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JODY SCHECKTER - NEW ESCORT - PENTTI AIRIKKALA

AUTOSPORT

Complete review of 1974 Formula 5000 racing



AUTOSPORT

BRITAIN'S MOTOR SPORTING WEEKLY

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AUTOSPORT *competition winner Alison Brooks takes delivery of her prize Escort Mexico from Stuart Turner.*



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EDITORIAL

Right rubber

After months of speculation the RAC confirmed last week that they were specifying tyres for exclusive use in a number of British club formulae this year. The formulae which are affected by the new regulations are Formula 5000, Formula Atlantic, Formula Ford and Formula Ford 2000.

The announcement should be welcomed by all concerned as a progressive step in keeping down the costs of competing in our major national formulae and a regulation which should genuinely improve the quality of racing. When it became clear towards the end of last season that Firestone's pull out was definite, there was a great deal of panic and hurried negotiations to secure deals for various formulae which, although it was the right idea, was conducted with an entirely wrong approach and gave false impressions. The negotiations which have been taking place in the past few months between the RAC, Goodyear and Dunlop and representatives of the various formulae has resulted in sensible, indisputable decisions.

Goodyear will be responsible for F5000 and Atlantic while Dunlop will cater for the two FF formulae. The specific tyres which have been decided upon will be marked on the sidewalls and it will be impossible for competitors to use any other type. The competitors in F5000 and Atlantic will have two dry weather tyres to choose from and one type of wet. The companies have agreed that they will not introduce any variations on these tyres without ample warning, so that a competitor will not be left with unusable tyres and, of course, it will not be necessary to have an excessive number of very expensive wheels to mount the various different tyres on. The tyre companies have also stated that there will be no change in the price of the tyres during the year.

It is always sad when a major company pulls out of the sport and Firestone will be sadly missed, but it is gratifying indeed that Goodyear have been prepared to increase their commitment while Dunlop have moved back into the lower echelons, where they feel they will derive a definite benefit. It is to the credit of both companies that they have got together with the RAC and between them turned a situation which could have had an adverse effect on the sport into something positively advantageous.

As well as the benefits to the competitor, it should encourage closer racing because nobody can steal an advantage by getting hold of something which is one step better. Also, and perhaps most important of all, it should be easier for the general public to understand. They don't understand compound and construction numbers which are given to them as a reason for one competitor having an advantage over another. The regulations simplify the situation enormously and is just the sort of move our introverted sport requires to attract a wider public.

our cover picture

This week's cover depicts Mario Andretti in the Viceroy F5000 Lola T332 which he used to challenge Britain's Brian Redman throughout the US F5000 championship. A review of the formula world-wide starts *on page 12.*

Photo : Phipps Photographic

Round the houses GP in America?

Even though the original plans to stage a second American Grand Prix failed a couple of years ago, the scheme has been put up once again and approved.

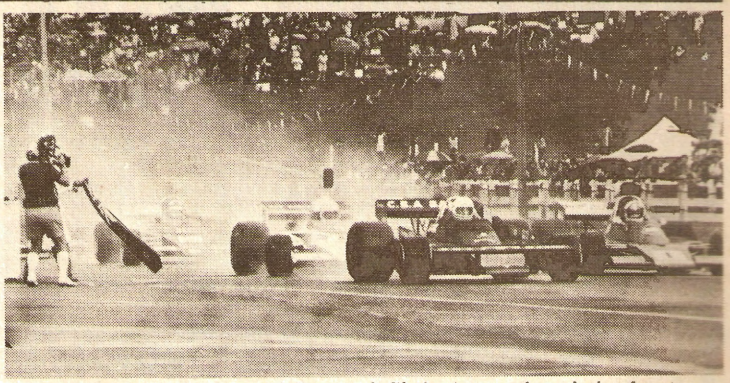
The Automobile Competition Committee of the US (ACCUS) met in New York recently and approved a second United States Grand Prix for 1976 to take place at the new round-the-houses Long Beach circuit on April 11. The date request has been submitted to the FIA for approval. The only problem we can foresee is that it falls between the South African and Spanish Grands Prix.

The Long Beach circuit in California is fast becoming quite a talking-point in the States and we are told by our American correspondent that the whole operation, run by the Grand Prix Association of the City of Long Beach, are taking it all very seriously indeed. Heading the Association is Chris Pook, an English born Long Beach businessman and former amateur race driver. Pook is supported by Dan Gurney, Les Richter (President of Riverside) and Don Dyer, who is a lawyer.

They originally got together in June, 1973 and formulated plans, receiving backing from the town's board. The Long Beach City Council in mid-November then unanimously approved to back the GP. Pook said that they "wanted to change the image of the city from what people think is a retirement town for Iowa (state) people."

Plans for the 2.23-mile circuit utilising the city thoroughfares have been approved by both the FIA's International Sporting Commission and the SCCA. Speeds are predicted at around 94 mph.

It is estimated that it will cost $1.2 million to prepare the circuit to bring it into line with the current GPDA and FIA requirements. A further $2 million has been approved for initial running costs. The installation of the Armco barrier, grandstands and so on will start in June in preparation for the September F5000 race. They hope to house 100,000 spectators in grandstands. The prize fund for the F5000 this year is varying between $160,000 and $250,000 while the Grand Prix purse will range from $275,000 to $350,000.



As at Pukekohe, Graham McRae and Chris Amon shared the front row at Christchurch Tasman race in their McRae/Talons.

McRae finally wins one

It was third time lucky for three-time Tasman champion New Zealander Graham McRae at the Lady Wigram circuit in Christchurch last Saturday when he took the third round of this year's Peter Stuyvesant sponsored Tasman series in his modified McRae GM 2B.

Once again McRae proved an exceptionally quick man in practice and for the second week running, he and Chris Amon in the Talon (née McRae GM2) qualified for the front row. McRae led away from the start but after five laps was passed by Australian Warwick Brown in his Pat Burke Racing Lola T332. However, Brown was forced to retire within half a lap with a blown cylinder head gasket. A win would have moved him into a commanding lead in the series.

Thus McRae regained his lead but now Amon came to the fore, pressurising his fellow countryman and the pair of them pulling well clear of the remaining runners. Unfortunately Amon's ill-luck struck again when he had to retire around half distance with a cracked cylinder head. It allowed McRae to cruise home a comfortable winner by 29.0 s from the Repco Holden-powered Elfin MR6 of last year's race winner John McCormack while the similar powered Lola T332 of Johnnie Walker was a further 1.3 s down. Graeme Lawrence was eventually placed fifth after an unhappy race, but thereby moves into a joint championship lead with Brown on 15 points. Walker is now third with 10 while McRae has 9 and now looks an ominous threat.

Oliver for US F5000

Despite all the ace Grand Prix names which have been linked with the new American UOP Shadow Formula 5000 effort, it was confirmed earlier this week that the team's new Can-Am champion Jackie Oliver will in fact drive the new car in the forthcoming American series.

As we have already mentioned, the car is designed by Tony Southgate and is based around the latest DN5 Grand Prix car. However, it will be constructed at the team's ex-STP racing workshops in the States at Des Plain, just outside Chicago.

Once again, Mike Hillman will be overseeing the American programme. Two chassis are to be built, one as a back-up spare, but there is no intention of running a second driver, certainly at present. This will be Oliver's first taste of F5000, although the British driver is certainly no stranger to American Chevvy V8s.

● Still not too late to mention is an official list of the fastest race laps in the Argentine GP. They are: Hunt, 1 m 50.91 s; Fittipaldi, 1 m 50.97 s; Reutemann, 1 m 51.61 s; Regazzoni and Pace, 1 m 51.76 s; Scheckter, 1 m 51.91 s; Mass, 1 m 51.99 s; Lauda, 1 m 52.26 s; Depailler, 1 m 52.31 s; Donohue, 1 m 52.84 s; Andretti, 1 m 52.93 s; Stommelen, 1 m 53.01 s; Peterson, 1 m 53.10 s; Merzario, 1 m 53.63 s; Ickx, 1 m 54.03 s, etc.

Brabham in Argentina

Brabham are back in the car construction business . . . in Argentina. Last Thursday night Bernie Ecclestone signed an agreement with Hecto Staffa of the Automovil Club Argentina to provide them with 20 kit cars to be built up into F2 and F3s.

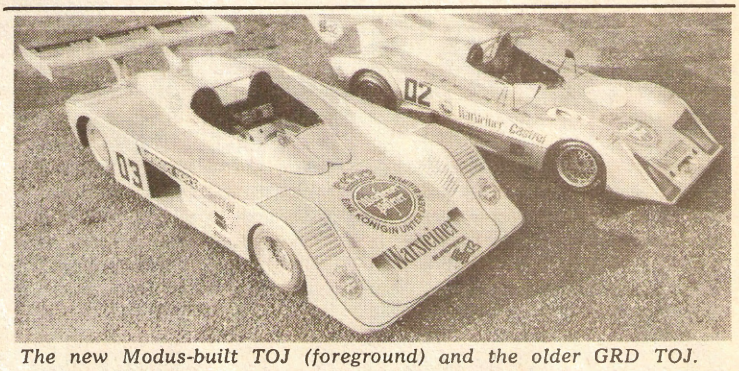
The ACA will be responsible for the building of the cars which will be fitted with locally-made 1600 cc production engines.

There will be a 15-race series for the national championship and at the end of the year the first two will be offered at least one season in European F2.

BMW stars

In preparation for next week's Daytona 24 hours sports GT race, the works BMW team have been testing their 3.5-litre CSL Coupés at Daytona during the past week.

Grand Prix star Ronnie Peterson, who will be sharing one of the two cars with Brian Redman, was lapping consistently in the 1 m 57.0 s bracket, occasionally bringing times down into the mid 56s. However, this is still 5s adrift of the best time set by John Greenwood's Sebring 75 Corvette. Peterson's times are however, a little more relevant to the speeds already achieved by the quicker Porsche Carreras.



The new Modus-built TOJ (foreground) and the older GRD TOJ.

Obermoser's challenger

Maintaining his close relationship with former Lotus and McLaren designer Jo Marquart, wealthy German businessman and sports car racer Jorg Obermoser has released details of his new Marquart-designed TOJ sports car.

The actual chassis has been designed by Marquart and built at Modus Cars in Watton. Marquart also designed Obermoser's 1974 TOJ SS 02 sports car while he was working at GRD. The car was constructed in more or less the same way. The aerodynamic bodywork for the new car, designated the SC 03, is the work of Obermoser's resident aerodynamicist Achim Storz.

Obermoser will undertake the entire European 2-litre series as well as all the major World Championship sports car races. The car is able to take a variety of engines, although Obermoser will concentrate on running either 2- or 2.1-litre works BMW engines. An interesting experimental engine which will be tried is a Josef Schnitzer developed 1.3-litre turbocharged BMW unit reputed to be giving 360 bhp.

Sponsorship for Obermoser's racing activities will again come from Warsteiner beer while Peter Scharmann and promising Swede Gunnar Nordstrom will handle a Formula Super Vee and F3 car respectively under the same banner.

Motor Sport Council meets

In closing the RAC award presentation in London last week, Lord Camden was seen to hand over the chairmanship of the RAC Motor Sport division to Sir Clive Bossom. In doing so it marked the end of an era in British motor sport administration. Sir Clive, 57-year-old former MP, takes over in the capacity of the first Chairman of the newly formed RAC Motor Sport Council which replaces the RAC Competitions Committee.

Sir Clive Bossom was, of course, the man who headed a special 12 man working party set up by the RAC to investigate the structure of the sport and to produce a more streamlined scheme to meet present day demands. It was the recommendation of his working party that the Competitions Committee should be replaced by the Motor Sport Council.

Immediately after the prize giving, the new council went into action. Its members are Earl Howe, a vice chairman of the RAC; Hon Gerald Lascelles, director of Silverstone Circuits Gerry B. Flewitt, vice president of the Midland Automobile Club and a former rally and hillclimb driver; Peter Cooper, karting; Mr A. Daunt Bateman, medical panel; Dr Lewis Jamieson, timekeeping; Jack Kemsley, rallies; Cecil Mitchell, scrutineering; Keith Douglas, SMMT; Jack Sears, racing; Michael Southcombe, speed events; D. W. Mitchell, Ulster Automobile Club; John Webb, Association of Circuit Owners and Major Robert Tennant Reid, RSAC.

Representatives of autotest and trials, the regional asscciations of motor clubs, the veteran and vintage, grass track and stock car racing have yet to be elected by their sub-committees. These will be decided next month.

Peter Cooper and Jack Sears were elected by the council as vice chairmen. Almost immediately Sir Clive Bossom outlined three major points of the aims of the streamlining plan. He called for an all out drive for more sponsorship; an improved relationship and better understanding between the environmental lobby and motor sport on the Sports Council and local government recreational bodies.

He said, "There are 24 members of the Sports Council and they have a budget of £5.5 million a year, and yet there is no voice for motor sport which has a following of over two million."

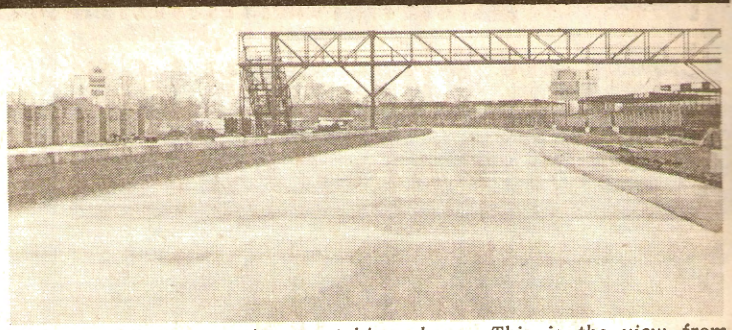
The first decision reached by the council was to impose tighter control on the licensing of new race circuits in this country.

The aim is to ensure that a new circuit is not granted a license when it has been built in close proximity to an existing circuit, and also to avoid a clash of major events.

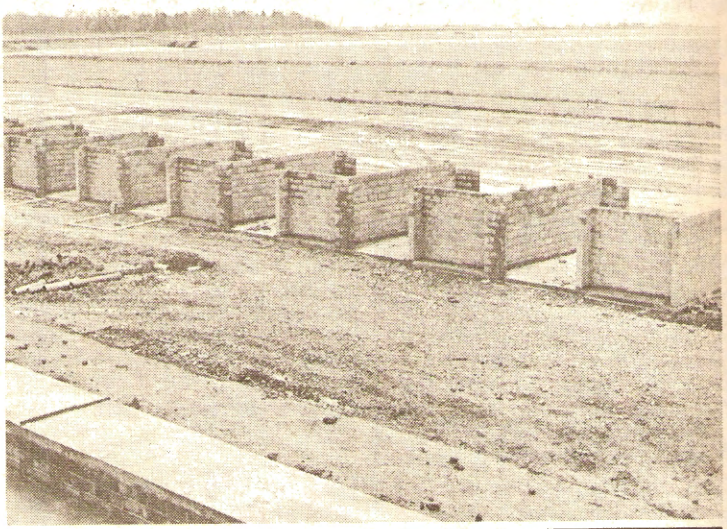
The Council said that they wanted to know of any new circuit proposed in its very early planning stages and long before any actual building began.

They would discuss the matter with the planners and then intimate whether a track licence would be issued. Such a measure, they felt, could save new circuit owners considerable sums of money.

The Council added they would also discuss with the planners the types of events proposed and the possible dates. Additional circuits must aggravate the problems of lack of entries and officials especially at Bank Holiday weekends.



The new Silverstone pits are taking shape. This is the view from Copse (above) showing the new pit wall and the widened track from the exit of Woodcote. The pits (below) are being erected towards Copse with a 50 ft wide pit lane.



Allison wins for AMC

Over 53,000 spectators crammed into the Riverside Raceway to watch the opening round of the Grand National NASCAR series last weekend. The crowd attendance was the largest at the circuit for six years, despite the absence of many of the top NASCAR names.

However, the event was dominated by one man and one car. No, not Richard Petty but Bobby Allison in Roger Penske's AMC Matador.

The Penske team have had two brand new cars built up over the winter by Banjo Matthews, an experienced NASCAR preparation expert. Both were considerably lighter, one being built solely for short track races while the other is suited far more for the vast open spaces of Daytona. The cars featured disc brakes on all four wheels, a novelty and an innovation for NASCAR. It enabled Allison to dominate practice and the race.



Richard Petty — fell off.

Petty in his Plymouth tried hard to stay with the Matador, only to crash at the infamous Turn Nine one third of the way into the race. Allison went on his way and even with a last minute insurance pit stop for fuel, he still beat David Pearson's Woods Bros/Purolator Mercury by a quarter of a lap.

Third, and five laps down, was Cecil Gordon's Chevrolet with Dave Marcis (Dodge) a further two laps adrift.

Caption winner

Following an overwhelming response to our Stuart Turner caption competition which was run in conjunction with the Win an Escort competition, much midnight oil was burnt last week to sort out the winner. The final choice was: "Well, don't just stand there homologate it!"

This was sent in by Rod Keys of 19 Masefield Close, Squiresgate, Lichfield, Staffs.

Well done Mr Keys, you have the choice of a day at Bagshot's Rally proving ground as guest of Roger Clark or two main startline grandstand tickets for the John Player Grand Prix at Silverstone in July as your prize. Please write to Ian Marlowe, 20/525 Arisdale Avenue, South Ockendon, Essex RM15, and tell him which prize you would like.

● Talks are continuing between the SCCA and USAC regarding joint sanction by the two organisations of the 1975 Formula 5000 series. Cameron Argetsinger, SCCA's executive director, stated a decision regarding USAC's continued involvement would be announced within 60 days.

● News from America suggests that Brown and Williamson, who themselves are a division of British American Tobacco and who produce Viceroy cigarettes, will sponsor the Parnelli Jones Grand Prix effort under the brand name of Pall Mall rather than Viceroy which is not sold in Europe.

RAC tyre regulations

The RAC announced last week the final tyre regulations for Formula Atlantic and F5000 for the coming season. Both categories will be limited to one specific tyre manufactured to set requirements by Goodyear. The tyres will be easily distinguished as the names "Atlantic" and "F5000" will be moulded into the sidewalls.

The Atlantic tyres will be available from March 15 in two "dry" and one "wet" weather configuration and the manufacturers have guaranteed that the prices listed will remain static throughout 1975. The Atlantic tyres specified are: **Front 9.2/20-13 (size); 20.5 (overall diameter), 9 in (tread width), 10 in (rim), £45.37 plus VAT. Rear: 12/23.0-13; 23.5; 11 in; 14 or 15 in, £52.24 plus VAT.**

The F5000 tyres will be available from March 15 also with two "dry" and one "wet" weather configuration with prices held steady during the year. These will be available in: **Front: 9.2/20-13; 20.5; 9 in; 10 or 11 in, £45.37 plus VAT. Rear: 16.2/26-13; 26.5; 15 in; 18 in, £55.40 plus VAT.**

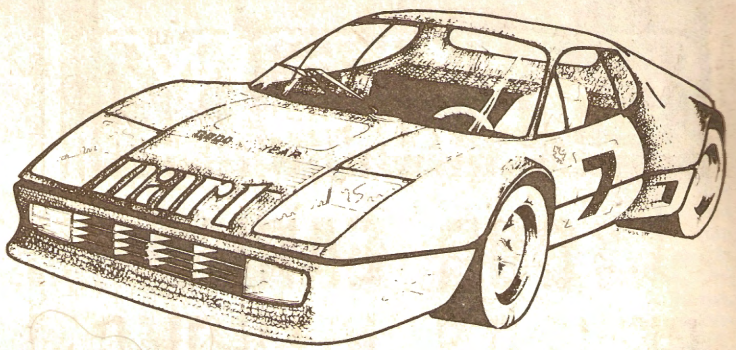
● There is growing speculation that the Vel's Parnelli Grand Prix team will be on Goodyear tyres this coming weekend.

Amon's UK Talon

Although he has yet to finish in the points in the Tasman series, Chris Amon is reputedly happy with the performance of his F5000 Talon MR1 and will probably drive for Jack McCormack's American team in this year's US F5000 Championship.

Amon also hopes to be able to bring one of McCormack's cars across to Europe to contest the F5000 races over here. It will be remembered that Amon initially was offered to run a works March with a Ford Cosworth V6 engine in the back but the idea fell through when it was discovered that neither the Tasman nor American organisers accepted the engine.

Amon's inclusion in the McCormack team will probably mean that Sam Posey is without a regular F5000 ride for the coming year. With Jon Woodner ordering a new Lola, it looks as if Amon will be the team's only driver. Quite whether Norris Industries will remain as sponsors is undecided at present. It is known that they have felt the economic squeeze in the States of late.



The NART Boxer which Jean-Pierre Jarier will drive at Daytona with Milt Minter.

J-PJ's Boxer

UOP's Shadow Grand Prix star Jean-Pierre Jarier will team up with American Milt Minter to drive the exciting Luigi Chinetti NART Ferrari Berlinetta Boxer at the Daytona 24 hours sports GT race next weekend.

Jarier has driven for the American NART team on a couple of occasions before, handling a Daytona at Le Mans and Montlhery in 1972 as well as attempting to tame the team's troublesome Can-Am Ferrari.

Donington: looks good

Tom Wheatcroft's appeal for two new sections of track and a pits block at Donington Park ended yesterday (Wednesday). When we spoke to him on Tuesday morning he said: "I'm very happy with the way things have gone, I'm 95 per cent certain it'll be all right providing nothing unforeseen happens today. It's going ever so well. The do-gooders and the aviation people have had their say and our supporters have still got to have their say. We did have one unexpected problem which has taken up a day and a half but that should be sorted out today and it'll be downhill all the way then."

Although the appeal finished on Wednesday, the relevant parties cannot get together until February 17 to conduct the summing up and pronounce judgment which Wheatcroft described as "disappointing, it means nearly another four weeks lost."

Tyrrell's GRD

For his third season in F3, Antiguan driver Mike Tyrrell will be running his fourth type of chassis in as many years when he forsakes his current March for a brand new GRD 375.

Mike Warner phoned us on Monday to tell us that Tyrrell would be running a car with a certain amount of works support. Tyrrell showed a surprising turn of speed last season in his controversial Neil Brown twin-cam engined car.

Warner also stated that following an amicable chat with Vern Schuppan at the Racing Car Show, the talented Australian would be carrying out most of the development and testing on the latest GRD cars when the Snetterton circuit reopens in late February. Warner also hoped that Alex Ribeiro would remain a GRD customer in F3, although the Brazilian's name has been linked with another well known F3 manufacturer.

● Jacques Coulon, the Frenchman who had such a disappointing season in F2 last year, will drive a Formula Super Renault this year.

Shell confirm support

Yet another major company announced its continued support for motor sport during 1975 last week. In spite of the present economic problems, Mr Walter Henderson, Manager of Shell Retail Sales Division confirmed that the company will continue to operate a competitions programme in the UK in 1975, for the 68th successive year. He said: "Even in this age of advanced technology and science, it is important to remember that motor racing improves the breed. Ten years ago we made no less than 10 different oils for road and racing purposes. Last year we made only two. It is a comforting thought that the oil purchased on the garage forecourt or in a supermarket is identical to that being used by a highly tuned racing car at speeds well over 170 mph."

Looking back over 1974 Mr Henderson said: "Despite a reduced programme, we again had an outstanding season on both two and four wheels with 19 major championships going to Shellsport teams, drivers and riders in addition to well over 100 individual race victories in national and international events."

The main feature of the 1975 Shell programme will be the Shellsport European F500 Championship. "After running one of the leading teams in this formula for the past three years, we feel that the moment is right for a change which is more in line with our present marketing objectives."

The popular Shellsport Mexico celebrity races will continue for a third year with the ever faithful Mexicos being replaced by new Escort Sports. A programme of 18 races has been scheduled featuring personalities from the world of radio, television and sport.

Ford and Chrysler will continue to receive assistance for their works entries in both racing and rallying while backing will also be given to Dave Brodie's Superloon Capri, Tom Walkinshaw's F5000 Modus and 1974 RAC Rally Champion Billy Coleman.

The Jim Russell Racing Drivers School will be backed by Shellsport for the sixth consecutive year while the company's extensive club support programme, operated by regional motor sport co-ordinators, will again feature strongly in 1975. Items such as direction arrows, armbands, dayglow marshals jackets, start and finish banners, bunting, trophies and blank poster paper in addition to the eight club support caravans which appeared at over 300 events in 1974, will again be available to clubs as in the past.

Although the number of individual driver contracts will be slightly reduced this year, selected teams and drivers will continue to receive backing from Shellsport. These include Patrick Neve in F3, Mike Smith in a G1 Capri and probably Tony Lanfranchi's Plymouth Hemi-Cuda in the RAC G1 championship.

More US F5000 dates

Three further events have been added to the SCCA/USAC Canadian and American F5000 schedule making a total of ten races in all. However, Cameron Argetsinger of the SCCA stated that negotiations are continuing for four additional dates and he fully expects the Formula 5000 Championship series to consist of a minimum of 12 events.

The extra three events are at Pocono, Edmonton and the new Long Beach circuit. Two further dates expected to become qualifying rounds are August 10 at Mid Ohio and July 6 at Road Atlanta, both of these being original CanAm dates. The full list of revised qualifying rounds are:

May 4, Pocono Int Raceway; **June 1**, Mid-Ohio; **June 15**, Mosport Park; **July 13**, Watkins Glen; **July 27**, Elkhart Lake; **Aug 31**, Ontario Motor Speedway; **Sept 14**, Edmonton Int Speedway; **Sept 28**, Long Beach; **Oct 12**, Laguna Seca; **Oct 26**, Riverside Int Raceway.

● George Follmer will drive Dick Beith's American Kid's Eagle in the three major USAC 500 milers this year.

AUTOCOURSE

The year's finest motor racing annual, AUTOCOURSE, *is out once more. Editor Mike Kettlewell has once again triumphed against the world wide paper shortage and produced a superb, action packed, glossy book which is invaluable to all motor sport fans.*

It contains the fullest details available anywhere of the 1974 Grand Prix season, generally regarded as the best ever, with reports by AUTOSPORT'S *award winning reporter Pete Lyons, full results, team-by team analysis and lap charts. Supporting all these are superb action photographs by the leading motor racing photographers all capturing the atmosphere and offbeat activities of the most famous circus in the world.*

World Champion Emerson Fittipaldi has contributed the foreword, while special features include an examination of Ferrari's revival in Grand Prix racing and an examination by Pete Lyons of the lessons learned during the 1974 season. And, of course, there is one of the most popular features of any motor sport publication in the world, the Editor's top ten GP drivers assessment.

In addition to the GP scene all other major areas of the sport, sports car racing, F2, F5000, CanAm, NASCAR, USAC, historic car racing and international rallying are covered in full detail.

There are a large number of full colour page action photographs, plus the invaluable 16 page portfolio of all the year's major results.

AUTOCOURSE *is priced at £5.50 and is available from Haymarket Publishing Ltd (*AUTOCOURSE *Book Sales), Craven House, 34 Foubert's Place, London W1.*

Emerson or Pace in Brazil?

Judging by his past record at the Brazilian Grand Prix (he's won two out of three races in the past three years) Emerson Fittipaldi must be regarded as the hot favourite for Sunday's Brazilian GP at the twisting 4.94 mile Interlagos circuit which lies in the suburbs of Sao Paulo. Following his excellent tactical win in Argentina a fortnight ago, the local hero will be once again handling his Texaco-Marlboro McLaren M23 supported by Jochen Mass.

During last year's race which, like this, is scheduled over 40 laps, Fittipaldi had to put up with a stern challenge from Carlos Reutemann's Brabham BT44 and Ronnie Peterson's JPS Lotus 72. Well, Reutemann must again be regarded as a big threat in the revised Martini BT44B but fellow Brazilian Carlos Pace in the second Martini car is bound to be sensational. From wherever he is on the grid, Moco is bound to lead into the first corner!

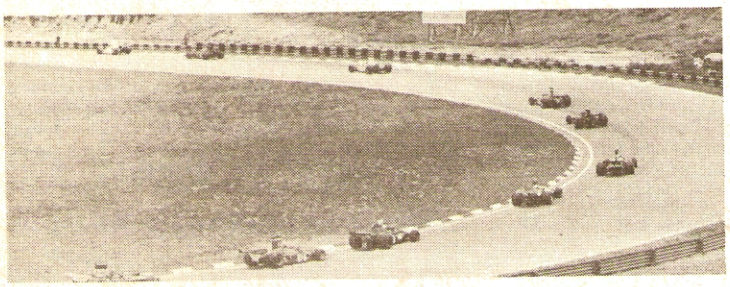
Other fancied runners have to be the Ferrari duo of Clay Regazzoni and Niki Lauda while one hopes Peterson and Jacky Ickx will have better fortune in the JPS 72s than in Buenos Aires. Then there's James Hunt in the Hesketh which, like several other teams, has been testing at Interlagos earlier this week. Can James repeat his Argentine performance, only this time go one better? Will Mario Andretti in the Parnelli prove to be the dark horse?

