

RONNIE PETERSON - TVR TEST - FRANK WILLIAMS

AUTOSPORT

The 1976 Grand Prix season opens in Brazil



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Minister of Sport, Dennis Howell, braved the elements in order to flag away all four London starters on the Monte Carlo Rally last Saturday. The Minister is pictured here talking with Neil Eason-Gibson and Dean Delamont of the RAC



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EDITORIAL

The price of patriotism

Whenever a prominent sportsman, film star or public figure starts to earn large sums of money, the thought of paying vast unwarranted income taxes usually is enough to drive them out of the country. With tax demands in Britain being what they are, we can only be regarded as one of the leading offenders for creating such a lemming-like precedent. When Jackie Stewart began to use the rapidly expanding world of commercialism in motor sport to his own financial advantage and left these shores to reside elsewhere, he was criticised for it. Criticised because many die-hard colonialists felt he had traded patriotism for personal wealth and materialistic gain.

Recent reports in both the specialist and national press media have pounced upon a story leaked out of Brazil stating that Emerson Fittipaldi was being paid over £1m per annum by his new Brazilian sponsors, Copersucar, a government subsidised sugar manufacturing company. Over the past couple of years Fittipaldi's reputation among British race fans has rapidly deteriorated. His outbursts on circuit safety have caused bad feeling and his general attitude towards the sport has annoyed many.

However, when Emerson Fittipaldi made the decision to leave the Marlboro Team Texaco McLaren team a few weeks ago and joined his brother's own, and until recently, uncompetitive Grand Prix equipe, many felt it was primarily for the money. Despite the Brazilian's denials that it wasn't so, the majority felt otherwise. Surely patriotism couldn't really be the root cause, money had to be the answer?

Perhaps his aims and ideals are becoming a little clearer every day. Perhaps Emerson is going to have the last laugh on all of his doubters this weekend because, through sheer application, this individual has transposed the whole argument by rising to the occasion, as only a true champion can, and surpassing the achievements of the all conquering Lauda/Ferrari combination in pre-race testing last weekend.

In all fairness, whatever an individual's faults and the higher the pedestal, the harder you fall. It's national heroes like the Emerson Fittipaldis of this world that our sport, certainly in this country, so badly needs. Money, to many, is a means to an end. Whatever the amount, it's what you get in return that really counts.

Lost horizons

Producing a weekly magazine like AUTOSPORT means that there is seldom time for rest and reflection. One of its many advantages, however, is that we are always busy finding new and interesting little pieces of the motor sport jigsaw worthy of scrutiny. One recent observation was that nobody on the magazine had given any thought to the Monte Carlo Rally this year until we opened our Sunday papers. Apart from indicating a possible mass-error on our part, we think that the situation we found ourselves in tends to put into perspective the importance of this event to the British public. Only four competitors embarked on their concentration runs from this country — one Japanese crew (already on ice-studs in London!), two British privateers and the works Escort of Roger Clark and Jim Porter. We all know the various reasons why the rally tumbled from favour, particularly in British eyes, and we know that the cost is a prohibitive factor in attracting much private or manufacturer participation from this country. But just to idly reflect for one moment: how would the scene have changed if Ford had continued with the ill-handling GT70? The rally "supercars" have arrived and they have proved to be a great boost for all spheres of rallying. The mid-engined GT70, we like to think, could have been a front runner now, with a V6 engine and handling to match the Stratos. Roger Clark is doing a sterling job with his tarmac-trim Escort 1800 but imagine what his progress could be like in a sorted 1976 GT70 derivative. Alas, these will only ever be sweet thoughts.

our cover picture

The reigning World Champion Niki Lauda prepares to climb aboard his all-conquering Formula 1 Ferrari. The Austrian, winner of six F1 races last year, will be out to defend his title from all challengers when the Brazilian Grand Prix, opening round of the World Championship, gets underway this weekend.

Photo: David Winter

Emerson pips Lauda!

During testing at the Interlagos track last Saturday, venue of this weekend's Brazilian Grand Prix, Emerson Fittipaldi electrified everyone with a private test lap that was quicker than Niki Lauda who was testing his Ferrari at the same time. Fittipaldi was, of course, driving the latest Richard Divila-designed all-Brazilian Copersucar F1 car. It wasn't a fluke or even local watches reading a bit fast for Emerson's lap, just 4/100th of a second quicker than Lauda, was recorded by the Ferrari team's own Heuer electronic timers.

We spoke to designer Divila on Monday night. Was he happy? "What you do think" he quipped, but he was quick to point out that this was only private testing and official practice on Friday would be the rear pointer. However Emerson was quicker than Lauda, the existing World Champion in his all conquering Ferrari 312T. As expected Ferrari are not taking their new T2 design to the race this weekend.

Clay Regazzoni was also testing, posting a 2m 33.1s in the 312T before

Laude whirled it around in 2m 32.29s. Also on hand was Carlos Reutemann in the Brabham-Alfa but the team incurred engine problems and couldn't better 2m 40s so we hear.

With over 1700 miles testing now under his belt in the new car "without any problems", Fittipaldi stopped the Heuer watches at 2m 32.25s. The 4.9-mile track is a lot bumpier this year and, during the recent tests, it's been very dusty and gritty. Punctures have been a problem according to Divila. The corner after the pits, as we said in last week's issue, has been tightened slightly but Fittipaldi reckons it will only add about 0.3s to overall lap times. Coupled to the fact that all the teams will be using the type of (harder) Goodyear tyre used in recent tests at Ricard, it will be interesting to see whether anyone can approach last year's sub-150s pole time.

The temperature in Sao Paulo on Monday was a staggering 38°C. It could well be one helluva hot race.

Lunger joins Surtees

Team Surtees announced at the beginning of this week that 30 year old American driver Brett Lunger would be driving one of the works Surtees TS19 Grand Prix cars from South African onward. John Surtees said that he "would like to take the opportunity to stress that it is still

Brett Lunger - "still learning"



our firm intention to run a full two car team of TS19s from the South African Grand Prix onwards. The initial tests I have made with the first TS19 have been most encouraging to say the least and a second car is currently in the process of construction.

"We are continuing to negotiate with a number of sponsors and we hope to reach a successful conclusion in the near future. Whoever the sponsor may be, their car will run alongside the Brett Lunger car as a full Team Surtees entry run from

Edenbridge. We are continuing our policy of testing promising drivers and will make a selection in due course when sponsorship has been confirmed for the second car."

Lunger, who drove for Hesketh Racing on three occasions last season, is backed by a consortium of American businessmen. One of the major commercial backers are Rand Time, an American company who make digital wrist watches "at the Rolex end of the market." They cost around £1000 each. Additional support will come from the Delaware Trust Corporation.

The team will be travelling out to South Africa next month where testing at Kyalami will commence, a happy hunting ground for Surtees.

The Team Surtees factory has also taken on a new streamlined shape with a smaller staff of 12. In earlier days there were 40 people working at Edenbridge but Surtees pointed out that "you don't need so many people if you are just doing Formula 1." A few staff changes have been made, the most significant being the return of Pete Briggs to the Surtees workshops as general manager. He was, as many will remember, with Matchbox Team Surtees during their successful 1972 Formula 2 season before leaving to rejoin March. Pete Briggs is very experienced on all sides of motor sport and has recently been working with Gordon Spice on the Special Products side. He is very enthusiastic about the new feeling at Team Surtees and his presence will be an added asset to the team. He joins on February 1.

Donington: all systems are go

Tom Wheatcroft reported on Monday this week that he had received no less than 318 telegrams of congratulation since the result of his planning permission appeal result was made known last week and racing was given the go-ahead at Donington Park. "Most of the papers got it all wrong though", said Tom, "The Leicester Mercury and AUTOSPORT were the only ones to get it quite right."

"We won the appeal 100% and have permission to run 27 meetings and 10 internationals a year and we can apply for more if we want to, but that's more than enough. Noise is no problem the inspector said 'it's something we all have to live with in this day and age'."

On the technicality of the access road which prevented full approval being given Wheatcroft said: "I'll have all that sorted out by Wednesday this week. In fact the chief planner issued a press release last week saying 'we will do all we can to help Bernard Wheatcroft Ltd to resume racing at Donington Park'. It's no problem at all, in fact they've said we can have a new access road if we want one. The inspector was right to turn it down though. He went along there and it's all overgrown and narrow. In fact it's bloody dangerous. It's no obstacle though. I know of seven ways round it."

Wheatcroft said he spent last Saturday and Sunday going round the circuit and drawing up plans for the circuit's completion. "It's going to cost me a million and half pounds to make it the complete home of motor sport ranging from Grand Prix racing to rallycross and drag racing. I haven't got that amount to spend at the moment and I'm working out in what order to get things done. But we shall go ahead at full speed".

Nilsson's stand-by call

As the Formula 1 Constructors air charter rumbled down one of Heathrow's runways last Sunday night, many might have thought they'd seen a stowaway on board. Gunnar Nilsson, March Engineering's recent signing, was Sao Paulo bound, complete with race overalls and crash helmet. He's on stand-by so we're led to believe.

Although the Swede hasn't been entered by March to drive in the Brazilian Grand Prix, it's expected that he will be given a try out during practice in Lella Lombardi's car if the Italian lady doesn't look like qualifying within the 110% rulings.

Renault admit they have F1

Regie Renault have finally announced their competition plans for 1976, although many of us are no doubt aware of them already.

In the World Sports Car Championship (G6), Renault and Elf are entering two prototype Alpine-Renault A442s, equipped with a turbo-charged version of their existing 2-litre V6 engine. They will be driven by Patrick Depailler, Jean-Pierre Jabouille, Jean-Pierre Jarier, Jacques Laffite and Henri Pescarolo.

The Formula 2 programme has only recently been announced (Tambay and Arnoux in Martini V6s and Jabouille and Leclere in Elf V6s) but it's interesting to see that they've admitted that a 1500cc turbo engine, corresponding to Formula 1 regulations, is under development by Renault-Gordini which, if successful, may be used by independent teams.

Pearson's opener

David Pearson opened the 1976 Winston-sponsored NASCAR Grand National Championship trial with a win in the Western 500 held at Riverside on Sunday. Driving his Purolator Mercury, Pearson covered 191 laps at an average speed of 98.995 mph, beating Cale Yarborough's Chevrolet Chevelle into 2nd place by 35.9s.

However the star of the race was Jim Insolo who, in his Chevelle, ran well up throughout and was only a few seconds behind Yarborough at the flag.

A lap down in 4th and 5th places were Ray Elder (Dodge) and Benny Parsons (Chevelle), seven laps clear of 6th man Lennie Pond in his Pepsi-Cola Chevelle.

Neither Vern Schuppan nor David Hobbs started the event as both drivers found their cars weren't ready in time. Hobbs, who will team-up with Parsons, commented instead.

Two leading NASCAR runners who retired were reigning champion Richard Petty (STP Dodge) and last year's winner Bobby Allison who quit in the Penske AMC Matador with 40 laps to go.

● Former Team Lotus driver Dave Walker is currently looking for sponsorship in Canada so that he can run a pair of Van Diemens in the Player's Atlantic for himself and South African Robert Joubert.

CBS cover the GPs

Grand Prix racing received a huge boost in the United States recently when CBS screened a half hour special on Formula 1 racing highlighting great moments from the past and also bringing viewers right up to date with news of the various American teams and drivers competing in the category in 1976. The plan for the future is for CBS to network the majority of major Formula One races during the year across America a week after each race. Previously American viewers have only seen the Monaco Grand Prix which has been regularly covered by the rival ABC Wide World of Sports programme.

The move, of course, coincides with a year which will feature two American Grands Prix and is likely to encourage several American sponsors into Formula 1. Stirling Moss was included in the first programme and leading American sports commentator Ken Squire is also included in the team.

● Italian Paolo Bozzetto, who raced an F2 March in 1974, is reported to have purchased a brand new Modus.

● The Mayor and Council of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich have decided to present Stuart Graham with a Civic Award in recognition of his services to motor racing next Wednesday at a public ceremony at Nantwich's Civic Hall.



An entirely new all-British Formula 3 racing team will be appearing on the motor racing circuits this year, starting at Thruxton on March 7, and sponsored by Unipart – the parts and accessory operation of Leyland Cars – the first time ever that there has been an 'official' Leyland entry in single-seater racing.

The Unipart Racing Team, as it will be known, is entering a brand new March 763 F3 car in all the major rounds of the 1976 BP Formula 3 Championship plus certain other selected events and it will be driven by well-known racing driver and journalist Tony Dron. Powering the car and making its first full-season debut in F3 racing will be the highly successful Triumph Dolomite Sprint 16-valve engine. Initial development work on the engine is being undertaken by Neil Brown and Denny Rowland.

Ashley drives for BRM

Although there has been no official announcement, it comes as no surprise to learn that Ian Ashley will drive for the Stanley-BRM team starting at the Brazilian Grand Prix this weekend. Ashley will replace Bob Evans who, we are led to believe, has been laid off without being officially notified.

It's ironic that Evans, who drove his heart out for the team last year, has been left sitting on the shelf, a fate which seems to happen to so many of Louis Stanley's drivers.

Ashley, a worthy F5000 exponent over the last few seasons, is no stranger to Grand Prix racing, having made several attempts to

break into the top echelon of the motor racing world. He drove the F1 Token at the German GP in 1974 following this up with outings in the Chequered Flag/Richard Oaten Brabham BT42. Then at last year's German GP, he crashed heavily in one of Frank Williams' cars and damaged an ankle. It probably cost him the European F5000 championship and, ultimately, his drive with Oaten.

Ashley has been testing with the Stanley-BRM team on seven separate occasions during recent weeks and changes to the existing P201 chassis have made him both excited and optimistic about his chances of doing well in Brazil.

Hawkins for Chevron?

Two drivers who have been tipped to form Chevron's two car works Formula 3 this season are Richard Hawkins and 18 year old Frenchman Patrick Bardinon, son of the owner of the private Mas du Clos circuit and racing car collection near Clermont Ferrand.

Bardinon finished 2nd in the recent Elf Volant run-offs at Magny-Cours but rather than go Formule Renault, his father thinks he could benefit in the long run by running in an international formula like F3.

Hawkins on the other hand needs no introduction, having run fast and spectacularly this season in F3 with a March backed by Ratcliffe Springs. Hawkins, who would form a formidable challenger for the Bolton marque in this highly competitive category, has also been mentioned in connection with the March works team, along with Rupert Keegan and Stephen South.

BL confirm Thompson

British Leyland confirmed earlier this week that Steve Thompson would be driving a Broadspeed-prepared Triumph Dolomite Sprint alongside Andy Rouse in the forthcoming RAC Touring Car Championship.

"I am really looking forward to the coming season," said Thompson, "now that Leyland Cars have given me the opportunity to extend my saloon car driving experience. Nineteen-seventy-five was my first year in saloons and I hope the result of the Escort series speaks for itself."

● We hear along the grapevine that the Elf Tyrrell Grand Prix team will, after all, run the exciting six-wheel (Project 34) Formula 1 car in world championship races. We gather that work is going ahead to build two pukka 40-gallon P34s to contest the European GP season.

F1 Boro for Perkins

Larry Perkins in Formula 1. That was the news we heard late last week following a telephone call to the HB Bewaking Alarmsystems firm in Holland. Since their split with Mo Nunn and Team Ensign, the HB concern, which is run by brothers Rody and Bob Hoogenboom, have acquired the F1 Ensign raced late last year by Chris Amon.

The car has been renamed the Boro (after the two brothers) and will still retain the distinctive white, red and black HB colour scheme. Rody Hoogenboom told us that the team would be making a concerted effort in Grand Prix racing and intended to contest all the events from Brazil onward. The cost, being non-FICA members, didn't seem to worry him. "Formula 1 is expensive, that's all there is to it."

The HB Bewaking team will base the car at their Amstelveen workshops near Amsterdam and have employed Gordon Horn, formerly of KVG Racing, as team manager. A total of five mechanics have been employed together with fabrication staff.

"We'll be going testing down to Ricard next month with Larry," Rody told us, "and if we find we're 2s off the pace, they'll be no reason to go to South Africa or even the Race of Champions. In fact, I expect our first race to be in California at Long Beach." Rody also explained that they would review their Formula 1 situation halfway through the year



Larry Perkins – great chance

to see whether they were making satisfactory progress.

Perkins, who has been one of the leading lights in Formula 3 over the last couple of years, has driven a Grand Prix car before, although he only in fact practised for the German event back in 1974. Ironically the car he drove was the ill-fated F1 Amon. Now the Australian's about to drive Amon's previous mount and when Chris returns to competition (after injury) with the Ensign team, it'll be an interesting confrontation between both parties.

Nicholson moves into F2 for '76

With the sale of his Formula One Lyncar to Bob Howlings, John Nicholson becomes the latest of the British based drivers to go into Formula Two. Once again he'll be sponsored by Pinch, and with a BDG currently on the workbenches at Nicholson McLaren Engines, the only query is which chassis the New Zealander will use. Not figuring too well in the running currently are March and Modus, so it may well be a Lola or Chevron.

Nicholson is at the moment in South Africa looking after his Formula Atlantic engines which race there for the first time this weekend. Ian Schechter has one of his engines, while others are in the hands of Alex Blignaut, Dave Charlton and Mike Domingo. The latter has both Modus and Chevron chassis, and Nicholson may find himself in one of them at the first race.

Nicholson is also off to Canada later in the season to promote Atlantic engines sales there. The West Coast situation is looking good, but with the F2 ride now a certainty, Nicholson will be eager to hurry home and get his own show on the road.

● Entries for the Brands Hatch Race of Champions is looking good. Expected to attend are at least 14 works FICA cars and at least six privateers.

Smith wins down-under

The New Zealand Peter Stuyvesant series for Tasman formula cars sank to an even lower ebb when the latest and penultimate round took place at the Lady Wigram airfield circuit last Sunday. Out of 13 starters, only five cars were running after 5 laps.

Victory went to Ken Smith, his second in the four-race series, and this means the Lola driver, who has recently won NZ Gold Star, is almost assured of the Stuyvesant title.

Smith put his T332 on pole at 67.5s, just 0.1s faster than Max Stewart (Lola T400) with Kevin Bartlett's T400 (69.8s) and Graeme Lawrence's T332 (70.3s) next up. Brian Redman in the Opert F2 Chevron wasn't able to match the pace of the bigger V8 powered cars on this quick circuit, despite a super tweeky engine from BMW producing a further 5 bhp.

The warm-up session claimed Lawrence, who had head gasket problems throughout practice, with a broken crank while lap 2 claimed no less than Bartlett, Stewart and Redman, the latter with a blown engine and the others with broken oil pump belts.

In the end Smith cruised home the winner by a lap, averaging around 112 mph. Jim Murdoch (Begg 018), Paul Bernasconi (Lola T400) and Bruce Allison (Lola T332) followed.

● Italian F3 coming man Gianfranco Brancatelli will run a semi-works March 763 this season run by Paolo Davenello.

Philips in SA

South African motor racing received its biggest boost for some time last week when a R40,000 sponsorship of the national championship series was announced in Johannesburg last week by the South African division of Philips, the car radio firm.

The new Formula Atlantic series which replaces Formula 1 as the South African Drivers' Championship, will in future be known as the Philips Car Sound Atlantic series.

The sponsorship will include more than R25,000 in direct prize money for the ten or eleven events to be held this year, awarded at a rate of R100 per point earned by the driver. The first six drivers in each race will be awarded 9, 6, 4, 3, 2 and 1 points respectively.

Helmut Ebner, General Manager of Philips' Consumer Marketing Division, said the prize money would be in addition to the prize money paid by the promoters of each event, and does not include the payment of the usual starting money.

"This means", said Ebner, "that the winner of each round will leave

the track with well over R1000 cash in his pocket." In addition to the prize money, Philips has set aside a substantial sum to be used in connection with the national series, bringing the total amount of the sponsorship to more than R40,000.

The first event in the series takes place at Cape Town this Saturday where an entry of over 15 cars has already been received. Entered are Dave Charlton (Modus), Ian Scheckter (March), Tony Martin and John Gibb (Chevrons), Roy Klomfass (Ralt), Nois Nieman (Wheatcroft) and Canadian Player's champion Bill Brack in his new Chevron.

Dates for the Philips Car Sound Formula Atlantic series are: **January 24, Killarney, Cape Town; Feb 14, Goldfields, Welkom; March 27, Aldo Scribante, Port Elizabeth; April 17, Roy Hesketh, Pietermaritzburg; May 8, Brandkop, Bloemfontain; June 5, Kyalami, Johannesburg; July 31, Kyalami, Johannesburg; Sept 11, Killarney, Cape Town; Sept 18, Roy Hesketh, Pietermaritzburg; Oct 2, Kyalami, Johannesburg.**

Penske plans

Roger Penske has confirmed his team's intentions to compete on the Grand Prix, USAC and NASCAR circuits again this year, as he did in 1975. Such a large programme is made possible by the continued support of his three major sponsors, First National City Travelers Checks, CAM2 Motor Oil and the Norton Company plus additional support from Goodyear, DieHard and Champion.

Apart from John Watson, who we all know will head the F1 team in the World Championship Grands Prix, Penske plans to run a 1975 series Mercury Montego MX in all the remaining 1976 NASCAR races for 37 year old Bobby Allison with CAM2 and Citibank backing. The NASCAR team will be managed by John Woodward and Travis Carter.

Allison will also drive a CAM2-sponsored McLaren-Offy M16C at Indianapolis alongside regular driver, 27 year old Tom Sneva, who will contest all 14 rounds of the USAC trial in a McLaren. Jim McGee will manage the USAC programme.



John Gibb and his asset

Mum for Gibb

Mum for Men, South Africa's leading male deodorant, is to sponsor 25-year-old John Gibb, one of the country's top saloon car drivers, in the new Philips-backed Formula Atlantic series.

Gibb's car will be the ex-Gunnar Nilsson/Rapid Movements Chevron B29 which has won its last five races.

A keen cricketer, Gibb hails from Salisbury, Rhodesia. He started his racing career on motor cycles at the age of 18. His saloon car career started in 1973 and out of many successes, his most recent was a class win in the Wynns 1000 touring car race at Kyalami last November.

Henton's F2 car

While all the celebrations continue following the decision to let racing recommence at Donington Park, work continues on the Wheatcroft racing cars. Three cars are being built to run in Atlantic and F2 trim and the first monopocoque is pinned together.

Following extensive wind tunnel test designer Mike Pilbeam has produced a new body for a car and the revised narrow track suspension which was tested during the winter will be retained. Wheatcroft is not saying what engines will be used at the moment.

Brian Henton will definitely be driving the Formula 2 car while Wheatcroft is talking to two others about Atlantic "but I might allow Brian to do both as only three rounds clash and we could get somebody else to do those three."

Player's dates

Dates have been finalised for the 1976 Player's-backed Canadian Formula Atlantic series. As can be seen from the list below, there are two alternatives for the Mosport date depending on supporting events. Whatever date Mosport choose to run will directly affect the Gimli race.

May 23, Calgary; June 13 (or July 18), Gimli; June 20 (or Aug 22), Mosport; June 27, St Jovite; Aug 1, St Celicien; Aug 8, Halifax; Sept 5, Trois Rivières*

* non-championship

● Roy Line, managing director of Simoniz, has confirmed that his company would be sponsoring the Concours d'Elegance in this year's Indylantic series which begins at Brands on April 4. The prize fund will be £50, £30 and £20 for the first three at each meeting.

Rally ace goes into F2

Roy Kennedy, who ran Masami Kuwashima in Formula 2 in 1974 and for part of last year before turning his attentions to Tom Walkinshaw's F5000 Ford V6 project, will be back running in F2 again this season.

The man Kennedy will look after is Sead Alihodgic, the 27-year-old reigning Yugoslavian rally champion. The car will be a brand new March 762 and engines will be supplied by BMW GmbH in Munich. It will be based in London.

Alihodgic, who hails from Sarajevo, receives backing from TAS, a firm who manufacture VWs under license (his rally successes have been in a VW) and Optima, the state owned oil company. The ambitious project has received government support and the country are, according to Kennedy, making a concerted effort to introduce professional racing to their people.

Alihodgic's previous circuit experience has been confined to local saloon races and a one-off drive in an Autodelta Alfa at Monza.

Sead Alihodgic - F2 bound



FF aces test Modus

Seen testing a works Formula 3 Modus at Silverstone last Friday were South African Formula Ford drivers Kenny Gray and Rad Dougall, along with British Formula Vee champion Ian Flux.

Running on the latest mandatory Goodyear G54 compound tyres, conditions were very cold but lap times around the 57s mark were seen, Gray ending up fractionally the quickest.

● Following the news last week that racing will recommence at Donington Park, a huge upsurge of interest in the speed show has persuaded Tom Wheatcroft to extend its duration. It will now open on Friday Feb 20 and run to Feb 29.

Alfa G1 plans

The Alfa Romeo Dealer Team have announced that following a test-session last Wednesday on the Silverstone Grand Prix circuit, the drivers for their team's two car Alfa Romeo T1 attack in this year's RAC Touring Car Championship will be Jon Dooley and Simon Kirkby.

The team's first appearance will be at Brands Hatch on March 14.

● Attention members of the US Armed Forces. The SCCA has granted its approval of the Jim Russell Racing Drivers School at Silverstone.

● The Shell motor sport division has recently moved to Room 966, Floor 9, Shell Mex House, The Strand, London WC2R 0DX. Ray Cunningham and Keith Kirby can now be contacted on 01-438 3222 and Keith Collow on 438 2214.

Graham Hill's remains were buried last week at St Biddolph's Church, London Road, Shenley, Herts. The village church was chosen because St Biddolph is the patron saint of travellers. A memorial stone will be erected in due course.

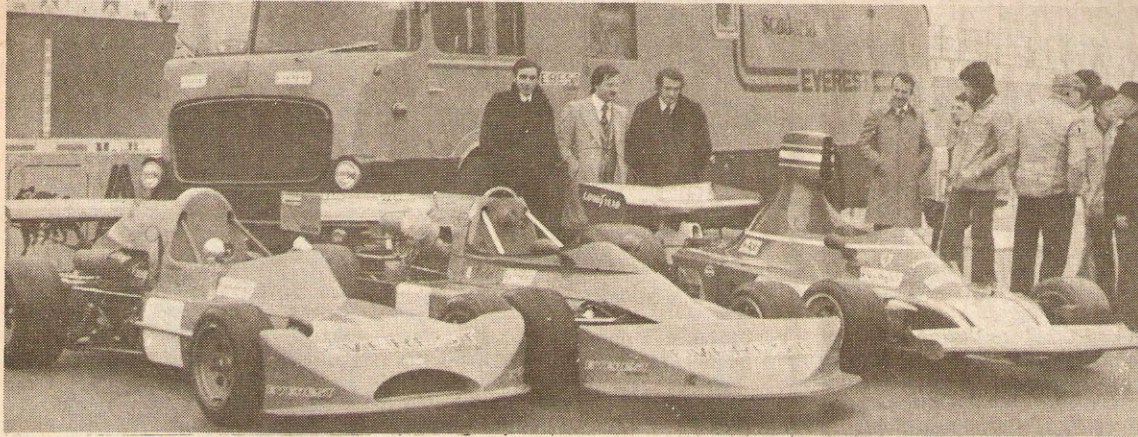
IMSA lose Porsche

Porsche has officially withdrawn from competition in the IMSA Camel GT series. The move came after IMSA banned Porsche's new G4 car, the turbo Carrera, from running in Camel GT races.

"We were totally at a loss when the turbo was banned," said US Porsche competition director Joe Hoppen. "We have in the turbo an FIA-approved car that has been under development for a year. The Carrera RSR is a closed subject as far as the factory is concerned. We will not support an RSR racing effort."

It is expected that Porsche will turn their attentions to the TransAm series. Because Porsche had influence with the VW Super Vee Gold Cup championship, IMSA have also lost this to the SCCA as a supporting event. It is expected that IMSA will look very closely at replacing the loss of Super Vee with Formula Atlantic.

F1 Ferrari for Italian Everest team



Giancarlo Martini (left), Maurizio Flammini (centre) and Giorgio Campaci are the three drivers who will drive for the Italian Scuderia Everest team this year. Everest is a large rubber company near Ravenna run by Sen. Galliagnani. Both Flammini and Martini will share a works loaned Ferrari 312T. The car makes its team debut at the Brands Race of Champions. Aside from their limited F1 commitments (4 races), Martini will race an Everest F2 March with a Dino V6 engine this year while Flammini's due to join March. Campaci will drive the smaller F3 March in Europe.

French aces?

The majority of French "aces" have emerged recently following their individual success in the various Volant competitions which we so sadly lack in Britain. So talent spotters should definitely note the names of the latest crop of drivers who have won the top awards at the various racing drivers schools.

One man who definitely looks to be heading for the big time is a 20-year-old furniture salesman, Alain Prost. Alain is the current European karting champion, the successor to Eddie Cheever in fact, as well as the French karting champion. Now he has added the Pilote Elf de L'Ecole Winfield Paul Ricard, to his successes. Prost took the verdict over another Kartist, Michael Hugon, on the decision of a panel chaired by Ken Tyrrell. Alain Prost will race an Elf-backed Martini in Formula Renault in 1976.

At the Winfield School's similar contest at Magny-Cours there was a very close contest between Frederic Watelet, a 28-year-old Paris publican and 18-year-old Patrick Bardinon, son of the owner of the private Mas du Clos circuit and racing car collection. After a run-off the verdict went to Watelet who lapped fractionally faster. Watelet will also race an Ecurie Elf Martini in 1976.

Meanwhile, at Nogaro, another competition was sponsored by Motul under the direction of Henri Pescarolo. Here the winner was a 25-year-old photographer from Toulouse, Patrick Laverge, who previously raced in the Simca saloon series.

Finally, the AC d'Ouest's competition at the Le Mans Bugatti circuit also has a champion. He is a 24-year-old Luc Favresse, a driving school instructor, who has been racing a Mini.

A similar scheme is being instituted by the Knight brothers new Winfield School at Goodwood. They will nominate a top pupil in February who will be backed by them in Formula Ford for 1976. It is hoped that a sponsor, similar perhaps to Elf, will be found to support the scheme.

● Good news for Thruxton. They will be able to hold 90 days of silent mid-week private testing in 1976 plus several un-silenced half days. Full details from the BARC on Weyhill 2607.

Big F2 plans for Osella

Following our story in last week's issue suggesting that Francois Migault would be going F2 this year, we now hear that Osella have confirmed the Frenchman's intentions and he will run a works car alongside Hans Binder, Migault using Schnitzer BMW engines and Binder's coming from the works.

To show that they mean business in this year's European F2 series, the Italian marque will also run another two car works team for team regular Giorgio Francia partnered this time by "Gianfranco". Engines are undecided although they have tested a Ford and the Romeo Ferraris engines recently.

Apart from their four-car F2 effort, Osella will also run a two-car team in the FIA European Formula 3 series for Marcello Rosei and Fernando Sprechico, the latter having shown a fair turn of speed in an ancient GRD last year.

Sir Clive speaks out

At the RAC prizegiving last week, Sir Clive Bossom said that there were clear signs that motor sport in this country was in a much stronger position than most other sports to weather the continuing economic storm. He said that competition licence renewals were 11 per cent up on this time last year, which, with a full programme of events, looked good for the future.

Sir Clive, chairman of the RAC and the Motor Sport Council, said that both Ford's and Leyland's competition programme were encouraging and that the RAC was going ahead with a Training Trust with the object of getting the sport run still more efficiently and safely. The first training seminars for stewards of meetings had already begun and these would be followed by similar sessions for Clerks of the Course.

The chairman thanked all those sponsors who had helped the sport along in the past year and the many people, particularly marshals, who had made a substantial contribution to the sport as a whole.

Briefly...

● John Surtees continued his F1 test programme on his team's new TS19 Grand Prix car at Goodwood last Friday. Although David Purley was due to get a run, the clutch blew near the end of the day and he didn't drive. He was expected to have tried a TS16 on Tuesday. Surtees was able to lap at an impressive 1m 12.3s without any aerodynamic devices on the car.

● Despite a good, although fortunate, 2nd place in the latest Tasman race, Jim Murdoch is retiring from racing. Murdoch, in fact, raced in Britain a couple of years ago in an Atlantic Tui. Also quitting the sport is New Zealand's only F5000 car constructor George Begg who intends to turn his attentions to powerboats.

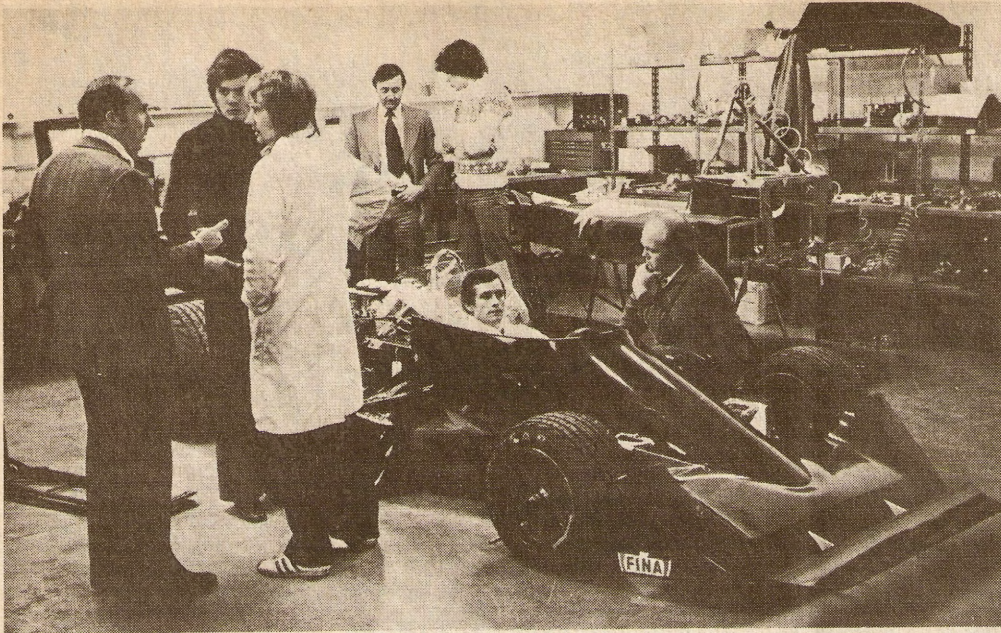
● Hot rumour department: Following our story last week that A. J. Foyt wants in at Le Mans this year, there's a chance that the legendary Smokey Yunick will build him a specially prepared Chevrolet stocker for the event. Far out!

● Currently under consideration by the RAC, is the formation of the Indyantic Drivers Club, obviously embracing the members of this ambitious section of racing.

CATCHPOLE

By Barry Foley





While Jacky Ickx sits in the new car, Frank Williams (left) issues directives and Walter Wolf (fourth from left) talks to the author.

INTERVIEW

Frank Williams reborn

by CHRIS WITTY

When Lord Alexander's plaintive cry for help went unheeded and the bottom fell out of Hesketh Racing last November, there were mixed feelings among the motor racing fraternity. For some, especially a man called Frank Williams, it was an opportunity to land the big catch, the biggest of his career and by far the best. In the space of a few days, the effervescent and genial Williams transferred his Grand Prix racing team from almost total obscurity into a potential world beating force.

