

Autosport

Haymarket publication

4th January 1979 30p



Touring car racing review

G1/G2 Golf track tests □ Decline & fall of GP racing

David Holt's 'Jim Brown' book... Ford's 'Golf'...

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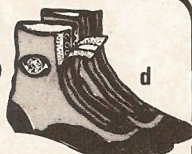
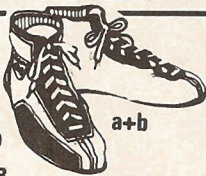
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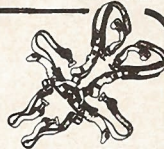
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SS3 — 3 point special stage	£59.35
G-Max 3 — 3 point Clubman	£21.60
G-Max 4 — 4 point Clubman	£25.50

TRAILER TIE DOWN STRAPS

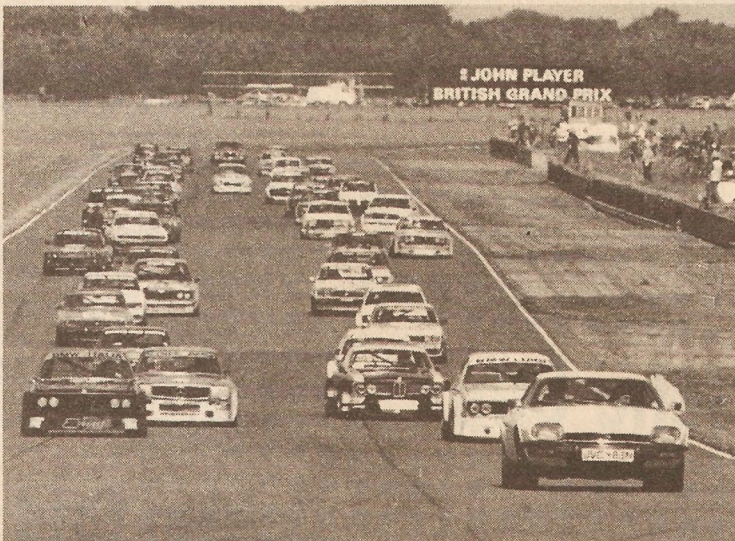
TD3 3 feet strap length	£5.30
TD6 6 feet strap length	£6.15
TD13 13 feet strap length	£7.10



this week

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As shown by the relatively small number of Group 2 cars in last year's Tourist Trophy field, the European Touring Car Championship continues to decline. See our review on page 26.



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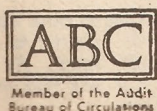
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Complacency

"Extremes meet," the whiting may have said, its tail in its mouth. But extreme opinions about the future of top-level motor racing may never become reconciled, even to the dubious satisfaction of the whiting, because one extreme point of view is rarely heard. A monopoly of power in Grand Prix racing which, during the last few years, has produced a universal increase in the popularity of Formula 1, has also tended to put the sport's foremost category almost beyond effective criticism. There are those who fear that the present success of Grand Prix racing may be short-lived, but their views cannot often be satisfactorily expressed. No voice even of superficial authority can be theirs when the Grand Prix circuit promoters are apparently satisfied with the present 'closed-shop' situation, and the sport's supposed governing body has shown itself to be little more than an organisation committed to sanctioning the wishes of the monopolistic Formula One Constructors Association. Where can the opponents of the current Grand Prix format find a platform?

In this, the first issue of the New Year, we are devoting editorial space to the views of Chris Nixon, a former staff writer for AUTOSPORT. Nixon believes fervently that recent weakness of the CSI, in the face of modern entrepreneurial tactics, has resulted in a Grand Prix 'circus' whose appeal, while presently strong, must decline along with the capacity of current Formula 1 cars actually to race against each other.

Nixon supplies plenty of evidence to support his claim that modern Grand Prix enthusiasts do not enjoy *racing* in the pure sense of the word, and it is evidence which is difficult to refute. There can be no question that there is less overtaking than used to be the case, no matter how superficially competitive the field as a whole. Technology — especially in the fields of tyres, aerodynamics and braking — seems to have got out of hand, at the expense of the spectacle of pure racing.

One of the most significant developments during the past decade has been the adjustment of the Grand Prix circuits to meet the needs of the cars, rather than the other way round. For the most part, this has been done to reduce cornering speeds, but the result has also been to make overtaking even more difficult — the racing, therefore, less spectacular. Every level-headed observer must agree that this trend is regrettable.

It is dangerous complacency to defend the other extreme view, namely that Grand Prix racing has never been better, and that its popularity can only increase with its projected growth as a major television sport. Chris Nixon's article points out that the single most important factor in the success of Grand Prix racing is the satisfaction of the spectator. In his opinion, the modern 'circus' has lost sight of this. Because he is a serious observer of the sport whose involvement has embraced much of the post-war period — and most of all because he *cares* — his views should be heard. They may be fiercely expressed, but they are also valid: let us therefore consider them.

cover picture

One of the most 'international' touring car competitors during 1978 was Stuart Graham, who took his Fabergé Ford Capri Group 1 car, as regularly raced in the British Tricentrol series, also to France and elsewhere. Both the British and the European Group 1 racing series are reviewed in this issue. Photo: Jeff Bloxham.

next week

Our complete review of the American racing scene — New Zealand's Formula Pacific championship gets under way — Latest Porsche 911 on test — Technical & otherwise — Another rising star from Ireland*



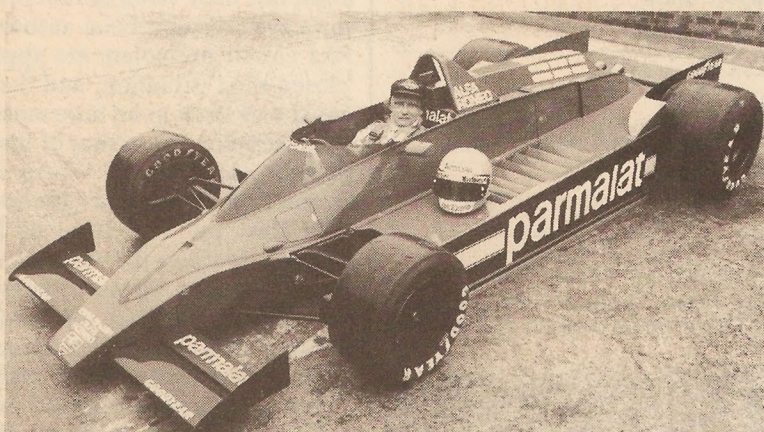
Delight on the face of Niki Lauda as he poses in the new Brabham-Alfa BT48 at the team's Chessington headquarters.

New generation Brabham BT48

The very latest Brabham BT48, complete with its new V12 Alfa Romeo engine, made a brief appearance at Brands Hatch on the Saturday before Christmas. Niki Lauda was at the wheel, and was expected to continue testing at Paul Ricard at the beginning of this week.

The British press have not yet been invited to view the new car, but, as the photographs show, it is certainly radical. The most obvious departure from the norm, of course, is the lack of a rear wing — or rather, a conventional rear wing. There is a wing there, but it is mounted behind the rear bodywork, rather than above it. Very obviously a child of the 'ground effect' generation, the BT48's monocoque is constructed part in aluminium and part in carbon fibre. This is the first time the latter material has been used for a monocoque. It features prominently elsewhere, too. In keeping with past Brabham practice, the Dunlop brakes feature composite carbon fibre discs and pads. Girling calipers, mounted outboard, are used at front and rear.

Inboard coil spring damper units are fitted at front and rear; there are double wishbones at the front, and single (bottom) wishbones at the back with



The shape of things to come? The rear wing arrangement of the BT48 is expected to appear on other new F1 cars in the near future.

triangulated twin links at the top. Front track is 67 ins, rear 64 ins, and the wheelbase is 108 ins.

Predictably, Niki Lauda was like a kid with a new toy, thrilled to bits with Gordon Murray's newest creation. The big question mark must surround the engine. Very encouraging horsepower figures have been seen on the dyno, but

there are inevitably teething troubles with any new Formula 1 engine. We know not how it has performed in the car, but hear that, following its Brands shakedown test, attempts were being made to obtain a Cosworth scavenge pump . . . The team intend to have two of the new cars in South America for Lauda and Nelson Piquet.

Wollek's Porsche Cup

After one of the closest seasons in the history of this lucrative competition, Strasbourg's Bob Wollek received the 1978 Porsche Cup, with its attendant cheque for £20,810, at a reception shortly before Christmas. The brilliant Kremer Group 5 team leader was challenged mightily throughout the year by his opposite number from Georg Loos's Gelo equipe, Dutchman Toine Hezemans, who finished only 14.5 points down on Wollek.

The Frenchman has now scored an unprecedented hat-trick in the Porsche Cup. In fact, he becomes the only man to win the title on three occasions, Britain's John Fitzpatrick having had

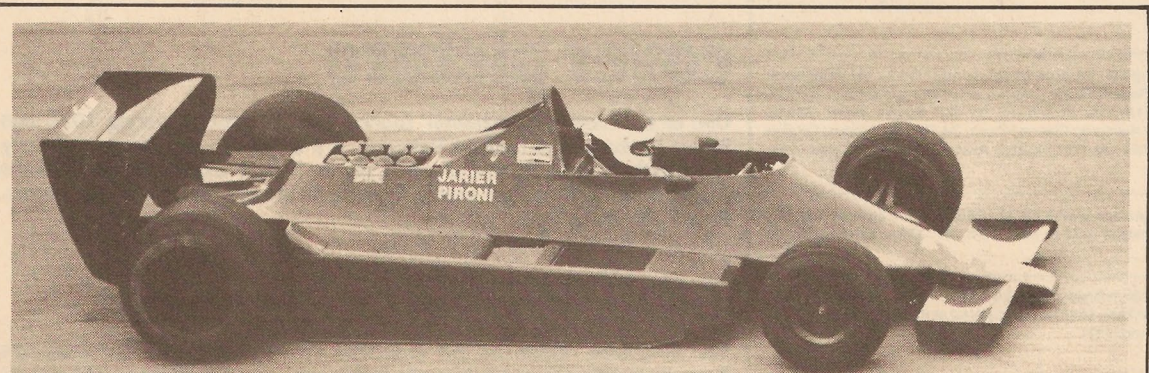
two successes but coming third this year.

The Porsche Cup is open to private drivers only, and last year 117 drivers from 14 countries scored points on their way to six international and 21 national titles.

- 1, Bob Wollek (F, DM77,000); 2, Toine Hezemans (NL, DM50,000); 3, John Fitzpatrick (GB, DM35,000); 4, Peter Gregg (USA, DM28,000); 5, Manfred Schurti (FL, DM22,000); 6, Klaus Ludwig (D, DM20,000); 7, Reinhold Jöst (D, DM18,000); 8, Ludwig Heimrath (CDN, DM16,000); 9, Henri Pescarolo (F, DM14,000); 10, Whittington (USA, DM12,000); 11, Don Whittington (USA, DM10,000); 12, Jacques Almeras (F, DM8,500); etc.



Congratulations to Sir Jack Brabham, knighted in last weekend's New Year Honours List.



Jean-Pierre Jarier was full of enthusiasm for the Tyrrell 009, which he drove at Ricard shortly before Christmas. Indeed the Frenchman compared the car favourably with the Lotus 79 . . .

Mo's new Ensign

Mo Nunn was understandably disappointed at Tissot's decision to take their sponsorship money to Lotus, but says he was not surprised. "I don't think they ever forgave us for replacing Ickx with Derek Daly," he told us on Tuesday. "They understood why we'd done it, and that it was a good move from our point of view. From theirs, however, Jacky was a better bet because he was more widely known."

Would the Tissot move make things difficult for Ensign? "Well, things are a bit tight at the moment. But Guy Edwards is looking for money for us in Europe, and Chuck Jones is doing the same thing in the States, so I'm hopeful. The new car is virtually finished now, and is just waiting for its bodywork. We won't take it to South America, though. We never really intended to! We'll run the old one, and hope we can finish."

In Argentina and Brazil, the car will be in its familiar dark blue livery, but for the new one, which will be taken to South Africa, Nunn will revert to red, last used in 1976. "I was going to go back to dark green, but Lotus are using that now."

F2 Pirelli's available

Pirelli, who supplied tyres to Piero Necchi in last year's European Formula 2 Championship, have announced that their P7 radials will be available for sale to any F2 team during 1979. They have also confirmed that they will be supporting two F2 teams this season. Eddie Cheever's works Osella-BMW will have them, and so will an Italian two-car March-BMW team, one of whose drivers will be Alberto Colombo.

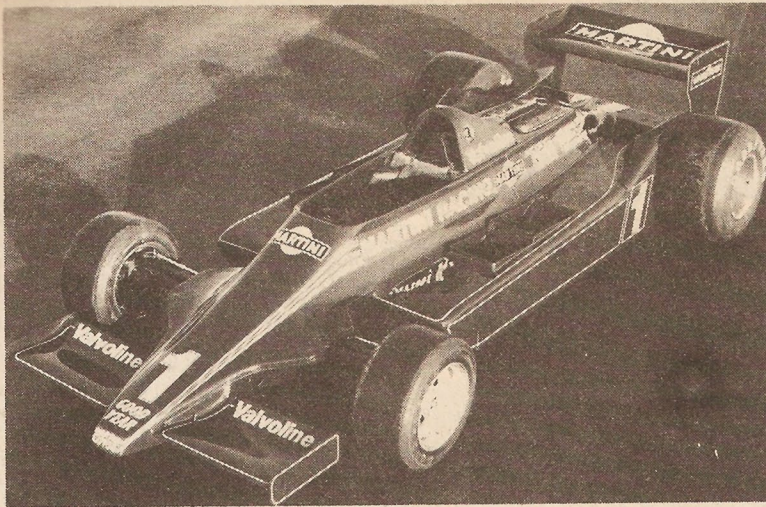
Golden Grid Pass scheme

The latest scheme from the Gunnar Nilsson Cancer Treatment Campaign is something entirely new. If you succeed in raising more than £200 for the campaign, you can qualify for a Golden Grid Pass.

These will be issued to all who collect more than £200, and will be used at the Race of Champions in March. The pass holders will have their own 'pits walk-about', during which they can present the money to the driver (or constructor) of their choice. The presentations will be made in a ceremony at the top of the startline tower.

So, if you want to raise money for this most worthwhile cause, and you'd like to meet Mario Andretti or Niki Lauda or another star of your choice, get weaving. Organise sponsored walks, sponsored knit-ins, whatever you like. And when you've reached the target, let us know at AUTOSPORT Editorial, Regent House, 54-62 Regent Street, London W1A 4YJ, and we'll pass on your name to the proper authorities.

● Our sincere apologies to Nina Rindt. In a recent issue, we referred to 'the former Jochen Rindt Show'. As his widow points out, it is still very much 'the Jochen Rindt Show'.



The Martini Lotus 79 — absolutely gorgeous in its new British Racing Green livery.

Fabi dominates NZ opener at Bay Park

It was Teo Fabi all the way in the opening rounds of the 1979 New Zealand Formula Pacific race series, held at Bay Park, Mt Maunganui, last Sunday (December 31).

Fabi drove his factory entered March -BMW 782/792 to pole position with a 55.1s qualifying lap, and then on the day led the first and second rounds of the 10-race series from start to finish and with consummate ease. The Italian scored the best possible 40 pts and put himself 12pts clear of American Jeff Wood (March 78B) and Kiwi Brett Riley (March 77B). Woods ran out fifth in the first race and third in the second, while Riley was sixth in the first and more or less kept the diminutive Italian honest by claiming second spot in the second race, Fabi's winning margin in that instance being 5.85 secs.

Australian Larry Perkins, who had not driven a racing car since May 1978, came home second in the first race with a March 77B, a full 58.9 secs behind Fabi. Perkins just headed Eje Elgh, who was given the same race time. After the first meeting, Elgh is next in the table with 26 pts, with the March 782 entered by Dick Bennett racing with Marlboro.

New Zealander Ken Smith (March 76B) is placed next in the table with 24pts gained from a first-race fourth and a second-race seventh. He is one of the two local old hands in this series, the other being Dave McMillan (Ralt RT1),

who had the misfortune to be shunted out of contention immediately after the rolling starts in both races.

Notable absentee at Bay Park was Fred Opert, who sent two Chevron B45s to New Zealand along with five engines. One car was to be driven by Dutchman Michael Bleekemolen, but he did not appear and, although rumours abounded regarding Opert's absence, those people who might have known were tight-lipped. Rumour has it that an Opert entry has been made for the third and fourth rounds at Pukekohe next weekend for Keke Rosberg, the overall champion in 1977 and 1978 in the Stuyvesant-sponsored series.

Fabi's March is the car which Teddy Yip entered for Alan Jones in the Macau Grand Prix and which Jones drove so well until spark plug trouble intervened. It is fitted with controversial adjustable skirts which, team manager Murray Taylor says, will not cause any hassles in this series because the formula is the brainchild of the New Zealanders, and is not subject to FIA regulations.

Whether the skirts accounted for Fabi's success at Bay Park (which is a throttle-on, throttle-off, 1.33-mile circuit with constant-radius curves) is debatable, but the general consensus of opinion is that the Italian has a great deal more talent than his opposition. At least, that is the way it showed up at Bay Park. Report next week.

Tissot join Martini Racing Team Lotus

As we told you before Christmas, Martini and Rossi have indeed concluded a sponsorship deal with Colin Chapman's Lotus team, and Mario Andretti and Carlos Reutemann will run in their colours throughout this year. The contract also covers the 1980 season, after which there are renewal options.

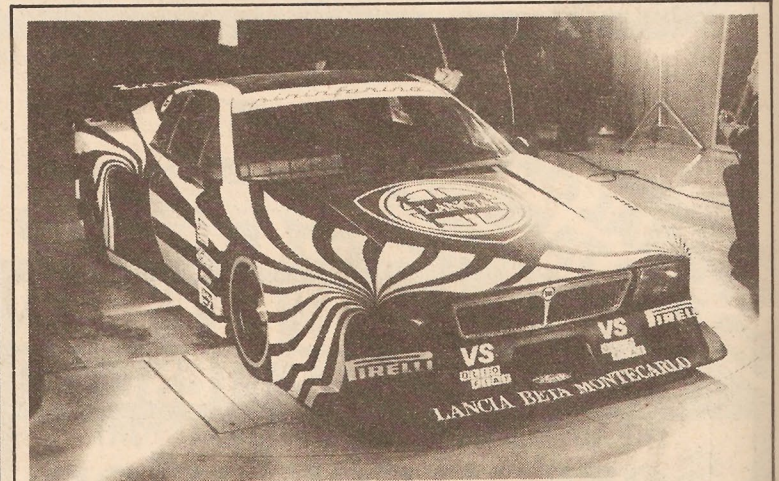
The deal was announced at a reception at the Martini Terrace in London shortly before Christmas. Martini's David Rutherford said that the company, which previously sponsored Brabham and Tecno, were delighted to be back in Grand Prix racing. We gather that Tyrrell, McLaren and Alfa Romeo were all discussed as possibilities for Martini backing. When Olympus — to everyone's amazement — decided not to renew their contract with Lotus, Martini were more than happy to step in.

Everyone was delighted with the team's colour scheme. It is quite some time since British Racing Green was seen on a top-class Grand Prix car. Count Rossi, who heads Martini Racing, is a racing fanatic, of course (remember his road-going Porsche 917!), and was apparently a great admirer of the late Jimmy Clark. "Make it as much like Jimmy's car as possible. That's what the Count told us," said Andrew Ferguson. "And, of course, we were more than happy to go along with that." Clearly Rossi is a sponsor with a soul.

Colin Chapman, who must be delighted that his cars are now Lotuses again, was in splendid form at the reception. "What," somebody asked, "are your feelings about the Tyrrell 009?" He grinned. "Well, of course, it's very flattering in a way... Then again, if all goes well, it'll be obsolete in three or four months!" The Lotus 80, he said, would appear in a few weeks' time, probably for pre-race testing at Kyalami. He declined to give any details of the new car, but said that several modifications were being made to the 79. In South America, the two drivers will race 79Bs.

After the withdrawal of John Player — who most unfortunately made their announcement on the very day of Gunner Nilsson's death — and Olympus's decision to go with Wolf, Lotus's sponsorship fortunes seemed bleak. As well as Martini, however, Lotus have also concluded a deal with Tissot, formerly with Mo Nunn's Ensign team. This arrangement was announced only this week, so our photograph of the 79 does not bear Tissot sign-writing.

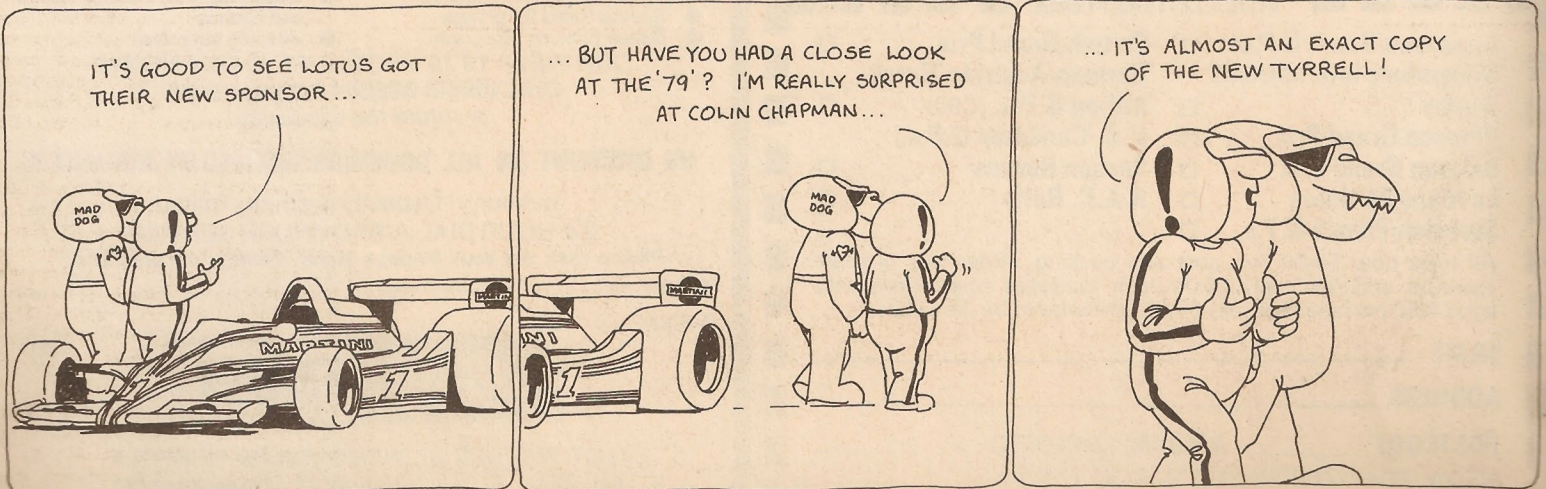
● The BWRDC collected £300 from their recent sponsored parachute jump, all proceeds going towards the Nigel Tan and David Allen Fund. Among the intrepid jumpers were Viv West and Wendy Markey.



Recently unveiled in Italy was the Group 5 Lancia Beta Monte Carlo, which will be driven this year by Riccardo Patrese and Walter Rohrl. The car did not have its turbocharged 1.4-litre engine installed at the time of the launch.

catchpole

by Barry Foley





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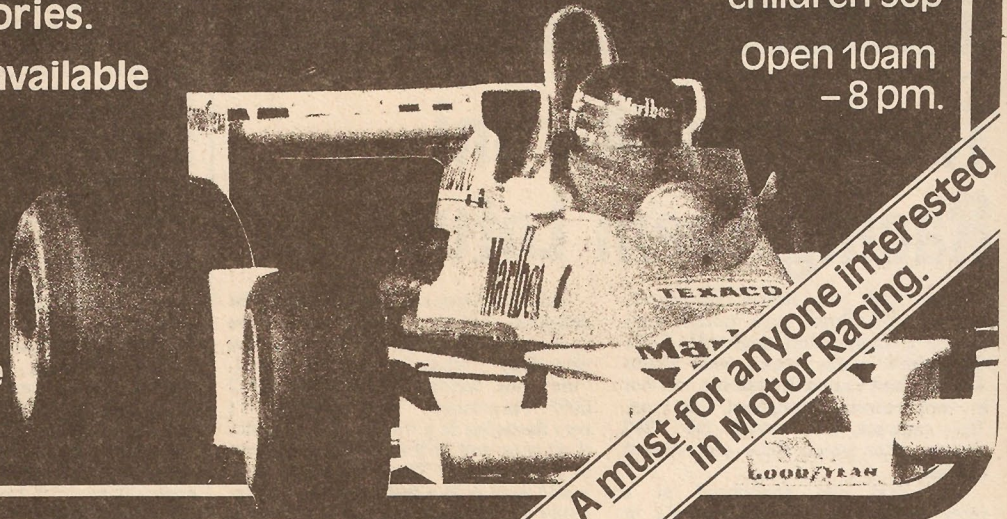
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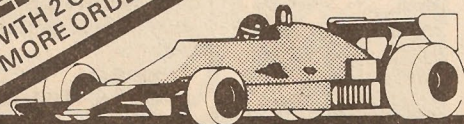
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Patriot

All Jean-Pierre Jarier's performances in Canada and the USA served to prove was that it was the car that won the 1978 World Championship, and not specifically Mario Andretti.

After all your boosting of Mario in 1978, and putting-down of Niki Lauda on the basis of his driving for points instead of to win like the 'racer's racer', Andretti's performances in 1978 were certainly not any more stirring than Lauda's were in 1977, Lotus 79 or not. One little problem, and he'd had it, once his 'unfair advantage' had slipped away; at least Lauda kept to his task and sometimes pulled out fantastic drives to attempt to salvage a situation.

So do Carlos Reutemann and Jody Scheckter, about whom you seem to have been rather cool this last year, hardly ever giving just comment on their performances. Mr Mustard has already pointed this out in relation to Reutemann, and I feel that the same has applied to Scheckter on occasions, such as his shattering climb through the field at Hockenheim and his brief lead at Kyalami when that Wolf was being kept on the road by sheer willpower and skill, until the engine cutting out entering corners was too much even for him.

If that had been Andretti, we would never have heard the last of how he battled gallantly against "the fabulous Lotus 79's display of rare pique" or some such journalistic jewel.

As for the "fabulous" 79, well, I hope the wingless 80 is a flop, or at least someone works out what Chapman does underneath his cars so that they have the opportunity to race with Lotus, and disprove the 'fact' that whichever driver is lucky enough to choose the right car wins the World Championship.

Remember Mario, Ferrari never stay down for long (just reminding you of Watkins Glen), and, with Jody behind the wheel now, watch out!

When Jody begins relieving Mario of his crown next year, let's get the adjectives in relation to his performances — and try not to fight too gallant a rear-guard action for your precious Lotuses.

ZULULAND, S. AFRICA

DAVID POLLOCK

Daimler, not BL

With reference to your *Sports Extra* story about John Whitmore's dragster (December 7), I feel obliged to point out that the Daimler 2.5-litre V8 engine had nothing whatever to do with British Leyland. That is why it was — and still is — one of the finest engines in the world.

Leyland failed even to recognise the engine's qualities, and introduced their own laughable Triumph Stag. The Rover V8, which is a reasonably attractive power unit, was taken from Buick. Please don't equate real Daimlers with BL (very apt initials).

Apart from the above complaint, many thanks for an excellent magazine.

YORK

CHRIS JOHNSON

Spotlighting problems

As organisers of the Dunlops of Dumfries/Burmah Galloway Hills Stage Rally, may we use your columns to highlight a rather serious problem which is rearing its head with increasing frequency these days? We refer to the theft of spotlights after events.

The Galloway Hills weekend has, we trust, achieved a certain reputation for friendliness and informality over the years. You can understand therefore that we were absolutely disgusted to learn that a considerable number of spotlights went missing shortly after the finish of our event.

The problem is, however, even more serious than this. Due to the secluded position of the Cally Hotel, it seemed to us very improbable that members of the public could be responsible for these thefts. After enquiries, we are now in possession of evidence that the thefts were committed by the crew of a service van engaged on the event.

Needless to say, in conjunction with the local police, we are devoting considerable energy to tracing this service van and the competitors involved. Any additional information that your readers can supply would be welcome (Tel: Castle Douglas 2202).

We do not devote all our time and energies into trying to put on an enjoyable weekend for the benefit of people like these, and we are sure that other rally organisers are behind us on this. We intend to see that these people are removed from the rallying fraternity completely, and we will approach the RAC with a view to their taking disciplinary action with regard to the competitors' competition licences.

May we offer our sincere apologies to those competitors who suffered loss, and we hope that their memories of the Galloway Hills will not be soured by the actions of the few who will never, with our knowledge, return to any event put on by us.

CASTLE DOUGLAS

DAVID MCHARG
NORMAN GOWANS
GRAEME MCDERNID
GEORGE RUTHERFORD

Low-cost FF1600

We promised in our earlier letter to your *Correspondence* section concerning low-cost Formula Ford, that we would report back with details of the response. It has been extremely encouraging — we have obviously uncovered a huge demand. Within a few days of the publication of the letter we had a gridful of car owners, and half as many again who have expressed a firm interest in the idea.

There is little doubt in our minds that such a series can be a success, and we already have the backing of the BRSCC Midland Centre for staging a number of races next year. But, before that happens, we need a set of rules, and before the rules can be drawn up there are some difficult questions to be answered. We need definite answers to such posers as: the minimum age limit for proprietary chassis; should 'specials' be permissible; and, in the light of racing tyres lasting four meetings, should road tyres be specified?

To help sort out these and other points we are currently circulating a questionnaire to all the interested people that we know about, and, if any of your readers who didn't contact us would like to fill one in, would they please get in touch as soon as possible. Again, we hope for a good response, because the regulations will be written in the light of the replies we receive and this is a chance to influence the outcome.

7 YALDING GDNS, WOLLATON,
NOTTINGHAM

BOB LEE
GRAHAM TEMPLEMAN

Keep it going!

I would like to point out an error in your comments on the MCD Fixture List for next season, reported in your December 14 *Sports Extra*. The 'Motor Show 200' was always a BARC event, not BRSCC, and has not been held for the past two years.

In fact, the 'International 200' is Britain's oldest single-seater race, having been held at Brooklands 1921-39; Aintree 1954-64; cancelled at Silverstone and Oulton in 1965 and 1966 due to flood and snow respectively; and held at Brands since October 1966 as the Motor Show 200.

Perhaps the BARC could revive it as a double length Aurora Formula 1 race at Thruxton?

BECKENHAM.

ROBERT W. TREBBLE

What about John?

Having watched BBC television's *Sports Review of 1978*, I found it necessary to ask myself, does John Watson really exist? Nowhere in this 90mins extravaganza was the brilliant but unfortunate Ulsterman's name mentioned. Watson was by far the best British driver competing during 1978; however, BBC seem to think Hunt is the only driver from our country in the World Championship.

I was dismayed by the replaying of some horrendous shunts, including Ronnie Peterson's tragic accident at Monza. We have seen this piece of film flashed across our screen so many times before; was it really necessary to subject us to it again? I was also shocked that the horrific accident in the Brands F3 race should be included among the 'funnies' at the end of the show. This senseless ghoulishness marred what otherwise was a good season of Grand Prix coverage by the BBC.

LONDON NW1

ANTHONY HELLER

Diet of pasties

I must point out on behalf of Camel Vale MC members that Roger Bricknell, National Trials Champion 1977 and 1978, is a true Cornishman, born West of the Tamar, reared on pasties and cream, and not a Devon man as stated in AUTOSPORT recently.

As a 'foreigner' myself, albeit married to a Cornishman, I feel my passport would be endangered if I did not point this out. Max Boyce may be forgiven for adopting the Cornish battle cry of 'Oggie, Oggie, Oggie', but...

EDNA BROADBENT,
President — Camel Vale MC

WADEBRIDGE, CORNWALL.

Few scapegoats

During 1978, I have supported the racing activities of Bryce Wilson. Thus the opening paragraphs of your Tiff Needell interview were of particular interest to me.

It does seem that Mr Needell's view on the incident at the Thruxton complex appears somewhat different to those held by your race reporter in your edition of November 16, 1978.

Eighteen-year-old scapegoats must be thin on the ground.

GLASGOW.

L. F. JACOBSEN.

Ban skirts now

I have a very contentious suggestion which will no doubt put the so-called purists up in arms: the powers that be (and I'm not quite certain who they are these days) should ban skirts on all formulae from January 1, 1980 so as to give 12 months advance warning. As I consider myself a purist, within reason, let me defend this suggestion.

Ground Effect Cars are all very well. They are clever, fast and make the best use of aerodynamics within the rules, but do have some major drawbacks. Firstly, skirts are so esoteric that they are unlikely ever to have any practical application outside single-seater racing cars. Second, and far more serious, they are bound to have the ultimate effect of making all cars virtually outwardly identical: in answer to *Catchpole's* dilemma (December 21/28), Jarier has a blue 79 already. At least this is the way it will appear to the man-in-the-street, since the design of a ground effect car is so restricted that it must end up with a chisel nose, very narrow monocoque, side pods containing rads to the maximum width permissible and so on almost by definition. Eventually Joe Bloggs will have no way of recognizing one type from another at all and they may as well be Sponsor Specials — identifiable by their livery solely. This is where his interest wanes.

Gone will be the distinctive noses, engine covers, body section profiles and so on. It has even virtually eliminated the use of any engine configuration other than Vee — that is ludicrous and can only damage the image of our sport in the long run. Ban all types of skirts and lift bodywork restrictions (except for wing dimensions) and then we'll see a number of aerodynamic solutions to the problem, from fully enclosed bodywork like a Le Mans Alpine to tiny and narrow cars à la Williams FW06, all mixing it together — the delicate balance between agility and straight line speed/stability.

It is essential that F1 retains its interest for the man in the street. It must not be allowed to degenerate into a 'one-make' series in appearance, otherwise they might as well contract Lotus to produce 25 cars and have customers run them.

Everyone will soon catch up and the technical interest and superiority of the ground effect car will no longer exist. The only result, therefore, will be a furthering of the lack-of-identity already evident in formula cars. How often have your friends said to you, "I can't tell the difference, anyway" in a disgruntled way? I do not believe that a ban on skirts would render all cars obsolete — many would get away with only a side-pod redesign initially.

The 'look-alike syndrome' along with the amazingly complicated and confusing new regulations will be enough to scare off all but the true-blue enthusiasts and, from the USAC debacle, we all know how few there are of those. The End is Nigh!

LONDON W15

GUY DORRIS

Our year in black and white

With more than a little help from Richard Longman and his 1275cc Mini, we took the honours in the RAC British Touring Car Championship for the sixth year running.

Umberto Grano's Luigi Racing BMW 3.0 CSL took the European Touring Car Championship, to give us our seventh success in the event in eight years.