As to be expected, the field will be the same as in Argentina. None of the teams have carried out any major changes, excepting the UOP Shadow team who have converted both Jean-Pierre Jarier's new DN5 and Tom Pryce's DN3 to their shorter wheelbase specification "as we think it'll work better around Interlagos" said team manager Alan Rees earlier this week. Following his sensational practice performance in Argentina, one wonders whether Jarier will be spurred to similar feats in Brazil. Hopefully, he may well make the start this time. According to Rees, Pryce should receive his new DN5 in time for South Africa.

March Engineering and Vittorio Brambilla are hoping for another workmanlike performance while John Watson must be praying that his works Surtees TS16 lasts a little longer than half a lap. Completing the line-up are Frank Williams' refurbished cars for Art Merzario and Jacques Laffite, the two Embassy Lolas for Graham Hill and Rolf Stommelen, Mark Donohue in the Penske, Wilson Fittipaldi's back-up Copersucar, Mike Wilds in the Stanley-BRM and last, but certainly not least, the immaculate Elf Tyrrells for Jody Scheckter and Patrick Depailler.

The time difference between Sao Paulo and Britain is roughly the same as Buenos Aires (three hours back, GMT) and one can assume that Andy Marriott on Radio 1 and 2 will be doing his usual job as he did from Argentina, giving a race report around 10 p.m on Sunday night.

Reutemann leads the field last year.



RAC confirm Organs G1

Following a lot of speculation in recent weeks, the RAC have at last confirmed that Southern Organs International Ltd will sponsor the 1975 National Touring Car Championship for G1 cars.

Fifteen rounds have been planned with a prize fund for each round of £1365 and overall Championship awards of over £2500. Regulations for the Championship will be available from the RAC Motor Sport Division on February 1. As we stated last week, in essence the regulations will be the same as in 1974, and there will be no change in vehicle eligibility requirements, though the RAC is discussing with the SMMT the desirability of outlawing optional equipment not available on February 1. Peter Jowitt will again lead the scrutineering team allocated to this Championship and will once again be available to give competitors technical advice.

In arranging sponsorship of this Championship, Jim Miller, founder of the Southern Organs organisation said: "I like to help people, and in my view this is one of the most deserving branches of motor sport as well as being one of the most popular. Mechanically it can have a direct affect on the development of the car which you or I use."

The qualifying rounds once again are:

March 9, Mallory Park; **March 16,** Brands Hatch; **March 28,** Oulton Park; **March 31,** Thruxton; **April 13,** Silverstone; **April 20,** Brands Hatch; **May 11,** Thruxton; **May 26,** Silverstone; **June 15,** Mallory Park; **June 29,** Snetterton; **July 19,** Silverstone; **August 17,** Ingliston; **August 25,** Brands Hatch; **September 7,** Oulton Park; **October 19,** Brands Hatch.

● Ladbrokes odds for the Brazilian GP this Sunday are: 5/2, Fittipaldi; 3/1 Reutemann; 5/1, Hunt; 7/1, Jarier and Pace; 8/1, Lauda and Peterson; 10/1 Regazzoni and Scheckter; 14/1, Andretti.

The latest world championship odds are: 3/1, Fittipaldi; 4/1 Reutemann; 5/1 Scheckter and 6/1 Lauda.

Belso in F1 works McLaren?

There have been various reports in Swedish newspapers of late that Danish driver Tom Belso has secured enough finance from Marlboro (Scandinavia) to run in Grand Prix races with a third works Texaco-Marlboro McLaren. The sum mentioned was somewhere in the region of £120,000.

We spoke to Phil Kerr of McLaren Racing earlier this week about such a deal. Kerr said that "they had talked to us a couple of months back but we haven't heard from them since." He then went on to emphasise that "it would be just for one race, the Swedish Grand Prix." Apart from that, Kerr said he was "not in a position to comment."

If Belso were to race a third works car alongside Emerson Fittipaldi and Jochen Mass, it would mean McLaren having to take four cars over to Anderstorp.

Belso it will be remembered made his Formula 1 debut last year in the South African Grand Prix driving one of Frank Williams' Iso-Marlboro cars.

Pryce stays

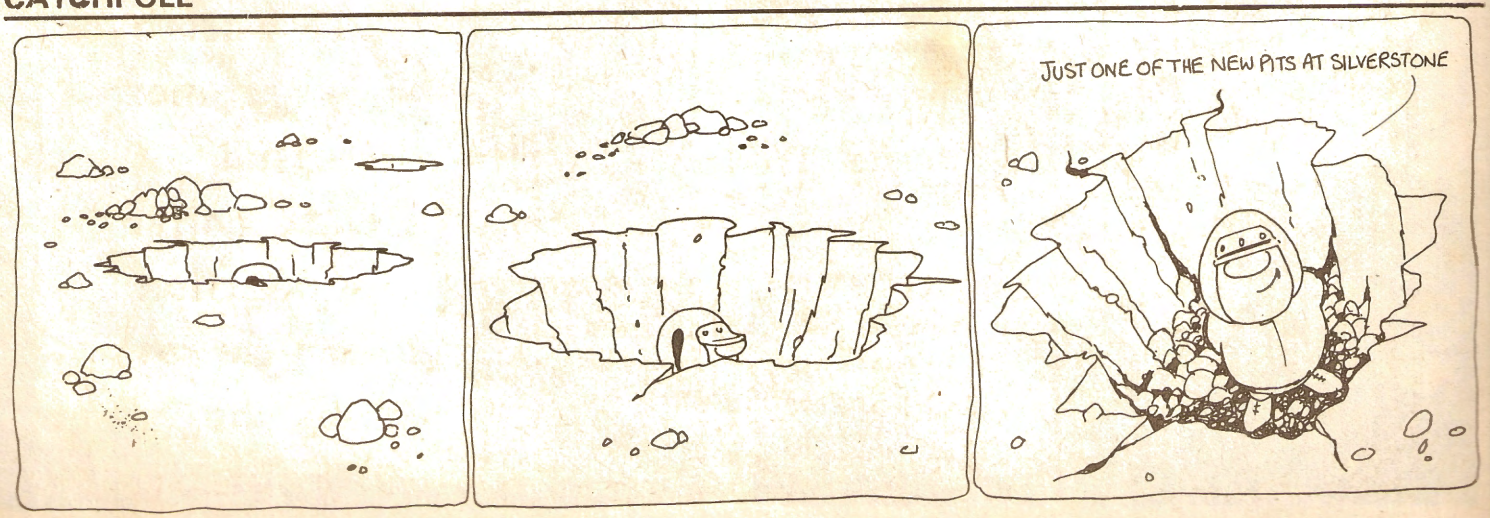
Tom Pryce issued a statement late on Tuesday afternoon before flying to Brazil which cleared up the question of which team he will be driving for this year.

Pryce said: "I saw my solicitors today (Tuesday) and the deal for me to go to Lotus in exchange for Ronnie Peterson is off. Lotus couldn't match my present financial arrangement with Shadow so I'm staying put."

● Southern Organs have appointed Geoff Green as general manager for their motor racing division. He will be responsible for the organisation of Southern Organs racing activities, advertising and publicity. Geoff Cherry will be their representative for the National Organs Formula Ford Championship.

CATCHPOLE

By Barry Foley



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PRIVATE EAR



NICK BRITTAN

There must be a cheaper way to warm up engines?

It was a relieved John Read who, with his pin-striped lawyer, emerged from the RAC tribunal which gave his Holbay F3 engine a clean bill of health. What has been one of the longest-running engine legality hassles for a long time involved a lot of people pointing the fickle finger of fiddling at Read.

The F3 engine regulations demand that the only supply of air to the engine arrives via a 21.5 mm hole. Somehow Read managed to stay within the law with a brilliant, complicated and costly system of internal oil pressure lines and valves which opened and closed an air valve in the diaphragm. The function of the valve was to provide extra air, but here's the rub, only during engine warm-up in the paddock.

It took all the skills of Read's devastatingly eloquent lawyer to persuade the tribunal that despite what they thought they couldn't prove that it let in air while it was running on the track.

It is a great relief to all of us to know that Mr Read's Holbay engine is legal. But there must be those among us who ask ourselves why it is that someone of Mr Read's talent could not devise a less costly and less complex method of warming up engines in the paddock.

Peter Jowitt, the cheerful and much-respected RAC Scrutineer, had nothing but admiration for the Read system. "It was beautiful; a maze of internal oil lines and valves activated by pressure. There was a concealed air valve and a final connection to the air box which used a half inch bore pipe. There was a degree of sophistication about it that put Keith Duckworth's Ford DFV into the lawn mower class."

Is he convinced that it doesn't let in extra air? "We know enough about how it works and I'm sure nobody will change it so that it works any differently to the way Mr Read's lawyer described it," he said with a far-away look in his eye, stroking his beard.

Changing faces at the Rising Sun (1)

Watch for craggy Australian Dave Walker and smooth Swede Reine Wisell to be driving partners in the not so successful Japanese Maki F1 team. A less than enchanting prognostication from a limping Howden Ganley was something along the lines of, unless they do something about the front end design of the car Dave will wind up with his ankle in a sling like me.

A sheltered childhood?

There was a funny semi-pornographic requiem mass last week for Ford's closed-down AVO factory. Management and dealers from all over the place dined elegantly in a London hotel and then set off for a ribald evening on a private Thames launch on which tittering topless ladies served booze, a professional lady removed all her clothes and a large gentleman usually seen on telly told unrepeatable stories. Stuart Turner, the man with the answer for everything, after his encounter with the professional lady was seen wandering around peering through steamy lenses asking, "anybody know how you get body make-up off the trousers of a blue suit?" What a sheltered childhood he must have had.

Browning's organs

I have to thank Southern Organs for their sponsorship of this year's RAC saloon series for the following little amusement. Talk of organs led Peter Browning into a personal trip down memory lane. Didn't know he used to be an organ designer before he became Competition Manager at British Leyland and later director of the BRSCC did you. Seems he designed this fantastic many thousand dollar organ for a new cathedral in New York. The first with electronic fanfare trumpets for the high notes. At the grand opening the organist was going to town with the fanfares when out fell the incredibly expensive new stained glass rose window. Seems that the electronic frequency of the fanfares did to the window what opera singers voices are said to do to wine glasses. Browning returned to England to devise another organ masterpiece for a Bloomsbury Cathedral with electronic bass notes which picked up the local mini cab radio frequency. As the Bishop was performing the opening honours a cockney voice from the organ loft pronounced . . . "George it's that bird with the big boobs at 14 Russell Buildings again, take her to Waterloo and keep yer 'ands on the wheel." Shortly thereafter Browning joined British Leyland.

Operation

I wish Mike Hewland a speedy recovery after his operation. I assume that if the purposeful little Alan Rees puts the stripped crownwheel from Jarier's Shadow where he said he was going to put it that there will be an operation.

The shadow of (Ronnie's) profile!

If, as Peter Warr suggests, neither he nor Ronnie have had any conversations about Ronnie leaving JPS Lotus to join Shadow, can someone explain to me what a brand new personal Ronnie-mould seat was doing in the Shadow pit in Argentina. Also why Jarier's name wasn't painted on the sensational new pole-winning DN5 until the second day of practice.

Bloody idiot

Tyrrell's Ford is for sale, said the voice on the phone. Then we had this strange conversation about how he was the agent and how he thought I might be interested. He said he would sell it to me for £100,000. After the pause he laughed and said he was an estate agent and Tyrrell's Ford was an eight bedroom Georgian house in fashionable Hampshire. So why tell me I said. You might think it was funny and put it in your column he said. Bloody idiot.

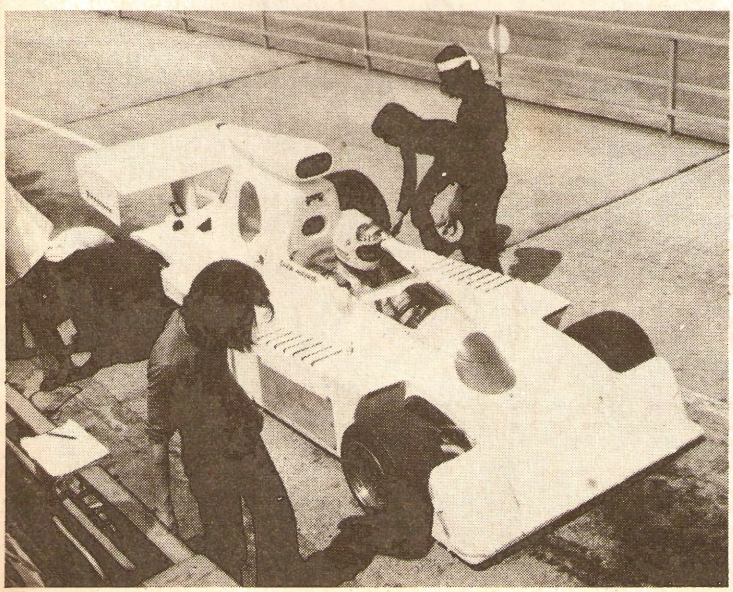
Quotes of the Week

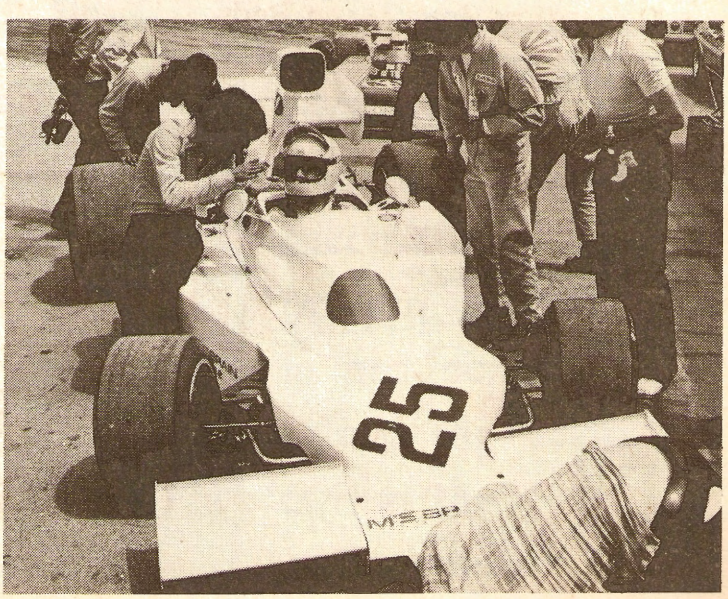
Dennis Norden: "All power corrupts. Horsepower corrupts absolutely."

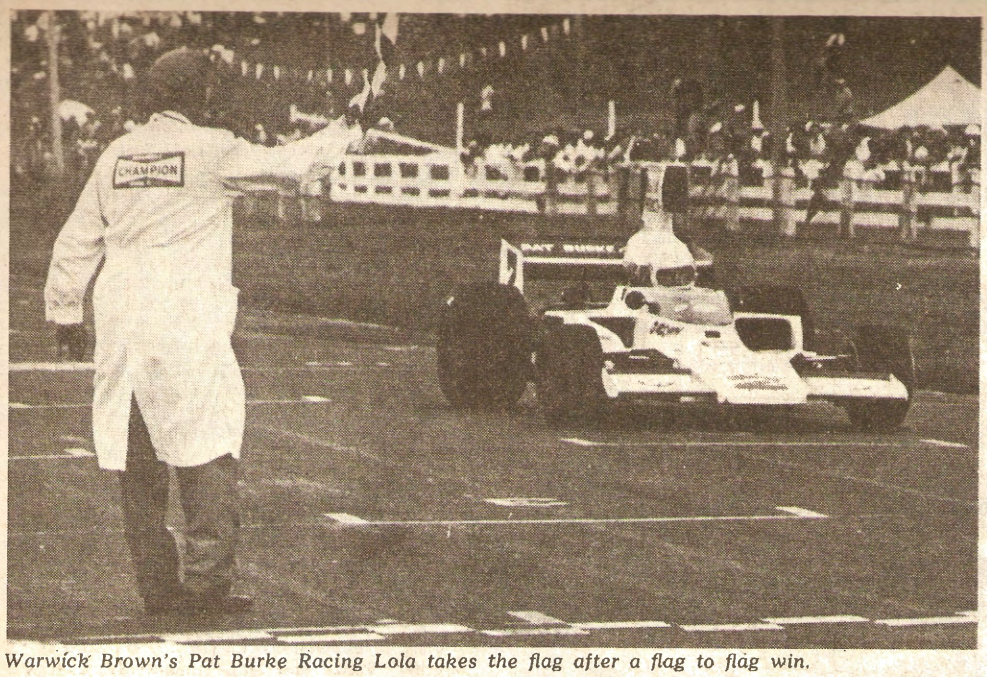
Ford Driver Tom Walkinshaw: "I was recovering from 'flu and my doctor told me not to go anywhere where there would be crowds. So I spent four days in a Vauxhall dealer's showroom."

Stuart Turner: "Anyone who doesn't believe that '75 is going to be a tough year should buy a season ticket to Peter Pan."

Changing faces at the Rising Sun (2): the Maki in early testing at Silverstone last year, Shaw Hayami driving; right at the British GP with Howden Ganley at the wheel.







Warwick Brown's Pat Burke Racing Lola takes the flag after a flag to flag win.

PUKEKOHE

Warwick Brown all the way

By PETER GREENSLADE Photos by REX RATTENBURY

Although an Australian has yet to win the Tasman Cup, which came into being in 1964, the Aussies have monopolised the New Zealand Grand Prix at Pukekohe since 1970 — the year of the switch from 2.5-litre Avgas racing engines to 5-litre stock block V8s. Frank Matich won in 1970, Niel Allen in 1971, Frank Gardner in 1972, John McCormack in 1973. Last year the GP was won by McCormack at Wigram, the venue being changed in deference to Christchurch being the 10th Commonwealth Games city. This year it was back at Pukekohe on January 12 and it was Sydney's Warwick Brown who turned the trick in his Lola T332, Chevrolet-powered and prepared by Peter Molloy, also of Sydney. Brown hit the front midway through the first lap and stayed there for the remaining 57½ tours in reasonable security.

He averaged 160.528 kph and came home 22 s clear of none other than former Lotus and McLaren spanner man Jim Murdoch, who was at the helm of George Begg's latest creation, the lightweight Begg 018. First round Peter Stuyvesant series winner at Levin, Graeme Lawrence was third, just 6.8 s behind in his Lola T332.

According to the official result, South Australian Johnnie Walker went 57 laps for fourth in his Repco-powered Lola T332. So did Aucklander Ken Smith (Lola T332) for fifth and 1973 and 1974 NZGP winner John McCormack (Ansett Elfin Repco MR6) went 56 laps for sixth. There would be no dispute about Walker, but it is unlikely that Smith and McCormack covered the ground the official lap scorers gave credit for.

Apart from the fact that Brown's win put him in front with 15 points in the eight-race Peter Stuyvesant series, the result had some other fall-out. Graham McRae, who had once again gained pole position with the GM2, but retired after nine laps, because it was then raining and he was on hand-grooved Firestone slicks and considered it too dangerous to continue, intimated that he would not be among those present at the 21st Lady Wigram Trophy for financial reasons. Evidently the finances came right because he changed his mind.

Murdoch, an outsider in the series, who the Australian promoters did not want to know about, captured the attention of Australian pressmen and sparked the Aussie promoters into action with some folding money. So constructor George Begg, Murdoch and the 018 will be doing the four Australian rounds. The Southland-based combination is needed because it does add some colour to this Australasian "Test" series in which the current score is Australia 26, New Zealand 24.

To put it in a nutshell, the 22nd NZGP was a funny old race. Pukekohe turned on guessing weather: high humidity, brilliant sunshine and unpredictable torrential downpours that flooded the track periodically. The guessing game went on through the two days' qualifying and right up to the GP start. During qualifying, everyone laid off while the rain fell and until the track dried. On race day, it rained heavily about half an hour before the GP start, cleared and enabled the field to go out and do about five laps apiece to get rid of the wetness. Then when it lined up on the dummy grid it all started again and there was a mad scramble for rain tyres. McRae had none, so hand-grooved some Firestone slicks. Of the other potential front runners, McCormack was the only one to bring his Ansett Elfin MR6, still Repco-Holden-powered, to the rolling start on slicks.

ENTRY and PRACTICE

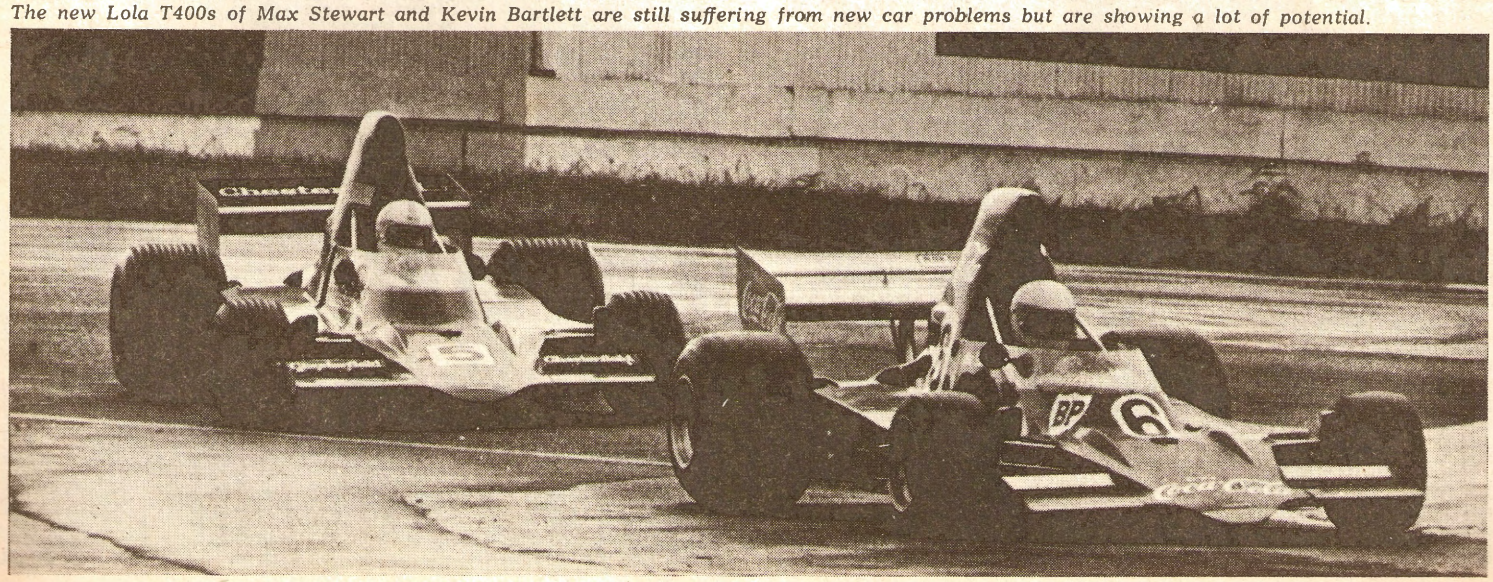
Let's face it, this Stuyvesant series is very much a New Zealand-Australia affair and although the racing has been fairly close and entertaining, it lacks some of the flavour of yesteryears with no one from the Northern Hemisphere to give it a lift. Qualifying seems, so far, to have had a "Down Under" casualness about it and if there has been much behind-the-scenes drama, no one has been talking about it. The entry was more or less a Levin blueprint. Graham Baker, whose Begg FM5 Chev engine self-destructed at Levin, did not appear, but his place was taken by Robbie Booth in an older Begg.

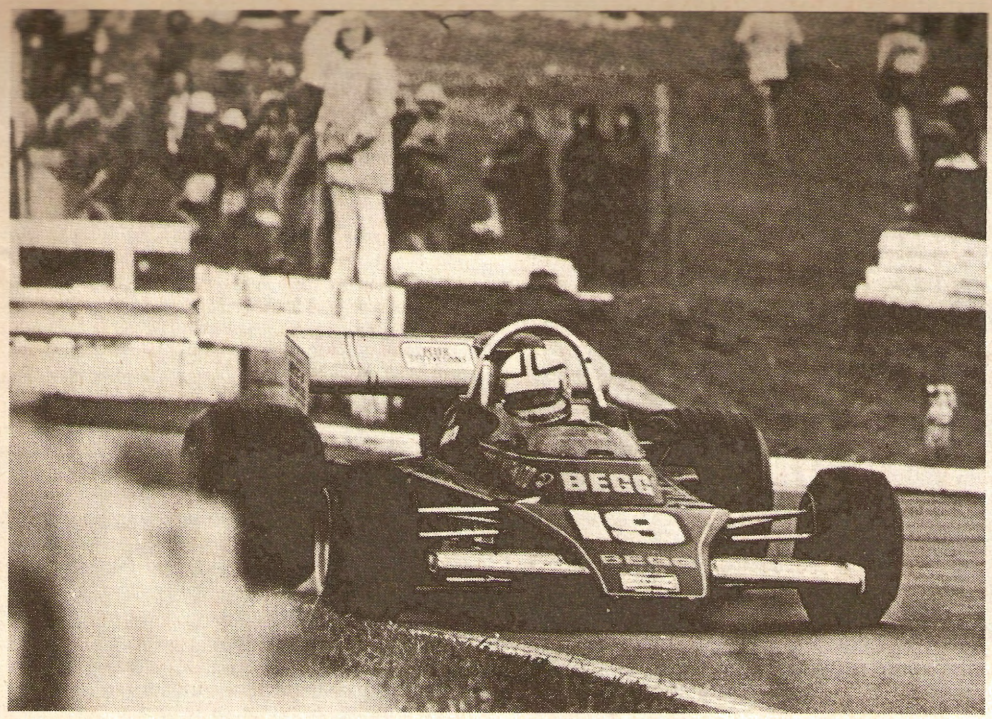
The Australians all appeared to be in good shape, the most notable feature in the camp being that the hastily readied Lola T400s of Max Stewart and Kevin Bartlett, both painted red, advertised their sponsors, Coca Cola and Chesterfield more effectively with some compelling but by no means ostentious sign-writing. On the other hand, Chris Amon's Talon was still bereft of advertising. According to Chris, the McCormack brothers would like a sponsor, but are taking the long-term view that if they do well in this series, some American firm will come up with the sort of backing they need for the 1975 US Formula 5000 series.

Often in the early stages of this series, there is a lot of feverish activity, but when the contestants turned up for the first of the two Friday qualifying sessions, the whole business was rather reminiscent of an old-age pensioners' annual picnic. Most of the action was in slow motion and no one seemed anxious to get down to serious business. A brief but heavy rain shower delayed the opening session, but when the rain stopped the track dried quickly.

The figure to aim at was McRae's 61.6 s (164.62 kph) 1974 pole-winning figure. McRae failed to make it. In the GM2 he made his seventh and last lap in 63 dead and packed up to go away and change the camshaft which, he said, was too mild. Amon was more tenacious. He put in 13 laps and got down to 61.3 s—good enough to make him

The new Lola T400s of Max Stewart and Kevin Bartlett are still suffering from new car problems but are showing a lot of potential.





Jim Murdoch put in a fine drive to second place in the new Begg 018.

fastest Friday qualifier and also earn him No 2 place on the race-day grid. That was just as well, because on Friday night when the Talon's Chev engine was stripped it was found that it had split in one bore. As there was no readily available replacement, the bore was given a Leyland diesel engine liner and while it was being fitted, Amon spectated all day Saturday.

Brown made 61.5 s on Friday and failed to improve. But that was sufficient to assure him of the inside position on the second row of the race-day grid. Murdoch signalled his and the 018's intentions by getting down to 63.3 s—a tenth better than Lawrence, whose engine sounded slightly off-beat. Ken Smith managed 63.9 s, which was much better than anything produced by Max Stewart and Kevin Bartlett in their T400 Lolas. These cars appear to handle well, but seem to lack power. In fact, apart from Brown, the only Australian to make any impression was McCormack who got down to 64.1 in the Elfin MR6.

Saturday was again hot and humid and interspersed with heavy rain. Murdoch, McRae, and Booth were among those who failed to appear for the morning session, but most of the other hopefuls turned out. Brown's best was 62.3 s. Bartlett, whose T400 had its clutch replaced overnight, made 65.1 s within a few laps and let it go at that. Walker put in a lot of mileage in the Repco/Holden-powered T332 and finally made 63.3 s. McCormack made 62.1 and even with a lot more trying could not better that. Smith was another who travelled a long way to be finally rewarded with 63.2 s.

Max Stewart had some drama. Coming over the bump at the end of the rise before the pit straight, one side of the engine fairing on the T400 came adrift and the fibreglass promptly broke away. So his day was finished with a best lap in 64.2 s, which put him inside Bartlett (65.1 s) on the fifth row.

