

# Start Line

Issue 10/18

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

October 2018

## Success for our sponsored drivers



**Sam Kirkpatrick had more success at Oulton Park in the MG Trophy and heads for the final round at Snetterton this weekend.**

**Jack Palmer completed his events in the BTRDA Autotest Championship at the Firefly Autotest earlier this month.**



**95 Years of Affordable Motorsport**

# Club Officials

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# Talking Point

## Topical Comment from the world of motoring

Many dads buy their kids Scalextric sets, some may buy them karts but buying a full F1 team is surely going a bit far, particularly if your lad had a noticeable lack of talent and has never actually won anything! Well that exactly what T Shirt mogul Lawrence Stroll has done for deal little Lance by buying the Force India team.

He is certainly not the only person spending millions of making his kid a super star, the world of racing seems full of them with varying degrees of success. We now have another British driver in F1, Lando Norris, whose dad is a billionaire apparently and young Lando has spent the last twelve years ( he is just 20) in a relentless pursuit of being a F1 driver, testing week in and week out at what ever level he was at. He might be quite reasonable, but it does seem the system is all wrong.

I want to see the best drivers in the best cars at the higher level of racing. Over the years the best British drivers have worked hard and struggled financially to get to the top, Stewart, Mansell, Hill, Button and Hamilton all had very limited funds and got to the top because a team thought they had talent and determination.

When Lewis Hamilton came to race at Rowrah he and his dad came in a Cavalier with the kart in a trailer and slept in the car. Jenson Button had better sleep arrangements - they slept in the Transit! Nigel Mansell sold his house to buy a race car, Damon Hill worked as a courier to get on the first rungs of the racing ladder. There are many similar tales but these days if you head to Rowrah when there is a championship meeting and the paddock is full of huge motor homes, mobile workshops, just about like a 90s F1 paddock! There is no hope for the talented youngster with no millions.

Of course, it's not just F1 that is suffering for pay to drive drivers, basically the BTCC is all about middle aged chaps with a fair bit of dosh paying to drive and the whole way the series is constructed with all sorts of handicaps and mixed up grids etc are to ensure that Mr. Average can mix it with good young drivers like Andrew Jordan. Its much the same in the British GT series with a Gentlemen driver ( one who pays the bills) going to a team a buying a driver and paying a professional co driver and then again there are "equivalence" restrictions that stop the best car and driver combinations from being too far ahead. Fans want to see the best drivers in the best cars. Teams should get the sponsorship and then employ the best drivers.

A final thought. Imagine is young Lance had been a football fan, would Daddy have bought Manchester United and installed Lance as centre forward! It's the same scenario!

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

## Solway Historic & Targa Rallies

Sunday, October 14th

Final round of the Protyres Rally Awards

Entry forms on the website

Marshals get a free meal at the finish please contact Chris or Fiona on:

[fiona.tyson@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:fiona.tyson@yahoo.co.uk)

## Cumbrian Canter

Saturday, October 20th

Starts in Penrith

Entry forms are on the website

## Halloween Autotest

At Maryport

Entry forms will be emailed out shortly.

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CLASSIC CAR INSURANCE

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# PG Tips

The Alfa Romeo is good! Hurray I hear you all shout. I drove it all the way back from London and it never missed a beat. It looks beautiful in black with big tele dial alloys and whilst the bodywork isn't as perfect as the seller had made out it's rust free and tidy. It has nice new Kumho tyres and a long list of recent work done such as new brakes and rear shocks. It's an absolute hoot to drive and is nippy enough to feel quick but not so quick as to risk my licence. There were a few things I wanted to sort such as the faded rear badge and knackered looking gear knob but other than that I am happy. I've fitted a free flow air filter and the exhaust is going to be replaced with a stainless version but for now I'm just enjoying driving it – it handles so well and the steering is so sharp it's the best driving car I've had in a long time. Hopefully it will stay like that for a long time.

Only a few weeks ago the Alfa was my only working car after the Eos threw a wobbly and died the cause was the EGR valve failing that resulted in it being unceremoniously transported to Brigham on the back of a recovery truck. All that happened just after I'd decided to replace the bearing on Snotty's engine in order to try and resolve the oil pressure issue. The Alfa never missed a beat during its week as main transport to its credit although it doesn't do very many miles per gallon...not the way I drive it anyway! The Eos was resurrected by Bill Kirkpatrick (have I mentioned him before ever?!) in a couple of days and hopefully won't need another EGR valve anytime soon. Car Time – the crooks who sold me the car – fitted one just prior to me buying it, however according to Bill, cheap aftermarket EGR valves are prone to failing quickly...a theory proved by my car (unfortunately).