Having struggled to exist in Grand Prix racing for the last seven seasons, and struggle is an understatement in Frank's terms, being able to secure the assets of Hesketh's Grand Prix team, together with substantial financial backing from the Canadian-domiciled Hungarian-born industrialist Walter Wolf, it was like a dream come true. With a three-year agreement existing between himself and Wolf plus guarantees for backing worth close on £1.5m, Frank Williams is now in a most enviable position. For a man who has been through so much, and has been close to financial ruin a number of times but never shyed away from it at all, and given 110% to the thing he loves in motor racing, there can be very few who would begrudge him his windfall.

Frank would be the first to admit that if he's to achieve what he's always dreamt of doing, and that's to beat the best in Grand Prix racing, his greatest asset must be Doctor Harvey Postlethwaite, the former March and Hesketh designer who many reckoned to be one of the best, if not the best, race car designer in the world. Because Postlethwaite is more than just a designer and because he's such a practical person, Frank has acquired not just a potentially winning combination but a man he can trust implicitly, a friend and a loyalist. Money can't buy that.

Way back in 1969 Frank Williams, still in his twenties, made the bold step into the world of Grand Prix racing. Having purchased an ex-works Brabham BT26 and handing the driving chores to his good friend Piers Courage, many purists were to be surprised by the team's approach and, above all, the results. Despite the fact that finances were limited, Courage and Williams were rewarded with superb 2nd places at the Monaco and American Grands Prix that year.

Tragically Piers was killed the following year in the Gianpaulo Dallara-designed de Tomaso and although Frank struggled on for the remainder of the season, the years that lay ahead were hard ones. He ran Marches in 1972 and 1973 for Carlos Pace and Henri Pescarolo before building his own cars under the Italian Iso-Rivolta banner from 1973 onwards. Iso pulled out in the middle of the 1974 season but still Frank carried on, as only he knows he can. The success never matched that first year although there were the odd occasions of hope but the one single fact stood out, Frank's team were the back-room boys of Grand Prix racing. Yet still the enthusiasm and the will to race, remained.

It wasn't until the German Grand Prix this year that Frank was able to equal Piers' feat of 1969 when Jacques Laffite, admittedly surviving a race of attrition, honed into view to take 2nd place over a minute and half behind Carlos Reutemann. The Williams pit erupted. Those points, the only ones the team collected last season, were enough to keep him within the Formula 1 Constructors Association. Apart from the rewards of finishing 2nd in a Grand Prix, that place possibly saved Frank between £70,000 and £100,000 on travel expenditure for this coming season.

Fate was being kind to Frank in many ways; a small token in return for when it had taken Piers and left him balancing perilously close to that

bottomless pit. Armed with nothing more than a knife and fork, Frank has clung to the edge and survived. Now he's about to extract himself completely. He's never been in such a healthy position before but he's still a long way from achieving an ambition; an ambition that is no longer a dream. That is to win and to win well and, more especially, to grind the opposition into the dirt. It's not that they've been unkind to him, for you can't help but like and respect the man; it's just the personal satisfaction of beating the recognised elite on his terms that he wants.

They say a shark never keeps still and, in some ways, Frank Williams fits the description. He's constantly moving, walking back and forth; answering telephones (the GPO love him now!), issuing directives to his loyal staff and trying to pay attention to you at the same time. It's not nervous energy, it's simply motivation. Looking at the past you begin to understand why. He's survived on his wits and he's very proud of it.

It's almost four years since his team moved into their current premises on an industrial trading estate in Reading. The recent turn of events have already seen the place outgrow itself; the Portakabins straddling the rear of the main building are visible proof of that. If a move is required, Frank assures us that it would only be a matter of yards away for already, with the March and Copersucar Grand Prix teams based nearby, Reading has rapidly overhauled the Slough of the 60s to become the Mecca of the racing world.

The rebirth of Frank Williams Racing began to evolve at the beginning of last year when he was running a pair of updated and, as Frank admits, outdated chassis deriving from the Iso days for Laffite and Arturo Merzario. Ironically the seed was sown by Dallara who, since his days at de Tomaso, had now journeyed across to Lamborghini having spent a short time working for

Frank on the Iso project. An extremely wealthy German-speaking industrialist by the name of Wolf was a good customer of the Italian firm. His naive enthusiasm for motor racing had seen him talk of Lamborghini entering Formula 1 and he, of course, would finance the operation. Dallara realised that Wolf's intentions to go racing certainly were serious so he pointed him in the direction of Frank.

The first time they met was at the Silverstone Daily Express International Trophy. "He couldn't have chosen a worse team to be involved with," said Frank, recalling the disasters that befell his team that weekend. However, Wolf seemed undeterred by the dramas and, more than that, seemed prepared to shrug them off for he continued to maintain his interest with the team as a very mediocre season unveiled itself in front of him. "However, by the time Germany arrived, Walter found himself such a part of the team that when Jacques crossed the line, he picked me up and literally threw me into the air," said Frank.

Wolf himself is a short, stocky man. He possesses a tremendously aggressive personality that puts you on your guard. We met him down at Frank's recently. He laughed when we told him that he had already gained a reputation for being a rogue-like figure and avoiding the press. "No, I'm not like that at all."

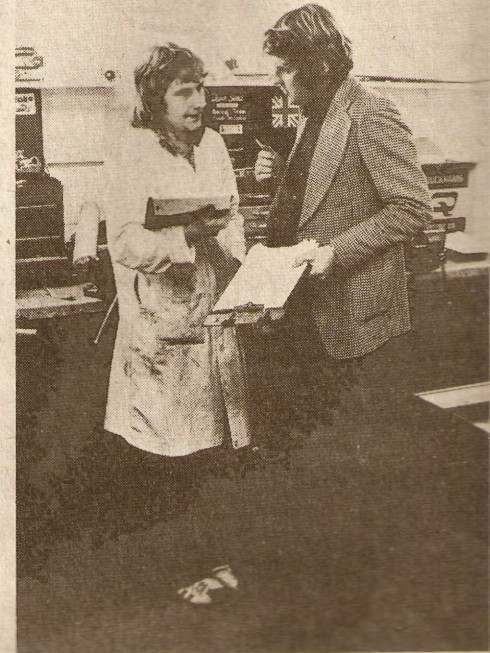
Of Hungarian heritage, he explained that he'd moved to Canada 15 years ago "with just \$5 in my pocket." In the following years, he built up an empire that encompasses many, many technological businesses and became, (a significant point) a self-made millionaire as a result. He loves fast cars and this is underlined when he arrived at the German Grand Prix in an aerofoiled Lamborghini Countach. "I had the car specially made," he explained, "and it's the fastest production car in the world. When I drive down the autoroutes and young men pass me in their Porsches, I don't have to prove to them anything because I know my car is the fastest."

Such an attitude can only be attributed to the wealthy individuals of the world. He owns a March-BMW sports racer, an AMS and an FI Williams which he drives occasionally and is immensely proud of. You get the impression that he always wanted to be a racing driver but never had the opportunity, and incredibly, the money at the right age. Perhaps his involvement in Frank Williams is a substitute.

Although he has bases throughout the northern hemisphere, Wolf regards himself as a Canadian and not a European. He's married to an attractive blonde Canadian wife and has two children. His wife drives a Muira, "the last one built." So strong are his feelings toward Canada that the national flag now appears on the side of Frank's cars (so far the only indication of Wolf's involvement) and he told us that he was extremely disappointed when last year's Canadian Grand Prix was cancelled. One got the impression that financial problems wouldn't stop it from taking place this year, for Walter would see to that.

He admits his agreement with Frank is to last

Ex-March and Hesketh men both. Designer Harvey Postlethwaite (right) and chief mechanic Dave Sims confer.



three years and he explained that even if he felt obliged to withdraw after then, the existing operation would still carry on in the same competitive state as when he left. Wolf also told us how he would influence his business associates into backing motor sport in the future.

Watching him wander around the workshops, looking at the team's new car and chatting to Jacky Ickx as he fitted himself into the car, one got the impression that here was a man who expected results. It remains to be seen how Williams and Co temper his initial enthusiasm if things take a little longer to gel, as is only to be expected with a new organisation.

How did it all happen? We cornered Frank and asked him to tell the story, unfortunately having to omit little appetisers that are best kept for Private Ear!

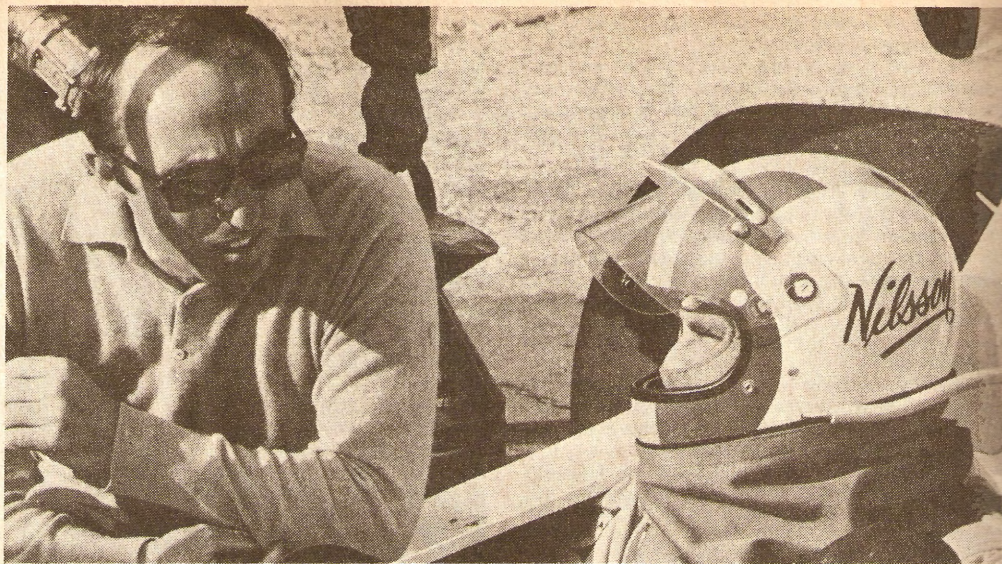
"Several weeks ago Teddy Mayer rang me up after Emerson's departure and said: 'Whatever you do, buy those Heskeths immediately to stop Emerson getting them.' He thought that Copersucar were going to buy them you see. I'm sure Teddy won't mind me saying this but he told me my cars were absolute rubbish and, in a way, he was right. It was old. It was designed by John Clarke and all that Ray Stokoe was allowed to do was to put a slimmer and lighter monocoque on it. The equipment was never very good, I was always using other people's scrubbed tyres, and finances were also tight, desperately tight. In a way, I'm terrifically proud of myself for having made the next race every time because no one else could, or would, have wanted to do it.

"It's always been financially tight for me. I suppose '75, '72 and '70 were the tightest. They were the most desperate. We were going racing on a £5 note. I was having to borrow money off people at the airport so that I could buy the mechanics a snack. No, really, I'd go to the airport with a quid in my pocket and knowing there was no way of paying the car park charge when I came back.

"In 1974 we had a reasonable amount of money until May. We'd been testing at Ricard before Brazil to try this and that, Arthur was really flying and looking good and then Iso stopped paying abruptly and our reliability record worsened instead of improving. We were just burning money and because of that it became difficult for '75. You can't do it without money.

"As far as budgets go, it's got to be fairly accurately investigated before you embark on a season. I did that last year for about £120,000, or something ridiculous like that, but this year we'll be spending something in excess of £400,000 and I'm not exaggerating. It is a real figure. That's Grand Prix racing. That's for engines, gearboxes, chassis, research and development, overheads and travelling."

Although Walter followed the fortunes of Frank's team throughout the year, his actual financial involvement was more of a donation. He'd bought all the Ford engines from the French Ligier team for Frank (they now have 12 DFVs with 3 more on order) and when adding up his



Frank listens to Gunnar Nilsson after the Swede had tested one of his old cars at Goodwood. Nilsson is a man Williams would dearly love to run in F1...

other involvements (like backing his protege Willi Siller in F3), "He'd spent £80,000 and all he'd got was two green F1 passes," said Frank. Commenting on his intentions to increase Walter's involvement in racing, Frank added that "I never took Walter that seriously about 1976 in relation to Frank Williams Racing until the end of the year. I didn't think there was any way I could do a deal with him but, as it turned out, I was quite wrong. He wanted to have his own team and I didn't figure in that. Why? Because I wanted my own thing too."

It was at the American Grand Prix that Frank told Wolf "No, we can't do a deal, with me hoping that everyone else would say the same. Then we'd do a half deal whereby he'd take care of my engines for half a year, buy 'em and overhaul them, just so that he could come racing and have his name on the car. If Walter hadn't come in, at any stage, I'd have still carried on. Though I'd a good deal lined up with Richard Oaten, I reckoned I could get a good deal out of Ambrozium, which didn't pan out, plus a couple of other good contacts which I haven't followed up since Walter's involvement. So I was reasonably optimistic.

"Richard (Oaten) made the biggest difference of the year actually. Richard saved my bacon and he made life a lot easier which was good news. I'm in great debt to Richard as far as the team's concerned, not a financial debt, but a debt of gratitude. Richard was a great ally. His arrival was totally fortuitous."

In fact Oaten's presence came about through Frank's first rentadrive of the year when Ian Ashley drove (and crashed heavily) at the Nurburgring. Frank told us that none of the other

people who drove for him up until then actually paid money. Although Ashley and Oaten eventually split, the latter still lends support to the cause, although keeping a low profile.

"I was hoping Jacques would stay," continued Frank, "and I had Renzo Zorzi for a big bunch of wedge, six figures, over a hundred grand, although I was hoping to run Gunnar Nilsson if I could get him. I reckoned I was looking good. In fact, if Shadow ever took a dive, I'd have Tom Pryce in the morning. But maybe I'm dreaming. There again, I might get him in '77. You never know, we might have a choice of drivers knocking the door down next year, especially with the Doc doing his best there, bless him. Also Walter's a great fan of Carlos Pace and so am I..."

At the mention of Harvey Postlethwaite, Frank's eyes lit up. "Of course I'm very happy, over the moon in fact. It's like being on honeymoon all the time. I see him walk in, it's just fantastic. In fact, I shouldn't admit, but the bloke can run the team himself. He's not just a designer, he knows what it takes almost better than me."

The actual purchase of the Hesketh 308C project, its designer and the bulk of the team personnel took place at the end of November. It was a complex deal but suffice it is to say, Wolf, on a trip to Cosworths with Williams, was taken and shown around Hesketh's ideal Easton Neston workshops. Frank suggested that Walter should buy the team although afterwards Frank admits he realised that he was cutting his own throat. Here he was with a man who, if he wanted, was prepared to spend £1.4m in three years to keep a competitive racing team in front of Frank on the grid. Above all, if a deal came off, Frank would lose Harvey, the man he'd wanted for so long.

Frank came close to losing out but, in the end, everything turned out right and Wolf decided to employ Postlethwaite and whatever equipment he wished to bring along with him. "As for the car, it depended on Harvey," explained Frank, "but really Hesketh was the catalyst that finally pushed me into Wally's deal."

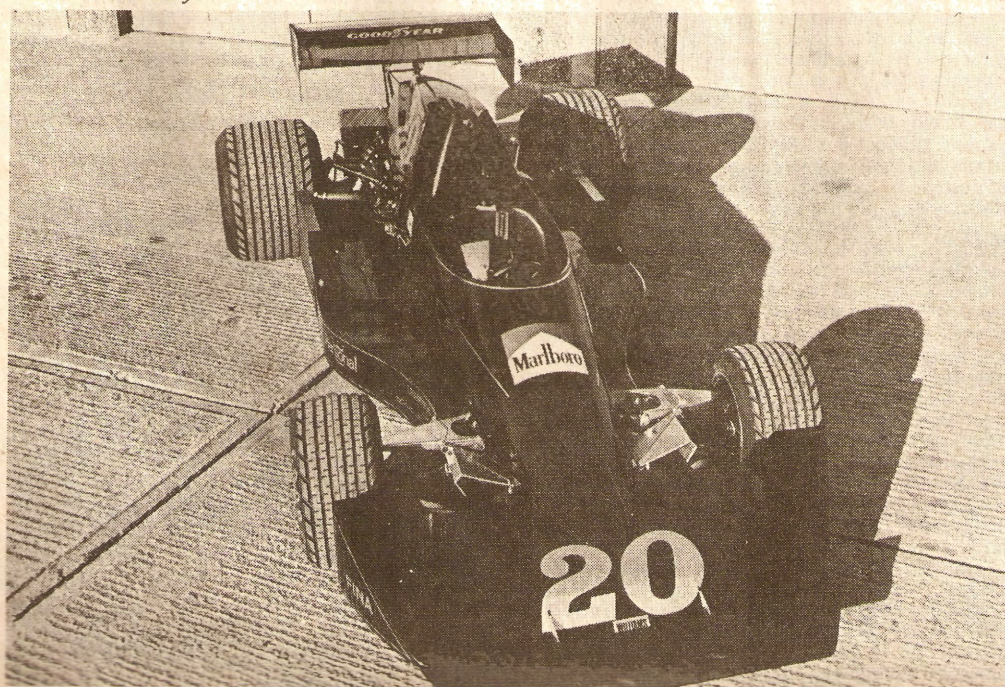
So by the beginning of December, Frank Williams had virtually everything he wanted. Christmas had come early.

As for his driving force, he'd lost Laffite to Ligier and Nilsson to March but even before Wolf's deal emerged, Jacky Ickx had phoned up several times expressing interest saying "couldn't we talk" as he wanted to get back into racing again and I was quite impressed by this ambition to revive himself. Now that Walter's turned up, he's very lucky. His attitude's right, he thinks he can run with the Scheckters and Hunts and he wants to sort them out. His career's nearly ended with a big flat fart and that's not what he wants. His vanity and pride won't allow his career to finish like that. Physically and mentally he's still able to go quick and "the fire is still going... I think."

As to the future Frank admits, "It'll be hard to break into that top echelon but Harvey is a racer, a winner and a killer probably more than I am. He wants to race and he wants to crucify them all." You'd think Harvey was Frank's number one driver which, at this juncture, brought him in on the conversation.

A lot of people have said that the Hesketh 308C isn't as good as the Hesketh 308B. There are a lot of sceptics in racing and when Frank got himself involved in purchasing the Hesketh project, many

The 1976 Williams Grand Prix challenger, having originally been designed by Postlethwaite as the Hesketh 308C last year.



thought they'd have done the opposite had they had the same opportunity.

"You can look on the positive and on the negative side," explained Harvey. "First of all you must bear in mind that the 308B was at the end of its development career which is one of the reasons why we built the new car and we weren't about to extract anything more from that old chassis. Certainly with the limitations of the new regulations there was nothing more to be gained in my opinion from the old car. What we tried to do with the new car, and what I am still quite happy we are doing with the new car, is to take a number of fairly major steps forward, which usually involves taking a couple of steps back, then enter on to the development programme with that car.

"Now it would have been very easy to have built another 308B which was a little bit lighter, which ironed out a few of the inherent problems that that car had and produced an instant car that went a little bit quicker. That would have been really quite easy to do but it would have served no particularly useful purpose at all as far as I was concerned.

"What I was much more interested in doing was to look much more fundamentally at those things which I believe inhibit the performance of the racing car and to try and, as it were, push those boundaries back a little further with a new design. This has meant quite a lot of, I won't say vast steps into the unknown because that's not right, but there were a lot of little things. The chassis was full of little steps forward, completely new uprights, completely new monocoques, and by completely new I mean like nothing we've ever built before. To the layman an upright's an upright but it's not. This is a completely new type of upright which we have on the FW05 (nee 308C), a completely different monocoque, a completely different fuel tank. We've done all these things because we thought they were going to be better and we know, in many instances, they are going to be better.

"You may land yourself with a car which conceptually, at the end of its development programme, is going to be ahead but we, at the same time, having encountered a lot of development problems. There's a lot more development work to be done before we realise the full potential of that chassis. There's an enormous amount still to come out of it. For instance, we haven't got the car handling properly yet. We know why and we're working towards that end. There's nothing fundamentally wrong. In fact fundamentally I'm more than pleased with the car but we've got little things going wrong connected with the various aspects of the design which we are putting right the whole time and which we're putting right now.

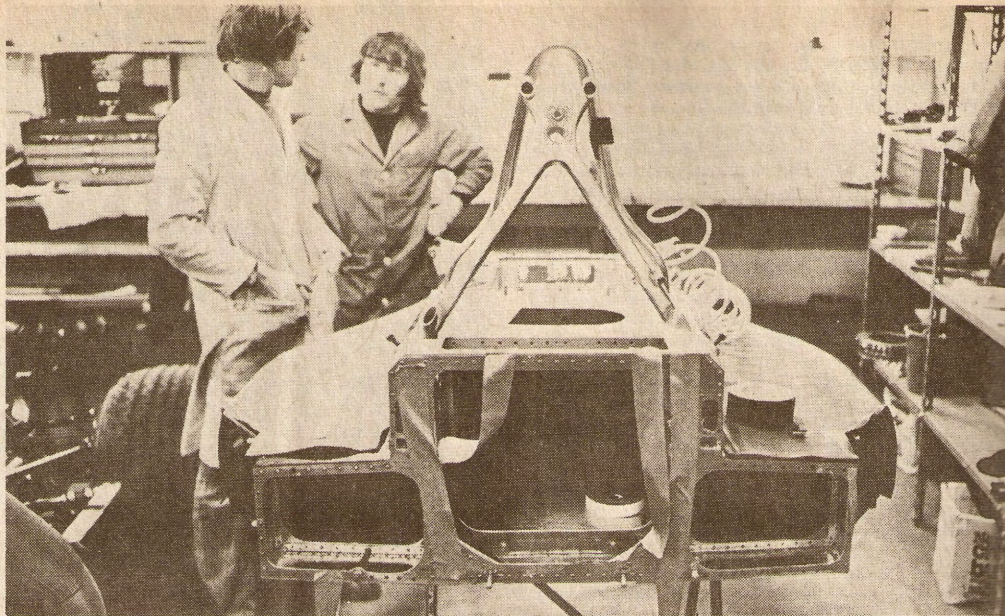
"I mean — if I may make so bold — remember the car in its first ever non-championship race finished 10th; in its second race, which was a Grand Prix, it finished in the points and in its next it came 4th having run for much of the race 3rd. Okay, it was with a competitive driver and he drove the car very well but I don't think you could say that was a failure by any stretch of the imagination. The point is the car is going better the whole time and we're finding out more and more.

"The most important thing from my point of view about that car is, since we built it and since we've started developing it I, personally, have probably doubled my knowledge of racing car design. I literally mean that. We've learnt so much because we've done things which we could never have done before. We said 'we'll do this,' 'we'll design it into the chassis' and by doing that we've suddenly realised a whole lot more information that I've thought all along.

"We're working along certain lines and we're trying certain things with the car, particularly in understanding why cars handle in the way they do, which is a very complicated business. We now think we understand certain things about it so we've designed this into the car and low and behold, it had a certain effect and this has advanced one's knowledge enormously which we could never have done if we'd have just built a development of the previous car. It's because of all this that of course I want to continue with this car.

"We're learning, learning and learning the whole time and one of the saddest things is that we didn't have a nice autumn development programme. The other problem is we have a discontinuity of driver which of course would rather upset things but nevertheless, yes, I'm happy with it and everything is going fine. There are seconds a lap to come out of the car."

With the closure of Hesketh Racing, Postlethwaite had offers to go to several other leading



A new FW05 monocoque under construction in the Williams workshops.

Grand Prix teams. Earlier in the year, Frank had approached him with a view to designing the proposed Lamborghini F1 car which, ironically, came true in a roundabout sort of way. Why did Harvey choose to go with Frank?

"There are a number of things. First of all World Championships are won, by and large, by the organisation. I believe that at the end of the day the best organised team will win because the best organised team will have time to develop its car properly. It will have the money to get the good drivers and it will have the back up to provide the excellent engineering services that a racing team needs to become competitive. Fundamentally you need a good, super, organisation. Now I've become increasingly aware of this and for every minute I stay in Formula 1 motor racing, the more I realise how important it is. So why on earth, you might ask, did I go from Hesketh to Frank's?

"I might add that I think the strong point about Hesketh Racing was that the team was getting better and better organised. It used to make me intensely annoyed when people use to call it an unprofessional or an amateur team because I think it was one of the most professional teams in the business underneath all the veneer. It's that strength, that slickness of organisation that is the real key to success in motor racing.

"Now the thing that attracted me here was probably *carte blanche* plus the fact that Frank is such an energetic person. Perhaps it's because for many years we've worked at opposite ends of the scale. Perhaps it's because he appreciates so much? That is what it's all about, because one is starting with, as I said, a clean slate. Really all we had here was, if you like, just a building and a small team with some good guys but not an awful lot. One could perhaps start to build again, knowing and having all the experience from Hesketh. The opportunity to start afresh was very attractive. To say it presented more of a challenge is perhaps the wrong thing because in the long run I can see it being much more interesting and much more successful potentially than perhaps slotting it easily with somebody else's set-up and way of working. I'm much more interested in perhaps involving something very much more along my own lines with Frank than go somewhere else. That's the real reason.

"Had it meant starting absolutely from square one then perhaps it would have been slightly different. One had the skeleton of a very good team. The bones, stripped of all the rancid flesh, were capable of building themselves a completely new body to go motor racing on and become a very experienced skeleton unlike at Hesketh where we had to grow the skeleton, and that took some growing! Maybe that's what was attractive about it, and of course, Walter represented a sponsor with many of the right attitudes. I rather like the idea of working for privateers, as it were, as opposed to a large company as a sponsor. It makes the thing so much more personal and board meetings are a bit nicer!

One got the impression that Postlethwaite carefully weighed up the pros and cons before making the decision. "Harvey is super perceptive" says Frank. "He's not a designer, he's not a dreamer, he's a very practical down-to-earth bloke and he faces reality perhaps more than I do. And I have to face reality."

Harvey has no illusions about the future, despite his period with Hesketh. "It's going to be a long, hard, rocky road, even to mediocrity, because it's such a damn competitive business. It'll be 18 months to 2 years before one can go to a race meeting and know you're going to finish in the points. That's being completely realistic about it. If then Walter survives to the third year, and I think he will, maybe in '78 he'll be able to see an attack at the World Championship and, if we do as well as we did at Towcester, then may be four years could see us standing a good chance of winning the World Championship."

Postlethwaite, aside from the 308C project, brought along five ex-Hesketh personnel. "I think it was very important" and when you consider they have worked with him and have built the current car and are familiar with it, you can understand why. The way Postlethwaite's working, you can see how he is trying to gel the team together into a first class workforce. "What we're trying to do is to build a very, very modern team running on modern lines. It'll have it's teething troubles, I'm realistic enough to know it'll have its problems but it'll come right because we're successful. In other words, to come back to what I said at the beginning, once we get the organisation right and we get the team functioning properly and we've overcome that, we've almost guaranteed that we'll become competitive. Then, after that, it'll be down to dotting the i's and crossing the t's."

As to carrying on developing the car without James Hunt, Harvey was impressed by Ickx's professionalism but felt it was far too early to judge his approach at this stage.

Since last season, the Williams work force has now expanded from 14 to 26 people. "Right now, I and the company, owe no one anything," said Frank proudly. "All the bills have been paid and we've a clean slate. One of my main goals in life was to get the best designer in the world. I'm happy. I've no regrets."

Now it's all down to Jacky Ickx. . . .

Jacky Ickx receives words of encouragement from the team's financial backer, Walter Wolf.



Munari heading Monte — "driest event for years" prediction

After dry and largely trouble free concentration runs the Monte Carlo Rally has, as we closed for press, sorted itself out after the two preliminary special stages into a seeding order for the next 36 hours loop. Somewhat predictably, quickest driver over the first two stages, the 30Km Col Dirodi-Vignai and the 20Km Molini-di-Triora - Bivio Buggio, is Sandro Munari/Silvio Maiga. Their Alitalia Stratos is 1m 08s ahead of Andruet's Alpine A310. This year's event is predicted to be one of the driest on record, and is already admirably suiting the wide section Pirelli P7 tyre. Roger Clark completed the two tests 3m 27s behind the Munari for 15th position overall and team-mate Makinen was 4m 02s behind in 16th place. Clark has suffered handling problems with his car, though no news was forthcoming for Makinen's 35s deficit over Clark. Waldegaard's and Pinto's Lancias are also highly placed and the Italian manufacturer looks set to dominate — especially if the weather holds fine. It is unlikely that the weather will deteriorate, but it must never be dismissed for the thaw which has left the mountains dry and spring-like a week ago could, just possibly reverse.

Already, and expectedly, the rally has turned into a tyre technicians paradise and the Pirelli tyres chosen by Fiat, Lancia and for Rohrl's Opel is proving exceptional. The thinking behind this extra wide 295 section tyre also permits a total of 1200 studs per tyre if the going does deteriorate, so although the contact patch is too wide for optimum pressure, 1200 studs in freshly replenished carcasses should be enough to keep the Stratos well in contention. Ford are using Dunlop's C1 pattern tyre, a narrow cross-ply and not suiting the conditions at the moment. Michelin's GF4, a "winter pattern" racer is also proving a good choice. After the two concentration tests over Italian territory, the team had to decide on their choice for the remainder and before Parc Ferme cars had to be pushed over a Heath-Robinson paint roller contraption which, after "inking" the tyre then printed onto sheets of paper as the cars were gently rolled forward. All these sheets were subsequently Xeroxed in great quantity and startline marshals have been issued with wads of these exact scale photocopies for checking against any cheating. It rather sums-up the rally.



Out in front — Sandro Munari.

The first ten in overall re-start classification were as follows: 1, Munari/Maiga (Lancia Stratos), 34m 26s; 2 Andruet/Jouanny (Renault Alpine A310), 1m 08s (behind); 3, Waldegaard/Thorszelius (Lancia Stratos), 1m 10s; 4, Pinto/Bernacchini (Lancia Stratos), 1m 33s; 5, Verini/Rossetti (Fiat Abarth 124), 1m 42s; 6, Therrier/Vial Renault Alpine A310), 1m 54s; 7, Campiaghi Scabini (Fiat Abarth 124), 1m 55s; 8, Nicolas/Laverne (Renault Alpine A310), 1m 58s; 9, Vincent/Delferier Renault Alpine A310), 1m 59s; 10, Rohrl/Berger (Opel Kadett GTE), 2.25.



Minister of Sport, Dennis Howell, flags away Roger Clark and Jim Porter at the start of their Monte Carlo trip.

Group one leader was Beguin/Fauchille (Alfa Romeo 200GTV) 5m 25s behind Munari; Stawowiak/Czyzyk (Polski Fiat 125P) 7m 48s (Group Two); Freuquin/Delaval (Porsche Carrera) 2m 28s (Group Three).

Of the major teams, the big three of Lancia, Fiat and Renault Alpine are all doing what was expected. Andruet is so far proving to be by far the quickest Alpine driver while Verini is also impressing with his Fiat Spyder. Markku Alen was reported to be in "foul mood" after completing the tests with his Fiat — complaining that it would not pull more than 6000 rpm and mutterings of sabotage similar to his unfortunate experiences on the San Remo were rife.

Opel were reported to have various troubles, most serious of which were stemming from the braking department. Kullang was lying a lowly 23rd and Mikkola was faring even worse in 25th position — well behind many of the group one aces. Darniche, with his semi-private two-valve Stratos could only manage 12th position after the first two tests.

The Italian cars, apart from dominating the top positions have also displayed some new "image" creations, especially the works Stratos's which have stylised their paint work and now incorporate such show items as "Nascar" type three-dimensional numbers.

The Fiats too are presenting quite a visual treat as they are turned out in Fiat Olio colours (Fiat's lubricant division) of midnight blue and bright yellow. Another Italian manufacturer putting on a display is Autobianchi, who with their A110 Abarths (12 entered) are chasing the leading Alfa 2000 GTV and occupy

Century Oils back Laurie

After weeks of speculation, Laurie Richards has broken his diplomatic silence with the news that he will be fully contesting this year's Castrol AUTOSPORT championship. Laurie's Lloyds of Stafford prepared Escort will be appearing in the distinctive gold and white colours of Century Oils, Britain's largest independent lubricant company in their Supreme Multigrade motor oil livery.

Graham Paskett, the Century Group's Public Relations Manager commented: "We entered motor sport as sponsors for the first time last year with a car in the BBC Radio One saloon championship and a car on the Lombard RAC Rally. In both cases we more than achieved our

marketing and publicity targets. Public response and interest exceeded our hopes which confirms our belief that there is still wide enthusiasm for new and specialised products and this accounts for our decision to sponsor Laurie. We are confident that our rally involvement will help our Supreme sales on the retail market."

Lloyds of Stafford will prepare the car throughout the season and will also be providing service support. Last year Laurie finished in third position in the Castrol/AUTOSPORT series after competing on eight of the 12 rounds. The new team augers well for greater success in this year's series.

Pond's plans formulate

Leyland's new signing Tony Pond is reported to be "delighted" with ST's first running competition TR7 and after a recent trial run, without a power-lock differential fitted, he expressed satisfaction with the car's general handling and traction, both parameters being in excess of what had been expected of the relatively short wheelbase car. The car's first outing will almost certainly be on the Mintex International and the signs from Leyland indicate that it will soon prove to be a competitive match for the ubiquitous rally Escort.

Although Tony's contract is with Leyland, ST will be allowing him to compete on other non-clashing rallies for other concerns; this of course only when there is absolutely no over-lapping of loyalties and a principal reason is to allow Tony to accumulate more experience on foreign events. With this in mind, Tony will be driving the Chequered Flag's Stratos again (and probably on similar events a number of times this year) on the forthcoming Boucles de Spa with David Richards. The same weekend as Galway, most of the quick Carreras are likely to be tackling the Irish tarmac event and Tony is hoping for a good result in Belgium, his principle rival likely to be Gilbert Stapelaere. The Chequered Flag's other representation, with Cahal Curley, will be simultaneously in action in Ireland.

● IRDC members are reminded that the AGM will be taking place prior to the Mintex International at the Groan Hotel on the 19th of February. All are welcome to attend.

● The Valentine Rally, organised by the Dunfermline Car Club, will this year be known as the Bank of Scotland Rally in deference to their obvious new sponsor. The event will take place on March 27th using familiar central Scottish stage territory (Ard, Achray, etc.) including a stage at the motor racing circuit of Knockhill. Prize money will be over £400. Regulations are available from: David Riley, 180 Springfield Road, Linlithgow.

Monte latest:

As we closed for press on Tuesday afternoon Roger Clark had moved up to 11th place with Timo Makinen 13th. On one Tuesday lunchtime stage Clark clocked sixth-fastest time. Conditions are dry.