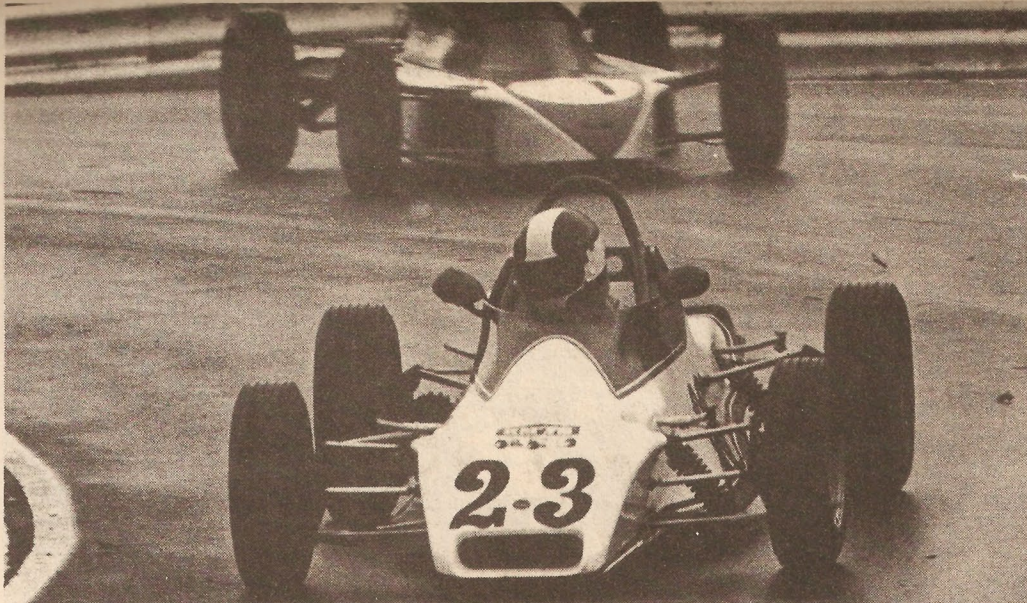
Harald Ertl won the prestigious German Group 5 National Championship in his mighty Schnitzer BMW 320 - on Dunlop.

Meanwhile, hardly a day passed when somebody, somewhere, wasn't winning something on Dunlop.

So that by the end of the season, we'd put another 16 championships under our belt. Here's a selection:-

French Touring Car Championship	Lucien Guitteny	Ford Capri III
European Super Vee Championship	Helmut Henzler	March 783
Volkswagen Silver Cup GB Super Vee Championship	Bruce Venn	Lola 326/8
National Formula 4 Championship	Ian Briggs	Delta 784
RAC National Formula Ford Championship	Kenny Acheson	Royale RMC RP24

leading the field to give you the best



James Weaver's TIGA finished a strong second to Terry Gray's Royale in the Kent Messenger FF1600 final.

BRANDS HATCH

What a Gray day!

Terry Gray, the ex-kartist from Wye in Kent, set his seal on the 1978 Kent Messenger FF1600 championship just as he would have wished on Boxing Day, whirling his Sisley Karting-backed Royale RP24 to victory in both his heat and the final at the BARC's traditional Yuletide meeting. This successfully rounded off a fine year for the promising Kentish driver, backing up his runner-up position in the national Dunlop 'Star of Tomorrow' series. In 1979 Gray may well be the man to beat. Racing was unusually uninspiring in the rather flat, grey conditions and, unlike Christmas meetings of a few years back, the entry was comparatively poor. Apart from Gray, who enjoyed some close combat with James Weaver's forcefully driven TIGA, only a couple of pilots stood out from the rest. Alan Humberstone endeared himself to the VIPs in the Grovewood suite and the enthusiasts on the spectator banks with a marvellous display of on-the-limit driving in his potent Stiletto-Ford while John Homewood used all his normal *panache* to good effect at the wheel of an immaculate BDA-powered TIGA Sports 2000 car in his pursuit of Syd Fox in the *Libre* event.

Championship leader Terry Gray coped best with the atrocious weather throughout practice for the opening Kent Messenger FF1600 heat, annexing pole from Jim Weaver, the lap record holder who was more than happy with the Scorpion-entered TIGA once again. Local man Peter Lawrence did well to complete the front row in the attractive yellow Mansell Racing Royale with Tim Davies (back in the Paddock Racing Royale) and Nick Taylor's smart Jomic in behind.

Weaver, from the centre of the front row, and Davies, got the best starts although Gray, by clinging sternly to the inside line, sat right on the TIGA's gearbox by Paddock, the leading pair not to be seen again by most of the field. Initial chase was given by Lawrence before his engine was plagued by a dreadful misfire whence Ashley Ward, from the third row, took up station in third place, guesting in Andy Ackerley's Crosslé.

Weaver and Gray were never more than three lengths apart up front, Jim managing to stay ahead although Terry seemed to be able to close up at will. However, Weaver stuck grimly to the task at hand and, when a side-by-side attempt by Gray at the line on lap 7 had failed one began to wonder just what the Harlow driver had in reserve. All was revealed on the last lap when Terry again went wide and, by virtue of a quicker exit from Clark Curve, drew alongside over the finishing line. Could they be split? To the spectator perhaps not, nor on the RAC timekeepers' watches but the judges had spotted a narrow advantage to Gray and the win was his. When Ward's engine punctured itself on the penultimate lap and Davies's unit had finally cried enough two tours earlier, a delighted Taylor took third

Coppelli TIGA had Don Hardman's Crosslé in attendance at the flag for the next places.

The Shell Superlife Escort fleet were turned over to some of the leading ShellSport 'Gold Star' competitors for probably their final appearance and a thoroughly tedious swansong this proved to be. Cameron Binnie led throughout, the Northern FF1600 man staying off 'Big Tone' Lanfranchi in the early laps until Malcolm Prior rudely nerfed his way through on lap 3. Lanfranchi saw no reason to indulge in further argy-bargy, electing to remain third (Peter Baldwin, Bob Jarvis, Nick Whiting and several others had become tangled already) and the order remained this way. Whiting clambered back through the field as one would expect, usurping John Brindley with two laps to go and gaining fourth place into the bargain.

Back to the Formula Ford single seaters and heat two of the Kent Messenger round. A quick glance at a lap chart would reveal no place changes in the first six which must be self-explanatory! Brands Hatch Racing's star pupil of 1978, Dave Rackham, has really benefitted from the expertise of Rushen Green Racing in recent weeks. Utilising the ex-Thackwell Van Diemen's potential to the full, the former hot rod champion romped away to victory. His closest rival and Rochester MC 'Driver of the Year' (I) Wil Arif could do nothing with his considerable Brands experience to shorten the lead (despite setting fastest lap) but held Mike Taylor's Royale at bay by a large margin so he, like Rackham, was not hanging around on the drying track. Gordon Friend (TIGA), Tim Barry (Merlyn) and John Ayres (Royale) had a good dice behind Taylor to complete the top six.

When David Orbell's Mallock shattered a half shaft in the centre of the front row at the start of the Jack Brabham *Formule Libre* race, poleman Syd Fox's problems could have been described as non-existent on studying practice form. Mercifully, a problem did arise for Syd (and the crowd) in the form of Ernie Farncombe's beautifully prepared ex-Pancho Webb TIGA, now fitted with a 1700 BDA unit, and driven by Imp specialist John Homewood. John managed a mere handful of laps in the morning, falling foul of the lake/skating rink at Surtees, thus starting from the third row.

Chaos reigned as the lights flashed to green, Bill Taylor (Delta), Roger Fullagar (Mallock) and Homewood in particular having to contend with the stationary (and worried?) Orbell. Fullagar, in fact, nipped between the Stallwood U2 and the similar machine of Robert Baker-Carr on the outside of the front row, rushing into second place while the inspired Homewood hustled the skirted TIGA past the brown Delta up the hill towards Druids and was hard after Fox on the exit of the hairpin. The wily Syd used the opening laps to his advantage, Homewood still acclimatising himself to BDA-power in the wet, the gap growing to six seconds at half distance.

After an excellent start, antiques dealer Taylor "always wanting to entertain the GP", gyrated to the back of the field while Charlie Kirby, having started from the back in his new A-class Mallock, had shot up to third place by the second tour. Interest centred on the leading pair though, for Fox was delayed badly when the Delta driver spun again at Graham Hill

incident to narrow the gap once more. Track conditions were against him however, the glorious sounding TIGA being unable to catch the impeccable Fox by some four seconds. Kirby kept his third place, the last un-lapped runner, while Fullagar held on to the small-class lead over Baker-Carr.

With Alan Humberstone's fabulous Wendy Wools championship-winning Stiletto at the back of the grid clutchless one could be forgiven for overlooking David Enderby's pole position or Derek Foy's fine practice performance as they sandwiched the gap where the Ford-powered Imp derivative should have been. Amazingly, and despite superb getaways by Viv Wallace's beautifully turned out Mini and Bill McGovern in the pristine Bevan Stiletto all eyes were on Humberstone and, as ever from one of the most spectacular drivers on the British scene, the Canterbury ace did not disappoint.

Past several cars by Paddock, Alan had incredibly weaved his way through to ninth at the completion of the opening circuit — that's 10 cars in 1.2 miles of tortuous track! Relentlessly Humberstone roared on, sliding the little beast through the bends in brilliant style. Poor John Worster, going very well in seventh place, was to halt his progress, though, as the two cars touched in Graham Hill Bend on lap two — one of those things — the orange Imp lurching off onto the mud taking the Stiletto's one-piece front end with it, the rest of the car following in a lurid power slide. From the cockpit all seemed in order mechanically so Alan, not unduly worried by his rapid fall to the back again, slithered back into the fray — gingerly at first — and then . . . wow! What followed provided one of the sights of the year. Casting aside the problems of a powerful saloon on a still very wet surface, Humberstone fought the odd-looking truncated device every inch of the way home. Eighth by lap 4 then gaining a place per lap until fifth had been reached. This was unreal and the hardy spectators loved it. The sheer speed as the white and green machine rocketed past the mid-field runners! Three more laps and Alan would probably have made third but even fifth had completely overshadowed McGovern's effortless victory, a fine scrap between Jon Mowatt, Wallace and Dave Wilson's re-re-engineered Escort for the minor places and Tony Crudgington's excellent 850 class win. Reward indeed for all that midweek testing, Tony!

After that, forgive me if the FF1600 final sounds tame — it was! From a staggered grid, Gray and Weaver, followed by Rackham and Arif promised initially to relieve their heat battles while "the hounds of hell" (apologies to commentator Brian Jones) were led by Friend and Mike Taylor. The first four cars circulated independently from start to finish and fifth was taken by Taylor whose run was not so straightforward. Mike survived a misdemeanour on the second lap, fell to the back, and spent the remaining 13 laps picking off the field one by one. This led to the only excitement of the race, when he came across the super confrontation between Barry, Ayres, Nick Pearce (Saracen) and Hardman. The plucky Taylor eventually won his fifth place while Barry, driving particularly neatly, took a commendable sixth.

MARCUS PYE

Kent Messenger FF1600 race, heat 1 (10 laps): 1, Terry Gray (Royale-Auriga RP24), 10m 45.5s, 67.13mph; 2, James Weaver (Tiga-Scholar FF78), 10m 45.5s; 3, Nick Taylor (Jomic-Rowland Mk2A), 11m 11.2s; 4, Chris Reynolds (Tiga-CES FF78), 11m 17.4s; 5, Don Hardman (Crosslé-Marque 32F), 11m 19.5s; 6, Nicholas Pearce (Saracen-Minister 78), 11m 26s. **Fastest lap:** Weaver, 1m 3.0s, 68.78mph.

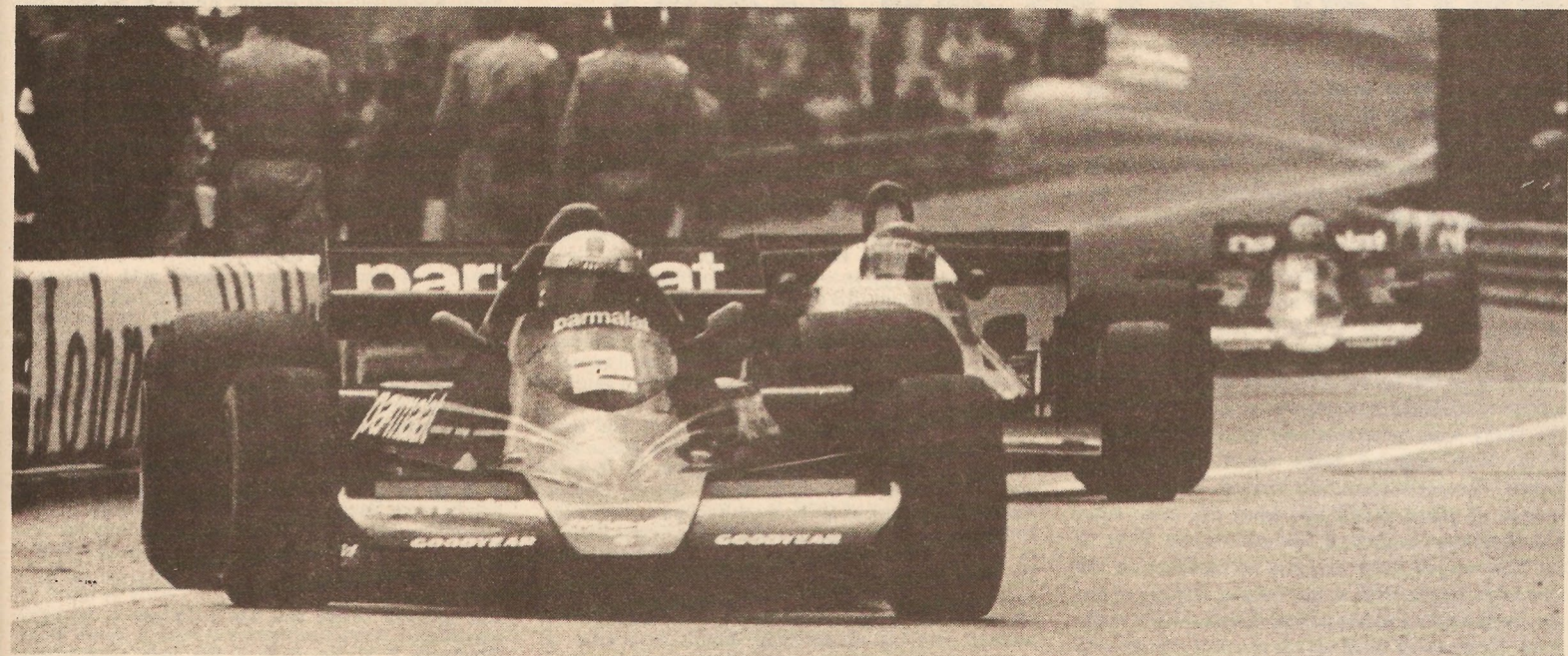
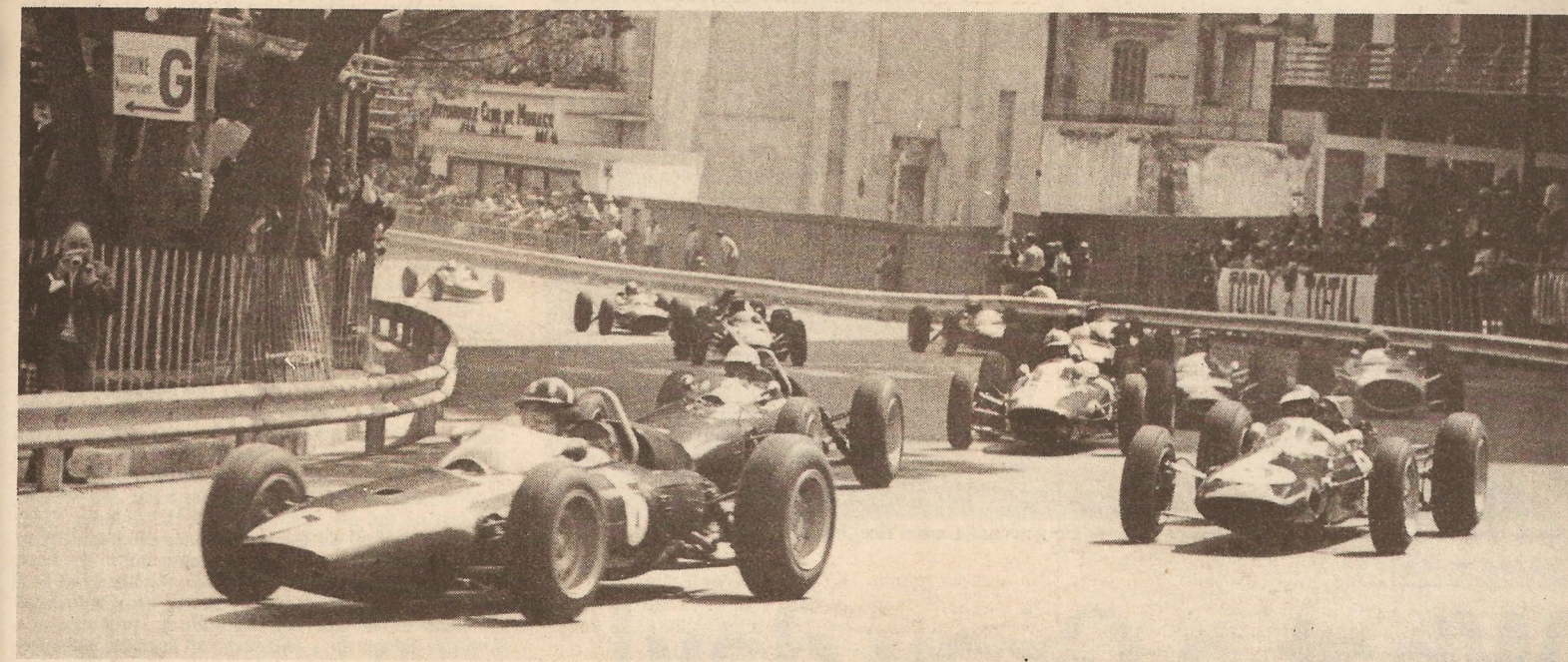
ShellSport Gold Star Escort race (10 laps): 1, Cameron Binnie, 11m 29.5s, 62.84mph; 2, Malcolm Prior, 11m 30.9s; 3, Tony Lanfranchi, 11m 37.2s; 4, Nick Whiting, 11m 50s; 5, John Brindley, 11m 53.4s; 6, Tony Dickinson, 11m 58.5s. **Fastest lap:** Binnie and Prior, 1m 7.4s, 64.29mph.

Kent Messenger FF1600 race, heat 2 (10 laps): 1, Dave Rackham (Van Diemen-Scholar RF78), 10m 24.5s, 69.38mph; 2, Wil Arif (Crosslé DPL-Rowland 32F), 10m 25.6s; 3, Mike Taylor (Royale-Titan RP24), 10m 41.5s; 4, Gordon Friend (Tiga-ARE FF77), 10m 54.7s; 5, Tim Barry (Merlyn-Scholar Mk17/24), 10m 55.6s; 6, John Ayres (Royale-Minister RP24), 10m 59.6s. **Fastest lap:** Arif, 1m 0.9s, 71.15mph.

Jack Brabham Formule Libre race (12 laps) — Overall and over 1600cc: 1, Syd Fox (2.0 TON-Minister), 11m 34.4s, 74.88mph; 2, John Homewood (1.7 TIGA-Cosworth BDA SC77), 11m 38.8s; 3, Charlie Kirby (1.7 Mallock U2-Nelson Mk20B), 12m 10.6s. **Fastest lap:** Homewood, 56.6s, 76.55mph. **Up to 1600cc:** 1, Roger Fullagar (1.6 Mallock U2-RJF Mk14), 11 laps, 68.55mph; 2, Robert Baker-Carr (1.6 Mallock U2-CES Mk16B), 11 laps; 3, Barry Barnes (1.6 Hawke-Scholar DL2B), 11 laps. **Fastest lap:** Fullagar, 1m 1.6s, 70.34mph.

Christmas Cup Special Saloon Car race (10 laps) — Overall: 1, Bill McGovern (1.0 Bevan Stiletto), 10m 7.2s, 77.36mph; 2, Jon Mowatt (1.3 Morris Cooper S), 10m 24.3s; 3, Viv Wallace (1.0 BMC Cooper S), 10m 28.9s, 10m 28.9s; 4, Dave Wilson (1.8 Ford Escort-Swindon BDE), 10m 32.8s. **1301-2500cc:** 1, Wilson, 68.47mph; 2, Tony Davies (2.3 Vauxhall Transpex Firenza), 9 laps; no other finishers. **Fastest lap:** Wilson, 1m 1.1s, 70.92mph. **1001-1300cc:** 1, Mowatt, 69.41mph; 2, Alan Humberstone (1.3 Mason Stiletto-Ford), 10m 34.3s; 3, Dave Hancock (1.3 Manx Mini-Ford), 11m 3.1s. **Fastest lap:** Humberstone, 59.2s, 73.19mph. **851-1000cc:** 1, McGovern; 2, Wallace; 3, Bev Comber (1.0 Mini), 10m 75.3s. **Fastest lap:** McGovern, 59.7s, 72.38mph. **Up to 850cc:** 1, Tony Crudgington (849 BMC Mini), 10m 50.9s, 66.57mph; 2, Eddie McLurg (848 Chrysler Imp), 9 laps; 3, John Bridgen (850 Leyland Mini), 9 laps. **Fastest lap:** Crudgington, 1m 2.7s, 69.11mph.

Kent Messenger FF1600 race, final (15 laps): 1, Gray, 15m 7.9s; 2, Weaver, 15m 11.9s; 3, Rackham, 15m 23s; 4, Arif, 15m 30.7s; 5, Mike Taylor, 15m 48s; 6, Barry, 15m 57.1s. **Fastest lap:** Weaver,



Grand Prix racing at Monaco, past and present: exciting dicing in 1963, a boring procession in 1978.

The Decline and Fall of Grand Prix racing

Have massive sponsorship and the advanced design of Formula 1 cars emasculated Grand Prix racing? Were things really better yesterday? CHRIS NIXON is adamant that the great days have gone — but not for ever?

Ronnie Peterson's was not the only death at Monza last September. Virtually un-noticed by everyone, Grand Prix Racing, too, finally succumbed — to the grievous injuries and indignities inflicted upon it over the past decade by the thoughtless vandalism of the CSI, the constructors, and numerous drivers. Like poor Ronnie, Grand Prix Racing is now dead and buried. Unlike poor Ronnie — who was irreplaceable — Grand Prix Racing has been replaced, but by a fake, a phoney. For instead of Grand Prix Racing we now have nothing more than a series of fortnightly, high-speed commercials called Formula 1. Money Rules, OK?

The decline and fall of Grand Prix racing can be traced back directly to the 1968 season, for it was then that occurred two innovations that were, to my mind, to have far-reaching and ultimately wholly destructive effects on the sport. The first was the acceptance by Team Lotus of complete sponsorship by John Player Gold Leaf cigarettes, and the second was the adoption of aerofoils or wings on GP cars as an aid to cornering.

Wings actually came on the scene first, both Ferrari and Brabham teams appearing with them for the Belgian GP at Spa in 1967. Lotus soon adopted them, too, and by the next season they were everywhere. Right from the start, there was much argument as to the validity of such devices in GP racing, but the Great God Progress was used as a formidable weapon by those in favour and, of course, the Great God Progress

must never be denied, especially when there's money to be won. What could not have been foreseen by anyone at the time was that the GGP — in the form of wings — was going to destroy Grand Prix racing.

A reprieve nearly came about at the Spanish GP of 1969, when the aerofoils on the works Lotuses of Graham Hill and Jochen Rindt collapsed, causing both drivers to have colossal crashes, fortunately without serious injury. Aerofoils of any kind should have been banned there and then. But, instead, the CSI merely ruled out high-mounted aerofoils, and wings were allowed to develop into those that we see today.

For the Great God Progress the result has been tremendous, no doubt, but for Grand Prix racing it has been catastrophic. The enormous downthrust generated by these wings demanded wider and wider tyres, which meant wider and wider cars, so much so that the maximum permitted width for a Formula 1 car is now 7ft 1in, and the maximum for tyres in 21ins! And this is how wings have destroyed Grand Prix racing: the cars are now so wide and their tyres and brakes so efficient *that they are incapable of racing!*

At virtually every circuit in use today, you hear the drivers complaining that "There is nowhere to pass," or, at best, "There is only one place to pass." With those few words, but without seeming to realise it (are they all really so dumb?), they admit that motor racing is a thing of the past. For if you can't overtake your competitors, how can you race?

By this single, astonishing admission, they render the terms 'motor racing' and 'racing driver' obsolete, and anyone claiming to promote the former or be the

latter is surely liable to prosecution under the Trades Descriptions Act! And all because of the Great God Progress, in whose name circuits have been abandoned or emasculated, for as far as drivers and constructors are concerned, the circuits are always to blame. Just occasionally a driver can be given a slap on the wrist, but *you must never, ever criticise the cars!* For the cars are synonymous with the GGP (which is synonymous with money), and that's what it's all about, folks.

Except, of course, when one team uses the GGP to such effect that it catches all the others with their trousers down — then it is no longer Progress, it is Unfair. A classic example of this was provided at the 1978 Swedish F1 event, when the Brabham team appeared with its brilliant (and therefore Unfair) sucker/fan cars. The hypocrisy that flew around at the time would have been hilarious had it not been so nauseating, for the other constructors suffered a collective fit of the vapours, and protests were thrown around like confetti.

In the *Daily Mail*, Ken Tyrrell claimed that the fan cars "had to be banned or there would have been a terrible threat to spectators and drivers at circuits . . . every circuit in the world would have to move its grandstands. Fan cars would have changed the face of modern Formula 1 racing." In his hurry to get Lady Ecclestone's Fans banned, Tyrrell conveniently forgot the havoc and expense that the wings and wide tyres on his and everybody else's cars have caused at circuits around the world — all in the name of the GGP, you understand.

But Lady Ecclestone's fan cars were going too far — they were so progressive they were positively Unfair. Worse than that, they are *dangerous!* (Horrors!) The fans would pick up all the sticks and stones that litter today's super-smooth, ultra-safe tracks and hurl them at the following cars. And what about the rain? Good grief, chaps — can you imagine the wall of water the cars behind will have to drive through? Those fan cars are positively deadly!

Utter nonsense, of course. The fan cars' critics conveniently ignored the fact that any stones sucked up would have to smash their way through the fan blades to get out, thereby destroying the fan, and that the modern, ridiculously wide tyres throw up so much water in the rain that the fans' contribution would be minimal. These arguments were about as specious as somebody claiming that Tyrrell's six-wheelers were dangerous because they had two more wheels that might fall off!

In the end, of course, the fan cars were banned, but for the wrong reasons. They should have been banned because they merely compounded the felony of wings, wide cars and tyres by increasing the cars' cornering speed considerably and reducing the amount of skill

... "the cars are now so wide and their tyres and brakes so efficient that they are incapable of racing."

needed to drive them still further. Instead, hypocrisy won the day and they were deemed 'dangerous'. Had they not been, however, you can bet your boots that within a couple of races every other team would have had sucker cars, a clear case of "Where the B***** sucks, there suck I." And to Hell with safety.

You will have noticed that I referred to the fan cars' appearance at "the Swedish F1 event". I did this because the term "Grand Prix" is no longer applicable in any sense to what one can, at best, refer to as Formula 1, but what should be called Formula Fraud. There is nothing remotely Grand about today's Formula 1 cars which, because of their excessive width, consistently prove themselves incapable of racing. The term, "Grand Prix", is no better than a bad joke. It means "Large Prize", and in virtually every other sport where the participants compete for money, the amount at stake is public knowledge. Tennis, horse racing, boxing, golf, show jumping — all publicise their prize money. But Formula 1 fans are not allowed to know, because Tiny Eccles and his FOCA cronies might be caused embarrassment if it was known how they carve up the loot. Pathetic, isn't it?

The sad truth is that Formula 1 today is just about the biggest sporting farce since the Muhammed Ali-Richard Dunn boxing 'contest'. It has been substituted for Grand Prix Racing right under the noses of millions of fans, who have been brilliantly convinced that they should still pay outrageous prices to watch invisible drivers in unraceable cars. As in so many other areas in life today, it is quantity that counts in F1, not quality. The FOCA and the promoters are always ready to congratulate themselves, because every event now has 24 or more starters, which appear on the grid covered by a mere two or three seconds. All this is put about as some sort of Fantastic Achievement, whereas in reality it makes for an appalling state of affairs.

More does not mean better, in spite of what many F1 people would have you believe. As for the two-second grid, well, the very fact that a novice like Eddie Cheever can claim (as he did in AUTOSPORT not too long ago) that he was able to lap Fiorano in an F1 Ferrari within a couple of hundredths of a second of an experience winner like Carlos Reutemann, is every bit as damning an indictment of F1 as the drivers' lament that there is nowhere to pass.

What it all adds up to is Formula 1's silliest paradox: today's cars are too easy to drive and too difficult

to race. Don't laugh, for it is all too painfully true. Even James Hunt came close to admitting as much in an AUTOCAR interview in 1977: "I think the F1 car of today is too easy to drive. The ideal car would be exactly the same weight as now, with getting on to double the power. About 700bhp would make them a real challenge to drive, shall we say . . ." He goes on to make a nonsense of his first statement by adding, "However, I would say that today's cars are certainly almost more difficult to drive than ones of earlier eras. You could drive the older cars at enormous angles . . . and it was good for a show. The modern F1 car is quite lively . . . but not conducive to spectacular driving." He can say *that* again!

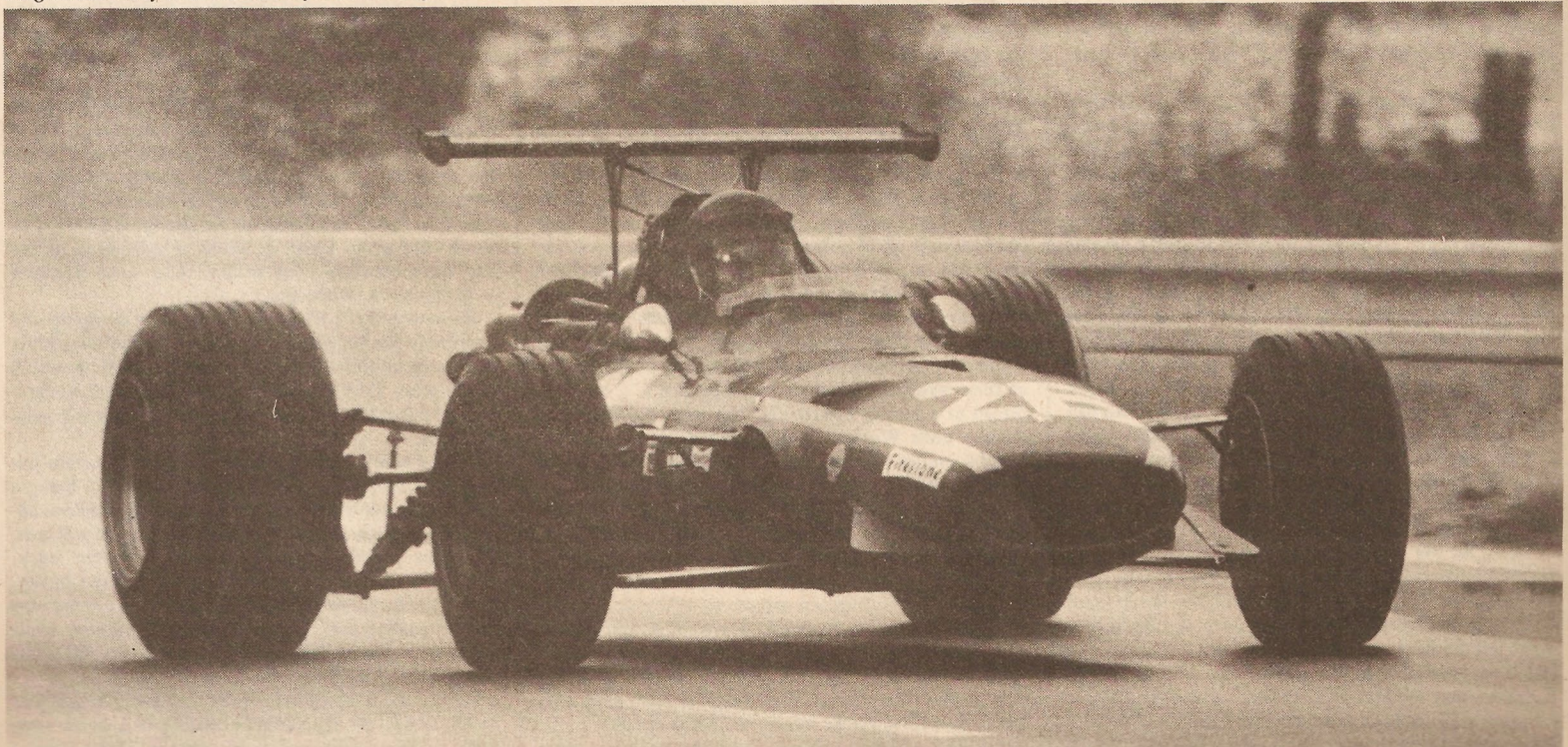
But if Hunt seriously believes that cars of earlier eras (forgetting the 1500cc formula) were easier to drive than modern ones, he is plainly talking out of the back of his Bell-Star. Another World Champion — Phil Hill — recently drove a 1938 Mercedes-Benz W154 Grand Prix Car for *Road & Track*. This is how 'easy' he found it:

"There are infinitely more negative things to be concerned with in a car such as the W154 than there are in the GP cars of today. And much of what the driver of the thirties did was to get used to the car's vices. In many cases, today's driver is able to work with a car that has a great many pluses and his job is to do his best to take advantage of them. That is why you could take an average driver and put him or her in a modern GP car, start them out slowly and let them work up faster and faster, maybe even take it out on a skidpan and even spin it once or twice, and eventually they might be able to drive the car at a little over half its potential because the car is dead honest in every way. But you could never do that with a W154, because you could tip-toe around the track or spin it all day on a skidpan and it wouldn't tell you one damn thing about how to drive it on a circuit. While a lesser GP driver might be able to work up a fair pace in a modern GP car, he could never manage this thing . . .

"When team drivers like Rudolf Caracciola, Manfred von Brauchitsch, Richard Seaman and Herman Lang were winning, you can be assured they were working for it and I have tremendous admiration for them."

I have no doubt that, were they able to drive some of the pre-war Grand Prix cars, most of today's drivers would share Phil's admiration. (Equally, I'm damn sure some wouldn't touch them with a barge-pole. "Too dangerous!" they'd cry. Too difficult, they'd mean.) But I'm certain that Caracciola, von Brauchitsch, Seaman, Lang, Nuvolari and the like — were they to be offered a drive in a modern F1 car — would take one look at those wings, wide tyres and

Belgian ace Jacky Ickx scored the first ever win for a Grand Prix car with a wing in his Ferrari at Rouen in 1968.



Decline and Fall of GP racing

continued

skirts, and turn on their heels in disgust. They would immediately recognise them for what they are: devices that invest the cars with such fantastic roadholding and braking powers that they can turn a mediocre driver into an 'ace' and (if the designer hasn't got his sums right) a champion into an also-ran. Once upon a time, a racing driver could overcome a bad car by sheer skill, and it was one of the glories of Grand Prix races that they were won in the cockpit. Formula 1 events are won in the drawing office. This is progress?

Progress is inevitable, of course, but when it actively prevents racing, then drastic action must be taken. Up until the seventies, cars could actually race each other, with drivers snapping at each other's heels and racing alongside, around and in front of each other. Today, the cars' excessive width combines with the turbulence caused by the wings to make this impossible, so we get the dreary, follow-my-leader-till he-breaks-down processions that now masquerade as motor races.