I hastily changed the conrod and main bearings on Snotty after the previously mentioned oil pressure issues and having opened up the sump found bits of broken circlips in the oil. Argh! This led to the head coming off and pistons out – thankfully none of them had damaged the liners, but as it was I'd already ordered a new set of the things so fitted them for good measure anyway. Instead of replacing the circlips (this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> time I've found broken ones in the last year) I had some PTFE buttons made up...if you don't know what they are then Google them because I don't think I can easily explain! They should prevent any future gudgeon pin meets liner issues.

With a couple of days to spare before Harewood I had Snotty back together and running. The oil pressure was.....exactly the same as it had been. However it did pick up extremely well and at high revs held well enough. Various people convinced me that it would be fine, and whilst I knew it wasn't right I figured as it was my last event of the year it would be fine. I was right as well – the old Skoda performed admirably and I knocked over a second off my 2017 time and that was despite it being cooler and at times a little damp. Over the winter I think the crank will have to come out for a re-grind.....hey ho – it wouldn't be the closed season without at least a partial engine re-build!

Don't forget the breakfast meet at Gilcrux on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> September 0900-1100 bacon buttie and a coffee for £1.50

Peter

# Championship News

As far as the championships go there have not been any changes in the competitive tables since last month as there haven't been any competitive events since the Branthwaite Autotest. However, there have been some changes to the marshal's competition following the show. We've now had 111 people who have recorded points in the marshal's championship with Graeme Forrester Eddie Parsons and Maggy tying at the moment for first place on 65 points and with Steve Fishwick and Mary Parsons both on 60 points just behind. The club championship has 179 points scorers and is being led by Peter Wright on 163 points who looks as if he will be pretty hard to catch. Peter is also heading the autotest championship table although that is a bit closer with Geoff Rae only 6 points behind.

## Our Sponsored Drivers

### Sam Kirkpatrick:



The latest rounds of the MG Trophy were held on the full international circuit at Oulton Park on September 1st. Sam had not raced at the circuit previously, however he was keen to build on his recent good form. Testing on Friday saw him top of the time sheets by a decent margin and without mechanical problems, so we were looking forward to qualifying and to the two races on Saturday. An excellent session meant that Sam would be on class pole for both races and,

in the cool morning air, he was nearly two seconds under the lap record. Race 1 saw him make a decent getaway, but a melee at old hall dropped him down to second in class which led to an excellent 5 lap bumper to bumper dice. The leader was driving a very good defensive race until he made a slight error at the first corner, leaving a small gap in which Sam dived into. This caused some light contact, pushing the leader onto the grass which led Sam to feel he had gained an unfair advantage, so he backed off to allow him to retake the lead. Unfortunately, the third place driver then passed them both. After this, despite huge effort, Sam finished second but with the fastest lap. Race 2 was less eventful; the start was not the best for Sam, leaving him in second place, but an excellent overtake around the outside at island bend saw him ultimately take the lead and proceed to win the race.

The final rounds are at Snetterton in Norfolk at the end of September.

# Diversions

The news that Ford might stop making some of their bigger cars is not surprising, have you seen the size of an S Max? I had a couple of Mondeos, excellent cars but they were too wide, I often had difficulty finding a parking bay that you could open the doors easily and even had the odd scrape. Of course each new model of any car is larger than the last so eventually the biggest one gets the chop (e.g.; Granada/Scorpio). Think of the relative size of a Mk 1 Cortina, Sierra and the current Mondeo for example. The 2017 VW Polo is apparently bigger than a 2005 model Golf! Perhaps the biggest “gain” is the Nissan Micra the current one appears huge compared to the original little car!



The Renault 5 was the best-selling imported car in the UK for many years, but did you know it had a bootied cousin the Renault 7? It was never sold in the UK



I mention this as having just returned from Bulgaria where bootied cars are popular and there are several models by Renault, Dacia, Ford and Fiat that we don't see in the UK. The Peugeot 301 is popular and is apparently a big seller in world markets being made at three different plants. Cars with boots are apparently more popular in southern and eastern Europe. Reputedly the Mafia find them more discrete for carrying bodies! There seems no interest in SUVs in Bulgaria,

other than the police Dusters.

While in the UK we seem to see fewer and fewer filling stations in Bulgaria they are building them all the time, lavish places with shops cafes, bakeries and of course assisted service. On the 20-mile trip from our place to the airport there are now seven! No doubt this is in part due to the increasing number of Bulgarian car owners in a fast-moving economy. It's certainly a place to sell BMWs, and only the largest ones at that!

Just after the last Start Line came out the latest Motoring Which arrived and their opinion on SUVs is very much the same as mine. They gave examples of how the SUV version of various models did not have any more load carrying space than the hatch back versions and were less economical and had a poorer performance. They said you were better with an estate car! Quite right.