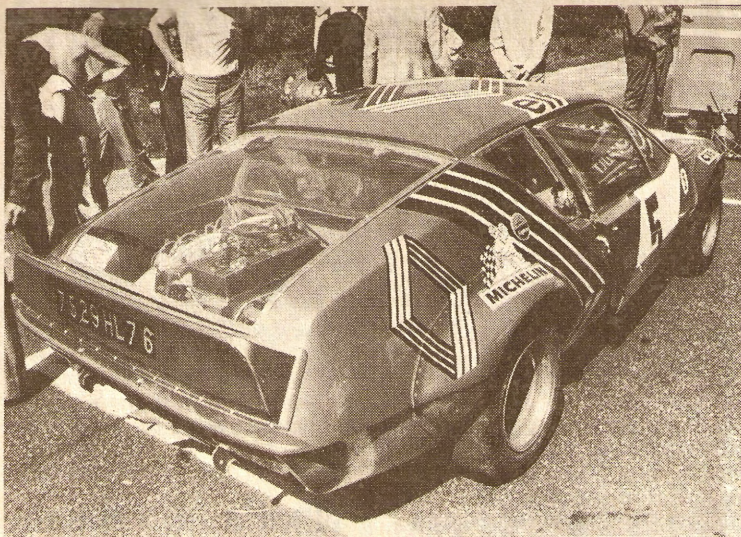
2nd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 8th places in standard car division. The Jolly Club have entered three cars and the French toothpaste manufacturer Aseptogil have nine cars — five with female crews. Not to be outdone is Pittoni, who campaigned an Alfetta in Italian events last year and is currently in 22nd position overall with a De Tomaso Pantera. A full report of the Monte Carlo Rally will be published next week.

Roger Clark, in his own inimitable style, found time before the start to exercise good rally PR on two celebrating Welsh rugby supporters.



Front to back

Mini-man Terry Kaby will be forsaking his constant velocity joints this year for a group one Triumph Dolomite Sprint with which to tackle the Castrol AUTOSPORT group one championship. Sponsoring will be Dunham and Haines of Luton as before. Dunlop and Shell will be providing some support for Kaby and co-driver, Brian Rainbow, and they will be running on Dunlop's new SP Clubman tyre all season. The crew will also fit in as many RAC national rounds as time will permit.



J-P Nicolas's A310 Prototype before the '74 Ronde Cévenole. Will Renault-Alpine have a 310 bhp version for this year?

Few rallies for Renault

Renault's recently announced competition programme for this year includes, as was predicted, a great number of racing involvements. Not quite all is lost however, and Renault with Elf will be officially contesting three events in the latter part of the season. These will be the ten mountain laps of the Ronde Cévenole, near Nîmes; the World Championship qualifying San Remo and the Tour de Corse. Drivers will be Renault-Alpine stalwarts, Jean-Luc Therrier and Jean-Pierre Nicolas.

On a more encouraging note, Renault will this year have the manpower and time available to offer a private-build service and, providing they like your face, will be in the rally car hire business, so those wishing to emulate Achim Warmbold's success with his KWS Alpine A310 of last year have definite prospects.



More in the pipeline for Chris?

Chris Sclater: Toyota testing

Chris Sclater, who appears to be leading quite a multi-national life of late with his associations to Japanese manufacturers and frequent trips to Europe, has just returned from a mammoth sorting session at Schnitzer's on the Austrian border with Germany. Extensive engine testing with the two-litre Toyota was undertaken in a week-long programme and modifications to the bearings and oil system are reported to have been successful. Chris took the car virtually straight from the Tour of Dean to the competition builders and spent a week working-out a modified engine over long distances and at high revolutions. A subsequent strip-down showed no recurrence of the trouble which has afflicted this engine.

Although Chris could give no official news, we are left with the

An 'F2' engined A310 Prototype?

As to what the cars will be for their three official rallies, Renault make no comment. We would imagine that the R17 Gordini can be ruled-out as they have proved well capable on the rough endurance events but lacking power and ultimate handling for something as tricky as the Ronde Cévenole. V6 production engines in the A310 are also unlikely by late season, for Renault would not have the time, or perhaps inclination, to homologate. This could leave the interesting possibility of using the sized-down two litre V6 Formula Two engine in at least one car for the Ronde Cévenole, an event where Renault have previously fielded prototypes, including the competition debut of the A310. The F2 engine produces more than 300 bhp, which should be more than enough to match a road-racing Stratos. For San Remo and Corsica further developments of the faithful four cylinder unit look to be the best bet.

impression that he will be associated with Toyota for the rest of this year, with the Sclater talents extending from the driving field also into the realms of test and development for Toyota. There is a distinct possibility that he may well be appearing on both the Mintex and in Galway. Some foreign events, for which Chris has a distinct affinity, could also be on the cards. Toyota Europe's competitions manager Ove Andersson returned from a ten-day visit to the works in Japan today and once the results of both of these drivers' trips have been discussed, we could well be hearing more news from Chris.

Big Stateside re-shuffle

News has reached us from the United States which might turn out to be a little more profound than its first appearances imply. As a result of power-games the NARA (North American Rally Association) have wrested control of the SCCA's Pro Rally Series after out-maneuvring the Sports Car Club of America. Such rally stalwarts as Bob Hourihan and John Buffum are closely involved with this ambitious plan and, in effect, they have the United States' only national stage-style event series in their pockets. The new series will be replacing the Americas Cup Championship and NARA will be integrating the best of the old Pro-events with the most deserving of the up-coming rallies to produce a 12 round championship with at least a \$50,000 prize fund. Sponsors, as before, are Lancia's North American operation plus "Wonder Mufflers" and also attracted into lending their name is the Italian state airline, Alitalia. Two

more big-name sponsors are reportedly in the pipe line and is also likely that the Holiday Inn hotel chain have joined the fun, offering cash prizes and expenses payments for all rounds using one of their many hotels as base. The controversial Press on Regardless rally now becomes the "Marquette 1000 Rallye" and as NARA are at the moment non-affiliated to the FIA, a late listing for the event looks likely to give the association time to tie-up all the paperwork. Other plans include a scheme for "Score International," masterminded by Jack Brady, to run a 1000 mile rally on the Baja Peninsula; Score International is already the organisation behind the Baja 500 and 1000 events.

With a prize fund equivalent to about £22,000 for a 12 round series with five sponsors and a giant hotel chain making special concessions... it looks as though we could do with a similar deal.

RAC decision

Further to the thorny RAC foreign drivers dilemma — that "scorers must be normally resident in the United Kingdom," the RAC Motor Sport Council has rejected a move to ban non-British drivers competing in this year's Motor supported RAC Rally Championship. The council considered that such a proposal, which called on drivers to establish a residential qualification in this country, could not be introduced until 1977.

A Spokesman commented: "During last year the Rallies Committee accepted this idea in principle, but it was not known generally until the end of the year, and so it was felt unfair to introduce this before 1977. The Motor Sport Council have also said they want to discuss the problem on a much wider basis so as to establish a consistent ruling as to whether or not foreign drivers are eligible for British championships." This year, such a decision effects 12 different motor sport series.

"Scotsman" go it alone

The Scotsman Rally Championship, in effect the Scottish Rally Championship, running this year without additional support from Gaelic Oil — a Gulf subsidiary, gets under way this year with the popular Snowman Rally at the end of January. There will be nine rounds making-up this year's series and the Snowman will count for both the drivers championship and the challengers section. There will be four capacity classes in each category and Burmah are putting up awards for all category winners in both sections. Castrol will be providing awards for top group one competitors in both sections and both Dunlop (12 sets of tyres) and Kleber (bonus scheme) will be involved. Apply for registration (if a Scottish domicile) to: Ross Finlay, 9 Glenan Gardens, Helensburgh G84 8XT.

Perusse scores on Round Two

The second round of the Castrol supported Canadian Rally Championship, the Rally des Neiges, brought victory to Jean-Paul Perusse and John Bellefleur with their Fiat 128 Rally after their major opponents lodged themselves into frozen snow banks. The rally took place in the Laurentian Mountains north of Montreal and temperatures were hovering around -27° centigrade. Of 31 starters, 15 crews lasted the distance.

Although Perusse and his amazing 128 are no strangers to victory on snow rallies, their win was courtesy of last stage attempts by other contenders getting out of hand. First to go off on the final test was John Buffum with his Carrera. Buffum and Dykema had been leading from Scott Harvey who passed the stricken Porsche then he, too, went into the snow with his Dodge Ram Charger pick-up truck. Bob Hourihan and Doug Shepperd (Volvo 142) suffered a similar fate earlier in the rally and Walter Boyce/Doug Woods (Toyota Celica) blew-up midway through the event while holding second position. Scott Harvey extracted his Dodge to finish 5m 52s behind the nimble 128 and Dusan Sadlecek/Paval Henja (Datsun 510) finished in third place 5m 02s from Harvey.

Rally mecca

What rally could possibly have attracted the following devastating pairings? Munari/Pinto (Lancia Stratos); Andersson /Mikkola (Toyota Corolla); Therrier/Nicolas (Toyota Celica); Andruet/Ballesi-trieri (Alfetta); Stommelen/Warmbold (Stratos); Daniche (Stratos). It is of course the 24 Heures sur Glace de Chamonix (held over January 30th to February 1st). This giant fun get-together with spectacular ice-rallycross, etc, will doubtless produce some sensational photographs, some of which might even be fit for publication.

Firestone Rally—a deal

An attractive deal has been put together for British competitors wishing to tackle the Firestone Rally (Spain, 18 to 21st March). Running the show is IRDC Secretary, Martin Whale, and he has informed us of some very reasonably priced trips being organised through Falcon Holidays of Blackpool. A number of different itineraries are available from a full 14 days to the bare minimum time, using aeroplanes.

The rally will be run on an improved version of last year's format and will consist of two loops, Bilbao—Santander—Bilbao. The first session will be all-tarmac and of approximately 660km. The return is slightly longer at 690km and this loop will be all-loose for its competitive sections. Six secret stages have been incorporated in addition to the

practice and pace-note sections and this should be of benefit to foreign competitors. To keep you on the right track Martin will be producing pace notes for the entire event.

A travel brochure is presently being completed. We hear that some examples will include a 14 day trip including ferry passage, car, trailer and rally car passage, four adults plus bed, breakfast and evening meal for all except the actual rally days (which Firestone provide for) at an approximate total of £75 per head. Sending the car with two crew members and with two others flying out later only moves this to £77 per head.

Interested parties should contact Martin on Highworth 762701. The travel deal contact is Tony Stone of Falcon Holidays on Blackpool 43350.

Pirelli's 'P7' and new Dunlops

Pirelli's controversial "new" tyre, the P7 Supersport, is being used by the works Lancias and Fiat on the Monte Carlo Rally and by Rohrl on his Opel Kadett. The tyre, basically a design for asphalt and not new, has had its tread grooves widened to what Pirelli describe as "an almost unthinkable degree" and tests have revealed that it works — successfully picking up bands of snow in the grooves and returning very good adhesion. For dry road going the tyre is of a suitable width and profile to allow a large surface area for traction and much less likelihood of overheating or puncture than a normal compromise tyre. This tyre has been seen in this country fitted to the Chequered Flag Lancia Stratos in its unadulterated form.



Above: Dunlop's C1 tyre of 225/60 HR13 size which is being used by both the works Escorts on the Monte Carlo Rally. Opposite: The new clubman's tyre from Dunlop. This 185/70SR13 tyre is similar in cover design to the A2 rally tyre but uses a conventional casing from the MS range. Other sizes will be introduced as production allows.

Castrol/AUTOSPORT 1975 awards

Castrol's General Manager, Brian Collis, presents George Hill with his major award during the prize-giving function recently.



The headlights may not be very effective, but "old nail" HHJ 700N is still doing sterling service, seen here with Timo Makinen preparing notes on the Col du Lautaret prior to the Monte Carlo Rally.

Impressive stages for Gwynedd

The BTRDA's first Gold Star round for this year is shaping up well, this being the Gwynedd Rally sponsored by Ollitts Motors who support Rowland Young's rallying. Entries for this Saturday daylight event (Feb 14th) are nearly full and any prospective Gwynedd participants not yet with their paper work completed are asked to make it quick. There will be a number of reserve places for top championship contenders.

Big attraction of the Gwynedd is undoubtedly the enviable total of 64 top quality forest miles, many of them genuinely new tracks through well established Welsh Forestry Commission plantations. These include four in Penmachno and the extraction of no less than 20 miles within the confines of Coed-y-Brenin, run as five separate stages. An all tarmac stage is also planned. Other good forests are scheduled but we are, for the obvious reasons, not at liberty to print. Spectator information for these locations will however be on-hand at the start and half way (Llandudno and Williams Garage, Bala). A cheap rate has been made possible at the County Hotel, Llandudno and those already aiming to be there for the first round include David Stokes, Frank Pierson, Robin Farrington, Terry Brown, Roland Young and Tarmac-man, John Edwards-Parton. Entries Secretary is: Christine Jones, 44 Mill Lodge, Llandegfan, Menai Bridge.

Welsh regs

Clerk of the Course for the Western Mail International Welsh Rally, Rob Davis, has informed us that regulations are to be dispatched on the 25th of this month. Entry list opens on February 2. Copies come from: Carey Edwards, 49 Heol-y-Gors, Whitechurch, Cardiff. Rallyphone (special service) 616722.

● Vauxhall will be continuing their successful "Road Show" forum formula and have ten evenings scheduled to keep them busy from January through to April. First on the agenda is on January 26th at Saville Tractors, Belfast.

What's in a name

The Lincolnshire AC and Louth MC who have jointly promoted the Bass Charrington Tour of Lincs rally for the past four years, have now amalgamated to form a new club, to be known as the Lincolnshire-Louth MC. This move celebrated their granting of national status for the rally which will now be known as the Bass Charrington National Rally. The format will remain similar to previous Tour of Lincs though the start, lunch halt and finish will all be in Grimsby. The event is a qualifying round of both the BTRDA Gold Star series and the Cars and Car Conversions championship.

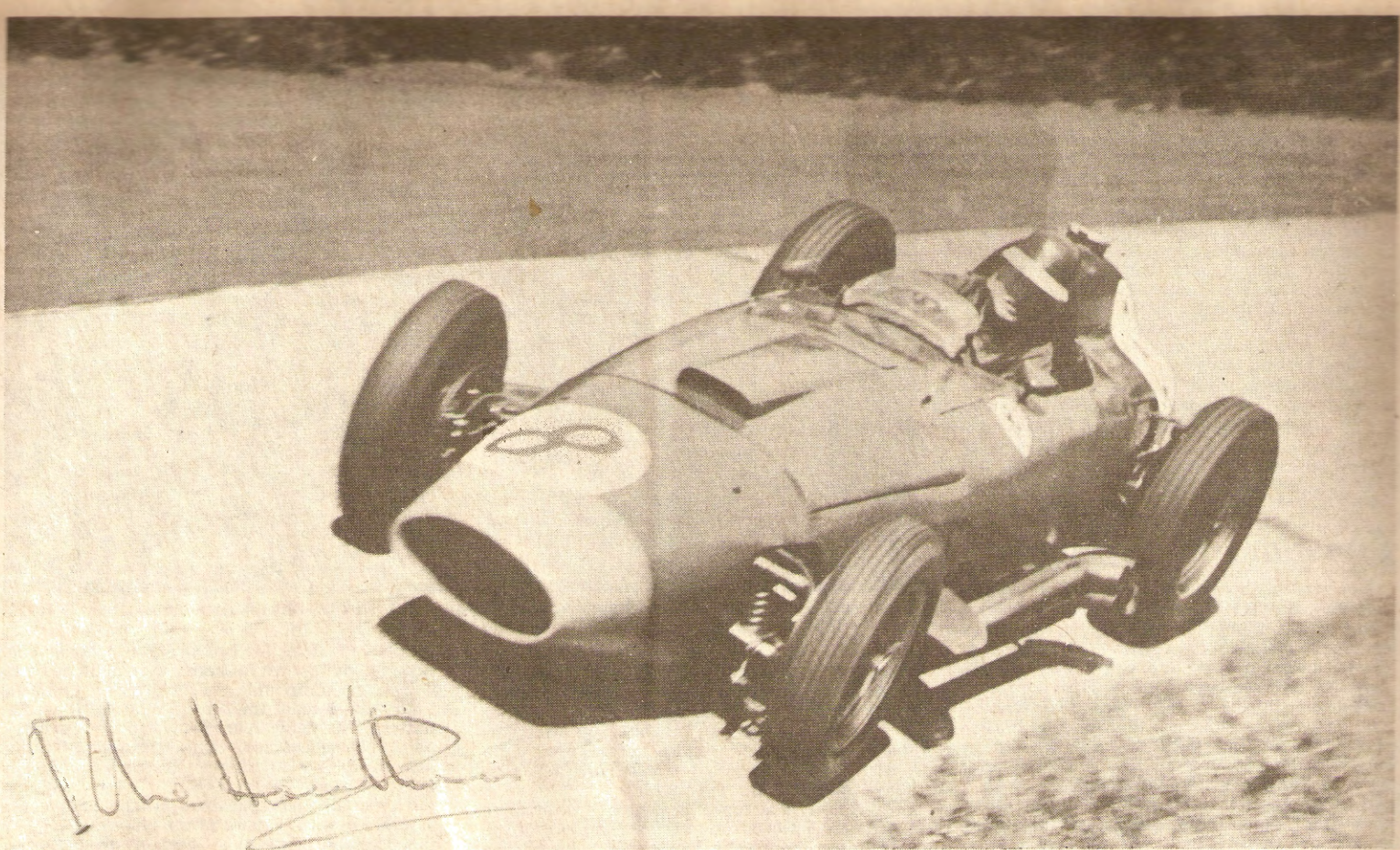
Briefly...

The recently announced droop-snoot Escort RS2000 is likely to have its UK rally baptism on the Mintex in the hands of Mike Gilligan and Ron Palmer. The car will be entered group one by the County Garage, the Ford main dealers of Carlisle. Other events for the car are not yet finalised apart from the Scottish International in June.

● Henry Inuretta and Martin Whale (this makes his third mention this week) will be operating a comprehensive Halda and pacenotes service on the forthcoming Boucles de Spa (6/7/8 February). Martin will be setting forth on the previous Monday in order to have his pace notes ready for use while Henry will have a comprehensive stock of Halda calibration gears and carriers. We don't know whether he is taking his own measured kilometer with him. He may just decide to borrow one over here.

● Bath MC have found no less than 70 stage miles for their Festival Stages (June 19th). Nearly 45 miles are on genuine forestry and the prize fund will top £200. Road sections will employ target timing and a couple of the stages will be run-off at 30s intervals. Their event will qualify for the ACSMC, ASWMC and Triple 'C' championships.

● Brunel University MC are holding a Chequered Flag Rally Forum in the lecture centre at the Brunel University, Uxbridge, on Monday, February 27th. Present will be Andy Dawson, John "JJ" Jensen, Tony Pond and David Richards, the Flag's Stratos and, hopefully the Curley Carrera. The evening is free but limited to a capacity of 200 so early arrival is advised.



Mike Hawthorn at full cry at the Nurburging in a Ferrari. This was one of the photographs sent out to young fans of Britain's first World Champion.

NAME FROM THE PAST

Mike Hawthorn—English hero

By NIGEL ROEBUCK

Mike Hawthorn was the archetypal English hero, the kind of man you have seen in countless war movies, blond and handsome, struggling back to base in a battered, burning Lancaster, landing it with damaged undercarriage, making straight for the bar, ordering a beer, modestly shrugging off the whole affair. Well, Mike Hawthorn was blond and handsome, did drink beer, did smoke a pipe. He was also one of the greatest racing drivers this country has ever produced.

To some extent, the career of Mike Hawthorn was overshadowed by the performances of his contemporary, Stirling Moss. For many people, even now, Stirling is still *the* racing driver, one of the very few in any activity to capture completely the imagination of the public. Stirling worked tremendously hard at the business of being a racing driver. It was his whole life. He made a great deal of money from it, too, although it was poor reward for the immense contribution he made to the sport. As characters, Moss and Hawthorn had about as much in common as Arthur Scargill and Harry Hyams, although they got on well. Whereas Moss was the dedicated, cool professional who never permitted himself the luxury of an off-day, Hawthorn was in the classic mould of the "English amateur." Strictly, he raced cars for his living, but for Hawthorn, motor racing was primarily a fun thing, and if he didn't feel like racing on a given day, he made no particular attempt to hide it. But take another day, when he was in the mood, and you had one hell of a mighty opponent, capable of taking on and beating anybody.

Born in Yorkshire in April 1929, Hawthorn's family moved south two years later when his father bought the TT Garage in Barnham, Surrey. Leslie Hawthorn was a keen racing motorcyclist, and lost no time in communicating his enthusiasm to his young son. In 1950, both went motor racing; with a pair of Riley sports cars, and at the Brighton Speed Trials, their first event, Mike won his class. The following year, he took the car over to Ireland and won both the Ulster and Leinster Trophies. As well as these, Mike was awarded the *Motor Sport* Brooklands Memorial Trophy for the best club racing performances at Goodwood during 1951.

Hawthorn clearly had an abundance of natural talent, and this was more fully realised in 1952. An old friend of the family, Bob Chase, bought one of the new Formula 2 Cooper-Bristols for Mike to drive, and the combination worked superbly. In

1952 and 1953, all the Grandes Epreuves were run for Formula 2 cars, so Hawthorn had ample opportunity to drive against the best in the world. In British events, the Cooper-Bristol was victorious nearly every time out, but there was no answer to Ferrari in the Grands Prix. This was the year of Alberto Ascari, the Italian winning all but one of the World Championship races. (He didn't win in Switzerland because he wasn't there! The race clashed with Indianapolis.) Hawthorn's Cooper simply did not have the power to keep the Italian cars in sight, nor was there enough money to take in all the Grands Prix. But Mike did a superb job that year, perhaps his best performance being a remarkable fourth place at a wet and treacherous Spa.

At the end of 1952 Hawthorn was offered a contract with the factory Ferrari team for the following season. It was an offer he couldn't refuse. In the early fifties, if you had aspirations to becoming a successful Grand Prix driver, you just had to pray that the Commendatore would call you. To be competitive, you needed a Ferrari. Hawthorn was an intensely patriotic individual and dearly wanted a competitive British car to race, but there was no such animal available. So Maranello it was. From a Riley Imp to a works Ferrari in twelve months . . . now that was something. Hawthorn must have felt somewhat bewildered, particularly as he was the junior member of a four-car team, and the other drivers, Ascari, Farina and Villorosi, were all Italians. . . .

At all events, Mike showed no signs of being hassled, taking his first few weeks there coolly and carefully. In Argentina he was fourth, at Pau second to the inevitable Ascari. That year, the *Daily Express* Trophy and the Naples Grand Prix were run the same weekend. The Italians, of course, went to Posillipo, but one car was sent over to Silverstone for Hawthorn. It was an important day for him, his first British race in a fully-fledged Grand Prix car, and he disappointed



no one, winning comfortably. The following week he did it again, this time at Dundrod for the Ulster Trophy meeting. But better yet was to follow. . . .

After finishing fourth at Zandvoort and sixth at Spa (where he was nearly asphyxiated by fumes from a leaking exhaust), Hawthorn moved on to Rheims for the French Grand Prix. Rheims was never much of a driver's circuit, but its long straights ensured tremendous slipstreaming battles, and the finish was always close. Rather like the pre-chicane Monza. During its long history, Rheims witnessed some astonishing races, but none equalled the intensity of the 1953 French Grand Prix. From a large group of cars scrapping for the lead, Fangio's Maserati and Hawthorn's Ferrari gradually broke away to begin a truly remarkable race to the flag, the Ferrari's superior acceleration being countered by the Maserati's top speed. Time after time, the two cars came past the pits side by side, and it seemed inconceivable that both could last the distance, that neither driver would be pressured into a mistake. And the odds, of course, appeared to be loaded against the Englishman. Fangio's experience would surely tell. . . .

Behind the two leaders, a repeat performance

was in progress, Ascari's Ferrari harrying Gonzales' Maserati so that gradually, very gradually, they were reeling in Hawthorn and Fangio. But they never quite got on terms. When the chequered flag came down, the glory was all Hawthorn's, for he beat Fangio by a matter of feet, and "God Save the Queen" rang out over the champagne country. Victory by "Papillon" went down well with the French and they cheered him to the echo. The nick-name (he always wore a bow-tie when racing!) stuck in France until the end of Mike's racing career.

Fifth at Silverstone, third at the Nurburgring and at Bremgarten, and fourth at Monza . . . Ferrari could scarcely have asked for more from a rookie, and Hawthorn's contract was renewed for 1954. The future, it seemed, could hardly be brighter. In all ways, however, it was to be an unhappy year for Hawthorn.

At Syracuse in April, Mike went off the road while trying to avoid team-mate Gonzales who had hit the strawbales. Hawthorn's Ferrari hit a wall and exploded. Mercifully, Gonzales rushed to his aid and got him out of the blazing car, but Mike's legs and arms were already badly burned. He would be out of racing for several weeks.

Questions in the House

Nor was this his only problem. Twenty years ago, National Service was compulsory in this country, but Mike had been given indefinite deferment because of a kidney ailment. For months on end, he was out of Great Britain at this time, and for good reason: he was driving for an Italian company and racing where the international calendar took him. Over the winter of 1953-54 he had been in England for three months, and the subject had never been raised. Immediately after his departure for the Argentine in January 1954, there were questions in the House of Commons. How was Hawthorn able to "escape his call-up responsibilities?" A man, it seemed, had to be in this country before a call-up notice could be served on him. In the face of a mountain of hysteria from the more trivial daily papers, the Ministry of Labour promised to "call him up very rapidly indeed" were he to return to Britain. At home, Mike's father tried to straighten everything out, but no one listened. The dailies - and the Ministry of Labour - were out for blood.

As soon as he was released from hospital, Hawthorn went to Paris for a few days prior to driving at Le Mans. There he was informed by Reuters that his father had had a serious road accident in England. By the time Hawthorn arrived at London Airport, his father had succumbed to his injuries. On the morning of Leslie Hawthorn's funeral, the police arrived to serve Mike with a summons over a traffic offence,



After the French Grand Prix at Rheims in 1958, Fangio congratulates Mike Hawthorn

and shortly afterwards, his call-up papers were delivered. Once more, he presented himself for a medical examination and, once more, he failed. Miraculously, journalists and MPs found other things to complain about, and the whole affair was quietly forgotten. The persecution was over. For a time, it must have seemed to Mike Hawthorn that 1984 had arrived thirty years early.

After that catastrophic sequence of events, life could only get better, and the second half of the year was good for Mike. He finished second in the British, German and Italian Grands Prix, the Ferrari not being competitive with the Mercedes Benz W196, however. Nothing was competitive with the Mercedes. With Juan Fangio leading the team, the German cars were quite simply in a race by themselves. Until Barcelona. That day, Fangio could do no better than third, and Mike Hawthorn won his second Grand Prix, with Luigi Musso's Maserati second.

Waste of a year

Many a man would have felt nothing but bitterness towards a country which had treated him so cheaply, but Hawthorn's patriotism was never far below the surface. More than ever, he

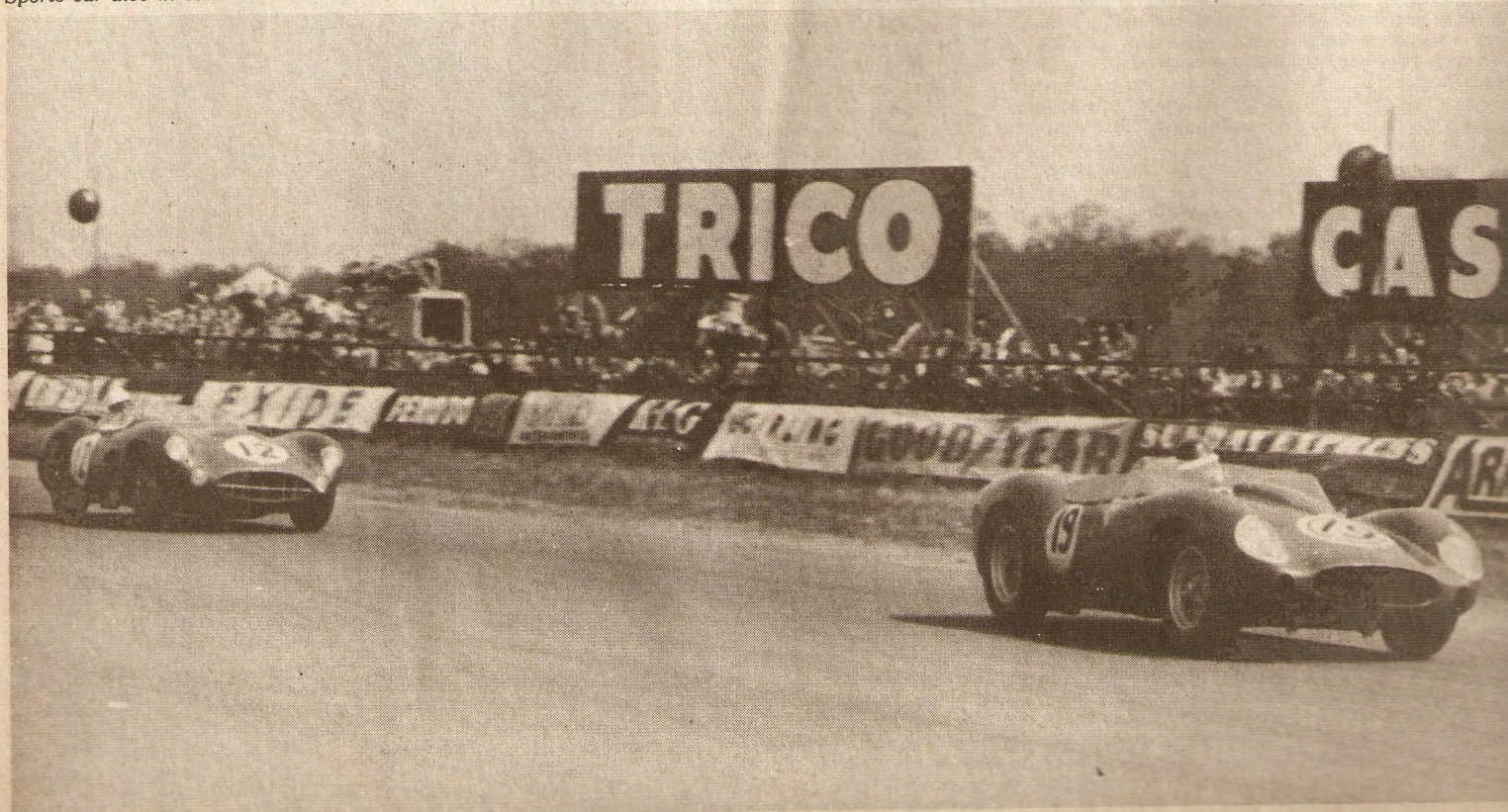
wanted to drive a British Grand Prix car. Accordingly, against his better judgment, he bade farewell to Ferrari and signed to drive for Vanwall, a Formula 1 team then in its infancy. It was a mistake. The Vanwall in 1955 was under-developed, unreliable and slow. By the second half of the season, Mike was driving Ferraris again, on a freelance basis.

It was in 1955, however, that Hawthorn's association with Jaguars began. I have always felt that certain cars "suit" certain drivers. The Maserati 250F "suited" Fangio, for instance, while the Lancia-Ferrari never did. Mike Hawthorn and the D-Type Jaguar were a perfect match. During 1953 and 1954, Mike had driven sports cars for Ferrari, of course, and had always looked upon it as the thin end of a Maranello contract. Sports car racing was a bore. All that changed when he joined Jaguar. In Britain he won race after race with the car, in America the Sebring 12 Hours. And then came Le Mans.

The entry for the Le Mans 24 Hours was quite fantastic in 1955. There were works teams from Mercedes-Benz, Ferrari, Maserati, Jaguar, Aston Martin . . . halcyon days. None of your fifty-three Carreras and the odd Gulf. All the signs pointed to a race of importance.

When the cars came round at the end of the first

Sports car dice in 1958 as Moss's 3 litre Aston hounds Hawthorn's Ferrari at the Silverstone Tourist Trophy.



lap, Eugenio Castellotti's Ferrari was in front. Endurance forgotten, the frighteningly brave Italian was driving the only way he knew. With Castellotti, it was always balls to the wall. But there was no way he or the Ferrari could sustain that sort of pace, and they were back in third at the end of the first hour. Fangio, after a slow start, had chopped right through the field with the Mercedes, had passed Castellotti, had caught the leader, Mike Hawthorn.

In the late afternoon, those two men treated the crowd to an unbelievable spectacle. For lap upon lap, the Jaguar and the Mercedes slammed past the pits, inches apart, Hawthorn's higher top speed being countered by the superior acceleration of the Mercedes. The two cars were perfectly matched.

After two hours Hawthorn had pulled out a small lead, and now was the time for fuel stops and driver changes. As Mike came down the pit straight, Lance Macklin's Austin-Healey was ahead, travelling appreciably slower, of course. Hawthorn passed Macklin on the left, then raised his arm to indicate that he intended to pull in at the pits, on the right hand side of the road. As the D-Type pulled over, Macklin moved left, straight into the path of Pierre Levegh's Mercedes, then travelling at over 150 mph. In an instant, there was a complete disaster, parts of the disintegrating Mercedes flying through the spectator area. Ninety people, including Levegh, were killed.

Twenty-two hours later, Mike Hawthorn brought the Jaguar over the line to win a joyless victory. For the second time in twelve months, he was now the subject of a vicious campaign by the Press, particularly in France. Resolutely determined not to accept that the extreme narrowness of the track was the cause of the holocaust, French journalists sought a scapegoat, and Hawthorn's victory made them the more bitter. Months later, after an exhaustive enquiry, Mike was completely exonerated. For the 1956 Le Mans 24 Hours, the road was widened considerably and there were new spectator barriers. As always, the lesson had been learned the hard way.

No joy at Bourne

Hawthorn had a miserable season in 1956. Still desperate to drive British, he signed for BRM, along with Tony Brooks. The cars, although quick, rarely raced and were ludicrously unreliable.

Someone, it seemed, was trying to tell him something and the message got through. At the end of the year, he renewed his ties with Ferrari, signing a contract for 1957.

Throughout 1957, Mike must have been close to despair. Most of the time, Ferrari were right out in the cold. Vanwall had come good, Stirling Moss dominating the second half of the season, but the year belonged to Juan Fangio and Maserati. At 46, the Argentinian was driving better than ever before. At the Nurburgring, he produced the greatest drive of his life to win the German Grand Prix. Hawthorn, although powerless to impede the progress of the 250F, nonetheless finished an honourable second. It was his best race of the year.

By the end of the year, Mike was beginning to give serious thought to retirement in order to devote himself more fully to his garage. Eventually, however, he made up his mind to continue. The new Ferrari Dino 246, much smaller than its predecessor, looked very promising indeed, and one of his team-mates would be Peter Collins, his close friend.

Mon ami, mate

Much has been written about Mike Hawthorn and Peter Collins. It was inevitable that they should have become friends. Both were easy-going and lighthearted, very English yet thoroughly at ease with Ferrari. And both were brilliant natural drivers, taking their racing much more seriously than themselves. In the fifties, they were true men of their time, sportsmanlike, civilised, liked by everybody.

Mike Hawthorn won the World Championship in 1958, despite winning only the French Grand Prix. It was a season of elation and grief. At Rheims, the scene of his first Grand Prix victory five years earlier, Mike flat left everybody behind. No one could keep him in sight that day, and his team-mate Luigi Musso died in the attempt, the Ferrari somersaulting off the road after Musso lost control in the middle of a fast corner.