Two classic examples of this were the 1978 South African and British events. In spite of the hysterical ravings of TV commentators Andrew Marriott and Murray Walker — each trying to tell us we were watching one of the greatest races of all time — neither event was a race at all. In each case the lead changed four or five times, but only when the lead car faltered or blew up. Nobody actually won the lead except the eventual winner — Peterson in South Africa and Reutemann at Brands. Commentating on the latter event for the BBC, Jackie Stewart complained bitterly more than once that Reutemann hadn't actually passed anyone (except Lauda), yet here he was winning the race having started in seventh place!

Think back to just a few of the great races of the fifties and sixties: Fangio and Hawthorn at Reims; Fangio, Ascari and Farina at Monza; Fangio Hawthorn and Collins at the 'Ring; Graham Hill driving through the field to lead the British GP at Silverstone; Hill passing Clark on the outside of Woodcote in the rain to win on the line, also at Silverstone; Phil Hill, von Trips and Brabham at Reims; Baghetti, Gurney and Bonnier, also at Reims; Moss driving Brooks's Vanwall to win at Aintree; and any number of three, four and five-car battles to the line at Monza.

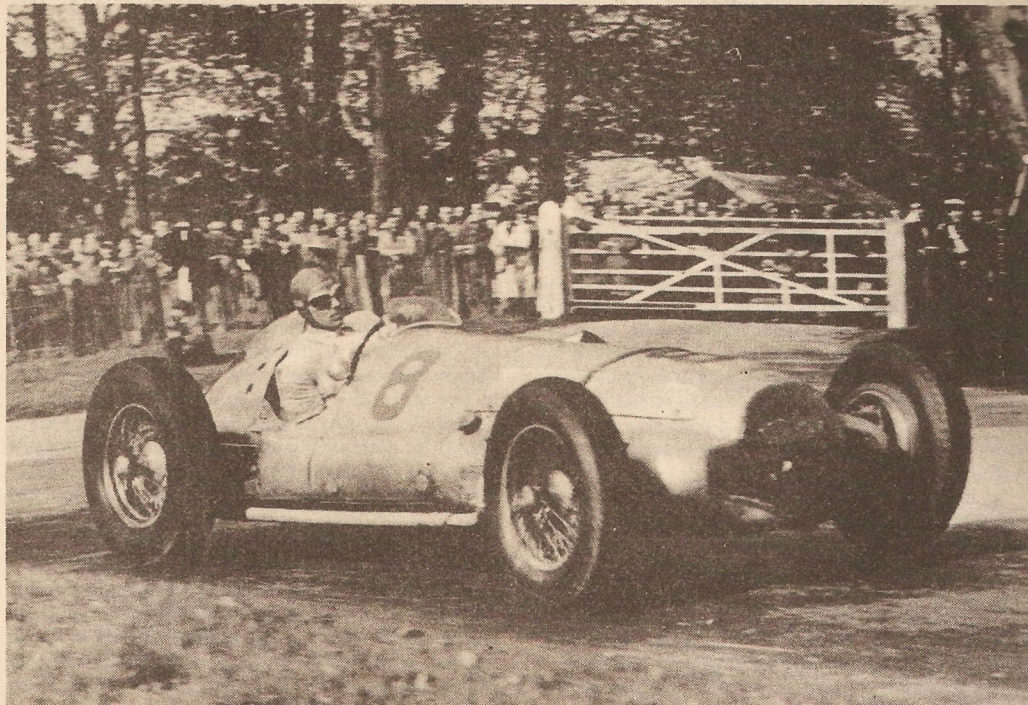
That, folks, was motor racing before it was destroyed by the Great God Progress. Let me give you an

"Formula 1 events are won in the drawing office. This is progress?"

example of what Grand Prix Racing could be like, an eye-witness report of a race that took place 15 years ago:

"As they went off on lap 2, Clark passed Ginther into second place at the back of the pits, only to be re-passed very soon afterwards . . . While Hill's BRM managed to preserve its lead from the howling mob that snapped at its heels, Clark fought Ginther for second place, the Lotus overtaking the BRM once or more each lap . . . Still nose to tail, with Clark passing and being re-passed by Ginther, the first eight cars bunched into the hairpin . . . As the leaders came round to complete lap five, Hill still lead by a few yards and Clark managed to nip through ahead of Ginther into second place as the two cars entered the tight Tobacco Kiosk corner. Now clear of Ginther, Clark went off after Hill as they set off on lap six. Surtees still held his fourth place, McLaren fifth, Ireland sixth, Gurney seventh, Maggs eighth and Mairesse ninth — virtually nothing separating these cars, and the lap times of Hill's BRM being practically those of Mairesse's Ferrari . . .

" . . . As the cars swarmed through the Gasworks Hairpin to complete the seventh lap, Clark managed to nip ahead of Hill's BRM — but as they accelerated away from the hairpin it was the dark green BRM that again led the field . . . Shortly Clark was back ahead of Hill and leading the field down past the Mirabeau Hotel towards the Station Hairpin — where once again he went wide and let not only Hill, but Ginther too, come past. By the time they came back through the pit



Dick Seaman lifts a wheel of his Mercedes-Benz W154 at Donington in 1938.

area, the Lotus was again in second place and once more, as they entered the Gasworks Hairpin, Clark nipped into the lead. Again, however, as the two cars went through the corner almost side-by-side, Hill took the wider line and emerged from the corner better placed to turn on the power — with the result that he regained the lead as they pulled onto the straight . . ."

Phew! You haven't read a race report like that since they emasculated Monza with chicanes, but in the great days before the GGP had blighted the sport with wings, skirts and wide, wide cars, drivers were actually capable of passing and re-passing each other. It was called Grand Prix racing.

My understandably breathless report is from Peter Garnier's splendid account of one of the 1963 Grandes Epreuves in his excellent book, *Sixteen On The Grid*. (Not 24, please note. They didn't need to substitute quantity for quality by padding the field in those days.) From the names of the corners you will have gathered that Hill, Clark, Ginther and Co were not passing and re-passing each other (the Hill-Clark battle went on for over 20 laps) on the wide open spaces of Monza, Reims or Silverstone, but on the tight, twisty little gem that was Monaco! I say 'was' because even this great circuit has suffered at the hands of Formula 1. They've put a chicane at Ste Devote and, in order to squeeze yet more money out of still more dumb spectators, they've taken the circuit round the swimming pool instead of giving the cars a clear run into the Gasometer Hairpin. By doing so they have deprived everyone of an exciting overtaking area and persuaded people into paying heavily to overlook four silly corners where the very thought of passing is ridiculous. This is progress?

If you watched the 1978 Monaco event on TV you cannot have failed to notice how appallingly badly today's cars perform there compared with their counterparts of 15 years ago. From the start we had three cars all in a bunch — Watson, Depailler and Lauda — leading, as did Hill, Clark and Ginther. But there the comparison ends for, whereas the latter passed each other time and again, lap after lap, the former — their ridiculous cars incapable of getting out of their own way, let alone someone else's — were reduced to a boring procession. Not once did the order change until Watson's brakes failed, and even then Lauda couldn't get alongside Depailler, never mind past him. Motor racing? Don't make me laugh!

It has to be said that the only reason that Monaco survives in the F1 calendar is the collective snobbery and hypocrisy of the FOCA and their drivers, for its only the glamour of its location that keeps them coming back. If the Monaco circuit were situated in Orleans, or Dijon, or Toulouse, the FOCA would have abandoned it years ago, claiming it was 'too narrow' or 'too dangerous' or both, for modern F1 cars. The fact that modern F1 isn't fit for such a great circuit as Monaco, but F1 means money, and money talks.

So, like so many other circuits, Monaco has been

hacked about to make things less difficult (sorry, chaps — safer!) for today's 'heroes', and we now have Mickey Mouse circuits for Mickey Mouse drivers. Nothing must be allowed to get in the way of today's ridiculous machines. Road surfaces must be as smooth as a baby's bottom because today's grossly expensive tyres will tear themselves to shreds, otherwise. Corners must be smoothed out, wide run-off areas provided so that our heroes can make their mistakes in comfort and safety, and kerbs must be very slight and rounded so cars can run over them without losing a fraction of a second. Sloppy driving is positively to be encouraged!

All this has been done to accommodate the 'needs' of today's cars and drivers. No doubt there are cricketers who feel the 'need' for a wider bat; footballers who 'need' a wider goalmouth; golfers who 'need' a special club, and so on. But the whole object of competitive sport is that it should be very difficult to do well (demonstrably untrue of F1), so the participants have to adapt themselves to the sport, not have it adapted to suit them, as has happened on a horrendous scale in F1. We are fast approaching the time when 'races' will be run on vast, open areas of tarmac, with corners defined by a curved white line painted on the road.

And while on the subject of corners, let me offer you a quote from Stirling Moss: "To go flat out through a bend that is surrounded everywhere by level lawn is one thing, but to go flat out through a bend that has a stone wall on one side and a precipice on the other — that's an achievement!"

I have no doubt that many of today's 'racing drivers' will look upon that as the remark of a madman, but as Moss's friend, the late Ken Purdy, once wrote: "There are three sports — bullfighting, motor racing and mountaineering. All the rest are recreations." I'm only glad that Purdy didn't live to see the sport he loved so much (and about which he wrote so brilliantly) turned into the recreation — or rather, fairground sideshow — that is has now become.

Because today's F1 cars — brilliantly designed and dazzlingly packaged as they are — are nothing more than fairground freaks. And I believe that sponsorship — the other 1968 innovation I mentioned at the beginning of this article — has had a lot to do with this state of affairs.

On the whole, sponsorship's major contribution has been to increase the cost of F1 enormously, it being a basic Parkinson's law that the more money made available to a project, the more money that project will cost. As Mike Doodson wrote in *Motor* awhile back: "Sophistication in racing cars doesn't come cheap. Ken Tyrrell's six-wheel experiments over two years may end up costing his sponsor around £1½ million, while the Lotus revival has probably set back Mr Player the best part of £2 million."

And Enzo Ferrari has had, as usual, some wise words to say on the subject: "There is now no such thing as an amateur sport; all are run by the laws of

"On the whole sponsorship's main contribution has been to increase the cost of F1 enormously."

cash. In motor sport the sponsors now have the dominant role; it is they who have inflated the costs of the sport so that a good driver costs half-a-million dollars a year. I accept sponsors who bring something into racing; lubrication, helmets, safety equipment, etc. But cigarettes and prophylactics are just prostitution, and we've reached the point where we've totally depersonalised the marque of a car. The organisers have prostituted the sport for publicity; their arrogant signs take away stands and block the spectators' view. It is all geared to profit. Drivers simply imitate their surroundings. Organisers think they are offering spectacle. We had spectacle in the old days: a spectacle of technique, honour and sport."

Formula 1 does not need sponsorship because its so expensive — it is so expensive because it has sponsorship. The result is that more and more money is poured in to pay for more and more testing; cars have become so fast that circuits have to be butchered to accommodate them and so easy to drive that what was once an art has become just another job. If Jean-Pierre Jarier can step into the new Lotus and put it on pole in Canada after two or three years at the back of the grid and beyond, you can be sure that 50 per cent — maybe more — of the starters at Montreal could have done the same. Progress? Who are you kidding?

And so we come back to Monza, and the tragic demise of Ronnie Peterson and Grand Prix Racing. Peterson was a very popular man and his death brought howls of anguish from the Formula 1 circus, which immediately blamed everything except the cars.

Typically, the drivers and constructors turned a blind eye to the shortcomings of their beloved cars and blamed the circuit, Riccardo Patrese and the starter. They claimed that Monza was out-of-date and too dangerous — there should never have been a chicane so near the start. But why are there chicanes at Monza at all? Because, some years ago the drivers, in their wisdom, decided that Monza was 'too fast' (the circuit, mind you, not the cars) and demanded chicanes in order to keep the speeds down. And why were the speeds too high? Because the wings and ultra-wide tyres had increased the speeds of the cars so much and now, with the aid of skirts, they're going even faster!

It was no good blaming Patrese, either. For years now, these freak machines have been barging into each other as drivers jockey for position at the start or attempt an overtaking manoeuvre. Always the drivers

blame each other, at the same time criticising the circuit for being 'too narrow'.

And why was the start such a mess? Because the cars are now so ridiculously wide that they have to start 2-2, instead of 3-2-3 or even 4-3-4 as in the days of Grand Prix racing. (You might think that on the wide open spaces of Monza even today's 7ft-wide freaks could start 3-2-3, but no — there are these chicanes, you see and . . . Stupid? Good Lord, no! This is Progress, man, and Progress means Safety, doesn't it?)

The 2-2 start meant that the 24 starters (never mind the quality — look at all the money on the grid!) were spread over 12 rows, and the rule book says that each row must have a minimum of 12 metres of space. So Monza had a grid nearly 200yds long to start with and more, by the time they had all straggled round the warming-up lap. Even an 'experienced' starter could have been in serious trouble with that lot. With the front rows stopped, the back ones still moving when the light turned green, and all of them funnelling into a silly chicane — carnage was almost inevitable. And it all starts and ends with these ridiculously wide cars.

So Ronnie Peterson died and with him, finally and inevitably, Grand Prix racing. And he, one of the last of the real racing drivers, was not even allowed dignity in death. Instead of displaying his dazzling skills visibly in a Grand Prix car worthy of them, he was hidden away in the 'safe' cockpit of a brilliantly engineered Formula 1 Freak, so superbly designed that many ordinary men, without a fraction of his talent, could drive it almost as fast. And Ronnie died, not at the limit of his skills on some really demanding corner, but in a sickening, humiliating mish-mash of F1 freaks on a perfectly straight piece of road. He, of all people, deserved a better end.

* * * *

Grand Prix Racing is dead, but unlike poor Ronnie, who was mere flesh and blood, it can be brought back to life. There are signs (better late than never, I suppose) that the CSI is at last beginning to realise that for the past few years of F1 the lunatics have been running the asylum. The constructors have been so concerned with progress and have spent so much money on it that they have failed completely to see how that 'progress' has destroyed Grand Prix Racing.

In AUTOSPORT recently, John Surtees said, "Sponsorship is now a vital factor, because F1 costs have got out of hand," adding the astonishing claim that "They have quite deliberately been put to a level impossible to reach for all but those who are winning consistently." Sour grapes? Or an unpalatable truth?

Much of the cost goes on tyres, with teams doing almost constant testing using umpteen different mixes,

compounds and sizes. The CSI should start by ruling that each car must race on the the tyres with which it sets its best practice time. It should also rule that the maximum tyre width should be drastically reduced together with the overall width of the cars. This would increase braking distances, allow the narrower cars to pass and re-pass as of old and — just as important, if not more so — put the premium back on driving skill.

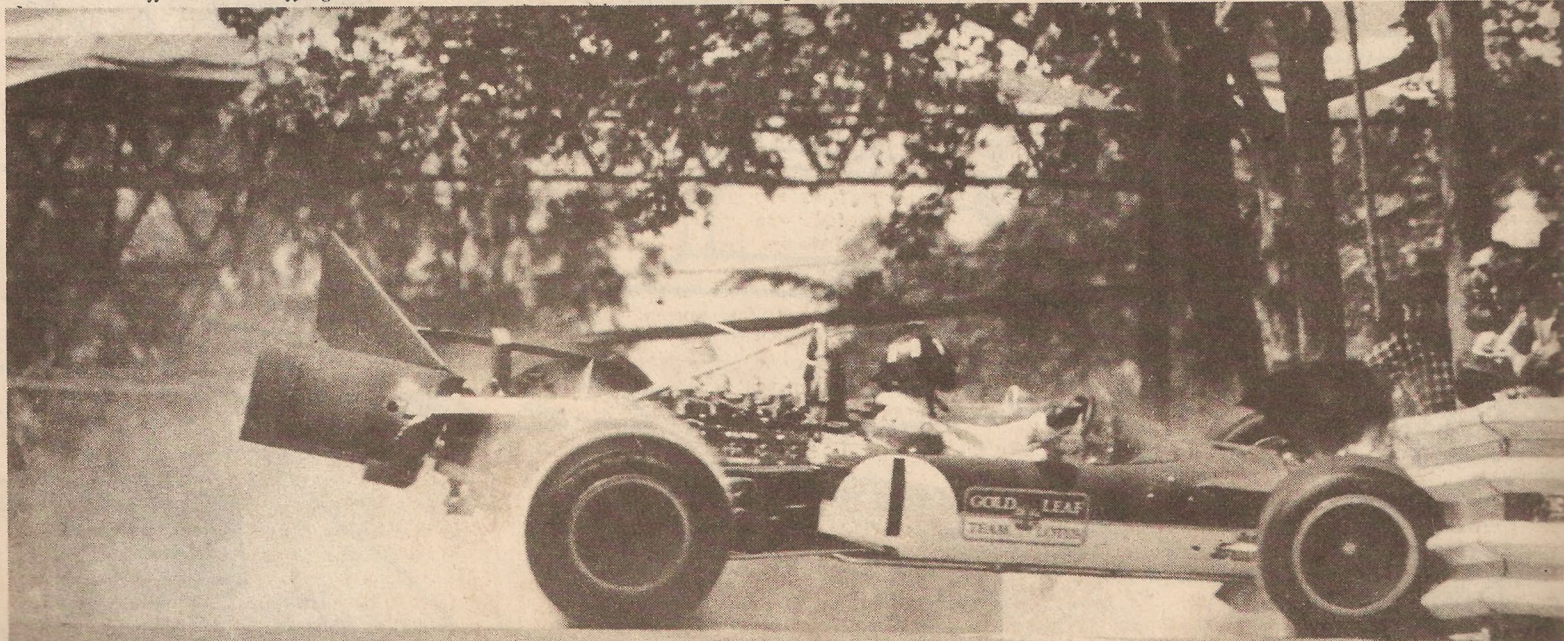
Sadly, the CSI's new man, Jean-Marie Balestre, started with an appalling blunder by allowing constructors to keep their wretched skirts because "they had invested many hundreds of thousands of pounds" in them for 1979. Yet at the same time he stressed the CSI's determination to reduce speeds and keep costs down! Thankfully, the Italians are doing their damndest to get skirts banned altogether and offer some stunning figures in favour of this move. Their representative recently timed Villeneuve in the F1 Ferrari at Fiorano with and without skirts. Corner 1 without skirts — 93mph, with — 98; Corner 2 without — 120mph, with — 135; Corner 3 without — 155, with — 176. These increases are bad enough, but the projected speeds for the 1979 Ferrari with skirts are appalling: Corner 1 106mph; Corner 2 149mph; and Corner 3, 217mph. And the constructors thought the fan car was dangerous?

This is the kind of 'progress' that has got to be stopped — and stopped right now, otherwise Formula 1 is going to be destroyed itself against a wall of stupidity and avarice. It is to be hoped that other sponsors will follow the example of John Player and Yardley and pull out of F1 altogether, for whatever reason. The sooner F1 has to cut its costs drastically the better, for it might encourage it to do some serious thinking about the damage it has inflicted upon itself in the past decade.

As I said earlier, money talks and it has talked F1 into considering only the constructors and the sponsors, and to Hell with the spectators. As can be seen, all too often money talks nonsense: more does not necessarily mean better; quantity never makes up for quality; processions are no substitute for racing. These self-evident truths have been denied for too long. Let us hope the CSI can put this right and, in the process, revive Grand Prix racing. They owe it to the sport itself, to the spectators and not least to the memory of a great racing driver — Ronnie Peterson. ■

"... money talks and it has talked F1 into considering only the constructors and the sponsors, and to Hell with the spectators."

Graham Hill suffered this terrifying accident at Barcelona in 1969 when the rear wing on his Lotus 49 collapsed.



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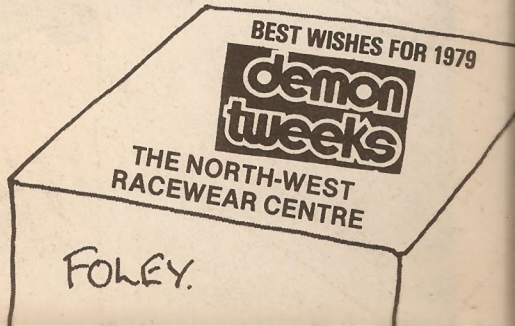
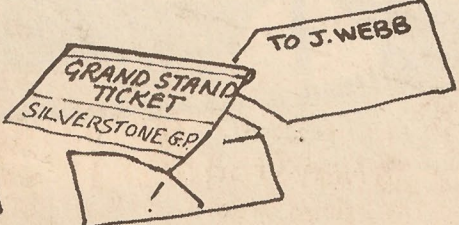
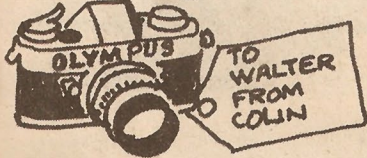
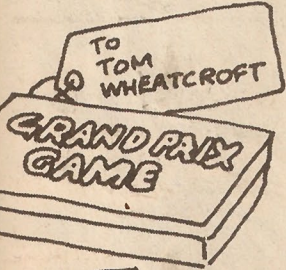
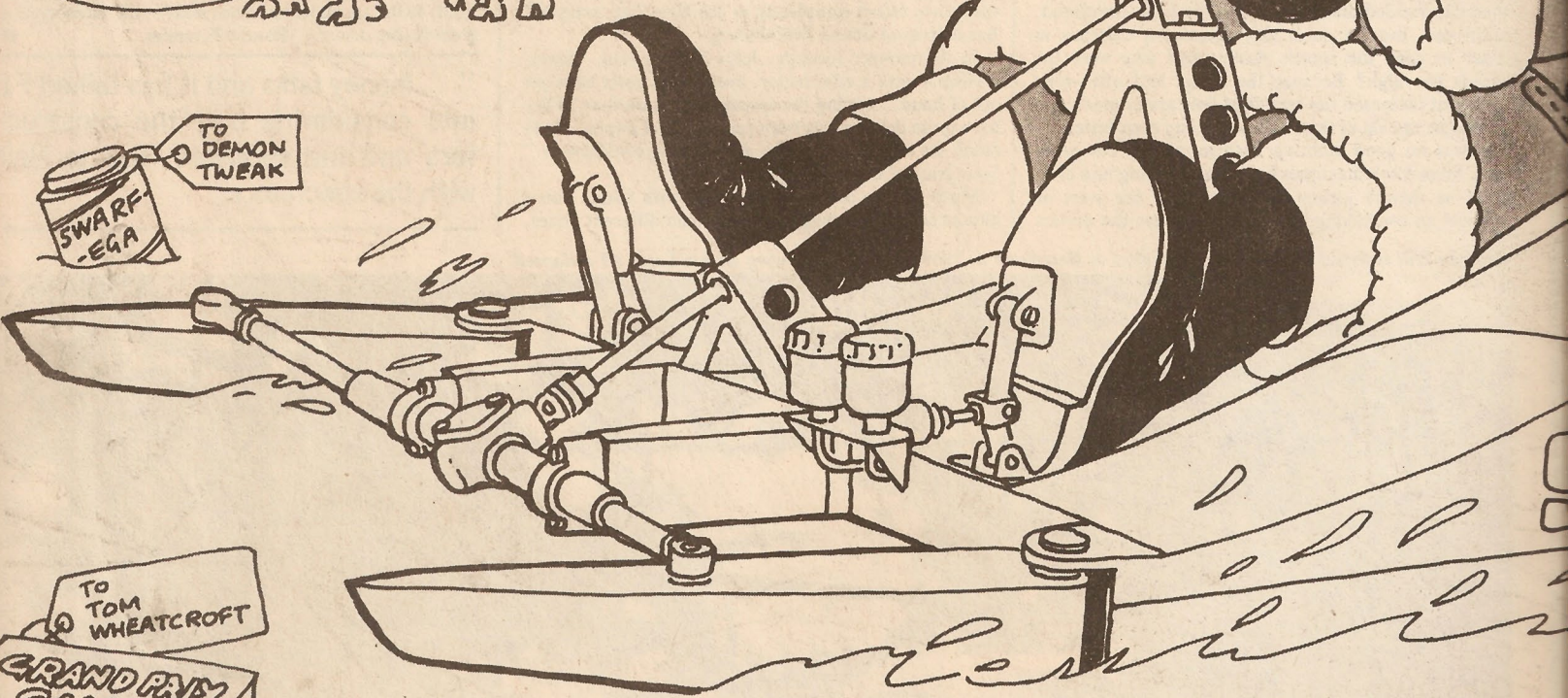
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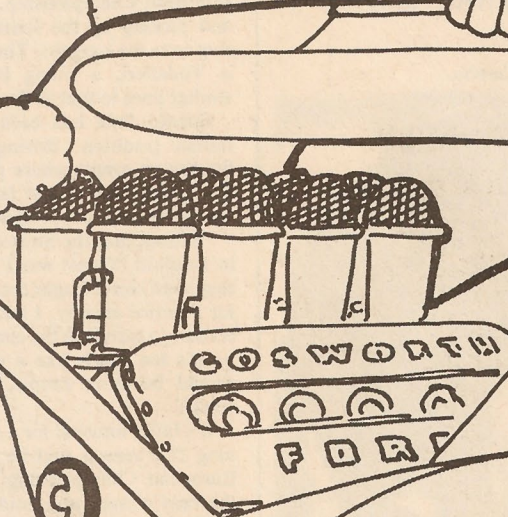


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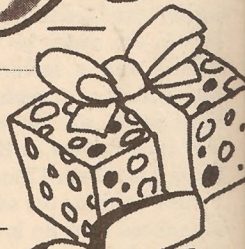
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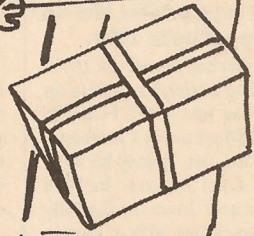


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Looking for a future

The European Rally Championship is a rally series made by the politicians, not by rally drivers. In 1978 it consisted of 44 events, spread as far and wide as the Arctic Circle, the Hungarian mountains, the tarmac of southern Italy and the forests of Scotland. In some countries of Europe it means nothing, in other countries it is considered to be almost as important as the World Rally Championship. Certainly to win the championship requires careful planning and a healthy measure of driving skill.

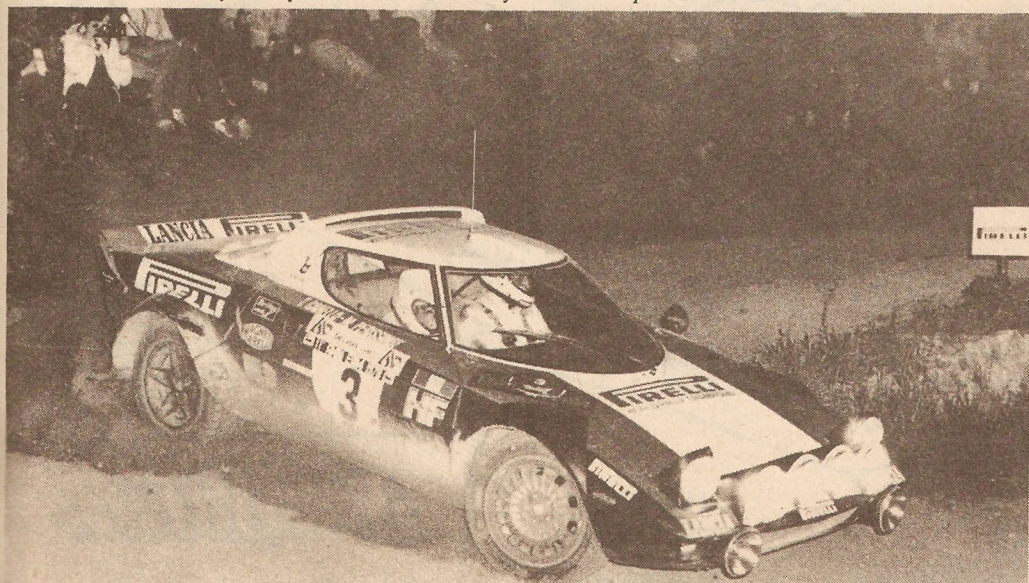
This year's European Rally Champion is Tony Carello, a 27-year old Italian who has been driving for the Lancia team for nearly three years. To win the series he used a full works Lancia Stratos with a factory service crew and team manager. It was, perhaps, the most determined effort yet to win the championship and he follows such drivers as Bernard Darniche, Sandro Munari and Jean-Claude Andruet.

Since winning the series, however, Carello has announced that he is leaving the Lancia team. He is unhappy about his position in the team and is now desperately keen to break into the World Championship. He feels that he has proved himself to be as good as some of the current team drivers and he is prepared to stake his career.

What's more, he's not sitting back on his laurels. He came to Britain for the Lombard RAC Rally to talk to team managers and to try to find himself that elusive seat. Some managers were interested, some were not; but Carello is a determined man and we can expect to see him on several World Championship rallies in 1979.

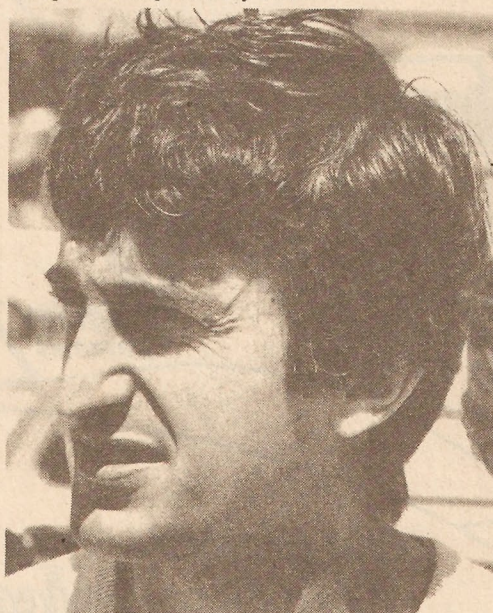
Tony Carello started his rally driving career in 1972, having first had a try at co-driving a friend's Lancia on the 1970 TAP Rally. His first car was a G2 Fiat 125 and his first event was the San Martino di Castrozza. From there, backed entirely by his own money he went on and, for 1973, bought a G1 Opel Ascona. In 1974 he was starting to make progress and drove for the Jolly Club team of Milan. He did two rallies with a Lancia Fulvia and then the rest of the year with a G3 Beta Coupé, staying with this car for the most part of 1975 until he got his first official factory drive at the end of that year.

Carello on the Elba Rally, one of the events on which he failed to score points.



In 1978 Tony Carello won the European Rally Championship driving a works Lancia Stratos. In 1979 he has no regular drive lined up. RUPERT SAUNDERS spoke to him during the Lombard RAC Rally.

European Champion: Tony Carello.



In 1976 he joined the official Lancia team but only as a second string driver and he didn't have a very active season. "I did only four rallies in the whole year which was very difficult for me because, as you know, it's better to do many rallies if you are going to drive fast. This was also the first time I drove the Stratos which made it even more difficult.

"In 1977 I had a better season, rallying with the Jolly Club five times and with the Lancia team five times even though I was an official Lancia driver. I did eight Italian championship rallies and two World Championship events, San Remo and Corsica.

"San Remo was terrible. I was leading the rally but then there was fog and I crashed. I broke the car completely but then it's very difficult to drive the Stratos in the fog. In Corsica I had an accident in training and I was tired even before the start of the rally, so I drove very slowly. I was lying third until the last time control where I dropped a minute and so finished fourth."

For the 1978 season Carello decided to go for the European Championship, winning six events outright and picking up the Italian International Championship into the bargain. The Italian National Champion is Vudafieri, a young Italian whose career follows similar lines to that of Carello but one year later.

Carello then has been brought up firmly in the Italian tradition, driving Beta Coupé and Lancia Stratos on events where pace notes are essential. He has specialised in fast tarmac rallies but is sensible enough to realise that he needs more experience.

"I think that the Stratos is fairly easy to drive. Only in Belgium (Ypres) was I without notes for six stages; they were secret stages though I'd not had enough time for practice anyway. I had some problems getting the Stratos to turn into the corners on the slick racing tyres — it's too much like a circuit car — over gravel it should be more simple, I think, though I haven't tried."

It's fairly unusual for a driver to decide at the beginning of a season that he is going to compete on the European Championship. The Italians are probably the only drivers who hold the series in such high regard. Other drivers prefer to try their hand at a few events and then decide whether to go on or not. Carello decided from the very beginning that he was going to be the European Champion.

"The original plan was to do eight rallies in the European Championship but when I found that I was leading we decided to go on and do ten, just to make sure that I would win. It wasn't really until the middle of the year, June and July, when Wittmann went to rallies in the east, Poland, Hungary, that we realised he was going to give us so much trouble.

"I am sorry for me that the European Championship is not considered so important; I don't think that it is very important but it means a lot to me. Before me the European Champions were Bernard Darniche (twice), Walter Rohrl, Sandro Munari, Jean Claude Andruet. All those drivers won the Championship after rallying for maybe six, seven, eight years, not at the beginning of their careers. So I hope that the Championship will help me get into World Championship rallies.

"I think that the European Championship should consist of only 12, maybe 14 rallies, and have just two coefficients, one and two. That's enough. But then when I was driving in Europe there must have been plenty of team managers who saw me drive."

Carello's team for the European Championship consisted of a factory car, factory mechanics and Nini Russo as team manager. But then Fiat are the only team in Italy to take any interest in rallying outside their own country. Alfa Romeo may have a small programme in Europe but the Conrero team, for instance, have their budget firmly tied to General Motors Italy. When an Italian driver has quarreled with the bosses at Fiat but still wants to rally at world level then he has very little choice but to go outside Italy. Even so, it's a hard decision for any Italian to make. They are a fiercely patriotic nation.

"Of course it is difficult to go away from Fiat. For a start, I am the first driver to do this. Secondly, okay I am the European Champion, but at world level I am practically unknown. I have only done two World Championship rallies with an official car and that is not enough."

The split with the Fiat empire has been brewing for quite some time and there were reports just before the San Remo rally of a huge row between Carello and his Fiat/Lancia boss, Cesare Fiorio. Although the argument wasn't quite as serious as those reports would have us believe, it was the beginning of the split.

"It's very difficult to explain, even to Italian people, but I will try. As I have told you, I have done two World Championship rallies with an official car and that is not enough."

World rallies in just three years. Okay, I am young, 27, but not so very young and I want very much to compete in the World Championship. I told my boss that I don't want to do another ten or fifteen years of National rallies like other drivers. I want to do World Championship now.

"For 1979 my programme was an Italian one even smaller than my programme for 1978. So, in September, I asked if I could do San Remo because I have a contract for San Remo and Corsica. When that was impossible I asked for a bigger programme for 1979, but that too was impossible so I then tried to find another car for the World Championship.

"After that Montezomolo (the Director of PR for the Fiat Group) told me that I could do the World Championship, maybe three or four rallies, and that was okay, so I went back to the team. When the contract arrived the rallies were there alright — the programme was what Montezomolo had promised — but I knew that Fiorio and Audetto were not satisfied with me. They weren't happy to work with me. I don't like to

work on that system. I like to rally but I also like to be happy so in 1979 I will rally for somebody else."

Despite the stories it doesn't seem as though jealousies within the team were responsible for the split and young Italian drivers find themselves in the same position as young drivers all over the world. They may feel that they have good results but this doesn't necessarily mean that there is a place in the team for them. Carello thinks that this is partly the drivers' fault and partly the teams'.