## BO'NESS HILLCLIMB IS ANOTHER GREAT SUCCESS



Once again Bo'ness hillclimb and classic car show was an outstanding success, here people from all over the country come together to put on a fabulous weekend of motorsport that is now by far the biggest motorsport event of its kind in Scotland.

“Revived” ten years ago after a lapse of fifty or so years when it was a counter in the British Hillclimb championship a group of experienced competitors and organisers formed a new club so that inter club rivalry didn't get in the way then worked tirelessly delivering year on year improvements to an area of overgrown Falkirk council owned land within the grounds of the historic Kinneil house making it the fine ven-

ue that it is today.

The forward looking Falkirk council have been a willing partner in the venture and the council officials can be very proud of what they have achieved as it has brought many thousands of visitors each year to the events with many visitors staying on in the area for holidays thus spending money and boosting the local economy.

Although run as two completely separate one day events most people love to do both days and the entry list was oversubscribed months in advance. Cars varied from the smallest Austin 7 single seaters to the fantastic 5litre Formula 5000 car of Roger Deans and an even bigger engined Chevy Camaro, for some strange reason a number of cars didn't turn up which was a great pity for those who didn't get an entry and for the spectators too.

Wigton members were out in force, John Hunter and Ian Smith in their usual Riley and Alvis respectively, Chris Spencer in his Scarab Formula Vee was putting in quick times in tricky conditions but posted on Facebook he had brought a supply of nappies with him, forgot to ask if he needed a change of them but his wife is a midwife so very able to cope with that. Marcus Bewley Triumph GT6 listed his home town as Scaryport which the commentator said if you googled it comes up as Maryport anyway, Markus was dressed in a top hat and looked scary himself. Geoff Mansfield was in his C type replica, Cliff McKinnon had a Triumph Stag instead of his TR, I cant understand why more people don't compete in Stags as having a 3 litre V8 would seem a suitable car. Unless it's the same reason as my Stag isn't competing, that's because I've been restoring it for about 10 or more years and it's not making very much progress but my wife Carol is getting impatient so she is putting on pressure as I speak to sort it and get out on pub runs with it. Branthwaite village fielded two cars, David Smiths Mini Marcos with a big entourage of supporters to cheer him on as it was only completed the day before and my Buckler with its newly rebuilt engine only having 90 miles on the clock so I was keeping my fingers crossed it behaved itself which it did I'm glad to say.

Its difficult to find out who are Wigton members as most are listed as Bo'ness, VSCC, MAC, 500cc, or CCC clubs so I'm sorry if I've missed people out, if I have please let me know for future.

Probably every make of car you could think of was represented, Alvis to a very crisp sounding Vauxhall Magnum on twin 40DCOE side draught Webers, Austin 7s to Wolsley Hornets, yes two very rapid Hornets made an unusual sight as well as the more normal Minis. Two Marcos variants appeared both totally different to each other, one just completed a couple of days before was a stunning Mini Marcos built and driven by David Smith usually seen sharing their 12/70 Alvis with dad Ian. David's 1380cc car is a real beauty and the workmanship is out of this world, he was leading his class and getting faster and faster but when he spun approaching the very solid walls of the courtyard cottages David remarked he had just overstepped the limit fortunately without damage apart from bending the timing strut so would re assess the “stiction” available for subsequent runs.

This vehicle won the trophy for the best prepared car and it was well deserved but it must have been a very difficult decision for the scrutineers to make as a couple of other cars were newly built to equally high standards, Steven Smiths red Austin 7 racer being one of them the build quality of these two cars would have done credit to a F1 team.

Dick Smith brought his very special ex Nürburgring GP Frazer Nash for us all to enjoy as he wound up the revs on his runs leaving his Supersport model he usually brings at home although son Adam brought his particular Supersport model so family rivalry was very much on the cards, Adam pipping dad this time which may cause a reduction in Adams pocket money from Dad or a reduced Christmas present in December. Dick doesn't like being beaten by any of his three sons but when you're over 80 it is allowed.



Colin McLachlan was driving a superb little Austin 7 single seater looking very vintage like and it appeared to have been campaigned on the hills for very many years it just had that patina and appearance. Completely untrue, built by a pal of Colins very recently he deserves to be congratulated for proving to his doubting friends in their local pub that it is still possible to compete in motorsport these days without spending a fortune.

He described to several of us how he constructed the car using cheap parts such as a rusted chassis given him for nothing which he repaired and strengthened, he made a stiff floor in thick alloy and rivetted it to the chassis to add strength. Standard springs were left

with a camber in them rather than buy Ulster ones, leaving the camber in the springs makes the car higher of course but when made as a single seater it takes on the appearance of a miniature GN Spider 2 being slim and upright especially as it was clothed in dull bare alloy. The car went like a rocket being very light, Colin McLachlan was grinning from ear to ear on every run and extolling the virtues of the car in the paddock, it proved the point that using ingenuity, skill and parts from other peoples throwaway materials a car can be constructed and raced very successfully for very little money.

