Peter Metcalfe continued to go well on 267s. David Agnew was again quickest WMC Historic on 270s with Team Sloan having a great day on 277s, Brian Bradley stormed these tests on 279s, David Short 280s, David Garstang

281s, and David Marsden on 288s was being harried by Charles Graves on 289s (How many Davids are you allowed.....!?). Drama in the WMC Targas when the flying Hunter/Tyson crew took a WT

and completed their 3rd run on 319s while David Winter had 265s, Philip Hodgson 268s, and Helen Harkness 276s - meaning a lot of time to recover during the afternoon for the H/T MX5.

Lunch was called and the organisers set about reformatting the tests for the afternoon runs. Meanwhile, competitors and marshals took advantage of the excellent on-site catering provided by a hard-working team from the Eastgate Village Hall Committee. In the paddock there was lots to discuss about the morning runs and quite a few crews were seen changing tyres after a morning of hard driving on some fairly abrasive surfaces.



Midday times indicated that we were in for a competitive afternoon and it was becoming evident that the smaller nimble cars probably had an edge on the rest. Tom Hall set the Historics a target for the 4th round with 278s, David Short had the bit between his teeth for 297s, David Agnew was going well in the 911 on 304s, we tied with Team Sloan on 314s, David Garstang 324s, Brian Bradley 329s and Charles Graves 330s. Hunter/Tyson had to claw back time and rocketed round in 290s, Philip Hodgson kept the pressure on with 296s, David Winter 304s and Helen Harkness 322s.

On the 5th and final circuit Tom Hall continued his master class with 276s while David Short made his bid for glory with 289s, David Agnew dropped time with 299s, John Sloan had 301s, Brian Bradley completed the day with a good 324s, we tied with Charles Graves on 325s but David Garstang's excellent day was undermined by a WT and consequent 364s. Chris Hunter again set the WMC Targa standard with 286s, David Winter going well on 291s, Helen Harkness an excellent 299s in the little Corsa while Philip Hodgson dropped time with 309s.



A meal, a welcome cool drink and the results were all provided in the Cross Keys just along the road from the venue; and, the rapid service of steak pie, chips and peas was equalled only by the speedy delivery of the results. The event was won outright by the very quick BMW Mini of Andrew Roughead/Kevin Cousins on 1355s from Tom Hall Riley Elf 1372s. John/Marian Sloan had "a grand day out" to lead home the WMC/Protyres historic contingent with 1444s (1st in Class H2), David Short/Roy Heath kept them honest with 1448s (1st in Class H3), David Agnew/Alan Jackson had 1467s, David Marsden/Mike Garstang 1510s, Charles Graves/ Ron Palmer 1567s, David Garstang/ Matty Alexander 1576s and Brian

Bradley/Michael Marsland 1576s. WMC/Protyres Targa crews were lead home by Chris Hunter/Fiona Tyson 1419s (2nd Class M2), David Winter/Michael Pears had a good day on 1426s, Philip Hodgson/Ian Giles 1430s and Helen Harkness/Barry Lindsay 1471s. Peter Metcalfe/Guy Whickham ended with 1425s and regular historic competitors Ian Dixon/Richard Welsh brought their MGB GT home in 1657s just 8s behind the remarkable Buckler of Mick Stead/Peter Masters.

Efficiently organised and well laid out the Northern Dales was a credit to the organising team and let's hope they will run it again in 2019.



Mike Garstang. (photos Tony North and Stuart Bankier)

Club News

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

Aidan and Mark Gregory from Workington

Grace and Jim Walker from Brigham

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 wmcmemsub@outlook.com

Marshal Force

Marshals are the life blood of our activities

Blue Streak Historic and Targa Rally August 12th

Our friends in Spadeadam MC are looking for marshals.

Can we get a WMC team to run a test? The events runs in the Brampton/Longtown area

Contact Barry Lindsay on either:

barry.lindsay@tiscali.co.uk

or

07745450714.