The final afternoon session was not very well supported, but McRae was there to maintain the interest. He made his 11th round in 61.1 s, did two slow-down tours and pitted. The figure was good enough for pole position inside Amon, but Cassius wanted to make it more conclusive so he fitted his Firestone qualifiers. It was not until the end of the sixth lap that he had improved on his earlier figure, but that sixth was a boomer 60.5 s. In the course of three slow-downers, McRae must have relaxed over-much for he clipped the chicane on the rise before the pit straight and damaged the GM2's front suspension. Fortunately there was plenty of time for repairs, as the race was still more than 24 hours away. Murdoch then went out to see if he could better his third row, sixth fastest position, but failed to do so, his best being 63.6. So everyone packed up and went home, the row pairings for the Sunday rolling start being McRae-Amon, Brown-McCormack, Smith-Murdoch, Walker-Lawrence, Stewart-Bartlett, Booth (66.3)—Baron Robertson (Elfin MR5, 67.1), Steve Millen (Chevron B20, 68.7)—Frank Bray (Brabham BT30, 75.4).

During the luncheon interval on race day the field was given an opportunity to put in a few shakedown laps to entertain the crowd which amounted to about 25,000. After this little session was over, Lawrence reported that an overnight engine inspection had revealed five bent valves, attributed to a missed gear the previous Sunday at Levin. McCormack said he was having a bit of a handling problem, probably related to the roll-bar height. Amon said the Talon felt good and reckoned he would be able to go with McRae. Brown reckoned to go with McRae and Amon said he was happy but would have been still happier if the Molloy-Chev was delivering more power. Bartlett confided that he'd replaced his best engine, used at Levin, with one not so good because he wanted his best for Wigram. As far as McRae was concerned, he was out of sight but certainly looming large in most minds.

RACE

Torrential rain fell spasmodically all day. But it was not until about an hour before the big event that the contenders started to get really uptight. Amon started off by fitting a set of rain tyres. It seemed a good idea. Then the rain stopped and the GP field was sent out to do five laps to help dry the track. They lined up on the dummy grid and Amon switched back to slicks. McRae took his pole place on slicks and most of the others lined up likewise equipped and then the rain started again. McRae's car was wheeled off to have hand-grooved slicks fitted. Amon switched back to rain tyres and most of the others did likewise. McCormack stayed put on Goodyear slicks. Robbie Booth compromised with slicks on front and wets on the back!

In any event, the rain was coming down fairly heavily by the time the pace car had led the field round to the start line where McRae, naturally enough, floored his foot and slid to the front with Brown, Amon and Murdoch in close attendance.

It looked as though McRae was going to perform his usual slip-the-field trick, but Brown and Murdoch were having none of that. Both took him in the back straight and first time round the order was Brown, Murdoch, McRae, Lawrence, Amon, Bartlett, McCormack, Smith, Walker, Stewart and the rest. Lawrence took McRae in the next lap and in the following one Bartlett relegated the GM2 to fifth place. Amon pitted at the end of this lap to rid himself of the ineffective rain tyres and dropped two laps in the process. By then Brown had put 13 s between himself and McRae in fifth spot and he was some 6.5 s ahead of Murdoch who was three or four lengths ahead of Lawrence. McRae was back in ninth place after eight laps and a lap later he pulled in and retired, being quoted as saying, "It's too dangerous."

After ten laps Brown was 6 s clear of Murdoch and at this juncture, Stewart stopped to switch back to slicks and lost three laps in the process. In the 14th round Brown lapped McCormack, who was then running seventh. By lap 17 6.5 s covered the first four runners, Brown, Murdoch, Lawrence and Bartlett. Bartlett moved ahead of Lawrence in lap 20, at which time Lawrence was followed by Walker, Ken Smith and McCormack. In the next round Brown lapped Walker and looked very secure as front runner. It was in lap 25 that the big upset came when Bartlett moved in on Murdoch in Champion Curve, the right-hand sweeper out of the pit straight, and proceeded to nudge the 018 in the quickly following esses. Murdoch spun to the grass and resumed in fourth place behind Lawrence, but ahead of Walker, Smith and McCormack. Murdoch was more than somewhat displeased and proceeded to put his right boot in it heavily. In fact, too heavily, for at Castrol, the right-hander leading to the back straight, he had an almighty spin in the course of lap 32, but was able to resume still in fourth spot.

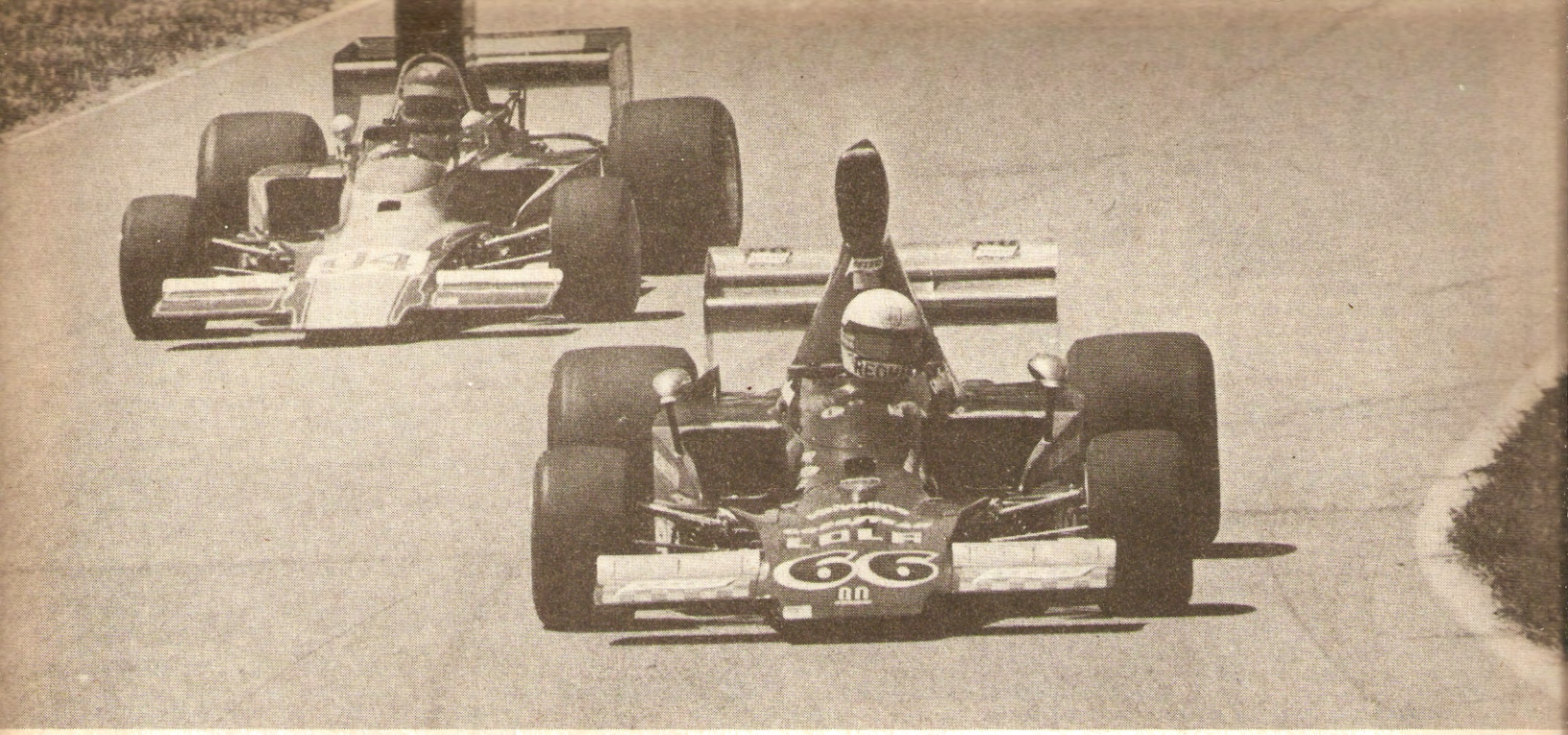
Brown was now 7 s clear of Bartlett, who had Lawrence in fairly close, while Murdoch was making up ground. The rest of them were well out of contention with Amon doing the best of the lot to get back in the picture, in the process making fastest race lap of 63.8 s.

With 44 of the 58 laps completed, Brown was 16 s ahead of Bartlett and two laps later the latter was out of the running with a broken gearbox. So that brought Lawrence and Murdoch back into the picture. But Lawrence was also in trouble, for his petrol tanks were nearly empty. He came in hurriedly after 48 laps to let his crew slop in a couple of gallons. Murdoch failed to get by and so the order remained Brown, Lawrence, Murdoch, Walker, Smith and McCormack. It looked as though it was all over bar the shouting. Then Lawrence slowed dramatically, his T332 again suffering from fuel starvation. Murdoch moved in on him smartly and took him in the 55th lap. Brown came home well clear of Murdoch. Lawrence virtually coasted across the line and was followed in by Walker, Smith and McCormack. Amon was next and then came Stewart, who had never really made any impression. Millen, Booth, Robertson and Bray were the other finishers in that order.

Pukekohe, January 12
Peter Stuyvesant Series, Round 2, 58 laps
1, Warwick Brown (Lola T332), 69 m 53.4 s, 148.6 kph; 2, J. Murdoch (Begg 018), 70 m 15.4 s; 3, G. Lawrence (Lola T332), 70 m 22.2 s; 4, J. Walker (Lola T332), 57 laps; 5, K. Smith (Lola T332), 57 laps; 6, J. McCormack (Elfin MR6), 56 laps.
Fastest lap: Chris Amon (Talon MR1), 63.8 s.
Tasman Cup points: Brown 15; Lawrence, 13; Murdoch, 7; Walker, 6; Barlett and Smith, 4 each; McCormack, 1.

Winner Warwick Brown now heads the Tasman Championship.





Having come so close to winning the American F5000 in 1973, Britain's Brian Redman made sure very definitely in 1974. His immaculate Car Haas/Jim Hall Lola T332 only let him down once, and that was when he was hit by a slower car. Here he leads Canadian Eppie Wietzes' similar car.

F5000 SURVEY: USA

Redman's just reward

By GORDON KIRBY

A transformation began to work itself upon the North American Formula 5000 Championship last year. Throughout the past five years all types and kinds of people have proclaimed Formula 5000 as America's Formula of the Future, yet the class has continued to exist on a thin handful of top drivers and cars. This year, finally, all that changed. This year the American F5000 series finally evolved into a first-rate Championship with prospects of a future that nobody even dared dream of a few short years ago.

The seven-race Championship started on a decidedly weak note when just 22 cars, only three of them properly prepared and competitive, arrived at Mid-Ohio in June. But by October there were more than 40 machines ready to gather themselves together for the final and Championship-deciding round at Riverside. At least a dozen accomplished drivers appeared in well-organised and well-developed machinery and the race itself unfolded with a new brand of sustained spectacle! Formula 5000 American style, had finally arrived. By then, even before CanAm was officially axed, it was obvious that F5000 had become the top class in the United States and its future looked better than the CanAm's had even at its zenith.

The formula was helped immensely by USAC officially recognising and sanctioning the Championship series in conjunction with the SCCA. As USAC turned their attentions more and more toward the stock-block formula in preference to their own costly formula and its proliferation of supercharged engines, the USAC drivers and entrants, anxious as they were to find a replacement for their regulations, began to think enthusiastically of F5000. By the end of the season Vel's Parnelli Racing and Mario Andretti had broken a trail for many of their USAC brethren to follow them into F5000. Al Unser, Bobby Unser, Johnny Rutherford and Mike Mosley all took their first serious sampling of single-seater road racing and USAC and the SCCA began to talk confidently of staging a F5000-based, fifteen-race North American Racing Championship in 1976. A championship that would include not only a full schedule of road courses but also the Indianapolis, California and Pocono 500s.

THE SERIES

All of this gave the race for the F5000 Championship far more prestige than it had ever before enjoyed. Brian Redman and Mario Andretti, both driving Lola T332s, were ideal protagonists, providing the Press with a perfect plot of wily old road-racer versus wily old oval-racer in their season-long fight for the title. Redman took the Championship for Carl Haas, Jim Hall and Steed by a seven-point margin over Andretti. It was the strength of Redman's places which ultimately won out for both men won three races each, but while the Englishman finished second three times, the American was unfortunate enough to collect only a single second, a third and fourth. Both men failed to finish just once, Redman due to a nasty shunt with a back-marker and Andretti because of a combination of failing engine and broken suspension. Quite obviously, these two veterans completely dominated the season.

Surprisingly enough Redman brought Lola Cars their first North American Formula 5000 Championship this year. Although Lola have long dominated the Formula 5000 marketplace, particularly in the past three years, the marque has been foiled by one-off efforts like Graham McRae's McRae and Jody Scheckter's Trojan. But 1974 saw Lolas fill the first four places in the Championship and take eight of the top ten places. With David Hobbs driving Carl Hogan's Lola T332 to win the only race in which neither Redman nor Andretti crossed the line first, Lola scored the first complete sweep of an American F5000 season.

The bulk of the field was composed of privateers in either 1973 or 1974 examples of a Lola chassis. Any given race would find at least half the grid occupied by Lolas and the final race saw seven T332s in the hands of serious frontrunners. While Redman and Andretti controlled the first two Championship places throughout most of the season, David Hobbs and Eppie Wietzes brought their new Lolas into equally solid third and fourth places. Yet there was still some competition for Eric Broadley and Lola's US distributor Carl Haas to think about. In fact, some fairly serious competition.

Dan Gurney and his own All-American Racers were the principal thorn in the side of Lola Cars ownership of F5000. AAR built the first F5000 Eagle since winning the Championship in 1969 and Gurney, Goodyear and sponsors Jorgensen Steel and Mr Marty poured a lot of money into the project. It was a hard understandably unsuccessful year of development for the Eagle with team-leader Brett Lunger doing well to take fifth in the Championship and the 1975 prototype showing a lot of promise when it was debuted by James Hunt in the last two Championship rounds.

The other car which showed an ability to compete with the well-developed Lola design was the Talon MR1. This car was a reproduction of Graham McRae's McRae GM2, which was itself based on the USAC Eagle. The Talon was built in California by McCormack Racing and the cars were run by McCormack under the Norris Industries banner. But they were bedevilled by sorting troubles and never finished well, although team drivers Sam Posey and Jon Woodner were able both on occasion, to press their way well into the hunt.

No other chassis made an appearance among the frontrunners. There was the old Chevron or March which went well enough to get among the top 10 finishers in some races but none of these marques were campaigned seriously. Graham McRae ran his McRae GM2 in the last three races and despite a lack of finance he went well, finishing fifth at Riverside. The Riverside race also saw Bobby Unser race his USAC Eagle-Offenhauser and the oval track Champion set everyone on their ears by qualifying second to Andretti and leading the race until pulling off when the Offy dropped a valve. This was the only occasion on which a USAC car showed that it could compete on a road course with a Formula 5000 machine.

The new USAC Champion was the only driver to take proper advantage of a late-season change in the rules for USAC machinery. Initially the turbocharged cars had been restricted to carrying 40 gallons of fuel for a F5000 race, but after a couple of lesser teams made thoroughly abortive efforts at competing with that restriction it was agreed to enlarge their fuel capacity to 60 gallons. This allowed a USAC team to run with at least the same boost pressure as they would in their own races and Unser and the Eagle team showed conclusively that a top-flight machine could be thoroughly competitive with

the 5-litre stock-blocks.

That, however, was not really the point of USAC's involvement with Formula 5000. USAC was attracted to Formula 5000 because of its comparative inexpensiveness and it was precisely with this in mind that immediately after the Riverside race Mario Andretti warned against any enthusiasm for supercharged engines from either the Press or the ruling bodies. "We don't want to create another monster here," Andretti suggested, "we don't want to upset anything which is working as well as Formula 5000. Formula 5000 works because it's relatively cheap and I don't want to see anybody change it."

However as USAC and the SCCA look ahead towards 1976 they are beginning to consider modifying both the 5-litre stock-block regulations and the USAC supercharger regulations for inclusion within a common formula. On the other hand Vel Miletich, Parnelli Jones, Roger Penske, Teddy Mayer and Dan Gurney have all been strongly opposed to any continuation of supercharging for they know too well the runaway costs that can result from racing with something like a turbo Offy. If the wind does blow against their opinions, Formula 5000 could be in trouble.

But this is a much healthier problem than the one which confronted the SCCA and American F5000 competitors at the end of the 1973 season. At that time L&M, the cigarette company who had backed the Championship for four years had just withdrawn their sponsorship, and with the CanAm series still alive, F5000 found itself as a secondary class with little support and the prospects of a slim 1974 schedule.

There was little change in this outlook throughout the winter and into the spring. There were constant rumours that the SCCA was talking with USAC about a co-sanctioning agreement for the formula but as the season drew closer the chances of the two historically opposed clubs joining forces to run the F5000 Championship looked thin.

But late in May, just as everyone was embroiled in the tensions of Indianapolis, USAC surprisingly announced that they would after all join with the SCCA in co-sanctioning F5000. This meant that USAC would take an active part in the running and promotion of the Championship and more importantly it meant that USAC drivers would be encouraged to take part in the series so that Formula 5000 suddenly took on a new air of respectability within the North American racing community.

USAC cars would be allowed to run F5000 races in basically the same trim as normal. They would be restricted to one, a maximum of 40 gallons of fuel which could be carried in both sides of the chassis and two, the standard USAC engine sizes of 2.8 litres supercharged, 4.2 litres unsupercharged and 5.25 litres stock block and head. The oval racing machines would also be required to make one pit stop during a race. These regulations were very much a shot in the dark and it was agreed that they could be reviewed as the season progressed.

Two weeks later the USAC/SCCA Formula 5000 Championship got under way at Mid-Ohio. A disappointing entry of just 22 cars arrived for this first race of the new season, and only a handful of these teams were properly prepared for a full and competitive season.

Easily the best prepared of them all was the well-financed Vel's Parnelli/Viceroy Lola T332 of **Mario Andretti.** This was the occasion of Mario's serious return to road racing and he and his team had been hard at work for more than four months. Andretti qualified the Firestone-shod Lola nearly a full second faster than Brian Redman's Carl Haas Lola and won his heat easily. Redman won the other qualifying heat from another new Lola in the hands of Canadian Eppie Wietzes and it was this trio, Andretti-Redman-Wietzes, which broke away from the rest early in the 40-lap final.

Andretti held on to his lead easily during the first few laps but then Redman and Wietzes came shuttling up behind him and for a while there was a fine, three-car race. Just as things began to reach a peak of intensity however, Wietzes dark blue Lola pulled off with a blown engine and at the same time it became evident that Andretti was nursing his tyres. Redman increased his efforts and after a handful of extremely close laps Brian pushed his way inside Mario and pulled away to win the race easily.

Andretti slipped back, slowly at first, but it soon became obvious that his slightly graining front tyres were the least of his worries. The exhaust pipes were falling off on one side of the Chevy and the Lola was deathly sick. Andretti tried to nurse his way to the end but with seven laps left a steering arm broke and his race was over. Brett Lunger drove a good, steady race with the new Jorgensen Steel Eagle and stayed on the same lap as Redman to finish second while David Hobbs worked through from the back of the grid to take fourth place behind Evan Noyes's new Lola. Hobbs drove his spare T330 Lola after a crankshaft damper flew apart and damaged the chassis of his T332 during the morning warm-up.

Nobody else had much of a race. Lunger's team-mate Elliott Forbes-Robinson was unable to make his F5000 debut for there was no spare to replace his engine which blew on the first day of practice. The noisily-promoted, three-car Norris Industries team struggled through the weekend without any reward. Team leader Sam Posey retired his Talon with gearbox failure, Graham McRae never started the final after engine failure in his heat and Jon Woodner went out with a broken oil radiator while lying fourth.

Two weeks later basically the same field went up to Canada for the Mosport round. This race was run in conjunction with the CanAm season-opener so there was lots of anxiety among the F5000 teams that they should put on a good show. There were again only 22 cars entered with the notable addition of Argentinian Nestor Jesus Garcia-Veiga in the third of the new Eagle chassis, this one owned and run by Ferrari dealer Francisco Mir.

Again Andretti qualified on the pole and won his heat without a note of competition. His led away from the start of the final and vanished into the distance. For the first time it looked as if Mario could well dominate the year as he drove on in a very smooth and unruffled manner, leaving the rest to grapple among themselves for the leadership of the second division.

But halfway into the race, with a dozen seconds in hand to second man Redman, the Viceroy Lola began blowing out blue smoke signalling a broken piston. For the second race in succession Andretti slipped back through the field. This time however he managed to bring the car home in fourth place, just over a lap behind the winner, David Hobbs.

Hobbs qualified his Hogan Lola T332 fourth best, won his heat (both of which were run in the wet) and fought hard with Redman and Wietzes during the early laps of the final. Redman got by David and pulled away, trying to close on Andretti while Hobbs settled into holding off Eppie Wietzes' charge. A few laps later David was back in second place after Redman was knocked off by a backmarker. Brian climbed out undamaged but the car was a write-off after sliding wildly through three catch fences and coming to rest about 50 yards off the road.

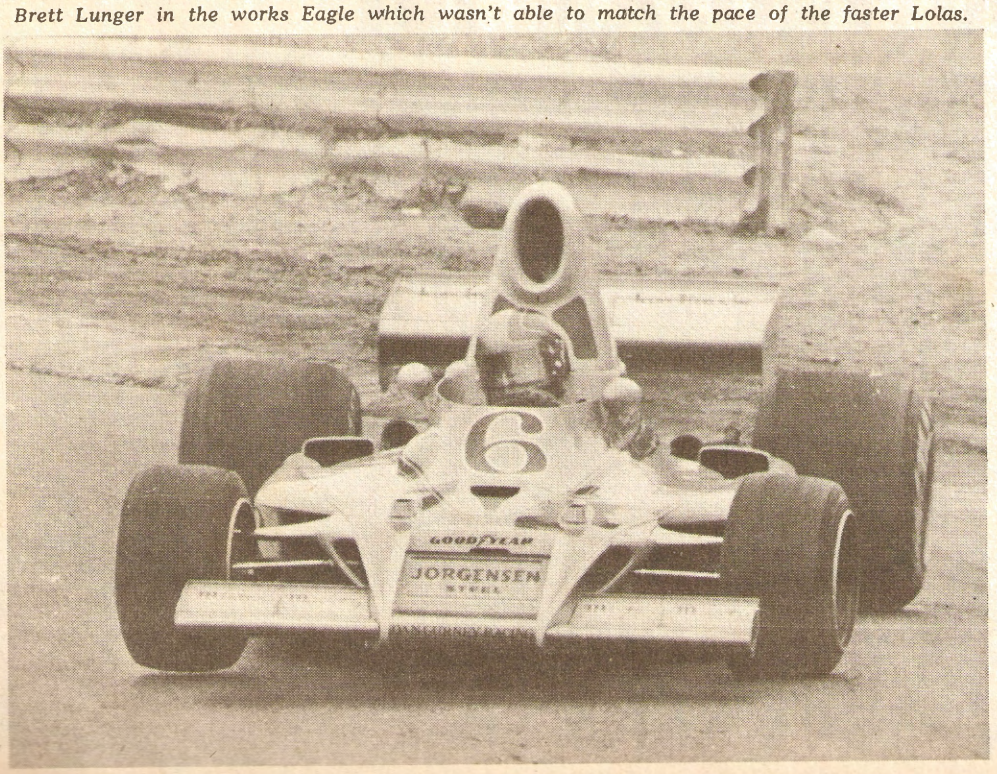
Just a lap or two after Redman's shunt Hobbs discovered that he was catching Andretti in great lumps of time. It didn't take long for him to catch and pass the sick Viceroy car and he drove on to score a three-second win from Wietzes. This was Hobbs' first North American F5000 victory in two years.

Wietzes chased Hobbs all the way to the end, his pace dampened by his tyres turning on their rims and going out of balance so that he was unable to bring any real pressure to the Hogan Lola. Nevertheless, Eppie's second place at his home circuit proved to be his best result of the season. Once again the first of the Jorgensen Eagles finished well as Brett Lunger was able to pass the fading Andretti for third, despite trouble with the shift linkage which resulted in a couple of missed shifts and some broken valve springs. Forbes-Robinson worked up well from the back of the grid, getting up to seventh before making a mistake and crashing badly but without injury.

Garcia-Veiga went well in his North American debut, qualifying fifth and running fifth in the final before running out of fuel with less than three laps to go. The Norris Talons had another bad weekend although this time they were able to run long enough to show some real potential. Posey chased Lunger for a while but went out with more trouble in his experimental Wiseman gearbox, McRae hung on to his team-mate for a few laps before dropping back with a weakening engine and Woodner also managed to keep Posey in sight until his engine seized.

There was a break of a full month before the next round at Watkins Glen. This gave Goodyear a chance to do some necessary work on their F5000 tyre programme and they arrived at the Glen with a completely new batch of rubber. Ironically this was to prove the undoing of Goodyear-contracted teams. Early in practice it became evident that the long and fast turns of the Glen

Brett Lunger in the works Eagle which wasn't able to match the pace of the faster Lolas.



were in some way overloading the new front Goodyears and after signs of failure showed up on a couple of cars, Brian Redman had a large spin when one of his fronts exploded. Goodyear quickly decided to withdraw all of their new tyres and field manager Lee Gaug organised a shipment of replacement rubber of the older and slower variety from Akron.

This left the Goodyear runners—and that meant more than 90 per cent of the field—scrounging for tyres so that Andretti was able to take his third successive pole position by an even greater margin than had been expected. He subsequently won the first of the 15-lap heats by the astounding margin of 45 s. The final was very much a similar story. The Viceroy Lola had broken away by the mid-point of the opening lap and Andretti drove off to a very clean 13 s victory. Redman and Wietzes fought over second until Wietzes' brakes glazed and Brian was able to get away and even hold Andretti within range during the last half-a-dozen laps.

A group consisting of Hobbs, Posey, McRae and Lunger battled over fourth place but all of them had problems of one sort or another so that their fight soon dissipated. Hobbs and Lunger went out with blown engines while McRae and Posey both stopped to change tyres although they were able to get back out and retrieve their places thanks to a comparatively high rate of attrition during the final laps. McRae took fourth place in this his first drive in Chuck Jones' Lola T332 while erstwhile team-mate Posey struggled into fifth suffering badly from a broken foot incurred in a spin with an old NART Ferrari while practising for the same meeting's CanAm race. Elliott Forbes-Robinson and Jon Woodner both had miserable races with engine troubles dogging them throughout practice, heats and final.

By this time the Championship was beginning to take form. Redman had now pulled back into the lead by five points over Hobbs and Andretti, while Wietzes and Lunger were tied for fourth just three further points behind. Nobody else was really in the hunt.

Two weeks later the USAC/SCCA F5000 Championship moved on to Elkhart Lake in the wooded lakelands of Wisconsin and it was here that the series began to find its real form. A fine entry of 32 cars arrived and for the first time there were some turbocharged USAC machines among the field. None of the USAC cars were from top-flight teams but their appearance showed that there was a real growing interest in F5000 among the oval racers.

Mario Andretti asserted himself by taking his fourth pole position and his second win at Elkhart, but he had to work extremely hard for this one. Both Brian Redman and Eppie Wietzes were in great form and chased hard after the Viceroy Lola, Wietzes initially holding off Redman. They held Andretti within reach, just 3 s away, until Wietzes' Lola started to lose part of its exhaust system. Andretti edged away as the Canadian car lost power and started holding up Redman.

Wietzes was quick to wave Brian through but almost immediately he was held up badly by the same car and driver that had put him off at Mosport. The Steed Lola lost 3 s in half a lap so that when he did get by he was 8 s behind Andretti with ten of the 25 laps remaining. Redman drove very hard in his late pursuit, tossing and flicking the big F5000 machine about as if it were a Formula Ford. He pulled himself to within a second of Andretti at the flag, very nearly getting by as the leading Lola hiccoughed through the last lap and ran out of fuel halfway round on its cool-off lap.

Wietzes again held on for an impressive third well clear of a four-car fight over fourth place. Brett Lunger drove his Eagle very well as he established initial control over this group but he had to stop to change a flat tyre, eventually retiring with a blown engine. Graham McRae got by Lunger as the Eagle's tyre deflated and set off on his own only to have one of his tyres soften for the second successive race. After his stop the New Zealander managed only a few laps before succumbing to engine failure.

So David Hobbs and Jon Woodner were left fighting for fourth, both of them troubled by sick engines. Hobbs eventually prevailed, struggling to the end on his third engine of the weekend while Woodner dropped back with gear linkage problems complicating his lot. The Talon driver persevered for sixth place and his best result of the year.

The three USAC machines which ran at Elkhart had proved to be thoroughly uncompetitive so during the five-week break before the next round the rules for the supercharged cars were modified. Their 40-gallon fuel limit was raised to 60 and their mandatory pitstop was deleted. This meant that they could consume fuel at a greater rate than was required by the USAC Championship rules without accepting the impossible penalty of having to make a pit stop. Suddenly Bobby Unser and A. J. Foyt were thinking about entering a F5000 race. Unser, in fact, wanted to run the fifth round at the Ontario Motor Speedway, but Dan Gurney didn't want to risk upsetting his team's chances for the USAC title so that Unser had to be content with driving the pace car.