At Silverstone, it was all Peter Collins. Taking the lead soon after the start, Peter disappeared into the distance, and the Vanwalls had no answer to him. In the end, Collins won as he liked, with Hawthorn following him home. As the two Ferraris cruised round on their slowing-down lap,

Mike pulled up at one of the marshals' posts to collect a pint of beer! Thus equipped, he arrived back at the pits, to the mystification of all present. Surely he hadn't had it with all the time, had he? The celebrating went on far into the night.

Hawthorn and Collins looked like repeating their Silverstone success at the Nurburgring. At half-distance, the two Ferraris, running nose to tail, held first and second places, but Tony Brooks in the Vanwall was catching them. As the Ferraris speeded up, so did Vanwall. Then, for no accountable reason, Collins lost control of his car which hit a bank and flipped. Shortly afterwards, Hawthorn retired with broken transmission, and when he returned to the pits, he was told that Peter was dead. Completely shattered by the news, Hawthorn's enthusiasm for motor racing was never the same afterwards, although it did not show in his driving.

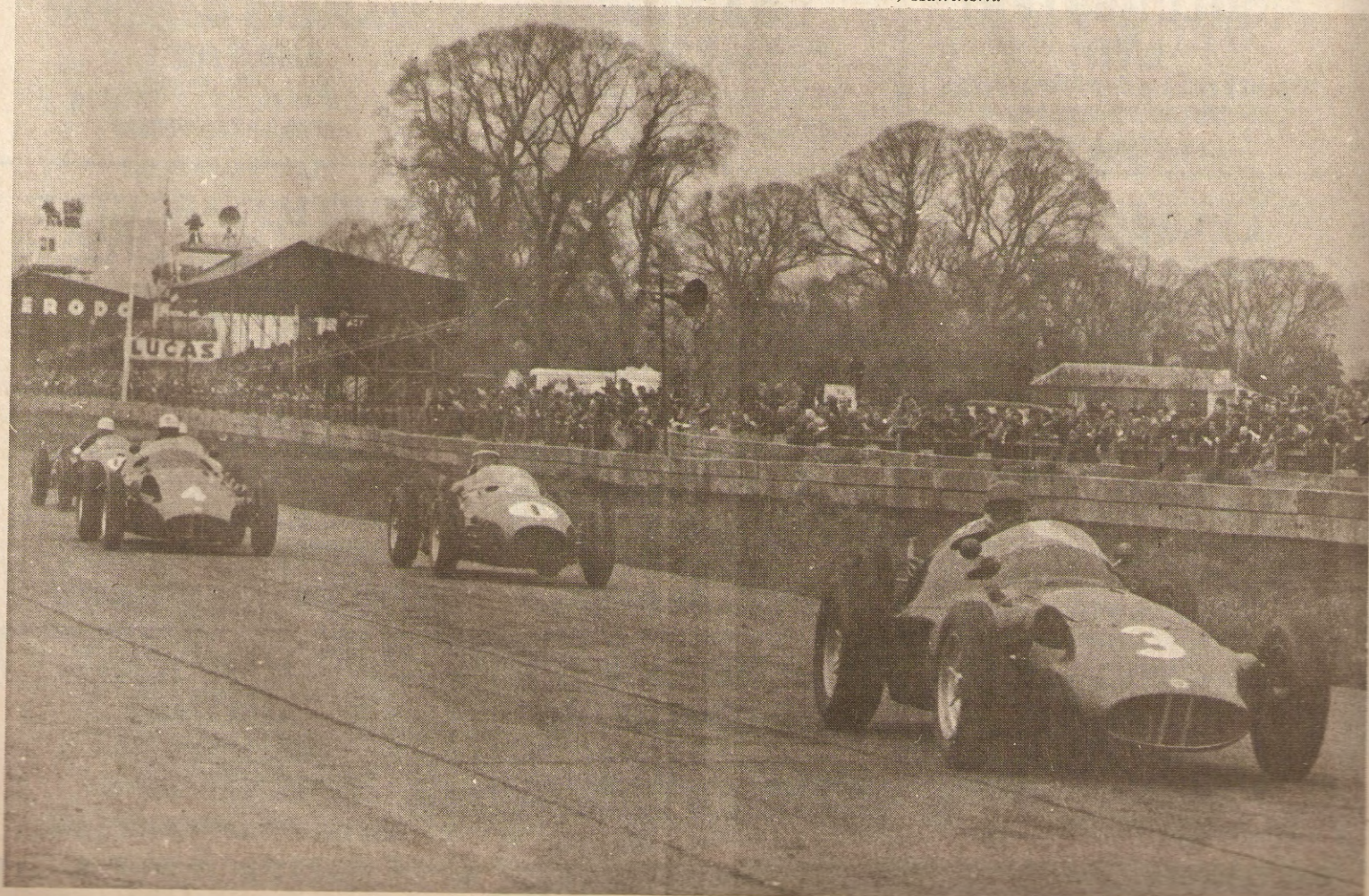
Second at Oporto and at Monza, Mike went to Casablanca, the last round of the World Championship, with the Championship virtually wrapped up. To beat him, Stirling Moss had to win the race and get the fastest lap (for which there was a championship point in those days), with Hawthorn finishing lower than second. A tall order. Well, Moss *did* win the race and set the fastest lap, but it was all to no avail, for Hawthorn got his six points for second place and took the Championship by one point!

A few weeks after, Hawthorn issued a statement to the Press, in which he gave his decision to retire from motor racing. As Jackie Stewart would decide, years later, to go out at the height of your powers is the way to do it. Hawthorn was 29 years old, World Champion, happy.

One evening in January 1959, my school housemaster told me that Mike Hawthorn had been killed. I was incredulous, stammered that Mike had retired from racing, that there must be some mistake, but then he told me that it was a road accident. Yes, it was true, the World Champion had died in a road accident, had been driving his beloved 3.4 Jaguar which he had so often raced, had skidded on the Guildford By-Pass and hit a tree.

People who saw Mike Hawthorn remember him with affection. He personified his era. They recall the cap, sports jacket, pipe; bow-tie, sense of humour. And they also recall the controlled fury which characterised his driving.

Jean Behra goes into the lead in the 100 mile Glover Trophy at Goodwood from eventual winner, Hawthorn.





World Championship Round 1

There's a grandstand that runs the whole length of the finishing straight at Interlagos. On Sunday it will be jammed packed to absolute capacity and tens upon thousands of screaming, chanting Brazilians will cry out "E-m-e-r-r-s-o-n, E-m-e-r-r-s-o-n". Rival bands will sing out for "P-a-c-e, P-a-c-e" and, between them, only the sound of the highest pitched thoroughbred racing engine will surpass them for noise.

If either Fittipaldi or Pace ever get the opportunity to lead next Sunday's 5th Brazilian Grand Prix, this mile-long stand will erupt and, like a long snake, the throng will rise up and hysterically cheer as the car races past. It's a spine tingling sight and for those who have seen it, you begin to understand just why it has to be worth a psychological advantage over the 'foreigners'. In fairness, both Emerson and Pace are going to need all the help they can get.

With the cancellation of the Argentine race, the Brazilian Grand Prix this weekend sees the opening round of the 1976 World Formula 1 Championship. As a circuit, Interlagos has changed completely over the past six years and, except for the circuit layout, it is almost unrecognisable when compared to its jungle like appearance in 1970. With almost 25 corners of differing radius laid out within its 5-miles, Interlagos is very much a demanding circuit for both car and driver. Visually it is a spectators' dream with all the action taking place within the central bowl.

Last Sunday the Grand Prix circus left this country on the FICA air charter bound for the concrete strip that acts as Sao Paulo's international airport. Having settled into their five star hotels, acclimatised themselves to the steamy heat and survived the local traffic (a Grand Prix in itself), Friday morning will see 22 drivers climb aboard almost £1m worth of pukka Formula 1 machinery and nose their way out of the pit lane to start off on the long road to find the 1976 World Champions.

"Normally a Brazilian wins the Grand Prix" says Brabham boss Bernie Ecclestone. He's right. In fact since the race gained Formula 1 status four years ago, a South American has won it every year. Somehow the odds are staked heavily in favour of a 'foreigner' winning this year though.

Whatever you may think of Emerson Fittipaldi and the grossly exaggerated reports of his yearly earnings (that's what his team say), he has a tremendous record in his home Grand Prix. He's led three out of four, won two, finished 2nd last year and, apart from that, he's been on the front every year.

It's asking a lot for a new driver/car combination to win first time out but you can be sure Emerson will, if his equipment serves him well, be right up there in front of his own fans.

"A driver's as good as his car" says Ecclestone once again. In reply to us asking him what he thought his team's chances were now that they were using Alfa engines, he added: "Our chances are better than the odds Ladbroke's have offered". Where's the opposition going to come from? "Either of the Ferraris and the McLarens, then there's the Lotus, Tyrrell, Shadow and March teams. It's so difficult. I can't really say." He then explained that although they've been slowest in testing at Ricard with the Alfa powered car, they

Seconds out...

CHRIS WITTY outlines the prospects for this weekend's Brazilian Grand Prix — opening round of this year's World Driver's Championship.

were in the same position in South Africa in 1974 and then won. However, the team have a Ford-powered car on hand just in case. However if it's required by one of the driver's, an interesting political situation could develop.

Another new car/engine combination is the Ligier-Matra and many will no doubt be aware that this car, with Jacques Laffite driving, has been the fastest in winter testing at Ricard in the face of opposition from McLaren, Tyrrell, Lotus, Penske and March. Team manager and designer Gerard Ducarouge told us: "I realise the car worked quite well in testing, but we've really got no comparison. As for Brazil, we've never been there and we will have a lot to learn. The first practice session will be wasted for us but if we have no incidents, I think our final lap time could be close to the best team. The car has good possibilities."

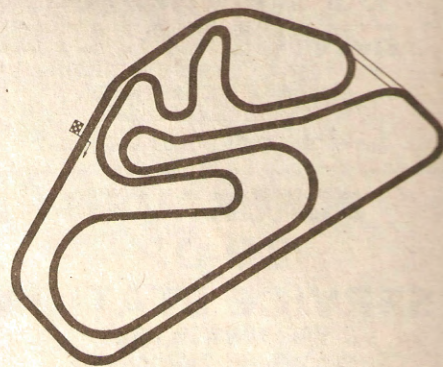
The fortunes of the Copersucar, Brabham-Alfa and Ligier teams are just a few of the many unanswered questions that will only be resolved when the final grid is known on Saturday night. The actual race result gives an indication of the fittest but it's practice that shows the fastest driver/car combination. That, at this stage of any season, is what is important.

Can McLaren produce the first English World Champion since 1968 in James Hunt? Can Niki Lauda secure his 19th pole position? Having already surpassed Jackie Stewart (18) and Stirling Moss (17) and now lies only behind Juan-Manuel Fangio (28) and Jim Clark (33). Can Jean-Pierre Jarier go one better than last year and win?

Shadow designer Tony Southgate is confident and he has reason to be after a good winter test programme undertaken by Tom Pryce at Silverstone. Like many other teams, existing chassis' have been developed over the winter and the Shadow is one of them. "Tom has lapped consistently under his British GP pole time in recent testing and I reckon we could be $\frac{1}{8}$ s quicker than last year (Jarier was on the pole at 2m 29.88s). There again we're all going to be running on different tyres this time." Who'll be quickest? "Jarier will be with Pryce about $\frac{1}{8}$ s behind." And the rest? "Brambilla might go quickly and he could split us. So too could Watson as he's got a car of similar configuration. McLaren will be quick but not quick enough while Ferrari will be right there. They're very reliable and with Lauda's confidence, he'll be there at the end. Pace could be quick if he can persuade Bernie into letting him drive the Ford car while we mustn't forget Ronnie. There's a question mark there and he could surprise us."

If Ligier have been quick at Ricard and Shadow at Silverstone, then the Penske team with John Watson driving have been equally rapid down at Goodwood. "John's been doing a great job" said team manager Heinz Hofer. "We'll be 100% better than we were last year having acquired more experience and we now know exactly where we are. We're certainly encouraged by what we have seen in testing but it's only when the flags drop..."

The 22 competing cars and drivers are illustrated overleaf which, by the time the next Grand Prix arrives, should be swelled by a further six teams! Brazil is about 4 hours behind us time-wise so keep your ears peeled to the radio sports programmes this weekend.



Interlagos, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

lap distance: 4.946 miles

lap record: Jean-Pierre Jarier,

(F1 Shadow-Ford DN5),

2m 34.16s, 115.509 mph

BRAZILIAN GRAND PRIX — previous results

1972 (37 laps — 183,002 miles)*

1, C. Reutemann (Brabham-Ford BT34), 112.89 mph;

2, R. Peterson (March-Ford 721);

3, W. Fittipaldi (Brabham-Ford BT33).

1973 (40 laps — 197,840 miles)

1, E. Fittipaldi (Lotus-Ford 72D), 114.24 mph;

2, J. Stewart (Tyrrell-Ford 005);

3, D. Hulme (McLaren-Ford M19C).

1974 (32 laps — 158,272 miles)

1, E. Fittipaldi (McLaren-Ford M23), 112.238 mph;

2, G. Regazzoni (Ferrari 312 B3);

3, J. Ickx (Lotus-Ford 72D).

1975 (40 laps — 197,840 miles)

1, C. Pace (Brabham-Ford BT44B), 113.393 mph;

2, E. Fittipaldi (McLaren-Ford M23);

3, J. Mass (McLaren-Ford M23).

* non-championship

Radio Coverage (BBC Radio 2)

Friday: 6.45 pm (practice)

Saturday: 2.00 pm

Sunday: 5.30 pm (practice)

5.00 pm (race)

Brazilian Grand Prix itinerary:

Practice: Friday, 10.00 am-11.30 am,

1.00 pm-2.00 pm

Saturday, 10.00 am-11.30 am,

1.00 pm-2.00 pm

Race (40 laps): Sunday, 11.30 am

Who'll beat the Ferraris?



Brazilian Grand Prix

SPA FERRARI SEFAC

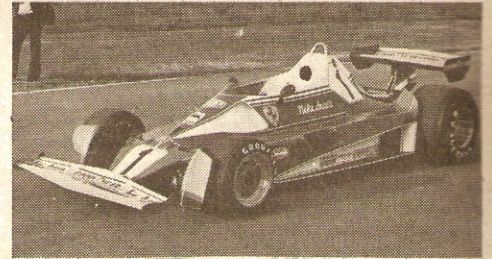


Niki Lauda



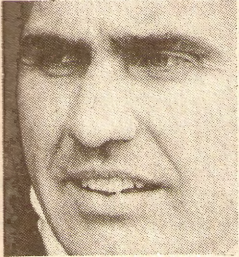
Clay Regazzoni

As reigning World Champions, Ferrari go to Brazil with an enviable reputation that has been with the Italian marque ever since they won their first Grand Prix 24 years ago. They have a new car, the T2 with a De Dion rear end, but it is expected that they will use the proven T1 for their driving force of 26 year-old reigning World Champion Niki Lauda (winner of 7 GPs in two seasons) and 36 year-old Gianclaudio Regazzoni (winner of 3 GPs). South America has usually seen the Ferraris off the pace, but finishing in the points. With 58 GP wins behind them, they are the most successful marque racing today.



Ferrari 312/B3 T2 flat-12

MARTINI RACING

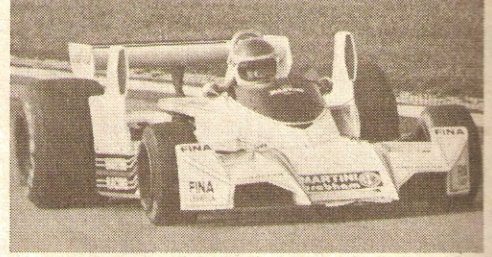


Carlos Reutemann



Carlos Pace

Both Brabham drivers have won the Brazilian GP in the past but this year, the chances of them repeating such success are slimmer as this marque are making their race debut with the flat-12 cylinder Alfa Romeo engine in place of the more customary Cosworth Ford. Both 33 year-old Carlos Reutemann and 32 year-old Carlos Pace are Grand Prix winners in their own right with 5 wins between them (1 to Pace) but with a new chassis and engine combination untested in race conditions, it would indeed be surprising if Brabham are able to add to their tally of 18 GP victories in this, their 10th season of Grand Prix racing.



Brabham-Alfa Romeo BT45 flat-12

MARLBORO TEAM TEXACO

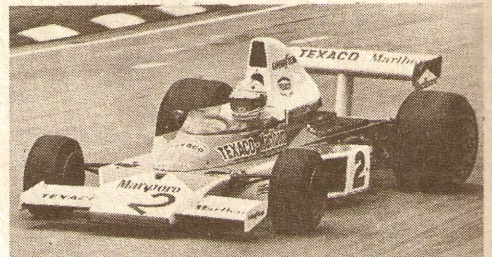


James Hunt



Jochen Mass

With Emerson Fittipaldi's departure, the McLaren team are still in a very strong position having replaced the Brazilian with 28 year-old James Hunt who now partners 27 year-old Jochen Mass. McLaren have a good record in Brazil and both their young drivers know their way round the demanding track. With each of them having won their first Grand Prix last season, they know the taste of success and could find themselves featuring well. The M23 design has been around since 1973 and is due to be replaced with a new car shortly. However in those years it has won no less than 15 GPs.



McLaren-Cosworth Ford M23 V8

ELF TEAM TYRRELL

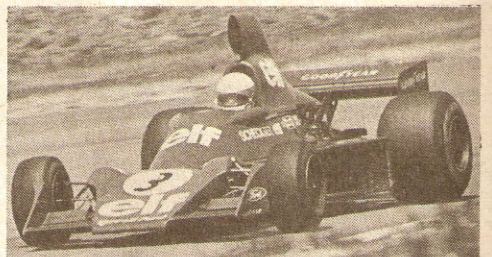


Jody Scheckter



Patrick Depailler

South America has never been a happy hunting ground for the Tyrrell team although one can remember Jackie Stewart's epic chase of Fittipaldi back in 1973. Having spent most of the winter concentrating on their exciting six-wheel F1 project, one wonders whether the 007 series chassis can bring 25 year-old Jody Scheckter and 31 year-old Patrick Depailler the results they have been lacking since Stewart's demise. Scheckter has won 3 GPs with Tyrrell while Depailler has 1 pole position to his credit. With 19 GP wins in 4 seasons, they are the most successful team racing today.



Tyrrell-Cosworth Ford 007 V8

AVS SHADOW RACING

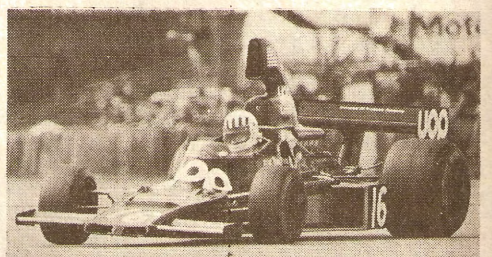


Tom Pryce



Jean-Pierre Jarier

At the beginning of last season, the Shadow team looked set to take the Grand Prix world by storm but it was a promise that was never realised. Their existing car, the DN5, works extremely well around Interlagos and therefore it would be no surprise to see 29 year-old Jean-Pierre Jarier and 26 year-old Tom Pryce well up the grid. Despite having lost their American sponsor over the winter, the team are in good spirits following a very poor showing towards the end of last season. Their only success to date is one non-championship F1 race with the two extremely quick young drivers.



Shadow-Cosworth Ford DN5B V8

JOHN PLAYER TEAM LOTUS

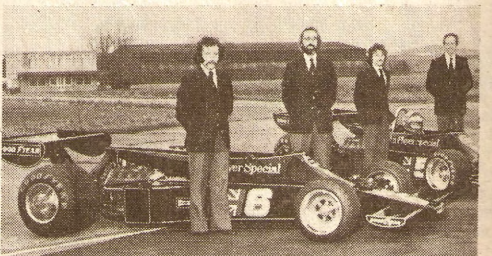


Ronnie Peterson



Mario Andretti

Team Lotus fortunes have been at a low ebb for the last year and, for the second time ever, the marque failed to win a race in a Grand Prix season. Considering they have been GP racing since 1960, it was only Lauda's win for Ferrari in last October's USA GP that surpassed their tally of 57 victories. Having finally discarded their 6 year-old type 72 chassis for the latest type 77, hopes are high that 31 year-old Ronnie Peterson can add to his list of 7 GP wins. Joining him for this one race will be 35 year-old Mario Andretti, having last driven for Lotus 7 years ago.



Lotus-Cosworth Ford 77 V8

preview of the 1976 Formula One season

MARCH ENGINEERING



March-Cosworth Ford 761 V8

March, having won their first Grand Prix last year after 5 years of trying, are running two teams this year, led by 38 year-old Vittorio Brambilla and 25 year-old Hans-Joachim Stuck. Brambilla's teammate will once again be 32 year-old Lella Lombardi.



Vittorio Brambilla

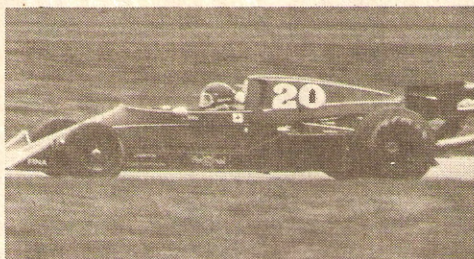


Hans Stuck



Lella Lombardi

FRANK WILLIAMS RACING CARS



Williams-Cosworth Ford FW05 V8

As far as Frank Williams Racing is concerned this season could see his efforts of the last 7 years eventually bear fruit. Having acquired the Hesketh 308C project, Williams has 31 year-old Jacky Ickx (winner of 8 GPs) and 26 year-old Renzo Zorzi to head his revamped team.

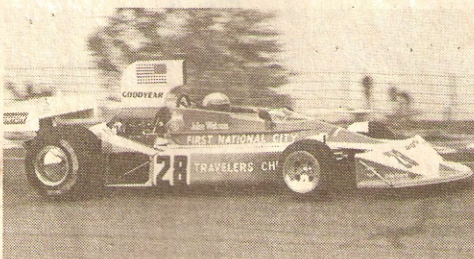


Jack Ickx



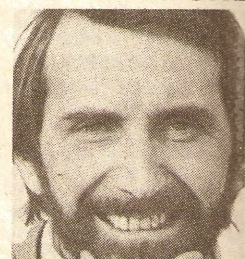
Renzo Zorzi

CITIBANK TEAM PENSKE



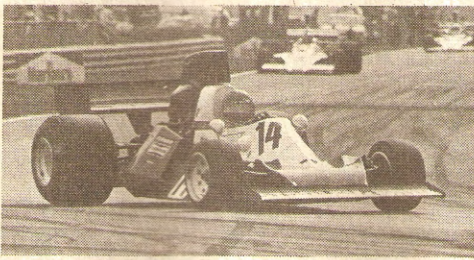
Penske-Cosworth Ford PC3 V8

With the tragic death of team stalwart Mark Donohue last year, the Penske effort in F1 looked in doubt but the team, who until last year had only spasmodically dabbled in F1, have carried on. With their latest car, the PC3, admittedly a March copy, they have an extremely good chance of becoming GP winners in their own right with 29 year-old John Watson leading this one car American team. Having spent last season learning the ropes, many have come to regard them as this year's dark horse. Team patron Roger Penske usually wins through.



John Watson

STANLEY-BRM



BRM P201C V12

In many ways it's surprising that the Stanley-BRM team are making the effort to journey all the way to South America as their race record over the past three seasons has been dismal. However with new found enthusiasm and yet another new young driver to blood in 28 year-old Ian Ashley, yet another revamped version of the team's existing P201 chassis will be on hand. Hope that work on their V12 engine will produce sufficient horse power to put them on terms seems almost eternal. BRM are now entering their 17th season since their first of 17 GP wins back in 1959.



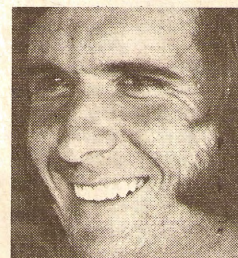
Ian Ashley

COPERSUCAR FITTIPALDI



Copersucar-Cosworth Ford FD04 V8

As far as the Brazilians will be concerned, there needn't be any other F1 cars in Brazil this weekend except the national year-old Copersucar Fittipaldi team. A new chassis has been designed and constructed over the winter and ex-World Champion 29 year-old Emerson Fittipaldi will be on hand to drive it and, with fingers crossed, hopes to win his national GP once again and add to his impressive list of 14 GP wins. Driving the second car, currently a 75 spec chassis, will be 22 year-old Ingo Hoffmann making his F1 debut.

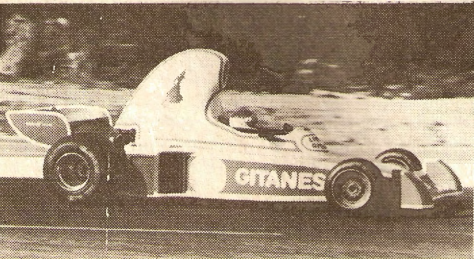


Emerson Fittipaldi



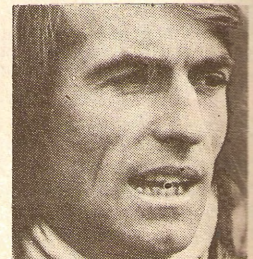
Ingo Hoffmann

EQUIPE LIGIER GITANES

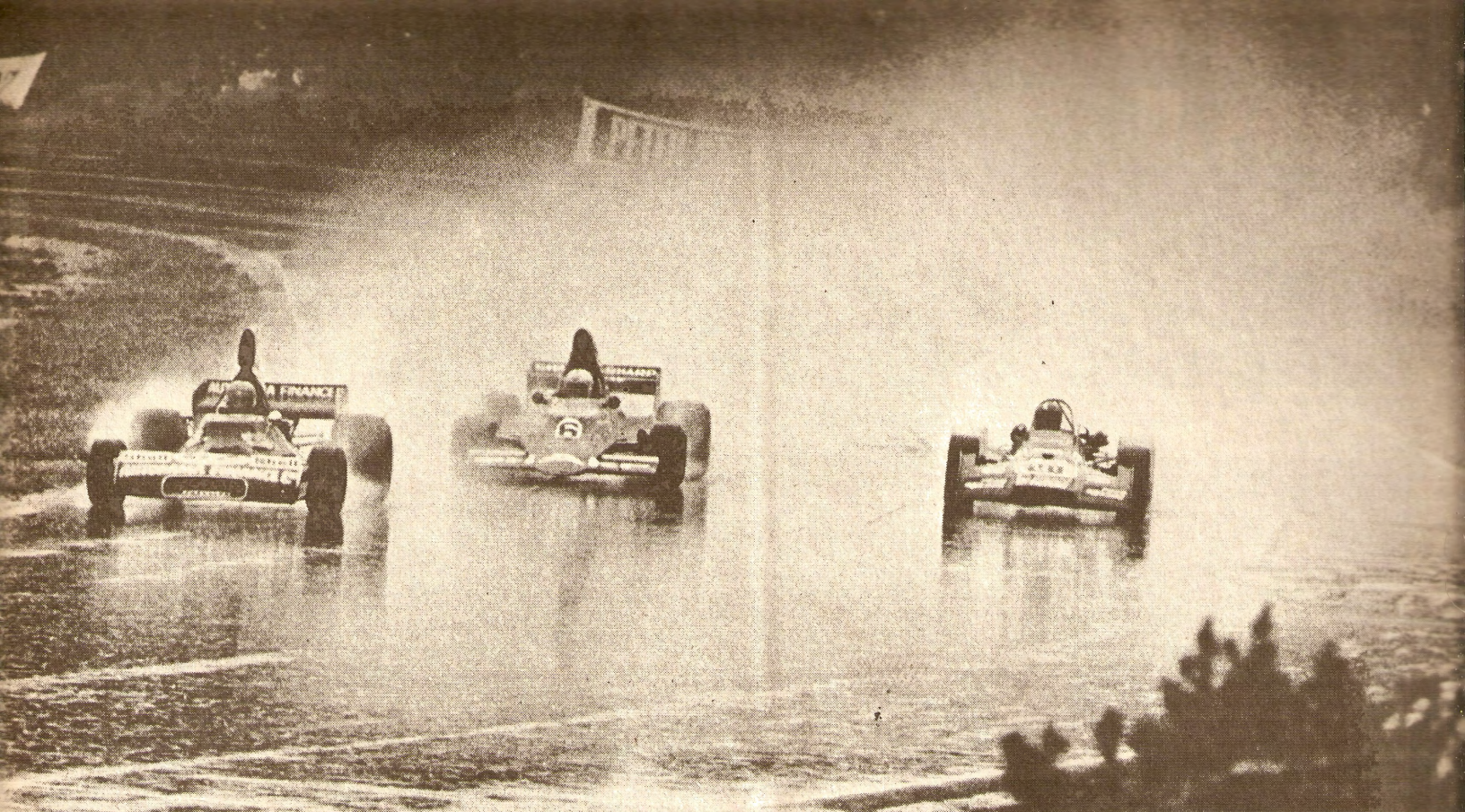


Ligier-Matra JS5 V12

Brazil sees the welcome reappearance of the French into Grand Prix with their first all F1 effort since the Matras back in 1972. Judging by recent testing times the new Ligier F1 car, designed by ex-Matra personnel and powered by a powerful Matra V12 engine, has got to eventually prove a potent foil. After internal wrangles, 32 year-old Jacques Laffite, the reigning European F2 champion, has replaced Jean-Pierre Beltoise in the driving seat. However, like several other teams, Brazil will be regarded as a testing time for them.



Jacques Laffite



Max Stewart (centre) slides past Graham Baker and Ross Calgher in the liquid conditions of the second Peter Stuyvesant round.

TASMAN 2 — MANFEILD

Stewart's liquid laugh

By PETER GREENSLADE

It was not until the first week in December that the news broke: Manfeild, the newest and by far the best racing circuit in New Zealand, at Feilding in the North Island was to be the venue for the second round in the four-race Peter Stuyvesant series for Tasman Formula cars. Levin, after a disastrous couple of years, had opted out. Robert Lester, the with-it Manfeild promoter who appears at his own meetings driving a Formula Vee car, had earlier applied to hold the New Zealand Grand Prix on his circuit, an application that had been turned down out of hand by the Motorsport Association New Zealand, and so it did not look likely that an international race would be seen at the circuit at least for a couple of years. How times change! With Australia and New Zealand electing to each run their own series this year, a three-race New Zealand series would have been nothing short of disastrous.

With little time-left for organising an international and running it only a month or so after the Australia-New Zealand Test match at the circuit, Lester took on an enormous task and one that certainly was not helped on the day, which turned out to be dreadful with continual heavy rain.

Nevertheless, despite the promotional problems and the weather, more than 10,000 paying customers braved the elements to see Australian Max Stewart win the second Stuyvesant round in his Lola T400 at an average speed of slightly less than 75 mph and by a margin of less than 12s from Brian Redman in the Fred Opert F2 Chevron-BMW B29.

Third, a lap down, was the up-and-coming young Queenslander Bruce Allison in a Lola T332 followed by yet another young Australian, the 1975 national Formula Ford champion, Paul Bernasconi in his T400 which, like that of Stewart, raced on the banner of the Sharp electronics people.

It was not New Zealand's day. Repeating their NZGP qualifying efforts, Graeme Lawrence and Ken Smith put their T332s on the front row for the

rolling start. Lawrence led the race easily until a broken rocker arm put paid to his chances and Smith, although in contention early on, was handicapped by chunking rain tyres and had to stop to replace them with slicks while Jim Murdoch (Begg 018) crashed while qualifying and did not start. First New Zealander home was Christchurch's Graham Baker, who plugged on steadily in his elderly New Zealand designed and built Begg FM5 to take fifth place ahead of Sydneysider Kevin Bartlett (Lola T400).

With two races remaining in the series — at Wigram and Teretonga — Allison, by virtue of his NZGP and Manfeild placings, led the series after two races.

Although Redman has not won a race and is unlikely to do so with his 285 bhp 2-litre BMW matched against the 500 bhp 5-litre V8s, his is the name on every New Zealand enthusiast's lips and, as was the case at Pukekohe, at Manfeild he again injected the life into the series that is so desperately needed with a driving display that won the hearts of a rain-soaked crowd.

ENTRY

With the exception of John McCormack, who returned home to Australia after the New Zealand Grand Prix, the cast for the second Stuyvesant round was the same as that for the opening round with some additions, the only one of which that was likely to pick up some of the minor money being Graham Baker with the rather elderly Begg, FM5. The others were Ross Calgher with a 2-litre McLaren M4A, Frank Radisich with a March mated up with a Mazda rotary engine and Hewland gearbox — an interesting though rather ineffective hybrid — and Gary Love with yet another Begg, an FM4 fitted with side radiators and, carrying, of all things, a neatly written "For Sale" notice!

Kevin Bartlett, who had just headed off Brian Redman in the Grand Prix, had switched engines for Manfeild and was using a flat crank version, built up in the US by Brian McKay. Max Stewart's

T400 was unchanged, but that of his Sharp team-mate Paul Bernasconi had been repainted black and white, the advertising on it laying emphasis on Sharp television rather than their calculators. The T332s of Graeme Lawrence, Ken Smith and the young Australian Bruce Allison were unchanged as also was Redman's well turned out BMW-engined Chevron and Jim Murdoch's lightweight Begg 018.