Cumbria Classic & Motorsport Sport Show

August 19th

We still need a few more marshals to man the classes,
or do a hour or so on the admissions gate
plus some for the competitors entrance gate (9 to 10.30)

If you can help please email Graeme on
gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk

Elderly Utterances

The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say

On July 7th we tootled down to Barbon in Charles' nice new Focus RS to watch two rounds of the British Hillclimb Championship in very warm conditions which were obviously suitable for breaking class records as breakages were announced regularly throughout the day. Committee members Peter in the Skoda and Paul in the Alfa were much in evidence and it was only on his last run of the day that Peter was bumped off his class leading position while Paul did no good to the Alfa's engine after buzzing it at the hairpin. The Skoda was fit enough to make it to Lingholm the following day whilst Paul replaced his wounded Alfa with a very smart Fiat Abarth in bright Italian red for our Sunday event. Mike Garstang was also at Barbon in his very desirable original '66 Morris Cooper S and got a re-run when the timing equipment knocked a few seconds off his time in error. It's a few years since I had been to Barbon and nothing much has changed except the pedestrian walk up the hill seems a lot steeper than it used to be and the paddock has had some work. The championship cars seemed a bit scary with lots of 'oomf' and times in the low 20 secs bracket and they were heading for another championship round at Harewood the following day. We saw Wiggy's Peugeot and Rob Grants Morgan in the car park but not their drivers.

The second year of our Breakfast Meeting at Lingholm on Derwentwater attracted a great entry of 50 plus cars with some families bringing two and sometimes three cars from their collections. The Gilcrux two demonstrated great enthusiasm by turning up at 8am – above and beyond the call of duty especially after doing a full day rushing up the hill at Barbon. Several members voiced their pleasure at the great mix of cars present ranging from Bond Bug to WO Bentley and much in between from the 1920's to 2000's. The venue of the front lawn at the big house at Lingholm was in great condition and everyone treated it with respect. Our hosts David and Jane Seymour are themselves great enthusiasts and produced two classic Jaguar Sports an XK120 and V12 E-Type as well as a nice Minor 1000 convertible. The cafe was well geared up for bacon sandwiches and coffee and it is a great central venue for this event especially as the weather was so good. There is room to take more cars in the future if necessary.

Those of us who take part in one day club tours will have visited Alston and the many great driving roads that radiate from it. One is the A689 which heads south-east along Weardale in the direction of Durham. From Alston you pass through Nenthead, Cowshill, Ireshopeburn, St John's Chapel, Daddry Shield and Westgate eventually arriving at Eastgate where is situated the huge abandoned site of the former Blue Circle cement works. This was created in the 1960's and was a major employer in the locality but after being taken over by the French Lafarge group in 2001 was closed PDQ in 2002 and the business transferred to their other plants. After demolition various schemes were proposed for redevelopment of the site but a lack of the necessary funding meant no progress until recently when there is an interest in building 40 houses and hotel there which could mean this may be another venue lost to motorsport.

After a few months layoff I ventured back into the co-driver's seat for the Hexham Motor Club's Northern Dales Classic Rally in Charles' 'new' RS 2000 Mk 1. This was a single venue event being run at Eastgate over four tests run three times before lunch and then another four run twice in the afternoon on tests created with imagination as you would expect by Ed Graham. A most enjoyable day's motor sport for the 11 Historic entries and 37 Targa cars. I imagine one of the successful Wigton entries will write a suitable report to do justice to this event.

Ron.

Rallying Call

Lake District Classic Rally, June 24th.

A warm and sunny morning greeted competitors as they arrived for scrutineering, noise and signing on at the Penrith Truck Stop. The forecast was set fair and the test venues would prove dry (with one exception!), hot and dusty - views of Hardendale during the afternoon looked like a scene from the old East African Safari rally. A good entry of 30 Historic and 15 Targa cars with some well known but recent recruits to the NESCRO series were faced with 14 tests spread across the day delivering close and competitive motor sport.



The truck stop also hosted three tarmac tests at the Start, Lunch halt and Finish providing crews with an opportunity to weigh up the opposition. Test 1 saw Short/Heath, Escort Mk2, Marsden/Garstang, Escort Mk1, Byrne/Byrne, Sprite, Alexander/Humphries, Viva and Cornthwaite/Fish (Mini1380) tied for quickest historic time on 54s; while, Bowness/Bowness, MX5, and Gleave/Gleave, 205GTi, recorded 50s and 51s respectively in the Targa Class.