Neville Carr an Austin 7 owner himself told me to go and look at the car and study its construction and simplicity yet understated quality. Asked how he made the top of the double curvature nose cone Peter Graham the builder explained if you start off with a big enough piece of alloy and bash it long enough it takes on shape then cleverly cutting this curved panel up in a certain way allows it to be joined by simple flat sections that then makes a very attractive radiator cowl, study the photos to see what I mean.



I'm very glad I went to look and I hope its builder got as much pleasure from describing its build as those of us did who were listening, it should be written down for others to copy and refer too especially when he told us it wasn't the first one he'd built and he would build others just because he enjoys it. Peter Graham deserves some sort of award and recognition for his work.

There were so many interesting cars it is impossible to mention but a few, Jimmy Stewart has an enormous Jaguar XJ6 Coupe that fits between the straw bales as tight as some of the girls you see walking about with almost shrink wrapped clothing on them.

Is its colour scheme and body shape a very subtle reserved one, no chance, its bright orange paint job, big wheel arches, fat alloy wheels this car makes a big statement it's great to see such diversity and individuality on the hills rather than clones of the same models and shape of cars at every event, well done Jimmy.

With a classic car show at the top of the hill with 100 car clubs taking part and 400 or so cars on display, autotests too, trade stands and a free shuttle bus service Bo'ness Hillclimb Revival Club or BHRC is its known pulled out all the stops, commentaries from long standing commentator Steve Wilkinson and his team were very knowledgeable and entertaining and no wonder as even before first practise Steve was wandering around the paddock notebook in hand researching cars he didn't know or checking for new modifications on those he did, this is dedication and one of the most im

important jobs yet a job people tend to be unaware of but very evident if the commentary stops for any reason such as a technical hitch or a pulled jack plug somewhere.

Well done guys you keep the meeting alive even when things come to a halt if an incident occurs or between batches.

Already looking forward to next year and so is everyone else I spoke to, its just like one big family without any other connection to each other except a love of motorsport. Roll on September 2019.

Keith Thomas.

## Autojumble

Compomotive CXR Ford 108 x 4 fit. Silver.

13 x 8 fronts ET 07.

13 x 9 rears ET01.

These are the original smooth rim CXR.

Fitted with Yokohama slicks 215/225 (old)

Very good condition. £500

Contact Jim O'Neill on: [jimoneill023027@gmail.com](mailto:jimoneill023027@gmail.com)

## Our Sponsored Drivers

### Jack Palmer



:The last BTRDA outing for Jack was the Firefly autotests in Shrewsbury held at the auction mart. There were 3 tests laid out. The surfaces were a mixture of tar and concrete and there was some interesting layouts used. The usual format was used with 3 runs before lunch and then 2 after.

Jack had his best event of the year with only 1 fault all day and a steady reduction in times. This resulted in a overall finish of 15<sup>th</sup> and a 3<sup>rd</sup> in class for his first season a good day.

Because Jack has only competed in 5 events he hasn't managed to finish that high in the championship as others have done more events but this year was a learning year and second juniors not too bad , if we get chance to do more events next year who knows.

After the championship is over at the end of the season is the Ken Wharton Memorial autotest where teams from England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and Ireland compete. The event is by invitation only and Jack has been asked to compete in the Nova class as the reserve car. For his first year this is a great result. They are held in Droitwich a bit of a long drive but hopefully worth it.

# Your Autojumble



Pug s 1.9 gti for sale tel 07850392854



Limited edition 1.9gti for sale tel  
07850392854

## FOR SALE, MGF

1995, very early model, chassis no 1450 App, New cam belt, multi layer steel head gasket fitted, this is the answer to head gasket problems on K series engines, runs well, good appearance, distinctive number plate HIG2430, but before an MOT can be obtained there are underbody issues that need to be sorted. MOT due November. This car must go as garage space is required for other projects £500

Contact Ed Glaister on 01228 576408 or 07776491393 or e mail [edgsm2@gmail.com](mailto:edgsm2@gmail.com)

Well known Historic saloon Car racer Ed Glaister was showing us photos of his pre crossflow engine which he had just removed from his 1959 Ford Anglia, this is the model that preceded the 105E sloped rear window type, the Anglia was the two door model and the Prefect was the 4 door variant. Corgi actually made a model of Eds car in a very nice presentation box describing the car and Ed himself, .