"There is maybe, half and half to blame for the situation. Half the blame lies with the drivers and half the blame lies with the teams. About 50 per cent, the young drivers are wrong because they don't rally enough. To rally in Italy is very expensive, to rally in the World series, privately is even more expensive, but you see Vatanen and Alen, they have started in World rallies. I don't know whose car or money they have used, but they have experience of World rallies.

"Then, in Italy a team doesn't like to spend money on young drivers. They are starting to with the Auto-

bianchi series but a driver gets known from driving the official car.

"I am the only Italian National driver known, okay only a little bit, but known outside Italy but then I was driving the official car. Even for me it was difficult. To get to where I am now was very hard work; every time they thought that I was fast but that I was unknown. Yes, I had an advantage because of who I am, but it was still hard work."

So, Tony Carello enters 1979 with a lot of uncertainties about his future. He cannot now go back to Fiat for the split must surely be final this time. He can't look to other Italian teams because they don't offer the kind of programme that he wants. He can only look to the rest of Europe and hope that somebody has noticed his talents.

"I want to be in a team. I am now a professional driver and I think that a professional has to be in an official team. If I have to pay myself to go rallying then I am taking a step backwards and that is wrong. I don't want to spend my money now in rallying. If I stopped rallying, I might have to work and that would be very bad!

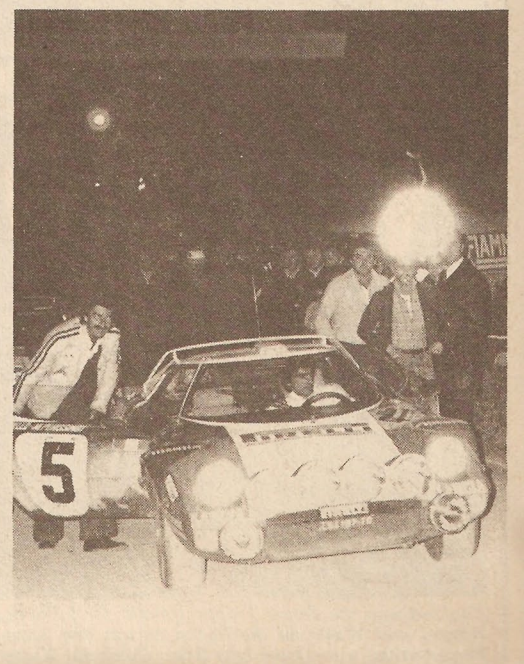
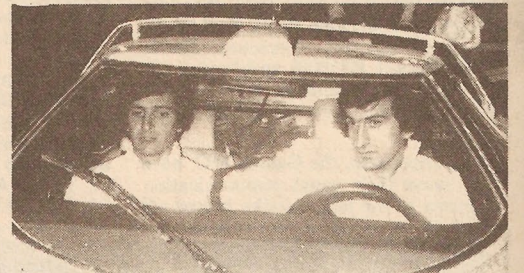
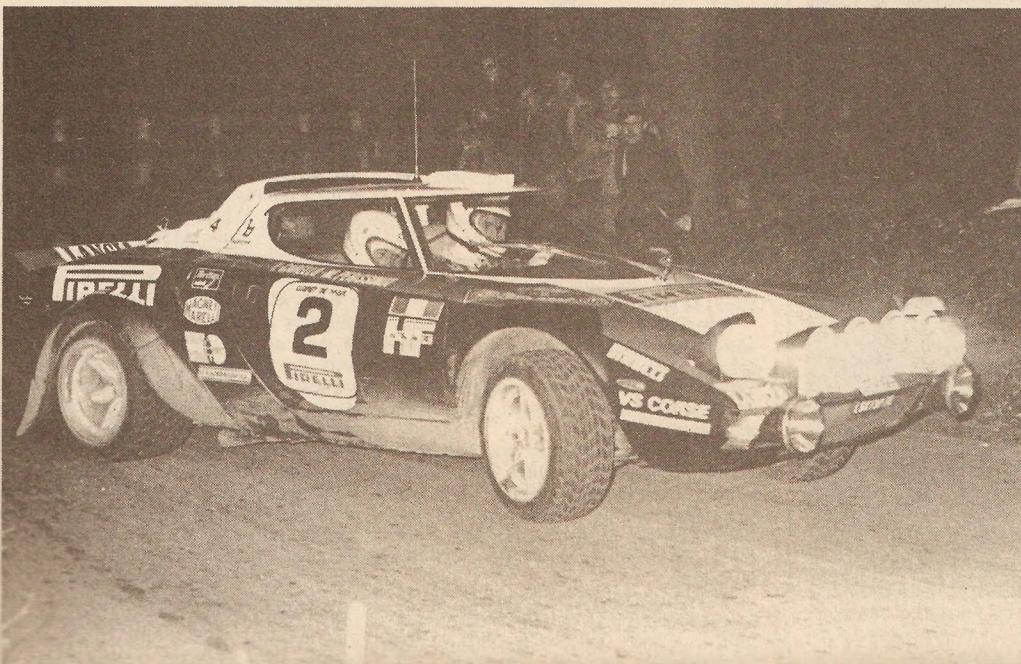
"I have just one advantage. I am European Champion and that is very important for me in Italy. I am more popular and so maybe I will have a sponsor, not a very big one but a sponsor and so I hope the teams will be interested. In Formula 1 this is the usual way and if a team has a choice of drivers, one who is bringing some sponsor's money or one who is only taking money, then I think that the choice is simple.

"I am talking to everybody. All the best cars, all the best teams who will be doing the World series, those are the ones I am talking to. I know absolutely, that I am not the best, that is why I am trying to bring in the sponsor. If my name was Waldegaard then there would be no problem. I know how difficult it will be but I want to try. Just to be one of the best in the world would be fantastic.

"What I like is to rally . . . to rally and not spend any money."



Left: Carello's only experience of secret stages was on the Ypres Rally. Below left: On the Costa Brava Rally the wrong choice of tyres lost a lot of time. Below: The cramped cockpit of a Stratos. Carello with co-driver Maurizio Perissinot, before the latter grew a moustache. Bottom: Arriving at a service point on the Four Regions, one of his six outright victories.



Ford Monte entries Fiestas and Escorts



Vatanen — pre-Christmas recce.

Ford confirmed this week that they will be entering four cars on the Monte Carlo Rally, two Escorts and two Fiestas. The Escorts will be driven by Bjorn Waldegaard/Hans Thorszelius and Hannu Mikkola/Arne Hertz and the Fiestas by Roger Clark/Jim Porter and Ari Vatanen/Dave Richards. The Fiestas will be 1600cc G2 cars, similar to those which Ford have been testing in the Alps over the past couple of weeks.

Vatanen went out to make his pace-notes for the rally before Christmas and, in fact, before the final decision to run Fiestas had been made. Clark has just left to make his pace-notes and will now be in the Alps virtually until the start of the rally. On the event itself Vatanen and Waldegaard will start from Frankfurt and Clark and Mikkola will start from London. We understand that one of the Fiestas has been built in England and that the other has been built in Cologne.



Per Eklund had his first Ritmo drive at the ice-driving circuit at Serre Chevalier.

Snow test for Ritmo

The week before Christmas saw intensive testing for the Monte Carlo Rally in the French Alps. All the Fiat team were out making pace notes in recce Fiat 131s and the new Ritmo. Ford had at least three drivers out, with Vatanen testing the Ford Fiesta in its G2 form.

The Fiat test session was also attended by most of the world's rallying press and gave many of us the first chance of a close look at the Ritmo. It was also the first chance that Per Eklund, the team's surprise signing for the Monte Carlo Rally, had of seeing and driving the car. Eklund took the car out for a few exploratory laps around the ice-driving circuit at Serre-Chevalier and soon got the hang of things, coming in to corners on full oversteer and pulling out on understeer.

"It's very easy to drive," said Per, "though the surface isn't ideal. We are having trouble with the studs. It's much lighter than the Saab and there seems to be plenty of power."

After early experiments Fiat have now settled for a fuel-injected 1500cc engine which develops 165bhp at 7,600 rpm. The overall weight of the car is between 800kg and 840kg depending on the

specification, but the most obvious modifications are to the rear suspension. This is fully independent using a lower wishbone and McPherson strut. There is a rear anti-roll bar and a single-leaf transverse spring connecting the two suspension units.

Since the cars were used on the Giro d'Italia some changes have been made to the limited slip differential settings making the cars easier to drive. According to Atilio Bettega, the young Italian who will be driving the works car on several events this year, the Ritmo now turns in to corners quite easily and can be held on the line through the corner.

One of the problems that the cars are likely to experience in the Monte Carlo is a lack of traction due to inadequate studding. The current regulations allow a reasonable band of studs around the tyre but the studs must have a 'flat' top rather than a chisel or a spike. Both the Ritmo and the 131 were clearly having traction problems on the icy surface of the track though the drivers expected life to be easier when they got on to the open road where there was a dusting of snow on the top surface.

Good entry in Galway

All the leading Irish rally drivers have entered the Galway Rally (Henley Forklift Ireland West International Car Rally to give it its proper title) and anyone who has yet to enter has just over a week before closing date on January 15.

Among the 59 entries received before early closing date were ones from Mick O'Connell (Escort RS1800), Ernest Kidney (Escort RS1800), John Lyons (Escort RS2000), David Agnew (Volkswagen Scirocco), Paul Windsor (Escort RS1800), John Price, Noel Smith and Jon Scorcroft (Porsche), Bertie Fisher (Escort RS1800) and having his first drive in Ireland in his Group 1 Escort RS2000 New Zealander Alan Carter.

The organisers, the Galway MC, have been saved their usual communication problems as the postal strike is now off

and this is obviously reflected in the fact that so many entries from outside the Republic of Ireland have been received. The club have been doing some sums and come up with the following statistics — 49 per cent of all entries are from outside the Republic, 53 per cent are in Group 1, 47 per cent are Fords, 17 per cent are Chryslers, 53 per cent are in the over 1600cc class.

As usual very good deals are being offered for boats across and interested competitors should contact B&I Line Tours Department, Reliance House, Water Street, Liverpool, tel: 051-227 8325.

The event is a round of both the European Rally Championship (coefficient 2) and the Irish Pharmaceuticals Tarmac Series and late entries can be obtained by contacting Brian Thornton, 12 Sylvan Avenue, Newcastle, Galway, tel: (091) 7853, telex 8365.



England won the Bruce Trophy (fought for by teams from England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales on the Sedan Series) and accepting it at the recent RAC Presentations were (from left) Brian Culcheth, Russell Brookes, Tony Pond and Brian Clark.

New HQ for Dukeries

A move of rally HQ will be the only major change for the 1979 Tyreservices Dukeries National Rally which has a route based on the Clipstone and Sherwood forests, and is being held on March 10.

The new HQ will be at the Sandiacre Post House, just off junction 25 on the M1, and the organisers have reserved the whole hotel for the nights before and after the rally.

The rally's history goes back 19 years and it is always a popular event with club drivers. For the second year running Tyreservice will be sponsoring the event which will be able to accept 130 entries at an entry fee of £40.

The organisation is in the hands of Howard Wilcock and Dave Clibbery on behalf of the Dukeries Motor Club and the event is the first round of the Esso/BTRDA, Ford Escort 1300, Ford Fiesta Ladies and East Midlands championships.

A computerised results system will be used and prospective competitors should send an SAE to Harold White, 55 Carterknowle Avenue, Sheffield S11

Briefly

- The withdrawal of the Burmah Rally from the Sedan Championship has meant alterations to the ABIRO brochure and so the 1979 edition will not be available until the middle of the month. In the brochure are full details of all UK and Ireland international rallies and a free copy will be sent to anyone who is interested and participants in all the events. While on the subject of the Burmah we must apologise to the RAC for incorrectly implying that the meeting that the Burmah organisers did not attend was called by ABIRO, it was called by the RAC.

- Anyone interested in doing a road rally on January 27/28 might like to enter the Selby and DMC's Three Swans Rally, which has not yet got a full entry list. The event is run over a 140 mile route on roads in the North Wolds and the start will be at 23.00 hours from Jacksons Car Park in Selby. The finish is at the Hazel Bush, Malton Road, York and the entry fee is £10. Closing date is January 21 and regulations can be obtained from Fred Harris, 31 Nether Way, Nether Poppleton, Nr York. The organisers are also in need of marshals and anyone who is interested should contact Roy Sumpner, 77 Station Road,

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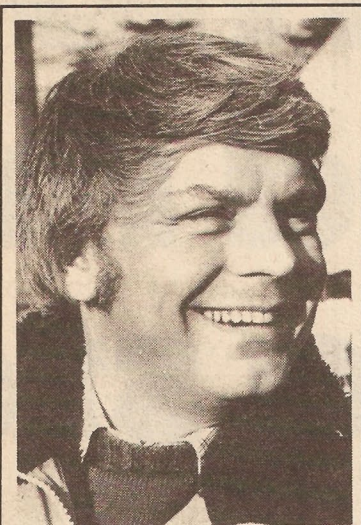
If you want to drive in the Gunk Renault 5 Elf Challenge Series, write to or telephone, Lorraine Parramore, Renault Ltd., Western Avenue, London W3 0RZ. 01-992 3481.

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Our congratulations to Roger Clark who was awarded the MBE in the New Year Honours List. Roger was given the award for his contribution to sport, the first time that a rally driver has been honoured in this way.

Regulations are now available for the first round of the 1979 Castrol/AUTOSPORT Rally Championship, the Gwynedd. The event takes place on Saturday, February 10 with scrutineering taking place on the Friday evening. Entries will cost £75 for which competitors get over 100 miles of stages within a total route of 250 miles.

The rally will be based in Llandudno with the Imperial Hotel once again providing the headquarters. From there crews will compete in the North Wales forests. Further details are available from Dafydd Edwards, Lliwedd, 39 Ty Croes, Llanfairpwll, Anglesey, Gwynedd.

Mazda prospects

Prospects for the Mazda Hatchback Challenge in the Castrol/AUTOSPORT Championship next year look very good with over 80 enquiries been received from new prospective competitors.

It seems that the series might even be attracting competitors from other championships and there could be three or four interesting new pairings. Last year's winner Martin Watson has sold his car to Steve Webster, while it seems that both John Wilson and Fred Almond are planning another year with the series.

● A Mazda RX7 will be having its European rally debut on the Monte Carlo Rally in the hands of Japanese privateer Hajime Nakagawa. The driver has competed on the event before in a Datsun B110 in which he came seventh in class. The entry is being sponsored by Clarion, a manufacturer of car radios and stereos, and the team will be starting the event from Paris.

Ecurie Royal Oak

Ecurie Royal Oak attracted only 43 crews for the Oaks Trophy Rally last Saturday night but they never expected a tie after a 160 mile route in Derbyshire, made more demanding by the almost sheet ice conditions throughout.

Victory, on the furthest cleanest principle, went to Tony Revell and David Taylor in their EARS RS2000 the engine of which Revell had had to rebuild during Friday. They pipped Geoff Birkett and Dave Orrick in their Opel Kadett, both crews dropping 28m.

Third, four minutes off the pace, but a hefty 10 minutes in front of the rest of the opposition, were Derek Carless and Pete Forrester with Geoff Page/Dave Read and Bob Hughes/Jeff Hignett taking fourth and fifth.

1. Tony Revell-David Taylor (Escort RS2000), 28m;
2. Geoff Birkett/Dave Orrick (Opel Kadett), 28m;
3. Derek Carless/Pete Forrester (Escort RS1600), 32m;
4. Geoff Page/Dave Read (Escort RS1600), 42m;
5. Bob Hughes/Jeff Hignett (Escort RS1600), 45m.

Gwynne wins Silver

With victories on the Agbo, Bartley and Eagle rallies, Bill Gwynne and Terry Thorp are confirmed winners of the BTRDA Silver Star Rally Championship. Both scored 109pts.

Phil Darbyshire, with 91pts and Malcolm Oxborrow, with 90pts, are runners-up while Theo Bengry and Paul Watkins take third place on 89 and 87 marks respectively. The remaining leading drivers were: fourth: Ted Cowell 82pts, fifth: Mick Briant 74pts. Dave Kirkham on 74pts and Phil Jones on 51pts were fourth and fifth in the navi-

gators table.

Twenty nine drivers and 25 navigators scored points on this year's series which totalled 11 events. Next year's series, which kicks off with the Snowball Rally, run by Vale of Cothi MC on January 13, will comprise 12 events with the best eight to count.

● Having postponed their Glanfield Lawrence Rally, due last week end, because of the lack of entries Morecambe CC propose running the event in the middle of next year. June 30/July 1 is the most likely date.

BBC's driver for '79

BBC Television will again be holding their Driver of the Year competition and entry coupons are in the *Radio Times* and *Autocar* this week. The aim of the competition is to seek out undiscovered talent among Britain's drivers and the competition is a motor sporting one. Judges for the first stage of the competi-

tion are the Hon Sir Clive Bossom, Chairman of the RAC Motor Sport Council, Sue Baker, Motoring Correspondent of the *Evening News*, Noel Edmonds, Ray Hutton, Editor of *Autocar*, John Surtees. The Chairman will be Dean Delamont.

Battle on the Hermit

Keith Edwards and Jim Bowie headed 73 crews to win the Hermit Rally over a very slippery 150 mile route in Bucks and Oxfordshire; the event being run by Aylesbury MC. In what was very much a contest between two crews for outright victory, with the rest battling among themselves for the minor places, Dick Mauger and Dick Steptoe, the 1977 winners, were the only crew to stay with Edwards/Bowie under the difficult circumstances.

Mauger led the first half in his Escort RS1600 by 53 secs from Edwards' Escort RS2000 but the eventual winners pulled back a minute in the second half to win by seven seconds. Matters were equally close for third and fourth with Pete Johnson and Alan Woodbridge hanging on to beat Will Rudd and Peter Tilling by five seconds while a similar margin

separated the fifth and sixth placed crews. In a fairly incident free event in which 55 crews were classified at the finish, Steve Hill and Barry Cooper retired their Fiesta after going pretty well in the first half but John Hollowell and Andy Thorburn travelled less than a mile before parking their Opel Ascona in a ditch. Three crews were excluded for infringements in a quiet zone.

1. Keith Edwards/Jim Bowie (Escort RS2000), 32m 4s;
 2. Dick Mauger/Dick Steptoe (Escort 1600), 32m 11s;
 3. Pete Johnson/Alan Woodbridge (Escort RS2000), 37m 5s;
 4. Will Rudd/Pete Tilling (Escort RS2000), 37m 10s;
 5. Robin Rees/Paul Maynard (Escort RS2000), 38m 8s;
 6. Bob Goodwin/Neil Davison (Escort Mexico), 38m 13s.
- Semi-experts: Colin Henley/Chris Jennings (Escort RS1600), 62m 24s. Novices: William Hitchcock/John Griffin (Vauxhall Magnum), 76m 27s. Ladies: Sarah Cohen/Dorothy Selby-Boothroyd (Escort RS2000), 46m 13s.

Repco filling up

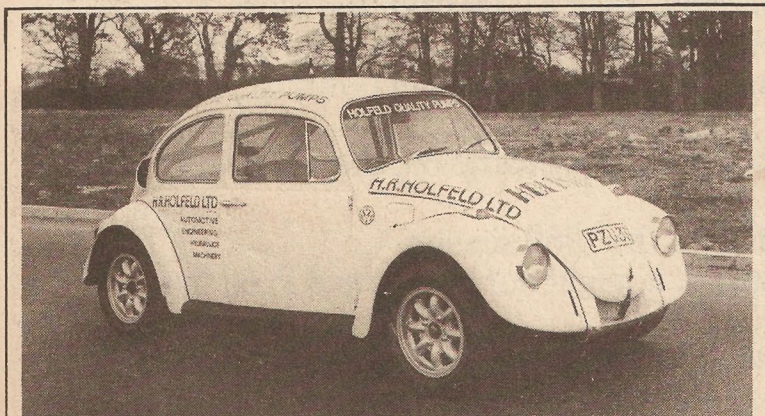
The field for next year's Repco Reliability Trial, which will cover 18,000 kilometres in a fortnight, is filling quickly, according to the organising committee's Chairman, Stewart McLeod. McLeod has said that there were more than 115 fully paid entries for the event, in which the field would be restricted to 250.

The rally will start and finish in Melbourne and will run from August 5 until August 18.

As was the case with the old Round Australia events of the Fifties and

Sixties, the 1979 event has attracted its share of unusual entries.

Included in the field so far are Jack Murray's 1947 Ford Deluxe, the Grey Ghost, which won the 1954 Redex Trial, and a 2½ litre Riley which has already competed in two Round Australia events. Rather more serious is a team of five Volvos, led by Volvo's Australian managing director, Harry Jensen, and two Porsches, to be driven by the Australian distributor, Alan Hamilton, and SA rallyist and local dealer Dean Rainsford.



This amazing VW Beetle is to be John Taylor's mount for the Holfeld Pump Rally which takes place in Ireland over the night of Saturday, January 13. The car is prepared to G5 specification with a 2-litre Autocavan engine. It develops about 150bhp, has dry sump lubrication and is fitted with twin 40 DCOE x Webers. There is a four speed gearbox and a limited slip diff. Taylor, who is tarmac rally champion, will be partnered on the rally by Drexel Gillespie and another star pairing on the rally will be Pat Ryan/Max McEvoy driving the Holfeld ex-works Mini Cooper S.

Shorter Virgo Galaxy

Terry Brown and Brian O'Flynn from Carmarthen were the slightly surprising winners of the Virgo Galaxy Stages Rally, run by the Port Talbot MC on the Epynt Ranges on December 30. Driving their Escort RS1800 they beat three times previous winner Frank Pierson and Julian Millward-Hopkins by 24 secs after the 15-stage event was reduced to nine stages when an approach road became blocked with vehicles.

A full entry of 90 crews turned up to blow away the cobwebs of Christmas to find the majority of stages lightly covered with snow but with a lot of black ice to catch out the unwary. From the start, the pace was set by Ian Giles/Lyn Jenkins (Triumph TR7 V8) and, after five stages, they had an 8 secs advantage over Pierson. In the second half of the

2½-mile stage to inherit a lead which he was never to lose. He went on to win the Zenith Motor Factors Trophy together with a free entry for the West Cork Rally.

The TR7 failed to maintain its pace in the later pre-lunch stages and dropped back to third, but more than 2 mins ahead of the next car.

With the problem of the conditions the rally was halted at lunchtime and during the afternoon a collection in the bar at the Abernant Lake Hotel produced £28 for the Gunnar Nilsson Fund.

1. Terry Brown/Brian O'Flynn (Escort RS1800), 63m 51s;
 2. Frank Pierson/Julian Millward-Hopkins (Escort RS1700), 64m 15s;
 3. Ian Giles/Lyn Jenkins (Triumph TR7 V8), 65m 24s;
 4. Ivor Clark/Brian Tilley (Avenger), 67m 43s;
 5. Brian Wiggins/Tony Shepherd (Vauxhall Chevette), 68m 90s;
 6. Wynn Jones/Bernard Hill (Escort), 68m 36s.
- Class winner: M. Henderson/J. Cox (Imp), 72m



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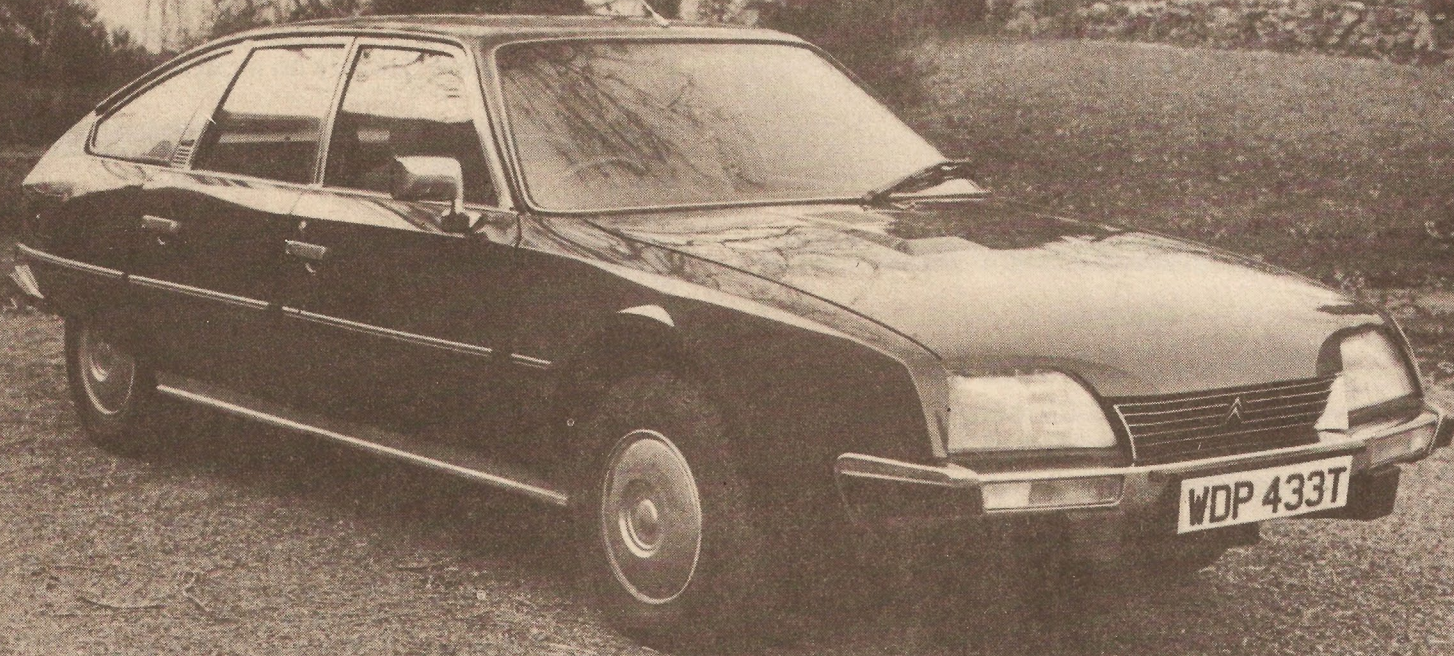
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The CX is an expensive car, but for luxurious riding comfort, silence, and safety it is unbeatable at any price.

CITROËN CX 2400 PALLAS INJECTION

A luxurious beauty

I had been looking forward to testing the Citroën Prestige. I adore the sinful luxury of long-wheelbase limousines, even if I can't afford to employ 'James', or perhaps 'Gaston' in this case, *Hélas!* Some rotter dented it at the critical moment and I had to make do with a normal-wheelbase CX Pallas. However, it was a CX with a difference, for it had fuel injection and C-matic transmission, and this last-minute substitute turned out to be one of the best cars I've driven this year.

When the Pallas arrived, long, low, and dark red, I realised once again that there is nothing more beautiful than an efficient aero-dynamic shape. The CX has a lower drag-factor than any other saloon and it employed ground-effect long before the Formula 1 boys got the message. It's slippery, stable, and glued to the road, yet it has no ugly spoilers or other excrescences.

The normal CX is perhaps short of power to exploit its aerodynamic advantage. With Bosch L-Jetronic fuel injection the story is entirely different, for not only does the engine produce a useful increase in horsepower at lower revs, but it hands out a massive 145lb ft of torque at 3600rpm.

The test car was fitted with the C-matic torque converter transmission, for which the engine's characteristics are admirably suited. This is similar in principle to the Porsche 'Sportomatic', in which a fluid torque converter is in series with an automatic clutch. There is no clutch pedal, withdrawal taking place when movement of the gearlever makes an electrical contact, and a three-speed gearbox suffices.

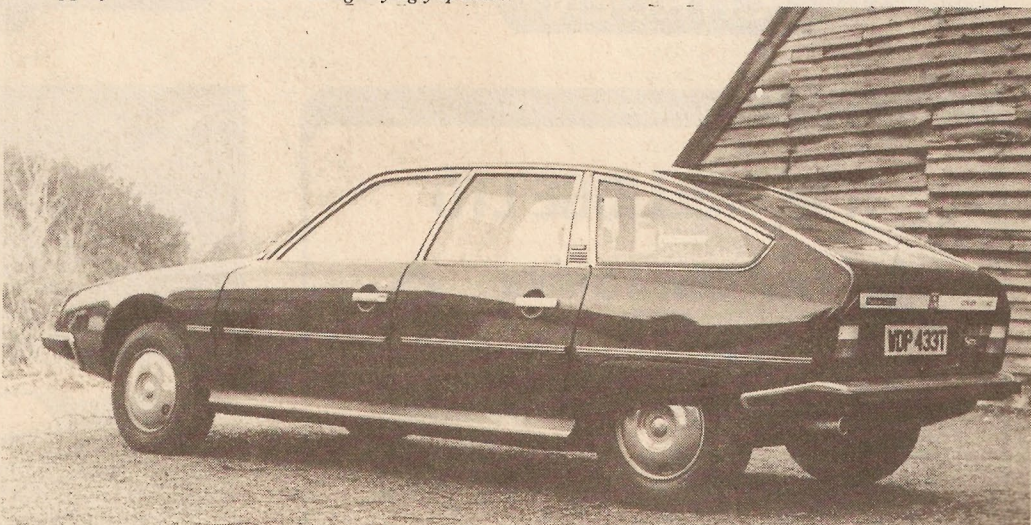
The term Pallas covers a luxury specification with various extras included, such as electric window operation. The interior is most luxuriously appointed

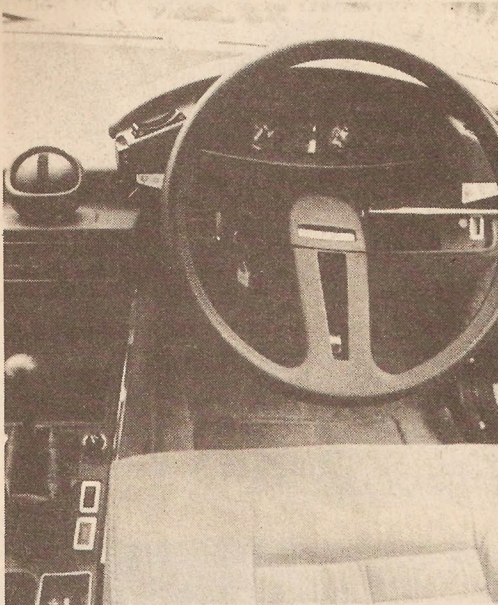
with no vulgar decoration, and the single-spoke steering wheel gives an excellent view of the instruments. In this connection, I would remark that although the speedometer and rev-counter are most ingenious and perfectly legible, I would still prefer proper round dials, perhaps because you can't teach an old dog new tricks. The driver has a good all-round view and the soft seats are blissfully comfortable, especially after

It's slippery and stable without needing any ugly spoilers.

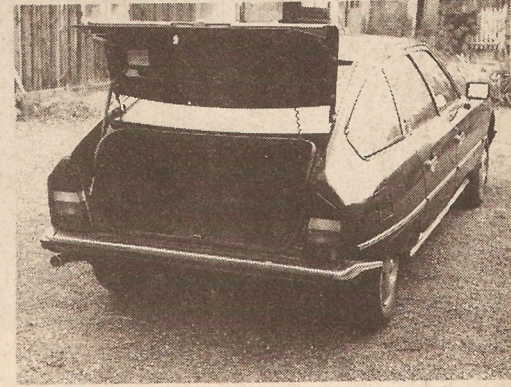
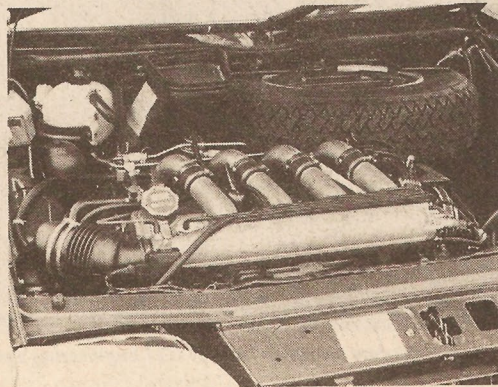
some hard Teutonic ones. The boot is very roomy, with no sill to impede loading, and the big spare tyre is in the proper place — under the bonnet.

Nobody should form an opinion of the Vari-power steering without trying it over a fair distance; one needs to become acclimatised, but the benefits are so great that it is worth acquiring the knack. Let me say, straight away, that there are some people with extrem-





Above: The CX instrument panel; the spherical object on the left is an ash-tray. Above right: The concave rear window can be seen clearly in this rear view. Right: The fuel-injected 2347cc engine produces 128bhp. Far right: The boot is very roomy with no sill to impede loading.



ely slow reactions who actually prefer soggy, low-geared steering with four or five turns from lock to lock. The Citroën has two and a half turns, with full power operation so that the wheels can be flicked from lock to lock during parking manoeuvres.

As the car gathers speed, a centrifugal governor makes the operation heavier, so that the driver feels in full control and does not cause the car to wander, which is all too easy to do with excessively light steering. The Citroën steering feels rather like that of a racing car or even a motorcycle, but at low speeds the power assistance renders such high gearing practicable. The CX has a preponderance of weight on the driven front wheels and though I have driven one with non-assisted steering, the Varipower absolutely makes the car.

As for the C-matic transmission, one can use it as a sporting manual box, going up to 47 and 81mph in the gears. However, very little acceleration is lost if all starts are made in second and top is engaged around 50mph. For that matter, rather more gradual starts can be made in top, but perhaps the most comfortable method is to use second in traffic or on winding roads and top at cruising speeds. The lever can be pushed into any slot without shock, but the mechanically sensitive can still double-declutch or use heel and toe, though of course it isn't necessary.

The first impression of the test car was of its amazing silence. It was so much quieter than any previous CX I have driven that I must assume the extra padding of the Pallas to be responsible. The engine can scarcely be heard at cruising speeds and makes only a mild buzzing when pressed, while the transmission is totally silent. This is most agreeable, and allowed the excellent stereo equipment to be enjoyed to the full.

There is no tyre roar, but an occasional thump can be heard over joints in the road surface. This, like the very moderate wind noise, would be inaudible if the engine made the usual amount of commotion.

The performance is distinctly brisk, as the figures show. The actual getaway is well below the wheelspin level but the car does not hang about, like some automatics, and the acceleration in the middle ranges allows rapid and safe overtaking. As with all very slippery cars, it's difficult to determine the absolute maximum because speed keeps on building up. In this case, I got the speedometer past 120mph with the rev-counter touching the red at 6000rpm, which my stopwatch called an honest 115mph, a satisfactory result.