For their first Formula 5000 race the OMS management organised support from Coca-Cola and decided to stage the race in the reverse direction than normal on the oval cum road course. This meant that the cars would be entering a flat-out, one-mile blind around a portion of the oval via a series of third-gear esses rather than from a tight, first-gear hairpin. Even more encouragement for the USAC teams.

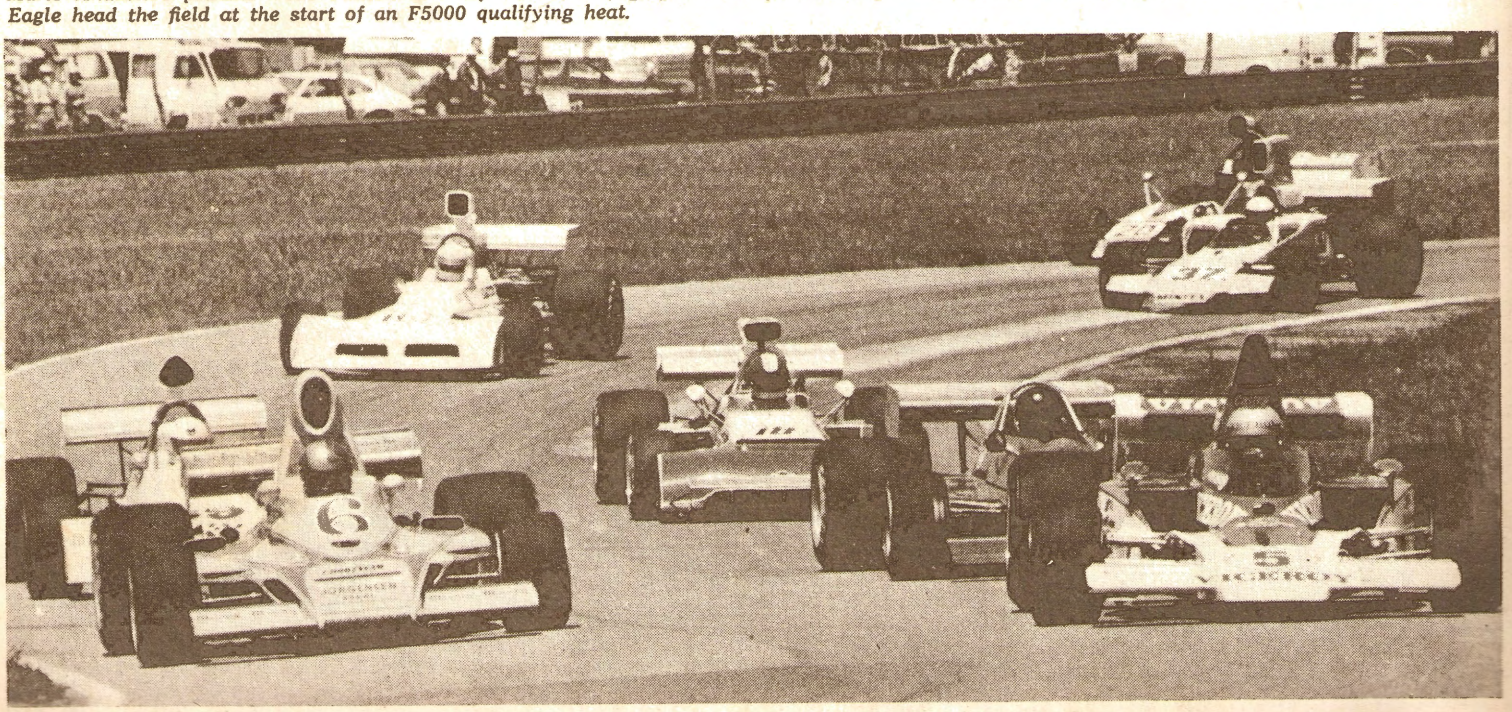
However, there was only one turbocharged car at Ontario, that being Lloyd Ruby's Eagle-Offy. On the other hand a grand total of 43 F5000 machines arrived to try to qualify for the 24 starting places in the final. Among this expanded entry were some very promising combinations. Francisco Mir reappeared after withdrawing from a dismal race at Watkins Glen. Mir had since modified his Eagle extensively in an effort at paring off some weight from the heavy car and had bought a new Lola T332. He had also hired James Hunt and Lella Lombardi to drive the cars in the place of Garcia-Veiga. Johnny Rutherford showed up ready to drive Carl Hogan's second Lola after crashing in practice for his planned F5000 debut at the Glen. Up from Australia came Warwick Brown and his Pat Burke Lola T332 while Jerry Grant joined Mike Mosley among the USAC-licensed drivers in F5000 cars—Lola T332s, of course.

It was here that Redman was able to nose Andretti off the pole for the first and only time in the season. Brian won his heat handily after a short fight with Sam Posey, while Andretti failed to win his qualifying heat for the first time when his engine burned a piston after just three laps. Mario jumped into his second car for the final and starting from the back of the grid he worked his way spectacularly up to fourth place after just four laps of the final.

Meanwhile Redman was winning as he pleased, breaking immediately away from Lunger's Eagle and Posey's Talon as Andretti caught and challenged the latter. Posey soon slowed as his front tyres went off and after a stop to change them he managed only a few more laps before again retiring with engine troubles. Andretti gradually closed on Lunger and just as it began to look as if the Eagle might hold on to second place Brett ran squarely into a wandering backmarker. The Eagle was written off and Andretti went through into second place some 25 s behind Redman.

David Hobbs had another troubled race with engine after engine failing and again he started the final with a quickly rebuilt and down on power Chevvy. Nevertheless he was able to finish while many didn't and he took third place, albeit a lap behind both Redman and Andretti. All the other frontrunners had serious troubles so that Mike Mosley came through for fourth ahead of John Gunn. Jerry

Mario Andretti's pristine Vel's Parnelli Viceroy Lola T332 (right) wasn't that far away from pipping Redman for the series. Here, he and Lunger's Eagle head the field at the start of an F5000 qualifying heat.



Grant finished sixth, thereby completing a Lola sweep of the first six places.

With two races left and a long six-week break until the next round the Championship was shaping itself into a straight fight between Redman and Andretti. The Englishman had now accumulated 70 points, five more than Andretti. The only other men with a chance were Hobbs (52 pts) and Wietzes (39 pts). The latter had been unable to start at Ontario after severe problems with cracking cylinder heads throughout practice.

It was at these final two rounds, both of them in California, that the USAC/SCCA marriage began to bear its finest fruit. Again there were some valuable additions to the field with James Hunt leaving Francisco Mir's team after an unhappy time at Ontario and joining All-American Racers to drive their prototype 1975 F5000 Eagle. Vern Schuppan arrived with Teddy Yip's Lola T332 and Al Unser took over Chuck Jones' Lola T332 after Graham McRae had left to finish the year with his own McRae GM2.

The race for the pole, however, was the same old story. Andretti took his fifth pole position of the year and Redman his fifth second grid place. But this time Mario was appreciably faster and he dominated his heat, winning by 12 s from Hunt and the neat new Eagle. The Viceroy Lola swept away from the start into its customary strong lead and by the midpoint of the race Andretti was more than 10 s clear of Redman who was comfortably holding off Hunt. But suddenly there was more ill-luck on hand for Mario. With a dozen of the 50 laps left he felt a front tyre explode, probably the victim of some pieces from Al Unser's blown engine, and by the time he had crept around to the pits and had it changed he had slipped to third behind Redman and Hunt. Eppie Wietzes struggled with a failing differential to finish a lap down in fourth place ahead of Warwick Brown and Jon Woodner.

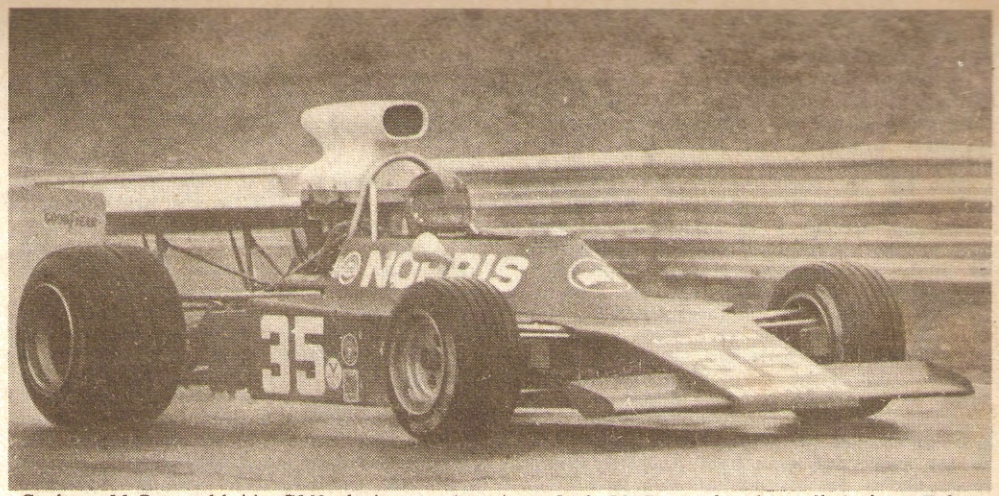
Schuppan qualified fourth but never started after a valve broke on the starting line while Brett Lunger held a pressing fourth place behind Hunt until his engine expired. David Hobbs had more engine troubles and retired after a shunt in his heat and losing much of his exhaust system in the final. Sam Posey had at least as much trouble as Hobbs and went out with yet more engine trouble while Graham McRae worked up to fifth before a flat tyre dropped him down the field.

Two weeks later 41 cars filed into the garages at Riverside Raceway for the seventh and last round of the season. Andretti had to win this race if he were to wrest the Championship out of Redman's hands for the Vel's Parnelli driver now trailed the Haas/Hall man by 13 points. Redman found himself in a very strong position for even if Andretti did win he need only bring the Steed Lola into fifth place to ensure himself of the title.

There was, however, a fly in the ointment, in fact, a number of flies. Based on the form of the Laguna race Hunt, Schuppan and Al Unser could all upset the balance of the season while Bobby Unser had finally persuaded Dan Gurney to run his USAC Olsonite Eagle-Offy and had been busy preparing the car with a mind to blowing off the road racers.

Andretti again took the pole, his sixth of the year, establishing a time that was almost as fast as Mark Donohue's best with the 1100 bhp CanAm Porsche 917/30K. There had been repeated rumours previous to practice about the speeds that Bobby Unser had managed in testing and he proved all the stories to be thoroughly true by lapping in a time that was second only to Andretti. Redman, running with a conservative, designed-to-finish engine, qualified third. Schuppan, Wietzes, and Hunt followed in that order on the time sheets and for the first time there were a dozen cars within 3 s of the pole. Not outstanding by some standards, but unprecedented both for Formula 5000 and American road racing.

The race fulfilled everybody's expectations. It was a close, hard-fought battle all the way down the line with only three or four of the 24 starters proving to be out of their depth. Bobby Unser swept off into the early lead



Graham McRae sold his GM2 design to American Jack McCormack who called them Talon MR1s. McRae drove for the team initially before switching to a Lola and then back to his beloved GM2.

with only Andretti hanging on to the swooshing USAC machine. But how he hung on! Mario threw the Lola about as if it were a USAC sprint car as he inched up on the white Eagle, hoping to pressure Unser into running out of brakes. Unfortunately the fight never resolved itself, for Unser pulled off on the ninth lap, his Offy having dropped a valve.

This left Andretti with a strong lead and he held his pace to the end winning by 5 s from a closing Redman. Brian slotted into third place at the start and let the two USAC men go, secure in his knowledge that he had the Championship in his pocket if he finished exactly where he was running. But in the closing laps he began to get a sniff of Andretti and with his gauges reading steady and the car feeling perfect he said to himself, "Bugger it, let's have a go." In the last dozen laps Redman halved the gap between him and Andretti, driving the tall red Steed Lola with all the style and panache that a champion should display.

Young Australian Warwick Brown drove extremely well to take third place, remaining well ahead of a hectic scrap between Al Unser, Lunger, Hunt and Schuppan. It was Unser who emerged from this lot to take fourth as Lunger slipped back with gearbox difficulties and Hunt and Schuppan crashed together just before the pits at the end of their 37th lap.

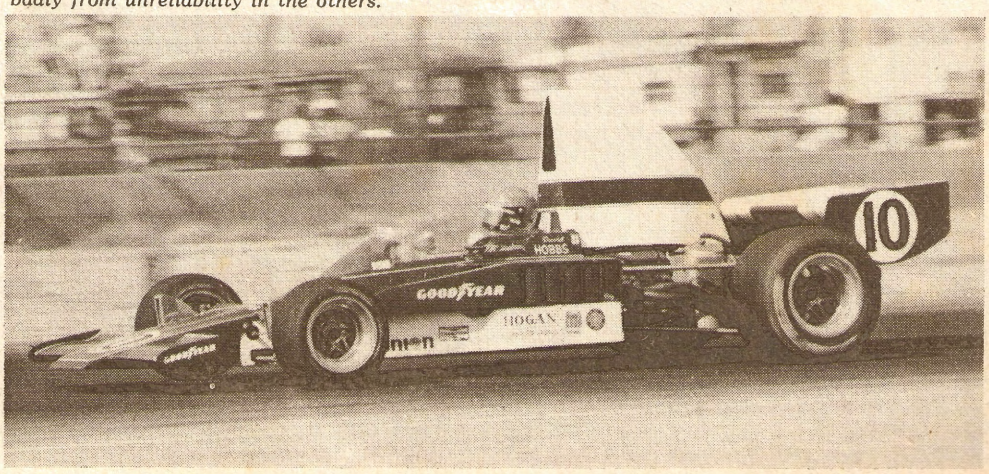
David Hobbs had another miserable weekend, going through four engines and two chassis as he soldiered his way into eighth place and third in the Championship. Fourth in the points tally was Eppie Wietzes who failed to finish at Riverside when his engine expired. He had been plagued by engine troubles throughout the meeting and started the final from the tenth row. It was Wietzes who probably best summed up the progress of American F5000 this year. Talking of the frustrations of his Riverside race he said, "It used to be that I could start a race from the back of the grid and be up to fourth or fifth in a couple of laps. But not this time. I was working as hard as I could and I was stuck in 14th!"

Carl Hogan entered his fourth Formula 5000 season in 1974. This year Hogan planned only a one-car team but as always that was for **David Hobbs.** The experienced Hobbs, starting his sixth season of F5000, initially had his pick of a new Lola T332 or one of last year's T330s. David fought his way through the field to finish a troubled fourth in that race which was, unfortunately, only a precursor of things to come.

There was a single bright spot when the blue Hogan car won the Mosport round, Hobbs having his only untroubled race of the season at the Canadian circuit. David drove a particularly tigerish race at Mosport, holding off Redman for many laps and keeping Eppie Wietzes behind him all the way. But after that everything went wrong and although he managed to finish third at Ontario and fourth at Elkhart, Hobbs experienced a string of engine failures in practice for both races and drove each final with a worried eye fastened on the gauges. The remaining races were even worse. At Watkins Glen the engine blew up while Hobbs was running fifth; at Laguna the exhaust system fell off while he was moving through the field after more troubles left him at the back of the grid; Riverside was a disaster both for Hobbs and the Hogan team. David crashed badly in practice when a bolt fell out of his T332's front suspension. He finished eighth in the final, nursing a sick motor in the spare T330 chassis which had been shunted in practice by **Johnny Rutherford.**

Rutherford joined Hogan for the Watkins Glen round, taking a seat in Hogan's second and brand new T332. But the Indy winner crashed after only a few laps of practice and the car was destroyed. Rutherford broke a leg in the shunt yet a week later he was back racing his USAC McLaren with his leg in a plastic cast. He rejoined Hogan and the

Britain's David Hobbs in the Carl Hogan Lola T332 won the second F5000 race but suffered badly from unreliability in the others.



F5000 series at Ontario and finished ninth in the T330 after the chassis had been damaged when a dreadfully slow backmarker pushed Rutherford into a retaining wall. He finished ninth again at Laguna only to have more bad luck at Riverside when the differential failed and slung the car into the wall, extensively damaging the left side suspension. It had been barely half an hour earlier that Hobbs had his shunt so Hogan sat down and decided to rebuild just one car for Hobbs to race. A bleak way to end the season for the whole team.

Also competing for the sixth year in F5000 was Canada's **Eppie Wietzes.** As has always been the case Wietzes was driving for Formula Racing, a privately-financed team managed by Joan Clayton who spends her weekdays working as a librarian. This year Wietzes ran a new Lola for the third time and took a second at Mosport, a pair of thirds (at Watkins Glen and Elkhart) and a fourth at Laguna to place himself fourth in the championship.

Wietzes had his share of engine troubles, failing to start the Ontario round because of cracked heads, but when the impeccably-finished blue T332 ran cleanly Eppie was quite a threat. He surprised everyone by chasing and catching Andretti and Redman at Mid-Ohio and leading Redman at Elkhart. Eppie Wietzes is probably one of the finest amateur racing drivers in the world.

Dan Gurney's new sky-blue Eagles had a troubled first season. The cars were based on the very successful USAC design and as a result they were overweight and lacked traction in slow corners. The Jorgensen Steel-sponsored team worked long and hard throughout the year gradually paring off at least some weight and sorting the car's beautifully-executed aerodynamics. By the end of the season the Eagle was becoming competitive and team leader **Brett Lunger** won a heat at Ontario and pursued his way, albeit briefly, into fourth place in the final at both Laguna and Riverside. A string of mid-season DNF's dropped Brett out of a contending position in the points table although he still managed to finish fifth overall.

Lunger matured considerably over the season, particularly in his car-sorting ability. At Riverside he led both James Hunt and Al Unser before gear-linkage problems slowed him down. The Californian had been under a lot of pressure to perform well in those final rounds and responded admirably proving that he has become a very competent racing driver.

Elliott Forbes-Robinson filled the second Eagle seat in his first season of F5000 but despite showing lots of ability his year was largely unsuccessful. He finished an excellent second, behind Hobbs and ahead of Redman, in a wet heat at Mosport but otherwise his season was riddled with breakages. He was dropped from the works team for the last two rounds and although he managed to find a drive at Laguna (in Francisco Mir's troublesome Eagle) that was the end of his Formula 5000 season.

James Hunt was hired to drive the prototype 1975 F5000 Eagle at Laguna and Riverside. The new car was lighter, narrower and much cheaper than the 1974 model and carried rising rate front suspension. Lunger did the testing on the car and reported it to be much better under braking and going into tight corners in comparison to the older machine. Hunt qualified third and finished second at Laguna and although the car hadn't proved to be fully competitive it was a very good debut. At Riverside Hunt found the car understeering habitually and finally crashed as a result of this while running fifth.

It was also at Riverside that **Bobby Unser** made his first F5000 appearance. He and his team ran their USAC Eagle-Offy quite separately from the F5000 team (even occupying a different part of the paddock) and they took considerable satisfaction in being able to clearly outqualify both the old and the new F5000 Eagles. Unser showed his road racing abilities as never before and will almost definitely campaign the full series next year in a Formula 5000 Eagle.

F5000 veteran **John Gunn** entered all seven races and earned a couple of fifths and a sixth place. He started the year in his March 73A from the previous season but after some alarming moments with the car he arrived at Ontario with a new Lola. Gunn was sponsored by Marchal Headlamps and Dalles Heyser, the darling of US road racing ran the team.

Twenty-three-year-old Australian **Warwick Brown** came over for the last three races with Pat Burke's Lola T332. He went extremely well, impressing everybody with his enthusiastic style which brought him a fourth at Ontario, a fifth at Laguna and an outstanding third at Riverside. Brown obtained sponsorship from Kenalloy Fasteners for the last two races and could well be a serious threat this coming year.

Graham McRae had a second frustrating year in America. After going so well with his McRae GM2 in the Tasman he did a deal with Jack McCormack who was to build the GM2s in his California shop. The cars were called Talon MR1s and Sam Posey was to partner McRae in the team with Norris Industries providing the backing. Unfortunately things started off badly and after two miserable races McRae left the team. He took up with Chuck Jones for a couple of races and went well in that team's new Lola T332, taking a fourth at Watkins Glen. But McRae wanted to run things his own way and after Elkhart he split with Jones. The last three races saw McRae run his own GM2 and despite a tight budget he began to show more of his old flare finishing a good fifth at Riverside.

The Norris team carried on after McRae's departure and their fortunes began to slowly improve. **Sam Posey** had, like McRae, failed to finish the first two races. On both occasions Sam retired because of gearbox problems with his experimental Wiseman 'box and for the Glen he reverted to using a Hewland. It was there that he had his best finish of the year, a fifth, for at every other race he had many problems. It was a disheartening year for Posey but when things were right he did show that both he and the Talon could do much better.

Jon Woodner arranged a private deal to race the third Talon but after McRae moved on Woodner became part of the Norris package. He acquitted himself well, going faster with each new race so that at Riverside he was able to hold a strong fourth place clear of Al Unser, Hunt and Schuppan before a flat tyre brought him into the pits. As it was, Woodner collected more points than any other Talon driver. These included Skip Barber and Rocky Moran who did rental deals for one race each, although both were out of luck.

After McRae left Chuck Jones, the California real estate man went looking for a Grand Prix driver for his T332. He approached Regazzoni and Reutemann but both were too involved with Formula One. Realising that he would be unable to get a top F1 driver he turned to USAC and quickly settled on **Al Unser.** The younger of the Unser brothers raced the black Lola at Laguna and Riverside and showed lots of road racing ability. He went faster each time he drove the car and at Riverside he was able to edge away from Hunt and Schuppan into a fine fourth place finish.

Teddy Yip, the doyen of Theodore Racing, decided to forsake the final Rothman's races in Europe to run his man **Vern Schuppan** in the last two American rounds. With Sid Taylor managing the effort and Alan Smith watching over the engines the team became an immediate force in the series. Schuppan qualified fourth in both races, impressing all with his press-on approach. Unfortunately he failed to start Laguna due to a dropped valve on the grid and crashed into a spinning James Hunt while running sixth at Riverside.

A colourful addition to this year's series was the team run by ex-patriot Argentinian Francisco Mir. Mir initially purchased an Eagle for Argentina's Formula One champion **Nestor Garcia-Veiga.** The car was ready in time for Mosport and Garcia-Veiga showed well, finishing fifth despite running out of fuel. Watkins Glen proved a disaster, however, with incessant engine troubles ending Garcia-Veiga's weekend even before the final began. After that Mir reorganised the team, dropped Veiga, purchased a Lola T332 and hired James Hunt and **Lella Lombardi** to drive his cars. Hunt appeared at Ontario but left after it became apparent that he and the team could not work together. **John Morton** and Elliott Forbes-Robinson filled in later with Morton taking a good seventh in the Eagle at Riverside. Mir obtained sponsorship from Mr Marty for the last three races and this was the basis of his deal with Lella Lombardi who finished ninth at Riverside driving the Lola.

Among the privateers the most successful was **Evan Noyes** who parlayed some good early-season results with his own Lola T332 into ninth place in the championship. **Tuck Thomas** appeared only three times with his Lola T332 and finished behind Noyes in the standings thanks to a couple of consistent fifths.

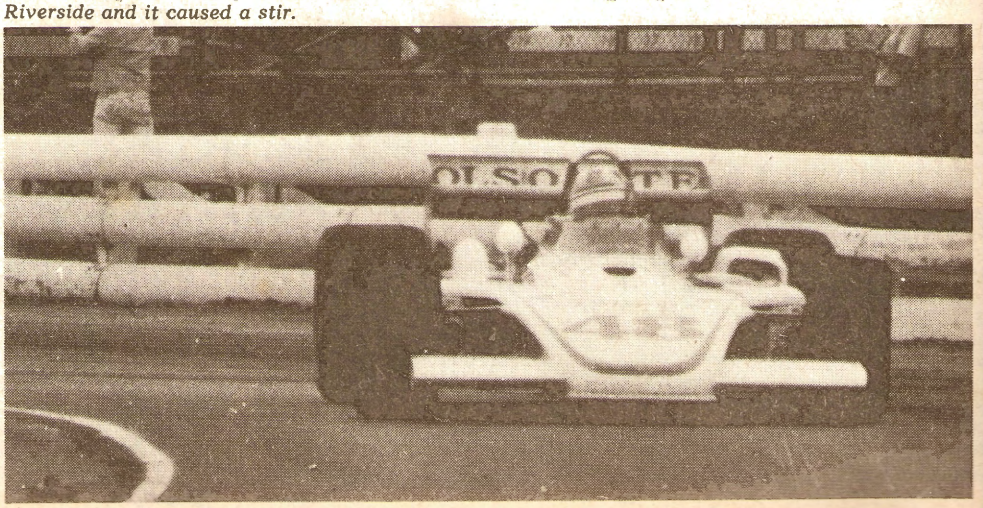
Gus Hutchinson rebuilt his March 73A around a 741 monocoque and entered Laguna and Riverside. Despite very little money and very little track time for both driver and car, Hutchison managed an eighth at Laguna and a tenth at Riverside.

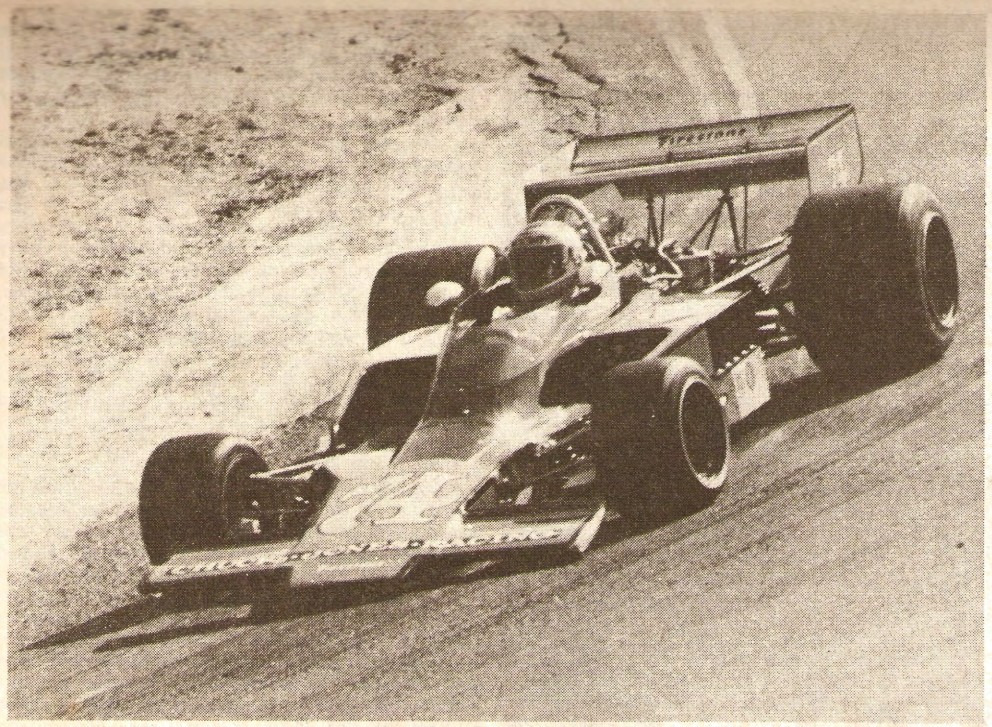
USAC driver **Mike Mosley** joined the F5000 series at Watkins Glen. His sponsor J. C. Agajanian and Lodestar Enterprises bought a new Lola for Mosley to drive but he had a difficult time at most meetings and didn't race the car at Riverside.

In total there were 47 drivers who qualified to start in the seven final races. Twenty-seven of those drivers were in Lola chassis while seven were in Eagles. The rest were in an assortment of Talons, Marches, Chevrons and Eagle-Offenhausers. Singleton qualifiers came from McRae, McLaren-Chev, McLaren-Offy, Matich, Kingfish, Lotus, and Fischetti.

If 1974 was a year of revolution for Formula 5000, next season should see a new order begin to flourish. The schedule for the 1975 USAC/SCCA championship will almost definitely comprise a dozen events. Despite a general shortage of team sponsors in American road racing it appears that more top quality teams than it ever seemed could

Dan Gurney ran Bobby Unser in his USAC series winning Eagle turbo in the last race at Riverside and it caused a stir.





USAC superstar Al Unser made the plunge into F5000 with the Chuck Jones Lola T332. He will team up with Andretti in the Parnelli team this coming year.

exist in North America are preparing full-scale efforts for this expanded series.

The Formula 5000 Championship it seems is on the threshold of becoming the first really representative motor racing series in North America. It is attracting constructors, promoters and drivers from USAC, the SCCA and Europe. Never before has that happened. Perhaps, just perhaps, Formula 5000 and American motor sport have matured and met each other at precisely the right time.