Highfield 1 followed and 8 historic and 7 Targa crews beat the 80s test bogey. This was a big open test on concrete and loose and would feature twice more during the day using a different

layout.

The route headed off towards Pooley Bridge and Ullswater (dramatically clear views of the Lakeland crags) but not before the farm test at Kirkbarrow which was competently marshalled (as always) by the Brothers Gough. Early crews were caught out on a tight section past the slurry tank including some unintended 360 spins, much understeering and odd bits of body damage. Running car 25 we found that the earlier cars had cleared the slurry away and enjoyed a dry run through the test. Quickest historic was Pete Tyson/Neil Harrison (Mini Clubman 1275) on 64s showing that they were settling into the event and had lost none of their rallying magic. Short/Heath on 66s and Marsden/Garstang on 69s were the only other historic crews to beat 70s giving an indication of the battle that would ebb and flow throughout the rest of the day. The targa crews were going well with Hunter/Tyson (MX5) well into their stride on 60s, Wright/Wright (Mini) on 64s, Bowness/Bowness (MX5) and Iveson/Robertson (MX5) both on 66s.

Heading north towards the A66 crews tackled Test 4 - a fast out and back gravel forest road with chicanes. This was definitely red mist country and we attacked the return leg with vigour and neatly skittled two cones out of the chicane - a 20s penalty that would cost us a place in the final results;

nevertheless, it was great fun!!! Short/Heath took an excellent 58s, Tyson/Harrison 62s, three crews tied on 64s and Hendry Couser pedalled their venerable TR2 to a stunning 65s and would finish 6th O'A showing a clean pair of heels to 80% of the historic.



Three more tests in the vicinity of Threlkeld (two on loose and one smooth tarmac) and then a long, tight navigational section with cunning code boards returned the crews to the Truck Stop for another test and a welcome lunch break.

Mid - point results showed that Short/Heath had moved into a solid Historics lead on 507s, Cornthwaite/Fish 526s, Tyson/Harrison 535s, the Sloans (Midget) had enjoyed a good morning with 546s, we had 547s, Metcalfe/Marsden (early Mini/1275) 552s and Tony Harrison/Maurice Ellison had pedalled the impressive rally prep'd Peugeot 504 to 571s. But, all was not well for some crews with Cornthwaite/Fish retiring their Mini with a broken rocker arm; Byrne/Byrne's impressive morning spoiled by a test maximum, Tony Tomlinson (returning to rallying after a long absence)/Jim McDairmid, Lotus Sunbeam had two test maximums and Mackay/Mackay (also returning after a long absence in their Mini Clubman GT) had three.



In the Targa Class, Hunter/Tyson held 1st with 490s, Bowness/Bowness 509s, Wright/Wright (Mini 1275) 528s, Iveson/Robertson 555s, Place/Iveson (Peugeot 309GTi) 556s, Harwood/Charlton (Impreza) 578s, Short/Thompson 580s (Proton Coupe), the Batemans (205GTi) on 606s (including a galling test max) and Cowling/Cowling (MG ZR) going clean and steady on 640s.

The afternoon started with a run out to Highfield for the first of two tests there. Times were very close in the historics but Tyson/Harrison lost time on their first run and Harrison/Ellison collected a test max on their second. Short/Heath were quickest on their 1st run with 61s but were equalled on 61s on the second run by Tyson/

Harrison and Marsden/Garstang. Game on!!!

For the targa crews, Highfield saw leaders Hunter/Tyson collect a test max while Place/Iveson were quickest on 59s, the Bowness MX5 on 60s and Harwood/Charlton getting the best out of their Impreza with 61s.

A ride down the A6 to Shap heralded two runs through Waters Farm and one through Hardendale Quarry. Waters 1 saw Tyson quickest on 113s (some rallying venues you just don't forget!), Short 120s, Byrnes on 121s, we had 122s and Metcalfe/Marsden 123s - close or what?!? Place/Iveson's targa MX5 beat the bogey (Wow!!!!!!!), the Bowness' MX5 had 111s and Gleave/Gleave (205 GTi) 107s. Hunter/Tyson's trying start to the afternoon didn't improve and their 145s here put the pressure on for the remainder of the event.