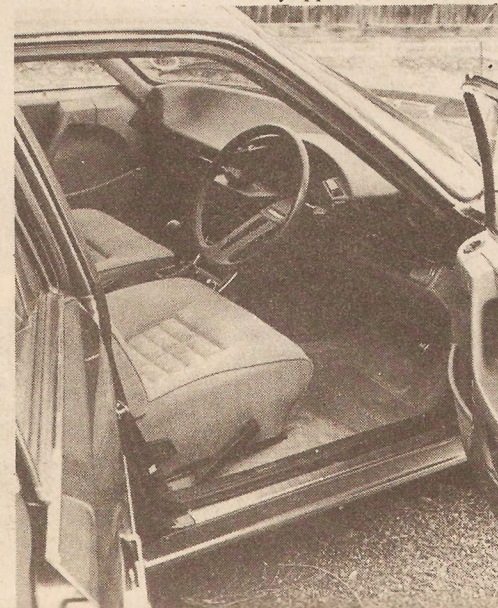
Very high cornering power, especially for a car that is by no means a featherweight, is a feature. There is naturally some understeer but this is not sufficient to reduce the crisp responsiveness of the steering. The stability in side winds is outstanding and the handling remains excellent and entirely predictable on wet roads. This is the result of the close relationship between Citroën and Michelin, the CX and its tyres

having been developed together. It is remarkable what tight curves the car will negotiate at speeds above 100mph, which would hardly be expected of so luxurious a carriage.

Luxury is the right word with the Pallas. The hydro-pneumatic suspension irons out all the bumps and though there is some roll on corners, the seats give good lateral location, including the rear ones. The back doors allow easy access and the rear passengers have plenty of space in every direction. The disc brakes, ventilated in front, cope easily with the weight and speed.

While the passengers enjoy exceptional riding comfort, it is a pity that the heating and ventilation have not been better thought out. It seems impossible to obtain adequate cool breathing air while keeping the lower part of the car warm, and this should receive attention. My only other complaint concerns the lights, which are excellent on full beam but cause some angry flashing from other motorists when dipped, though I

The interior is most luxuriously appointed.



couldn't see why.

The Citroën CX is a car which has been improving all the time and with fuel injection it's exceptional road-going properties can be really exploited. It combines riding comfort for the passengers with pleasure for the driver to an extraordinary extent, and much of that enjoyment comes from handling a steering gear with only two and a half turns, lock to lock. One steers more by a thought process than by consciously turning the wheel, and after a very sharp corner the powered self-centring straightens the steering at once. If released, it will come back too quickly, but personally I brake the wheel with the palms of my hands, so that it straightens up at the right pace.

In Pallas guise, the CX is an expensive car, but for luxurious riding comfort, silence, and safety it is unbeatable at any price. To some extent, the big Citroëns have always been an acquired taste, but what marvelous enjoyment they give when one has become an addict!

Specification and performance data

Car Tested: Citroën CX 2400 Pallas Injection (C-matic) 4-door saloon, price £6,997.
Engine: Four-cylinders 93.5 x 85.5mm (2347cc). Compression ratio 8.75 to 1. 128bhp DIN at 4800rpm. Pushrod-operated inclined-valves. Bosch L-Jetronic fuel injection.
Transmission: Transverse engine and C-Matic transmission, with fluid torque converter, automatic clutch, and 3-speed gearbox, ratios 0.80, 1.13, and 1.94 to 1. Helical spur final drive, ratio 4.77 to 1.
Chassis: Combined steel body and chassis. Hydropneumatic self-levelling suspension with manual height control, operated by high-pressure, engine-driven pump and accumulators, equal-length front wishbones and rear trailing arms. Vari-power fully-powered speed-conscious steering. Anti-roll bars both ends. Disc brakes, ventilated in front, fully-powered by high-pressure hydraulic system, with dual circuits and rear limiting valve. Bolt-on steel wheels, fitted 185 HR 14 tyres.
Equipment: 12-volt lighting and starting. Speedometer. Rev-counter. Fuel, water-temperature, and sump level gauges. Voltmeter. Clock. Heating, demisting, and ventilation system with heated rear window. Electrically-raised windows, 2-speed and intermittent wipers and washers. Flashing direction indicators with hazard warning. Reversing lights.
Dimensions: Wheelbase 9ft 4in. Track 4ft 10in/4ft 5.5in. Overall length 15ft 2.25in. Width 5ft 8in. Weight 1ton 7.4cwt.
Performance: Maximum speed 115mph. Speeds in gears, second 81mph, first 47mph. Standing quarter-mile 18.3s. Acceleration: 0-30mph 4.0s, 0-50mph 8.4s, 0-60mph 11.5s, 0-80mph 21.5s, 0-100mph 36.2s.
Fuel Consumption: 20 to 26mpg.



The two test cars parked in front of GTI Engineering's premises at Silverstone.

The Golf club

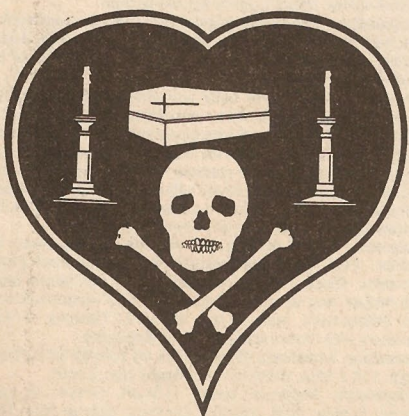
TONY DRON has been out on the links with two variants on the Volkswagen Golf theme. In this test in which he compares a Group 1 Golf GTI with a Group 2 version, it turned out to be rather more than a restful Sunday afternoon exercise.

Tony immediately took to the G2 car, a "fabulous little racer".



Maybe I'm wrong but I have created a web of superstition in my mind about race driving over the years. I hate, for example, having my name painted on a car and the reason is quite simple: I have a superstitious belief that either some other driver will get to drive the car in my place or that disaster will strike. In the Wynns 1000 at Kyalami in early November I had my only major accident of the season when I wrote off the Sigma team's Mazda after hitting a giant oil slick — the regulations unfortunately insisted that all drivers had to have their names on the cars.

I prefer to drive as number seven or a multiple of seven (my Porsche this year was 14, the Dolomite 21); and, of course, Lt Nungesser's emblem has to be on the car before I race it. In the same way, it is my firm belief that dirty cars turned out by scruffy individuals from foul, oil-ridden workshops don't stand a chance in any race. That's why I can overcome my allergy to work when it comes to polishing any car that I am going to race.



I don't think Richard Lloyd is as superstitious as I am but he obviously has the desire to run the neatest, cleanest racing team that ever was. Richard isn't just interested in tidiness, good taste, and style for the sake of vanity; he feels that they are an important part of race preparation, and I reckon he's right.

In keeping with his ideas on the perfect racing team, Richard has set up his workshops at Unit 9, Silverstone Circuit, Towcester, Northants (Tel: 0327 857037). Unit 9 is a large Nissen-hut style building converted into a very smart racing workshop comprising offices, work area, engine preparation room, and stores. He and his partner, Brian Ricketts, have called their enterprise "GTI Engineering" because of their connections with the Volkswagen *marque*.

Brian is in charge of car preparation and both he and the team's resident engine expert, Derek Jones, are former Broadspeed employees. GTI Engineering also receives considerable help from an old friend and mentor of Richard's, Peter Stephens, a rather brainy lecturer at the Royal College of Art and a successful freelance commercial vehicle cab designer. The stylish appearance of the GTI Engineering racing Volkswagens is certainly a credit to Mr Stephens.

The two cars made available for this AUTOSPORT track test by the team were both Golfs, in Group 1 and Group 2 variants. The former was the machine that Lloyd campaigned successfully to win the 1600cc class of the Tricentrol RAC British Saloon Car Championship, and in which he was only just defeated for the overall title by Richard Longman (Mini).

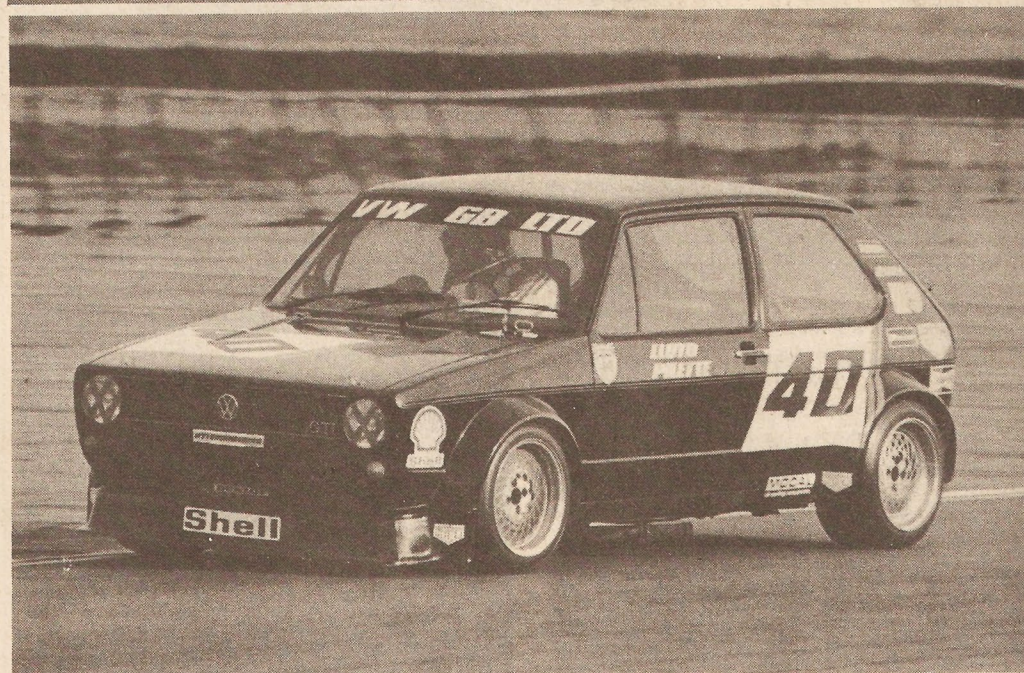
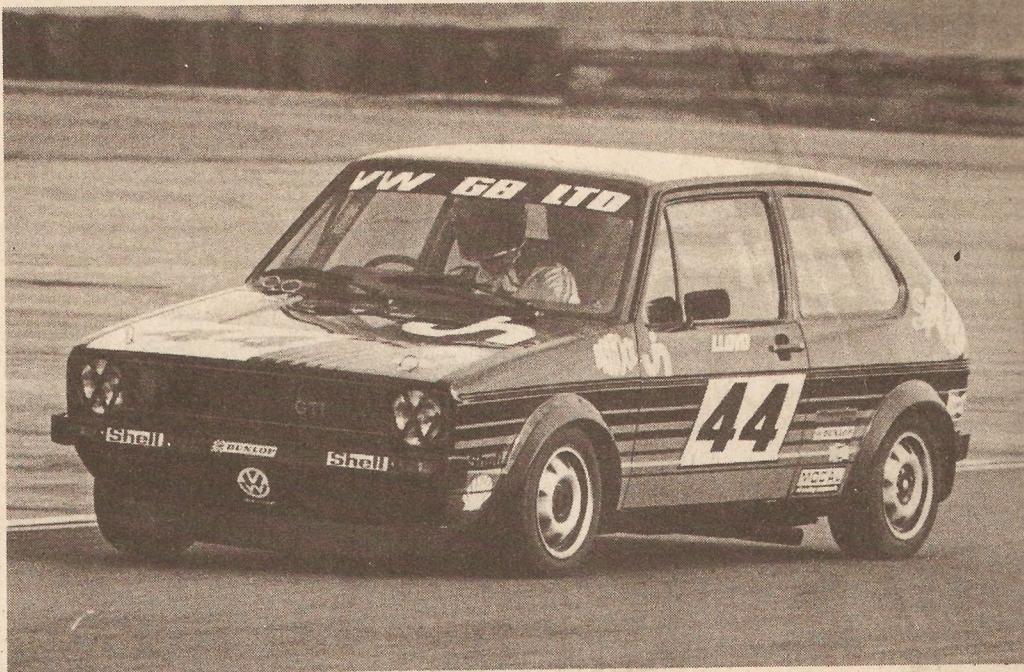
This G1 car was prepared initially by Broadspeed but in mid-season Brian Ricketts left the Southam firm to set up GTI Engineering with Lloyd, causing some temporary unhappiness. The preparation of the GTI car is relatively simple: harder springs are fitted, with 240lb per in. springs at the front being about twice as stiff as the standard coils while those at the rear are up-rated from about 75 to 120 or so. Special Bilstein dampers, originally designed for the amazing little G2 Sciroccos, are also fitted. Both anti-roll bars are stiffer than those on the standard road car but in this case it is the rear that receives proportionally more stiffening than the front. The homologated weight of the car is 810Kg, and there is no difficulty in achieving that figure even with a full roll-cage installed.

Roadgoing GTI's produce a quoted 110bhp — a little less than that if measured on the DIN system — and the best that the G1 car has shown this year has been 130bhp DIN (which comes out at 112bhp at the front wheels). Most of the power increase is due to the specially-profiled camshaft which is permitted in the RAC regulations. Richard revs the engine to 7,500rpm when racing and, with the clutch bolts lock-wired, it seems happy at these revs for almost indefinite periods. In the transmission department, a set of close-ratio gears has been homologated for the car and, like all the Tricentrol cars, a limited slip differential is fitted.

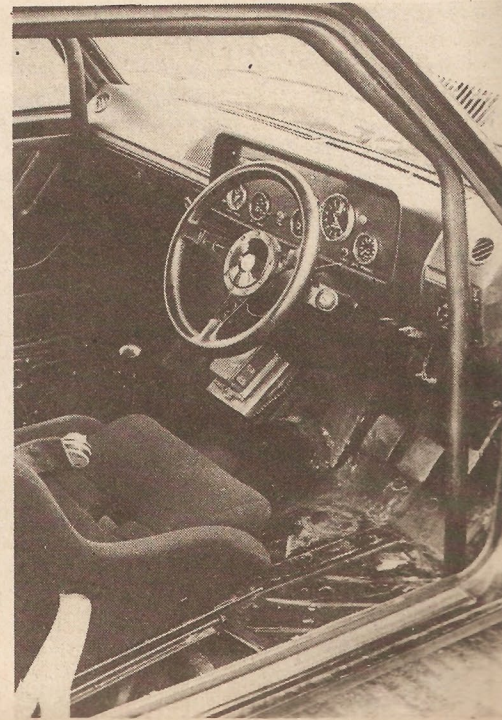
On the circuit, the first thing I noticed about the Golf was its fantastic brakes, the car stopping without any weaving even when I left my braking absurdly late, and this despite a warning from Richard that the pedal was feeling a bit soft and causing the brakes to be less effective than usual! Ventilated front disc brakes are a standard fitting on the GTI model, by the way.

As for the car's behaviour in corners, I was quite unprepared for the amazingly safe and predictable handling of the Golf. Having driven Richard Longman's Mini in a test session a year ago I was expecting a similarly marked sensitivity in the steering to throttle opening — in other words, it veers one way when you put your foot down and violently the other way when you lift off, so that the Mini needed fresh instructions down its steering column all the time. Again the VW was a revelation, for it stuck to its appointed line very securely so that, unlike most of the racing saloon cars I have driven, I never felt that I had to force the Golf to do anything it didn't want to do in order to make it really go.

With the Golf, the driver just brakes insanely late, then chucks the car into the corner at the right speed and gets back on the throttle. Turning in, you can feel the car adopting a nice, stable, neutral attitude as it swings neatly onto the line. It is simply very good indeed and I could only find one tiny niggling point to criticise: I found the clutch pedal was rather too high off the floor for easy operation. Even when the car misbehaved, by staying on full throttle when I was more



Above: Spot the differences. The G1 (top) and G2 Golfs had virtually identical handling characteristics. Below: A study in cockpit interiors, the G1 car pictured on the left.



The Golf club

continued

intent on slowing down for Copse, there was no drama. Braking gently right through the corner brought the tail out a bit more than usual and the car stayed pretty well on line without giving me the hair-raising moment I was expecting.

As that incident suggests, front-wheel drive cars require a different technique from conventional racing saloons. Hitting the brakes in a rear wheel drive car when cornering with a stuck throttle would of course provide the driver with his just desserts, i.e. a full-blooded terminal understeer accident.

However good you make a front wheel drive racer, once a limited slip differential is fitted the car will possess one very nasty trap for the unwary: that is, if the driver lifts off in a corner, the car will leave the racing line at a tangent. When GTI Engineering prepared their G2 Golf for the TT, they engaged a certain well-known and respected single seater ace as Richard's co-driver. Entering Copse Corner early in practice, this unfortunate gentleman felt that the car was not quite on the right line and lifted off to readjust matters with the inevitable result — he rolled it into the catch fences.

With the memory of that incident firmly in my mind, I then set off in the G2 car. Richard had said, "The rev limit's 9000. You'll find that the extra power makes the wheel tug at your hands a bit but it's okay so long as you just hang on."

While the G1 car was so well-behaved that it was almost too easy to be exciting at Silverstone, the G2 car is a fabulous little racer and I took to it immediately. The engine, a 187bhp unit built by Muller Tuning of Atteln, screams up to 9000rpm eagerly and you can feel the front wheels tugging the car urgently through the corners. A full race cam, high compression ratio, and Kugelfischer fuel injection really bring the car to life.

At 730Kg, it's even lighter than the G1 car, yet it has bigger brakes — 11½ins x 1in vented discs with Lockheed four-pot calipers at the front — and bigger wheels — 15 x 9 BBS rims instead of 13 x 5½. Though the dampers are the same on both cars, the spring rates on the G2 car are pushed up to 350 front/185 rear. A special pedal box, incorporating a balance bar for the independent front and rear braking systems, also makes the G2 car much more comfortable to race than its standard counterpart. External differences are evident in the spoilers and neatly moulded wheel arch extensions.

If I had been impressed with the G1 car's brakes, the G2 car was astonishing in this respect and better than any other saloon car I have driven.

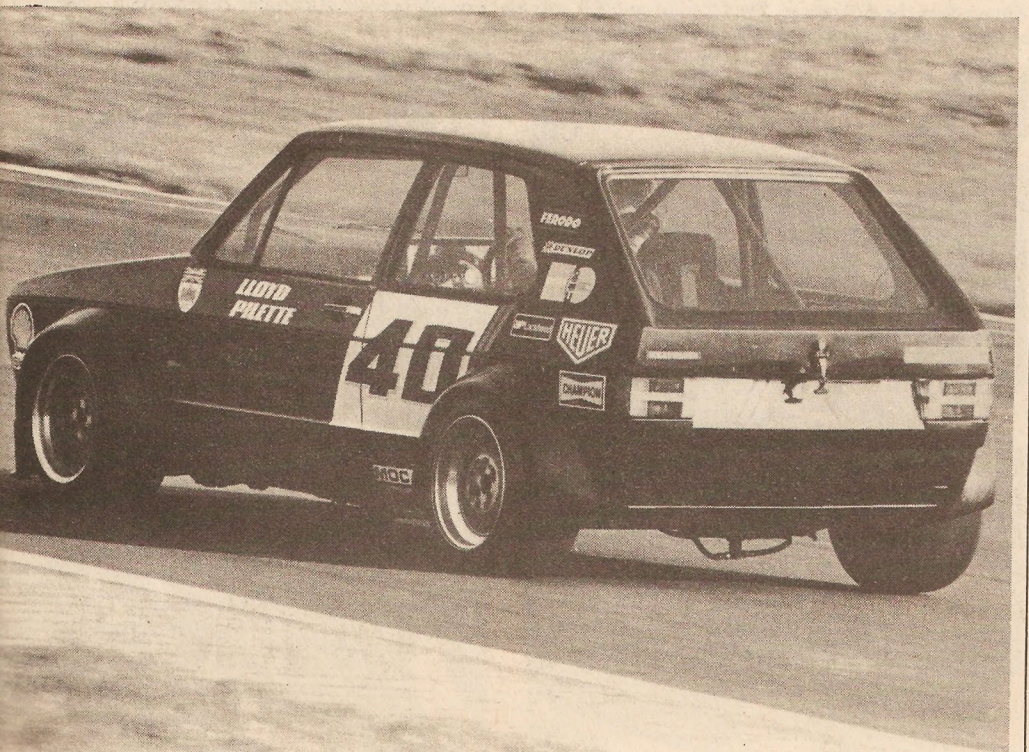
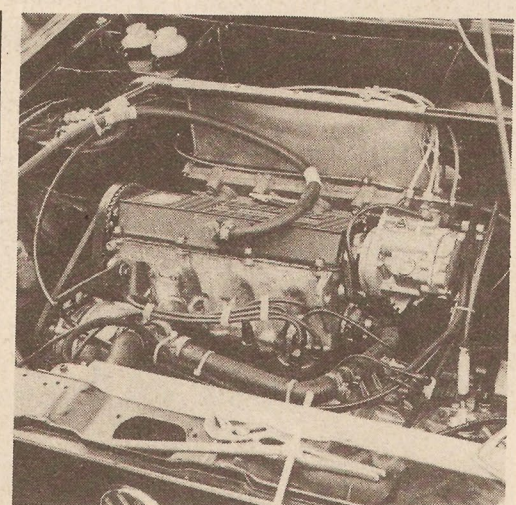
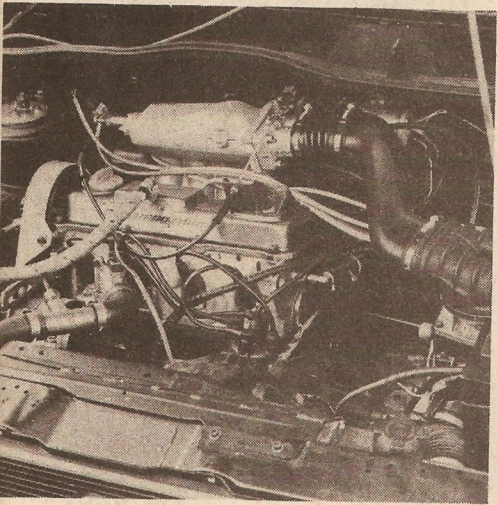
The handling was similar to the G1 car except that, as Richard forewarned me, you can feel the steering tugging hard at your hands when you floor the throttle. The whole front end of the car feels alive but it doesn't "scrabble" wastefully for grip — the sensation is more like floating and, believe me, very, very quick floating at that. There was perhaps a trace too much body roll in the G2 car's cornering habits, but when you consider that the whole project was put together in five weeks it is remarkable that GTI Eng have produced such a fine little car.

The gearchange in both cars was good, too, and I can't say I noticed much difference between them. I was told afterwards that the G2 car is fitted with an RGO15 box, one of a batch of 25 special racing units on loan from the works to various teams. What I did notice after driving the G2 car was an extremely painful cramp in my right thumb, a testimony to the tugging of the wheel, the kind of thing that sometimes happens on a first encounter with a strange car.

Plans for the future include the development of a SuperVee engine and continued expansion of their service to customers running VWs of any kind in competition. A recent project was the preparation of the first of next year's ladies challenge cars, Julie Chimes's Dovercourt-backed machine. Lloyd and Ricketts are currently enlarging the GTI Engineering premises to accommodate the anticipated increase in work. In the meantime their sponsors, Volkswagen GB and Britool, are no doubt pleased with the results achieved by the team with their smartly turned out black and red cars.



Above: Tony getting tweaked up in the G1 device. The verdict — "amazingly safe and predictable handling." Below: 130bhp (left) versus 187bhp. Bottom: The only idiosyncrasy of the G2 Golf is a tendency induced by the limited slip differential for the car to shoot rapidly off the track.





**Jeff Allam and BP VF7.
Two of 1978's star performers.**



Willi Bergmeister leads the field away at the start of one of the Nürburgring Group 2 races.

The shadows lengthen

The European Group 2 series continues to decline, as BOB CONSTANDUROS narrates.

Each year, the European Touring Car Championship seems to mean less. The regular runners in this expensive series dwindle, factory involvement decreases, the number of star drivers (or even competitive drivers) is minimal. The result is the familiar demand to get rid of Group 2 and the European Touring Car Championship as it stands.

True, Group 2 is a shadow of its former self, just as is Group 6. Gone are the days when Formula 1 drivers raced works Fords and BMWs at Ricard or the Nürburgring. They don't race sports or GT Ferraris either, and rarely race either Formula 2 or Group 5 if it comes to that. The changing face of motor racing has left everything but F1 weaker, and a reluctance of the 'stars' to race anything but their chosen Grand Prix cars.

In place of the stars has come a new specialist breed of Group 5 and 2 drivers, people such as John Fitzpatrick, Tom Walkinshaw, Hans Heyer, Armin Hahne, Carlo Facetti, Eddy Joosen and Pierre Dieudonné. They may not be Grand Prix drivers, but they have become the stars of these two non-single-seater classes of FIA status motor racing.

The great days of Group 2 were essentially races of Ford versus BMW, 'works' cars, their drivers paid 'works' money. With the great names there were great cars. In 1977, various manufacturers showed close interest in G2: Leyland with the Jaguar, VW with the Scirocco, Audi with a lone 80, and Autodelta (Alfa Romeo) with AlfaSud Sprints. This year, VW again took an interest with their Sciroccos, and Skoda contested a number of events with works

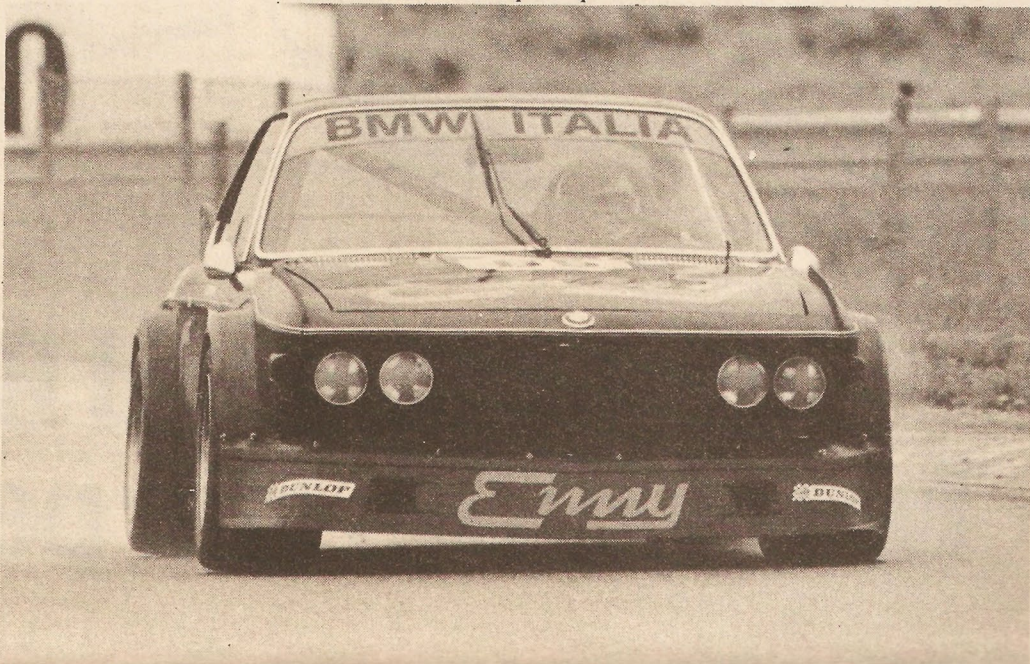
cars. But, once again, the manufacturers interest is dwindling, too.

A further point about the European G2 series is that there is little help for the competitors in terms of finance. Strictly speaking, starting money is banned, and rarely is all the stipulated £8000 prize money distributed. Without extensive sponsorship, contesting the whole Group 2 championship can be very expensive.

This year, every round of the European Touring Car Championship took place, which is something that few other FIA series can boast. In fact, only one round (the last of 1977) has been cancelled in the past two years. So something, somewhere, manages to keep the Group 2 circus on the move from Mugello to Silverstone, from Zandvoort to Osterreichring, from Brno to Jarama and Estoril.

But it is not surprising that only about 15 competitors regularly contested the championship, as opposed

Umberto Grano won six of the 12 races to claim the championship.



to more than 20 the year before. Works involvement and/or sponsorship usually means commitment; without that commitment, no organiser can rely on many competitors turning up. To most organisers, the most important thing is that the front runners from the biggest of the five Group 2 classes turn up. There were four regular runners in the over 3000cc class, but only one of these four turned up for every race. And the number one driver of that car, Umberto Grano, became European Touring Car Champion. Simple.

In 1977, Grano drove occasionally with Martino Finotto and Carlo Facetti, but frequently got the rough end of the deal and didn't get a race. So he set up his own deal for 1978. With support from Enny Handbags and BMW Italy, he took upwards of £50,000 to Luigi Cimarosti's Belgian team to run a 3.2-litre BMW 3.0 CSL for the season. He followed Dieter Quester's example of the previous year by hiring experienced co-drivers, preferably from the home country, to share driving duties at the various races. With this experienced help, he won half of the 12 races.

In a thrilling wet opening round at Brands Hatch, Tom Walkinshaw just beat off Facetti at the chequered flag for Grano's first win. With Arturo Merzario at Monza, Grano's BMW blew up, but two weeks later, he and John Fitzpatrick were back in the winner's circle at Mugello. Engine trouble stopped Fitzpatrick early in the race at Salzburgring, but with Walkinshaw again at Jarama, and Jean Xhenceval at Estoril, Grano picked up another 40 points. Partnered by young Markus Höttinger, Grano won again at Osterreichring, but after lack of success at Brno there followed another engine failure at the Nurburgring, once again when Fitzpatrick was in the driving seat. However, with Toine Hezemans co-driving, Grano clinched his title at Zandvoort. It was just as well, for the black BMW finished neither of the two remaining rounds at Silverstone and Zolder.

Although Luigi Racing cannot be called the most professional of teams, nor Grano the fastest of drivers, both parties have their good points. Grano had good races at Jarama and Zandvoort, and the Luigi team did well when under pressure.

The main competition came from the 1977 championship winning car, the Alpina-built BMW CSL which Finotto bought for himself and Facetti to drive. Facetti is an acknowledged touring car expert, and Finotto has improved immeasurably, matching Facetti on occasions. Causing a lot of controversy, the car seemed to be quicker, too, so much so that Burkhard Bovensiepen of Alpina wished to have no more to do with the Finotto programme, and even demanded that the name of Alpina be removed from the car. The car's speed brought the Italians three victories, at Monza, Salzburgring and Brno, but it wasn't always a happy and well-organised team. The Italian Goodyear representative succeeded in ruining their Mugello race, and after crashing both their G5 Porsche 935 and the G2 BMW within two weeks, Finotto and Facetti did not contest the last three rounds.

Although the old CSL apparently has another year to run in G2, it seems possible that a BMW 635 will be run in the ETC next year. Such a car may have a tough job to do, because the main rival could well come from Mercedes. With the new lightweight, five-speed, 5-litre 450 SLC. A year later than expected, the AMG tuning company campaigned one of the heavier, 4.5 engined, automatic 450s in 1978, and it kicked off its season with two encouraging second places at Monza and Salzburgring.

However, the season went sour on the AMG team for a few months with an abortive attempt to qualify at Le Mans, and then they produced a virtually untested new car for the Nurburgring round. But when the regular drivers Hans Heyer and Clemens Schickentanz returned to the series at Zandvoort with a competitive car, there was renewed hope of good competition, and the car ran well before its retirement. With Brian Redman co-driving with Schickentanz, one might have hoped for a strong challenge in the Diners Club Tourist Trophy at Silverstone, but that never materialised, either. Dieudonné joined Schickentanz for the final round at Zolder and, as at the previous two races, led at one stage of the race, but the car was eventually retired again. The 1978 Mercedes was heavy, under-braked, and the automatic gearbox proved to be a big disadvantage. But, with the new Mercedes, there could be a changing face for Group 2.

The final regular runner was the CSL of Belgians



The expected challenge from the 4.5 Mercedes never really materialised.

EUROPEAN TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

		Brands Hatch	Monza	Mugello	Salzburgring	Jarama	Estoril	Osterreichring	Brno	Nurburgring	Zandvoort	Silverstone	Zolder	Total Points
1	Umberto Grano	BMW CSL	20	—	20	—	20	20	20	15	—	20	—	135
2	Willi Bergmeister	VW Scirocco	10	8	8	10	12	15	(1)	10	—	10	—	12...95
	Jorg Siegrist	VW Scirocco	10	8	8	10	12	15	(1)	10	—	10	—	12...95
4	Carlo Facetti	BMW CSL	15	20	—	20	8	—	—	20	—	—	—	83
	Martino Finotto	BMW CSL	15	20	—	20	8	—	—	20	—	—	—	83
6	Eddy Joosen	BMW CSL	—	—	—	15	—	—	12	15	—	20	20	82
	Rajmond van Hove	BMW CSL	—	—	—	15	—	—	12	15	—	20	20	82
8	Heribert Werginz	BMW 530i	—	—	—	—	4	12	15	—	8	8	8	55
9	Jean Xhenceval	BMW CSL	—	—	15	—	—	20	—	15	—	—	—	50
10	Tom Walkinshaw	BMW CSL	20	—	—	—	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	40

Rajmond van Hove and Eddy Joosen. At the beginning of the season, the Luigi team intended to run two cars themselves, and van Hove and Joosen would run theirs independently. However, after a couple of races, Luigi sold his car to his fellow-Belgians and they ran it with a noticeable amount of back luck. On at least two occasions, they never started the race; at Mugello, they arrived to find that they had no entry! Towards the end of the season, they were re-adopted by Luigi Racing, and had a fairytale end to the season by winning the final two rounds at Silverstone and Zolder.

There are another four classes in the European Touring Car Championship, and perhaps the least well-supported is the 3-litre class. The Racing Corporation of Vienna's BMW 530i was the main entry, but was usually outclassed by 2-litre and 1600cc cars. The class otherwise relied on local entries of BMWs, Capris, and Mazdas.

In the earlier days of G2, the 2-litre class had always been a BMW versus Ford class. Following Triumph Dolomite Sprint, Alfetta and Chrysler participation, the class reverted to the old protagonists last season. The Swiss, Rüdi Eggenberger, who contested the series in 1977, built up eight G2 BMW 320is and sold them off. In the early rounds, there were regularly three or four 320is, although some dropped out on the way. When Eggenberger finally had time to complete his own car for Walter Brun and Helmut Kelleners, it was the fastest of them all. Then Zakspeed built up several Escorts, and proved even quicker. Although not intending to race at many rounds, the German Zakowski

team ended up doing four, their finest hour being at the Nurburgring when the number two car of Armin Hahne, Werner Schommers and Jorg Denzel broke BMW's domination of the series by winning outright. Zakspeed have already said they will be contesting the 1979 championship.

The 1600cc class is also competitive, and it is this section that produced the series runners-up, Willi Bergmeister and Jorg Siegrist. The VW Sciroccos make superb little racing cars, and Siegrist and Bergmeister drove a Jägermeister backed version. The other regular Scirocco was the Spiess car of Anton Stocker, teamed most of the time with Hans Nowak. This second car, though, suffered mechanically on many occasions. The Audi 80 of Jurgen Reinke provided some variation, as did the Escort Sport of David MacPherson, Pete King and John Waterman, who won their class at the Osterreichring. Fellow-Briton Richard Lloyd's GTI Engineering company built up a Group 2 VW Golf, and Lloyd led the class with Teddy Pilette at the final round, which might provide interesting inter-VW competition next year.

The up to 1300cc class also had variation. Skoda contested a number of the championship rounds with works cars, and won the class on occasions. Lella Lombardi did a number of rounds in a Fiat 128 Coupe with Carlo Giani and they proved to be a winning combination. However, there was a good number of AlfaSud Sprints, and one of the ex-Autodelta models, that driven by Richard Mattozza of Belgium, won the class overall.

The shadows lengthen

continued

One of the surprises about the series was that each round was well-supported in terms of entries. Surprising, because few European countries actually have a domestic G2 championship. However, because of this, the cars that kept the numbers up were, in the main, Group 1 racers.