The top teams

Carl Haas and Jim Hall continued their successful association of 1973 into the new season with **Brian Redman** again driving the team's new Lola T332. Once again Steed Additives sponsored the car in conjunction with a variety of secondary sponsors and Redman followed on his record of five successive '73 wins with three victories in 1974. In conjunction with three second place finishes the Lancastrian became the first USAC/SCCA Formula 5000 Champion. Surprisingly enough this was the first time that either Redman, Hall or Haas had won a major championship.

It was principally an uncanny reliability record which brought Redman the title. The team approached their season from this perspective and only once did they try to wring all the speed they could from the Lola. That was at Ontario when they ran the car with the newer and more powerful Chevrolet heads, but Chaparral engine man Franz Weiss (who also did most of the testing on the car) didn't place much faith in the new heads and reverted to the older design for the last two races. Throughout the season Redman suffered only one engine failure and that was in practice for Riverside when a long-mileage engine that was due to be changed at the end of the session threw a rod after the big-end bolts had stretched.

There were, of course, other reasons behind Redman's triumph. Carl Haas managed the team's finances impeccably and he claims they actually made a profit on the season. Jim Hall was always busy tuning the chassis and aerodynamics of the Lola in a very careful and calculated manner so that the car almost always reached its best pitch in the final itself. Redman worked particularly well with Hall, slowly playing himself in at each meeting so that by the time of the final he was just as fast as anybody. In total it was an extremely relaxed yet effective operation. A perfect Formula 5000 Championship team.

In a nutshell, the story of the team's success can be told by a few graphic figures. During the past two North American F5000 seasons Redman has started 15 races for Haas and Hall. His record reads eight wins, five seconds and one DNF (that because of a shunt with a backmarker). Few teams in the long history of motorsport can boast of such performances.

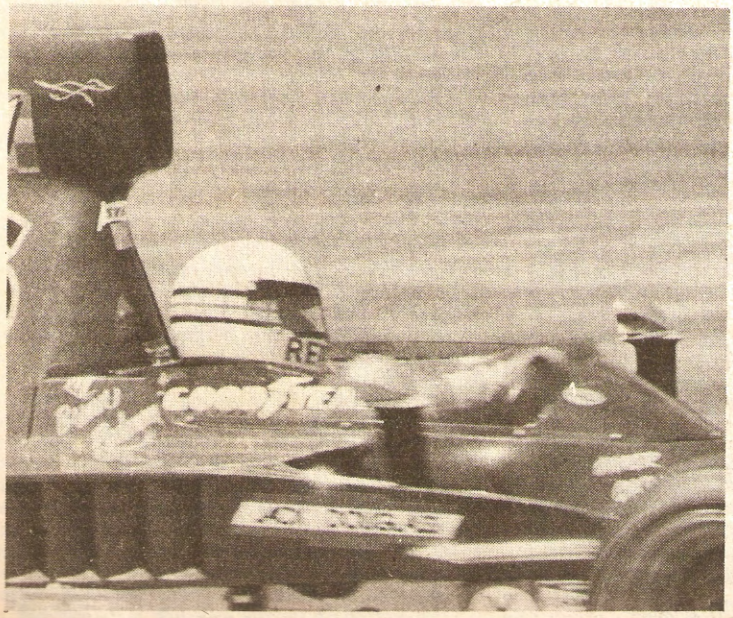
Parnelli Jones and Vel Miletich, the principals of Vel's Parnelli Racing, made a bold move when they decided to run **Mario Andretti** in Formula 5000. At the time of their decision the series looked shaky and they had everything to lose if, for some reason the team failed to perform.

With generous backing from Firestone and additional support from Viceroy they began their season in January when the first of their two chassis arrived in California. Jim Chapman, previously with Carl Haas and Lola Cars, had been hired to manage and prepare the cars and Andretti began his development programme in early February. By the opening round of the series the Viceroy Lola T332 was more than ready. Its Falconer & Dunn Chevy appeared to have established a new target in the F5000 horsepower race and its Firestone tyres seemed to be worth some measureable time over the Goodyears which almost everyone else used.

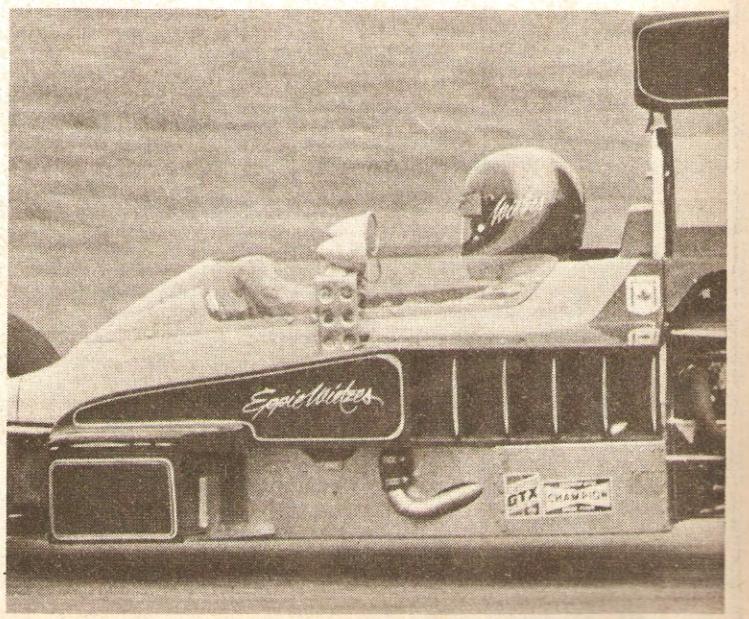
The car was able to maintain at least some edge over the opposition throughout the season and Andretti's extremely fast and clean driving brought him six pole positions and took him into the lead of six races. Only once did the car fail to finish, that at Mid-Ohio when a steering arm broke. Andretti continued his development programme during the season (in between an iron man schedule of USAC Championship races, sprint car races and testing and racing the F1 Parnelli). At the end of the year the two red and white Viceroy T332s had different roll centres both front and rear, different wings and were used to test differing tyres during practice sessions. Andretti and Chapman were the only team in the series that it could be said ran themselves hard, just as if they were campaigning a Grand Prix season. And that, of course, was precisely the point.

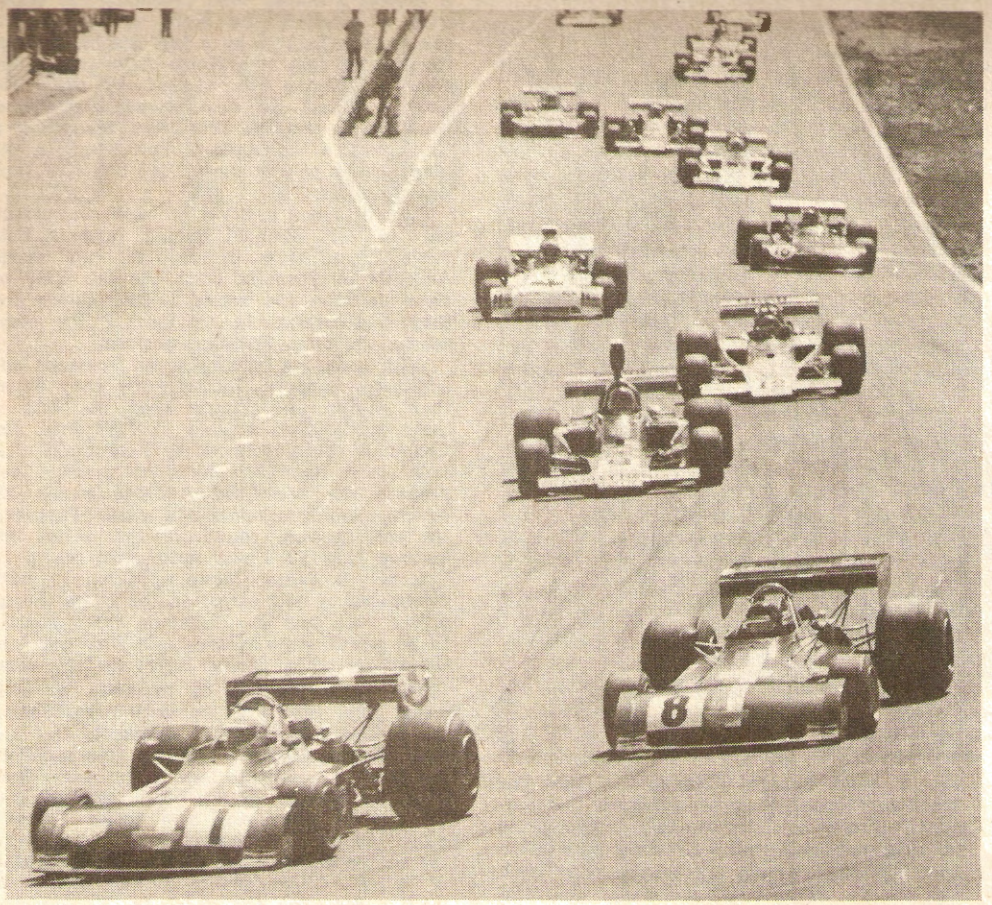
Mario Andretti may not have won the USAC/SCCA Championship but he clearly showed that his road racing capabilities were at least as good as had ever been expected of him. He is a man experienced in many forms of motor racing, a man who can drive a racing car with relentless speed and calm. As Jim Chapman said of him, "He's an incredible driver to work with. I know so many prima donnas who ponce up and down if things go wrong. But he'll just get out of the car and immediately get involved with a solution. I've only ever known one or two drivers like that."

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The VDS Chevrons of Teddy Pilette and Peter Gethin lead the Lolas of Bob Evans, Ian Ashley and the rest soon after the start at Zandvoort.

F5000 SURVEY: EUROPE

Evans thunders home

By IAN PHILLIPS

A year ago we were reflecting on what had undoubtedly been the best year of Formula 5000. It had been through a very stormy childhood but during 1973 it began to grow up — the racing was good and thus the misgivings were forgotten. It looked good for 1974. A number of critics have said that last year was better than 1973; however, I'm of the opinion that it did perhaps fall a little way short. It was more a year of consolidation of the ground gained in 1973 rather than one of giant steps taken forward. The racing was once more excellent with some superb battles taking place in the majority of the 18-round Rothmans Championship. There was a slight lack in numbers of truly competitive machinery, but this is perhaps not surprising considering the problems caused by fuel and economic crises at the start of the year. However, two cars can make a race although conversely 12 or 14 do not constitute a full grid or anything like it. That, though, was not really the problem. Politics is generally regarded as a nasty word, it's not really in this instance, but it generally provides an apt description of the area where the development of the Formula was hampered. A fuller look into these appears towards the end of this review, but I'd like to make it clear at this point, this is not a trendy knocking viewpoint. Formula 5000 is basically healthy, as stated above the racing is excellent, but the one thing which emerged from this season of consolidation was that the basic organisation of the formula was lacking in some areas which caused some discontent among the competitors. This is proof in fact that the formula has really established itself. In past years when it was feeding fodder to the critics, nobody really cared. Now it's established world wide and taken on a tremendously professional air, inherent problems have been discovered. I think the formula will be better off in the long run as the 1974 consolidation allowed the problems to come to a head and be sorted out before it became too big. All indications point to a tremendous year in 1975.

From a technical point of view 1974 did not really see any great strides forward, at least not until the end of the season. Only two manufacturers really took the formula seriously, Lola and Chevron. Neither came up with anything very new. Lola built a development version of their successful T330 model, the T332, and this was undoubtedly the most popular model world wide. Chevron took their existing B24 model to the Tasman series and while Peter Gethin and Teddy Pilette showed the locals the way home, a number of development ideas were tried and the cars arrived in B28 trim for the European season, although, like the Lola, they were outwardly very similar.

March Engineering made a more serious effort than before with their 74A model which was directly descended from their F1 car of the time. They built two cars for one team but these disappeared in the middle of the year. Trojan who, results-wise at least, had a good first year in 1973, came up with the Ron Tauranac-penned T102 but interest was surprisingly low and it appeared only spasmodically. Modus came up with a car for Tom Walkinshaw towards the end of the year which was fitted with the Cosworth Ford V6 engine. The car was an uprated F2/Atlantic chassis which really was not quite up to the job while the engine (of which more anon) was too new for anything conclusively to be drawn.

There were no McRaes or Surtees in anything like competitive form. The only Surtees to appear was a TS8 which didn't comply with the deformable structure regulations and was dreadfully slow, while the entire McRae GM1 stock was bought by Ian Ward and updated to his own specification. Keith Holland tested it once and the plan was dropped. One car turned up for the last meeting and one can understand the reason why. Two McLaren M19 ex-F1 chassis appeared during the year and, except on one freak occasion, were not as competitive as one likes to think they should be.

On the engine front certain developments were made. Universally fuel injection became a must. At the start of the year opinion was divided on this but by mid-season all the leading runners considered it necessary Although it may not have added significantly to the power of the big American V8s it did make the power they delivered easier to tame. The horses came in smoothly instead of all in one lump and made life much easier for the drivers. Swiss tuner Louis Morand reintroduced the flat plane crank V8 on one occasion for Peter Gethin (it was last tried in 1970 by Alan Smith). The power was certainly there but it caused far too much vibration in the car to be of any use.

The announcement of the 3.4-litre Ford V6 engine at the beginning of the year created a lot of excitement especially when it was announced that a version would be developed for F5000. The theory behind it being that it is considerably lighter than the 5-litre Chevrolet and could be slotted into a smaller F2 chassis, thus despite its lack of horsepower its power to weight ratio would be such that it should be competitive. Because of the three-day week its appearance was delayed until the last three races of the year and no real conclusion can be drawn. However, the quoted power figure of 440 bhp looks as though it won't be enough, another 20 would, perhaps, make all the difference. The chassis manufacturers are divided on its possibilities although it is perhaps significant that Chevron, who announced they would not build any cars for 1975, have agreed to build at least one car to take the V6. If the V6 can be made to work it could be a tremendous boost for the formula, in that it should reduce all round costs which will give the formula a wider appeal. Only time will tell but it would be most agreeable if it does take off.

DRIVERS

The final year of the Rothmans Championship saw 27-year-old Bob Evans take the series. Evans graduated to F5000 in 1973 after two years in F3. Driving for the Gloucestershire-based Alan McKechnie Racing team, with additional sponsorship from STP and Henly Forklift, he had a brand new Lola T332 at his disposal plus the best in Alan Smith Chevrolet engines. In 1973 driving a Trojan for the same team, Bob showed himself to be fully competitive in this class although the machinery available was not of the best. In 1974 he seized his chance and fully deserved the honours he won. Not only did he have the speed, but on a couple of occasions his temperament was severely tested, by Brian Redman at Brands and Gethin at Mallory, and he acquitted himself very well. His handling of the Lola was very smooth yet severely confident and his approach thoroughly professional throughout. The team, under the managership of John Thornburn, was small and extremely efficient. The preparation of the car was such that Bob finished all but two races which is most impressive. Early in the year Bob found the Lola a little bit difficult to sort out but sheer application by him and the team put it right and the successes started to come.

If Bob does get into F1 this year it will be interesting to see how he adapts. It's a different technique but the character he showed in 1974 should see him through. It must also be recorded at this time that there are no plans for McKechnie Racing to compete next year. They have been supporters of the Formula since the beginning and will be sadly missed. It is fitting that they should have taken the championship in their last year.

Evans' only real challenger for the title was Peter Gethin in the VDS Racing works Chevron-Morand Chevrolet B28. After winning the Tasman championship and then dominating the first race at Brands it looked as though Peter would take his third Rothmans title (he won the first two). However, although a number of wins followed during the first half of the year, it then started to

go a little sour for him. Peter undoubtedly still has the ability to be the quickest man in the Formula but when the Chevron appeared to lose its advantage he became disenchanted and seemed to lose interest on occasions. Having been in the Formula since it started, and a consistent winner throughout, he, more than anyone, is able to judge how things have progressed. It is hardly surprising that such a professional should become disenchanted with some of the very amateur running of the races.

Gethin's VDS team-mate and 1973 champion Teddy Pilette had a desperately unlucky year, not managing a single win. Again in the first half of the season when the Chevron had a real advantage he proved in a good many races that he had been a worthy champion. He led many of the early races only to have mechanical problems intervene. His results just were not indicative of how competitive he was and it is hoped that with the change to Lolas both he and Gethin will have a happier year in 1975.

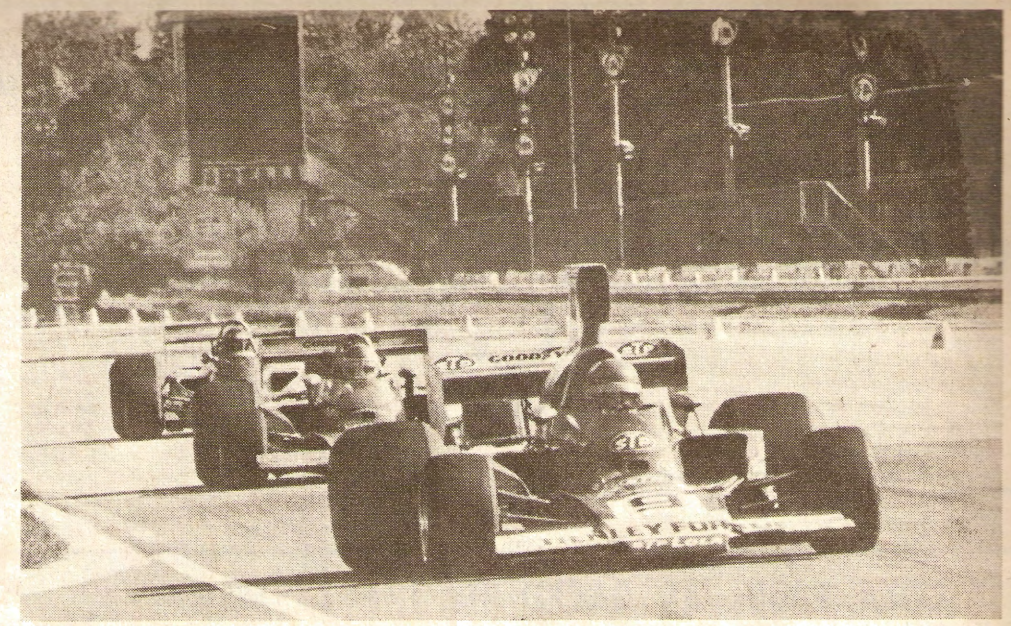
The early season races saw the return of Brian Redman to our shores driving Sid Taylor's Lola-Smith Chevrolet T332. The new model was developed by Brian during his American foray in 1973 and he quickly proved it to be very competitive. Brian and Peter Gethin, the two seasoned F5000 competitors, really made the early season races with Redman taking more of the honours. His drive at Oulton Park with a puncture and the rear wing falling off was one of the races of *the* year. He quit the Formula for F1 briefly and then went to the USA to take the championship over there and his absence was certainly missed over here. His presence in the entry lists gave the other drivers something to aim at and, without discrediting the other competitors, much of the quality of the entry was lost when he moved to America.

The season also saw the return of David Hobbs to the British scene, albeit briefly. He brought over one of Carl Hogan's T330 Lolas and the combination certainly added some colour to the scene. David had a win in his own time at Mallory and an unsatisfactory one at the rain-ruined Mugello. He was, however, another true professional to find the British scene a little too amateurish. When his other commitments clashed he hired the car out; Derek Bell put it on pole position at Thruxton (another former F5000 driver who we'd like to see more of) and Dave Morgan did the same at Mallory before crashing it in the race while leading. It proved a fairly expensive operation for Hobbs and the car was retired before the end of the year. It would be nice if he could take in the whole series again, though.

Vern Schuppan started the year with Sid Taylor's Trojan T101 which was a fairly unproductive operation but when Redman turned to F1 and America, the Australian, with extra support from Teddy Yip, took over Taylor's Lola. He proved to be very fast on occasions but luck just wasn't on his side and he didn't manage to carry on the Lancastrian's success. For the last race of the year he took over the third VDS Chevron B24/B28 at Brands Hatch and with a smooth but very determined drive, he walked away with the race and rid himself of the frustrations of what must have been a very unsatisfactory year, certainly until then.

Another driver of whom much was expected, but for whom nothing really went right, was Guy Edwards in the Embassy Lola-Smith Chevrolet T332. The first half of the year was punctuated by accidents for the John Butterworth-owned car and then Guy broke his wrist in a testing contretemps at Mallory. He was out of racing for some time and the car was handled competently, if unspectacularly, by South African Eddie Keizan and Keith Holland, the latter having given up trying with the unreliable Trojan T102. However, on his return at Mallory Park Edwards led virtually from start to finish; he failed to repeat the form again but it was a worthy highlight in an unproductive year.

Dane Tom Belso was surprisingly dropped from the ShellSport Lola team for the year but backing from EMI Records and Radio Luxembourg enabled him to campaign his



European F5000 series winner Bob Evans leads Vern Schuppan and David Hobbs at Monza.

T330 during the year. He always tried his very best and was always in the top six runners—he scored a good win at the Snetterton debacle but deserved more in the way of satisfactory results. Replacing him in the ShellSport team was Ian Ashley who brought with him his own Lola T330 for Jackie Epstein's outfit to run. Unsuitable engines at the beginning of the year hampered his performances but when he got hold of first, the RES injected, and then Roy Fewkes developed mills, he became one of the strongest challengers. He's lost his reputation for being a wild man and has in fact matured into a very fast and extremely competent driver. In a new car this year, with a properly financed team behind him, he must be a strong favourite for the title.

Mike Wilds graduated from F3 with a new March backed by Dempster Developments. Right from the start, when he finished second, in the Race of Champions event, he proved to be competitive. However the car was in obvious need of a proper development programme to give it some sophistication despite it gaining a pole position at an early Brands round. What it lacked Mike made up for in enthusiasm but it became increasingly unsatisfactory. After being put off at Thruxton and breaking his wrist he never really looked like settling in the car again and moved into F1 at the end of the year.

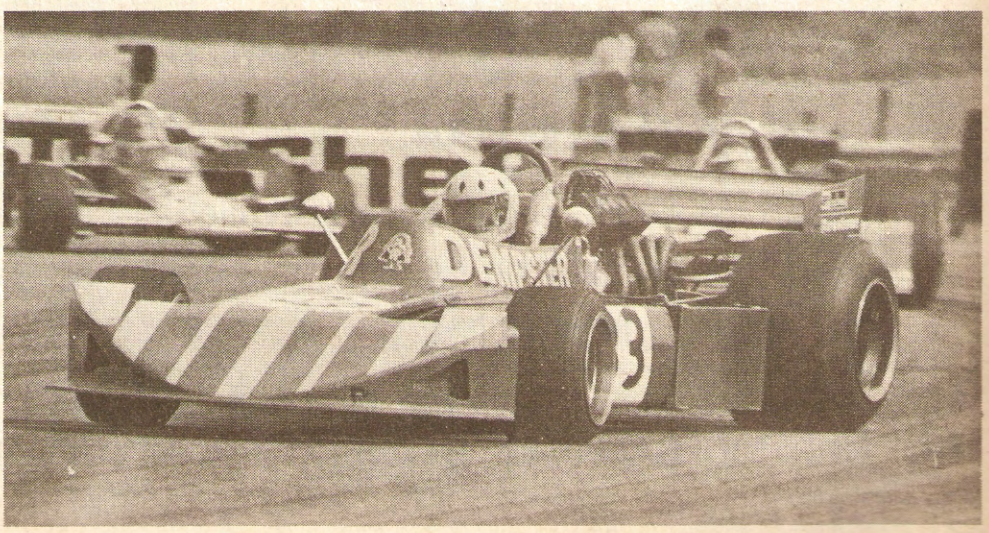
Yorkshireman Tony Dean campaigned a couple of Chevron B24s during the year and although he scored a win at Brands he was never really competitive although he had the reputation of being the most difficult man in the Formula to pass. Irishman Damien Magee started the year with the ex-Regazzoni Lola T330 which was thoroughly underfinanced and never gave him a chance. He got a Chevron B24 for a couple of races and showed up well, especially at Brands in the wet, but once more the money ran out and he was left without a drive. If he was given the security of a regular competitive drive Damien could still make the grade.

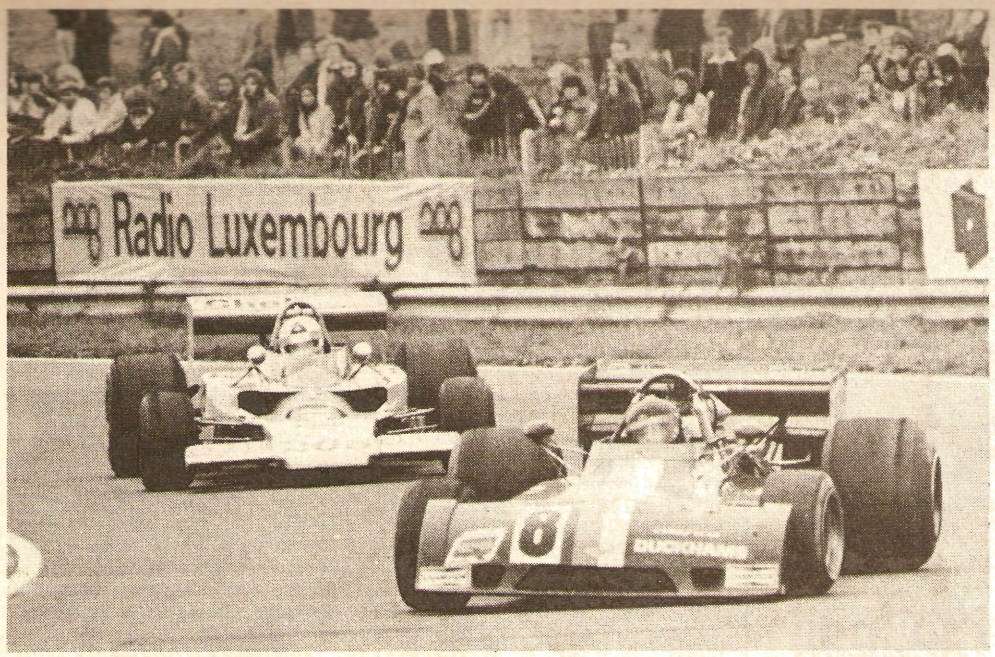
Chris Craft handled an updated B24 for Adlards Crowne Racing following a deal with VDS and although he put everything he had into it, success just never came mainly due to lack of horsepower. Team patron Martin Birrane pulled out in August after American F5000 ace Brett Lunger had driven the Brabham BT43 competitively for him.

Australian Brian McGuire started the year with the ex-Hexagon Trojan before buying a new Lola T332 in which he showed up well. He surprised one or two who didn't remember him from F3 days and with an injection of some sponsorship he could really put it all together and become a consistent front runner. His former F3 team-mate Alan Jones had one outing in the ex-Magee Chevron B24 in the last race and ran strongly until mechanical trouble intervened. With the ambitious and enthusiastic backing of Harry Stiller next year Jones will certainly be a strong contender.

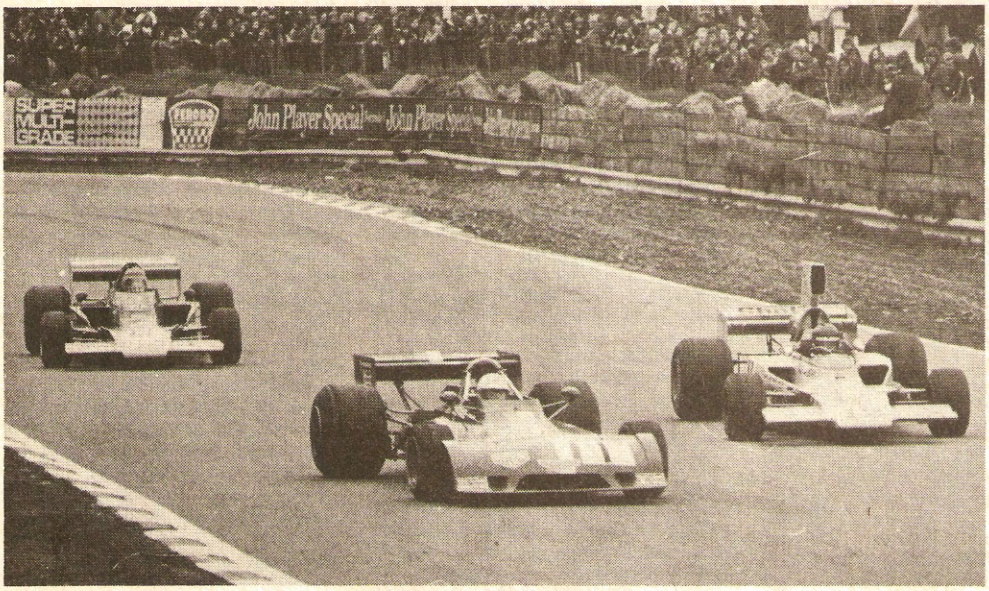
One driver who deserves special mention is Italian lady Lella Lombardi. When it was first announced that John Webb was bringing her over to drive one of the ShellSport Lolas, we all laughed and were perhaps a little worried. How wrong can you be. She started with a lucky fourth place at Brands but as the year progressed there was no luck about her high grid and finishing positions. Race by race her confidence grew and her driving improved

F3 graduate Mike Wilds showed spirited early-season form in the semi-works March 74A before he broke his wrist in a shunt.