Hardendale was loose and very dusty but Short/Heath were taking no prisoners and banked 69s, we tied with the Byrnes on 70s, the Sloans had 71s, Hendry took his TR2 to 72s (never underestimate the dynamic duo of Hendry/Couser) and Tyson battled through the dust storm to 73s. Hunter/Tyson started their fight back with 65s, Iveson/Robertson 67s and Place/Iveson 69s.

Maintaining their form, Short/Heath took 106s on Waters 2, Tyson 109s, we shared 112s with the Byrnes and Team Sloan had 115s. Hunter/Tyson continued their fight back by beating the bogey (under 100s) as did Iveson/Robertson, the Bowness' had 102s and Wright/Wright took 103s in their Mini.

Heading north the route involved a further run through Highfield and a final test at the Truck Stop. On Highfield the Byrnes impressed on 60s with Short, Tyson and Marsden on 61s - nobody was giving anything away. Hunter/Tyson took fastest targa on 57s while Bowess/Bowness and Place/Iveson tied on 59s. At the Truck Stop the top five crews in the historics were separated by 5 seconds as were the top five targa crews.

An excellent meal was provided by the staff at the Truck Stop and Results were delivered promptly. Short/Heath took the Historic honours on 960s (four 1st O/As in succession!) from Tyson/Harrison 1005s, and Marsden/Garstang 1011s. Bowness/Bowness were 1st O/A in the Targas with 946s from Place/Iveson 985s and, despite a scintillating drive through the afternoon's remaining tests, Hunter/Tyson could only recover enough time for 3rd on 1001s.

WMC are to be congratulated for delivering a slick event with a compact route, varied tests and a very competitive day's sport. Events are always challenging to organise but in Sunday's heat wave conditions the organising team, marshals and other helpers made the "LDC" a rally to remember

Hope to see plenty of "Challenge" competitors out on Round 4, The Northern Dales, on July 15th.

Mike Garstang.

British Autotest Championship comes to Maryport

Two dozen of the top auto testers in the UK came to Maryport for round five of the British Autotest Championship on Saturday. This was a late change of venue as the event had been scheduled to take place at Dumfries under the banner of the South of Scotland Club, but the venue became unavailable and some quick re-arranging saw the event being run at the Maryport Business Park with Wigton Motor Club stepping in as co-organisers.

Autotesting is one of the most precise forms of motorsport and is one where rally champion Colin McRae started as well as top stunt driver Russ Swift and his son Paul who were both multiple champions. Some of the drivers taking part at Maryport also do stunt driving for Top Gear Live and the Grand Tour TV shows.



The venue proved very popular with the competitors with the available space being well used and it being a very smooth surface. There were no less than three past champions taking part and all the drivers put on a superb display of controlled high-speed manoeuvrability.

The event was dominated by the experienced drivers in their well developed autotest specials with past champion Malcolm Livingstone winning by nine seconds from Dave Mosey and Chris Chapman third. Local hot shod Jack Palmer who is sponsored by Wigton Motor Club was 16th and fourth in class with Peter Wright 18th and Stephen Palmer 19th.



It was certainly exciting to see such great driving and the amount that they were ahead of our best local drivers put their performance into perspective.



Inside The Industry

Paul Gilligan has his say

Who Remembers When New Cars Didn't Even Have Heaters?

Quite a few of you I'd guess? I certainly do. One of the biggest changes I've seen in almost half a century in the industry is the vast increase in items now standard which were either very rare or unknown (because they hadn't been invented yet) 50 or 60 years ago. And it's not just heaters Automatic transmission is now fitted to almost half the new cars sold in the UK. Many larger and more expensive cars aren't even offered with a manual gearbox. Air conditioning is now the norm rather than the exception. Cars park themselves, are not far off driving themselves. They tell you when they need a service, fuel, oil, water or air in the tyres. And it's not just cars. Commercial vehicles are following close behind with traffic congestion making automatic transmission a popular choice and the other "extras" now standard on cars becoming very popular. This week we took an order from a local business for two small Citroen Berlingo vans. One of the cheapest vans on the market at around £10000 + VAT, but you still get as standard air conditioning, cruise control, electric windows, rear park sensors and satellite navigation!