Group 1 is popular in Britain, Belgium, France and Holland and, perhaps because of their involvement in G2 races, or because of the excellent entry at the Spa 24 Hours last year, there was a separate Group 1 championship during 1978. The series of eight races included rounds in Italy, France, Belgium (Spa 24 Hours), Germany, Austria, and Britain, but some were badly attended.

The problem is that G1 competitors are used to racing as supporting attractions at Grands Prix, Formula 2 races and so on. On the whole, the idea of travelling to Osterreichring in an effort to entertain a handful of spectators instead of going to, say, Donington to support an F2 race is scarcely attractive. Furthermore, Germany, Austria and Italy do not have very great G1 interest, so there are few local aces to challenge. G1 competitors would prefer to race in front of a large Spa, on the other hand, is a classic in its own right.

For this reason it attracts a tremendous grid, and what a fantastic race it was. Two of the major contenders for the 1978 Diners Club Trans-Europe title, Gordon Spice and Hartmut Bauer, won their classes in Ford Capri and Escort respectively, Spice winning overall in a very exciting finish. Although Spice took three victories in the series, the faithful Bauer contested more races and won the championship.

Long-distance events for G1 cars are punishing for the machinery, to the extent that the car has to be totally overhauled and virtually everything replaced afterwards, a costly business. Most G1 events are sprint races, and budgets are more suited to that type of racing. Stuart Graham, the Fabergé Capri driver who had a bit of success in France last season, envisages racing at the more important G1 events throughout Europe. That means taking in a couple of Grand Prix supporting events, some F2 supporting races, and those where the bigger crowds are found. Naturally, that is the type of programme a sponsor appreciates.

Of course, there are complications. As Tom Walkinshaw found out at Silverstone recently, G1 regulations can be confusing. Indeed, they tend to vary from country to country, despite the FIA's efforts to make them uniform. Obviously, uniform G1 regs would be ideal, but that, along with tighter control of homologation, is down to the CSI.

The two saloon car formulae of Group 1 and Group 2 are heavily in the doldrums. Both are frowned on in Germany, incidentally, which hardly helps their passage through the lawmakers. France has a healthy G1 scene, but no interest in G2. Italy is the reverse, while Belgium supports both quite considerably.

As a whole, European G2 staggers on. The cars are suited to long-distance events, the race format seems right and, each year, some manufacturer somehow manages to keep interest alive. Both the grids and the calendar are full, but the championship itself just doesn't have the competition.

G1, on the other hand, is very competitive. The cars, though, cannot stand up to continual long-distance races. The budgets are small in G1, although the enthusiasm is there. Furthermore, promoters cannot afford to import foreign competition — sometimes they do not even pay the prize money that they are supposed to, which does not exactly attract competitors. It seems that G1 continues insularly in three or four countries with great competition, and yet those same competitors only meet once a year, at Spa.

Certainly, the new Diners Club European series was of a great success, unfortunately for the enthusiastic sponsors. Neither was the European G2 series. One cannot replace the other, so perhaps the ideal is to establish a G1 series based only in the Northern European countries, with events supporting F1, F2 and Aurora races over short distances, plus the occasional classic like Spa. 1979 will tell.

Just three years ago, Ian Titchmarsh referred to the RAC Touring Car Championship as "this great institution which has gradually meant less as the years have passed since the RAC took it away from the BRSCC". The 1975 championship, he said in his seasonal survey, "carried an insignificance never previously attained." Indeed, AUTOSPORT considered it worthy of merely 89 lines tucked away in the annual club racing review.

Titchmarsh, still bearing fond memories of the RAC series in its Group 2 heyday, was deeply disappointed by the move to G1 in 1975, missing the brute power of the Camaros and the close infighting of the Escorts. The following year, even less space was devoted to the annual series review, Titchmarsh's basic objection being that, despite the efforts of circuit promoters and organisers to rid the championship of domination by one marque; 'one-horse' races were still very much the case.

In my review of the 1977 season this time last year, I said that the year had been the best for the series since the change to G1. The championship, now under the sponsorship of Tri-



The 1978 Group 1 Champion Richard Longman leads Tony D

Good effort but

The RAC Touring Car Championship can provide exciting racing, but it could be

Tom Walkinshaw gets his Pentax BMW 530i very sideways as Gordon Spice carves through with his 3.0 Ford Capri.





Triumph Dolomite Sprint at Brands Hatch.

control, was treated to its own five-page review, possibly arising out of the personal interest of the author. I am at odds with Titchmarsh in one important respect. My favourite G1 British Touring Car Championship race was in the middle of that 1975 season for which he had such disdain.

It was at Brands Hatch on August Bank Holiday Monday and came in the upper capacity race. Three cars fought bumper to bumper throughout, the Triumph Dolomite Sprint of Andy Rouse, the Mazda RX3 of Barrie Williams and the Ford Escort RS2000 of Tom Walkinshaw. I don't remember who came out on top, but the racing was just the sort of close competition which should be the hallmark of our premier saloon series. What makes it so significant for me, however, is not simply that there were three cars fighting for every slight advantage, but more that they were three different marques.

And it is the lack of that inter-manufacturer competition — and some of the reasons for it — which have been the only big minus points during the 1978 Tricentral RAC British Saloon Car Championship.

Must try harder

better. ROBIN BRADFORD reviews the past season.



Last year, I suggested that the 1978 season would surpass the previous year in excitement. Indeed, at that time, the forthcoming season showed great promise. Ford had announced that they would run a Grand Prix driver at selected rounds, and similar plans were later announced by Leyland (now BL Cars) and BMW. For a number of reasons, the injection of 'big names' into the series didn't work out quite as planned, although the Hermetite Dolomite Sprint did appear in the hands of such as Derek Bell and John Fitzpatrick.

But the undesirable ingredient which persisted, as it had done in previous years, was the lack of truly competitive cars. The top class was dominated by Capris — and in particular the Autocar Gordon Spice Group pair of Spice and Chris Craft — the next division by Triumph Dolomite Sprints, the 1600cc class by the Volkswagen Golf and the 'baby' class by outright championship winner Richard Longman's Mini.

The smallest class-winning margin was 26 points (Spice's advantage over Jeff Allam) and the largest 47 (the gap between Tony Dron's works Dolomite Sprint and Pete Lovett's privately-entered car). It is probably significant that the smaller of those two figures — but even 26 is not low by anyone's standards — came in the most competitive class, but once again the truly competitive cars in the class were all of one *marque* — the Ford Capri.

The only person able to seriously challenge the Capris was Tom Walkinshaw who, after starting the season in a purely management position with the BMW team, finally got into one of the heavy 530i saloons himself to improve his team's efforts. He won the final championship round at Oulton Park, but only after reducing the weight of the BMW to try and make it competitive, but more of that anon.

Walkinshaw's reason for 'cheating' at that final round was basically his frustration at some of the problems and anomalies created by the regulations for the championship — by no means a new problem in the RAC series. Specific problems need not be related here, but it is well-known that those who play the homologation game the best are likely to win more races.

Accusations of cheating — not necessarily made in the open — caused a certain amount of friction among competitors (thankfully not evident at a meeting last month to consider the future of the championship — Pit & Paddock, December 14) but the RAC's own inability to word instructions clearly, or to give people sufficient advanced warning of changes, also created

problems, notably over Ford Capri suspension at the Grand Prix meeting.

Sadly, the Tricentral championship was once again virtually settled in court, a tribunal only a few days before the final round disqualifying three of the four class leaders from a Donington result for a variety of eligibility infringements. This effectively ensured Longman's title as the only man who could have challenged him at that final Oulton round was Richard Lloyd, who was one of those disqualified.

2301-3000cc

There was no change in the class format for 1978, the 3-litre limit imposed after Camaros ran away with the 1975 series persisting. As had been the case in 1977, the upper capacity class was virtually the domain of the Ford Capri, the only car to challenge the domination of the popular hatchback, being the BMW 530i.

The Ford Motor Company, in whose interest it is for Capris to be successful on circuits, had continued their progressive homologation improvements to the 3-litre Capri S, which became Capri III during the year. The changes included the addition of a rear spoiler — something which many had commented was necessary during the previous season — a slightly lower bonnet line, four headlights and even wider wheels. These changes, and particularly the arrival of that rear spoiler, served to improve the Capri's handling still further.

The 3-litre engines, running to the same spec as the previous year, were still developing around 200bhp at best — not a match for the superior power of the BMW, but the considerable weight disadvantage of the 530i counteracted that.

As in previous years, there was no official Ford works team in the championship, but considerable assistance was given to Gordon Spice's two-car team (for himself and Chris Craft) and to Stuart Graham. It was the two Autocar Spice Group Capris which set the pace early in the season, Gordon winning four of the first six races. By the end of the season — by which time the ever-immaculate cars had changed from white, through blue and black to red livery — he had notched half of the 12 class wins (7, if you include the Donington round from which he was disqualified) and teammate Craft had taken a further one. The team boasted an exclusive contract with Goodyear which many suggested was their key to success early on and, while this did not necessarily mean the difference between winning and losing, it is certainly true that tyres played a very important part in this year's championship.

As the only team running on Goodyear rubber, supply was not a problem, whereas the Dunlop runners suffered quite heavily in mid-season when union problems at Fort Dunlop made tyres very scarce. Most of the cars running in the championship, from Capris to Minis, run on 13ins wheels and, as tyres of all widths are made using the same basic mould and spacers, manufacturing sufficient, particularly in the period running up to the Grand Prix was a major problem.

One problem which has been pointed out by Stuart Graham was the complicated series of tyre types available. In an interview in AUTOSPORT, he said: "You could try a tyre on Wednesday, find it was great and leave it on the car. You left the car in the truck, came out on Sunday for the race and suddenly you found you couldn't get near your testing times. 'Course, what's happening, the tyres are curing themselves all the time. You put on four tyres and they'll all be completely different . . . for every 10 degrees of temperature, you've got a different tyre."

The level of preparation of the Spice Capris was as high as ever, Spice winning the class by a margin of 26 points, his second 3-litre class win in a row. And he managed this win despite the disqualification from the Donington August 6 round for, according to the RAC Tribunal, oversized inlet manifold ports and unauthorised pistons. Craft finished third in the class, the teammates sandwiching perhaps the hottest prospect of the '78 series, Jeff Allam.

For his efforts in the Allam Motor Services Capri, Jeff was recently presented with the third Grovewood Award, one of the rare saloon car drivers to receive that accolade. Jeff won the Brands Hatch round which supported the British Grand Prix, after an excellent drive in the face of some immensely strong competition, from some considerably more experienced hands. He was also handed the following round, from which win-

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Must try harder

continued

ner Spice was disqualified, giving him two wins during the season. He is keen to move into Europe, continuing in saloons, and hopes that he might reach Le Mans one day. Whatever his ambitions, however, the promise he showed the previous year, when he was the only person to beat Gerry Marshall in a Magnum, was certainly fulfilled in 1978.

Two more Capris won the 3-litre class, those of Gerry Marshall and Brian Muir. The season opened with a very wet race at the International Trophy meeting and that master of wet conditions, Gerry Marshall, racing his Triplex Capri for the first time, came out on top — and that despite windscreen wiper problems. When the Magnum was no longer a mainstay of Vauxhall marketing, DTV decided to withdraw from racing and concentrate on rallying the 2300HS Chevette. This left Marshall without a drive, and he put together a deal to take over Colin Vandervell's Triplex Capri for the season. After that initial win in the wet, his able team, run by Bill Shaw, decided to look carefully at the ways of improving the car but, somehow, it got worse rather than better. Supply problems from Ford added to the difficulties and Gerry fished eighth in the class.

The Browne & Day Capri carried former British Saloon Car Champion Brian Muir to sixth in class, this Martin Thomas-run team providing the opportunity for spectators to see some really tigering drives. Muir has lost none of his flair, his challenges to some of the younger bloods among the highlights of the series. His win came at Brands on August Bank Holiday Monday.

Of the other Capris, the most consistent was Vince Woodman, the affable West Countryman's Esso car finishing fourth in the class, ahead of Stuart Graham, whose season was recounted in *AUTOSPORT* two weeks ago. Lawrie Hickman and Dave Brodie also scored points.

The final round of the championship was won, after one of the most exciting races of the series, by Tom Walkinshaw in the Pentax BMW 530i. Walkinshaw had started the season as Team Manager to Rad Dougal (driving a Toleman Group car) and the Pentax car, which was due to be driven by Dieter Quester and



A pair of Golfs, Richard Lloyd leading Thierry Tassin through the Donington chicane.

Gunnar Nilsson. Sadly the late Gunnar's illness kept him out of the car all season, and Quester was only scheduled to make a limited number of performances, so Tom found himself back in the driving seat — and certainly not too unhappy about it. The only other driver, apart from Dougal, to score points in a 530i was Andy Rouse, but the cars were also driven by Win Percy and Barrie Williams.

Walkinshaw, frustrated by the severe weight disadvantage under which the 530i runs, stripped out the interior furnishings having found a loophole in the regulations, for the Trans-Europe Trophy G1 race at Silverstone during the Tourist Trophy meeting, and won in impressive style. Having been disqualified from the results, he was later reinstated by an RAC Tribunal and he repeated the performance at the final Tricentrol round.

A close race — a hint of what the series could be like if more cars were competitive — resulted in a win for the overjoyed Tom Walkinshaw Racing team, the ten points gained from the win and fastest lap pushing him up to seventh in class. Walkinshaw has become very disillusioned with the series during the year, citing a number of anomalies in the regulations which serve to put his cars at a disadvantage. Whether these cars

will be seen again is not yet known, but it is to be hoped that Walkinshaw does not pull out altogether, thus removing any challenge to the Capris at all.

1601-2300cc

Fifty-three points. That was the margin by which Tony Dron won the second division with his works BL Cars Triumph Dolomite Sprint, prepared by Ralph Broad, who was running Sprints for the fourth season. Run alongside Dron's two cars — yes, he had a T-car as well — was a third Broadspeed car, sponsored by Hermetite, which was driven by selected celebrity drivers throughout the year. These were Derek Bell, John Fitzpatrick, Brian Redman and Win Percy but, as the drivers changed, it could pose no serious challenge for points to Dron.

It was, however, naturally this car which was often up with Dron and the tremendous wheel-to-wheel battle at the penultimate round at Thruxton when both Dron and Fitzpatrick were well down the field after pitstops gave me some of my most enjoyable moments as a commentator this season.

After an excellent start to the season, running a

Tony Dron was a runaway winner in the 1601-2301 class, and here at Thruxton he leads Barrie William's Vauxhall Magnum.



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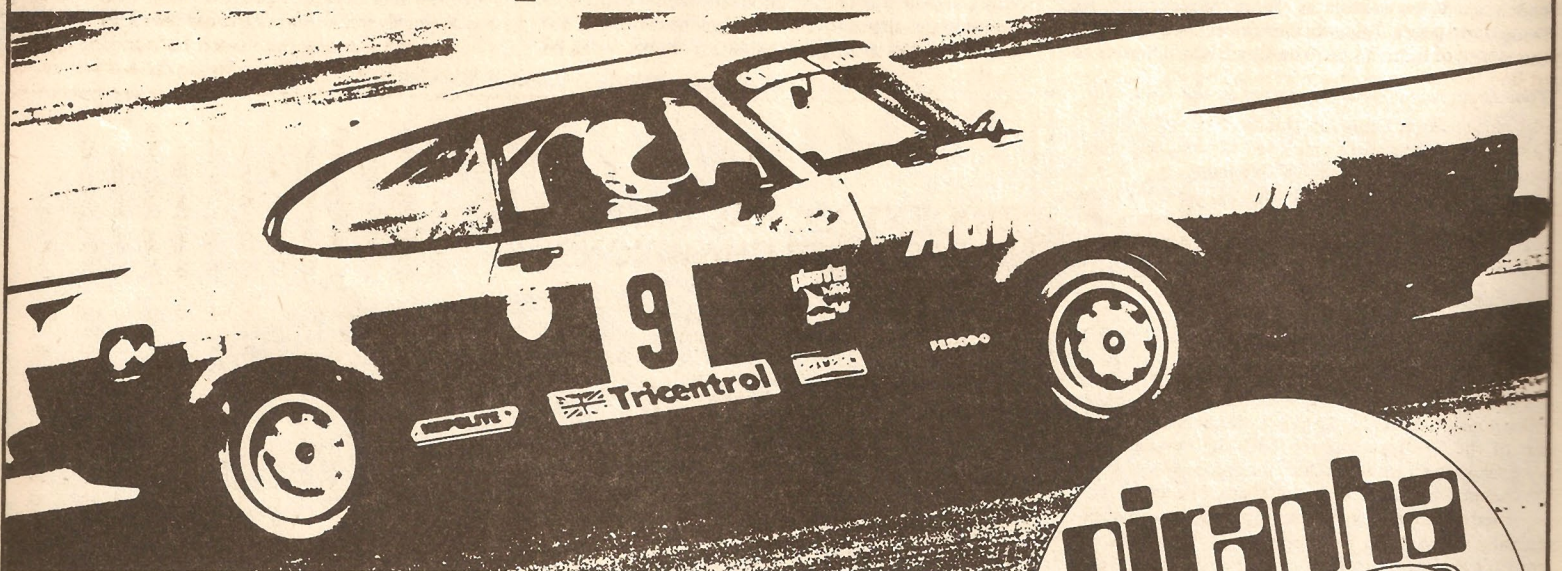
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R.A.C. British Saloon Car Championship.

Overall:

- 1, R. Longman, Mini 1275 GT.
- 2, R. Lloyd, Golf.
- 3, T. Dron, Dolomite.
- 4, G. Spice, Capri.
- 6, W. Percy, Celica.
- 7, M. Brundle, Celica.
- J. Allam, Capri.
- 9, C. Craft, Capri.
- 10, M. Wayne, Alfasud.

Classes:

- A. 1, G. Spice, Capri.
- 2, J. Allam, Capri.
- 3, C. Craft, Capri.
- 4, V. Woodman, Capri.
- B. 1, T. Dron, Dolomite.
- C. R. Lloyd, Golf.
- 2, W. Percy, Celica.
- 3, M. Brundle, Celica.
- 4, M. Grant-Peterkin, Golf.
- 5, M. Wilds, Celica.
- D. R. Longman, Mini 1275 GT.

Spa Francorchamps 24 hours, 22/3 July.

Overall:

- 1, G. Spice/T. Pilette, Capri.
- 4, P. Clark/S. Rolt/A. Liernaux, Capri.

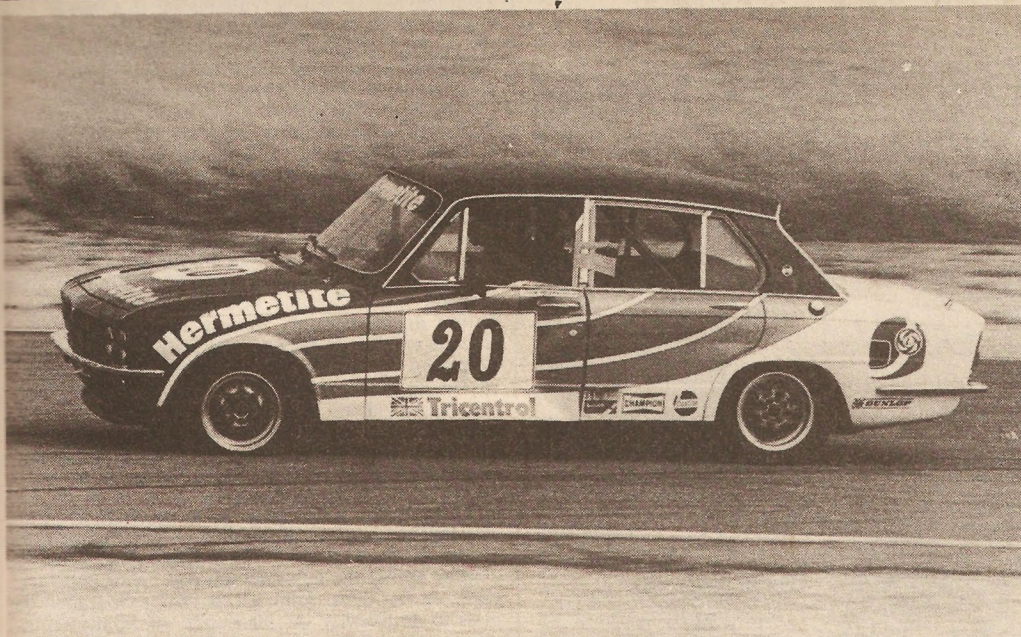
Tourist Trophy, 17 September.

Group 1:

- 1, S. Rolt/P. Clark, Capri.



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John Fitzpatrick's appearance at Thruxton in September was very eventful.

Must try harder

continued

typically shoestring effort, Barrie Williams was a strong second in the class, although many points behind Dron. His Sprint, which built up by Fax Dunn, was comprehensively destroyed against the Shaw's Hairpin armco at Mallory Park by David Piper, and not rebuilt until the Tourist Trophy. Barrie changed over to a Vauxhall Magnum, an ex-Marshall car now owned by Alan Foster, for the rest of the Tricentrol season but, as the car was not registered for the championship, none of his points, including a couple of class wins, have been recorded. A fine effort.

The consistency of private entrant Pete Lovett, allowed him to ease Williams out of second into third spot by four points, his sensible drives often keeping him well out of harm's way. Tim Goss, Roger Saunders and Bob Neville also scored points in Dolly's, finishing fourth, sixth and seventh respectively, the only non-Dolly points-scorer being Jon Dooley.

As usual, former Alfa employee Dooley, was campaigning an Alfa Romeo, in his case the Alfetta GTAm, but it just can't match the power of the Sprints. Each year, Alfa Romeo Dealer Team under the energetic leadership of Mike Lindsay hope for better homologations to come through from the manufacturers in Italy, but still they have not got them.

1301-1600cc

The third class-winner to repeat his previous year's victory was Richard Lloyd, who had introduced the Volkswagen Golf GTI to the national series at the start of the 1977 season and, with the demise of the strong Toyota effort which had dominated the previous few seasons, ran away with the class. The same thing happened in 1978, Lloyd running a brand new car, originally prepared by Broadspeed but run by his own firm GTI Engineering, after its foundation about mid-season.

Lloyd won every round but two in his new Britool-sponsored black right-hand-drive GTI and, until his disqualification from the August 6 Donington round for underweight pistons and oversized inlet ports, was in with a chance of the title. The points lost in that disqualification, however, meant that he and ultimate champion Richard Longman did not, as originally thought, arrive at the final round with an equal chance of the title. Thus it passed to Longman.

Lloyd's left-hand-drive silver Golf from the previous year passed into the hands of Martin Grant-Peterkin who, when he managed to avoid the scenery (which he visited on a couple of occasions) ran consistently, finishing fourth in the class. Jim Marsden ran a Scirocco GTI in early rounds to finish sixth in class.

The man who finished second in class, Win Percy, was the only driver to seriously challenge Lloyd's supremacy in the class and it would be interesting to know what would have happened had he not missed the opening three rounds. Percy, who was unbeatable in one of the Samuri Racing Celicas in 1976 — then transferred to a Capri with the same team the following year — reappeared with a Celica. It made an immediate impact at the May 1 Brands Hatch meeting, setting fastest lap and finishing second in the class, but despite his many efforts, it took a long time for Percy to win the class. He managed to do so on two occasions — once when Lloyd was disqualified at Donington Park and once at Brands Hatch.

Percy's effort was a good one, financed partly by Bradshaw Hire Plant with support from Percy's own garage business, Wey Valley Service Station. He also had one brief outing in a new-shape Celica — which replaced the original car during last winter — when he tried Gordon Mayers's Hughes of Beaconsfield car. Mayers scored points in it once and Mike Wilds also drove the car, although the single-seater driver did not seem to be able to adapt as smoothly to the car as he would have liked.

Up to 1300cc

So, for the fourth time in its 19-year history, the British Leyland Mini won the country's major saloon car title. Richard Longman's BL Cars 1275GT, supported by Patrick Motors, won all but one round of the Tricentrol championship, setting fastest lap at 11 of them.

Longman was justifiably a happy man at the end of the season, the car with which he had persevered having proved well worth all his efforts. And it was a good win, too, for Leyland who had to all intents and purposes lost the Dolomite Sprint as a potential winner and were able to turn their promotional interest towards the Mini.

Tom Pitcher — who transferred from the Leyland Challenge mid-season and surprised a few with his persistent and sensible driving — Jim Burrows and Barry Johnson also ran Minis in 1978 with varying degrees of success.

The major thorn in the side of the Mini-men was the Alfa Romeo Alfesud Ti, now boasting a 1300cc engine, the most successful of which was that of *Motor* journalist Rex Greenslade. There weren't as many of these as had been seen in previous years, Alfa Romeo Dealer Team concentrating their efforts on attempting to get Greenslade going. And this they did. Some sensible early-season testing suddenly gave them an extra 1sec or so per lap — simply with some basic suspension adjustments — and suddenly Rex began to stay with the Mini.

On a number of occasions, Greenslade was able to stay with the Mini throughout, and even got close enough at Donington in August to exchange a little paint. Greenslade's only class win was at Mallory Park in July, but his second position, although by a large margin, was a tribute to his determination to make the little 'Sud work out.

John Spiter's Chrysler Avenger was no match for the form shown by that ace Chrysler driver Bernard Unett in past years, although it did manage to score some points, and Rodney Posner picked up a few points with French Chrysler product — and the car which must take the award as the prettiest car in the series — the Simca Rallye 3.

Most consistent of the 'also-rans' in the 'baby' class was the Fiesta 1300S of Stuart McCrudden, who has been seen in a variety of cars during recent season including Mexicos and Opels. He persevered with what was obviously not a competitive car, but with some new homologations during the winter, he is hoping that he can get much closer to the leaders in the new season. ■

TRICENTROL RAC BRITISH SALOON CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

	19 Mar Silverstone	24 Mar Oulton Park	27 Mar Thruxton	01 May Brands Hatch	29 May Silverstone	25 June Donington	02 July Mallory Park	16 July Brands Hatch	06 Aug Donington	28 Aug Brands Hatch	10 Sep Thruxton	07 Oct Oulton Park	Total points
Overall													
1 Richard Longman	10	10	10	(9)	10	10	(1)	10	10	10	10	10	100
2 Richard Lloyd	10	10	10	(9)	10	10	10	10	Ex	—	10	10	90
3 Tony Dron	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	Ex	4	—	—	83
4 Gordon Spice	6	10	9	9	6	9	(1)	Ex	7	10	(6)	—	75
5 Rex Greenslade	—	6	6	7	6	6	9	6	6	—	6	4	62
6 Win Percy	—	—	—	7	6	6	6	6	9	10	—	6	56
2301-3000cc													
1 Gordon Spice	6	10	9	9	9	6	9	(1)	Ex	7	10	(6)	75
2 Jeff Allam	4	3	3	2	4	5	4	10	10	4	—	—	49
3 Chris Craft	—	4	—	1	7	9	3	3	4	2	6	—	39
4 Vince Woodman	3	1	6	—	—	3	—	2	6	1	2	2	26
1601-2300cc													
1 Tony Dron	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	10	Ex	4	—	—	83
2 Pete Lovett	4	—	4	4	3	6	—	3	—	—	—	6	30
3 Barrie Williams	6	4	6	6	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	26
4 Tim Goss	—	—	3	3	2	4	—	2	2	4	—	—	20
1301-1600cc													
1 Richard Lloyd	10	10	10	(9)	10	10	10	10	Ex	—	10	10	90
2 Win Percy	—	—	—	7	6	6	6	6	9	10	—	6	56
3 Martin Brundle	6	6	6	4	4	4	(3)	3	4	6	6	—	49
4 Martin Grant Peterkin	—	—	4	3	—	3	4	2	3	4	—	—	23
Up to 1300cc													
1 Richard Longman	10	10	10	(9)	10	10	(1)	10	10	10	10	10	100
2 Rex Greenslade	—	6	6	7	6	6	9	6	6	—	6	4	62
3 Malcolm Wayne	4	3	—	1	3	1	2	3	3	6	(1)	2	28
4 John Spiller	—	4	3	4	4	2	1	—	2	3	—	3	26

Ex — excluded from results
Scores in parentheses dropped; best ten scores counted.



Philippe Roux takes advice from John Kirkpatrick, Senior Instructor at the Jim Russell school.

On a hot summer afternoon, 14 young men from far and wide arrived in Attleborough to participate in a Russell Overseas Course. This is one of the many options offered by the school, and gives pupils a concentrated ten-day course, culminating in a race — and the answer to many questions. I was able to monitor the course's progress and, never having driven a racing car before, to experience first-hand the elation — and frustration — of the 14 prospective racing drivers.

Most of the new arrivals didn't know what to expect. And if they thought they did, they were wrong. Any thoughts of pulling on a helmet and roaring off to fame and fortune were quickly dispelled by the opening remarks of Senior Instructor, John Kirkpatrick: "If you think you are going to be a racing driver by the time this course is over then I suggest you leave now."

No-one did. The only man who may have felt like making a hasty departure was Philippe Roux, a 25 year-old Swiss Olympic skier from Verbier. Roux, having driven Formula Renault at the Paul Ricard track in addition to rallying a Porsche, had been rather perplexed to discover that the course did not include racing, or come to that, driving, on a daily basis. He threatened to leave before the course started and Kirkpatrick caused further agitation when he stressed that the instruction would be in gradual steps with the emphasis on consistency and smoothness. Speed was to be sacrificed for style and safety.

Kirkpatrick's tough opening remarks were to set the standard of no-nonsense teaching that he and his assistants, David Turner and Guenda Eadie, were to employ during the following ten days. Having laid his cards on the table, John Kirkpatrick encouraged the class to do likewise. As the pupils will be the central characters of this feature, let's take a closer look at their backgrounds. Eight countries were represented by 14 pupils, their average age being 23.

Glen Gardner: 28; from Washington State, USA, was one of the oldest: a helicopter mechanic sporting a thick beard with an equally thick American drawl. Racing experience: none. Racing ambitions: "Don't know; guess that's why I'm here."

Walter Stephens: 23; Denver, Colorado. Smiling American with a deep, syrupy voice. Racing experience: Spitfire in local events. Ambitions: "Felt the course would be good experience and a good excuse to visit Europe."

William Stephens: 20; Denver, Colorado. Quiet and shy. Tended to live in the shadow of his brother, Walter. Racing experience: none. Ambitions: "None. It seemed like a good idea to join Walter on the trip."

Rene Broekhoven: 19; Holland. The youngest member on the course. Tended to be a loner. Racing experience: none. Ambitions: "I would like to race if I have the ability."

José Sanchez: 24; Mexico City. Air Traffic Controller. Tall and quiet with a long face and a wide-eyed expression. Racing experience: none. Ambitions: "I would like to race in Europe but I don't think that will be possible because Mexico is so far away."

José Pablo Escalante: 20; Mexico. Another typical Mexican but rather more excitable and about six inches shorter than Sanchez. Racing experience: none. Ambitions: "I wait to see what happens on the course."

Martin Kelly: 25; Glasgow. Bespectacled Insurance man — and looked the part. Racing experience: none. Ambitions: "None. I had saved some money and it was a question of either going to Argentina or coming here. Considering Scotland's performances in the World Cup, I think I made the right choice!"

George Herthel: 22; St. Louis, Missouri. Student. Blond, all-American boy in peak physical condition that exploded with his every move. Racing experience: MGB in SCCA events. Ambitions: "I've packed my bags and I'm staying here until I reach the top."

Masakazu Kumagai: 25; Japan. Spent three years in America working in electronics. Doing the course on his way home to Japan. Racing experience: Saloons in Japan. Ambitions: "To improve and race in England if I can."

Hugh Schollum: 21; Auckland, New Zealand. The youngest in a line of racing mechanics. His brothers had decided that Hugh should be given the opportunity to become a racing driver. Money in his hand, new overalls and helmet in his bag, Schollum arrived in England keen to learn. Racing experience: none.

Guy Billette: 28; Quebec. Teacher. Spoke English with a rasping French/Canadian accent. Easy-going manner that reflected his reason for attending. "I'm taking a long holiday in Europe and this is part of it." Racing experience: none.

Jose Ferreira: 24; Portugal. Male model. A man with bullish self-confidence who spoke English with a cockney accent. Racing experience: none. Ambitions: "To be a racing driver".

Andreas 'Andrew' Jelden: 21; London. Born in Hamburg but working in London as a mechanical engineer. Young and intelligent but inclined to kick against authority in an immature way. Racing experience: none. Ambitions: "I'm here because it's something that I've always wanted to do. I would like to think that maybe I could take up racing at some stage."

To prove his enthusiasm, Andrew had arranged to

Making champions

MAURICE HAMILTON does a Jim Russell course and gets to learn some home truths . . .

Fifteen miles south of Norwich lies the town of Attleborough. First appearances suggest a sleepy English community, struggling to retain dignity despite the constant pummelling from heavy transport ploughing through the narrow streets. There is little in the way of tourist attractions, yet the small inns and boarding houses are often fully booked; the air charged with the prattle of accents from every corner of the globe. Although the visitors are young and adventurous, they haven't travelled to the depths of Norfolk to unearth the rural charm of Attleborough. They have come to discover more about themselves.

Scratch any man with a driving licence, and the chances are that you will find a racing driver underneath. The majority of road users have neither the wish nor the ability to take their

talents further than racing fellow motorists away from traffic lights. There are those, however, whose curiosity gets the better of them. Do they possess that intangible combination of physical and mental skills that make a racing driver? And if they do, will they like motor racing?

There are others, of course, who don't doubt their ability. For them, it is a question of 'when?' rather than 'how?' or 'why?'. One way to satisfy such curiosity is to join a racing drivers school, strap yourself into a single seater and go find out with the benefit of expert instruction. The Jim Russell International Racing Drivers School at the Snetterton circuit — the most experienced in the business — lies not far from Attleborough. Occasionally they make champions out of the curious.

up the entire ten days at a local camping site. However, if you didn't possess quite so much pioneering spirit, there was a choice of accommodation ranging from bed and breakfast with a local family to a room in one of the two local inns — 'The Griffin' and 'The London Tavern'. There were, of course, more expensive alternatives in Norwich but to gain on creature comforts was to lose on the experience of living in Attleborough.

The Automobile Association guide quotes the population as 4,079, but there is more to Attleborough than that. There is another community; a transient population of ex-Russell pupils living on their wits and love for motor racing. Their worldly possessions are helmet, overalls — and dreams of driving racing cars. Having completed previous courses, they earn their money as best they can, sleeping in an annex to 'The London Tavern' and living for the next Jim Russell race. The end of each Overseas Course is planned to coincide with a Russell race meeting — it's the highlight of the course and the *raison d'être* for the young men killing time in Attleborough.

The Overseas Course provides a wide and varied programme ranging from skid-pan techniques to corner by corner instruction followed by 96 closely monitored laps. In between there is time for a technical lecture; films; a talk by Patrick Neve, an ex-Russell pupil; a stiff medical and, on this occasion, unscheduled entertainment provided by the late Ronnie Peterson in his Lotus 79.

A falacy about the ten day course is that the actual driving does not figure until after several days of classroom teaching. Not so. The pupils were up to their shoulders in single-seaters on the first full day — and for many, it was the moment they had travelled thousands of miles to experience.