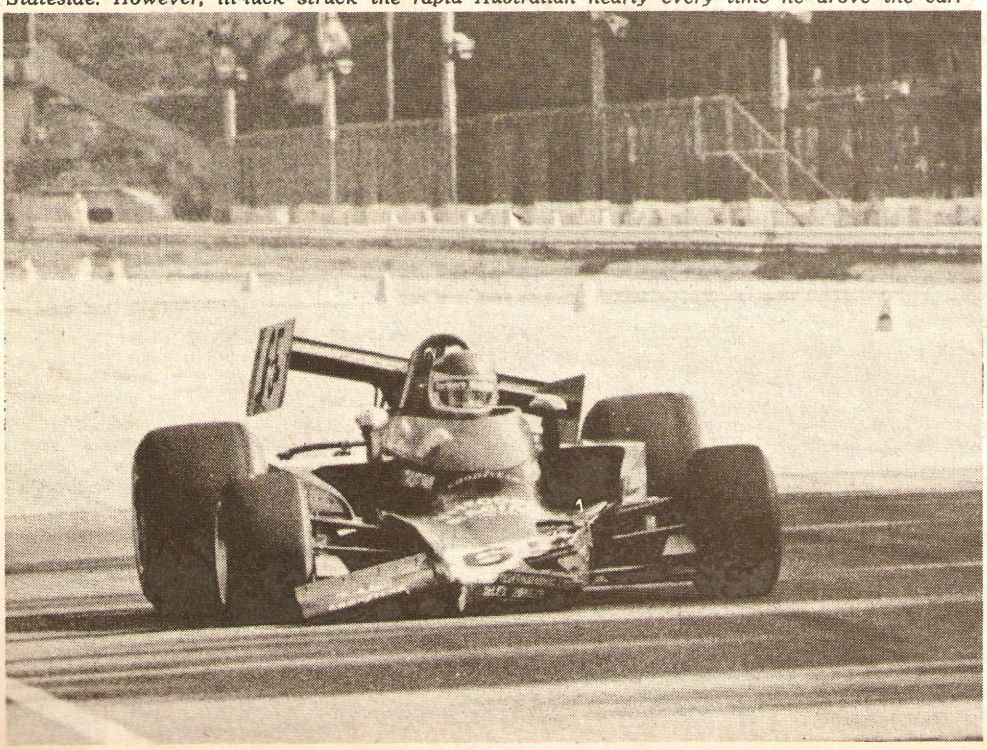


Gethin leads the impressive Italian Lella Lombardi in her ShellSport Lola at Mallory.



Reigning champion Pilette in his VDS Chevron led many races but luck was not on his side. Here he leads the impressive Ian Ashley and Evans at Brands.

The Sid Taylor/Teddy Yip Lola was taken over by Vern Schuppan when Redman went Stateside. However, ill-luck struck the rapid Australian nearly every time he drove the car.



enormously. Instead of being a publicity gimmick she was, by the end of the year, a respected competitor and although she will never escape the spotlight she is without a doubt a serious racing driver.

THE FUTURE

Before one starts discussing what is right and what is wrong with the formula it is perhaps best to see where the formula stands. Whether it was originally intended to replace any existing formula is now irrelevant as it has established its own identity, however, it is becoming increasingly obvious that it will replace F2. This category now holds very little British interest and with a change of engine regulations at the end of 1975 it will virtually become wholly French. Both formulae are expensive but the up and coming British driver can only get sponsorship for F5000. Formula 2 which spreads throughout Europe just does not attract the money, therefore it's got to be F5000. As this becomes increasingly so, the whole formula has become more professional but, and this is the crux of the problem, it is being run almost as an amateur club formula. A single car professional team in F5000 is laying out around £50,000 during the year. It is scandalous that they should be subject to organising clubs who dither about unable to make decisions. On three occasions in England last year races had to be stopped because of rain; on two of these the decision was taken too late. These are cars with around 500 bhp on tap and running on very wide slick tyres. They are lethal on just a damp track. The drivers have decided they want the race stopped if it starts to rain and it's clear. Whether one agrees with this method or not it is the regulation and must be adhered to before a nasty accident occurs.

The Formula is organised by F5000 Europe, an organisation with representatives from the promoters, organisers, drivers, constructors and sponsors in its constitution. All very democratic but does it work? Half of the drivers don't agree to racing on certain circuits and at Snetterton they couldn't make up their minds whether to race, alter the circuit, go home or what. It was chaos. Admittedly it came about through an inadequate circuit and a complete amateur organisation but if F5000 Europe is a united body the whole thing could have been sorted in a third of the time.

There are other vagaries among their decisions. They'll race at Brands Club, Mallory Park and Snetterton; all being very short circuits in need of safety improvements, but not on the Silverstone Club circuit which admittedly is very short (not as short as Mallory though where three races are held) but with considerably more room in which to have an accident.

If F5000 is to become a strong European formula as it undoubtedly will, is it right for potential GP drivers to get their horsepower experience by racing on a circuit where they are lapping in under a minute (Brands Club, Mallory, Snetterton, the new Oulton and Silverstone Club) all the time? No, it can't be. It does make for good watching and attracting crowds is what we're all in business for, but to run 12 out of 18 races on circuits like this not only does the driver no good but the spectator too gets bored after a while.

There are probably too many championship rounds anyway, but if it does become as important as it looks like doing, wouldn't a 16 race series with eight in England and eight in Europe give it a good balance? There are already races at Zolder, Zandvoort, Mugello and Monza. Surely another four at the expense of some of the silly short circuit British races would not be hard to find.

Until there is a real alternative to the Chevrolet V8 engine, European interest from a competitor's point of view will not be very strong but with the right sort of management the Formula can be built into a highly attractive circus to sell to the Europeans with a little co-operation between the parties who currently band together under the name of F5000 Europe. With ShellSport sponsorship this year and rumours of a very respected organisation taking over responsibilities for the Formula, 1975 must be the best year yet.



Fifth after four stages — Walter Rohrl/Jochen Berger, Opel Ascona.

Monte: Munari into the lead

As we went to press the situation on the Monte Carlo Rally was finely in the balance. In the end there were 96 official starters, and the concentration runs were reported to be unpopular with all competitors including the private entrants. There were many problems awaiting competitors on the run in. . . . In Italy all the controls were very poorly located, and enormous crowds contributed to the confusion. In Morocco the rally route made use of the new road from Agadir to Marrakesh, so new in fact that it included a 30 kms unmade section. This in itself would have presented no problems but competitors happened to run into a sandstorm with a violent following wind at the time, which resulted in many cases of mechanical failure owing to overheating. In Sweden intense police activity was reported, particularly between Stockholm and the ferry. Police made their mark too in France where a speed trap set up outside Gap claimed Andruet, among others, and he was in consequence penalised 50 seconds.

Of the 96 starters, 86 reached Gap last Saturday morning. They left the town that evening at 11.00 pm to tackle four stages on the run in to Monte Carlo, two in France and two in Italy. Only the first stage was well covered with snow, but all the others were wet and liberally strewn with mud and boulders. All serious competitors used heavily studded tyres on this first stage, and racers for the remaining three.

Several principal contenders hit trouble well before the start of these stages, however, Amicare Ballestrieri had the engine of his Beta coupé fail just before the Monaco start. He struggled on to Cuneo where the Lancia mechanics changed the bearings in the engine, but it refused to co-operate and blew up on the way to the next time control. Walter Rohrl has been hampered by a suspected cracked camshaft in his Euro Ascona, and it was changed on Monday night before the stages at Burzet. Anders Kullang in another Ascona suffered a two minute penalty on the road at Brescia after changing axles and running short of time. Jacques Henry in his ex-works Alpine had the inlet manifold go in Rome, and then the sump cracked at Brescia so the Alpine mechanics had to glassfibre it up to enable him to continue.

Andruet took along Yves Jouanny as his navigator in place of Michelle Petit and the crew got lost in Italy. Nicolas had the starter motor changed on his Alpine only to have a short circuit in the wiring loom, a fault that was fixed on the run to Agadir. All three Stratos changed axle ratios in Gap, (this is an easy 12 minute job on these cars).

The first four stages provided intense dramas of their own. Sandro Munari was fastest on three of the four, while both Andruet and Piot crashed the other two Stratos on the same bend in test two. Andruet broke a knuckle in the front suspension while Piot half-demolished his car. It seems that a small patch of ice had formed here in between the time of the start and ice note crews going up for their recce.

Both A310 Alpines started the first stage on three cylinders as the driving rain had got in while the cars were in parc fermé at Gap and wet one of the plugs. Warmbold then went on to crash 400 metres from the finish of SS4 after grazing a rock and breaking the mountings of the steering rack, heralding his retirement.

Ingvar Carlsson in the Dutch Ascona lost nine minutes on SS3 when he went off and had to enlist helpers to regain the road. Alén in the 124 had a puncture on this same stage and was forced to drive 6 kms on the flat; while his teammate Hannu Mikkola set fastest time on SS2 after being slow through the first; the reason for this being that he was first car through the stage and had to make tracks through the deep snow. Ragnotti took 600 studs per tyre here while the others made use of 400. He proved his point convincingly by setting fastest time despite a spin. Nicholas went off here; he had had new brake pads fitted in Gap and the reason for his misdemeanour was apparently that they had not been given time to bed in. Stage three was the first of the stages run over Italian territory and it was on the point of being cancelled owing to a rockfall, but the organisers left their decision too late. This has made a big difference to the current overall positions as it has enabled Munari to go far further ahead. Both British entries are still running. Doug Harris/Mike Butler in their G2 Mexico were lying 57th overall, while Tony Maslen/John Jensen in a G1 RS2000 were 61st; 74 cars were still in contention as we closed for press. Overall positions after four stages were as follows: Munari, 38 m 58 s; Alén 40 m 53 s; Bachelli 41 m 33 s; Mikkola 41 m 44 s; Rohrl 41 m 51 s; Darniche 41 m 55 s; Nicholas 42 m 05 s; Ragnotti 42 m 28 s; Therier 43 m 13 s; Henry 43 m 36 s. The top ten cars thus run as follows: Lancia, Fiat, Fiat, Fiat, Opel, Fiat, Alpine, Alpine, Alpine, Alpine. Lying 13th overall and currently leading the G1 section are Guy Frequelin/Christian Delferrier in an Alfa Romeo 2000 GTV.

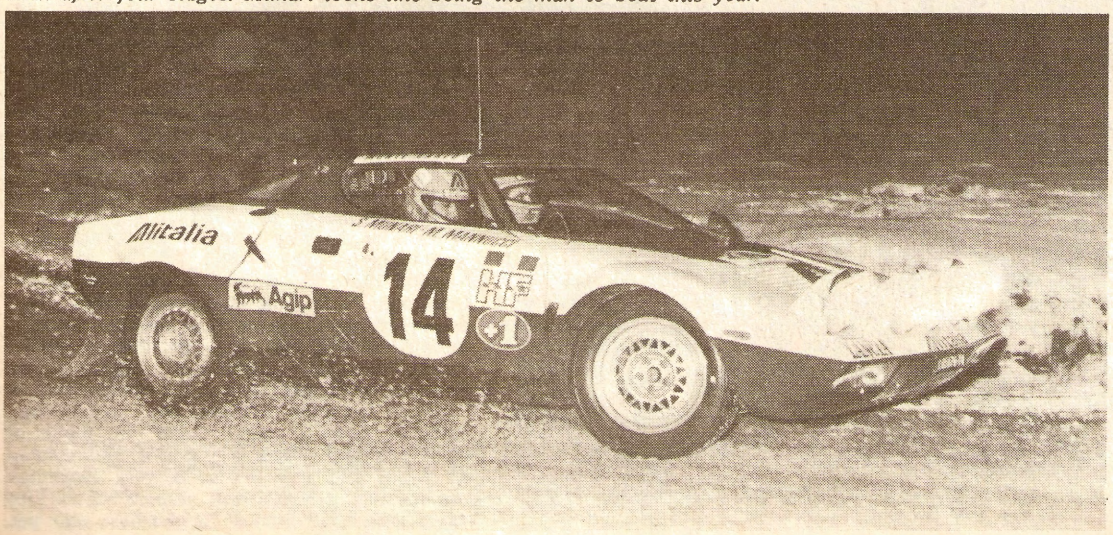
'Temporary withdrawal' for Clarke and Simpson

Ford Rallye Sport dealers, Clarke and Simpson of Belgravia; London's leading rallying-orientated Ford people and one of the country's most ambitious rally participants has been forced to cease a competition programme. The reasons are a two-fold lack of sponsorship, with Centre Hotels pulling out after three successful years and a considerable involvement with Castrol terminating, due to the parent Burmah Oil Company's financial plight.

This news must come as a blow to Finnish star, Pentti Airikkala (see feature elsewhere in this issue) who was due to be driving a Clarke and Simpson Escort on the forthcoming Mintex Dales.

Managing director David Sutton commented: "Our withdrawal is only temporary and we hope to be back in rallying very soon. In the meantime our competition workshop and performance parts department will be continuing as usual." Last year Clarke and Simpson successes included winning the Castrol/AUTOSPORT Ladies' Rally Championship, which was supported by Evette cosmetics; and winning the Sherry Rally in Spain with Billy Coleman, although it is well known that a timing technicality caused their eventual disqualification. Clarke and Simpson have always encouraged and sought new talent and the drivers they have helped to success include Markku Alén, Mike Hibbert, Barry Lee, Pentti Airikkala, Jill Robinson, Chris Sclater and Billy Coleman.

Clear leader — Sandro Munari slithers the Stratos over the snow of the first test, 1 m 55 s ahead of Markku Alén after four stages. Munari looks like being the man to beat this year.





revised dates . . .

There have been one or two revisions to the dates fixed for the Castrol/AUTOSPORT series and there seems to be some confusion over the revised schedule, so here it is. February 21/22, Mintex Dales; April 13, Tavern Rally; April 26, Bass Charrington Tour of Lincs; May 9/11, Welsh Rally; June 20/22, Circuit of Donegal; July 26, Welsh Border Rally; August 23, Burmah Rally; September 6, Armstrong Forest Rally; September 12/13, Manx Trophy; September 27, TBN (Wolverhampton and South Staffs CC); October 17/18, Cheltenham Festival; The date of the last round, the Tour of Eppynt, is still to be finalised. Anyone with any queries regarding registration, etc, is urged to get in touch with Castrol Rally Championship Co-ordinator, Eric Silbermann, Clubs Department, Burmah House, Pipers Way, Swindon, SN3 1RE.

● Following the unfortunate fire which all but burnt out Gordon Batchelor's CAX 2K Escort on the Tour of Dean, he is reportedly purchasing a new rolling shell from Graham Lepley. The engine is to be a 1930 cc all-steel BDA built up by John Robinson of Northampton. Batchelor's plans include a determined assault on the Castrol/AUTOSPORT series this year.

Esso terminate with R. Clark

Although Esso have pulled out of their association with Roger Clark (rumoured to have been in the region of £10,000) their decision is not likely to affect Clark's programme of events and Boreham are continuing with preparation and testing of the new shelled Escort. However, it is unlikely that this car will make a competition debut before the Granite City on April 12. The Escort will not be in the dealers' showrooms until March 19 and it would seem that a policy decision is responsible.

Problems arising from the disappearance of XPU 220 L, the car Andy Dawson was to drive on the Tour of Dean, have certainly created some musical chairs amongst regular Ford drivers though all are likely to be accommodated in some form. Russell Brookes, who was to have taken over the Dawson prize-drive car until a new car is made ready, will now revert to the trusty group one RS2000 for the Mintex Dales and the Circuit of Ireland. Brookes' plans are not thwarted however and he is grateful for the assistance Ford are giving through this difficult period—Brookes will also have a new sponsorship announcement soon. Billy Coleman, a Ford contracted driver, will be marking-time for the moment with his current car and will continue to use it for both tarmac and loose events. Coleman was planning to run the present car set-up for tar and use a new vehicle for loose rallies.

SCCA plan "Pro" series for makes

The Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) have announced details for their Pro Rally Series. This will be the third year of the popular championship for European style events and the first round will be the Sno Drift on February 15/16. In all, twelve events are scheduled to be run at even spacing throughout the year and, subject to approval by the SCCA's Board of Governors, a separate Pro Rally Series Manufacturers Series will be instigated this year with the highest placed marques finishing in the top six overall positions awarded points towards the title. Scoring for drivers and co-drivers counts on a most points in the best five of the first seven events started. The SCCA also sanctions the POR International Rally, which was dropped by the FIA from World-Makes status after last year's problems.

So far so good for sideways Jean Ragnotti — likely to finish but perhaps not without some tears in the delicate glass fibre bodywork.



First for Fagan

Recent Irish news stories include that Brendan Fagan/Kenny Johnston (Escort RS) won the first round of the BP Irish National Rally Championship, the Cibie Nite Lite Boreen Rally, with almost 10 marks in hand from the Gerry Forde/Paul Phelan Porsche Carrera. John Tansey/Derek Johnston (BMW 2002) finished in third position ahead of reigning champion Sean Campbell, navigated on this occasion by Derek Smyth. The 180-mile event attracted 38 starters and was organised by the Trials Drivers' and Dublin University Club.

For the first time in the six years that this rally has been won the navigation was cleaned by Paul Phelan (winner of navigators title in 1974). Brendan Fagan ensured victory by taking fastest time over all four of the forest stages by almost a minute to mark his first big win. Forde had an "off" on the first stage, losing nearly 2 m.

The BP Championship goes into its second round on February 22/23 with the Hellfire Rally, another co-promoted event, this time between the Leinster and Cavan Clubs. Originally scheduled as a night rally, this will now be run as a daylight stage event.

● John Butson, winner of the Ford indoor Table Top Rally Championship last winter has transferred his experience to the road. Driving with his wife, Pat, in his Escort Sport, Butson won the Dunfermline CC's "Night Op" rally last weekend. The 170-mile route was over sheet ice and frost and was the fifth counter in the Esso Uniflo Championship of navigational rallies in Central Scotland.

● By last Sunday night the forthcoming Mintex Dales amassed a total application of entries figure of 231. Seeding has now been completed and "everybody is entered," including Finnish star Pentti Airikkala—see C&S story.

BTRDA Gold Star series boasts 65% forests

The BTRDA have announced that an official list of their Gold Star events is now complete. Though there is no sponsor this year, Esso will be producing the paperwork and stage arrows/boards, etc. Esso will also give assistance where possible with individual events and, in particular, will be supporting the Uniflo Gwynedd on February 22 — the first restricted forest rally using "classic" North Wales forest stages. Intending participants should contact: Mr D. W. Edwards, 22 Grugun Wen, Groeslon, Carnarvon.

The BTRDA policy for deciding on the format and standing of the events within the sphere of special stage rallying has been to keep costs to a minimum. This has been effected by cutting the number of events and spreading the remaining 11 rounds as evenly as possible through the year. Seven of the 11 rounds have a full forest allocation and seven of the 11 also count for scoring, so the BTRDA would appear to have pruned their series most effectively. The Triple "C" Championship will have no association with the BTRDA.

An extra committee, under the direction of Simon Bretherton, have produced a paper on stage rallying which has been put to the RAC, who are now examining the BTRDA's suggestions. The paper covers the sport comprehensively, including the grading of events and use of land.

IDEM Escort—back to leaf springs?

After the Tour of Dean, the IDEM Escort of Scottish crew Donald Heggie/George Dean, was sent back to its base for Broadspeed to continue development. The car made a most impressive showing on the Dean until clutch trouble forced retirement. A list "something approaching 25 items" of adjustments and recommendations was sent with the car. The car's next outing will be on the Snowman Rally, on February 1, and by that time futher modifications will have ben made to the rear suspension arrangement. Testing later this week is expected to take place of new Bilstein parts and if any problems persist, there will be everything necessary fitted for the accommodation of leaf springs.

● Donald Heggie's previous car, the successful ex-works LVX 941J, is now offered for sale. The car has an exemplary pedigree and could be yours for £3,000—no haggling, we are told. Interested parties should contact George Dean at Beaconsfield 5652 (business) or 6614 (home).

Extravaganza for the Scots

On Sunday, February 16, *The Scotsman*, in conjunction with SMT, DTV and Castrol, are running another "Wheels within Reels" spectacular at the Dominion Cinema, Churchill, Edinburgh. The extravaganza gets under way at 3 pm. In the easy chair will be none other than John Foden, and the panel includes Andrew Cowan, Tony Fall, Gerry Marshall and, of course, the irrepressible Roger Willis. Films on the agenda are the Vauxhall Tour of Britain epic, the Castrol film of the Burmah Rally, a Vauxhall film entitled "Enthusiast" featuring racing at Ingliston, and the Marlboro film of the 1973 Monte. Various competition cars will also be on static display. Tickets are 75p from the promotions department of *The Scotsman*, North Bridge, Edinburgh. Mark your envelope "Wheels within Reels."

Super-quick Scot, Andrew Cowan.



Briefly . . . .

A top entry for Circuit

Interest in the Circuit of Ireland International Rally has been described as "very good indeed" with a particularly high number of continental and Scandinavian drivers writing for details. Among drivers to have reserved entries are Donald Heggie with the IDEM Escort; Harold Morley (a Porsche currently undergoing preparation at Tony Drummond's workshops) and Paul Martin, this year's Ulster Rally Champion. David Lindsay, Adrian Boyd and Sean Campbell are three "regulars" already entered. Entries are open until March 1, by which time the Circuit could have amassed its best-ever entry. Clerk of the Course, Malcolm Neill is busy in Sweden recruiting.

Rally stars collect their due

Last Wednesday the presentations of the RAC Motor Awards for 1974 attracted a great many rally faces to the impressive "Great Gallery" of the RAC Club, Pall Mall; a building which reflects the better days of the sport with a towering ornate ceiling and glittering chandeliers of immense proportions. However, the RAC are saving money with the best of us, even shortening Russell Brookes' name to keep the engraving bill within reason. The public bars around the sumptuous Pall Mall location must also have experienced a sudden and unexpected windfall when the RAC enforced a strict time-limit on the imbibing of their courtesy drinks and brought the chequered flag out after barely an hour. Several rally and racing stars escaped being run down by only inches as they raced from the building to have their hard-won trophies filled with intoxicating liquor to continue their merry-making.

Not all the faces were the winners' countenances, however, and somewhat surprisingly no Opel representatives were in attendance. Billy Coleman made a welcome public appearance to collect his congratulations as 1974 RAC National Rally Champion. Timo Makinen made an appearance as winner of the RAC Rally, before being hurriedly whisked off to the airport to jet back to Finland. To collect awards for the Group One section of the National Rally Championship, both the winner — Will Sparrow and second place man, Russell Brooke(s) were present.

● A further award to Ford of a Caithness crystal vase engraved with a picture of a rally-prepared Escort was presented at the RAC Awards to Mick Jones, Competitions Department Foreman, who accepted on behalf of Ford. The award was in recognition of Ford's three consecutive RAC Rally victories with Roger Clark in 1972 and Timo Makinen in 1973 and 1974. Mick Jones, of course, has led the team of Boreham mechanics who have serviced with winning cars.

Welsh support

The Welsh Rally has a new sponsor, the Cardiff-based *Western Mail*. A revised schedule goes with the good news. Cardiff is to be the new HQ and hospitality area for the rally, something that will surely not dismay competitors; and the start will be at the local cycle stadium. HQ itself is situated right in the centre of the city. The start will be on Friday morning and there will be a rest halt at Aberystwyth. A lunch halt is scheduled for the Saturday at Llandrindod Wells and the remaining competitors make their way back to Cardiff on Saturday night. On Sunday there is just the matter of Llandow in the morning, and prize giving in the afternoon. It is interesting to see the resurgence of interest in rallying shown by Thompson-owned provincial newspapers (the *Scotsman* and the *Belfast Telegraph* are also Thompsonites); one only regrets that such interest is so sadly lacking at a national level.

The Firestone

Details are now available for the Firestone International Rally, the eighth round of the European Rally Drivers' Championship, scheduled for March 21/23. The event has always been popular with British crews and last year Paul Faulkner and Billy Coleman finished fifth and sixth respectively behind winner Walter Rohrl.

The start this year will be as usual in Bilbao on the evening of Friday, March 21. The first part will be an 816 kms section to Santander on good tarmac with two 1 h service halts. After a nine-hour rest halt the rally then returns to Bilbao over a 599 km route with a 1 h service halt. All the stages of this section will be on loose with tarmac links. The total number of stages will be 29, covering some 350 kms.

Entries will be accepted up to February 28 with a fee of 5,000 pesetas which includes insurance and accommodation in Santander. The total prize fund is $17,000 with $3,500 going to the winner. Regs will be available in early February from Martin Whale, Secretary IRDC, 9 Common Close, Shrivenham, Swindon, Wilts.

exhausting . . .

The Central Tyre Service crew of Graham Hollis/Euros Jones, Escort RS2000 Group 1, No 44 on the recent Tour of Eppynt, had the misfortune to lose their exhaust system on the second stage but they finished 17th O/A and first in Class. What the crew did not know as they could not hear was that a lobe on the camshaft had worn down which meant that the exhaust valve of number three cylinder remained closed throughout the event.

Plans for this year for the pair, is the Castrol/AUTOSPORT Group 1 Rally Championship which is yet to be finalised. Graham also hopes to compete in the Mexico Challenge Racing Championship once again, after showing promise last year.

O'Gorman bros to share Alpine

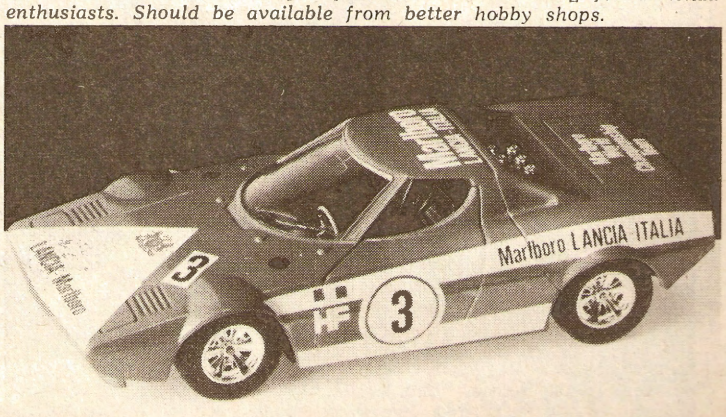


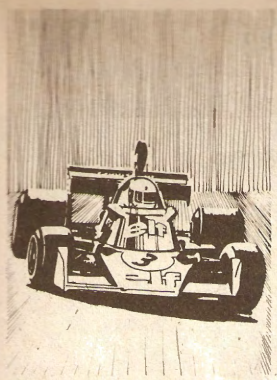
The O'Gorman Bros, well known hat manufacturers of Cork, have purchased the ex-John Price Alpine Renault. John (above) will drive it in Galway while brother Greg waits until the Circuit for his first shot.

Adlards efforts

Peter Watson, Adlards (Clapham Common) Rallye Sport Centre Manager will once again be competing with regular co-driver Graham Smith throughout 1975 with an Escort RS2000. They will be tackling *Motoring News* events plus selected ACSMC and London Counties rallies. Selected internationals and the Avon Tour of Britain are contemplated. Performance of the Adlards car is expected to be "drastically improved" for the coming season.

No escaping the Stratos — this is a picture of a new 1:24th scale die-cast model from Martoys of Milan. Just the thing for armchair enthusiasts. Should be available from better hobby shops.





"I like to think that Jochen Mass could usefully have spent more time driving around town learning to avoid hitting his fellow motorists."

Pretty well all the drivers like to get out to the Argentine at least a week before the race. Officially it's so that we can acclimatise—you know the sort of thing. We overcome our jet lag, get used to being on a different continent, but mainly we spend time driving around in Buenos Aires traffic. After a two month lay-off it's a great way to get returned to thinking like a racing driver.

You would not believe the way the traffic here behaves. It makes a Formula Ford grid rushing up to Paddock Bend at Brands look like a funeral cortege. Everyone travels at the same speed—flat out. When you get to a cross road priority goes to the man with either the biggest car or the guy going too fast to stop. The philosophy for avoiding accidents in the interesections is beautiful. The man least likely to have an accident is the man spending least time in the intersection. The other thing I learnt very quickly was never to tell cab drivers that I was a racing driver. One of these loons trying hard to impress you is an experience you'll never forget. So now if they ask me I'm an underwear salesman here for a convention.

Driving around here is the next best thing to being in a motor race. Funnily enough they seem to have a low accident rate.

I like to think that Jochen Mass could usefully have spent more time driving around town learning to avoid hitting his fellow motorists.