Manufacturers make a great deal of money on optional extras charging far more than the real cost, so as more items become standard they have to find new options to part the customer from a bit more cash. At the top end the average Rolls Royce customer spends over £50,000 on extras. Ferrari buyers spend around £30000. How? Well on your new 488 metallic paint is £2500-£7500. You can have either a red or yellow rev counter at no extra charge, but if you want a white one that will be £592 please. A leather rear parcel shelf is £1722, electric seats £2368, fitted luggage £4198. Navigation (standard on a £10k Citroen van remember) £4198!

You will have read that Mercedes are paying Lewis Hamilton up to £40M a year for the next two years. I think they are funding this by flogging options to buyers of their top end cars. For example if you want a big S Class saloon and find the standard specification inadequate, even though that can be around £180,000, how about these extras: Exterior carbon fibre trim £5000, ceramic brake discs £7000, nappa leather £6890, individual rear seat pack £6000, rear luxury lounge pack £4595 and surround sound system £6430. NOW you've got a proper car!

Good news is that nobody I can find charges for a heater these days.

Half Time Report

With the year half over how are new car sales going? Well badly is perhaps the best word. Overall sales are over 6% down on last year. Diesel sales are 30% down, petrol up 11% and electric/hybrids up 24%. Even after this growth electrics and hybrids only account for 5% of total sales.

Ford whilst still market leader are down by over 13% in a market down 6%. They expected a bad year because of the disruption caused by the introduction of the new model focus but it's been worse than forecast. I hear the cost cutting axe is being swung in Brentwood. Vauxhall are doing just about as badly but worse are Fiat and Nissan both a staggering 30% down on last year.

Amongst the prestige Germans BMW are fighting back, now just ahead of Merc and 3000 cars ahead of Audi. This will be an interesting fight to the finish, I can see the December pre registrations already. At the top end some interesting differences. Aston Martin 30% down, Bentley 14% down but McLaren (see below) 48% up?

McLaren Better On Road Than Track

While McLaren's F1 performances continue to be a source of embarrassment their road car division is entirely the opposite. They recently announced a £1.2 Billion plan to introduce 18 new cars by 2025 and reach annual sales of 6000 units. To put this into perspective last year Ferrari sold around 8400 cars. I don't think anyone except perhaps Ron Dennis would have forecast being so close to Marenello a few years ago?

Currently McLaren have 86 dealers spread over 31 countries. To support the planned sales growth around 20 new dealers will be appointed and sales will start in countries like Russia, India and several in Central and Eastern Europe where McLaren are currently not represented. By 2025 all McLarens will be hybrid or pure electric and they are as part of this developing a lightweight superfast-charging battery system that will have over 30 minutes range on a race track, never mind on the road.

Surely a British success story to be proud of?

Ford Switch On Internet Buying Channel

This week Ford launched a new internet buying channel called (with enormous imagination) "Buy Online". Using this customers can be quoted for the car of their choice both for cash or finance purchases, have their part exchange valued and arrange delivery either direct to their home or business, or via their local dealer. So in simple terms this system does everything a traditional dealership does except the test drive.

Quite how the dealers are being compensated I don't yet know, but I imagine they will be far from happy. Whilst well over half of new car buyers use internet research in their buying process, currently only 2% actually buy online. With Ford and others now offering this facility this number can only increase.

Margins are wafer thin for volume manufacturers and they have long looked enviously at the margin they give to their dealers. Retaining some of this "in house" can only be good for Ford etc, which means only bad for the dealers? Ford less than 20 years ago spent many millions of pounds buying up a lot of their largest dealerships which now trade under "Trust Ford" in London, Birmingham, Bristol, Northern Ireland, Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Jersey. Recently they have started to reverse this process, selling 3 dealerships in London and Essex with more reportedly "quietly" being offered for sale. Wonder if Ford can see the future of these dealerships more clearly than those who are buying them?