The reason for its removal was because it had recently blown up at a meeting probably Croft, the “blow up” describes exactly what the photos showed, a stick of dynamite couldn’t have done more damage, the engine had been totally destroyed. None of us have ever seen anything like it parts of the engine came out through both sides of the block, only one conrod was still recognisable as a conrod, several pushrods were lying in the sump when it was removed but on top of all that destruction a cam follower had gone right through the starter motor and left what looked like a bullet hole in the casing. No wonder Ed has a piece of chequer plate between his legs and the clutch/ flywheel housing, far better to add a little weight than to lose ones legs, ankles or other parts that are non-obtainable these days for his model/ year of body !

Apart from being dismayed at the total loss of his engine he was even more upset that the starter motor was a brand new geared type unit so even more expense on the job. A very kind friend of his called George Cooper well known for racing several lovely ex Stirling Moss Coopers that he owns has lent him an engine for the remainder of the season but Ed is very anxious to get hold of another block and components. If you have a 711M Ford Crossflow block, crank and other suitable pre crossflow parts it would be a good idea to have a chat with Ed , he can be reached on 01228 576408 or 07776491393 or e mail [edgsm2@gmail.com](mailto:edgsm2@gmail.com)

# Club News

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

David Thomas of Keswick

Dale and Shelley Sharp of Kendal

Nick and John Kirkpatrick of Warcop

Steven and Angela Handley of Leyburn

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](mailto:wmcmemsub@outlook.com)

## Entry fees

**A couple of points to note: if you enter a pub run where there is food involved, that food is ordered in advance so the organisers has to pay the due amount to the pub/restaurant whether or not you turn up. We had had a case recently when an organiser has been left out of pocket as an entrant did not arrive.**

**Similarly with autotests we always seem to get a few people enter and then don't arrive. The organiser will have planned on the number of entries and set up the results system with all the entries. So if you are unable to attend do please let the organisers know.**

## Marshal Force

**Marshals are the life blood of our activities**

**Solway Rally, October 14th:**

Marshals get a free meal at the finish please contact Chris or Fiona on:

[fiona.tyson@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:fiona.tyson@yahoo.co.uk)

**Halloween Autotest**

October 28th

Peter Wright: [jp931@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jp931@hotmail.co.uk)

# Elderly Utterances

## The Voice of Experience!

### Ron Palmer has his say



Malcolm Wilson and Ron Palmer on their way to victory in the Raylor Rally and further points in the 1978 Castrol/Autosport National Championship Rally.

Forty years ago I enjoyed a season with Malcolm Wilson in the Ex works Escort RS1800 – HHJ701N in which we won the 1978 Castrol Autosport National Rally Championship. This series consisted of 10 rounds starting with the Gwynedd Rally in North Wales in early February and finishing with the Wydean Stages in the Forest of Dean on November 4<sup>th</sup>. In those days the two principal supporters of UK national rallies were Castrol enthusiastically fronted by Ian Parry their championship coordinator and Autosport with Rallies Editor Peter Newton and reporter Ann Bradshaw.

Malcolm started the season with a determination to do well and in the tricky icy conditions scored a convincing win on the Gwynedd. The competition was fierce with most of the top UK crews contesting each round and Nigel Rocky finished hard on our heels followed by Brian Culcheth, Charles Samson, Drew Gallagher (his son is top man in Scottish rallying this year) and Terry Kaby. Also in the series

were Jim McRae, David Stokes, Paul Falkner, Peter Clarke, George Hill, Mike Jackson, Geoff Simpson, Willie Rutherford and Andy Dawson although not everyone did all the rounds. The Castrol Cheltenham was next up at the end of March and we were second to Brian Culcheth/ Neil Wilson on this one followed by George Hill in third. Next along was The Raylor in Yorkshire where a win confirmed our lead in the series on 44 points ahead of Brian Culcheth on 40. Owing to the odd mishap with accidents on the Peter Russek and Jim Clark and a gearbox failure on the Granite City we finished the year with only five scores out of the 10 possible events in the series. However with a second place on the Ulster (with Terry Harriman on this occasion) and another win on the Castrol 78 the three wins and two seconds were sufficient for us to win the series on 73 points. Jimmy McRae was next along on 69 points from 6 events and David Stokes (HHJ702N) on 59 points with Nigel Rockey and Paul Falkner following close behind. The year was exciting and demanding and Malcolm was able to further prove his immense talent and potential to succeed in the future. At the end of 1978 I chose to follow my career path with County Garage back in Carlisle and Malcolm went on into 1979 with the great Irishman Terry Harryman as regular co driver.