On the first lap of the race he came flying up behind me going into the Esses and gave me such a thump that I went skeetering across the grass like a billiard ball. It was all arms and elbows for a bit and then I got the car pointing at the track and since there was a gap in the traffic I rejoined. The time I spent off track was offset by the fact that I'd cut off the first loop of the Esses so in fact I only lost about four places. I knew it was all too good to be true when I looked in my rear view mirror and saw a concave profile on the rear tyre. So on the first lap I slipped into the pits for a new wheel. Three laps later I was back in again with blisters the size of grapefruits hanging off the tyre. What we discovered later was that the bump up the back had knocked the rear suspension out of alignment and I was scrubbing the hell out of the tyre.

During the race I needed two more tyres and there was one point where I thought the Goodyear guy was going to come over and give me Green Shield stamps for being their best customer.

But it wasn't all bad. I quite enjoyed the race once I'd got over being annoyed with Jochen. I'd watch Ken's pit signals and see myself climbing through the field . . . 16th, 15th, 14th . . . and then in for another new tyre and 16th, 15th, 14th again.

Towards the end of the race I devised a technique of easing the car through the left handers so as not to aggravate the tyre wear situation and was in fact going quite quickly. I didn't have too much trouble getting past Ickx and Stommelen and Donohue and after the race I discovered that I'd been lapping with a few tenths of the leaders' times. In fact I think I made fourth fastest time in the race with the bent suspension. So if we unbend it maybe I can do better than 11th in Brazil next week.

The race crowds here are amazing. There's more spirit among them than I've ever seen at an English soccer match. If they've got a favourite they stand up and let him know. Of course Carlos Reutemann is *their* man and I'm sure it was the force of their cheering that took Carlos off the second row into the lead on the first lap. Last year he lost the race here when he ran out of petrol. This year he finished third and the delight of the fans was both visible and audible. In fact we could even hear the cheers for him through the ear plugs we wear.

The other novelty of the weekend was our bodyguards. Kidnapping is the second most popular leisure activity out here. There have been 171 successful cases in the past 12 months. No one is really sure whether the reasons are political or purely financial. But it seems that anyone worth more than a fiver is a potential target. So they mustered the most talented, most professional elite of bodyguards to protect us. I assume that they were all crack hot operators because we're all still here.

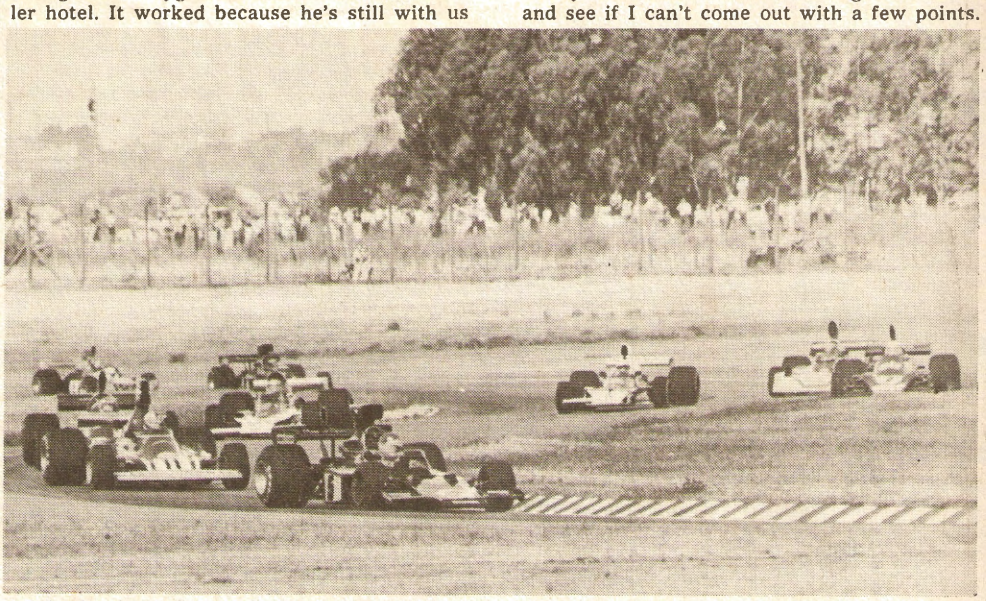
Emerson got a bit twitchy about the security angle. I guess he figured that as world champion he was a more likely target than the rest of us so he doubled his personal strength of bodyguards and moved to a smaller hotel. It worked because he's still with us too.

I hear Ford got one of their rally cars stolen from outside a hotel in England over the weekend. Maybe it's cars that need guarding rather than the drivers!

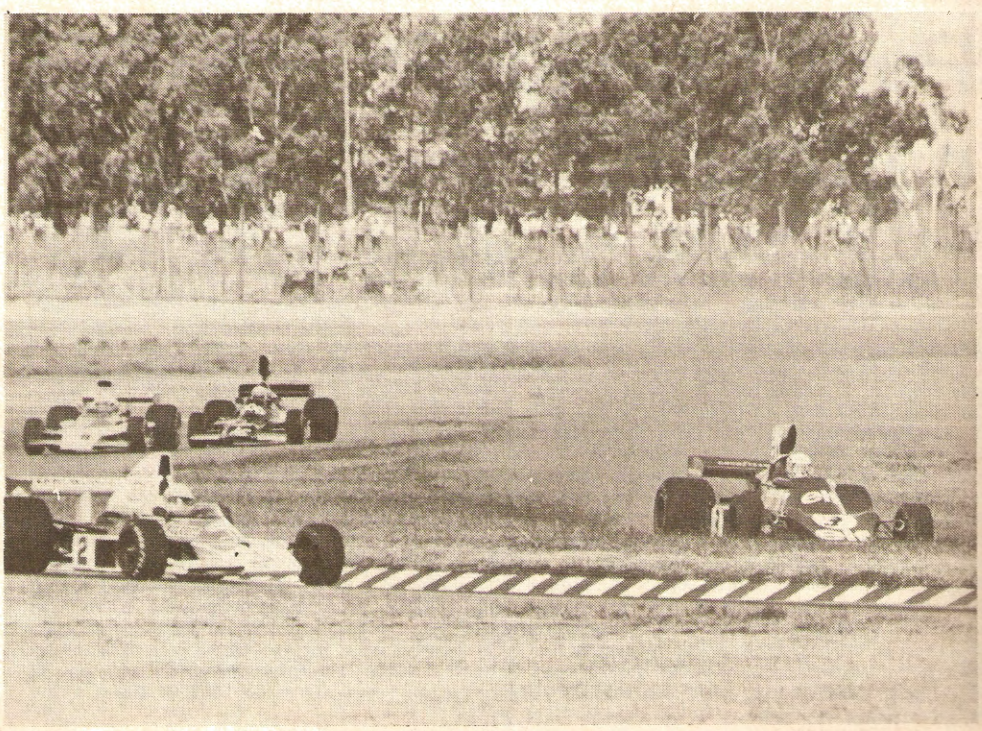
We're on our way up to Brazil to try and fit in some testing at the Interlagos circuit prior to the race so that we can get some of the bugs out that bothered us during practice here. My ninth place on the grid wasn't altogether representative of what the car was capable of. On the first day a gearbox bearing gave up and that put paid to my practice after only eight laps. It was a nice cool day and good for making fast times. The following day was a real scorcher and nobody improved on their previous day's times.

I thought the two Brabhams went particularly well, rather as I predicted in my last column. James made the new Hesketh really work well and Emerson proved again that you don't have to be fastest to win the race.

Scoring points is important at any time in the season. But somehow its psychologically more important in the first couple of races. So, with luck, in Brazil I shall give up any further attempts to establish myself as Goodyear's best customer and get in there and see if I can't come out with a few points.



Scheckter's "off": "the time I spent off the track was offset by the fact that I'd cut off the first loop of the Esses. . . ."





Twilight in the Dean is shattered by Airikkala, Liddon, and 000 97M's snarling BDA.

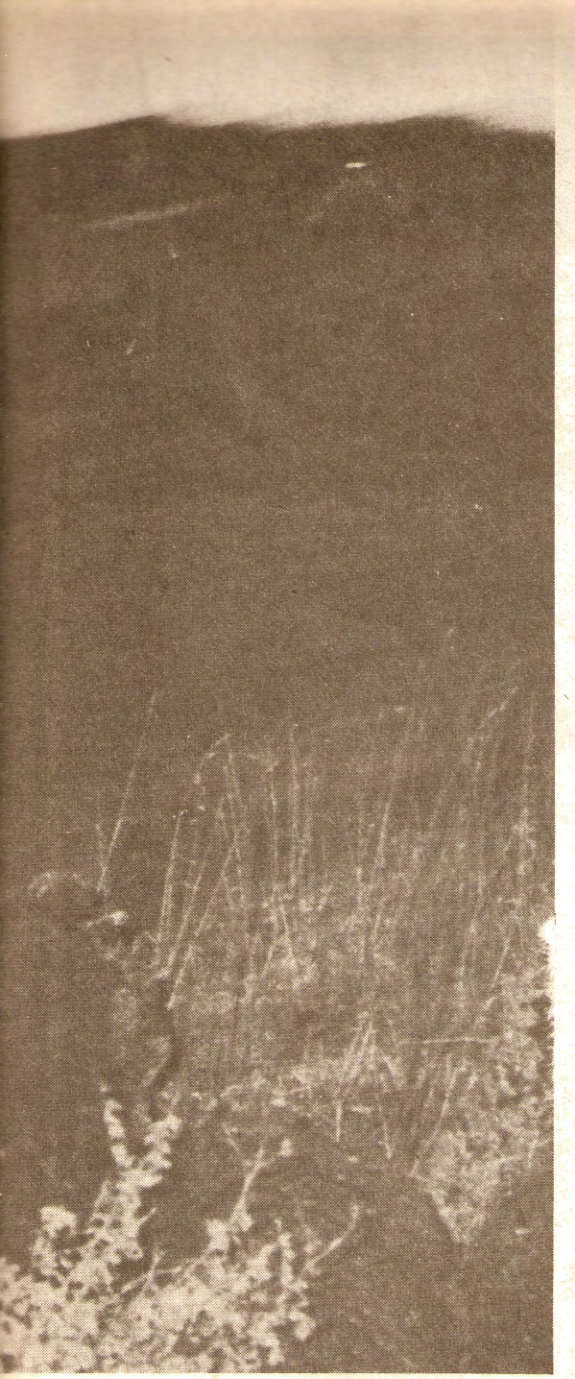
Pentti Airikkala — a natural born winner

By PETER NEWTON

Every so often an uncharacteristic occurrence serves to ripple the surface on the tranquil pool of British stage rallying — sometimes it bounces out of the regulations to surprise the circus, sometimes it arrives by ship from Eire, and sometimes it comes from the frozen north in Super Caravelles marked Finnair. The latter event has occurred more regularly of late, and all the signs point to the fact that it will happen more frequently in the future. The event in question is, of course, the arrival of a stocky 29-year-old Finn by the name of Pentti Airikkala. He smiles a lot with an infectious, boyish grin, and his disarmingly quiet and unassuming nature leaves one totally unprepared for the violence he is only too happy to unleash at the wheel of a rally car. He approaches his rallying in a refreshingly open fashion and with a bubbling sense of humour simmering just below the surface, he will tell you how surprised and fortunate he was to have won an event — only the twinkling eyes and the grin serve to illustrate what fun he has extracted in the process. The sport has always meant just that to him — a hobby from which he derives immense personal satisfaction and, like all Finns, the tougher the opposition the better he likes it. Two weeks ago he competed for only the fourth time in this country. It was the occasion of his second win on a national status rally, and it was achieved with more than a mere touch of professionalism as well as a vast store of natural talent that serves to demoralise all but the most determined and bring broad smiles to the faces of even the coldest, wettest spectators. To accuse him of professionalism might well be met by a toothy grin and laughing denials — the latter probably just a smile. How does he do it and who is this burly affable stranger on our shores? We intercepted him after the Tour of Dean, as he was preparing to slip away to his homeland, to find out.

For all the modesty that Pentti exhibits, one might be excused for assuming that success is something new to him; and one would be wrong, for he is no stranger to the art of winning. He started rallying ten years ago in a secondhand Volvo which he bought himself, and won his first three junior class events outright (similar to our restricted status rallies) before moving into the seniors' sector. His father ran a bus company at the time so there were wheels outside the house which had to be experimented with; the locals soon became used to the sight of incredibly sideways coaches exploding out of snow banks, their driver perched at the controls, juggling with brakes and throttle. He just happened to have a well-known next door neighbour at that time who undoubtedly made a lasting impression . . . "Hannu Mikkola was my neighbour and he was rallying with my ex-girlfriend (who is now my wife); he was also my co-driver and I got some good advice from him. . . ."

The following year he decided to have a stab at circuit racing and managed to get hold of a Volvo from the importers to attack it with. The car was unique in more ways than one; for it was the first car in Finland to be equipped with slicks straight from Goodyear in America . . . "those tyres looked very strange for us, we thought: 'they are rubbish!'" The car was fast but the romance with circuits did not last long, for besides persistent mechanical mishaps, the driver was



experiencing reservations of his own . . . "it was very boring for me to go to circuits; you just learn to brake and accelerate in the right places . . . of course that is only my opinion you understand." It was with no regrets that he returned to the delights of stage rallying the following year with his faithful old Volvo . . . repeated successes here led to drives for the works Isuzu team, and in 1969 he was asked to join the Renault equipe, who were at that time running both the R8 Gordini and the R16, (his first experience with front wheel drive). The now familiar wins came as usual, but Airikkala found that increasingly, rallies in Finland were not able to offer him any really new challenge, so he took up an offer of manager made by the Finnish Opel dealer team; 1971 was his first full year as boss of the new outfit. They won everything in sight; it was the most successful year that Opel Finland had ever had; the drivers were Hannu Palin and Taipio Rainio. That year was also significant in that Pentti drove his first ever British event, the RAC in a 1.9 Opel Kadett; the propeller shaft broke when they were lying tenth overall.

That event rekindled his latent desire to be behind the wheel, and he returned home and did just that, first with Opel and then back with Renault driving their R12 Gordinis. It was at about this time that the French firm started to run into financial bothers and the rally programme ran into serious difficulties. Pentti, who had recently set himself up in the motor trade, dealing principally in secondhand cars, began to fear for the permanence of his drive in the forthcoming Arctic rally. What he then did is typical, not only of him but of the Finnish national spirit. He rummaged around at the back of his garage, dragged out a used Opel Ascona, replaced a bulb in one of the lights and headed north for Rovaniemi. He won the premier G1 award and finished seventh overall. This was another milestone in a long and enjoyable association with G1 cars.

Then came the '74 Welsh, and a Finnish importer was persuaded to part with an Alfa Romeo for Pentti to drive on the event; "there was some man whose name was Will Sparrow in a Group 1 Vauxhall in front of me, and I wondered, what was that car?" He came 11th overall in the G1 Alfa, right behind Will, and returned home impressed with the Vauxhall's performance and determined to drum up interest in Finland among GM dealers. His persuasive powers resulted in him getting a DTV prepared car for the 1000 Lakes, entered and supported by the Finnish GM dealers. Almost needless to say, they won Group 1, everyone was happy, and the decision was taken to continue. DTV leant him another car, (it was James Hunt's ex-Tour of Britain machine) and in his next rally, a Finnish national, Pentti clinched the G1 championship with another win, while setting several fastest times over the stages against such unknowns as Timo Makinen in the works Escort . . . "that tells you something about the car."

Something else besides the start of the DTV association happened on that Welsh excursion. He met David Sutton of Clarke and Simpson who asked him to drive a G2 Escort on the RAC later in the year . . . "I was, you know, on the floor! It was fantastic to get the offer of such a good Group 2 car." The Armstrong Forest was entered to enable Pentti to get some practice with the car before the RAC . . . "what do you think about my problems? I looked at the entry and I looked at scrutineering—all these beautiful cars that we don't have in Finland . . . you could say I was worried!"

His first ever drive in the car was up the M1 to the start, and no one ever told him anything about the brake balance control, perhaps not wishing to complicate his job still further. "I was most glad to have John Gittens; he said many times to me, 'steady! steady! watch it! watch it!' and I didn't understand him, so I asked him after the rally, 'what did you mean when you said that?'(!)" Out of 16 stages Airikkala set fastest time on 12 of them to set a seal on the event that only the flying Tony Pond in his down-on-power Ascona could hold a candle to . . . Pond was beaten into second place by 77 seconds.

To date Airikkala has driven 16 different types of rally car, and except on two occasions he has won first time out in every different model type. The G2 Escort was no exception. What then is the secret in all this? "I don't have any special technique for driving Group 1 or Group 2 cars, it's the same technique, but I found with G1 it's sometimes much more difficult to drive because you don't have any power, you only can go sideways if it is second gear or first gear, and you don't use those gears very often, you have to just press very hard all the time, go very fast into turns and hope that it is not very bad! . . . also I have learnt to brake with the left foot, that makes me much more confident, and confidence means so much. G1 is easier too in some respects because you don't need so much muscle; I think there is going to be much more G1 rallying if only because it is so much cheaper. I was impressed with the G1 Vauxhall because the handling was the best I have driven; the grip was tremendous, we didn't have any problems with the car and it was always fast enough," he smothers a small smile before hurrying on to talk about the RAC and Clarke and Simpson. They had many problems on the rally including brakes, engine and finally gearbox, but there was some satisfaction to be gained: "We had some fastest times after we changed the throttle cable, and I was very pleased about that because I worried about if you have a good entry and you're driving with a good car, well, am I competitive?" He in fact set three fastest times that night in Wales, including one over a treacherous icy Eppynt which naturally he was "very surprised" about. "Timo started after us so I was nervous about that too, I was looking in my mirror more than through my windscreen . . . you can see lights so far away . . . oh no! he is passing and passing, getting closer and closer!" He laughs happily, remembering the ice, and the blinding white pools of light, arcing across the barren terrain. He actually prefers driving in the dark because "if you don't see so much you are always ready to brake, your reactions are a bit faster."

Colt have sponsored him as an individual driver since 1972, a situation in which he is not unique as his wife, Makinen and Mikkola, are just three other contracted drivers. He is in the enviable position of dealing with people who respect and trust him to the point where if, as happened at the beginning of this year, he had nothing fixed up, they know that it will not be long before something is. He explains the position succinctly; "my reason for doing rallies is to do as well as possible—these aims are also the aims of the sponsors." The ex-James Rae Kleber Escort that is now the property of Clarke and Simpson, and which he drove for the first time on the Tour of Dean, is thus resplendent in its Colt decals. He clearly enjoys coming over here immensely for, not only is he happy to drive for Clarke and Simpson; "they are like a family, if you ask something you know they are going to do their best . . . " he thoroughly enjoys competing on British events; particularly liking the high organisational standards of our rallies, and the company of British enthusiasts. All the while he remains entirely adamant that winning the two nationals he has so far been entered for has not been at all an easy task.

So when are we going to see this likeable gentleman again? He remains politely inscrutable, but one gets the feeling that it will not be too long before the charisma of this engaging Finn appears again among the entry lists to provide another catalyst besides the one from Narborough. There are several events that he particularly wants to do over here; one is the Scottish, but he had heard that some of the stages were very rough and "I don't like rough stages because it's so hard for your car, and if it is hard for your car, it's hard for my heart!" Something else he would dearly love to try is the all-tarmac rally as this represents an entirely new challenge for him.

The arrival of Pentti Airikkala has brought with it many fringe benefits; not least besides spectator value and good publicity has been a new sense of realism and perspective among the competitors themselves, for he is very definitely one of the few "men to beat." One hopes that his presence will continue to raise everyone's game, for as he says, "if you are a good rally driver you never give up—you just try harder."

Pentti Airikkala.



Stephen Choularton—not just the willing benefactor



An established part of the Formula Atlantic scene over the past year has been the two blue and yellow March 73Bs of SDC Racing. While Jim Crawford was attracting all the attention by driving one of them to first place in the Southern Organs championship and second in the John Player series, Mr SDC himself, Stephen Choularton, was also having his most successful season to date, culminating in a prestigious win in front of the television cameras at Thruxton. Many people find it difficult to believe that Steve doesn't feel just a little resentment at the attention his protege has received while his ever-improving performances went frequently unnoticed. But his friendship with Jim is too close and his approach to racing too well thought out for that: "It doesn't make me question my own ability because I've got an objective view of where I'm at. From the overshadowing point of view, it's not really bothered me. I suppose I may well have got a better press if there hadn't been the comparison, but on the other hand I might well not have. Jim always feels a bit bad about it."

Steve began racing in 1970 when a friend of his lent him a Merlyn Mk 11 Formula Ford for an Oulton Park *Libre* race. "The car ran from the beginning of the race to the end" is his description of that debut, but it was enough to begin his interest in motor racing and he went after a second hand car of his own. "Then I went hot foot down to Bob Howlings' place and bought myself one—an Alexis." The car blew its engine at the very first test session: "An auspicious start to things. That was the first time I discovered in the motor racing business that when someone sells you something, they don't take any responsibility for it. So we went up to Manchester Garages and bought an engine. This was the car that Jim later didn't rise to fame in. We weren't very successful with that because we didn't know a thing, and a fellow from the garage sort of fettled it in his spare time, and he didn't know a thing either."

By the end of the year he'd nevertheless managed to do 10 races and collect an international licence: ". . . which is another funny thing about motor racing because I knew absolutely nothing. Then in the winter I went browsing down at Bob Howlings' again. He had a 1970 Alexis F3. And that really was disastrous. It'd been laid up for a while and we had to do all sorts of things to it and it really wasn't a very good effort because in the year we finished one race. By this time Jim had reappeared from the States and had gone off with the other lump of scrap. That really was a bad year. I was very disillusioned. It was really a problem getting things organised because I'd never been a car-y person. I didn't know anyone in motor racing—and Jim didn't know anybody and we couldn't see how anyone got the things going."

After running with the Alexis in Atlantic specification throughout 1971, Steve decided to look for another car suitable for the Formula for 1972: "A friend of Jim's had just bought a Lotus 69 F2 car and we decided to weigh in our two piles of scrap and a few hundred pounds to get that. We also invested in a BDA from Cosworth, which we took up to Autovita and asked them to build as they had a great reputation in and around Manchester. We did a bit better that year 'cos we started off with a car that was in one piece and which worked, and the engine wasn't bad and we'd gained access to Autovita and Jeff Goodliff, so at long last we had somebody telling us a few intelligent things about racing cars. These were real revelations to Jim and me, so we let him set the car up." They'd also got to know Cyd Williams and he helped them further in getting the car competitive. "He did quite a bit of work on things and started telling us about roll bars and wings. By this time our confidence was being developed—wrongly, because if we'd had known what we knew after the next year we might have been a bit wary of the whole thing."

For 1973 Goodliff advised Steve to pick up a good car, a good mechanic, a good engine "and really have a go at it. It was a toss up between March or Chevron. March put on such a really fantastic selling operation. They really come over with this air of grand confidence—so it was a March. As well as that Cyd had driven a March the year before when he nearly won the championship and he said that his car was really nice, really easy to drive. We bought the 73B and by this stage we'd acquired ourselves a second BDA. We hadn't had a marvellous year with engines the year before, but we still had Autovita building them. And then, the most important thing of all, we got ourselves a mechanic—a good one, and we discovered what mechanics could do.

"The year started very well. We went and did a *Libre* race at Silverstone, which I won. In fact we won two races that day. The results were definitely an awful lot better, but it's like everything else; the more you learn about something, the more you learn what there is to be learned about it. That year tyres started to become a real thing. We got the tyres right and the setting right and we went up to Croft. I was about half a second ahead on pole, which was quite a turn-up for the books. I was surprised no one protested that I had a DFV in the back." Steve went on to lead the race from start to finish and so added his first championship race win to his two Silverstone successes.

During the remainder of the season Steve established himself as a consistent mid-to-front runner and by the end of the season Jim had joined the Atlantic circus with a borrowed Chevron. "At the end of that year we thought well, what shall we do, and we thought, why not build up all the spares we've got into a second car, and we did, and we bought a nice shiny new transporter, put ourselves in our own premises and sort of launched ourselves on 1974. There was a promise of some sponsorship for Jim to the tune of about £8,000, which never came off and which would've gone a long way." By the time they became certain that the extra money wasn't going to arrive the motoring press were already beginning to latch on to Jim as the greatest thing since God and so Steve decided to stretch his own finances to include Jim temporarily.

The source from which 25-year-old Choularton gets his income is usually described as "merchant banking," but in fact his activities spread throughout his father's group of manufacturing, property and banking concerns: "I don't have any particular responsibilities. Basically I watch everything to think of ideas for what we can do with our group of companies—and special projects which I might come up with that other people might not think of, including my father, who's the MD."

And how much is it likely to cost to run the outfit next year as successfully as it's been run this year? Steve starts off with a budgeted figure of £680 just to get the two cars to a race meeting. Overheads of keeping their own premises and full time mechanics as well as just maintaining the cars comes to £9,750 per car, and then there's regular test sessions at £170 a time for each car. With 27 races, 15 test sessions and VAT that comes to a cool £22,500 per car—"Which is a pretty horrifying figure, isn't it?" adds Steve. "There's a bit of a contingency in there for crashing because if somebody comes along we want to give a definite figure. It sounds very commercial because I've worked all the figures out, but it's not meant to be that way."

Just how did he feel about footing the bill for Jim, as it turned out, for the whole year: "It always makes it sound too friendly and homely the idea of his friend Stephen Choularton footing the bill and it's not an idea that could go on in any event. That was the idea behind the team thing—to put it on a proper basis where it could have a future. These things never do have a future if they're being paid for out of someone else's pocket. It's really been a good year though. It's justified itself a lot more in terms of Jim's success than it would otherwise. When I was just racing on my own it wasn't as much fun. This year's been really good fun. Unless something is good fun it's not worth doing at all—and that's why we'd like to stay together. I don't like people who take things too seriously. It shows a great disregard for the realities of life."

DAVID GORDON

Stephen Choularton took the SDC March to a fine win at Thruxton in the last race of the season.





Sport version (shown above) has Mexico-style suspension modifications and novel stripes.

New suit for the Escort

The Ford Escort has been a very successful car. The new model, therefore, is very obviously derived from that machine, but with improvements which experience has proved to be desirable.

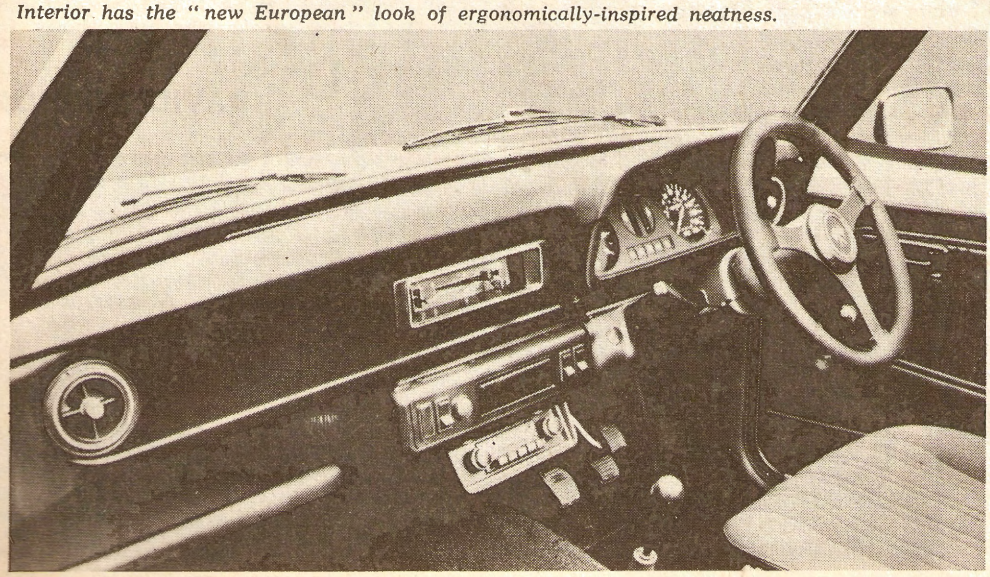
As we predicted, the coke-bottle look was a passing phase and the entirely new body shell is of modern design, with a much lower straight-through waistline. This gives 23 per cent more glass area to ensure an excellent all-round view and a light interior. The old Escort had been particularly criticised for its noise, vibration and harshness and for the uncomfortable ride. These matters have been first priorities in the new design, while re-shaped seats give a useful increase in leg room for the rear passengers, a bigger luggage boot of exceptional depth also being featured. A new and sophisticated heating and ventilation system is also incorporated.

There are over 20 models in the new range, the engines being the Kent pushrod crossflow series, extended to include the 1600 GT in regular production vehicles. The existing synchromesh gearbox, with central remote control, is retained, and in addition a new automatic transmission from Ford's Bordeaux factory replaces the Borg Warner box. The front drum brakes, when fitted, are wider, and the discs are both larger in diameter and have pads with 30 per cent greater friction area.

Now that people must drive more slowly, all journey times have been increased, which means that they must sit for longer in their cars, with greatly altered priorities. A comfortable ride is now essential and noise, vibration, and harshness are intolerable. These problems, are, to some extent, interrelated and have been tackled at source.