Snetterton was cloaked in grey; raining and drizzling onto the track and soaking the seats of the waiting Van Diemens. As far as the young racers were concerned, the sun was shining. They only felt warmth as they slid deep into the long cockpits, held the chubby steering wheels, reached for the stubby right-hand gear shifts, felt a racing car at last. It was Christmas Day

Life was made simple by the progressive clutch which could be eased in and out in a similar fashion to the road car version. In other words, no embarrassing lurching and stalling as the cars gingerly set off in single file down the puddle-ridden track. The procedure was simple. Limited to 3000rpm, pupils drove up and down the straight in order that they could become accustomed to the layout and feel of the cars. The immediate sensation was one of precision and taughtness of the controls; an open fresh-air feeling coupled with the curious sight of the front wheels bouncing up and down as they flicked plumes of spray into the Norfolk air.

On paper that may sound pedestrian and boring. In practice, it was totally new for the majority. It was driving a racing car. It was exciting. Their enthusiastic expressions conveyed that clearly.

Having established that everyone could drive in a straight line, the next stage was learning the lines through the Snetterton corners. It was carried out on a step by step routine. Literally. Kirkpatrick, a 31 year-

old Scot, walked the group through the first turn explaining the braking, gear-changing, turning in, power application and clipping points with the care and clarity of Jackie Stewart. Identification points ranged from marker boards and tufts of grass to changes in the track surface. It looked straightforward on foot. Back in the knee-high cockpits, it was not so easy to spot the markers — even at a 3000rpm trickle through the turn.

At this early stage, it was becoming obvious that some drivers had a natural feel while others were groping clumsily. Philippe Roux quietly voiced his objection to being harnessed at 3000rpm and tried to go too fast too soon — as did the impetuous Portuguese, Ferreira, keen to impress his spectating girlfriend as much as anyone else. The Mexican, Sanchez, was showing consistent accuracy without drama while others were being dramatic rather than consistent.

Various levels of competence may have been reached but the level of enthusiasm was consistently high and anticipation keen to string the corners together for a complete lap. That followed on Saturday.

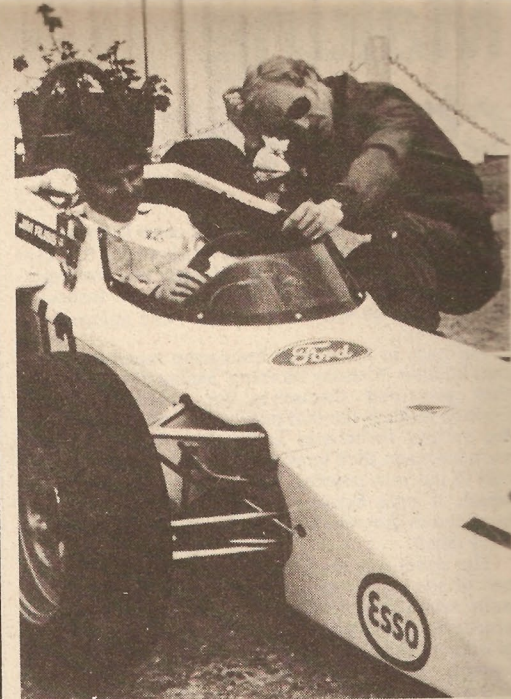
The morning was occupied transferring everything learnt the previous day into notebooks, followed by an informative technical lecture on the basic design and function of racing car components. The buzz of Formula Fords heralded the arrival of British pupils thrashing their way through lapping sessions and the overseas members made their way to the pits to watch. Earlier, John Kirkpatrick had given a stern briefing about lapping procedures. The rev limit would be 4000rpm and the mental limit would be to take it easy and not to rush into stupid mistakes. "If you do," warned Kirkpatrick, "I'll get very upset."

Each session of lapping consisted of eight laps, after which the cars returned to the pits and awaited the critical observations of the instructors who had been corner watching. The Overseas Course stood in embarrassed silence as a British 'hot-shoe' received a stern one thousand words for going too quickly and screwing up just about every corner. When the man said "take it easy," he meant it. The other drivers took note. Perhaps the lecture was for their benefit as much as the recalcitrant racer.

Idle chatter had ceased, blank expressions were legion as everyone mentally raced from corner to corner trying to remember the various marker points. Once on the track it was as though a tape had been switched on in the back of your helmet. Approaching a corner, Kirkpatrick's celtic tones would rattle the memory into action: "brake at the 200 board, into third at the 100, turn in at the 'fist' of tarmac (a hole about 150mm diameter), apply the power when the clipping point is in sight," and so on.

The terrible temptation was to try to go too fast. The results were disastrous: wrong lines and missed gear changes which did nothing for the confidence let alone the image presented to the ever watchful instructors. No-one was happy or comfortable.

"You must go at your own pace," cajoled Kirkpatrick, "get it right and the speed will come naturally." That may be so but the feeling was that it was your first time out and you'd better be a racing driver.



John Kirkpatrick with one of his pupils.

And what do racing drivers do? Brake late; power on early and all that good stuff. There we were braking ridiculously early and then ambling through the corners in slow stiff movements. Kids' stuff.

Accepting that 'they know best', it was a case of talking yourself into making a positive decision to go at a comfortable pace. Never mind others passing you — just do it right. And behold, it worked. The speed did increase; 4000rpm became comfortable instead of a challenge.

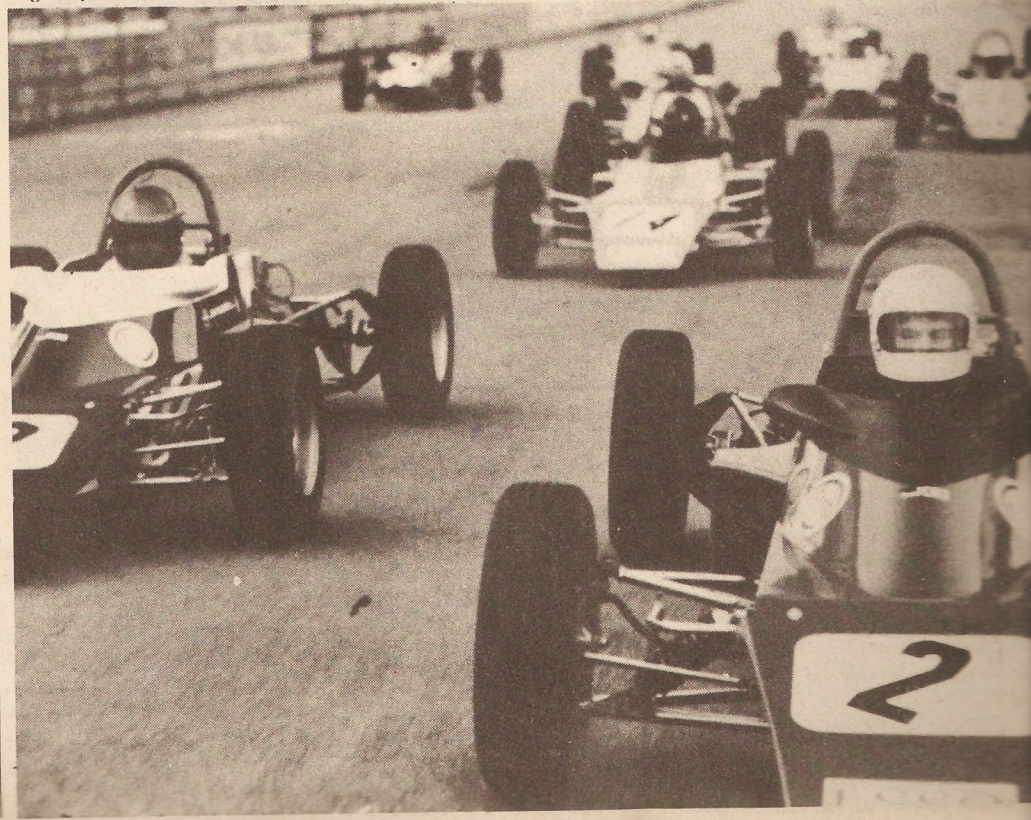
There was a feeling of achievement as the drivers hauled themselves out of the cockpits, legs weak, bodies tingling, and returned to the classroom for a brief chat about the day's activities — and advice about the Norfolk night-life. Some made the trip to the bright lights of Norwich — but the day's work had taken its toll. Martin Kelly dozed off at a disco; Glen Gardner had no energy to finish his steak at dinner. The majority opted for a quiet drink in 'The London Tavern' and talk about the challenge and excitement that was adding a new dimension to their lives.

Everyone slept on Sunday — in keeping with the rest of Attleborough. Hugh Schollum wrote to his brothers in New Zealand and advised them of his progress spending their money. Initially at sea, young Hugh was slowly finding his feet and approaching the course in a common sense manner, becoming more convinced of

Splashing round the skid pan.



A grid of trainees about to start their first race at Silverstone.



Making champions

continued

his ability. Even Philippe Roux had come to terms with the fact that it was not *that* easy. Kirkpatrick had kept the Swiss under a tight reign and Roux was now beginning to see the wisdom of the school's ways. Instead of complaining, he was conforming — and enjoying the experience.

For once in their lives, the course members found that familiar 'Monday Morning' feeling did not exist as they presented themselves for skidding lessons. Guenda Eadie is the skid pan expert and demonstrated the various techniques in a saloon car fitted with purpose-made slick tyres. Easy to talk about but difficult to put into practice. When the pupils took to the wheel, it soon became a matter of male pride determined to show the lady that it was not that difficult. They failed.

The secret was to enjoy it. And if you did not, the rest of the course certainly did as they watched you waltz around the first class skid facility. It was good practical experience — and besides, there was the possibility that it could rain during the important lapping sessions the following day.

It was not surprising therefore, that the first reaction on Tuesday morning was to pull back the curtains and heave a sigh of relief at the sight of clear blue skies. The whole day was to be devoted to lapping — and

The author tries his hand in one of the school's Van Diemen RĤ75's.



hurried formality and an 8am arrival at the circuit a minor detail. Kirkpatrick was already in attendance; the cars lined up in the pit lane.

Perhaps sensing the simmering adrenalin, John ordered a walk of the circuit. Now it's a fair bet that if asked to take a 1.9 mile walk before a normal working day, most would offer blank amazement — if not stubborn refusal. But this was different and the racers set off laughing and joking, making roaring noises and gyrating in the corners as they 'spun off'.

Forty-five minutes later, Kirkpatrick reviewed his troops as they climbed into the now familiar cockpits. Each driver was spoken to individually and a 4000rpm limit confirmed. Once again, the simplicity of it all from a pedestrian point of view became a series of misjudgements when recumbent in the cockpit at speed. For those who continued to rush into mistakes, the instructors made no bones about their feelings.

"And what were you doing, mister?" demanded Kirkpatrick of a sheepish Escalante, the little Mexican sitting on the pit wall with a hurt expression. "That was terrible. A session wasted. You've got to concentrate. Go slowly."

Pablo was not alone either. Others had made a nonsense of various corners while some, including José Sanchez, had committed a cardinal sin.

"You've over-revved."

"I know," replied Sanchez with a nervous Mexican giggle.

The instructors did not see the funny side. Compliments did not come easily except perhaps to those who were having difficulty and mild rebukes coupled with encouragement where applicable worked wonders for the confidence. It was quite obvious that there is more to the business of instruction than simply the art of teaching. The tutor has to be an enthusiast; a psycho-

logist, a tactician — and possess a keen sense of humour.

"Your gear-changing was terrible," Kirkpatrick informed Walter Stephens.

"I only missed a gear twice — and each time it was in front of you."

"Aye . . . I seem to get blamed for a lot of things . . ." came the dour Scottish reply with more than a hint of a twinkle in the eye.

By the end of the afternoon the rev limit had been raised to 5500rpm. The 4-cylinder 1600cc engine suddenly packed a punch and a healthy roar replaced the transmission whine that had accompanied low-rev operations. At that pace, everything fell into place. Previously, the gear-changing and turning-in points had been well-spaced but unnatural. At 5500rpm, the markers flashed by at breakneck speed; movements flowed and the corners became a swift, gentle arc that seemed absolutely right instead of a series of stilted, awkward movements. Suddenly the 200 marker board meant what it said instead of appearing to be half a mile from the corner.

The logical pattern of the tuition became clear. If you had mastered the correct lines at slower speeds then everything fell into place at higher speed — and confidence grew. Sheer exhilaration replaced apprehension. You felt you were the fastest man at Snetterton; a real ace. It was only when drivers vacated their cockpits and watched others at work that the realisation dawned of just how slow they had really been going. But that did not matter. It had been one of the most exciting moments they had ever experienced. A personal 'high'.

The day ended with the usual de-brief in the classroom. Everyone was chatting furiously; almost euphoric with the sense of achievement. John Kirkpatrick soon burst the bubble. The last session had been punctuated by a shower of rain which did not dampen the drivers' enthusiasm. Not at all . . .

The performances in the wet had marred what had hitherto been a good progressive day. There had been one or two visits down the escape road at the end of the back straight; Andrew Jelden had spun; Philippe Roux had managed to get into a dice with a more experienced driver who had been lapping at the same time and, in his enthusiasm, he had overtaken others in the braking areas. Not the prescribed behaviour for lapping sessions. Kirkpatrick did not mince his words. The class sat tousle-haired, perspiring, motionless. The 'big stick' was being waved; it was a serious business — and they knew it.

With business over came the realisation that it had been a full day where the hours had seemed like minutes. The circuit continued to roll before the mind's eye. Shoulder blades were stiff; hands were lightly blistered. Ah, if every day could be like that . . .

An unexpected bonus for everyone — including the enthusiastic staff — was a brief test session at the circuit by Lotus on Wednesday. It was the first sight of a Formula 1 car in the flesh for many and their awe increased ten-fold when Ronnie Peterson was chauffeured to the track in the black JPS aircraft used by Colin Chapman. The would-be racers watched in silence as this sadly missed Grand Prix driver yawned before climbing nonchalantly into the Lotus 79, firing up and taking to the track. The 'exclusive' air gave the feeling of being allowed to touch the sacred hem of Grand Prix racing.

The wailing DFV signalled Peterson's progress around the circuit and students stood, heads cocked, listening to the gear changes as they mentally rode in the Lotus. But the inexperienced mind found it difficult to keep up once Peterson was into the groove. The speed and spectacle was almost too much for the experienced observer to accept as well.

I watch Grand Prix cars every other week-end during the summer but now I was seeing F1 in a new light. For once I was standing at a corner which I had tackled — or tried to tackle — in a racing car. I had become a participant instead of an observer. I thought I knew what it was all about. I knew nothing. Peterson's speed astounded me. It was as though I had never seen a Grand Prix car in action before.

Peterson's performance remained the cause of glazed expressions until Jim Russell's barbecue — a social highlight of any Overseas Course. Held in a tastefully converted stable at Jim's beautiful mansion — Bardwell Manor — the course had the opportunity of inspecting the highly respected Russell race horse stud. Jim extended a friendly welcome at the door. Food and drink were 'on the house' and there is no doubt that Russell could comfortably enter the catering business such was the slick and professional manner in which the food was cooked and served by Jim and his wife with able assistance from the school staff.

Jim mingled with 'his boys' answering their queries and comments in addition to spinning many a hair-raising yarn about his racing days. He is justifiably proud of the school's reputation but feels aggrieved that little recognition is awarded to his World Scholarship Competition. Held at the end of each year, the competition is designed to find the school's best pupils with final judging carried out by an independent panel

from the racing world. First prize for the winners of both the British and Overseas sections is a Jim Russell school works Formula Ford drive for the following year (worth about £14,000 and making the much-trumpeted Grovewood award look pathetic).

Russell is an earthy individual, rolling his own cigarettes and lacking the pretentious attitude that usually accompanies such wealth. He holds the reigns of the racing school of course but concentrates on other divisions of his multifarious business empire thus leaving the school (which receives generous backing from Esso) under the overall direction of John Paine and the specific Snetterton control of John Kirkpatrick. Nonetheless, Jim enjoyed mixing with the boys and promised to attend the race on Saturday.

Before the big day however, two more sessions at 5500rpm were scheduled — the emphasis as always on consistency and accuracy rather than out-and-out speed. Lap times were recorded but not issued until the course had finished.

Nonetheless, there was an unspoken feeling among the pupils of wanting to push themselves and the cars to as near the limit as they dare. Nature stepped in and soaked the track, cutting the rev-limit to 5000rpm. The character of the circuit changed completely; marks disappeared under the shiny track surface and puddles caused new hazards. Visors misted and generally the frustration was enormous. Martin Kelly admitted to being rather confused while the two Mexicans appeared to be more baffled by the so-called 'English Summer' than anything else.

A detailed briefing was delivered for race day. There would be 80 Russell pupils competing in seven races. The Overseas Course would be spread over the first three races — and they would be very much on their own. "I won't be able to tell you if you are overdoing it. If you do, the consequences could be dire. Winning," said Kirkpatrick, "is only a bonus. It's not what it's all about at this stage." Licences were issued.

The teaching was over but the learning had only just begun.

The ride back to Attleborough in the school bus was quieter than usual. Faces stared out of windows, thoughts preoccupied with Saturday — and the race. To the outside world, the Jim Russell Race Meeting may seem like a third-rate affair of no consequence. To the Overseas Course, it meant their first race. And the thoughts of a first race twist the guts no matter what the circumstances.

To add to the sense of occasion, Attleborough has assumed it's own 'big race' atmosphere. Young racers from as far afield as Belgium and France packed 'The London Tavern'. It was unbelievable that such enthusiasm could be raised for a six lap race. The local 'transient racers' had been preparing for the race by keeping fit and running as much as five miles per day! There were even the admiring local ladies sitting in a row and twittering like starlings on a wire. The Attleborough Grand Prix was under way.

A blustery Saturday morning wind kicked up the dust in the Snetterton paddock as young men scurried about in silence. They were scheduled to go through the formal procedures accorded to a normal race meeting; signing on, helmet check, waiting, practice, waiting, briefing, waiting — and then the race.

Practice consisted of eight laps at a 5500rpm limit. For every 100 revs over the top, five seconds were added to your best lap time (a similar offence in the race added ten seconds to your overall race time). The Overseas Course acquitted themselves well during practice. Philippe Roux and Hugh Schollum were on pole for their respective events with the remainder spread evenly down the grids.

Lunch was available for those that wanted to eat but the smell of cooking in the cafeteria was hardly conducive to a settled stomach. Many disappeared to a quiet corner; British pupils sat in their road cars and stared blankly ahead. The toilets were well patronised.

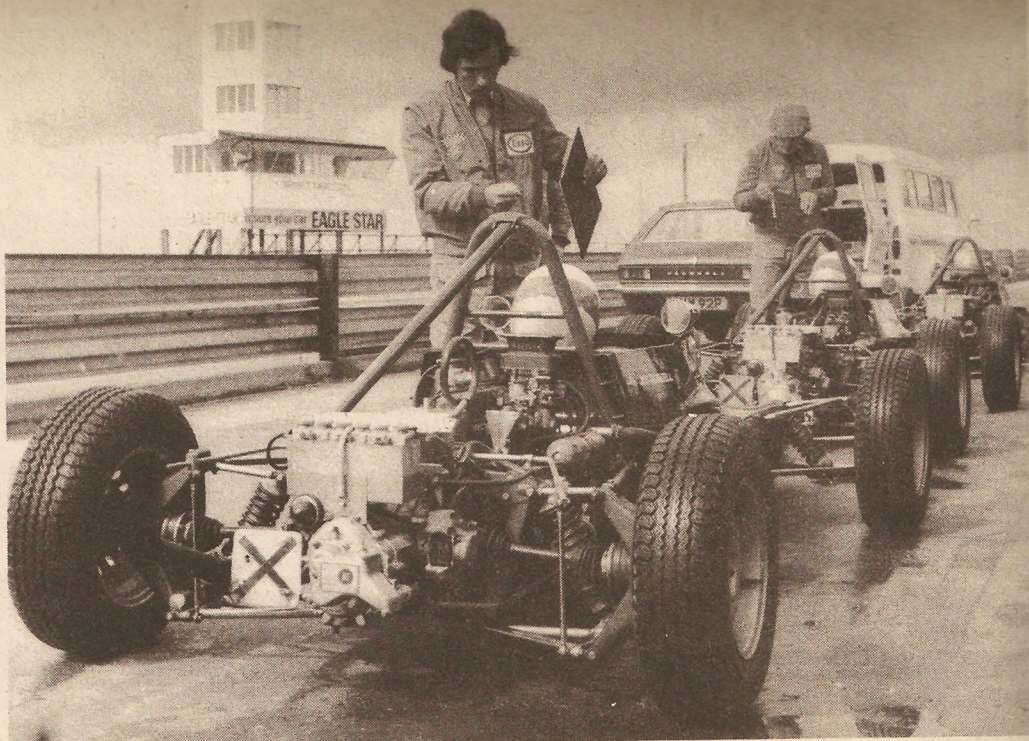
The loudspeaker crackled into life across the strangely silent paddock calling the faithful to a briefing by the RAC Clerk of the Course: advice on the latest state of the circuit — procedure for rain — good luck and enjoy yourselves.

Now they were on their own.

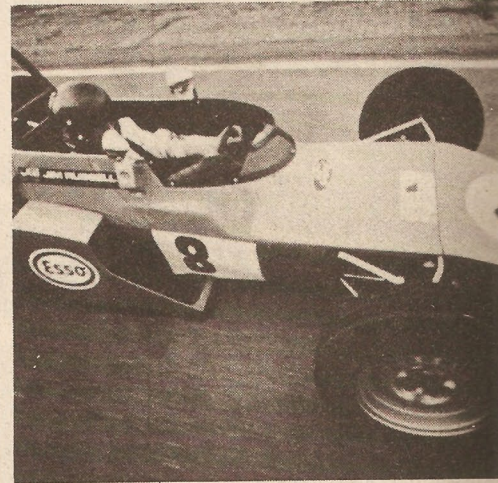
As each race finished, drivers emerged babbling furiously as they struggled to describe the experience. Each performance was highly personal and different. I can merely relate my own.

Once your race number has been called and the cars return to the collection area after the previous race, you climb into 'your' car. Seat padding if necessary; fasten harness and pull taught. Wait. Those that have raced chatter merrily while those that have not watch from a distance and wish that they had. Kirkpatrick's words, "Check for neutral and start please," bring a chill to the bones and 11 Formula Fords to life. File onto the circuit in grid order. I am on the outside of the front row. Check the outside of the first turn just like John advised during his pre-race briefing. It's dirty. Form on the grid, engage first, switch off. And wait. It's spooky. No spectators on the banks; no mechanics, photographers or hangers-on milling on the grid; no babbling public address. Just the sound of the wind.

Eye the man in the middle of the front row. Don't



Above: David Turner and John Kirkpatrick offer advice to pupils at Snetterton. Below left: American student, George Herthel is shown the right way to do things. Below right: The Van Diemen at speed.



either. He nods. I give him a mean look. I'll show him. Philippe is on pole. He passed me during practice as though I was standing still. Think I'll wave at him if he looks . . . Horn. 2 minutes. God, why don't they hurry up? The other lads watch from the pit lane — but they may as well be a million miles away. Feel very alone and unprepared for all this. Wish I'd had more experience at 5500rpm in the dry . . . Horn. 1 minute. Start engine. No problems. Hold revs at 3500. The final 60 seconds seem like forever. The starter couldn't possibly climb the rostrum any slower if he tried. Left leg trembling. Flag up slowly and . . . thoughts cease and actions follow.

Lift off too soon at the first corner. "At the first corner, be gentlemanly," Kirkpatrick had said. I was . . . and those other rude bastards rushed straight through the door I had left wide open! The rest of the race follows in a high speed blur. Don't make a mistake; get the line right; watch the guy behind; don't over-rev; don't throw the car at the bank; finish for God's sake.

Perhaps if I'd got on with racing rather than thinking all that I might have finished higher than sixth.

Tremendous feeling of sadness as I round the last corner on the slowing down lap. It's over. Feeling of disappointment too. The race came as a bit of a shock. Wasn't ready for all that pushing and shoving. Initially I thought I simply wanted to finish. Climbing out of the car I realise just how much I really wanted to win. But like everyone else, I thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

To add the final trappings to 'race day', a prize-giving for the Overseas Course was held in 'The London Tavern'. John Kirkpatrick had ruled with a strong but understanding hand and the logic of the school's methods was indicated by the high esteem in which the pupils held their tutors — plus the steady performances on the track.

Philippe Roux won 'my' race comfortably — and underlined his promise by using no more than 5000rpm. He said he intended to take racing more seriously when he stops professional skiing in two years

José Sanchez won by a whisker and was moving on to take an advanced course at Russell's Silverstone school. Fellow Mexican Escalante finished third: "I over-revved while dicing for second place, but I didn't care because I was enjoying it so much!"

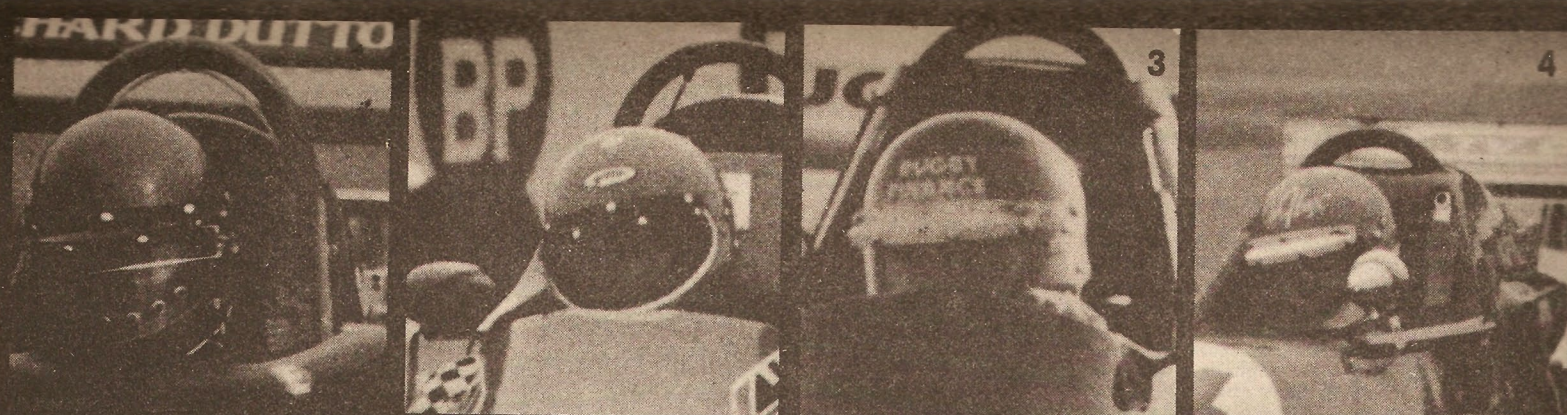
But for over-revving, George Herthel would have finished third. Suitably encouraged, he was more determined than ever to stay in England and 'make it to the top'.

The Stephens' brothers drove sensibly, William receiving an additional boost by winning the award for the "driver who has made the most progress". Jose Ferreira had initially been in the depths of despair. The Portuguese had been pushed to the back of the field during a first corner scramble — but he was soon back on form and raring to race again.

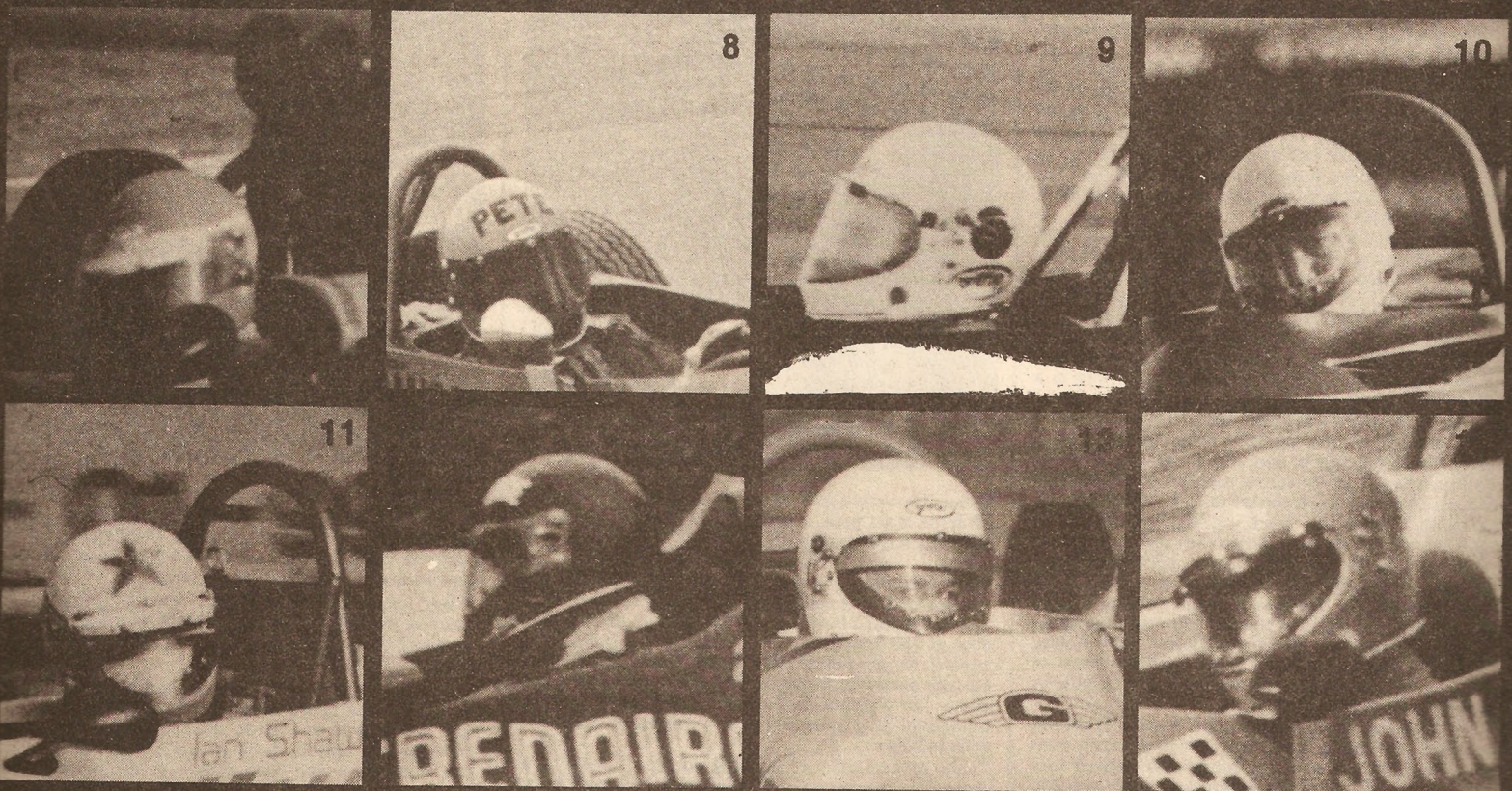
Rene Broekhoven's smile indicated that he was pleased with his performance and he intended to enter the World Scholarship. Racing had definitely eased its way into Hugh Schollum's blood and, after a brief tour in Europe, he intended to take up cockpit duties back in New Zealand. Andrew Jelden had driven a spirited race although he predictably won the dubious honour of over-revving to the tune of 900rpm. Andrew was the only member to voice reservations about the course and said he intended to try other schools.

There was an 'end of holiday' atmosphere. Addresses were exchanged and perhaps Pablo Escalante summed it up best when he simply said he was very sad that it was over. Under the flush of alcoholic enthusiasm, virtually everyone vowed to race again. Few probably will. As Kirkpatrick had warned in his opening remarks, no-one present could consider themselves a racing driver at that stage. But at least they knew if they wanted to race.

Personally, I found it to be the most exhilarating ten days I have ever spent. I only wish I had taken the course ten years ago. To anyone thinking about satisfying their racing curiosity, I can only say 'do it now'. You won't regret a minute of it. And I know at least 13 men scattered across the world who would agree with that.



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European FF2000 series sponsor negotiated

Great news for FF2000 drivers, constructors and engine builders in Britain this week is that Daniel Partel, President of the German Formula Ford Fahrer-vereinigung, has secured a sponsor for a European championship series in 1979. The races will take place at prestigious meetings — Nurburgring, Zolder, Zandvoort and Donington are already said to be interested in staging rounds, consequently an attractive prize fund will be on offer. Many details are still to be finalised but Partel is anxious that interested parties contact him as soon as possible.

A European FF1600 championship is also being promoted and, once again, competitors are asked to write (or tele-

phone after January 10) for further details. Your contact is Frau Gisa Schmidt, German Formula Ford Fahrervereinigung, BSI-Bureau Service International, U6, 12a, 68 Mannheim, Federal Republic of Germany.

Details of the 1979 Golden Lion Trophy series will soon be available with the first round already scheduled for Zolder on March 11. It will carry a minimum purse of DM4000 and a strong contingent from England and Ireland would be particularly welcome. We will publish further details as soon as we receive them but please contact the Formula Ford Fahrervereinigung through Frau Schmidt at the above address if you would like to compete.

Keeler join Excel F1300

Excel Lithoplates are to continue their association with the 750MC's Formula 1300 series in 1979 having had a successful season's involvement last year. Managing Director Ron Giles feels that both parties can reap further benefit from further co-operation and, judging by the standard of competition in 1978, the coming season should be the best yet for

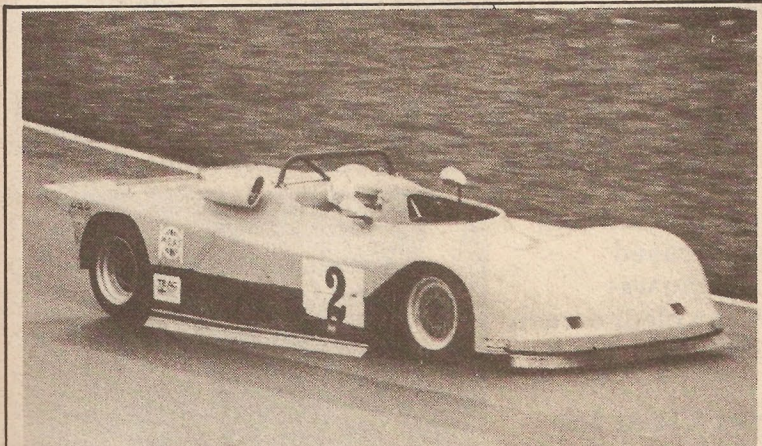
the category. Additional backing has been offered by Bob Keeler, Managing Director of the Keeler Motor Group, of Wembley. Keeler feels he would like to be involved with the true amateur driver and total sponsorship for the series has now reached £5000 — a most worthwhile prize fund for the club to dispense in 1979.

Roy James to return?

It seems that Roy James is planning to make another return to motor sport in 1979 and is looking for sponsorship to contest either FF1600 or FF2000. James first raced in the early 60s in Formula Junior but his career was interrupted by a 12-year stay as a guest of Her Majesty following his part in the Great Train Robbery. While Roy was in prison he maintained a rigorous keep-fit programme but shortly after his release he took to the tracks again.