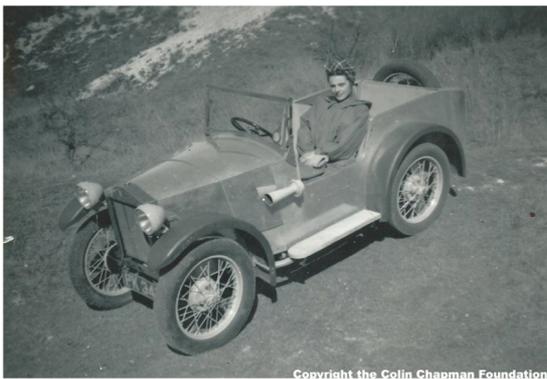
Dick Turpin was alive and well on the Great North Road in early September. We had an excellent weekend with eldest son Garry and extended family to celebrate his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday at Knaresborough. Having filled up at Sainsbury's Carlisle before the trip we parted with 130.9p/litre for diesel fuel for the Kuga (more about this later). I thought this was a bit steep for us pensioners but it is a fairly economical form of transport especially as it was full of us, Labrador Oscar, presents and the kitchen sink. We stopped at our regular watering hole, Crossways coffee shop on the

A66 before reaching Scotch Corner where we were fortunate not to require fuel as it was advertised here at 151.9p/litre! Having travelled this road many times in the last 50 years Scotch Corner has always had the facilities for a convenient stop. However now that the A1M motorway is complete beyond the A66 junction the journey south is a pleasure after so many years with 50 mph speed restrictions on the road works, so definitely no more planned stops at Scotch Corner from now on.

After reading the Startline editorial last month I realise I may have made the wrong choice of car. We currently have our second Ford Kuga SUV after having replaced the first one with 85,000 miles on the clock and after three years and 35,000 miles with the existing one it's also doing quite well thank you. SUVs represent the fastest growing sector in UK new car sales with all the manufacturers getting on board due to demand. So the buying public don't appear to be on side with the editor. Why not try one next time Graeme?

Ron

## Can you find a Lost Lotus?



Lotus might be celebrating 70 years of building cars this year, but before the fireworks launch the British sports car brand has some unfinished business to tackle. Colin Chapman's first car, the Lotus Mark I that he built in London in 1948, has been lost for more than six decades. Lotus wants your help to track it down.

Before Chapman founded Lotus, he was an engineer who decided to build his own car after getting involved with trials driving in England. The Mark I served as Chapman's first attempt and would cement many of the practices Chapman carried into the formation of Lotus with Colin Dare.

The Mark I competed in numerous events in 1948, bringing home several awards. Unfortunately, the Mark I was sold in 1950 as Chapman put to work lessons learned from building and racing as he pursued his next iteration (the Mark II).

According to an ad in the November 1950 issue of *Motor Sport* magazine, the competitive trials car sold for £135. As for its destination, all Lotus knows is that the aluminum-paneled legend was bound for the north of England. While likely repainted since, it was last known to be red, with a layer of white underneath, and it carried two spare wheels in the rear of the body.

Lotus asked for help from professionals, but the search has come up fruitless thus far. The company hopes that a grassroots effort worldwide will bring to the long-lost car to light. Go out and do your best *Barn Find Hunter* impression, ask questions, sniff out those garages, and find cars. One of these days you might even a significant piece of history.



# Inside The Industry

## **Paul Gilligan has his say**

As I've said before I'm a very optimistic person. I think you have to be in this industry otherwise you'd be better off working somewhere else. But even I can help noticing the floods of bad news flying around the industry currently. Here's a few tasters:

### Even Henry Ford I Couldn't See This As Good Publicity?

The first Henry Ford was famous for a few sayings:

“History is bunk!”

“You can have any colours as long as it's Black” and

“There's no such thing as bad publicity”

He might struggle with the last one just now. Moodys, America's foremost credit rating agency cut Ford's rating to Baa3 at the end of August. That is one notch above junk status. This will make it more difficult, and expensive, for Ford to borrow. Reasons are major problems in China (sales down almost 40% in the world's largest car market), Europe (continuing losses especially in Britain), and reduced margins in the US where Ford are shifting saloons and small cars at a loss because people simply only want SUVs and “Trucks” (double cab pickups to us). On top of all this Ford (like all manufacturers) have to find vast sums to fund the development of driverless and alternative fuel cars.

Press reports are forecasting Ford will shortly cut 24000 jobs in Europe and slim down the product range by dropping Mondeo, S-Max and Galaxy. Ford have responded that this is “pure speculation” and while committing to the current Mondeo has refused to say if there will be a replacement. Meanwhile the cutback in Ford sales to rental companies which I reported on last month means that Ford may soon lose their place as the No 1 seller in the UK which they have held since the 1960s. In fact of course they lost it a long time ago to VW Group who if you add VW, Audi, SEAT, Skoda and Porsche together comfortably outsell Ford.