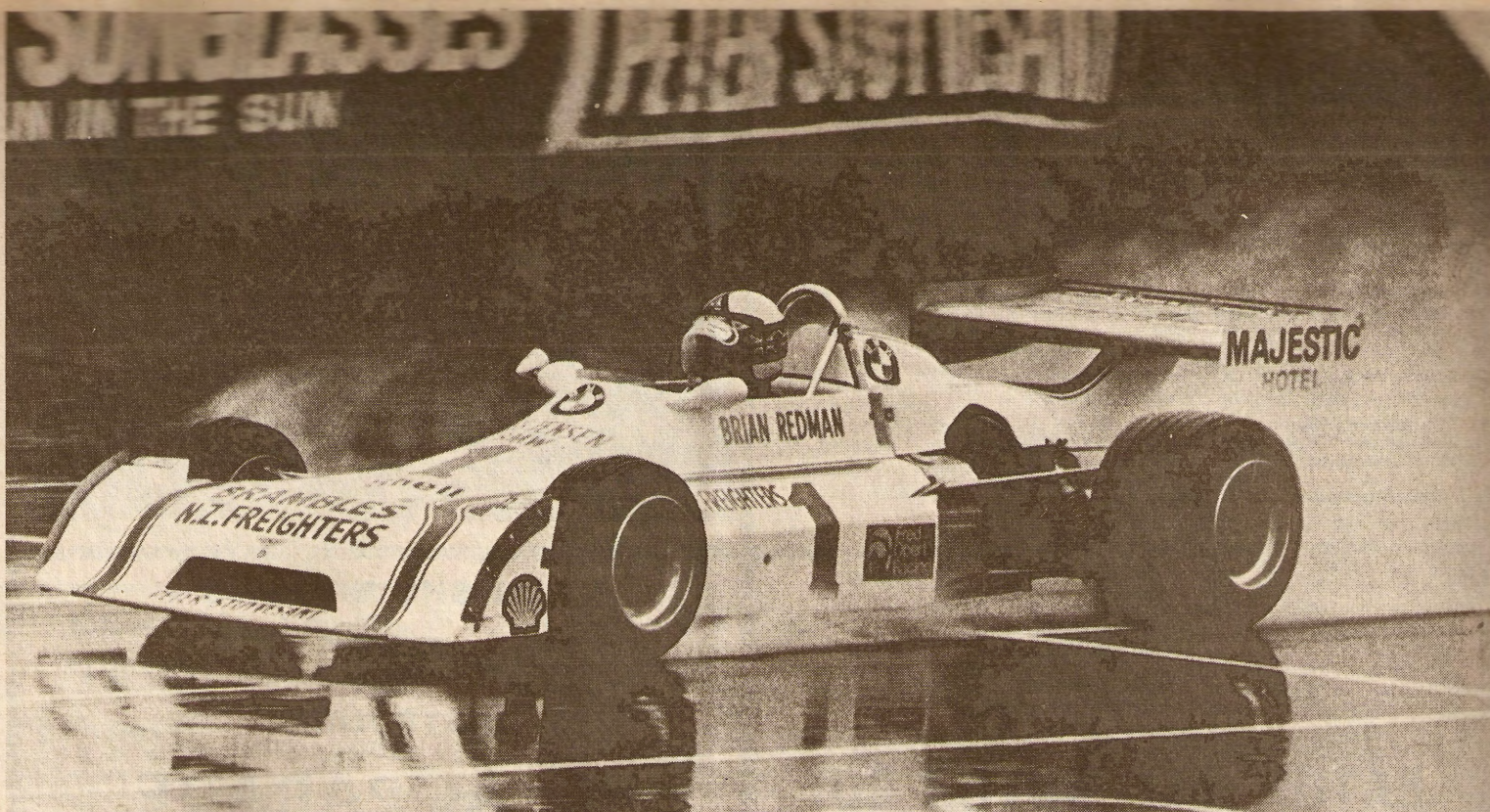
Redman has three engines with him and also, reputedly, if any of them malfunctions they are to be returned untouched to BMW in Munich. By the time the Manfeild race had been decided, the first engine had covered more than 500 miles and, although Redman admitted to having considerably over-revved it on a few occasions, it still sounded very healthy.

PRACTICE

Most of the people who mattered turned out at Manfeild for some testing earlier in the week, but official practice and qualifying for grid positions was confined to two sessions on the Saturday and they were held under a grey and threatening sky and, in fact, rain curtailed the first session. The figure to aim at was 62.6 s, the official lap record for Tasman Formula cars, set by Lawrence last month.

Lawrence and Smith were among the early ones on the circuit and were soon circulating rapidly and appeared to be appreciably quicker than anyone else, with the exception of Stewart and that proved to be right. Smith eventually came down to 62.5s, Lawrence equalled his record and Stewart was a fifth of a second slower on 62.8s. Allison, who had raced at Manfeild along with Stewart and Bernasconi in December, made a brief appearance in his immaculate black T332 and had put in only a few laps when his Molloy-prepared engine belched smoke, having blown in a big way. Nevertheless with a 63.9s lap already to his credit he was fourth fastest in the first session. But, as he was unable to replace the engine in time, by the time qualifying had ended he had been relegated to sixth fastest. Bartlett recorded 64.4s, Murdock 64.6s, while Redman, trying all he knew by flinging the Chevron round the circuit in most spectacular fashion, finally came up with a 65.5s. Next came John Edmonds (Elfin M125) with 66.1s and Bernasconi on 66.4s. Like his compatriot Allison, Bernasconi also struck trouble for both cylinder heads developed cracks and so he too had to miss the second session.

The rest were Baker (68s), Booth (69.6), Calgher (71.2s) and Radisich, with the raucous rotary-en-



Brian Redman took his Chevron-BMW to second place after a time consuming first lap incident.

gined March (71.5s). The only other contestant, Robertson, did not make an appearance. A fairly heavy rain shower drove everyone into the pits before the official closure of the session.

Conditions were more settled by the time the second session started and, once again, Smith and Lawrence were on the job smartly. However, Lawrence soon struck trouble with leaking valve cover gaskets and he made several visits to the pits.

But when Lawrence was running he was really flying and he ended up with pole position at 61.4s — an improvement of 1.2s on his official lap record. Smith tried all he knew and overcooked it on one occasion to finish up in a cloud of dust at Brambles hairpin. However, the diminutive Auckland finally finished up with 61.6s and that put him outside Lawrence on the front row, as had been the case in the New Zealand Grand Prix. Stewart put in a lot of laps and kept Australia's end up by being third fastest with 61.7s. Then came the consistent and unspectacular Murdoch, who recorded 63.2s before he had the clutch pack up in the Begg as he rushed down the pit straight at around 140 mph. The car went straight ahead off the track and a shaken Murdoch stepped from it, lucky to have his legs intact, as the front end was written off and there appeared to be no way in which it could be rebuilt in time to race the following day. So Murdoch's demise put Bartlett up a place for he had recorded a subdued 63.4s with the T400. Smith's morning time was good enough to give him the inside running in the third row with Redman outside him. The Englishman tried harder than ever in the final session and consistently circulated around the 64.8s mark, but finally managed a 64.3s lap to edge Bernasconi back to the fourth row with his morning time.

Baker, who had had a layoff from driving for some time, got back in the groove to record 66.6s in the FM5 to join the Australian in the fourth row. Robertson appeared with the Elfin MR5 and made 66.9s, then came Edmonds (67.4s), Booth (69.8s), Calgher (72.2s), Radisich (73.4s) and Love (77.6s). Love was right outside the minimum qualifying rule.

Heavy overnight rain continued on race morning and, in fact, it was not until the feature event was more than half-way through that it eased and the track started to dry out. Because of the atrocious weather conditions, the contenders were given about half an hour to warm-up some two hours before the race to sample the rain-soaked circuit and, naturally enough, everyone was running rain tyres by courtesy of Goodyear. Smith, who was unprepared for the conditions, bought a set from Lawrence.

During this "wet practice" session everyone took things quietly, and with good reason, as there was water everywhere and the plumes of spray

made it difficult for the drivers to see where they were actually going. However, there were no incidents of any consequence.

THE RACE

As the rain was still coming down in sheets when the cars were brought out to line up for the start, the usual introductory ceremony was dispensed with at the drivers' request. They were as anxious as the spectators who were huddled under umbrellas, rugs and so on on the open terraces to get on with the business in hand as quickly as possible and have it over and done with.

With Lawrence and Smith in front, the field trundled off behind the Datsun 260Z pace car, that is with the exception of Radisich, whose rotary engine sounded very seedy when it finally fired up. He was left well in arrears and took no part in the contest.

The pack was let away first time round and Lawrence and Smith made a bee-line for the first sweeping right-hander and Stewart and Redman tucked in close. Smith lost some ground and it was Lawrence who led Stewart and Redman into the next bend, a tightish left-hander, in which Redman and Stewart apparently touched. The little white Chevron slid and revolved to the outside of the track in a flurry of sodden grass and mud. Redman was back on the road again within seconds, but this excursion dropped him to 6th place and at the end of the first round Lawrence led Stewart, Bartlett, Allison, Smith, Redman, Bernasconi, Robertson and Baker, and the rest were already some distance back.

At the end of the second lap, Lawrence was about three cars lengths clear of Stewart and then there was 4s to Bartlett. Redman had already taken Smith to be 5th behind Allison. Next time round Lawrence was 2s clear of Stewart and Redman, who was trying all he knew to take advantage of the weather, had moved up to be 4th behind Bartlett, tail-sliding and four-wheel drifting through the bends, much to the delight of the spectators.

Lawrence was dictating all the terms up front. After six laps he was 7s clear of Stewart and a lap later he began to double the tail-enders, Edmonds and Calgher. On this lap Bartlett slid into the rough, damaged the T400's nose slightly and pitted for repairs. Redman was now in 3rd place, with Allison, Smith, Bernasconi, Robertson and Baker next and well clear of the rest. Content with his 7s lead, Lawrence doubled 7th man Robertson in the course of his 10th lap and then proceeded to increase his lead over Stewart to 9.5s after 15 laps. The race order was still substantially unchanged. It looked as though this was going to be Lawrence's day as it was obvious that Stewart was working to his limit and the way things were

shaping indicated that there was no one else capable of overhauling the New Zealander.

But the picture changed dramatically at the end of the 17th lap when Lawrence pulled into the pits. There was an audible groan of disappointment from the sodden spectators. A broken rocker arm had put paid to Lawrence's bid. Now Stewart was in front with a 19s lead over Redman, who was followed by Smith, Allison, Bernasconi, Baker, Bartlett and Robertson.

Well out of contention, Lawrence rejoined the race as Stewart completed his 24th lap. In the course of the next few laps he took the Australian on the road, but was so far behind that this could not affect the result in any way. In the course of the next lap, Redman spun at the hairpin and Smith assumed 2nd place, which he held for two laps only. It was becoming obvious that Smith was in trouble, his tyres were chunking and after 31 laps, with the track starting to dry in patches, he pitted and switched to slicks.

So now the order was Stewart, Redman (who was quite a long way back), Allison, Bernasconi, Baker and Bartlett and then, leading the rest, Robertson in the Elfin MR5. After 37 laps Stewart had lapped the entire field with the exception of Redman who now began to gain on the leader. It must have been about this time that Stewart's left rear tyre began to deflate, because Redman, still driving flat to the boards, was definitely making a visible impression of the T400. Smith came back into the race but he was well out of the hunt and all that remained was to see whether Redman could take Stewart in the dying stages and on a track that was now drying out quite rapidly.

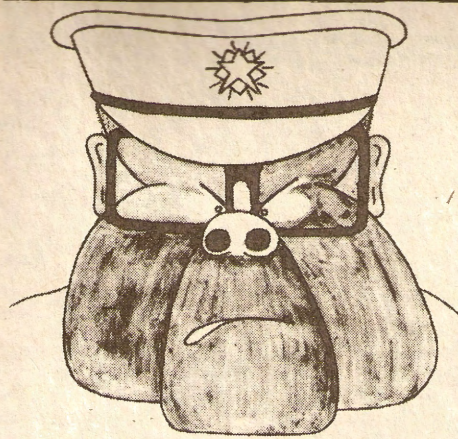
It was not to be. Stewart, the rear tyre now quite flat, trundled over the line fractionally less than 12s clear of Redman. Allison was flagged off third, a lap down, and then came Bernasconi, Baker, who had driven a steady race to be first New Zealander home, a further lap back, and Bartlett.

The lanky Australian was given a good ovation, but it was Redman who had won the hearts of the crowd with a display of driving the like of which is unlikely to be seen again at Manfeild in many a year.

Peter Stuyvesant International
Manfeild, New Zealand — January 11
50 laps — 75 miles
Round 2

- 1, Max Stewart (Lola-Smith Chevrolet T400), 1 hr 00m 26.4s, 74.89 mph;
- 2, Brian Redman (Chevron-GmbH BMW B29), 1hr 00m 38.2s;
- 3, Bruce Allison (Lola-Molloy Chevrolet T332), 49 laps;
- 4, Paul Bernasconi (Lola-Smith Chevrolet T400), 48 laps;
- 5, Graham Baker (Begg-Baker Chevrolet FM5), 48 laps;
- 6, Kevin Bartlett (Lola-McKay Chevrolet T332), 47 laps.

Fastest lap: Graeme Lawrence (Lola-Molloy Chevrolet T332), 1m 09.3s, 163.00 kph. **Peter Stuyvesant series** (after 2 rounds): 1, Allison, 10pts; 2, Ken Smith, Redman and Stewart, 9; 5, Bartlett, 5; 6, Bernasconi, 4; Baker and Jim Murdoch, 2.



DE GENERAL alias PETER EVANS

Big Munny

Wot de bloody hell am goin' on? De whole wurd o' motah-raycin' goin' mad or somethin'? No soonah am de broad back turned, an' de elegant Kampalah conk pointin' towards de wurd politikis etc, de raycin' scene degeneratin' into de absolute chaos.

Wot am all dis cobblahs abowt Everso Biggiballis gettin' £3000 per minit? Dat am allmost as much as de RAC post-boy gettin', an' he takin' a damn site more risk, an' not whippin' de hand out de till de minit it start rainin', or suddenly turnin' honest just because a few bolts missin' from de armco etc. We all losin' sight o' de basiks, if you askin' me! If you a dedicated thief, then you gettin' stuck in to cookin' de ole stamp-bill, an' not whinin' away to ole Easy-Gibbon 'bout rearrangin' de posishun o' de filin' cabinets so no-wun see orl de nickin' wot goin' on! So if ole Everso expectin' to earn more than de RAC post-boy, he just got to accept de risks wot attached to de big money jobs. In a way, it am a good thing, fo' now he so rich, if he not likin' de pits kompleks at Silvahstone, he able to afford a noo one round de back, an' leave de original where evrywun else (wot am there evry week) think it just grate as it is.

Corse, de noos abowt ole Everso's wages am bound to cause de stir among de udder Formulah Wun Drivahs! Bob Evhans rushin' off to ole Big Loo an' sayin' 'Oi dat 300 Green Sheeld Stamps per win am within de ole Soshul Kontrakt, but dat not goin' far towards de Kraft Cheeze Slices an' de Ritz Crackah's an' de Chateau Rothmans etc.' An' even if ole Watson am de Typikal thik Mick, how long ole Penski keepin' him happy with de sack o' potaytos fo' de win an' de bottul o' Guinness if he braykin' de lap rekord? Everso reely puttin' de ole bull in de china hornets nest if you askin' me!

Noo Appointments

Udderwise, things goin' well on de Formulah Wun front, an' de latest move am a stroke o' pure jeenyus on de part o' de RAC. Dey appointin' Frank de Gardener as offishul liayson man between de FIA an' de GPDA. Dis am a big step up from diggin' up weeds an' savin' up de ole horse turds etc. but Frank am de soul o' tackt an' jus' de man fo' de job. He obveeusly takin' de diggernified an' dipperlomatic approach to de probberlem, for when I askin' him how he tacklin' de Prima-Donnas in Formulah Wun, he removin' de half-eaten Kangaroo leg from he beamin' de taktful smile an' sayin' 'Jeez General, that flamin' bagful o' poofdahs not causin' enny trouble aftah I givin' em a swift kick up de donger an' a quick knuckle sandwich, stone the flamin' crows an' starve the bleedin' lizards. Cripes General, I'm dry as a kookaburra's khyber, wheres all the flamin' Fosters gone then, you coons are all the same, allways runnin' out of the ice-cold article etc.'

At dis point he disappearin' off just as I abowt to offah him de post as Foreign Sekkertry. Dat sort o' diggernified elegance becumin' damn hard to find since ole Alec Verglas-Home givin' up politikis an' goin' back to rallyin'! Dis talent spottin' bizniz am a lot harder dan it lookin', an' so far de only

post wot I fillin' am dat o' head o' de noo assassinaishun squad wot I needin' to keep de Cabinet in ordah! Dis am a tall ordah, for it easy enuff to find sumwun wot cheerfult an' positive, an' constructive an' helpfult etc, but it bloody difficult findin' de genuine top-class killah. De role callin' for an insiggernificant little weed wot able to sneak 'round an' not be notised, an' stab in de back while smilin' in de face, an' reely enjoy de merciless doom an' destruckshun etc.

I originally aftah attila de Nun but it appearin' dat he retirin' back to de convent so I damn lucky to get hold o' Nick Brittle, who probberley de last o' de Mongol Horde, an' jus' de man fo' de job! Mark de ole words, Nick findin' de rightfult place in de ole History Books, and comparin' pretty damn well with orl de udder folk-heroes such as Crippen, Borgia, Judas de Chariot, an' even affable ole Adolf hisself!

De Noo Sirkit

So ole Tom Weetabix finally gettin' Donnington opun! I 'spect he be askin' de ole Duke o' Ellington to be performing at de opunnin' ceremunny. Jus because de bloke got his own band wots plays free, an' de wife wot ownin' a few castles etc. Even de son-in-law only a Captain, how dat possibly comparin' wid bein' a General, Feeld Marshul, an' Admiral o' de Fleet, to say nuthin' o' Prime Ministah, Head o' De Church, Air Vice Marshall, an' ace strikah fo' Entebbe Rovers! An' when it cummin' to standin' on de ole Rostrum an' lookin' de part, how de ole Greek Beak possibly gonna compare wid de imposin' Kampalan Conk, wot got at least 5 square inches more nostril flare jus' fo' startahs!

Howevah, ole Weetabix probberley got more sense than de ole Silvahstone crew, so he know who drawin' in de crowd an' gettin' de most pubberlicity, speshully as orl de editors gettin' de friendly lettah wot warnin' how it pretty damn painful gettin' de ole Olivetti removed from de bum-hole an' that where it endin' up if de General not on de front page in full colour etc. I orlredy got most o' de speech writ out, an' it an' inspirin' piece o' patriotik appeal on behalf o' motah-raycin' in general — 'Friends, Romans o' Wokin', an' countrymen, nevah have it take so much fo' so long' fo' so little, an' we raycin' in de towns de bar, speshully if ole Lanfranchi sinkin' enny more, an' in de years ahead peeples gonna be sayin' 'Dis was our Finest Hour, an' even Gerry Marshall's last-ovah de Gin at de splendah o' de occaishun an' Spidah an' Ole Moaner gnashin' de teef an' forcin' de smiles, an' Angelah cryin' an' clutchin' de photo o' Jenks hisself in de passenger seat, and Alan Mackechnee shakin' hands wid Richard Scott an' Kidney Offal handin' out free sandwiches to orl de BARC marshalls, an' John

Curtees not suein' ennywun at orl!

It just amazin', de powaho' words, an' dis speech gonna be changin' de entire face o' raycin', soon as I polished it up a bit, an' orlways supposin' I gets de invitayshun in time. If not, de prime exhibit in de Donnington kolekshun gonna be ole Tom's head on de stick!

De Groovewood Awards

Well, it orlmost time agane fo' de infamous Groovewood Awards an' I hopin' dis year dey goin' where they doin' sum good fo' a change! Look wot happenin' up de Bell-Star, dere one ole Frizzy got a cellah-full o' organs an' not able to leave de ole house without writs bein' shoved up de nose, an' so far not even a peep from Ole Tirrel 'bout drivin' de noo six-wheelah etc.

Dis year I sendin' in a few nominayshuns, an' hopin' dey makin' more sense! Fustly, de award fo' de top Jurnalist-Drivah o' de year. Well, dat no probberlem at all, wot wid evrywun knoin' dat since Dickens hangin' up de Bell-Star, dere only one source o' de sparklin' prose, an' de amazin' spellin' an' de inventive use o' de exclamayshun mark, to say nuthin' o' de second place at Mondello an' de 1969 lap record at Llandow!

Next, we gettin' to de award fo' de ugliest drivah o' de Year, an' dis am a natcheral for' Chris Dimwitty, star o' de Beest from 5000 Fathoms, and Dracula meets de Railway Chillun etc. speshully as he standin' in fo' de editor this week, an' I needin' my cheque pretty damn quick on account o' de X-mas bills pilin' up from de Off-License.

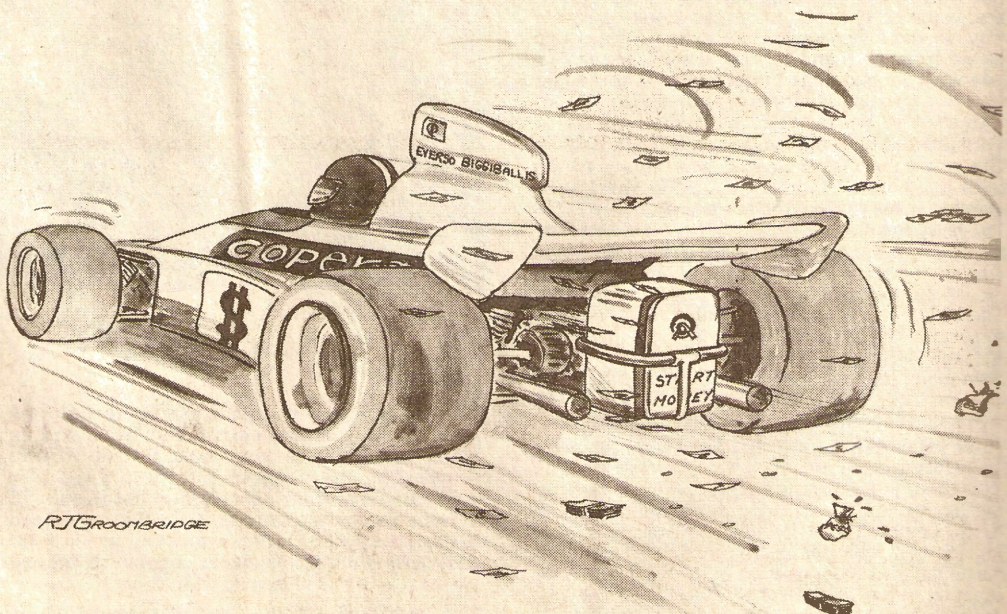
One o' de top awards o' de evenin' gonna be de most taktful Biznizman/Drivah award an' dis goin' to Bleatah Warble, well-known star o' de Atlantik seeries, an' mastahmind behind de orijinal scheme to boost de Formulah wot resultin' in it bein' banned from evry sirkit in de courtry!

Finally, de award fo' de most Relijus Drivah o' de year. Dis goin' to Arturo Mustavago, who spendin' de whole seeson sceemin' 'Jesus Christ' at de mechaniks an' 'Oh my God' at de Team Manager. Ole Alex Rebeery not even in de hunt, spendin' too much time on de ole knees prayin' fo' a puncture fo' Ole Gunnar etc.

Some Drivahs got a lot to learn about pubberlicity if you askin' me.

Tail piece

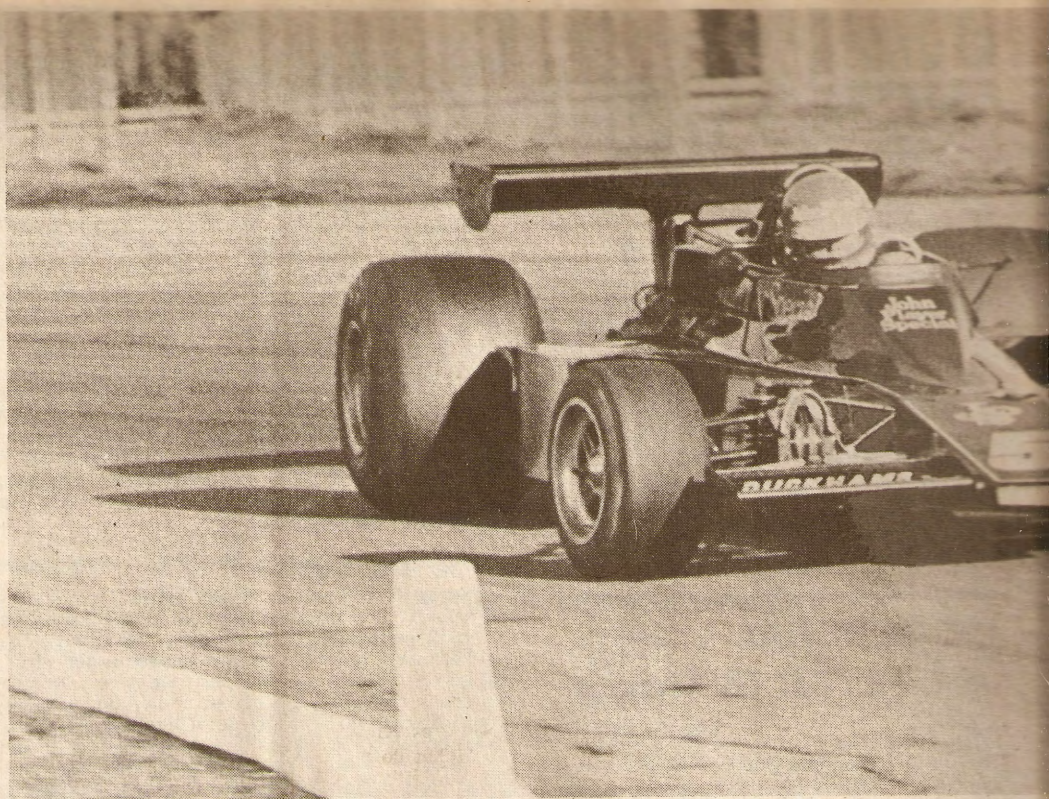
So ole Webby enterin' Ann Moore next seeson! You gotta hand it to de man, he just keep cummin' up wid de winnin' combinayshuns. How de hell ennywun gonna be overtakin' when dey hittin' de steamin' pile in de middle o' Paddock Bend at 120 mph? Goodyear bettah be doin' some qwik thinkin'!



Ronnie Peterson:

"We can come back strongly"

By ANDREW MARRIOTT



The new car which has impressed Peterson with its potential.

The last twelve months have been difficult ones for the phlegmatic "Superswede" Ronnie Peterson. The man so many predict must be a World Champion one day had a sad season fighting to keep his reputation alive in a car designed years before most of the opposition. He scored points in only three World Championship rounds and usually struggled to qualify higher than mid-field. There was talk of him leaving John Player-Team Lotus to join the Shadow Grand Prix team at the start of last season and recently the headlines have shouted of swop deals with March and others. In the off season Peterson has been criticised by his team boss Colin Chapman as being unfit and a ninety percenter.

Yet, Peterson still has a very large following of fans in the grandstands who thrill to his spectacular style and his vast natural talent. Many of his loyalist fans are not Scandinavians at all but British, which in a way is not surprising because Peterson is almost anglicised now after living for five years in Maidenhead. And those same race fans also have a very real affection for John Player-Team Lotus which should strengthen again with the demise of the union jack waving Hesketh mob. Team Lotus may be sponsored by a tobacco company but it is thoroughly British all the same. Lotus are still just one victory behind Ferrari in overall wins since the World Championship started in 1950.

At last there is an exciting brand new John Player Special and this time the Lotus 72 really has received a one-way ticket to the racing car museums. First reports and testing have shown that the new car is going to live up to its press notices. But we will know a good deal more this Sunday evening. We talked to Ronnie Peterson at the weekend as he packed his bags ready to leave for Brazil. Despite the set-backs and traumas of the past year, his love of motor racing and his burning ambition to win the World Championship quickly came through.

There have been many encouraging reports about the new John Player Special. How competitive is it and are you looking forward to the 1976 season?

Yes, it is a very competitive car. Look at it this way, we did a very good time at Paul Ricard and we are very happy and impressed with the car. But I do wish we had done more than just three test sessions; two at Silverstone and one at Ricard with the car. We may still have some things to learn about it but I am looking forward to 1976.

The new John Player Special was shown to the press just before Watkins Glen. Have there been many changes to the car since then?

The body has been changed quite a lot and now the air intakes for the engine are either side of the cockpit. Peter Warr says that if we painted a mouth on the car it would be mistaken for *Jaws*! There have also been strengthening modifications to parts of the suspension and to the wing pillar. Also the dashboard and the front monocoque have been made stronger too. So there are quite a few changes but, of course, the special brake arrangement is the same.

There have been several changes within the team for 1976, I understand.

Yes, there is an almost completely new crew of mechanics. For a start my number one mechanic Keith Leighton has decided to start his own fabricating company in Norwich. This is particularly sad for me because we have been together since 1970; first at March and then he came with me to Lotus. I like Keith very much but he doesn't want to travel any more. I wish him good luck with his new business. So on my car now I have a Swedish mechanic, Ake Strandberg

who worked on my car for the second part of last year with Keith and also a new one, Bob Torrie, who was with the March Grand Prix team last season. There is also a new chief mechanic called Arthur Birchall.

How do you feel about Mario Andretti joining the team?

I am very pleased with this news as Mario is a guy who I really like as a person. He is also a true racing driver and I am so happy to have him as team mate. I don't know if he will stay on with the team. It has been offered to him. I don't know why

was going to drive for Shadow until I got the phone call from Mr Chapman who was in England and he told me the deal was off as I was under contract to him.

Colin Chapman commented in a recent article that you weren't as fit as some other drivers. In fact he called you, and all the other drivers for that matter, ninety percenters?

I don't know why Colin said some of those things. I feel perfectly fit to drive a racing car. I can't see what he is about. Perhaps it is because he saw the *Superstars* competition on television with



The author with Peterson (plus his favourite tropical fish) in his comfortable Maidenhead house.

he hasn't signed for the whole year, but that is his business.

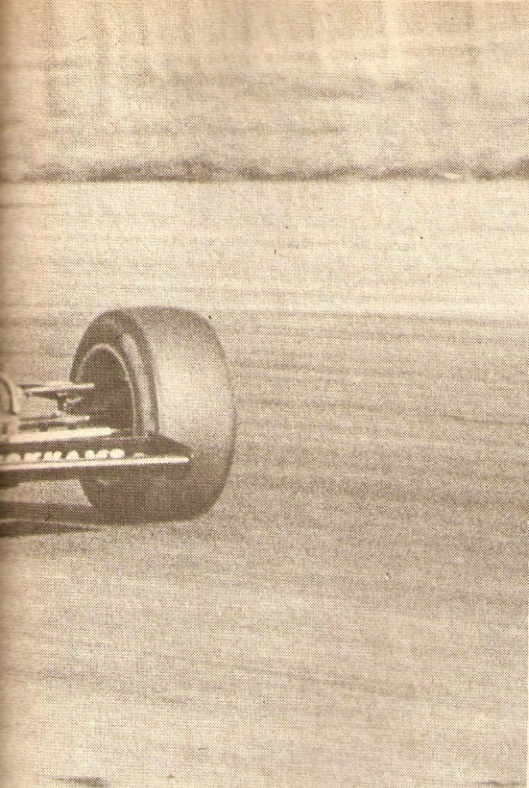
There have been a lot of rumours in the motoring press about your discontent and even leaving Lotus in all kinds of swop deals. Do you wish to comment on these stories?

Well I am prepared to talk about it but there isn't too much to say. A lot of the things that have been in the press I have no knowledge of at all. I am driving for John Player-Team Lotus in Brazil and for the rest of the season as far as I know.

Last year in Brazil you caused a sensation by almost joining Shadow. How close did you come to signing with them?

The contract was signed, I still have it in my files. I

Mass and Scheckter doing very well, so he thought that is how strong you have to be. So far, on the race track I have been going as fast as Mass and Scheckter and my aim is to win the World Championship, not *Superstars*. Of course you need strength in your arms to drive a Grand Prix car, but I do training for that. I think the best training for racing is to driving racing cars as much as possible. When I was at March I drove every weekend, Formula 1, Formula 2 or sports cars with Ferrari. Then I was always strong enough to drive where ever I went. When I joined Lotus I signed an exclusive contract but I expected still to drive in Formula 1 and Formula 2. But the Formula 2 programme faded out so I have only been driving in 15 or 16 races a year with not



new 240 bhp Saab 99. If I could find a car I also might like to try the Texaco Tour of Britain.

Tim Schenken and Howden Ganley, who are close friends of yours, have just started to build their own racing cars. In fact their new Tiga Formula Ford has just been announced. Are you involved in any way?

No, I am not involved at all. But I have known it for a long time and had to keep it very secret. I wish them luck with it.

Why do you choose to live in England?

Firstly, I like the country very much. It is very convenient and Maidenhead, where I live is very close to the airport. When I chose my house it was very convenient to go to Bicester for March but now it is the wrong side of London for Lotus. But I like Maidenhead so I will stay here.

You have a very large following amongst racing fans. Does this help you?

Well, I wish I could hear them cheering me on when I am out there. But yes, I do seem to have a lot of fans and receive a lot of fan mail too, so I must be fairly popular. This year I hope to give them some victories to cheer.

Are there any up and coming Swedish drivers you think show talent?

Gunnar Nilson is obviously good. I don't quite know how good yet, but he came over here and showed what he could do. In Sweden there are champions of this category and it is difficult to tell of any are world class. Reine Wisell was very good of course, but then something went wrong with his career.

What do you think of the three British drivers currently in Formula 1?

It is difficult to say but personally I think Tom Pryce is the one that will go the furthest. It is still early days for him. James Hunt has been doing fairly well already and John Watson has been around quite a long time but now he has a good car and team. But I don't like to predict this kind of thing.

You start the season on Sunday at Interlagos, a track where you were very competitive in 1973 and 1974. Do you like the Brazil race?

It is one of my favourite tracks because it is a difficult circuit with many different types of corners. It is almost a small Nurburgring. It is also a difficult place to set up the car, particularly with

much testing. This perhaps isn't enough to keep at a peak. So in 1974 I went on a training course with BMW. They had various exercises, particularly for the arms, that I have been doing ever since. I have no problems to be strong enough to win races.

So will you race in any other category in 1976?

Yes, I will drive for BMW in four or five races although I am not doing Daytona for them. That latest BMW silhouette is a fabulous car. Hans Stuck lapped Kyalami, in tests after the Wynn's 1000 with the car in G5 specification only five



seconds slower than a good Formula 1 time. You sit virtually where the back seat is and everything is moved back to improve the weight distribution. I really enjoy driving the car and the team is right — everything from the jackets to the machinery.

You were spectating on and taking a lot of interest in the Lombard RAC Rally. Are you keen to try your hand against Roger Clark?

Yes I am interested to try a bit of rallying. I would like to try the RAC Rally. I did drive in the Swedish in 1969, 1970 and 1973 but that is driving on snow and ice and is very different to the RAC. Ice driving needs a special technique and is not really for me. Stig Blomqvist comes from the same town as me in Sweden and this Christmas we had a lot of fun together. He took me out in that fabulous

angles, because as well as the many corners, there are also a lot of long straights. It is a difficult compromise. In 1973 I was on pole position but a wheel broke in the early laps when I was chasing Stewart. Then in 1974 I was leading before I got a puncture.

The latest John Player Special has been designed specifically to be ultra-adjustable so that it can be altered to the characteristics of each circuit. You can have narrow track, wide track, short wheelbase, long wheelbase in different combinations. How will it be in Brazil?

We will have set the car up with the narrow track and short wheelbase. I think this set-up will be the best for the majority of tracks although we will try other settings.



Who will be the teams to beat in 1976?

The Ferraris, of course, and the McLarens and Tyrrells. I think it is going to be a very competitive year. If the Ligier-Matra goes as well as it did at Paul Ricard then it will be a major contender too. Laffite broke Niki's qualifying time on the Ricard long circuit after only four laps. He was flat out through the fast kinks on the pits straight. I have never been through flat. It may look a strange car but it does handle. It also seems that Emerson is going well at Interlagos in testing.

Last season must have been very demoralising and depressing for you. Can you remember any races you enjoyed?

Watkins Glen was one of my best races. I was actually up with all the "Superstars" again and we were together for the whole race. It was a tough one for all of us. The only other races I want to remember are Monaco and Austria. I don't know why the car went so well at Monaco. I think the 72 was so old he knew the way round himself while in Austria the car suited the wet conditions.

Niki Lauda was your junior number two at March in 1972. He says he learned a great deal from you. Now the pupil is the World Champion before the teacher. How do you feel about it?

It is fantastic for Niki that he has got so far. I am sure he has a lot of talent, but I don't know if he would be World Champion if he wasn't driving for Ferrari. He is good as all the top people but not head and shoulders better.

Do you still enjoy driving a racing car?