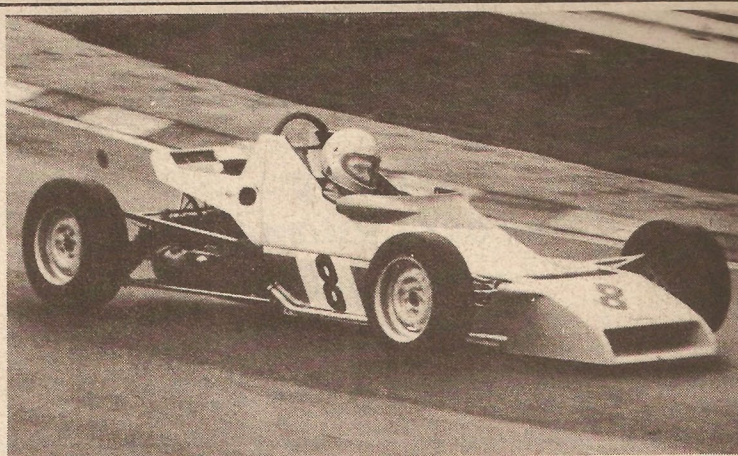
Another setback was suffered when he crashed Ted Wentz's FAtlantic car at Silverstone during a test session, break-

ing a leg in the shunt, but he was soon back in the cockpit with a sinister-looking black Royale FF1600 chassis, winning a race at Castle Combe. Switching to a Hawke in 1976 proved a mistake, James having another crash and retiring due to a lack of finance. The silversmith attended the FF Festival at Brands Hatch late last season and he is convinced that another go would be more successful. Among his other projects is a handsome trophy for the winner of this season's Rivet Supply special saloon championship which has just been completed.



Homewood tries Tiga-BDA

Making its circuit racing debut in revised trim on Boxing day was Ernie Farncombe's immaculate Tiga SC77 Sports 2000 chassis, driven by John Homewood. Formerly the property of John Webb and raced by him in the colours of Monsieur Rochas, St Leonards driver Farncombe acquired the car a couple of months back with a view to a season of sprints and hillclimbs in 1979. The first time that he had seen the car for several months was at a Brands Hatch test day when the owner and close friend Homewood were concentrating on setting it up properly. Homewood, the former Imp-specialist and one of the most successful saloon drivers, was really flying that day, faster than any other Sports 2000 car previously witnessed. But, then again, that engine note did not sound right? And it was going very quickly! One look under the back end and all was revealed. Nestling beneath the fibreglass is a pokey 1700cc BDA unit, destined for the 1979 RAC Hill-climb championship. Farncombe has a lot of experience in this field with the bulky Nomad-Buick (née Hurricane) and wants to give Simon Dominey's Martin a good run next year. Meanwhile, Charing farmer Homewood is still contemplating a move into Sports 2000 proper in 1979, finance permitting.



New Van Diemen for Grigg

Making its debut at Brands Hatch over Christmas was the first customer Van Diemen in the hands of Basingstoke motor trader Stephen Grigg. In fact the proud owner had intended to give the chassis a shake down run at the Kent circuit the previous Wednesday but, on arrival at Brands, found the track under snow and decided not to take it out of its box in the general testing session. The new chassis from Ralph Firman's Norfolk concern (first seen as long ago as the FF Festival of course) is very distinctive to look at with its very wide low nose — Van Diemen's first front-radiated design — and high, upswept tail. Grigg was full of praise for the car having raced a Hawke DL12 chassis until now, and is hoping to have it well sorted prior to the 1979 championship trail.



A lesson to many...?

A superb little document found its way onto the Club Editor's desk this week, this being the invaluable Ingliston Championship Year Book, 1978, published by the enterprising Scotcircuits concern. This really should be a pointer to all circuits, covering the year's sport in detail in a nicely produced booklet. Just imagine, if each track could publish a yearbook, enthusiasts all over the country could collect a set and have all the national championship details at their fingertips for future reference — a bound volume perhaps.

The Ingliston book contains a splendid collection of photographs (not least this excellent cover shot of John Kirk's Wallinger Imp and Doug Niven's bulbous Beetle) and these provide a welcome guide to Scottish motor sport in general with shots of most of the leading names.

King's Lynn duo back Brundle

Carter Builder, the King's Lynn construction company involved in motor sport through the activities of Bob Morey and Alex Ferrada in the last three seasons, have joined forces with John Brundle Motors, another Kings Lynn firm to launch young Martin Brundle into FF2000 this year. Martin has for two seasons piloted an ex-Bradshaw Hire Plant Toyota Celica in the RAC British Saloon Car series, this being his first move away from saloons. Brundle will have the use of Ferrada's 1978 Reynard chassis, owned by Carters themselves, completely updated to Adrian Reynard's 1979 specification, and will contest the ShellSport/Martini FF2000 championship.

Busy year for the Andreasons

An interesting and varied season of motor sport has been undertaken this year by Roger and Judy Andreason in a wide variety of motor cars, culminating in Roger taking the Classic saloon car championship in a 23-year-old MG ZA Magnette owned by Don Hofland from Holland. Prepared by Roger's business, Andreason Racing and Tuning in Eastleigh, the car has been driven to every meeting and even towed the company's Druid F3 car to the Ghent Racing Car Show last month without trouble! The Andreasons achieved 13 class wins and five lap records with their Magnettes in 1978 (Judy campaigned their own model) while Roger also went well in his Marcos GT modsports car and the sleek Druid single-seater in which he took overall honours in several meetings this season.

Next year he will concentrate on the Marcos in the STP modsports championship (unless he is offered a competitive G1 saloon drive!), Judy hopes to do the VW GB Ladies Golf tournament while RAC timekeeper Tim Colman, who has driven one of the Magnettes on occasions, should have his own Magnette. The development Druid is for sale and, should a suitable driver be found, the Andreasons would like to run a car in Formula Atlantic next season.

Lawson's PRS

Former Scottish FF1600 champion Stu Lawson has forsaken his Hawke DL20 in favour of a new PRS chassis from Vic Hollman's Welwyn Garden City concern. Lawson has had a good working relationship with Hollman since Vic's days at Hawke and feels that a PRS is his best bet for the new Scottish season. Lawson hopes to venture South more often this year although he is currently trying to raise sufficient backing to make this possible.

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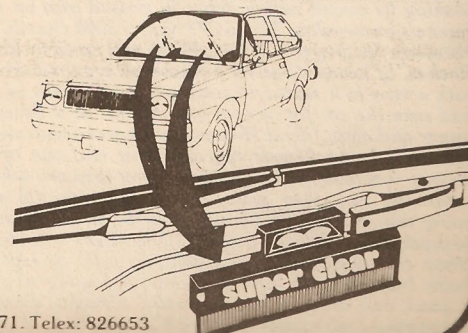
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Briefly . . .

● Robin McEwen King has been elected Chairman of the Under 17s Car Club at the recent AGM. He succeeds Shirley Mold who continues on the Committee as Treasurer. The Club is currently reviewing its membership and will be accepting young drivers in February prior to their first driving meeting in March. It would be particularly nice to welcome members and stimulate interest from farther afield and any interested parties should drop Robin a line at 20 Bramcote Road, Putney, London SW15.

● At the AGM of the Sports Racing Drivers Club (formerly the Clubmans Register), Stuart Glass announced his intention to stand down as General Secretary due to expanding business interests with effect from March 31. It was proposed that Chris Hart, currently Northern Secretary, should take over the position, a motion carried unanimously. Richard Groombridge will be co-ordinator of London/Southern area business and entitled Assistant General Secretary. Glass will continue to edit the club's magazine until the end of the year.

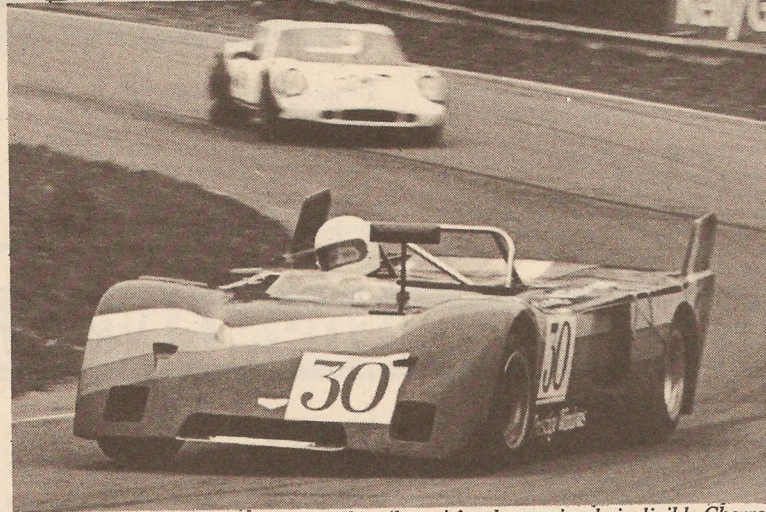
● Mike Carey of Bramhall, son of former Manchester United football captain Johnny Carey, has secured backing from Provincial Insurance for his ex-Alex Ferrada Mallock U2 Mk16B. The car will be co-sponsored by Vernons the large advertising agency of which Carey is Managing Director.

● Such has been the response to the first publication of the John Brown Wheels catalogue that a second edition has had to be prepared. The brochure is fully illustrated, 132 pages in length, and contains everything you want to know about John Brown's 'emporium of goodies'.

● New Secretary of the Dudsbury CC is Richard Yates, 41 Winston Avenue, Branksome, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset while Richard Acres, 32 Queens Close, West Moors, Wimborne, Dorset becomes Competitions Secretary.

● The Sevenoaks & DMC 1979 speed championship will again be sponsored by Bristol Street Motors, the Ford Rallye Sport dealers at Masons Hill, Bromley. The 12-round series includes races, sprints and hillclimbs.

● The Under Seventeens' CC re-open their activities on the first Saturday in March following the Christmas break and it seems that BBC's *Nationwide* TV crew may materialise to film the meeting. Over 130 members attended the recent Christmas party where Chris Craft presented the 1978 awards to the young drivers. Duckhams and Cibie donated prizes for the raffle.



The invitation series creates an excellent 'home' for the previously ineligible Chevron B19, this being Vin Malkie's superb example.

HSCC "invitation" series

The Historic Sports Car Club have for a couple of years now been running their fabulous Group IV category and, in 1978, decided to run an "invitation" class alongside those for strictly eligible machinery, just to gauge interest within the club and from the spectator. Fortunately, some of the more recent cars have appeared successfully and sufficient enthusiasm has been shown to warrant Historic Invitation Sports Car races separately this year. To be eligible, cars must be at least seven years old (built prior to December 31, 1971) and to their original specification. A five-race series is anticipated and the or-

ganisers hope that Chevron B16 and B19 models, Lola T210s, Porsche 908s and even 917s, Ferraris, Alfa Romeos and examples of the Taydec, Dulon, Caldwell and McLaren marque may also be tempted to join in. Donington are to stage a race while others are expected at Silverstone and Brands. Interested parties are invited to speak to Paul Howarth on Saddleworth 2758 after working hours. Incidentally, Historic Group IV drivers are reminded that they are eligible to join the new championship which should help to re-establish sports car racing on the club calendar, a facet sadly lacking for several years.



The final special saloon race of the year; Boxing Day Brands. The Mason Stiletto of Dave Enderby (24) and eventual winner Bill McGovern (21) are harried by Viv Wallace's demon Maguire Mini and Jon Mowatt's more conventional version.

Cox's third championship

Despite a blowing head gasket, Peter Cox took his 1275 Midget to overall victory at the Harrow CC annual Boxing Day autotest at Brunel University, Uxbridge, a victory which gave him the club championship for the third time.

Nineteen cars turned out for the 15-test event in which the best of two runs at seven tests plus one run at the last test counted. The last exercise proved decisive for two drivers lost the opportunity of class wins following mistakes.

First of these was class I leader Andy Longhurst, who had the class sewn up by almost 30secs in his Cooper only to make a complete hash of the exercise and Tony Brett came through with his Wolseley Hornet to steal the award by just under 1sec.

Peter Lansdale (Escort Sport) had lead class II for most of the day but he also erred and class victory went to Tony Rees (Escort RS2000).

Cox himself had no easy task for he shared his car with Dennis Crome and the pair had a great tussle before Cox emerged victorious by just over 1sec.

Overall: Peter Cox (1275 Midget), 279.0 secs. Class winners: Tony Brett (998 Wolseley Hornet), 322.4 secs; Tony Rees (Escort RS2000), 327.6secs; Dennis Crome (1275 Midget), 280.2secs. Novice: Noel Conaty (Dolomite Sprint), 342.5secs.

● The annual Hagley & District CC awards have now been decided for 1978. Rich Yapp taking the prestigious Ken Wharton Memorial Trophy, the premiere club prize. Alan Cox has won the Dick Richards Trophy with his Harrison while Tony Lusted has earned the accolade of the Martyn Smith Trophy for the best novice driver. Maggie Blankstone is the winner of the Wal Handley Ladies' series.

BRANDS HATCH

The first four-wheeled event of the 1979 Brands Hatch season takes place on Saturday, this being a non-championship rallycross starting at midday. A representative entry has been received including the Escorts of Nick Oatway (Team Technical Mouldings), Colin Page (Blue Line) and Bill Riddle while Trevor Reeves and Richard Panton head the Mini contingent. The meeting forms an excellent warm-up for the opening Castrol BTRDA championship round on January 28.

International events

Date	Venue	Event
Jan 7	Pukekohe, New Zealand	Formula Pacific Championship



British events

Date	Venue	Event	Status	Club	Start	Details
Jan 7	Brands Hatch, nr Fawkham, Kent	Rallycross	R	BRSCC	12.00	RAC Championship Rallycross

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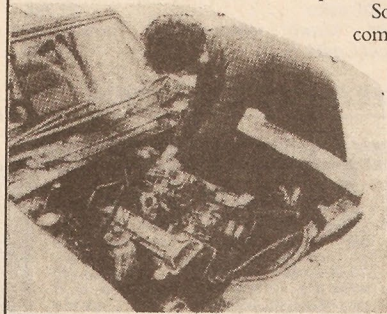
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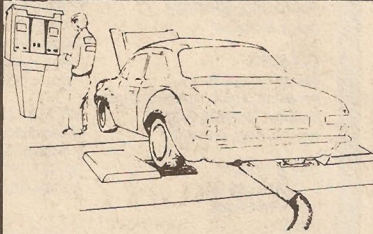
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Mr Pat Thomas
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Triumph Specialists, Staq, TR7, Dolomite Sprint

Holling road facilities using a
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BRINKLOW SERVICE STATION
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Rolling road facilities up to 600bhp

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Contact Keith Tillbrook

GOLDSEAL

£8995 MERCEDES 280S 1975, but R-reg. Met silver, blue check, tints, alloys, Becker radio cassette, auto PAS unblemished.

£7,395 LAMBORGHINI URRACO "S" 1974, Met. Silver green, black leather, air cond. Electric windows, radio cassette unit. Tints, alloys.

£6,995 BMW 528 AUTO, 1976 (R). Black, velour int., air cond., electric sunroof and windows, tinted glass, Mahler alloy wheels, electric mirror, radio stereo etc. 22,000 miles recorded.

£5,995 FIAT 130 COUPE 1976 (R). 1 owner, met. blue, russet velour, air cond., radio stereo etc. £5,695 JAGUAR E TYPE V12 2+2 auto, 1973. Midnight blue, black hide, webasto s/roof, radio stereo.

£5,695 DATSUN 260Z 2+2 1977 (S). Met. Silver, black cloth, Auto Rev, radio cassette, alloys.

£4,595 DATSUN 260Z 2+2, 1976. Met. blue, black int., alloy wheels, radio stereo, tinted glass etc., 19,000 miles.

£4,895 BMW 3.0 CSA, 1973 (Oct), Polaris silver, blue velour, electric s/roof and windows, tints, radio stereo, personal reg. no.

£4,395 BMW 320i. 1976. Sahara, tan check cloth, tints, etc.

£4,195 TVR 3000 M, 1976 (R). orange, s/roof, Wolfraze alloy wheels, tints, etc.

£3,995 BMW 320 1976. Met. fjord blue, check cloth, tints, radio cassette.

£3,995 MGB GT V8 1976. Citron yellow, black cloth, o/d, s/roof, tints, radio/cassette unit.

£3,795 BMW 525 AUTO, 1974. Met. sienna brown, tan velour & vinyl roof.

£3,795 BMW 525, 1974 (N). Metallic anthracite, p.a.s., vinyl roof and velour interior.

£3,765 ALFETTA GT 1.6 1977 Series. Metallic olive, tan interior, radio cassette etc.

£3,595 LANCIA BETA SPYDER 1976, white, tan int., radio, 14,000 miles only.

£3,295 LOTUS EUROPA SPECIAL 1973. Met. tawny and gold, wolfrace, radio cassette etc.

£3,095 MGB GT 1976. Brooklands green, tan cloth int, o/d, tints, radio with automatic electric aerial, headrests, 1 owner, 18,000 miles.

£2,995 TRIUMPH TR7, 1977. Tahiti blue, tartan trim, p.b. radio, tints etc.

£2,795 ALFA ROMEO 2000 GTV. Special Equipment 1975. Royal blue, tan cloth int., matching vinyl roof, tinted glass, alloys 29,000 miles.

£2,645 TOYOTA CELICA 2000 ST LIFTBACK, 1976. Met blue, ivory cloth trim, 5 speed gearbox, radio etc, 22,000 miles recorded.

£2,595 JENSEN HEALEY, 1975, yellow, black int. hard/soft top, p.b. radio, tints etc.

£2,545 MGB GT 1975. Aconite, tan cloth, o/drive, radio stereo, tinted glass etc.

£2,495 ALFA ROMEO 2000 SPYDER 1973. 2' owners, met. silver, black int & new black hood.

£2,495 ALFASUD TI, 1977. Absolutely unmarked in yellow, black & grey int., 12,000 miles only.

£2,395 SCIMITAR GET, 1973 AUTOMATIC. Ivory beige with tan interior, radio etc.

£1,995 TRIUMPH SPITFIRE 1976. Tahiti blue, tan int., hard top, radio cassette unit.

£1,795 MERCEDES 220R 1970. Auto., p.a.s., e/sun roof, 1 owner, 53,000 miles only.

Car Care — 12 months warranty available. Any car or motor cycle taken in P/X. Urgently wanted — your well maintained Sports car for cash.

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TRIUMPH STAG: all spares and exchange units (except engines) at competitive prices. All work carried out to make your Stag ultra reliable without needless substitution of Rover 3500 unit. Engine rebuilds at sensible prices with comprehensive guarantee.

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Offer from their used stock

1978 T Fiat 132 2 litre, auto, pas, radio, gold £3995

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Other cars available

Special end of the year offer on all used cars!

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RACING & COMPETITION CARS

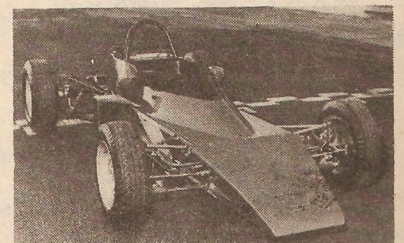
TEAM HARLEQUIN

Have the latest Van Diemen RF 79's available for hire next season.

We prepared the car driven to race wins by Kim Furner, and can offer the same high standard of service for you.

VAN DIEMEN RF 78 Rolling Chassis with Mk9 gearbox. £3,450.

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RACING AND COMPETITION CARS

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WANTED: Competitive 'B' Class car, i.e. Mallock 14/16/18. Must be in first class condition, sensible price please, cash waiting. Tel: John, Northwich (0606) 74862 (Cheshire). (2)

MK 20 Mallock John Law's immaculate 'A' class complete, less engine £2,200 ono aluminium tanks, hubs, Mag, brakes, aeroquiped etc. Tel: Leicester 303769. (2)

YOUR MALLOCK BUILT, REBUILT

Set-up or contract preparation by our full time race mechanic who produced our race winning form last season. Kirby racing have the workshop facilities near Brands Hatch to offer you.

Also we will be pleased to provide a complete racing service to the serious competitor for next season to run alongside our new "A" car or as a separate "B" project, either to the highest standards obtainable.

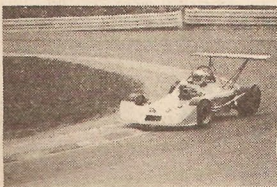
Contact: Charlie Kirby
For further information
Tel: 01-852 1586 day
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Exceptional ADA engine freshly rebuilt. Very successful, extensively developed car. Ex lap record holder at Brands Hatch, Lydden, Llandow. Only race one season (championship winner 7 wins 6 2nds). Totally rebuilt from scratch, fully set-up, and ready to race condition. Many spares. Excellent wets and dries, good trailer included.

£1,795
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MIKE BARNBY'S HARRISON CLUBMANS CAR, WETS & SPARES
£4,000
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VAN DIEMEN 78 complete. Immaculate condition, £4,000 complete with 2 sets of tyres plus spares. Telephone: Caston (95383) 402 (T/C)

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FLWSHEET Racing OFFER FOR SALE MARC SMITHS IMMACULATE ROYALE RP 24.



Maintained regardless of cost, built to 1978 works spec. Complete with engine and g/box, spares if required inc — rims, tyres, uprights, rockers, and wishbones.

£3,700 THE LOT.

Also large selection of used tyre's two races **Only £5 ea.**
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MERLYN 11/17A rolling chassis with Hewland Mk 8. Nice clean car. £650 ono. Tel: West Kilbride 822506. (1)

1972 Royale RP16A. Rowland engine, Mk 8 Hewland. Race ready. Superb condition. First £995 secures. Tel: South Benfleet 57988. Essex. (2)

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TONY HOWARD'S CROSSLÉ 30F is for sale

16 races this season, 4 wins, 6 seconds, 2 thirds.

£3,000 ono

Some spares available

Mercedes Benz 406 Box Van
Exceedingly good condition
£2,250

Tel: Brighton 772840 day
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HAWKE DL12/15 rolling chassis, complete with Varley fire extinguisher and spares, £1,050 ono. Also available Norman Abbot engine not run since rebuild, complete including exhaust, £350. Tel: Ingrebourne 48186. (2)

CLIFF WEBB'S successful Image FF2B is for sale due to purchase of new FF4. Complete with rolling chassis, including gearbox, spares, and set-up by works. £1,650. Contact Image Race Cars (see Autosport Directory for address). (1)

CROSSLÉ 32F, 1978, rolling chassis, Hewland Mk 9, very competitive (Brands 50.4s), good condition, gear ratios, wheels, nose cone and spares, £3,300 ono. Brand new Rowland engine at substantial saving over list price. Be legal and ultra-competitive in 1979. £650 ono. Tel: 01-734 7605 day. (1)

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PRS. Complete car, less engine/box with extra set of wheels and tyres **£2,850**
Minister engine, 78 spec, new **£695**
C.E.S. works engine, 78 spec, 1 race front row Silverstone GP **£565**

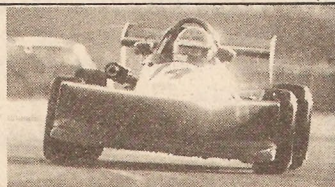
Hewland Mk 9 **£475**
Used Varleys **each £10**
Used ratios **each £12**
Gear ratio box **£15**
Used Bilsteins **each £15**
Price for complete car on request.
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FORMULA FORD 2000

REYNARD SF 77/8 competitive car, ready to race, choice of two engines, many spares including wets, gears, bodywork, also available, £3,000 Px road car. Tel: Romford 40600. (3)

ROYALE RP25 ex-double championship winning car with newly rebuilt Titan engine, complete new spare body with full running spares, £2,700 or offers. Tel: 030-453 038, 022-787 447 evenings. (51)

FORMULA THREE



MARCH 773

Ex James King works car (1977). For sale with set of wets and various spares, complete with Toyota engine **£5,600.**

Tel: Ian Flux on
Hermitage (0635) 201528 or 200205

Ex Derek Warwick CHEVRON B38 F3

This immaculate car is available with or without engine complete

£5,500 ono

or Rolling Chassis with Mk 9 Series 5 gearbox and spares.

£3,500

Can deliver
Tel: Swavesey (0954) 31037

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OFFER FOR SALE THE IMMACULATE

WEATHERSEAL ROYALE RP 24

Complete with Scholar engine, Mk 9 box, ready to race with full complement of spares.

£3,600

We can also build for you a new super competitive
ROYALE RP 26

To any specification — for details contact Rick at
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MALLOCK MK. 2 rolling chassis, originally raced by Arthur Mallock. Recently lapped Silverstone Club 1:09 and Mallory (long) 0:58 on Dunlop 970s and knackered engine. Offers invited for this unique car. P/ex good road Mini considered. Also 2000E box, chromed exhaust, new 970s. Tel: Errington, Tadley (07356) 2501 evenings, Reading 862222 day time. (1)

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Formula Junior
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Used only 2 races
last season.

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MARCOS 1500 GT. Roger Anderson's successful modsports car, fully prepared for next season, rebuilt engine, £2,750. Tel: Eastleigh 612445 day time, Westend 3295 evenings. (2)

Abandoned project Formula Libre etc

Rolling chassis, new front uprights, alloy calipers and spares, new Willans, new gauges, bag tank, oil tank, BCF extinguisher, RP16 rear suspension, new composite 8in and 10in split rims, good YB 33's. New springs and spares, Mk 8 box, 1300cc Alfa on 40 DCOE's, electronic ignition, 40mm inlets, L1 cams. All dry sump equipment, steel crankshaft and fly-wheel, cintered clutch. Needs finishing, or exchange Formula Ford.

Phone: Stratford-upon-Avon
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offer

Last remaining MRE/Tiga with or without engine. A very good first season car.

Also Sports 2000 Lola Type 492, virtually unused.

Offers for both to Mike Knight.

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MINI 1000. Car and engine built of all new parts, costing over £3,000 for 1979 season. Car not left workshop, offers or exchange for road car. Tel: 0284 67817 8am-6pm, 0284 68274 after 6pm. (1/79)

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For Sale Opel Kadett - 2 litre

As new. Full racing Group 1 specification. New bodyshell and professionally rebuilt by Andy Morrison and team. One race completed.

£3,950

Telephone I G C McLaren at
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or 041 427 0343 (evenings)
for further details.

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MILTON RACING Lola T490 with 1978 Nelson engine car in good condition with only limited use during season, spare wheels, tyres, ratios and engine plus excellent four-wheeled covered trailer. Offers to Richard Bailey. Tel: Mexborough 582005. (2)

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JOHN TREVELYAN offers his race and championship winning Lola T490/2. Tel: Shipston-on-Stour (0608) 61138. (5)

Jim Evans Racing

offer

March/Atlantic, less engine

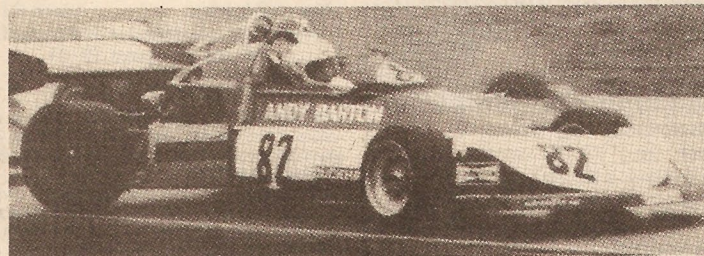
Cosworth FVC engine

For further details contact **Jim Evans**:

Office 075-781 381, ext. 59
Home 075-781 364

RETIREMENT SALE

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(1) **Ex-Ian Scheckter March 772B**. BRSCC Midland, BARC Northern Championship winning, and Ingliston outright lap record holding car in mint condition with spares and bodywork. **£3,950**

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Lap Record Holder.
up to 1500cc class.
complete with G/year Wets, for sale
due to change of formula.

£1,200 ono.

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(anytime)

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This well-known car is not yet sold. An ideal opportunity to obtain a really competitive rolling chassis absolutely ready to race for 1979. Price £1,800-£2,000 depending on specification.

Telephone for full details.

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evenings/weekends

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Open sensible offers

For further details

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Schrick Motor
wets + drys + ratios
£6,000

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£1,700

Set Ralt F3 discs and calipers
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1 set BBS F3 wheels
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2 DY-Mag wheels
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Tel: **Don Farthing**
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Fully lightened body, race front suspension, coil spring rear with 4 link and Watts linkage, Atlas axle, built gearbox, with alloy bellhousing and tailshaft, high ratio rack, dry sump equipment, foam filled petrol tank, 4 pot ventilated discs, adjustable pedal box, split rims with wets and slicks.

£2,000 ono

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F/Atlantic Modus M3

Rolling chassis with FT200 gearbox (recently overhauled) complete less engine, including 5 extra wheels including tyres, several gear ratios, spare nose cone and some spares. Very successful car in 1978 Irish Atlantic championship. **£3,250 ono.**

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Lightweight R26 chassis with 2 litre Vegantune dry sump twin cam engine, highly successful Modsports car with many spares including complete set of G45 wets and a set slick G50. All on 8" and 10" Minilites rim, complete diff assembly with L.S.D., springs, shocks, etc. Extra cylinder head complete. **£3,500 ono.**

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(2) 1978 Crosslé 32F. Scholar

(2) 1978 P.R.S. RHO1. Scholar
7 races only

Complete or as rolling chassis these well known ultra competitive cars are For Sale as raced or will rebuild as new for the 79 season.

ABACUS Rebuilds

Have your Crosslé or PRS rebuilt by professionals. We will strip car completely, restove chassis, crack test and rebuild to all completely new set-up car and engine to our very high standards to give you that competitive edge for the 1979 season.

For quotation's ring **MIKE TAYLOR**

0594 22477/23442

or write

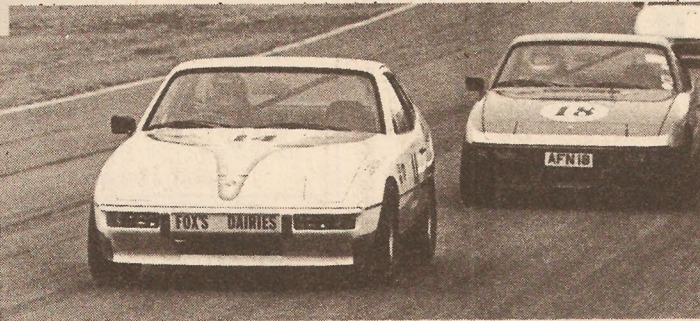
Hollywood Works, Steam Mills Road, Cinderford, Glos.

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GORDON RAMSAY LTD.

offer for sale their

Porsche 924 Championship Winning Car driven by Tony Dron



924 Porsche 1978 model, 5-speed gearbox. Alloy wheels, rollcage, Fire-Eater System, Corbeau seat, Wyllans harness. Finished in white with distinctive paintwork. Broadspeed prepared and modified to championship rules, giving maximum permitted 114bhp at the rear wheels.

This car is suitable for entry in a number of meetings in 1979 and will qualify for a special 924 sub-championship within these races. Alternatively it is fully road equipped for normal use.

Success in 1978 with 6 firsts, 2 seconds, 2 fastest laps, 3 fastest in practice. No major structural or mechanical defects during the season.

Contact Bill Leathers at
Gordon Ramsay Ltd., St. Georges Terrace
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Tel: 812829/814383.

T. V. R. TUSCAN V8 S. E.

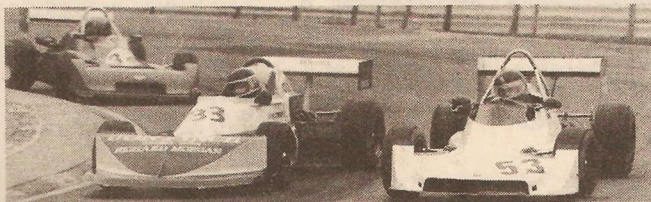


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1967 S. W. B. model — maroon. Recent engine and gearbox rebuild, L.S.D., full F.I.A. cage. 10 x 15 rears and 8 x 15 fronts — slicks, full set 8 x 15 wets. Very rapid and rare car. Parts available to convert to road car, inc 5-72 spoke wire wheels. Offered complete with all spares at £3,950.

Delivery can be arranged — finance possible.

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Immaculate condition, engine recently rebuilt, spare ratios, spare nose, 12 spare wheels and tyres (inc. wets), and a comprehensive selection of chassis spares.

£5,900 complete

Tel: Richard Morgan
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Rally built to full DTV specification, engine prepared by W.B.B. Racing. Dry sumped with Lotus cylinder head, triple plate clutch, ZF 5-speed gearbox, Salisbury 4.55 rear axle with 4 link suspension, disc brakes all round. This car has been built in our workshop using a Safety Devices bodyshell. Complete, ready to use, price with a host of spares

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ALL RALLY PREPARATION

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1300cc SOC, full race engine. Complete with inlets and exhaust manifolds, 2 twin downdraft carbs, approx 150bhp, dismantled for inspection. £495. Tel: Canterbury 54437 or 830326. (1)

EX EVE SARISEN MINISTER, only four races since re-build; new crank, rings, bearings etc. Can be heard running. A real goer. £500. Tel: 01-204 3849. (1)

ALL HEWLAND gearboxes, spares, services, Cortina limited-slip differentials, obtainable from — Hewland Engineering Ltd., Boyn Valley Industrial Estate, Boyn Valley, Maidenhead, Berks. Tel: 32033. 6 lines. (TC)

FULL RACE 335 cu in 500bhp alloy V8. Gurney Weslake heads, direct port injection, billet steel crank, teflon buttoned pistons, roller cam, bench run only, £2,000. Spare heads and 289 bellhousing also available. Tel: Weybridge 42006 evenings/weekends. (1)

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WANTED LOTUS MK I C.R. gearbox with short tail shaft for Mallock. Must be good. Tel: 0282 27682. (1)

BURTON
PERFORMANCE Camshafts

Comprehensive range inc:
PRE-X/FLOW & X/FLOW;
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Plus: BMC, CHRYSLER,
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Ford cars manufactured from 1965 to ensure optimum profile reproduction. All stages inc. Gp 1: Fast road : Rally race.

Exchange service for most types.
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Official agents and stockists for Hewland spares Express 24-hour or normal 2/3 day repair rebuild service. New and s/hand spares sent immediately by post (OD British Rail Red Star Express parcel service). Also overseas express air freight, etc. Collection and delivery of gearboxes for repairs rebuilds to from any UK mainline station. New gearboxes for sale with part exchange on you old Hewland if required.

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Autosport MARKET PLACE

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HEWLAND SERVICE

In the Midlands and North



Gearboxes,
Spares & Repairs.
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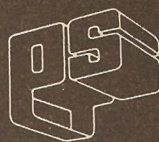
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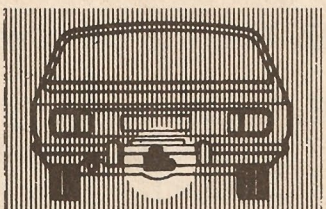
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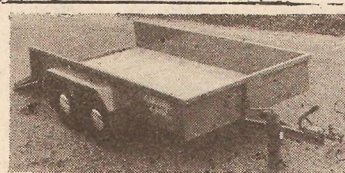
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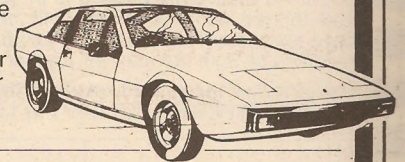
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