### **BMW Dealers Not Happy**

For a long time a BMW dealership has been seen as a licence to print money. Although the dealers did complain that BM insisted that most of the profits went back into paying for more and more expensive showrooms there was enough left to keep them happy. Now I'm told things are changing. BMW are locked into a three way fight with Mercedes and Audi to be the top German prestige car manufacturer, in the UK and the World. In order to preserve their position BM have forced their dealers to commit to vast numbers of pre-registered cars. And they have enormously increased their presence in the rental market. As I type this on my desk I have a list of over 1000 BMWs under a year old available from a major rental company. And not just basic models. 5 & 7 Series, X5s, M3s and M4s, all with a few thousand miles on and an awful lot less than new price. This amount of near new cars being available to anyone doesn't help the dealer network!

There is another factor I'm told. Every BMW dealer also has to represent Mini in his area. That used to be a useful extra profit. The word is that is no longer the case, most Mini dealers lose money and are subsidised by their adjacent BMW dealership. I was very surprised to hear this but was told by someone who should know: “The Mini product is c\*\*p and far too expensive”.

One motor group I know has already terminated their one BMW/Mini franchise. I believe others are looking to follow including a big operator with double figures of BMW dealerships. When the dealers

don't see a business case any longer the manufacturer has a major problem.

### **Manufacturers Have Their Own (Legal) Problems**

Whilst the boss of Audi continues to languish in a German jail because of the emissions scandal news now comes that VW Group, BMW and Mercedes are being investigated by the European Commission for possibly colluding to limit the development of emissions reducing technology in their vehicles. If found guilty fines can be up to 10% of the manufacturer's worldwide revenues on affected products. And this really happens. In 2016 The EC found DAF, Mercedes, Iveco, MAN, Volvo, Renault and later Scania guilty of operating an illegal price fixing cartel. They were fined a total of 3.8 BILLION Euros! Now Part 2 of that situation is beginning. Because of course if the prices were kept artificially high the customers paid too much. The cartel operated from 1997 to 2011. In the UK alone claims from these customers are thought to total around £5 Billion, in Europe as a whole it could be five times that figure – or more! This is real our Fleet Management side is already working with truck operators to support their claims. Goodness knows what the car claims could be if the manufacturers are found guilty?

Meanwhile VW are being sued by a group of their shareholders who claim they lost out when the share price dropped by around 405 due to the emissions cheating scandal. Claim is a mere £8.2 Billion.

### **Jaguar Go On A Three Day Week**

Not long ago Jaguar Land Rover cut production of the Evoque and Discovery sport by 1/3 by reducing the Liverpool factory from 3 shifts to two. Now they've announced they are putting the Castle Bromwich plant in Birmingham, which makes just about all UK manufactured Jaguars these days, on a 3 day week for the remainder of this year. JLR's most profitable products, Range Rover Sport and Range Rover are just about unobtainable until next March because they didn't get the WLTP certification completed in time. Which leaves a big hole in profits for manufacturer and dealers.

### **August "Sales" Boost As Manufacturers "Sell" Non Compliant Cars**

I've reported before that manufacturers were well behind in getting their cars and vans certified for the new WLTP regulations which came into force on September 1<sup>st</sup>. Non compliant cars had to be registered before then or scrapped. Result was that new car registrations (not sales!) in August were 23% up on last August in a year when sales have been running around 5% down. It's easy to see which car makers had the biggest problem by comparing their August 2018 registrations against last year:

McLaren + 567%, Aston Martin + 310%, MG + 224%, Suzuki + 147%, Subaru + 127%, Jaguar + 120%, Bentley + 113%, Honda + 91%, Mitsubishi + 79%, DS + 72% and so it goes on.

Most of these cars will have been unsold and will have to find buyers in September. This is supposed to be the second best month of the year for new cars as it brings yet another new plate, but I'm told things are very quiet in the showrooms.

### **"Replica" Business Booms**

Sorry these aren't replicas they are "Continuation" models. Jaguar were I think first with the creation of the "missing" XK SS models and then some E Types to follow. Aston Martin have now announced they are to build 25 new cars to the exact (more or less) specification of the James Bond DB5 used in the Goldfinger film. They may well not have the ejector seat or machine guns but WILL have the revolving number plates. Those of course aren't road legal but that doesn't matter because the cars aren't either. Being built to the original specification they wouldn't have a prayer of passing current safety legislation, so they are confined to use on tracks or private estates.

Price is £2.75M plus VAT, deliveries start 2020, I understand all 25 are sold!

### **Lister Back In Business**

In the late 1950s the Lister company built some wonderful sports-racing cars that used Jaguar D Type engines to amazing effect. The most famous version was the “Knobbly”. A couple of years ago a UK millionaire and his son bought the remaining Lister spare parts and the rights to the name and produced 10 “Continuations” which sold at £340,000 a time. Then Stirling Moss entered the story and agreed to lend his name to 10 more “Stirling Moss Limited Edition Knobblys”. Which sold at £1M a car. Of which I’m sure SM extracted his fair share!