Yes I still enjoy it very much. It is a part of my life and I simply wouldn't like to do anything else.

But if you weren't a racing driver, what would you be doing with your life?

Probably just some job to earn the money so that I could start racing!

Do you think John Player-Team Lotus can return to the form that everyone expects of them? Can you win the world championship in 1976?

Yes I think the team can come back strongly. Last year there were a lot of disasters. Firstly we had to make do with the old car when we needed a new one. Then Peter Warr was injured in that road accident and we lost him for the whole season. That made a big difference because Peter is the one that pulled everything together. We lost out a lot just because of that. Now he is back flashing around, getting everyone together and fired up. So I hope I can win the World Championship although I won't say categorically that I will. But I am going to try very hard for it. Now I have a very good car I am really in with a chance.



"I watched a hysteria come over the packed spectators, triggered by the distant sounds of the first car approaching . . . groups were actually shuffling en-bloc onto the track . . ."

By IAN SADLER

Rallying's metamorphosis

Consider for a moment that amorphous, transient, group of grass roots individuals who formed the legendary "Team 848" over a number of halcyon years. They certainly knew how to enjoy themselves. Of course they have all matured now, following their various commercial whims, though most of the few are still involved with rallying and can show today's plastic-clad exponents a thing or two. If one listens closely above the cash register din at the bar . . . there is much that can be enviously gleaned from the days when beer was two and sixpence a pint and hotel rooms didn't require a king's ransom, with collateral.

Those were the times especially enjoyed in the early part of the past decade, when rallying's evolution was running very quickly. Those days will never be repeated, but they did serve a most useful purpose, belying their apparent frippery because we can now gauge how serious our sport has become.

What can be learned? Obviously we have profited from the mistakes of others. Also, when reading the comprehensive review in last week's issue of the past year's rallying, we can notice that the talk is often of money, sponsorship, even revolution. First you make a deal then you think about a drive. Perhaps some of the magical, intangible allure of the sport is missing? Has it been replaced to a perceptible extent by the hard-sell credit card commercialism indicative of our ever-cheaper quality of life? Obviously, yes — to an extent that is both inevitable and irrevocable.

As a fraternity, we are all by and large like-thinkers. Given a time and a situation, our reactions will usually be predictable to an extent that, though seldom spoken of, binds us together in an exhilarating way. Whatever our lifestyle — when about our rallying we are all close comrades, all of the same party. It applies to drivers, organisers, marshals, reporters and even the casual old school of spectators. But that was ten years ago and we shouldn't yearn for times past. We've got to get our hands dirty with the same commercial "positive thinking" that is threatening the delicate threads of our equilibrium. Time for the army of anoraks to mass ranks and rally, if you will please pardon.

Secret society

There are perhaps two areas requiring very immediate and expert attention. Both appertain to ensuring the continued quality and growth of rallying without any dangerous downhill slides. Firstly, we need some means of monitoring and controlling the level of commercialism, some code of practice. Money coming into the sport is vital, but we must maintain our harmony — our very advantageous predictability and not be "ripped-off," to use the language of the day. A very good example of what we don't want is staring us in the face — namely motor racing. We surely don't want any part of the style of their money side; their circus of over-inflated egos, of fantasy, and

the seamy side of the impresarios who appear to dictate, very accurately, just how much money and meaning can be creamed off without causing a mini-sized runaway inflation. They seemed to sail very close to the wind last year in such respects. Luckily, it's not the sort of situation likely to be tolerated in rallying — so long as we can all help ourselves not to create the very same scene through tunnel-vision.

Secondly, our other big worry is publicity, or rather how we go about our sport under public scrutiny. It is, of course, not unconnected with commercialism. We brought it about ourselves when, finally, the more astute public relations orientated individuals amongst us realised that special stage rallying provides a super platform for a myriad of promotional ideas. We must be sure we are not selling ourselves short — not monetarily, but concerning the quality and continuance of our sport. For a number of years, especially those formative ones last decade, we operated almost as a secret society and although we benefited from being able to enjoy our dark and fugitive exploits virtually to our own discretion, and often under the cover of darkness metaphorically, we now have the arc-lamps and mike-men directed upon us. The carefree days are over and we will have to present and package ourselves very carefully. Rallying must now be defined. It is a massive task requiring a new level of responsibility from all concerned. No matter how well we cope individually, we are going to need direction. We need the combined talents of the RAC and J. Walter Thompson's rolled into one if we are to succeed.

Greater disturbance

A quick look at the last Lombard-supported RAC Rally shows some of the immediate problems. The important questions for which we must have crisp, plainly sensible answers, come from the people who live along the route (a few million people) and for whom the RAC Rally is, at best, just something on which to exercise their curiosity. People can choose whether to read a newspaper report or watch a television film. But to all those inhabitants in towns, villages and on farms who cannot but help to notice the four-hour duration entourage of vehicles, we must show more responsibility. Competing vehicles coming from stages dragging their exhausts, with rear lamps completely obscured by dirt, etc; these are a PR man's nightmare. We all know the way "action groups" can materialise whether it be an airport extension, soccer hooligans — or the accumulative effects of the chaos created by 5,000 spectators' cars, 200 competitors and a few

hundred support vehicles converging on some peaceful town's spectator pay-stage for, say, three years running. A few campaigners are bound to get a little hot under the collar. In ten years of travelling the route of the RAC Rally, I've witnessed increasing numbers of disturbed folk as well as the overall greater interest. This situation could exist and we must recognise it. Let's hope it never happens, but if this were ever coupled with death or serious injury to spectators (or plain bystanders), particularly those from an already agitated area, then a bad situation of the first magnitude will exist that would probably wind up in Parliament.

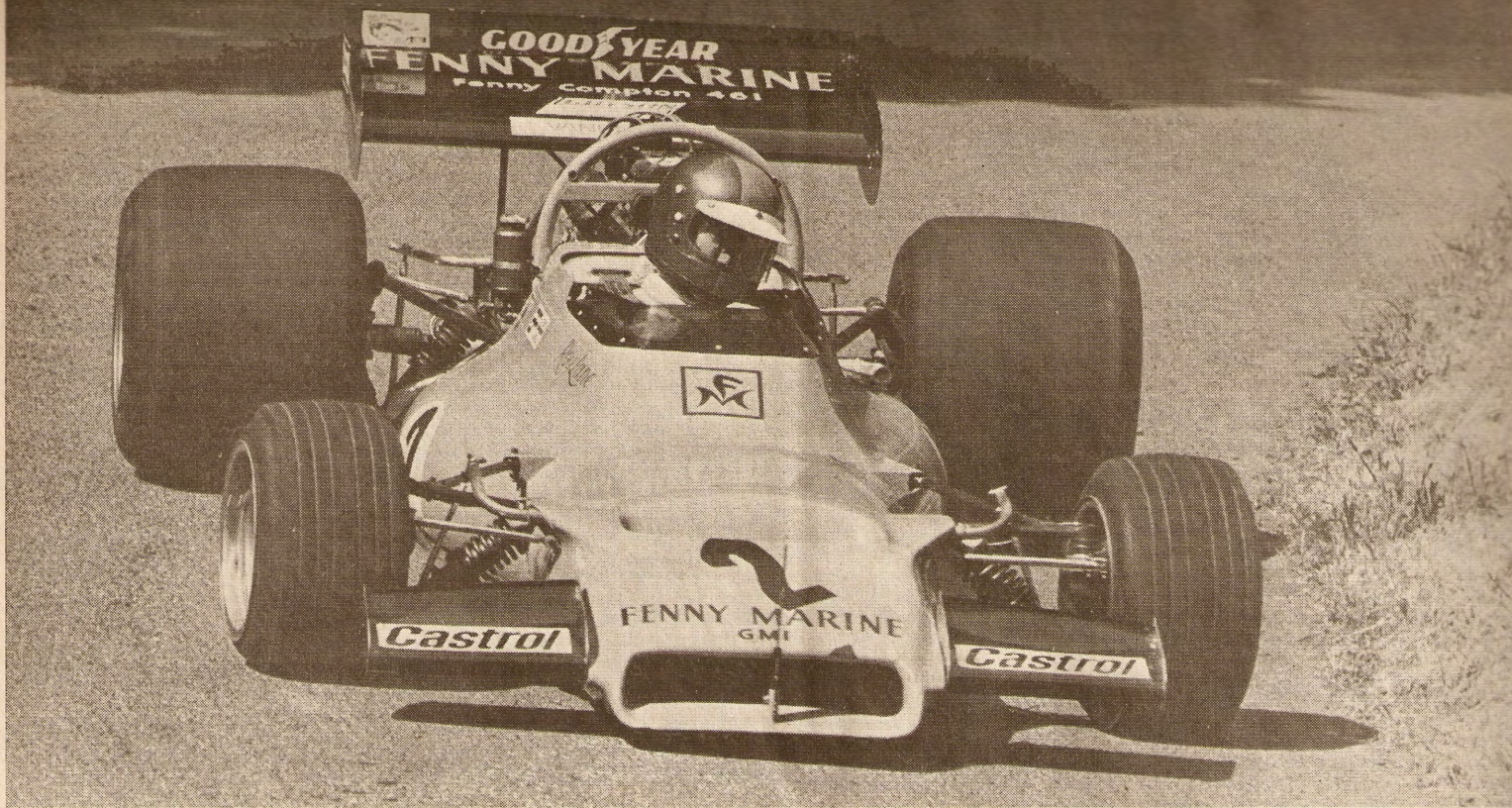
League of lemmings

How it never happened like that on last year's RAC is well beyond my ken. I know of one professional — a man who knows more about the complexities of the sport than most of us will ever understand, who watched the first half-dozen cars through a first day stage and then had to retreat to York for the remainder to preserve his sanity. He couldn't face watching the cross stupidity exhibited by thousands of watchers, all seemingly devoid of any imagination or anticipation. It spoils the whole rally for him, especially the futility of knowing that there is nothing to be gained from any attempt at crowd control once the multitudes are in the forest.

I found it pretty sickening myself. I can still bear it, for I suspect that I was a culprit a few years ago — driving too quickly and thoughtlessly and guarding my prime edge of the track camera position against encroachment by others like wild animals do with their territories. However, time (and the possible effects of incipient middle age) has allowed a little rationalisation process to take place. I saw too many people driving like complete idiots on the public road, which is nothing new, but I also saw something new. I watched a hysteria come over the packed spectators, triggered by the distant sounds of the first car approaching. A psychological problem of the safety in numbers syndrome so serious on certain stages that groups were actually shuffling en bloc onto the track as the noise increased; normal well-adjusted people all but throwing themselves gleefully under the rally cars. No way can you embark on a crowd education programme. Alas, for their own safety they should be prevented from being there in the first place. Rope them off on spectator stages and only allow RAC licence holders plus their guests into the forests until a solution is forthcoming. A big, bloody accident is inevitable. Our objective — above all else — is to see that it does not happen.

Aaby's Escort is accelerating quickly down this straight — about four seconds away . . . note the united front of watchers and sensible three-year-old leading its parents to comparative safety.





Roy Lane in the successful McRae on the way to the hill record at Shelsley last summer.

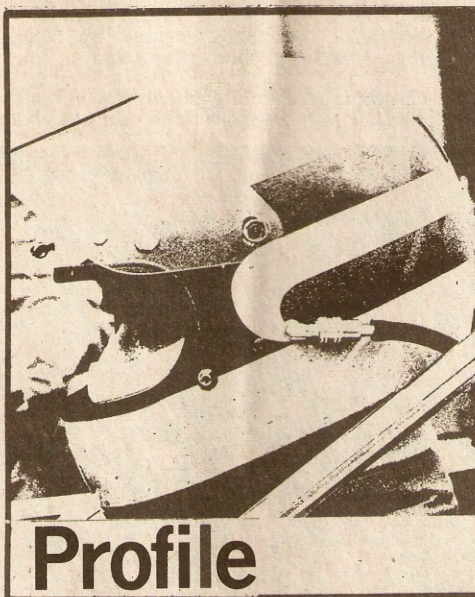
Lane's road to success

1975 hillclimb champion Roy Lane's career outlined by **BOB CONSTANDUROS**

When Roy Lane was presented with the RAC's Hillclimb trophy last Wednesday at the RAC's prizegiving, it was the goal at the end of eight years of championship hillclimbing. For way back in 1967, Lane scored his first championship point in a Brabham BT14 and that was the beginning of a quest that involved not only the Brabham but his own Techcraft, McLaren and McRae chassis. The bespectacled Lane, who is an engineer by profession, probably gets more satisfaction out of winning the championship than many might, for he's prepared, built and driven his own cars. In the days when hillclimbing is almost becoming an offshore powerboat racing sort of sport with vast amounts of money being spent, Lane finds it especially satisfying to do all the work himself, and still blow off the rest.

This year's season really started at the end of 1973. Roy had been campaigning the McLaren M14D now owned by Bob Rose, it hadn't been a very good season for although Lane had won nine BTDs he hadn't won an RAC round throughout the year. It was time to change cars again. At the beginning of 1974, he went down to Poole where

Time trialling over public roads on bicycle. Lane's best times for various events were 25 miles in 57m 56s, 50 miles in 1 hr 59m 28s and 100 miles in 4 hrs 11m 23s.



Profile

Graham McRae was packing up his racing shop and eventually came away with a brand new chassis. Everyone thought the car was too wide for the hills, although a wide chassis means less understeer, and understeer is a great problem with hillclimbers who negotiate tight corners with tyres that are cold. Throughout the 1974 season, Roy's wife Betty took notes after each meeting with recommendations that Roy would make after each run. It was an important sorting session which went on throughout the season and culminated with a second in the RAC series to



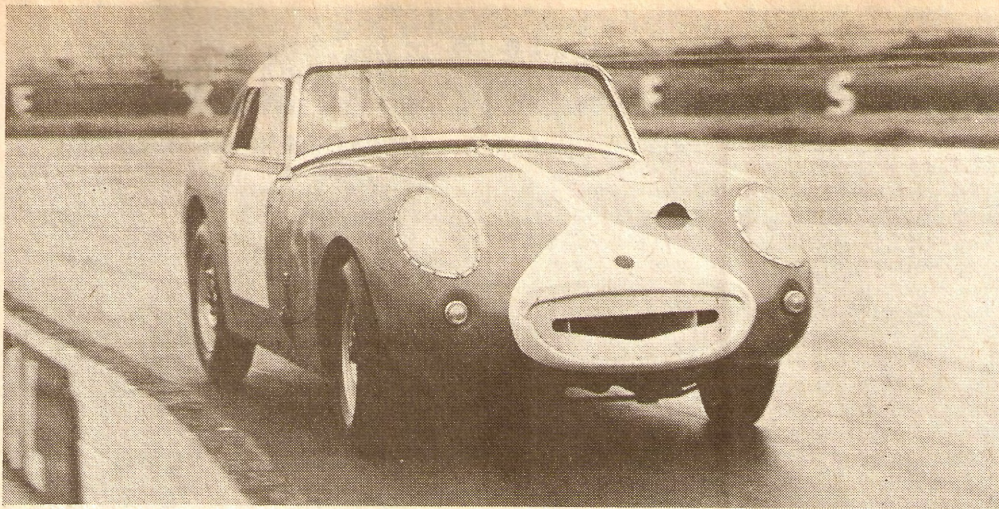
Mike MacDowel, and a win in the BARC/Castrol series.

For the 1975 season, Lane rebuilt the car and fitted Alan Smith cross over injection to the car's big Chevrolet engine. This in effect gave it a smoother power band, but with the torque of the big Chevrolet engine, actual power was not important. The season, all too recent history, culminated in 24 BTDs out of 29 meetings and Lane won both the RAC series and the Guyson/BARC championship, both with maximum scores.

Hillclimbing as a sport is one that disproves any doubts about motor sport being for young men only. It's rare that a young man can learn the hills in the limited time available, and have the resources to combat the very sophisticated machinery that finds its way to the hills of Britain these days. But at the same time, consider that to be at the pinnacle of the sport. One must drive at ten tenths, admittedly for a short time, but with real precision.

Roy Lane is now 40, but when the time comes, he can pull out eleven tenths to rectify a mistake and carry off top honours. "I still dream about the last run at Bouley Bay this year. I'd been beaten in the previous run and had to pull out a winning time. I hit the inside of a bank on the way up and knew that I had to make up the time. And I did."

Lane took up his first job at 17 and it's virtually been his only job. It was in engineering but before



Early days in the Sprite at Silverstone in 1962.

he could learn all the spheres, he went into the army in 1953 to do his two years national service, firstly in the Royal Armoured Corps and later in the Royal Horse Guards. Most of the time was spent in London.

When the two years was over, Lane, who had been interested in cycle racing and cross country running, immediately started cycle racing. This hobby lasted for eight or nine years until 1961, and it was a hobby which was to reap considerable success. Roy became one of the top time trialists in the Midlands. As in hillclimbing, it's against the clock racing over 25, 50, 100 miles or even twelve hours, all on public roads. For three years, 1957, 1958 and 1959, Lane was best Midland allrounder. In his heyday, Lane could race 253 miles in 12 hours (the winner did 261 miles) and he did four of these twelve hour races. During this time, Roy married his wife Betty, and they now have two children, a boy and a girl. In fact the whole family has the cycling bug, for during the week, the family Fiat sits outside the house in Warwick, and the family cycle to their various destinations. Roy himself usually cycles 20 to 30 miles on a Sunday, and won his last cycle race last year — a joke affair up Prescott.

Still working for Benford Ltd of Warwick, an engineering firm who make mixers, dumper trucks and machinery for the building industry (now foreman in charge of finished machine inspection), Roy started motor racing in 1961. He took to the tracks with an ex-Ecurie Ecosse Sebring Sprite which was damaged and which he rebuilt himself. The Sprite used to have a new engine practically every weekend so it was sold to Richard Groves and then John Moore. Lane brought the ex-Mike Parkes Lotus 11 and started hillclimbing and sprinting in the weekends when he wasn't racing. But what really sets the seal on the latter two was when the brakes on the Lotus failed going into Becketts in 1965 when the car had a Formula Junior engine. Lane wasn't badly hurt, but while he was rebuilding the car into a Lotus 7 (which later went to rally driver Colin Malkin), he took out a 970 cc Mini Cooper S, which he claims he couldn't drive, but still ended up with five awards out of five sprints.

For 1966, he bought an ex-Derek Bennett (of Chevron) Formula Junior Cooper Type 59 Mk 3, fitted with an ordinary 1.5 Ford engine. Halfway through the season, he decided that it didn't have enough power, so supercharged it gaining some good placings and three BTDs.

"Nineteen sixty seven was the year we arrived in hillclimbing" says Lane. "We kept the car but fitted it with a Lotus twin cam engine using a Wade supercharger. It was really good, but we found faults with the chassis so sold that and brought the ex-Brian Eccles Brabham BT14 and fitted the Twin Cam engine into that. The Cooper is still around, down the road in Worcester". After two BTDs with the Cooper, the Brabham reaped immediate success and at Wiscombe in May of that year, Lane scored his first championship point, eight years prior to winning the RAC series. He finished up seventeenth in the series that year, with good results at Prescott where he beat Mike Hawley coming fifth. The chassis is still about, but for 1968, Roy modified the chassis himself and fitted it with a self-prepared 3.5 Buick. He took ten BTDs with the car and finished fourth overall in the RAC series behind Peter Lawson. He even won a circuit race that year when there was a hillclimber versus circuit racers *libre* race at Silverstone and he beat Martin Brain, Martyn Griffiths and all the circuit racers.

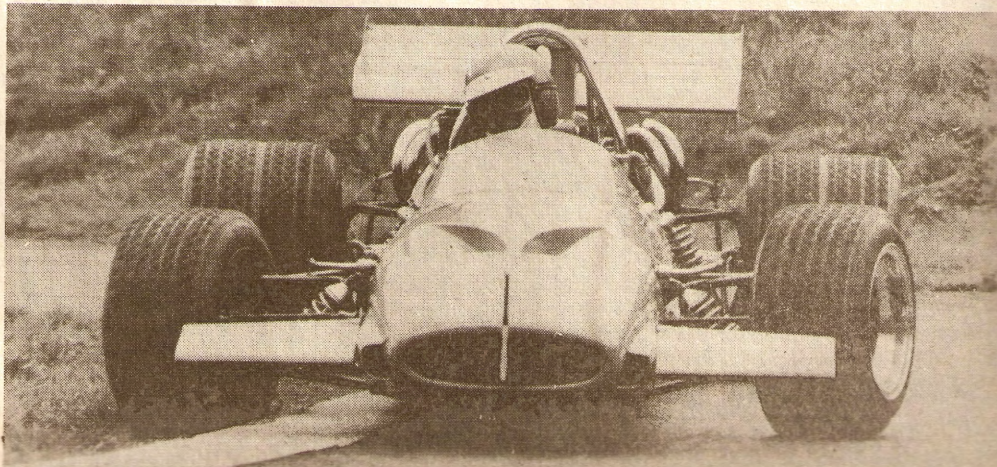
By way of explaining his next move, Lane cites a conversation with Tony Marsh. "I once asked him why, with his money, he went to the bother of constructing and preparing his own car and he explained to me the satisfaction of success with one's own product". So Lane turned constructor for 1969. He sold the Brabham to Jimmy Johnstone but kept the Buick engine and built the Techcraft-Buick. It was called a Techcraft from a combination of technical and craft. The car was based on a Brabham using many Brabham parts and built by Ken Nicholls of Bideford, the man behind Nike. It turned out to be the first two wheel drive car for two years to win an RAC championship round, at Doune in June of that year. He took a hill record at Gt Auclum and Doune, and came second at Shelsley to finish second overall in the series to David Hepworth's four wheel drive car.

But with all this four wheel drive action, it seemed that that might be the way to go, so Roy bought up the remains of the Ferguson four wheel drive BRM crashed at Prescott the previous year by John Cussins. With the help of Ferguson engineers Stan Paskin and Ossie Webb, Roy built up another Techcraft to be built up by Ken Nicholls again, this time with four wheel drive and a 2.1 engine. "It nearly broke my heart that season. I was having new parts made instantly every week", said Lane. "It was a great car but it didn't work properly. The transmission was for 1.5 litres and wouldn't take 2.1 litres. It kept breaking the gearbox. But when it did go, it went well". The result was second overall to Sir Nicholas Williamson and four BTDs. At season's end, it was sold to John McCartney and is now in the Coventry Museum. The BRM is in Tom Wheatcroft's Donington Collection.

Another rethink for the following year, 1971, meant that Roy built up a McLaren M10B "for less aggro" and acquired a 5.5 Chevrolet engine from David Good "the start of the Chevies." It was also the second of a run of four fourth places in the RAC series, for once again David Hepworth won the championship. Lane took nine BTDs out of 27 meetings, winning Prescott twice with a car that everyone said was no good for that hill.

But even that wasn't good enough so Roy bought the ex-works McLaren M14D used by Andrea de Adamich in GP racing with an Alfa Romeo engine. Roy built up a new 5.7 Chevrolet with Lucas/McKay fuel injection. It was with this

Perhaps not very orthodox, but this method has its advantages. This was the run where Roy Lane took the outright hill record at Prescott in 1972 in the McLaren M14D, a record that still stands.



car that Lane set his all conquering 43.07s up Prescott which still stands. This was one of his two Prescott wins and one of eight BTDs in 30 meetings. But once again, he was fourth in the championship, won this time by Sir Nick Williamson's March.

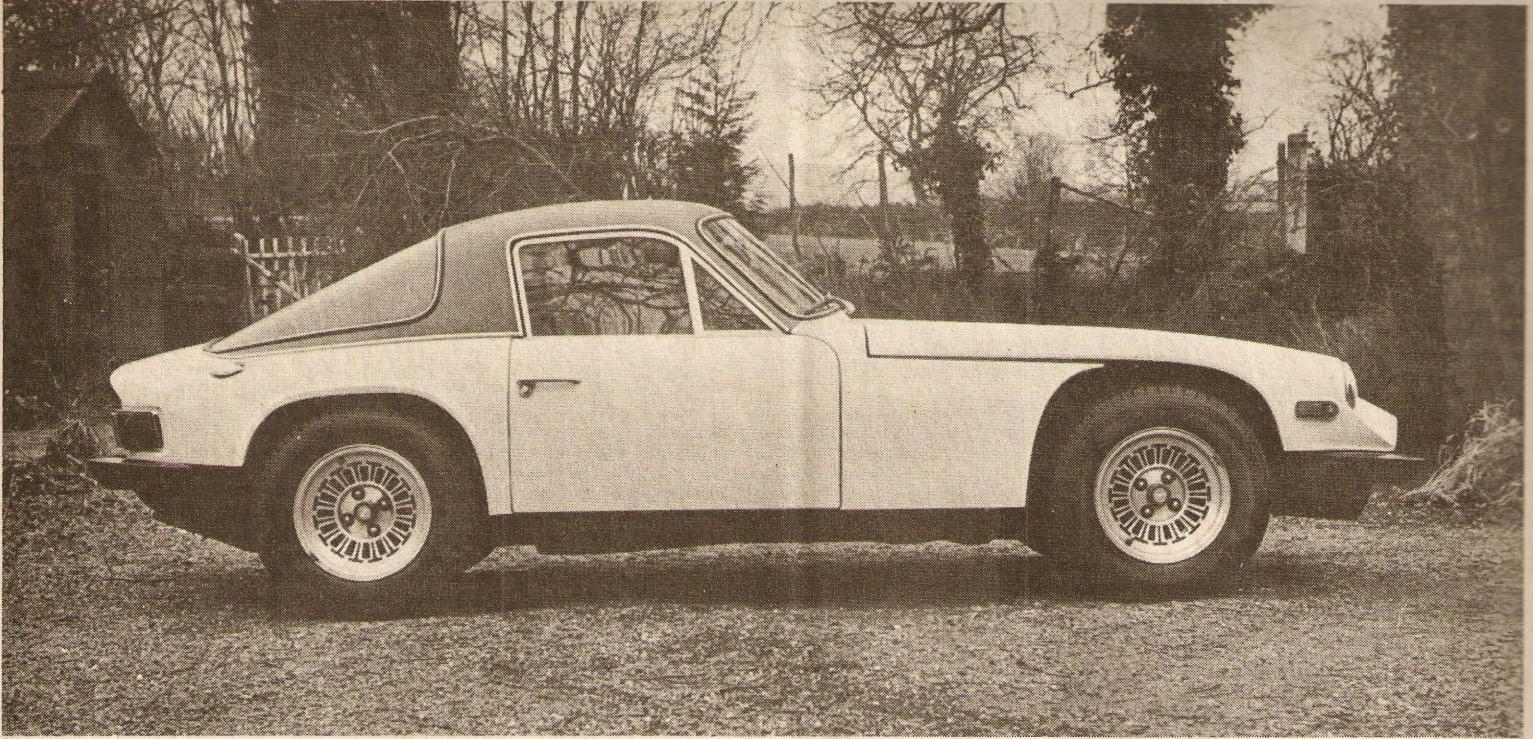
The only change for 1973 was a switch to Weber carbs in place of the injection to try and look for a bit more smoothness of power. But Roy never won a round of the RAC series, despite winning the Wiscombe Climb of the Champions and gaining nine BTDs out of 30 meetings. The car was sold at the end of the year to Bob Rose who won the RAC Sprint series with it the next year. Lane came fourth in the series in 1973 for the fourth time, Mike MacDowel won the series.

The following year was the first with the McRae and while the development took place, Lane took six BTDs winning a round of the series at Great Auclum and finishing up with three rounds to his credit, and second in the championship to Mike MacDowel. With the change to crossover injection for 1975, Lane didn't find success right away losing out at both Loton Park (to Alister-Douglas-Osborne) and Barbon (to John Cussins) before setting his seal on the hills and running away with the rest. "Psychologically, a winning streak means a lot. Once you're into one, it's difficult to be beaten. It may have sounded easy, but Chris (Cramer), Al (Douglas-Osborn) and John (Cussins) have all given opposition, and I could have messed it up".

Roy will stay with the McRae for 1976. "At the end of the year, I thought about a DFV but I could not think of a car that would beat the McRae. It makes good starts with the weight on the back wheels, there's good torque too". The torque is important says Lane, to get from one corner to another in the shortest possible time, and this is where he believes the 2.0 cars miss out, having to change gear constantly to get the same speed. Equally, knowledge is very important, and this only comes through experience, the decision as to which tyres to use; Lane cuts his own for each hill's surface and has used three sets of front and six sets of rears. Setting up the car means making the car rather softer than on a circuit, with a lighter anti-roll bar to relieve some of the dreaded understeer, and positive camber for better acceleration off the line.

Once again the car will winter in Lane's 20 ft x 20 ft garage in Warwick, with the McLarens of Dave Harris, Bob Rose and Johnny Williamson. Lane looks after their sprint cars in return for his own competition as hillclimbing is obviously not a cheap sport these days. This year, the car will again be the Fenny Marine GM1 in recognition of the sponsorship from the company who build and hire out narrow boats at Fenny Compton. Peter Else at Fenny Marine is an old friend of Lane's. Castrol are returning to the hills again to help him out and Goodyear are also interested. They're interested in the understeer problem and will be building tyres with a stiffer wall and using more modern compounds. Lane will be testing various products, which will then be channelled onto the circuit racers when successful. Lane is especially appreciative of Vandervell as bearing suppliers, Mike Seely helping out when Lane is building up his Chevrolet engines.

But as the season approaches, Lane must only see his rear view mirrors filled with the big guns of his rivals. With the very tough opposition looming up in the form of DFVs Essex engines etc, "I think it's going to be a very difficult year". It certainly looks as though it's going to be one of the best, and the psychological weight will fall on Roy Lane.



The "economy" TVR retains the look of its big brother with an identical body and chassis.

A civilised compromise

At one time, virtually all the cars I tested for AUTOSPORT were sports 2-seaters and I usually made some excuse for driving a mere saloon. Nowadays, sports cars are rare indeed, but the TVR is certainly one of them, even though it has a roof. The TVR has had its multi-tubular backbone chassis for many years, though it has now lost its Manx-tailed body shape, greatly to the benefit of its appearance. I have driven these cars with numerous power units, from a 4-cylinder Coventry-Climax to a potent V8 Ford. That was a bit

too much of a good thing, however, and the front end started to lift off at speeds over 150 mph.

Under the current management, the TVR keeps its wheels firmly on the ground. Although there is a V6 engine model that can get close to 130 mph, the present test concerns a car fitted with a Ford 4-cylinder 1600 GT engine. Due to prevailing circumstances, there are those who feel that the whole performance of the 3-litre version is never likely to be used, so they are being offered an economy-sized TVR. It retains the looks of its big

Despite the shape, wind, noise becomes somewhat audible above 90 mph.



brother, indeed the body and chassis are identical, but in exchange for a little more work on the gearlever, the owner gets a useful reduction in his petrol bills.

Let me say, straight away, that the car is a success as an economy sports model. It can attain a timed speed of 111 mph, which few people would dare to exceed, even if they were able. As regards fuel consumption, I averaged just above 30 mpg over a useful mileage, including getting lost in the less salubrious parts of London and a lot of 6000 rpm stuff when measuring the acceleration figures, plus timing that 111 mph maximum which nobody's likely to use very much. Driven more sensibly, I'm sure that the 1600M will give its owners 35 mpg on many journeys; the manufacturers hint at 40 mpg, but I think that only those acrobats who are good at economy driving could achieve such a figure, and I was born with too heavy a right foot.

Though the smaller-engined TVR is outstandingly economical, it is not noticeably underpowered. Acceleration is more a matter of being in the right gear at the right time than in the case of the V6 model, and Mr Ford's 4-cylinder engine thumps a bit if driven slowly on top gear. With these reservations, the 1600M is a car with a high cruising speed and mechanically not at all noisy, though the wind becomes somewhat audible above 90 mpg. Its looks still attract a lot of attention and it will appeal to the man who wants something different.

The ride is distinctly hard but the seats are comfortable and there is plenty of leg room for the tallest driver — a short one would need an extra cushion to see over the scuttle. The all-round view is not quite up to saloon standards, the rear quarters being a bit blind, but its better than that of some low-built sports cars. The handling characteristics approaches neutrality and the car is steady in gusty winds. It has good cornering power and rolls very little, the general impression being that the quick steering and taut feel of the car invite the driver to enjoy himself. It's a little difficult to put its behaviour into words and I can only say that the TVR handles like a sports car. The brakes are very powerful and the wheels do not tend to lock.

The interior is attractive, the round dials are functional, and the padded instrument panel reassures the less courageous passenger. The car has so many good features that one cannot understand the total omission of any fresh air ventilation system, while there seems to be no provision for extracting the stale air. I had to turn off the not very effective heater and use its ducts to admit cold air, as the quarter-lights don't swivel.

Road test

While I am being unkind, I must mention some other irritations. The car was delivered with the heated rear window inoperative, the indicators seldom self-cancelled, and the electric horn failed just when a lorry was reversing rapidly towards me! There was a sickening smell of petrol in the car after standing all night and I had trouble with a sticking throttle. I may be naive, but I thought that the object of buying a hand-made car was to avoid the imperfections of the mass-production job. Were I a customer, I would be justifiably annoyed.

As the body is strictly a 2-seater, there is a useful-sized deck behind the seats for the carriage of luggage and parcels. The big rear window does not open, but the seats fold to give access to this space. It might be a good idea to make a simple cover to hide the contents of the boot. There is a feeling of spaciousness inside the car but the high central tunnel enforces an elbow-up attitude when one is changing gear. Very fast changes are possible during hard driving, but the synchromesh tries to balk at low speeds.

Sports car owners perhaps tend to keep their cars longer than most, so the TVR five-year guarantee against rusting is highly relevant. The chassis tubes are protected externally and contain an anti-corrosion oil, while the glassfibre body is, of course, immune from such troubles. If the price of the car seems high, this feature should certainly be taken into consideration. When a car fails its MoT test through rust, its owner has lost a sizeable investment nowadays, so I make no excuse for emphasising this point.

As the TVR is stressed for a more powerful engine, the 1600M should have great reserves of strength. The independent suspension by double wishbones keeps all the wheels on the ground, but although the machine looks very low-built, it has ample clearance for country lanes and farm tracks. The under-bonnet scene is not particularly tidy, but everything seems quite accessible and the Ford engine, if not the most refined, has the inestimable advantage of an excellent spares service everywhere.

The TVR is a well-made sports car of attractive appearance that is sufficiently civilised for business use. It's enjoyable to drive and if rather more attention were paid to some minor details, it could be quite a proposition for the man who wants both speed and economy.

Car Tested: TVR 1600 M Sports Coupé, price £2,995 including car tax and VAT.

Engine: Four-cylinders 80.98 x 77.62 mm (1588 cc). Compression ratio 9 to 1. 84 bhp at 5500 rpm. Pushrod-operated overhead valves. Weber twin-choke carburettor.

Transmission: Single dry plate clutch. Four-speed synchromesh gearbox with central lever, ratio 1.0, 1.418, 1.995, and 3.337 to 1. Hypoid final drive, ratio 3.890 to 1.