MINI Becomes More Mini

One of the criticisms levied at Mini since it was relaunched almost 20 years ago is that the cars aren't actually that small. In fact some of them are pretty large. Another negative comment is that the brand has been slow to move towards electric or hybrid power. Now both of these problems are being answered but not by BMW/Mini themselves. Instead they have signed an agreement with Chinese car manufacturer Great Wall who will make a pure electric "baby" Mini in China for export to all markets including Europe. At 3400 mm long (just over 11 feet) this is about 10% bigger than the original 1959 Mini. This is far smaller than the current offerings and the BEV electric/hybrid Mini to be built in Oxford from next year.

The Chinese built Mini won't be available for another 3-4 years but when it comes will be far cheaper than the BEV model as well as far smaller. BMW have done the technology but will take advantage of lower Chinese production costs. A brand new factory is being built capable of producing "at least" 300,000 cars a year.

Paul Gilligan

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Andy's Armchair

Andy Armstrong takes an irreverent look at motoring and motorsport

How long should a motorway last?

I ask the above question because the section of the A1(M) between the Ripon turn off and Leeming services has a huge chunk of it being worked on for 26 weeks, there are temporary centre barriers, two way traffic crammed onto one carriageway, the full "whazoo" and yet the road has only been finished about 6 or at the outside 7 years. I can't help thinking that when you consider what they cost to construct in the first place you'd expect them to remain serviceable for a good deal longer than this one has managed.

It seems that every time you pick up a car magazine there's a new electric vehicle being tested. They really do seem to have taken off, with models from the cheapest to most expensive, slowest to fastest, four wheel drive, all types, jumping on the electric bandwagon. Anyway, I'm still "stupid" regards electric, hybrid etc and really don't have a grip on what these vehicles are capable of doing at the moment, so I've invented my own criteria, and when it's achievable I might take them seriously. Is there an electric machine out there which will meet the following requirements?

Fill up (fuel/ charge). Drive overnight from Carlisle to Southampton, lights, heater, radio all in use. Fill up (maximum time 10 minutes) and drive back to Carlisle, this time in daylight so no lights. Now I know it's an extreme case but I share drove the above run maybe 40 years ago in a Datsun 140J when picking someone up from a cruise ship. Is there an electric vehicle out there that will do the same??

We're seriously considering a run down to Silverstone to watch the WEC cars in the middle of August. Looking at the way the event's organised we're sorely tempted to go on the Friday for free practice and various bits of qualifying for the ELMS and Euro F3 cars.(Hooray I've just been told the hotel's booked). It's cheap, you see all the cars on track and most of all you won't have a huge problem getting into and out of the circuit. Granted it's not a race you're watching but in a six hour event where there are four different classes all circulating at once, I haven't got the "wit" to work out what's going on anyway so might as well just have a snoop when it's nice and quiet.

We were recently in Lincolnshire indulging our other interest of World War 2 Bomber Command. We visited several defunct airfields, broken concrete doesn't "float many people's boat" but I'd defy anyone interested in cars not to be blown away by the sight and sound of a Lancaster pass low overhead or run up it's four Merlin engines in preparation for take off. At the moment the engineers and volunteers at East Kirkby museum are re-building a De Haviland Mosquito aircraft from the 1940's, and when you look at the task they've taken on it makes sorting up an old car look pretty simple. Just as an example, the aircraft which is pretty big by the way, was taken to bits in Yorkshire put on a couple of low loaders with cranes and then delivered to it's new home where cranes came into play again. You need scaffolding to work on the engines and the propellers alone are about ten feet across. The whole thing seems so complex.

Finally it was nice to see that someone had seen fit to smarten up the grave near Kidderminster of Peter Collins, sixty years after he was killed in the German Grand Prix. A great British driver who's obviously remembered by more people than I thought.

Ends

AA

What's On

WMC events and other events of interest

August

1st	Pub Run
4/5	Croft Historic Nostalgia Race Meeting
12th	Blue Streak Historic/Targa Rally (Protyre round)
18th	Rose & Thistle Challenge
19th	Cumbria Classic & Motorsport Show
25/26th	Battle of Britain Race Meeting at Croft
25-27th	Oulton Park Gold Cup Historic Racing

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