Since then the owners of the Lister name have spent their time modifying F Type Jaguars to provide up to 670bhp and will soon be doing the same to the Jaguar F-Pace SUV to produce the World’s fastest road legal 4x4. Having established the name next step is apparently to make a new Lister Storm, a £2.5 Million Pound hybrid hypercar. What would Brian Lister have thought?

### **Electric Matters**

Electric car sales are increasing no doubt. And as the technology becomes more mainstream costs are coming down and will come down much further I’m sure. The range of the cars on offer (with cost the biggest block to sales) is improving and again will improve further. Our leaders are doing everything to encourage all this. The next step is to ban petrol and diesel cars from certain streets or lanes. This has already been put in place in nine streets in North London during peak times, the thin end of a very long wedge I think?

Now some of the more sensible people around are starting to turn their attention to the next key problem. If electric cars take off as many predict where is all that electricity going to come from? The National Grid is already often at breaking point?

However if we believe minor problems like that will be swept aside the interesting (to me) question is who will make and sell the electric (and probably driverless) cars. Will it be the people who know how to make and distribute cars? Like GM, VW, Toyota, Ford etc. Or the people who know how to design and manufacture electrical devices like Apple, Google, and of course Dyson. Dyson have just announced plans to create a test track and visitor centre at an airfield it bought last year as it works towards launching an electric car. This is due to happen in 2021. James Dyson may have got it right, he has sought to recruit people from the car industry and mix them with his own “inventive” people. I wouldn’t bet against him?

Paul Gilligan

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# Andy's Armchair

## Andy Armstrong takes an irreverent look at motoring and motorsport

After the best part of 60 years attending racing circuits from Knockhill to Lydden Hill I didn't think what happened at Silverstone was possible, but it was so that shows you how wrong you can be. We'd watched the European F3 cars free practicing, interesting enough, trying to work out who showed the most talent. When that was over we decided to walk round to Luffield for the ELMs and the WEC cars. Now on our way we met some Silverstone employees who were obviously told to make sure the aged and befuddled were coping OK and knew where the courtesy bus was if they couldn't totter about unaided. Anyway after a brief natter one of the ladies reached in her bag and gave us some ear plugs. Ear plugs, I ask you, I'm a man who's heard a V16 BRM and a Matra V12 what could I possibly want with ear plugs? Well I did.

The noise was painful and surprisingly the worst of it came from some of the slowest cars on the track, namely the GT Porsches not the prototypes. I kid you not without the "lug plugs" it would have been impossible to sit anywhere near the track without pain and doing yourself damage. Be warned, "go equipped" if you watch endurance racing, the kind lady might not be there!

Alonso and Button were at the above meeting and it was only a few days later that Fernando announced he was quitting F1, one of the reasons he gave for his decision being that it was too predictable and boring. Well Fernando, talk about being two faced, ask me to show you the ultimate boring and predictable class of racing and I promise you it's the one you're spending some of your time in next year, namely the Toyota fest called the WEC P1 class where you apparently find it as impossible to lose as you've found it impossible to win with McLaren in F1.

Moving on, I'm now having a halt as Croft beckons tomorrow with a chance to see the TCR saloons, which from all accounts could well be what the BTCC morphs into in the years ahead.

Sunday tea time and back at home (i.e. the caravan in Nidderdale). Croft was quite good on the racing front but only eight TCR cars turned up. Other grids were pretty full and racing entertaining. Mind you the wind and occasional shower weren't too welcome, I guess we're so used to "hot and dry" this season that we take badly to it. The TCR machines were impressive, they looked and sounded the part and went very well so if the entries fill up a bit surely they'll have a future. It was interesting that a current BTCC driver was in attendance and some ex major league tail enders have gravitated down to the series so I assume it needs big pockets to get involved.

And finally we're patting ourselves on the back having recently heard that Lando Norris is going to be an F1 driver next season. We spotted him when he was little more than a babe in arms, and were immediately convinced he had the talent to go far, so he's proved us right. We only hope McLaren can give young Mr. Norris something resembling a car and not the sheds they've produced of late. Two other young Brits are also knocking firmly on the F1 door and so with luck we'll soon have George Russell and Dan Ticktum, now he's got his temper under control, in the top tier of our sport, I can't wait.

Ends

AA.

# What's On

## WMC events and other events of interest

### October

- 4-7 Rally GB in Wales
- 14th Solway Historic and Targa Rallies
- 20th Cumbrian Canter
- 28th Halloween Autotest

### November

- 25th Autumn Autotest (final championship round)

### December

- 2nd Christmas Cracker Run (MG Cumbria)

Visit the Facebook page for the latest news or the webpage at  
[www.wigtonmc.co.uk](http://www.wigtonmc.co.uk)

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