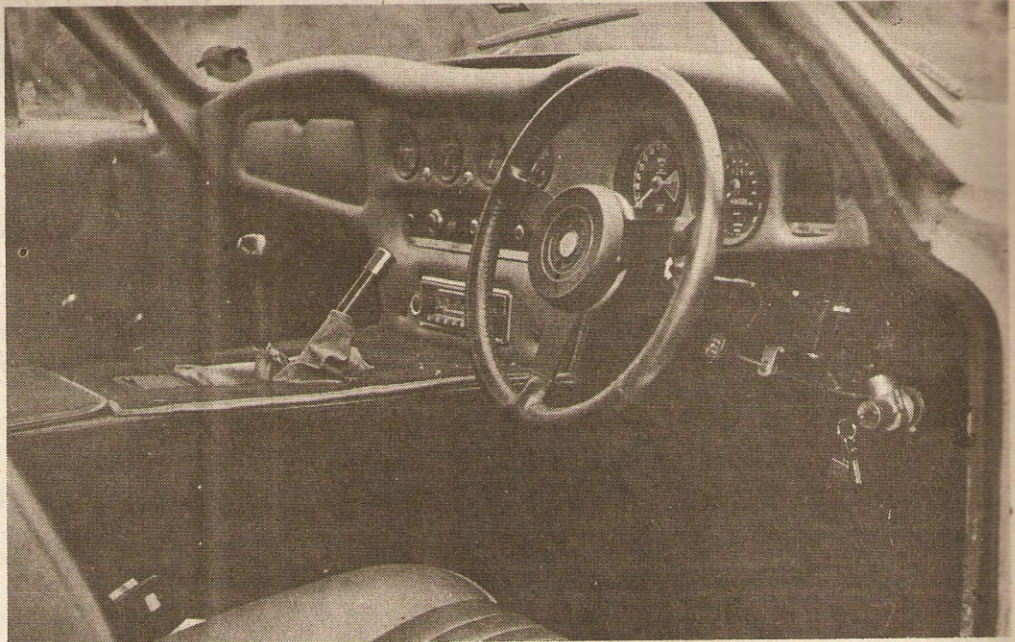
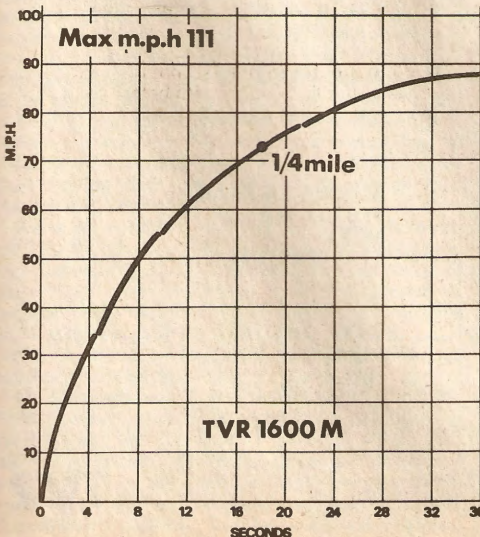
Chassis: Multi-tubular chassis of backbone form, with separate glassfibre body. Independent suspension of all four wheels by double wishbones, coil springs, and telescopic dampers. Rack and pinion steering. Bolt-on light-alloy wheels, fitted 185 HR 14 tyres.

Equipment: 12-volt lighting and starting. Speedometer. Rev-counter. Voltmeter. Oil pressure, water temperature, and fuel gauges. Heater. Heated rear window. 2-speed windscreen wipers and washers. Flashing direction indicators with hazard warning. Reversing lights.

Dimensions: Wheelbase 7ft 6in. Track 4ft 5½in. Overall length 12ft 11in. Width 5ft 4in. Weight 16cwt.

Performance: Maximum speed 111 mph. Speeds in gears: Third 77 mph, second 56 mph, first 34 mph. Standing quarter-mile 18.0s. Acceleration: 0-30 mph 3.4s, 0-50 mph 7.8s, 0-60 mph 11.6s, 0-80 mph 23.2s.

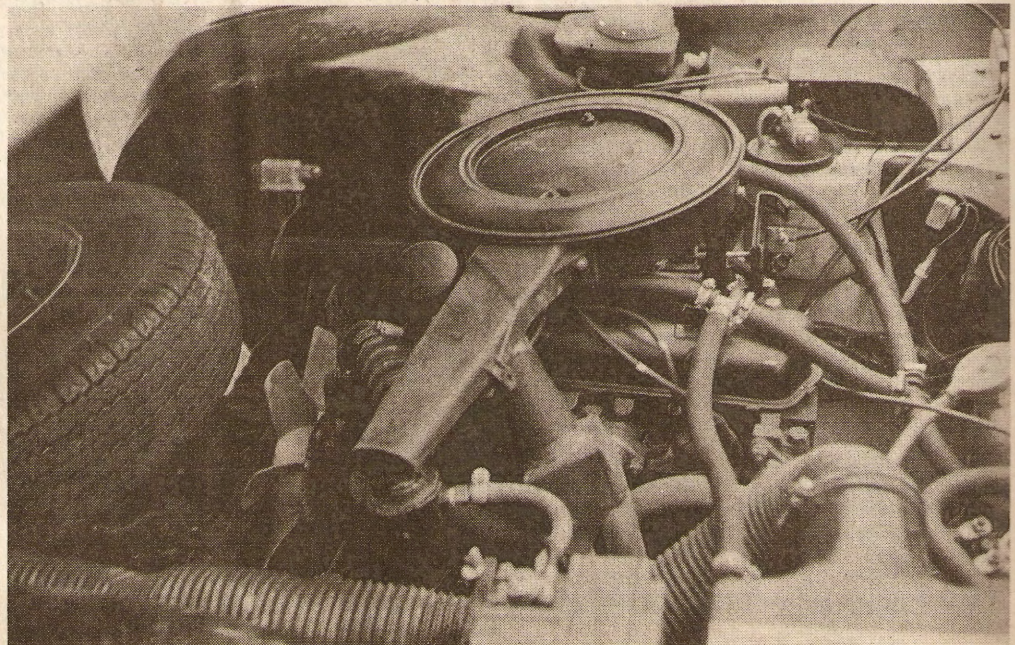
Fuel Consumption: 30 to 35 mpg.



The interior is attractive with functional round dials and generous padding.



The Ford 1600 GT pushrod engine works well to provide a useful performance/economy combination.



Commission con?

Having just returned from the Tour of Dean I'm left with the impression that the forestry commission must be doing very well out of us rally goers.

Not only do they fleece the competitors for their use of the roads, they fleece us spectators for our use of the car parks which we are compelled to use now by a bye-law. It costs 20p every time you go into a car park, you get no ticket so when you move to see another stage or stages you have to pay again and again. For me the major attraction of one day one area rallies is the way you can see the top runners every couple of stages but now it costs to do so. As a result we parked in a hard standing park some 50 yards from the road and collected a ticket. No we weren't on the verge but in what appeared to be a picnic area.

Does this mean that everyone within the forest on rally day not in a rally car park gets booked? Even if they are there to walk the dog or have a picnic.

Secondly if it is illegal to park on the verges why don't the cars parked on the verges outside houses get booked? They cause far greater obstruction than cars 50 yards from the road do.

Anyway, grouses aside it was a superb rally, and thanks "Ford", Ari Vatanen makes for instant excitement, he's super fast and ultra ragged!

MALVERN, WORCS.

MARK G. LISSIMORE

BBC shock

It's just not my luck this year. For the past three years I have travelled all alone to Silverstone and Brands Hatch just to see the British GP, and also the race of the champions, and each time the race is always on TV. But this year I will not go because of the high cost of admission and travelling, and to my astonishment the BBC are not televising it. Why do they have to make life hard for me (us)?

I would not mind missing one day of the Olympics, but to miss one day in the year of the British GP is murder.

EXETER, DEVON

STEPHEN EBBATSON

BARC: defence....

We feel we must write in reply to Mr Nick Brittan's comments in *Private Ear* on January 15.

The cash payment clubs make to marshals is generally understood to be no more than a contribution towards expenses and as such it is always welcome, for, with certain few exceptions, marshals receive no payment.

For 1976, the BARC have introduced a NEW IDEA whereby the 25p contribution they make is by way of special stamps, which are added up at the end of the year and, in the case of club members, may be used to pay for subscriptions, insignia, goods, etc; the BARC will increase the face value of the stamps by 10%. For non-members the stamps may only be exchanged for membership subscriptions but the BARC increase the face value of the stamps by 50% as an incentive. By choosing membership, with all its attendant benefits, a non-member will have something to show at the end of the year which surely is better than having 25p per day just disappear into his/her loose change.

We don't consider marshals are being "ripped-off", Mr Brittan, and you should not knock a new idea benefiting BARC marshals, the majority of whom are club members, and also aimed at increasing the membership of one of the country's leading race organisers, who put so much into the sport. On the contrary, they should be given as much support as possible.

Mr Shalders and I are both members of the BRSCC, BARC and the South Midlands Region of the BMRMC and marshal for BRSCC, BARC and BRDC approximately 50/55 days per year and whether or not the cash or stamp contributions are made we will still be there and despite Mr Ray Darvill's views do not wish to be considered paid

professionals, with the attendant disciplines, but amateurs with a professional outlook towards our involvement in motor sport.

WESTON COLVILLE
HARPENDEN, HERTS

M. J. SHALDERS
T. J. NORMAN

....and attack

Having just received entry forms for the season's opening meetings, I note that the BARC is leading the fight against inflation by announcing to my battered finances the raising of race entry fees to £10 (representing an increase of 44%). I presume, that just in case no spectators arrive, the meeting could be financed by the drivers.

Small wonder participation in Hod Rods, stockers, etc, has become increasingly popular (start money!)

GILLINGHAM, DORSET

M. G. JAGGARD

What's in a name?

Without wishing to detract anything at all from Guy Edward's account of "Taking Willie for a spin..." (January 8), I can't help thinking that there might be another explanation for the nickname given this splendid motor car, used by Equipe POW, in their pleasantly refreshing approach to motor racing.

Willie would seem an appropriate name derived solely from the registration numbers, but... could it not also indicate a cross between a Wolseley and a Riley, for aren't they Riley headlights and sidetrims, and isn't that a Riley bumper and radiator shell?

The standard weight of these cars was in the region of 32 cwt., and I thought most cars lost weight as they grew older (ferrous oxide etc.), not gained, something like 10 cwt! That must be one hell of a rollover bar!

Incidentally, if I remember correctly, this particular model was the last one to carry the polished "bell", those on the later 6/99s being painted mat black!

TONBRIDGE, KENT

CLIVE COOKE

Disillusioned with GP scene

Having read lately that it is proposed that there should be less races at a Grand Prix, I feel myself that if this does come about, it will be last straw in the battle to give spectators what they don't want.

The most important people in motor racing are spectators and I am sure that the majority of them wish to see a full day's racing. They should be considered a lot more often than they are, instead of it being taken for granted that they will be there.

I have often heard the view that sponsors have too much control in motor racing, due to the amount of money they are putting into it. Some people have even suggested that the sponsors are running Grand Prix racing to a certain extent. In fact, spectators run motor racing only they don't know it. Sponsors and advertisers don't spend money in motor racing because they have nothing else to do with it, they are interested in exposure. If we didn't go to watch races a lot of big firms with huge sums presently tied up with racing would have difficulty justifying continued expenditure.

One reads in magazines that due to the amount of money involved, Grand Prix racing is a business, not a sport. If this is so I always understood one of the first rules of business was that the customer is always right, in this case the spectator. I can only liken our case to that of standing at a shop counter, seeing the assistants go by but vainly waiting for service.

For example, I always go to the Brands Hatch Race of Champions and Grand Prix. Having paid half a day's gross wages for the privilege of looking round the paddock at the GP teams, I get the feeling that the teams are competing for the "Biggest Con of the Weekend" trophy. I suggest that this could be won next year by any enterprising team willing to leave a locked transporter in the paddock and fly their cars and personnel in and out for practice and the race by a large helicopter landing at Clearways. Then they could really laugh at us. I suspect John Webb

could even manage a smirk in acknowledgement of a fine tactical win.

racing stop their petty politics and bickering and help the circuit owners to improve facilities for the race goer, and remember that we are not people who are just to be barely tolerated.

Long live Pete Lyons, Barry Foley and Peter "the General" Evans. R.I.P., FICA, GPDA, FIA, RAC.

SEVENOAKS, KENT.

ROGER WARBURTON

Lotus appeal

I am writing to ask if you could possibly print this letter, to ask your many readers if anyone can give me some information on a Lotus 47, which I have had stored for four and half years. I was told it was an "Ex-Works" car.

It is chassis no 47-GT77, and has a fully demountable body, wide arches, with 10-inch front wheels and 14 inch rears. It is also fitted with triple pot alloy calipers, and fully rose jointed suspension. It was painted metallic blue when I bought it, but I have now re-sprayed it back to the Gold Leaf colours.

Since I started buying your magazine in 1967, not missing a single copy, I have found it to be the only one, for me, with the best coverage of motor sport available. I must thank you for the many hours of reading I have had over the years.

MORPETH, NORTHUMBERLAND

HARRY R. APPELEY

Roll bar folly

It would appear that a new rule in the 1976 RAC Blue Book requires all post-1965 open sports cars to have roll bars fitted for all speed events as well as circuit racing. If true, this spells the end of motor sport for the thousands of true road-going sports cars. What a way to run The Sport! To me, and many others, it will be the straw that breaks the camel's back of amateur participation in speed motoring, whence all motor sport derived originally. Those of us — and there must be a great number — who enjoy competing in hill-climbs and sprints in open cars which they also use as their normal road car, are now going to be forced either to give up the sport, or fit an expensive and ugly roll bar. In twenty-off years of competing (in Morgans of course!) I do not know of one injury, let alone fatality, to a sports car driver in a sprint or hill-climb that a roll bar would have prevented. Lord Ebury at Prescott many years ago, possibly, but he died driving a 'C' type Jaguar.

Entries at speed events everywhere will be substantially reduced, as will spectators' interest. For instance, our Morgan Sports Car Club annual sprint at Curborough will be worthless to organise. For many years this and similar events have given enjoyable and safe speed motoring to Club members at reasonable cost. Only a fraction have roll bars fitted, or will be prepared to disfigure their road cars and pay the hundreds of pounds to comply with this ridiculous rule.

Morgan cars in particular will be hard hit by this ruling. They compete in their dozens, showing often that the British sports car can beat expensive Ferraris and Porsches around the twists and bends of our hill-climb venues. The demand for their very limited production goes up and up, with more and more being seen and appreciated abroad. What a way to treat such a fine example of British motor manufacturing! No sport available for the last of the True Sports Cars, by order of the RAC. OK if you don't mind driving like a boy racer, but otherwise it's our 50 mph public roads and say goodbye to Motor Sport as we have known and enjoyed it.

This seems to be one more example of unnecessary legislation from the Organisation purporting to look after our interests, the consequences of which have been inadequately considered, or shrugged off as immaterial. Is the RAC so wrapped up in the world of big-time professional motor racing and the like that the future of the small, enjoyable weekend motor sport events is ignored?

If this rule is true, then let those of us who feel strongly against it write NOW to Dean Delamont, Eason-Gibson or whoever, in the hope that with sufficient outcry it can be rescinded.

BROMSGROVE, WORCS.

RAY MEREDITH

Tony Dron—dizzy heights

"I think you can safely say that I am the tallest racing driver in Britain," says Tony Dron. He stands 6ft 5in, not, you might think, the ideal size for somebody who's planning a season of single seater racing. But that's just what he is planning (see P&P) and he doesn't like jokes about lengthened chassis etc. March 7 will be quite a day in motor sport as it will see the first ever running of an officially entered British Leyland single seater Formula 3 car. It will also be quite a day for Tony Dron, for it will mark his return to single seater racing after an absence of some five years.

Most people think of Tony as a saloon car driver/journalist, indeed he has scored well in both categories in recent years, but he has, in fact, done more single seater races than he has saloon events and although he does still contribute powerful prose to a number of magazines, he's now a full time racing driver, and an ambitious one at that. His fellow journalists have always scorned his talk of making it big in racing and given him a hard time in the past — but he's an extremely tolerant sort of chap and his way of replying to the cynics is going to be with his track record.

Tony Dron arrived on an unsuspecting world in August 1946 and was only about 18 inches long, and other than his parents nobody really took too much notice. In fact it seems that he was a fairly unobtrusive child as he doesn't recall a great deal of incident from his early years.

He went to school in Aldenham in Surrey and it was here that a first interest in things mechanical became to grow. Like the majority of people he didn't have much time for the ridiculous false discipline of school cadet forces and managed to work his way into an easy niche with the motor transport division. Tony actually found himself in charge of this division "there were only two others and they dismissed after 15 minutes for a smoke so I had the motorbike to myself and used to terrorise the poor idiots who were subjected to square bashing," says acting Lieutenant Corporal Dron.

He was something of an expert shot though (because the ridiculous length of his arms took him nearer the target, I suggested; his reply being quite unprintable). Shooting contests at Bisley were far more important than his struggle to get through English and Latin A-level and, in fact, it was impossible to ascertain whether he ever gained these distinctions.

"My only other athletic claim to fame was in the three legged race at my prep school," he recalled, "I won that two years running which I reckon was quite an achievement." Quite so. He also admits to being something of a perishing nuisance with his bicycle which had an obnoxious horn with which he used to delight in annoying people. A warning to the inhabitants of Blackheath — the Dron has recently acquired a new bicycle and can be seen terrorising everyone on the road into London almost every day. Ah well it can't be much worse than his antics in a Citroen 2CV which preceded it — I hope.

After leaving school at the age of 18 he arrived upon the startled populis of Calcutta for a holiday — his height saw him rejected as a possible Guru candidate so he returned from the mystic East to try his hand at the College of Estate Management and the joys of motoring with an Austin 7. This brought out the mechanic in him as it required rewiring and some work on the engine and it was then passed on to brother Peter (of *Custom Car* and Woolworth LP cover fame). To replace it he bought an Austin 12 which he acquired by leaving a note on the windscreen of the poor unsuspecting vehicle. "I will buy this car, phone . . ." and he did. He kept it for two years and then sold it "at a profit. I wanted to buy a Bentley but it wasn't that good a deal so I thought I'd buy a racing car instead. Actually I would have felt guilty driving fast in a vintage car — I had this absurd, irresponsible urge for speed. I suppose I still have really. I love travelling and going fast, I don't care what in."

Actually he only spent three months at the college before leaping up half way through a lecture and walking out and enrolling at the Chelsea "College of Knowledge" where he

qualified as a mechanic. "I was rather worried as my father was a chartered surveyor and it was sort of accepted that I would follow the same course. There was a long silence on the line but to his credit he accepted my rather extraordinary action." After three months Tony became a defaulter and began racing with his Formula Ford Titan.

That was in 1968 and during the same year he became involved in motoring journalism. He met Innes Ireland (then Sports Editor of *Autocar*) through a friend and began doing odd jobs for him. "I was frightened by the insecurity of motor racing. I had no money and was really scratching. I had to have some money to help my racing career. My big break in journalism came when I did the Formula Ford review for *Motoring News* in 1968 for which Mike Doodson (later to be Tony's successor at *Motor*) paid me £10 6s for a whole page."

He'd actually been through an MRS course prior to starting to race the Titan but in the beginning it was a struggle as he had to prepare the car, take it to the circuits and drive it. However, after being punted off in his first race, the name of Dron soon became quite a force in Formula Ford. "I began finishing second to the aces like Tony Trimmer and Ray Allen on occasions and used to beat James Hunt in those days." At the end of 1968 things were looking good except "I was naive about money". On the journalistic side he'd won the Guild of Motoring Writers Sir Williams Lyons scholarship.

But 1969 didn't work out very well despite a small amount of sponsorship from Silver Knight



Dron leads a group of Mexicos in his Strand Glass Escort Sport at Cadwell Park this year.

Lubricants. He was offered a drive by Mike Spence Ltd in a new Lotus but this didn't materialize and for a while he ran his Titan from the Ron Harris workshops next door. An early season accident didn't help matters and another in his sixth race of the year, at Thruxton where he was leading the likes of Dave Walker and Mo Harness, brought the season to a close and the car was sold to Dave Charlton in South Africa.

He still had a £12 job cleaning cars at Spence's but the Lyons prize persuaded *Autocar* to offer him a job but he didn't take it. A month later a certain Nick Brittan offered him a job as his assistant running the European FF series, the STP bonuses, Guild of Motoring Writers business and the *Daily Mirror* Colour supplement. "It was the best thing that ever happened to me. I got my self-respect back and learned how the world worked."

He returned to the tracks with a Gerry Birrell entered FF Crossle in 1970 but lack of time, money and mechanic made it a disaster. On Jan 1 1971 he started to work for *Motor* and gave up racing to concentrate on work. In August 1973 he was promoted to Sports Editor but the racing bug was back. He'd seen Editor Roger Bell competing in the Escort Mexico series and he wanted to have a go. He fixed a deal with Frys of Lewisham to run Bell's car in the final races of 1972. In 1973 Strakers of Wimbledon provided him with a similar drive. He took pole at Cadwell Park but then rolled the car — the following week he scored his first ever



win at Oulton Park. "I was stupid really. I wasn't a pot hunter — I always went against the best opposition and got demoralised." However this win and a special award on the Tour of Britain gave him confidence.

He had an offer to drive a second works Broadspeed Dolomite Sprint in the 1974 RAC championship and took the most important decision of his life. "I felt there could be no compromise between racing and writing — it had to be one or the other. It may have looked stupid for me to leave the security of *Motor* but I wasn't married and could afford to take the risk." It worked out both ways really. He made £20 or more that year than he would have done at *Motor* and he became a recognised racing driver. His best performances were at Spa, the TT and the Tour of Britain where he won his class. He was also the only Dolomite driver to get a lap record that year (Barrie Williams took all the others in his Mazda). "I also learned a lot about how a proper team is run, tactics and so on. It was a good year." He was replaced in the team for 1975 by his former Editor Roger Bell. "Ralph Broad said that Andy (Rouse) had to win, which was fair enough as he was the number one. However, I wanted to win as well so I had to find something else."

He didn't find anything worthwhile though. There was a deal with Stan Clark to run an Alfa but that petered out and so he wandered back into Mexico racing with a new Escort 2. "It was pretty awful — I had a mortgage, an overdraft and no drive." Happily he found an enthusiastic new sponsor in Strand Glass and started to get the Escort going well and then he scored yet another success on the Tour of Britain in a Strand backed Fiat so the year ended up well.

"I feel I've always given my sponsors good publicity and I'm sure I am capable of giving them good results if I've got the right car" he says in his friendly, persuasive tone.

Certainly his achievements haven't gone unnoticed and last week's announcement of a fully sponsored Formula 3 drive is a climax to many years of very hard work and dedication to a cause. Unipart recognised Dron's ability to drive as well as the publicity he attracts and have put a lot of faith in him for their exciting 1976 project. How does Tony feel?

"I've still done more single seater races than saloons. I don't really feel at home in saloons except on Special Stages like on the Tour or long distance events. Perhaps I should have been a rally driver, but that's different altogether. I'm looking forward to this year. My aim is to win races for Unipart, of course, but also to help them get the fact that they provide parts for all cars sold in Britain across. It's a great challenge but I think I can do both jobs well."

The future? "To make this season a success and hopefully progress logically from there. But it's got to be success with Unipart first . . . and, of course, my bicycle.

IAN PHILLIPS

MRE becomes TIGA

Are Tim Schenken and Howden Ganley really in Formula Ford as the ad said in last week's issue? Yes, they are, that's the simple answer, and judging by the response from that one ad, people seem to like the idea.

What Tim Schenken-Howden Ganley Engineering have done is to buy up the racing manufacture side of MRE, the company that Jim Gleave ran at Bourne End, and incorporate their own ideas, with the help of a designer. To this end, they've moved the whole assembling operation (Bill Stone makes the chassis and FKS the bodies so the car only has to be assembled) down to premises of Ganley's at 361 Bath Road, Cippenham, Slough, Bucks.

"We're working about 12 hours a day at the moment," said Schepken last week.

How did the great Australian (Schenken)/New Zealand (Ganley) alliance come about? Without wishing to be detrimental about their careers, neither have driven anything really competitive in Formula racing this year (apart from Schenken's one F2 ride) and they decided on diversifying. They looked at the various FF cars, and didn't really like any of them apart from a couple. But they talked to MRE and have bought out their manufactur-

ing and car production departments.

With Martin Read, the only other member of the staff at this stage and an ex-Frank Williams designer who's been working with Harvey Postlethwaite of late, they've recently been attacking both the FF and FF 2000. The former is due to have a new rear pickup point and new front suspension plus upright and wishbones, "we're doing a tidying up job, finishing the car off a little bit nicer," said Schenken, citing the way that Brabham used to market their cars. The FF 2000 will have the same treatment, and testing should take place within a month.

The cars are to be known as TIGAs, and the FF with gearbox only should cost around £2550 while the FF 2000 should cost £3,250 with everything apart from engine. The aim of Schenken and Ganley is to put the cars together so that a driver can just pick it up and go straight out onto the track, already sorted, no fantastic amount to do to the car. In fact the two partners will be doing some of the testing, even though Schenken hasn't driven an FF since 1971 (in South Africa) and Ganley's never driven a Formula Ford at all. "He's got a shock coming to him," remarked Schenken.

RAC's insurance warning

A serious warning about not having a certificate of insurance issued by the RAC's official brokers C T Bowring is contained in the latest Motor Sport bulletin.

In recent weeks a number of clubs have collected premium from drivers under the rally scheme without first applying to the brokers for a certificate.

It is pointed out, very strongly, that unless the brokers receive a request for a blanket certificate no cover is in force. By collecting premiums, when they are not operating the scheme, clubs give a false impression to competitors who, the

report states, are in fact driving while uninsured.

In addition to the risk to competitors it is conceivable that an offending club could be liable to substantial damages which are not insured under any policy.

It would seem therefore that competitors, if in doubt about cover, should ask to see the certificate at signing on.

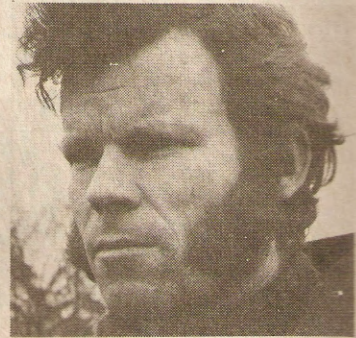
The new rates for insurance for this year are £5 for a closed event, £5 for a restricted event and £10 for a national event of up to 24hrs duration. The two smaller fees apply to events of up to 12 hrs in length.

Power to the hills

The hillclimb scene is currently erupting with DFVs, new engines and cars, and an awful lot of power. Leader of this new attack on the domain of Roy Lane, the 1975 RAC hillclimb champion, is former champion Sir Nick Williamson. After a year's absence from the championship scene, the baronet is back with a vengeance, for he's bought the ex-Hans Stuck F1 March and fitted it with his own DFV from the Marlyn.

But if that's not enough, then there's the story that Alister Douglas-Osborne is fitting his Pilbeam with a DFV and the talk of the hills now is how good will the 3.4 Essex engine be in the back of Chris Cramer's March. Richard Brown bids for top honours this year as well, for having remained faithful to Brian Martin's sports car, Brown has asked Martin to build him up a short wheelbase, F2 based single seater, and the next question will be what sort of engine he's thinking of fitting, for it's known that he's looking for something ultra light and has his sights set on an ex-Tommy Reid mill.

With the rumours gathering in strength, it was only right to phone Mike MacDowel. The 1974 RAC champion liked the idea of a comeback to single seaters, but replied that it was past his financial



Chris Cramer — Essex power

limit. "I haven't done anything about it so far although the idea of doing the occasional meeting appeals greatly." So the former F2 driver will continue with his sports car exploits even though his rivals maintain there's a 3.8 Essex engine at Cosworth with his name on it. Even so, it all adds up to a great year on the hills.

● David Franklin leaves the 1.6 band of hillclimbers this year to go 2.0 with one of the more potent cars to be seen on the hills, the ex-Depailler March-BMW 742. His Ensign has been sold to Ted Williams, a one time Anglia and Mini racer on the circuits.

Thruxton's 100 days testing

For the first time in four years, Thruxton are to offer up to ninety days of silenced testing and an undisclosed number of unsilenced testing days. The news was announced by the BARC this week following talks with the circuit owners.

Thruxton has traditionally been beset with problems from local residents who now restrict it to 12 days racing a year, but the testing facility has always been there, usually negotiated with the circuit owners. Now the BARC have been allowed the full testing option which embraces ninety days of testing, and what would seem to be around ten days of unsilenced cars.

For the silenced testing, the club reckon that they could take around 40 cars which would have to be silenced as per road use, which is down to 85 decibels, and one assumes that the BARC would enforce this rule pretty heavily. However, if a racing car were to be silenced down to that level, the club would certainly accept it. It is expected however, that a number of the days will be taken up with block bookings for dealer promotions of new cars, etc.

The unsilenced days will have the same track numbers and it's expected that there will be both private and general test days. For the full list of dates for both silenced and unsilenced test days, when catering facilities will be available incidentally, write to the general manager, Thruxton Circuit, Andover, Hants or phone him at 026 477 2607.

Julian wins

Highlight of last Sunday's Yorkshire SCC sporting trial was the battle between Lol Hurt in his Ford Special and Julian Fack in his Impunity. The pair headed a small but fairly representative body of northern drivers and four rounds of seven sections on land at Brighouse produced some close competition.

Fack eventually won with 49 marks lost to the 54 of Hurt. In the first round both dropped 10 marks, Fack cleaned the entire course on the second tour to Hurt's 11 marks and the entire course on the second tour to Hurt's 11 marks and the local man got back six of these in the subsequent two tours.

Robin Alexander, in his Facksimilie was third on 78 marks from Keith Butterfield (Cannon), 80 marks, Ray Hatton (Cannon), 82 marks and Ralph Needham (Cannon), 103 marks.

TEAC's rally X series

TEAC are once again organising a four round rallycross championship at Lydden Hill this year. The format at each meeting will be the same as last year with the fastest 18 in the preliminary qualifying runs competing for points in the final runs, where six drivers start simultaneously.

The prize fund is quite considerable with a total of £1,060: £50 goes to the top points scorer at each meeting, and £200 to the championship winner. Any potential candidate who has not received regulations is asked to contact Ken Kaye at 167 Benfleet Road, Benfleet, Essex (Southend 558030). The dates of TEAC's series at Lydden are February 8, March 7, April 19 and August 30.

Doubts at Aintree

The future of Aintree as a motor racing circuit is still looking uncertain at this stage and the Aintree Circuit Club are more pessimistic at this stage than optimistic. This follows the recent change of management and ownership, now in the hands of Ladbrokes.

The Club themselves have recently formed a new committee, but at least they expect to be able to hold their practice sessions on Tuesday evenings, at least until June. Then it depends on negotiations with Ladbrokes.

So Brian Murphy, the E-type driver, may be the last ever Aintree Trophy winner. It was he who scooped the £100 prize and trophy with 87 points, just beating Dave Millington (Firenza) by 2 points, while third was Formula Fordster David Harbour some 14 points back with Harold Nuttall (Cooper S) a further point behind.

BRDC insist on protection

In the interests of driver safety, the BRDC are insisting that all drivers at their meetings at Silverstone wear fire resistant gloves and fire-resistant outer clothing which must cover a driver's arms, legs and the torso up to the neck. Although the RAC recommend it, the wearing of protective garments is not compulsory at any other meetings. The BRDC are to check on clothing at scrutineering prior to each meeting and should anyone be seen on the grid "improperly dressed" he will be asked to "dress" before the flag drops.

● For the record, if you're getting a little confused about trials cars Facksimilies and Impunities, let it be said that the former was designed as a production car, using Impunity 2 as the development car. Julian Fack still drives Impunity, with its Imp engine, while he's sold around 15 Facksimilies which can take any engine.



Escort 2s at play: Ron Douglas leads Rod Chapman, but both were beaten by George Warren's old Escort

Warren's great return

Just to show that the days of the Mark 1 Ford Escort in Rallycross are not dead, George Warren returned to Snetterton to trounce the Mark 2 versions of Rod Chapman and Ron Douglas in Round 1 of the Winter Series on Sunday, his first run time of 3m 07.0s remaining unbeaten throughout the afternoon. All the ingredients were right for another successful afternoon's rallycross, an excellent entry sprinkled with Internationally experienced drivers, a dry day and a fast track. Rewarding the efforts both of the organisers, Sporting CC of Norfolk and West Suffolk MC, and the much travelled drivers was a very large crowd despite a cold and grey day.

Once again the Rally Car class opened the various runs, a bit depleted this time but livened up by the likes of Chris Gamble (Escort RS) and Dick Talbot in an evil-handing Marina. Gamble had his usual disastrous first run but won the class easily on the sum of his other two, nearly 10 seconds ahead of Keith Webb's Escort. Nick Garner seems to be constantly looking over his shoulder these days since the opposition is getting closer and closer, however despite the lack of ccs the Solihull Motors car again remained unbeaten in the 1 litre class but looked set for defeat on run two by Roger Burn in the Clan Crusader, until he had a drive shaft go with serious results, while Bruce Male pushed him all the way with his 1 litre car in race three, drawing alongside to record an equal time. As we said they're getting closer.

While the rest of the 1400 cc class practiced their kamakazi tactics at the Hairpin, Dave Baskerville quietly practised his art of being the fastest 1400 car on the circuit. Almost unnoticed he set a second run time of

3m 08.2s which qualified as second only to Warren's BTD and took maximum Championship points. Richard Painton was next, some three seconds off pace, with Keith Stones a further three seconds down, the rain in the last runs effectively reducing all this class to two quick runs.

Who then stood out in the unlimited class? Without doubt Warren's individual run time was sensational but even he was beaten by Hugh Wheldon's VW in the last race and managed a spin in another. For sheer spectacle Rod Chapman was hard to match; in the first race he powered through after a first lap melée, throwing the car from lock to lock; in his second he almost pushed Ron Douglas through the bends; and in the last he seemed set to pass Wheldon when he spun wildly at turn one. Perhaps Douglas should take the honours for struggling around with only first and fourth gears for two races; or Wheldon for yet another smooth, swift display and getting within 0.3s of Chapman's time. Or Peter Harrold (VW) who beat Douglas once and was always there or thereabouts. Or Rob Gibson who was leading a race from Chapman when his Midget's engine went bang. Or Dave Fuell who certainly seemed to be trying the hardest and had a bout of Escort understeer to contend with. Or Nobby Creswell (Escort RS) for using the highest revs of the day. It was that sort of meeting, never a dull race or performance, a great start to the Snetterton year!

BTD: George Warren (2.1 Ford Escort-BDA), 3m 07.0s.

Class winners: Chris Gamble (1.8 Ford Escort-BDA), 3m 12.5s; Nick Garner (870 BMC Mini), 3m 19.2s; Dave Baskerville (1.4 Airey Mini), 3m 08.2s; Warren, 2, Rod Chapman (2.2 Ford Escort-BDA), 3m 08.9s.

Snetterton gossip

Another recruit for rallycross from the BTRDA autocross ranks is Terry Smith who at Snetterton on Sunday gave his 1558 cc Ford Twin cam-engined Mini a taste of the mixed surface racing. Despite finishing sixth in class Smith could hardly be too happy with his debut for he had the clutch give in during practice and expired in his last race with very low oil pressure after circulating in a steaming state.

Ian Turner's Turnmex Racing Escort 1300 ran for the first time with a 1300 T/C unit installed and the

driver was well pleased; we feel he would be happier still if the car displayed less of a seemingly terminal understeer.

Last year's Winter Series Champion John Winsor, who confesses to having done very little because of business pressures since winning the title last winter, brought along his earlier car resplendent in its Colton Good Shoes livery, but his day was a poor one involving a couple of re-runs and what looked very much like a cooked engine at the end.

Lorina B tops at BWRDC

The British Women Racing Drivers Club presented their annual awards at a very pleasant function at a Heathrow Hotel last Saturday night, when Dave Lee Travis hauled himself off his sickbed to welcome the fast ladies of the club. The lady who scooped the big two was Lorina Boughton, who took both the SpereX VHT championship and the Goodwin Trophy. But it was a very close thing, for Wendy Markey was two points behind in the former, and one in the latter.

Third in both series was Sue Tucker-Peake, and Divina Galica

Lorina Boughton — three awards



picked up a prize for fourth in the SpereX series, although physically speaking, Jackie Epstein did the job for her as she's still throwing herself down mountains. Divina scored again in the MCD Ladies Escort championship, just one point behind Sue Tucker-Peake who took the series which consisted of four races in Shellsport Escorts. Wendy Markey and Lorina Boughton tied for third spot. The Improvement award in this series was won by Viv West.

Lorina Boughton took another award in the shape of the Embassy Trophy, another really close struggle with Wendy Markey who was a mere half point behind in second place, and Formula Ford driver Janet McPherson took the Newcomers Award. Not unnaturally, she also took the Helen Spence Trophy for the best novice driver, Divina Galica being her closest rival some three points behind. Carol Lloyd took the Hillclimb trophy by nine points from Maggie Blankstone, but Mrs Blankstone tied for the sprint trophy with the club's chairman, Judy Andreason. And it was Mrs Andreason who carried off the greatest trophy of them all for her services to the club, the Lord Wakefield Trophy which was first awarded in 1932. A most pleasant evening was had by all.

The Pod down the Palace

This weekend, Santa Pod Raceway are holding the first International Drag Racing show at the Crystal Palace National Sports Centre, with a display totally devoted to the country's leading drag racing cars and bikes.

Star exhibit will be Don Garlits' dragster, which will be driven by Garlits himself later this year at the Easter Pod meeting. Don Garlits is of course the World's leading driver and constructor, having dominated the sport for over twenty years with a whole string of cars, culminating in the latest line of rear engined cars, a concept he was the first to perfect and one that now is the standard design.

The car on show will be his 1975 model with which he set best times of 5.78s and 247 mph, and until the building of his 1976 model (5.6s/250 mph) set the mark that the rest have to aim at, powered by the ubiquitous alloy Milodon of 470 cubic inches (7.8 litre).

The leading cars from the UK — Pete Crane's Stormbringer, the Houndog car and Dennis Priddle's Mr Revell, will also be on display, together with Funny cars from the Houndog team, Priddle and Santa Pod, who will exhibit the rebuilt Chadderton and Okazaki Vega for the first time since its catastrophic engine explosion last year, renamed as "The Gladiator" and to be driven by Allan Herridge.

Other leading cars will include the three car Stone team, Ray Hoare's immaculate new streamlined Pro Comp dragster, Pat Cuss' Pro Comp dragster, the original Tee-Rat now with new owners and small block Chevy, Panic, Strip-teaser, Liam Churchill's Capri funny with new Mk II body, the new Austin/Pontiac

from the Dorset Horn team, John Moreton's Invader Chevy Vauxhall, the Pro Stocks of Goggin, Rose, Dickson and Smith, John Hobbs' Incredible 8.3s bike and so-on, just about every car that can be squeezed in.

The show opens on Saturday 24 at 10 until 7, and from 10 until 6 on Sunday, admission 70p for adults and 30p for children, and it will have two drag racing films showing continuously.

Stretching it to four

Thanks to slick organisation everyone had four runs over the 900 yds course at the Shenstone and District co-promoted autocross at Hill Ridware, nr Rugeley, last Sunday, but Wiltshire driver Barry Stretch showed the locals how it was done by taking BTD in his Cooper S with a run of 65.8s.

Stretch was just three tenths quicker than Dick Keen, still with his 1300 Escort, who won the class by just over a second from Dennis Sparkes and Bruce Rushton, both in Minis.

Reg Fitt was quickest of the Minis on Standard tyres in 74.5s from John Watson's Imp on 76.4s. Ron Aiken and Terry Dunn shared an Escort to take first and second in class three seconds apart while the sports car battle was resolved in favour of John Haden's Alfa GT Junior over Geoff Strong in a borrowed MGB.

Polydor's feature races

A series, but not championship, of seventeen races will be given very wide support by Polydor Records during the coming season. The deal has been fixed up with Motor Circuit Developments whereby certain races at rounds of the BBC Radio One saloon car championship will receive support from the record company. Two of the races will be for Formula 3, one of them at Mallory Park BBC Radio One funday in May. Other formulae with Polydor races planned include FF2000, special saloons and historic cars, the last

at the 25th anniversary meeting at Snetterton in October.

Not all the 17 races will be Polydor Trophy races but will be named after various of the company's recording stars and it is intended that some of those stars will be at the meetings where their records are being promoted. The meetings will be at the four MCD circuits, Brands Hatch, Snetterton, Mallory Park and Oulton Park. It was at Brands in September that the first Polydor meeting took place featuring F3.

Croft practice

Three sessions replace the hourly sessions that have taken place at practice days at Croft. For 1976 there will be practising each Tuesday morning from 9.30 to 12 noon at a cost of £4.50, and two afternoon sessions on Tuesdays and Fridays from 1 to 4 at a cost of £5.40. Booking will be taken in advance only, and anyone not turning up for his or her session will forfeit 50 per cent of the fee. Ten cars will be allowed per session, and priority will be given to regular Croft competitors.

RAC's championship dates

The RAC issued the list of dates for their various championships in conjunction with their prize-giving last week. With a fine turn-out of competitors, received by Sir Clive Bossom, all the various off track presentations were made to the various award winners.

Among the various winners were Roy Lane (hillclimbs), Alan Richards (Leaders), Dave Harris (sprint), Brian Mondey (drag), Jack Pearce (sporting trial), Geoffrey Spencer (production car trial), Mike Turpin (autocross), Trevor Smith (auto-test).

The dates for the 1976 season are as follows:
RAC National Autotest championship: February 8, Eastbourne and DMC; March 7, Sevenoaks and DMC; March 28, Harrow CC; April 4, Hagley and DLCC; April 18, Southsea MC; April 25, Bolton le Moors SC; May 2, SCC of Norfolk; May 16, Eastern Counties MC; May 23, Loughborough CC; June 6, Southampton MC; June 13, Rhyll and DMC; June 26, Scottish SCC; June 27, Cumberland SCC; July 4, Caernarvonshire and Anglesey MC; July 11, Airedale and Pennine MC; July 18, Bath MC; August 8, Hartlepool DMC; August 22, Sherwood Forest MC; September 5, Dunlop MC; September 12, Whitehouse MC; October 3, 62 CC.

RAC National Autocross championship: April 18, South Hams MC; April 19, Haldon MC; May 2, Peterborough MC; May 9, Cosmopolitan CC; May 16, Bristol MC and LCC; May 23, Stort Valley AC; May 30, GEC (Strafford) MC; May 31, Hagley and DLCC; June 6, Lancs and Cheshire CC; June 13, Welsh Counties CC; June 19, EMI MC; June 20, Chess Valley MC; June 27, Midland Manor MC; July 4, Exeter MC; July 10, West Suffolk MC; July 11, Chelmsford MC; July 18, Longton and DMC; July 25, Woolbridge MC; August 1, Dudley and DMC; August 8, Winchester and DCC; August 15, Owen MC; August 22, Rhyll and DMC; August 29, Bath MC; August 30, Taunton MC; September 5, Brent Vale MC.

RAC National Production Car Trial championship: February 1, Dudley and District; February 15, Farnborough and DMC; March 7, Shenstone and DCC; April 4, Mid Surrey ACC; April 11, North Cotswold MC; April 25, Coventry and Warks MC; May 2, North Wales CC; May 16, Bewdley AC; August 15, Wolverhampton and South Staffs CC; August 29, Mid Surrey AC; September 5, Sporting Owner DC; October 3, SUNBAC; October 17, Owen MC; October 24, Salisbury and Shaftsbury CC; November 7, North Midland MC; December 5, Ilkley DMC.

RAC National Sporting Car Trial, those still to be run: January 25, Kitching Trophy; February 1, Geoff Taylor; February 15, Charles Pollard; February 22, Wiltshire Trophy; February 29, Colmore March 7, 4/44; March 14, Derbyshire; March 21, Jacobean Trophy; September 19, Stone Trough; September 26, Bossom Trophy; October 3, Dergate; October 10, Roy Fedden; October 17, Pennine; October 24, Shell; October 31, High Peak; November 7, November Sporting; November 14, Biggs Memorial; November 21, John Bull; November 28, Johnson; December 5, Gloucester.

RAC National Drag Racing championship: March 7, Santa Pod; April 16, Snetterton; May 8/9, Santa Pod; May 16, Blackbushe; May 31, Santa Pod; August 15, Blackbushe; August 30, Santa Pod; September 26, Snetterton.

RAC National Sprint Championship: March 21, Longridge; March 28, Yeovilton; April 3, Oulton Park; April 18, Wroughton; April 25, Curborough; May 1, Greenham Common; May 31, Basington; June 6, Curborough; June 13, Duxford; June 20, Blackpool; July 18, Duxford; August 15, Woodvale; September 19, Yeovilton; September 26, Wroughton; October 2, Weston-super-Mare.

RAC National Leaders championship: April 11, Wiscombe Park; April 18/19, Loton Park; May 1/2, Prescott; May 29, Barbon; June 5/6, Shelsley Walsh; June 19/20, Doune; July 4, Harewood; July 31, Craigantlet; August 8, Pontypool; August 14/15, Shelsley Walsh; September 4/5, Prescott; September 18/19, Boune.

RAC National Hillclimb championship: April 11, Wiscombe Park; April 18/19, Loton Park; May 1/2, Prescott; May 29, Barbon; June 5/6, Shelsley Walsh; June 19/20, Doune; July 4, Harewood; July 22, Bouley Bay; July 24, Val des Terres; July 31, Craigantlet; August 8, Pontypool; August 14/15, Shelsley Walsh; August 29/30, Gurston Down; September 4/5, Prescott; September 18/19, Doune.

WarrenMk1

Undeterred by his enormous roll at the November meeting George Warren was back with a different kind of bang at Snetterton on Sunday. Since the circuit is now considerably tighter than at the September meeting when Trevor Hopkins set a time of 3m 04.0s, Warren's BTD of the afternoon will be the record to beat for 1976. As forecast his car was repairable after its November crash and now displays a new paint job for '76 and the decals of his major sponsors for the new season, Team Castrol and Ralph Ripley Tyres. Like several of the top drivers at Snetterton Warren was on M & H Racemaster Tyres (although in his case on the driven wheels only).

WarrenMk2

Sunday at Snetterton marked the motorsport debut of Ian Warren, son of the popular Welshman George Warren. 17-year-old Ian who spent last year grass track motorcycle racing turned out in a one litre Mini which started life near home in the hands of a local autocrosser. But Dad sent the engine to be breathed on by the Mini engine wizard Tom Airey. Considering that he had never driven the car before Sunday's rallycross, Ian drove very well and it should not take too long before he is up with the rest of the class. He plans a season of autocross this year.

BF's FF at Silverstone

Brush Fusegear are remaining faithful to the BRDC next season by again sponsoring their Formula Ford championship. There are 10 rounds to the series with eight at Silverstone and two at Oulton Park. Points will be scored on a 20-15-12-10-8-6-4-3-2-1 basis at each round, and all rounds will count. Prize money in each round will be first, £54; second, £36; third, £24; fourth, £18; fifth, £12; sixth, £6. Final awards will be £125 and the Brush Fusegear Trophy for the winner with £75 going to second man and £50 to the third placed competitor. The dates, printed correctly in last weeks issue, are:

March 14, Silverstone; April 10/11, Silverstone; April 19, Silverstone; May 31, Silverstone; June 30, Silverstone; June 25, Oulton Park; August 1, Silverstone; August 14, Oulton Park; August 30, Silverstone; October 2, Silverstone.

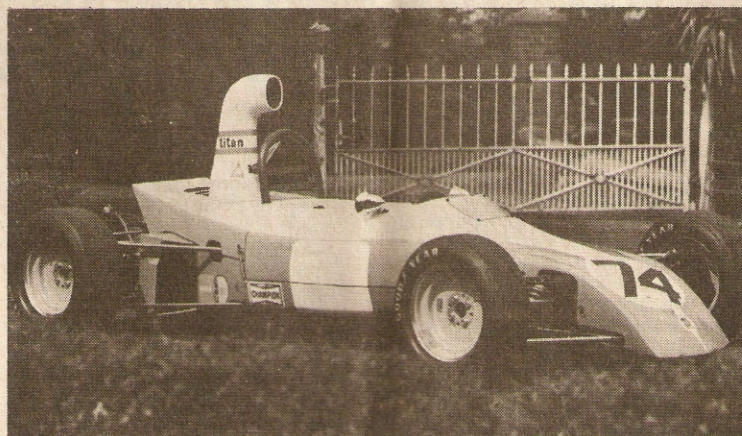
SS Register planned

Very much in the embryo stage at the moment are plans for a Special Saloon Register. Formed by David Canacott of Pole Position in South-end along the lines of the Clubmans Register, it is hoped that it will represent the views and sort out the problems of special saloon drivers throughout Britain, numerically one of the largest bodies of motor racing people in the country.

Each class will be represented by one driver on the committee, so that if a driver has a problem in his class,

he has just one person to contact, and he in turn will put forward that problem at a committee meeting. The whole idea has been given the blessing of the RAC, who obviously see this as being a way of allowing motor racing people to sort out their own problems without having to go to the RAC to have them sorted for them.

It is thought that the Register will get underway properly in February when Canacott will announce full plans and ideas, plus a 'midfield' championship.



Titan's Formula Ford Mk9 in American trim.

Titan's FF and FF2000

After a couple of years concentration on exports, Titan are back on the home scene with two cars and their engines. In fact they've been supplying engines to Crossle for last season's FF2000 models, and now they've gone into the production of the cars themselves. The Titan is to be known as the Mk 10 and Titan's Mk 9 is their Formula Ford. They already have one customer for their FF2000, a long-time Titan driver and will continue doing engines for Crossle in FF2000 and for themselves and Lola in Formula Ford.

The man in charge at Titan is Roy Thomas, who both designs and sells the cars and he may be contacted at Titan Cars at St Neots Ltd, the Harley Works, Paxton Hill, St Neots, Cambs, tel: Huntingdon 74402/73003.

Dixon's win by 0.2s

Tony Hunt scored an easy win in his RS 2000 at the Dunlop MC autotests at the factory car park last Sunday. Hunt had a total of 563.4s for the ten tests but battle of the day was between Cecil Dixon of the organising club and Mike Herbert from Loughborough. These two were never more than a couple of seconds apart and Dixon finally took the class in his VW by 0.2s in 573.8s.

With Ray Webb breaking the diff on his Sprite around half time, Sherwood Forest member D. Rowlands took the big sports car class in his Midget in 608s, more than 0.5s ahead of Richard Yapp whose Sprite was never at its best.

The 1.0 sports car class was won by Roger Atkinson in 599.8s, some seven seconds better than Alan Nelmes (Sprite). The small standard saloons went to P. Jeffery in his 1.3 Escort in 636.6s.



Many drivers have found themselves on the grass at Paddock, but few intentionally. Here John Taylor tries out the new circuit in a Shellsport Escort after most of his machinery had broken elsewhere.

Brands rally X on Sunday

The Brands Hatch rallycross gets underway this Sunday at the Kent track. Using a brand new course, declared interesting and in the best of health by John Taylor last week, will be some 90 drivers, including 12 reserves.

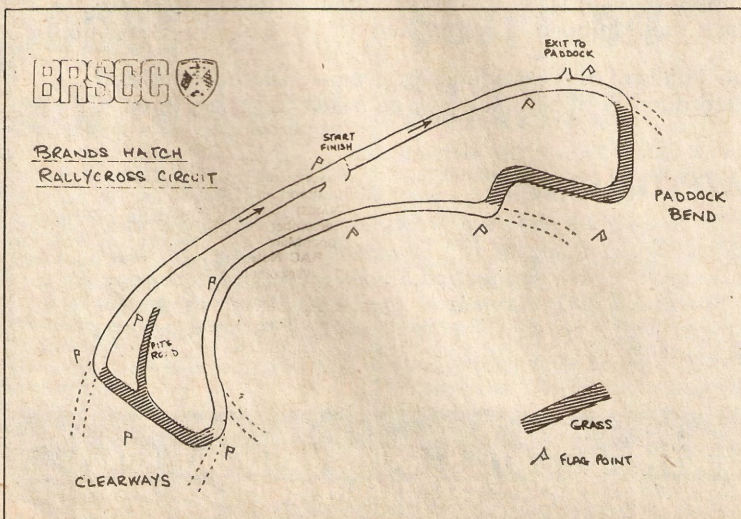
The entry is really excellent for this BRSCC organised event, and competition should be tough in the up to 1000 cc class where there are 21 Imps and Minis, plus the Clan Crusader of Roger Burn. He'll have Nick Carter, Trevor Smith and Phil Clark up against him. In the 1001 cc to 1400 cc class, the 1.3 engined Minis could be competitors for top honours, despite the Escorts and 1.4 Minis. Among the 29 entries are Bob Merridale, Tom Airey, Richard Pain-

ton, Barry Hathaway and three ladies, Viv Potter, Judith Jesty and Teresa Goddard. And don't forget Albert Hopkins' 1936 Ford Y or the Mini of Porsche man Bernard Rode-mark or Roger Brunt's Mini.

The big engined class has an entry of 40. And here's where the stars are. Take Tony Merridale, John Taylor, George Warren, Trevor Hopkins, John Smith, Dave Fuell, Rod Chapman, Ron Douglas in Escorts, add the Minis of Mick Bird and Keith Ripp, and the Volkswagens of Hugh Wheldon, Peter Harrold, Geoffrey Thomas and John Button and you have a rare tussle.

There are just two runs per car, and practice starts at 9 am to 12 noon with racing shortly after.

Learn your way round, or tape this map to your steering wheel.



Davies starts off well

Second in last year's Welsh Road Rally championship, the Tredegar crew of Howard Davies and Phil Jones started their 1976 season in fine style by winning last weekend's Llandeilo Service Station Snowball Rally run by Vale of Cothi MC.

Initially engaged in a three-way struggle for the lead with Eric Davies Mike Cowburn and Brian Thomas/Lee Vincent, they finally triumphed by more than two and a half minutes when both their main contenders were forced to retire at the same spot, fairly early on in the night.

The Davies/Cowburn Escort lost a wheel as they arrived at the ford at Llanfyndd and soon after Thomas/Vincent sidelined their Mexico with the fan through the radiator.

This left Davies, in his RS 2000, to go on and collect maximum points in the first round of the Welsh Road Championship, dropping 12m 59s on a fine night in which 44 of the 73 crews managed to complete the 180 mile route.

Only blot on an otherwise trouble-free night was the exclusion of four crews for failing to comply with Give Way signs while one crew was eliminated for noise.

Second overall, on 15m 37s, were Jeremy Nock and David Jones in their Escort 1300 and they were leading organising club members. They had an exciting dice with Des Douche and Alan John in an RS 1700 who were only five seconds behind at the finish, the two selectives probably being the deciding factor.

Fourth was the Avenger GT of Alan Evans and Bernard Hill on 17m 18s who had Gwyndaf Evans and Martin Thomas (RS2000), breathing down their necks on 17m 23s. Sixth were John Pugh and David Brierly (RS 2000) on 19m 15s.

In the semi-experts class Dilwyn Williams and Noel Morgan dropped 24m 16s in their RS 2000 to win by more than two minutes from Hugh and Howell Reece in an RS 1600 while top novices were Sean Hellett and David Elias in a Datsun Cherry on 39m 7s.

The show goes on

That successful show, the DTV/Castrol roadshow, is continuing its run by extending to a further ten free motor sport evenings in the next three months at Vauxhall dealers' premises throughout the country.

The roadshow includes the 36 minute film "Winning ain't easy" followed by ten minute talks by Chris Coburn of DTV, Roger Willis of Castrol and John Horton of Dunlop. After a break for refreshments, there's a short audio visual quiz for the audience and then a team of four take part in a teach-in, the team including various Vauxhall personalities. The roadshow also includes a mobile exhibition.

The new venues, with their dates, are as follows: January 26, Daville Tractors, Belfast; January 29, Auto Maintenance Ltd, Wareham; February 16, Thompsons of Hull Ltd, Hull; February 18, Harold Thompson and Son Ltd, North Shields; March 4, Skurray's Ltd, Swindon; March 11, Canning Day Ltd, Newport IOW; March 23, Auty and Lees Ltd, Bury; April 8, Skilton Motors Ltd, St Albans; April 13, BRSCC, Surrey Tavern, Kennington Oval, London (principally for BRSCC members, but public invited); April 28, Hamilton Motors Ltd, London W2.

● Already Association of West Midlands MC Rally Champions, John Chaplin and Keith Ashley have easily won the Midland Manor MC's stage rally series. In night rallying Brian Ashley, elder brother was partnered by Keith in collecting a second trophy having scored on eight events. Top of the autocross list is the club's double national champion Martin Barnard while Steve Tibbetts ran away with the production car trials series.

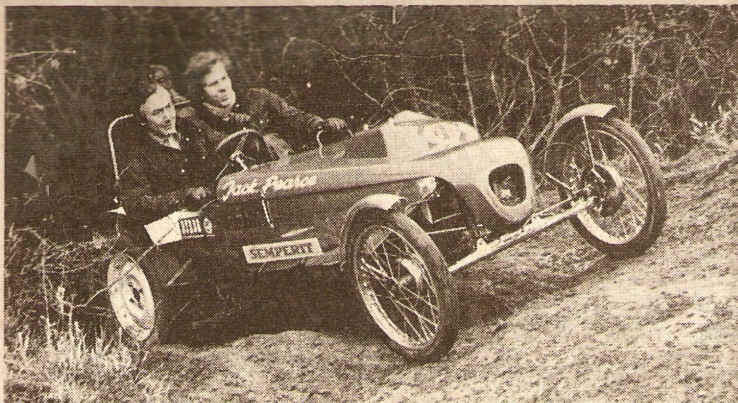
Vote of confidence

Fearing that their low budget operations, due to the falling through of sponsorship negotiations, might mean a lowering of the class of entry, SCCON and West Suffolk MC were delighted to receive entries from Rod Chapman, Ron Douglas and Hugh Wheldon for the first round of the Winter Series on Sunday. Chapman in particular was very pleased with the new circuit (the first time he has raced there since the days of the tank destruction course) while Douglas compares it with the best in Europe. Confirming the resurgence of rallycross was the appearance of the M & H Tyre fitting van supplying on the day Chapman, George Warren and Ian Hall amongst others.

Quiz kicks off

The first qualifying round of the Spruce/Howlett Challenge took place last week among the 16 invited East Anglian Clubs. Based upon the familiar Castrol Quiz questions (suitably updated by AUTOSPORT contributor Mike Dixon and Ian Ringwood) the first heats saw resounding victories for Sporting CC of Norfolk (B) and Gothic MC, under the guidance of another AUTOSPORT scribe, Andy Leader. But perhaps the biggest surprise of the evening was BRSCC (A) where saloon racer Tim Stock showed a remarkable knowledge of rally topics.

● Skip Brown and Richard Tomkinson's problems on the Hairpin rally ten days ago were incorrectly diagnosed as diff failure. The true cause was the belt to the metering unit which broke on the fuel injected Imp. But then the spare belt broke, and the spare spare broke and...



Jack Pearce on his way to a close win in Kent at the weekend.

Close one for Pearce

The Maidstone and Mid-Kent Motor Club held their Brian Lewis sporting trial at Boxley Warren, a site which the club rent and are developing for a few more trials events. The venue is certainly an ideal ground and could finally herald the return of the Semperit/BTRDA championship trial to the south, for which it is very much overdue — on the last occasion Rex Chappel was still king of the sport.

Over 30 competitors gathered last Sunday for this Semperit/BTRDA and RAC qualifying round. The entry was split into groups starting at different hills, this good system was however spoilt by a couple of people hanging back and not taking their rightful turn, as being first or third made the difference of ten easy points, the difference of winning and coming third on such a close scoring trial. The event attracted a pleasant crowd which all added enjoyment to the day, especially as they included people from the racing and rally world.

The ten hills contained plenty of variety from grassy banks to chalky blinds and a few wooded wonders that did not cause undue damage to the priceless machinery. The first round saw Jack Pearce lead with 21, and Gordon Jackson three points behind which was an excellent performance as Gordon had the worse of the draw and which he kept. Others found the draw a little more helpful and cashed in, George Fisher and John Benson were level on 30, with the newer faces next of Ray Bown 35, Tony Mitcham 37 and

Patrick Walters 38, KB trials chairman John Hopkins in his Ibex was a further point behind and still in the hunt.

Another round before lunch made sure all would be ready for their lunch. The hills were adjusted but the difficult early starts were well cleared so passages were easier and scores tumbled. Gordon Jackson took the lead with an expert 13, followed by the day's twins John Benson and George Fisher both again recording equal scores of 17, with Colin Taylor and Pat Walters on 20, John Hopkins followed with 21 and Chris Highwood 26, Alan Brunning and Roy Denton having retired due to mechanical problems.

The ten hills after the break had a few modifications and the scores remained much the same. Jack Pearce and his immaculate Kincraft won the day with a final and best round of 14, Colin Taylor was next on 16 and pulled up into fifth place after a sticky start. George Fisher finally beat John Benson to third with a 17, three better than John. Gordon Jackson's 22 lost him the trial by one point. Chris Highwood improved with a 25, and Stirling Moss put in some Grand Prix climbs to beat his friend Adrian Blenkinsop, both Cannon mounted, by enough points to continue their friendship. Dick Lee took his customary 750 class win and Alan Gisby the 950 pot by one point from Colin Ford.

1. J. Pearce (Kincraft), 58 marks lost; 2. G. Jackson (Ibex), 59; 3. G. Fisher (Iris), 64; 4. J. Benson (Jabs), 68; 5. C. Taylor (Cannon), 77; 6. P. Walters (Cannon) 84; **Best 750:** R. Lee (Reliant), 136; **Best 950:** A. Gisby (Trialsmaster), 146.

Sones works hard

Mike Sones took BT in his rebuilt Clubman GT at the Owen Motoring Club's autotest at Fradley near Lichfield last Sunday, but had to work hard for his success.

Initially Keith Squires led in his Saab 96 but an incorrect in the afternoon, plus a quickening of pace by Sones, enabled the rallyman to win comfortably after nine tests. He totalled 318.7s.

John Bloxham had a class win with a Fiat 127 in 345.1s beating Phil Shaw's Mini by eight seconds and Peter Saunders (Simca Rallye) was four seconds quicker than John Rose's MGB with Squire third.

Terry on furthest

Invaders MC members Alan Terry and Graham Lindley tied for joint lowest score at the Winchester and District MC's co-promoted production car trial near Winchester on Sunday, but Terry took the class on furthest cleanest.

Both in Minis they lost 33 marks on the 35 hills and both finish two marks ahead of Terry Gibson. In the second class John Skipper's Skoda Octavia beat Chris Appleby's Escort by seven marks with a winning score of 72 marks and the rear engined class went to Alan Foster in his Imp on 66 marks with Mrs Janet Parker (Imp) and Bob Halfacre (VW) tying for second on 69 marks.

Brown by default

Two crews who had identical selective times and road penalties might have caused Border MC (Finningley) organisers a headache on their Morning Star Trophy Rally last weekend but they both made an identical mistake and dropped out of contention.

Alan Young and John Rook (Mexico) and Bob Slack and Peter Halkyard (RS 2000), failed to get their cards signed after correctly noting a passage board very early in the 120 mile event round the Doncaster-Retford area.

At the finish both had dropped 376pts which would have placed them joint first by under a minute. As it was winners were late Liverpool entrants Skip Brown and Ri-

chard Tomkinson in a fuel injected Imp who turned up on the off chance of a run and were slotted in at sixth away.

With a total of 390pts they won by some two minutes from Wilf Hobson and Jim Burton in an Escort on 459pts while the novice crew of David Pope and David Lawrie covered themselves with glory in taking third in their Mexico on 462pts.

Only 12pts separated the second and fifth crews, fourth being J. Burton and D. Howell in a Cooper on 470pts with Bob Short and Graham Corfield (RS 1600) in fifth on 471pts. The leaderboard was completed by Ken Dart and Alan Merchant in a Mexico on 482pts.

Llyn-Jones Harrold's comfortably bigger VW

Tony Llyn-Jones from Dartford scored his first ever production car trial success when he won the Sevenoaks and District MC event at Darenth Wood nr Dartford last Sunday.

In his Escort Sport he dropped 61 marks on 12 hills to win comfortably on index. Thirty four competitors tackled the event in five classes and lowest score of the day was achieved by Mark Kemp in his Fairthorpe who dropped 51 marks to win his class with ease.

In the Mini class Steve Edmonds and Bev Coomber finished first and second on 62 and 73 marks respectively while Ian West had a five mark advantage over George Coake (Chevette) in the front engined rear wheel drive class.

The other class winners were Bill Foreman (VW) on 75 marks and Bob Tidy in his Mini entered in the specials class who dropped 60 marks.

● Track racer Tony Lanfranchi will be taking to the grass officially this weekend when he campaigns Peter Bryant's rallying Imp at the Brands Rallycross. Bryant was Lanfranchi's navigator on the Tour of Britain in the big Hemicuda

Further stroking of the engine of Peter Harrold's rallycross Volkswagen and the substitution of a plain crank for a roller bearing one gives the Norfolk driver's car a capacity of 2235 cc. Apparently two of these larger engines have been prepared for the Autocavan team for the new autocross season although Harrold may try to concentrate on rallycross which, he feels, gives better value in terms of racing time than its grass track equivalent.

Richards' Surtees

Moving into the big league of hillclimbing this year is last year's RAC/Woking Motors Leaders champion, Alan Richards. Richards, who was sponsored by Cheltenham Cameras in his quest for the series, drove a 1.1 Gryphon.

But for 1976, still with the support of Cheltenham Cameras, Richards is using the ex-Team Surtees/Alan McKechnie Racing F5000 Surtees T58, and once again, he'll be on the hills contesting most of the championship rounds.

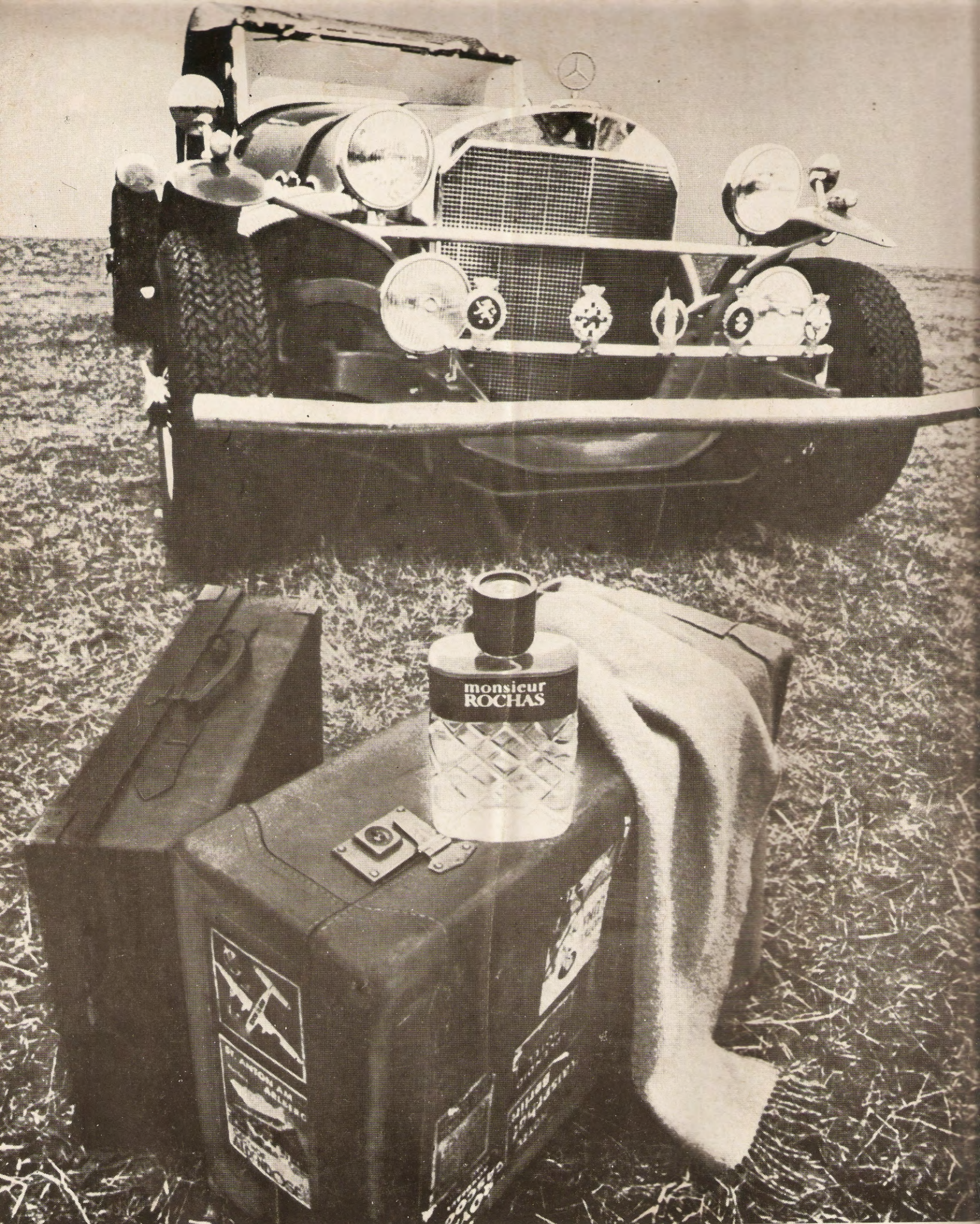
Chapman just makes it

Rod Chapman's Mk 2 Escort and the car driven at Snetterton's rallycross on Sunday by Ian Hall nearly didn't make the circuit after a nasty towing incident on the way up to Snetterton from Kent. Both cars were on a 32ft trailer which jackknifed into the rear of the Range Rover towing vehicle damaging the front end of Chapman's Escort and doing a substantial amount of damage to the Rover.

● The RAC Timekeepers' Conference will take place on February 22. The venue is not yet decided but items for discussion should reach Belgrave Sq by January 29.

For 1976, Susan Tucker-Peake will run her 1300 cc Escort with sponsorship from Sedan Products Ltd. Sedan come from Hemel Hempstead and deal in all types of auto accessories. Susan is very busy at present working on her new BDA engine and will be competing in the Simoniz championship.





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