In the front suspension, the anti-roll bar has been greatly increased in diameter and the MacPherson system now has more progressive bump rubbers. At the rear, the semi-elliptic springs have been increased in width from 2in to 2.36in, which has permitted the use of three leaves instead of four. A short anti-roll bar is pivoted across the centre of the axle, the arms of which double in resisting torque to reduce wind-up of the springs, while the telescopic dampers are now vertically mounted. The Sport version has harder and lower suspension, with wide rims and low-profile tyres.

Interior has the "new European" look of ergonomically-inspired neatness.



The rear engine mounting has been relocated and the exhaust brackets changed, to feed the engine vibration at 5,000 rpm into the side rails of the floor pan. This avoids the former boom period in the body panels, which was so pronounced. In addition, the drive-line harshness, which was a problem with the longer-stroke 1600 engine, has been eliminated by using a two-piece propeller shaft, with a constant-velocity centre joint and a bonded rubber support bearing.

A large amount of sound-deadening material has been applied in many places. A thick sandwich of felt has been attached to the engine bulkhead on the interior side, with deadener pads on the floor pan and inside the doors. All models also have insulation of the rear bulkhead, rear pillars, and over the front doors, the Ghia version having additional layers on the rear tunnel and wheel-housings and on the cowl top in the engine compartment—the Sport has the cowl top padding. The Ghia model has felt stuck to the roof panel and a perforated roof lining. There is also padding behind the instrument panel because this model has a tuned engine, which is noisier.

The instrument layout now follows that of the Cortina. The ventilation system employs eyeball nozzles that can be used to demist the side windows, totally separated from the heating ducts, as is correct practice. The heating system relies on easily controlled blending of hot and cold air. There is positive air extraction, with outlets in the rear quarter pillars.

Three sizes of engines are offered, of 1100, 1300, and 1600 cc. The same bore is used throughout, with three different throws for the five-bearing crankshaft. The standard 1100 and 1300 have Ford single-choke carburetters and cast-iron exhaust manifolds. The 1300 GT and 1600 GT engines, used in the Sport and Ghia models, have twin-choke Weber carburetters, fabricated exhaust manifolds, and more sporting camshafts. Power outputs range from 48 to 84 bhp DIN. All models are fully equipped, with extra equipment on the more expensive types, culminating in the luxurious Ghia series; prices were not available at the time of announcement, but will be added if they come through before the release date.

In addition to the many versions of the new Escort that are catalogued, a special RS model has already been produced. This is based on the new body shell, with heavy-duty rating. The power unit is a 16-valve twin-cam BDA of 86.8 x 77.62 mm (1840 cc). Instead of the twin, double-choke carburetters of the RS1600, the bigger unit employs a single instrument with two chokes operating progressively. In standard form, 125 bhp at 6,500 rpm will suffice for 125 mph motoring and 0-60 mph acceleration in 8 s. Works cars will give 230 bhp for rallies or 275 bhp for racing. An RS2000, with the single-cam engine, will be available later.

SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA

Cars described: Ford Escort two-door and four-door saloons and estate.

Engines: Four cylinders 80.98 x 53.29 mm (1097 cc), 80.98 x 62.99 mm (1297 cc), 80.93 x 77.62 mm (1593cc); DIN power output at 5500 rpm: **1100** 48 bhp, **1300** 57 bhp, **1300 GT** 70 bhp, **1600 GT** 84 bhp.

Transmissions: Single dry plate clutch; 7.5 in diam all models; four-speed synchromesh gearbox with central remote control, ratios: **(1100 and 1300)** 1.00, 1.485, 2.185, and 3.656 to 1, **(1300 GT and 1600 GT)** 1.00, 1.418, 1.995 and 3.337 to 1; rear axle ratios: **(1100)** 4.125, **(1300)** 3.89, **(1300 GT)** 4.125, **(1600 GT)** 3.54 to 1. Automatic option on **1300** and **1600 GT** only; stall ratio of torque converter: 2.30 to 1; gearbox ratios: 1.0, 1,474 and 2,474 to 1; axle ratios: **(1300)** 3.89, **(1600 GT)** 3.54 to 1.

Chassis: Combined steel body and chassis; MacPherson front suspension with anti-roll bar; rack and pinion steering; live rear axle on three-leaf springs with anti-roll/tramp bar and vertical telescopic dampers; brakes: **(1100, 1300)** drums all round, front discs optional, **all others** disc/drum; servo: **(1100, 1300)** servo extra, standard on more expensive models; bolt-on wheels fitted 155 SR 12 tyres with drum brakes, SR 13 with discs, 175/70 SR 13 on **Sport.**

Dimensions: Wheelbase, 7 ft 10.8 in; track, 4 ft 11.3 in/ 4 ft 2.3 in; overall length, 13 ft 0.6 in; width, 5 ft 0.5 in; weight: **(1100)** 1844 lb, **(1600 Ghia)** 1987 lb.

Performance: (1100) 83 mph, 0-60 20.5 s; **(1300)** 87 mph, **(1300)** 87 mph, 0-60 17.0 s; **(1300 Sport)** 94 mph, 0-60 13.9 s; **(1600 Sport)** 101 mph, 0-60 11.1 s

Fuel consumption: (1100) 38.3 mph, **(1300)** 37.6 mph, **(1300 Sport)** 35.3 mph, **(1600 Sport)** 36.7 mph **(1600 Auto)** 33.5 mpg (maker's figures).

Correspondence

The editor is not bound to agree with readers' opinions

No offence...

I was very disappointed reading Mr Hardie's letter in your last issue regarding Barry Foley's cartoons.

To be offended by a cartoon like this is not only very childish but it also shows what a great lack of humour Mr Hardie has. By the way, it must be a great experience for a sponsor to find that you have more spectators than you can cope with.

If everybody "in" Foley's fabulous cartoons were offended, I trust there would be hundreds of people asking for apologies. Fortunately this does not happen and I may draw the conclusion that there are still a lot of people around in motor racing who have a sense of humour. Personally I find Mr Foley's cartoons very amusing and I would find AUTOSPORT very empty without them.

Today's motor sport lacks a great deal of humour and Barry Foley is probably one of the few people who try to and change that situation.

ILFORD, ESSEX. HANS KIVIET.

...caused by Barry and Santa...

I wish to apologise to Mr Hardie (Jan 16). If my cartoon inferred that Drag racing was a bore then I am sorry. Drag racing as everyone knows is not at all boring; I have in fact witnessed it myself on several occasions and have had the opportunity to make a direct comparison with the vehicles in the fast North bound carriageway of the M1 and I can say here and now that drag racing is much more interesting. (But I have heard it said that the South bound carriageway is better.)

I imagine that this accounts for the location of Santa Pod (just off the M1 near Northampton) 'its' proximity to the motorway puts them within easy reach of the vast audience that watch motorway traffic from the Newport Pagnell and Toddington service stations, restaurants and bridges. The M1 spectacle whets their appetites and they can't resist going on to Santa Pod to see the real thing.

There *are* of course people who feel that Dragging *is* a bore, but these people tend to be biased. They are more than often people who have spent their lives motor racing, sky diving, flying, water ski-ing, bull fighting or some other equally exciting pastime and therefore tend to look at Drag racing through jaundiced eyes. I am not one of those people—I am not easily bored.

Having apologised to Mr Hardie for giving the wrong impression, let me now spring to his defence. A lot of readers, I am sure, are going to feel that Mr Hardie, who takes offence so easily at a cartoon, is totally lacking in any sense of humour. He surely can't be as pompous as his letter suggests—after all anyone who sponsors Drag racing must have a keen sense of humour. (Incidentally the Catchpole cartoon he complains of appeared 4 weeks' ago—let us hope Mr Hardie's dragsters travel faster than his pen.)

LONDON, E15. BARRY FOLEY.

...at the Pod

I would like to reply to Mr Hardie's letter which was published in your issue of January 16. Looking at his letter I think Mr Hardie is after some free publicity for which he tries to use Barry Foley. I would like to say to Mr Hardie that his comments are incredibly childish and I would like to support Barry Foley.

As an overseas reader of AUTOSPORT I think that AUTOSPORT should be very proud having a character like Foley around.

His cartoons are very amusing and up to date. I know for a fact that a lot of magazines in my country would love to have someone like Barry Foley to do their cartoons.

AUTOSPORT would be very dry to read without Barry's cartoons and I am sure that part of your magazine's success lies in his cartoons. Please continue doing cartoons like this Barry, it brings some humour back to the sport. And as for Mr Hardie "We all love drag racing and who said it was boring."

BAARN, HOLLAND. A. J. KLEYN.

Sports

I seldom disagree strongly with anything written in your excellent magazine but I must protest strongly when Jody Scheckter says, in his article of January 2 issue, that motor racing must be the only international sport you can do lying on your back!

LONDON, SW1. ARTHUR CLEGG.

Racing Car Show causes disappointment

I went with some friends last Saturday to Olympia to see the Racing Car Show, encouraged by the rave reviews in the last few issues of your magazine, and quite frankly was most disappointed.

The show, it seems to me, should cater for two types of people, *ie*, those who intend to buy a racing car and/or equipment and those who want to see what racing and motor sport generally has to offer. The former were catered for quite well by the many smoothtalking salesmen, but for everyone else there was very little to stimulate or amuse. My wife pointed out that it was fine for us men who know of most of the exhibits and their achievements already, but there was hardly any explanatory data to be found by the exhibits nor did we hardly dare to ask the people on the stands as they all looked so hostile—those that were awake that is.

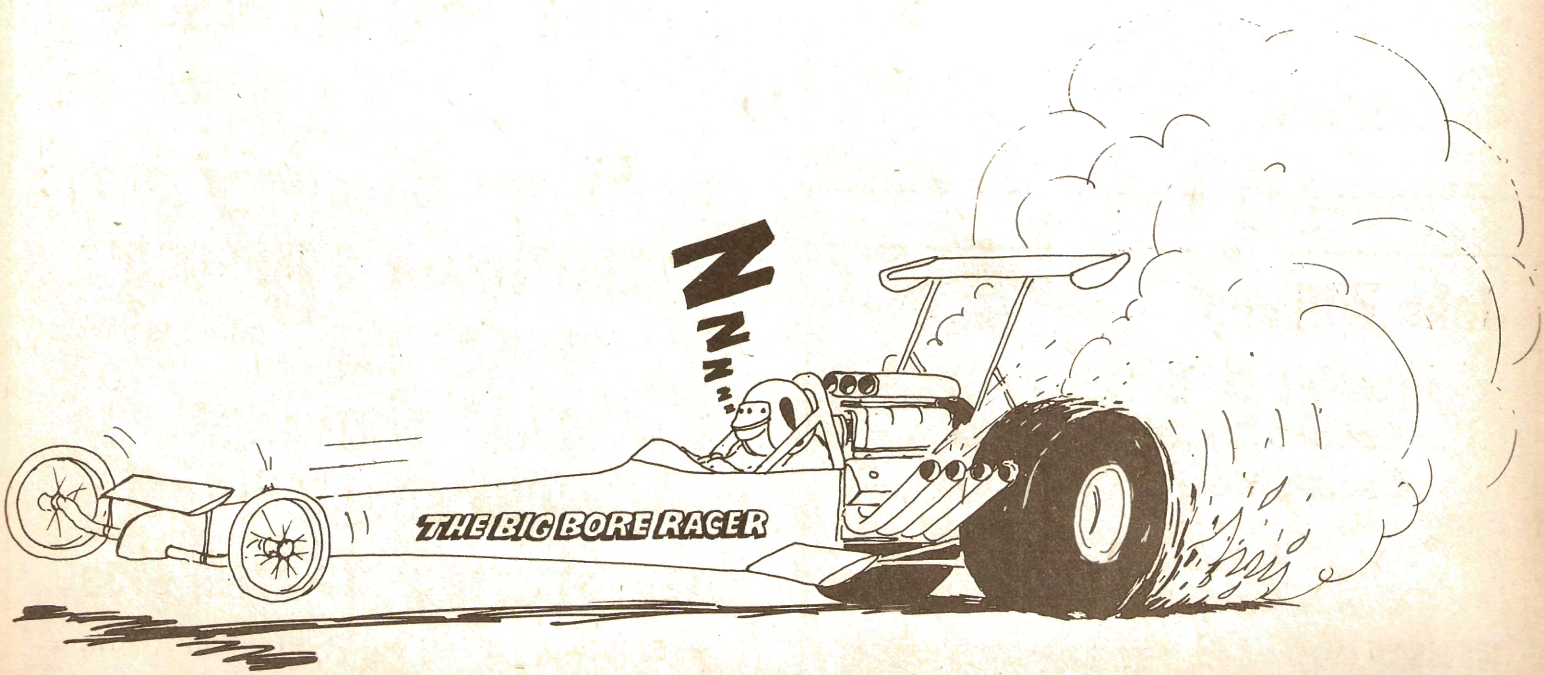
Take the CanAm Shadow as an example, supposedly the fastest car there (it didn't say that anywhere) almost out of sight behind a pillar. I think deprived of its ferocious roar it looked about as impressive as that pedal car I saw not far away. I am sure it could have been mounted in, or on, a far more elaborate stand or plinth and that a simple tape recording of a CanAm race could have been rigged up.

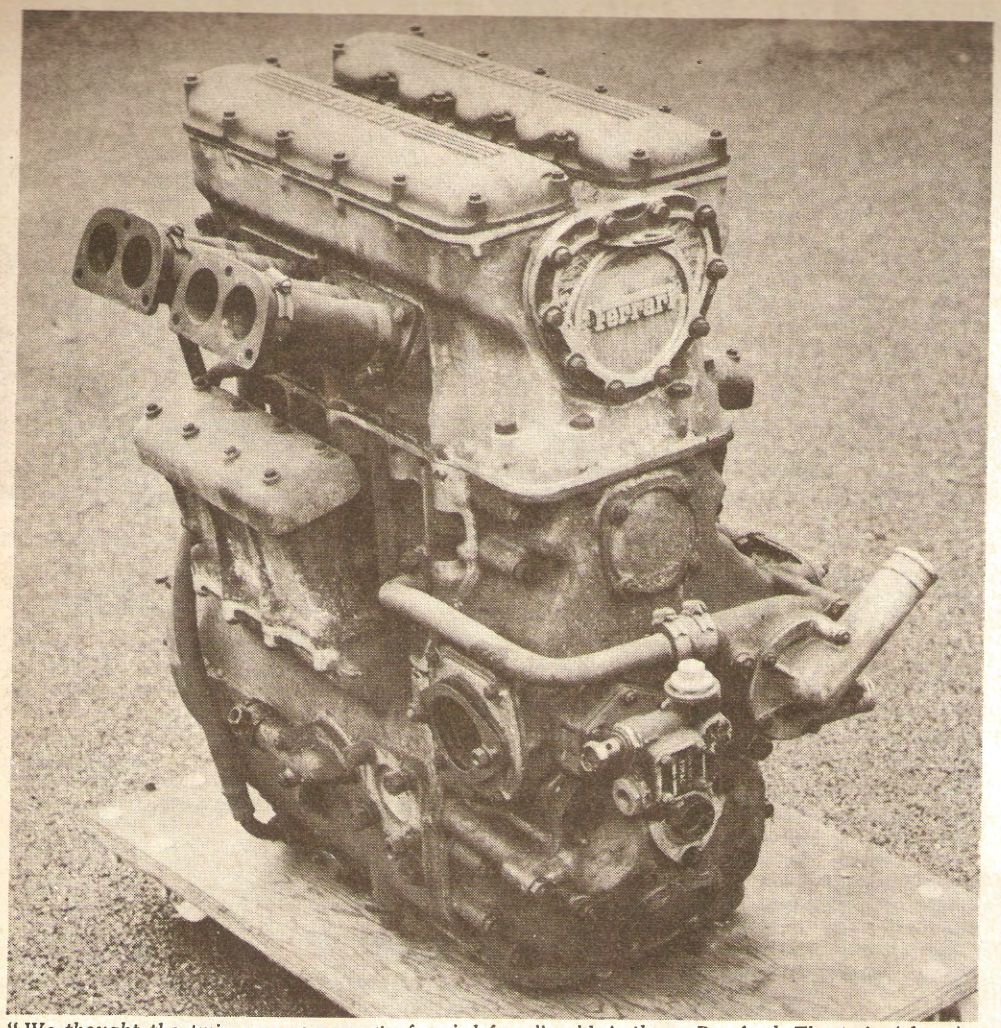
One feature I did like was the film clips on the Davrian and Renault stands even though they lacked subtlety and also the ease we had in walking round even on the last day.

For the next show why not suggest holding it at Donington Motor Museum (Brands Hatch is too far away and lacks the facilities) and organise rides in G1 cars for the public. Let them take part in wheel-changing competitions in real pits, watch a kart race, or a demonstration of fire protection/prevention equipment—the list is infinite.

Unfortunately the most memorable part of this year's show for me will be the meal afterwards in one of London's splendid restaurants.

BIRMINGHAM. TIMOTHY C. KING.





"We thought the twin was some sort of weird four," said Anthony Bamford. The twin (above) that never raced.

The Ferrari that never was

Eoin Young outlines a unique engine, that turned out to be too unique

Twenty years ago Enzo Ferrari was not in the happy horsepower position he enjoys in Grand Prix racing today. The formula had changed from 4½ litres to 2½ litres in 1954 and although Ferrari started well with uprated Type 625 versions of his Type 500 Formula 2 cars as well as the new "Squalo" design it was apparent that the Prancing Horse would be no match for the new 250F Maserati, the D50 Lancia or the return of Mercedes Benz. In the winter between the 1954 and 1955 seasons, Ferrari instructed his chief designer, Aurelio Lampredi to come up with a car that would be competitive against the formidable opposition they would face in 1955. Lampredi's answer was not one car but two!

It was current Formula 1 practice to have long-chassis and short-chassis variants of the same model to suit different tracks but Lampredi planned two completely different cars. His idea was to have a short, lightweight car for tight tracks like Monaco with an engine that produced plenty of torque since punch low down would be much more important than top-end power on stop-go circuits. The other car would be more conventional and it was to have a new long-legged in-line six for the faster tracks like Rheims and Spa.

Lampredi's idea for the short-track car set racing rumour ablaze that winter, fired by the whispers that he was working on a 2½-litre two-cylinder engine—a Grand Prix twin! The design number in the Ferrari drawing office was 116F and for an engine destined never to be installed in a racing car, it certainly excited engineering comment then—just as it will now since its discovery and restoration in Anthony Bamford's workshops in England.

The two cylinders with four valves each, had the muscular bore and stroke of 118 x 114 mm giving a total capacity of 2493 cc and on test the engine gave 175 bhp at 4,800 rpm according to the details available in Hans Turner's book *The Ferrari*. Tanner merely mentioned it as one of the experiments carried out at Ferrari. L. J. K. Setright in his tome *The Grand Prix Car 1954-1966* refers to the twin as a "grotesque" engine but this is surely the learned Leonard's sense of engineering elegance being offended rather than the aesthetics of what is outwardly a neatly packaged power unit giving no inkling of what lies inside. Bamford and his men thought it was a strange type of small 4-cylinder engine before it was taken apart!

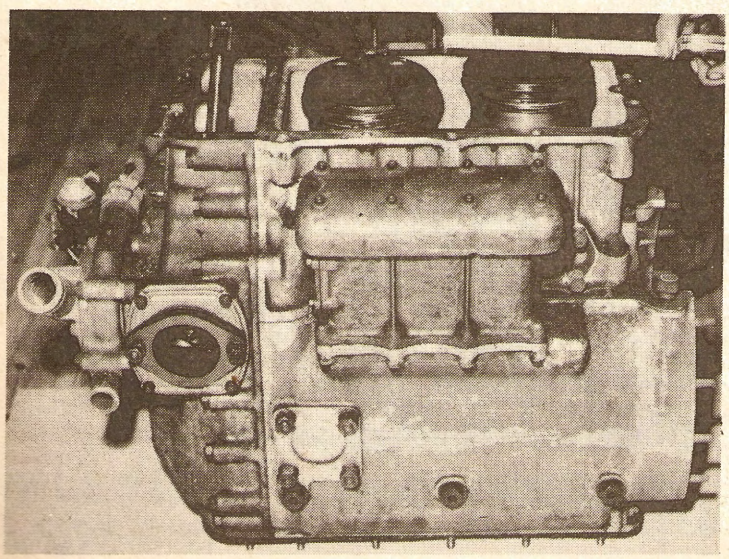
The engine fell foul of balance problems that were to plague twin-cylinder engines until the Japanese sun rose in the motorcycle world. The two handspun pistons rose and fell together and the vibrations set up on the test bed practically tore the experimental engine from its mountings.

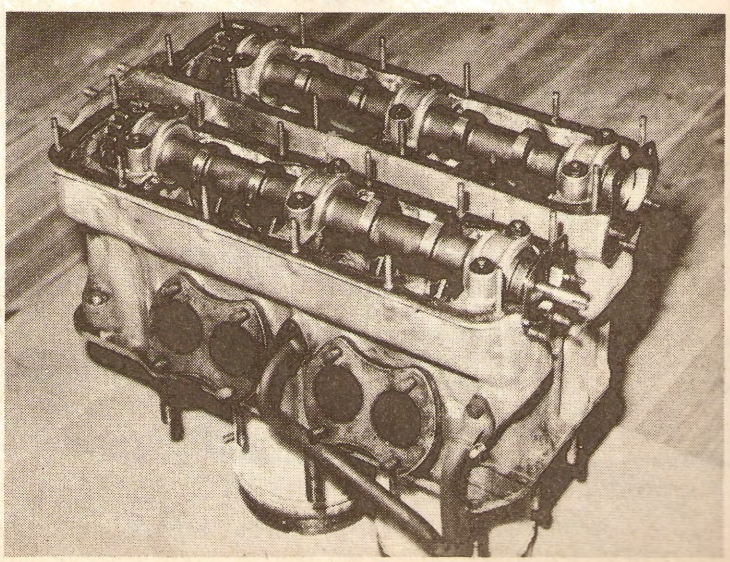
These photographs of the engine drew enthusiastic comment from Derek Gardner, the quiet-spoken designer of the Elf-Tyrrell Grand Prix cars, and he jotted down these observations carefully recorded in engineerese: "The concept of the engine is extremely interesting since it was obviously intended to produce high torque at the expense of maximum horsepower. The engine is dimensionally compact and comparatively simple yet it is rugged in its construction. One may assume that by adopting the method of screwing the cylinder into the cylinder head casting—thereby eliminating troublesome head gasket problems—Mr Lampredi was expecting relatively high Bmeps. The quoted figure of 175 bhp at 4,800 rpm corresponds to a Bmep of 190 lb/in² and probably exceeded 200 at maximum torque.

"From this one may also assume that it would develop something in the region of 200 lb ft of torque which compares favourably with, say, the 250F/1 Maserati which gave 179 lb/ft at 5,800 and recorded a Bmep of 179 lb/in².

"At maximum power it would achieve a mean piston speed of 3,590 ft/min, again

Left, pistons measure 5½ in across. Right, twin cylinders, but twin cam too.





comparable with that of the Maserati. We can calculate, by making an intelligent guess at the connecting rod centres, that the maximum acceleration of the pistons was not much in excess of 60,000 ft/sec² which certainly indicates a low level of stress for the reciprocating parts.

"From this it would be safe to assume that an exceptionally light, compact and reliable engine producing considerable torque (but lacking ultimate horsepower) would be the ideal power unit for a circuit such as Monaco. Unfortunately there seems to have been a fundamental problem in the balance of the engine. Basically it is two single-cylinder engines coupled together with the power impulses situated every 360 degrees (or one power impulse per revolution). Since it is impossible to completely balance a single-cylinder engine, except by methods that must be considered impractical for high-speed applications, a compromise is reached in the transfer of primary out-of-balance forces by attaching a mass balance to oppose the reciprocating weight and the weight of the crankpin. By careful tuning it is possible to obtain virtually vibrationless performance at predetermined speeds. But single-cylinder engines of 1250 cc capacity running at 4,800 rpm would (and presumably did) still have a considerable out-of-balance force that would manifest itself in the form of low frequency vibration of high amplitude. In short, if it didn't wreck itself, it would probably destroy the car. . . ."

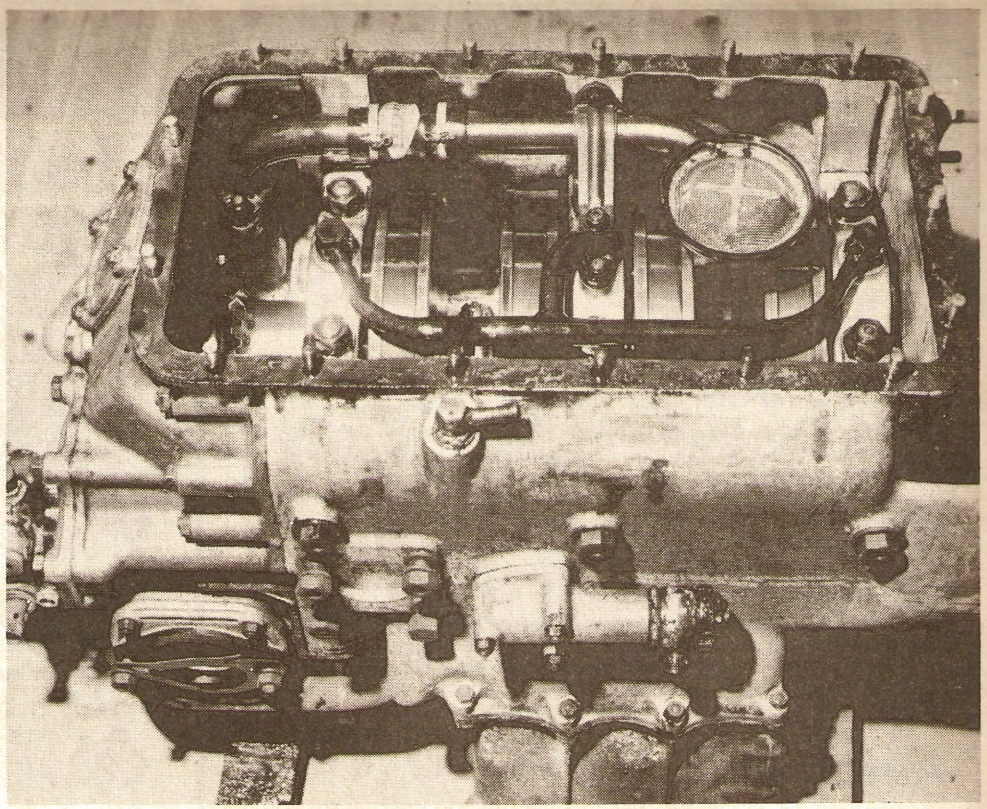
It was this insurmountable problem of vibration that probably cancelled the project before it ever reached a car.

Meanwhile Lampredi had forged ahead with his 6-cylinder engine for horsepower tracks (the Type 115F) with a capacity of 2495 cc and a power output of 250 bhp at 6,500 rpm. This engine was also eventually abandoned after chronic overheating problems and subsequent distortion.

So Lampredi's two off-beat engine projects had scored a success rating of zero and Ferrari was already battling into the 1955 season with updated 1954 cars now running Super Squalos with the older Type 625s as back-ups. Ironically Ferrari was to win the race for which he had designed the twin-cylinder car—Monaco. It was a precedent for Lotus fortunes at Monaco when Rindt won in the Type 49 and Peterson won last year in the supposedly obsolete Type 72. Twenty years earlier Tringtignant was entered in a 625 Ferrari and he out-lasted the field to win! Monaco 1955 was also a race that strongly influenced the future for Ferrari.

With 20 laps to go Moss was winning with ease in the Mercedes when the engine failed as he was about to lap Ascari's Lancia D50 in second place. Ascari had only to reach the start-finish and he would have been leading but he lost control coming out of the chicane and the Lancia plunged into the harbour. He was rescued shaken but uninjured. A few days later he was at Monza during a Ferrari sports car test, was offered a drive, crashed in still unexplained circumstances and was killed. Saddened by the death of his number one driver and close friend, Gianni Lancia considered his situation in the light of fading finances and withdrew from Grand Prix racing. The Lancia cars and equipment were offered to Maserati who turned them down because their 250F was coming strongly on song, but Ferrari didn't have to be asked twice. The Lancia had a competitive V8 engine and with the advanced Jano chassis ideas converted more to Ferrari's taste, the thoughts of twins and straight 6s were banished. Lampredi left soon after this to join Fiat on gas turbine projects and still works there.

The two experimental engines were consigned to the scrapheap at Maranello, a sort of Sargasso Sea of motor racing history, piled with left-overs of Grand Prix progress, until Anthony Bamford came along. Son of J. C. Bamford, the man who established the JCB Excavators Company, as Britain's leading constructors of earth-moving machinery, Anthony had the wherewithal to pursue his motoring enthusiasm. He arranged to buy what must have been part of the Ferrari scrapheap, a truckload of obsolete Ferrari engines and parts. When the bits were unloaded at the JCB factory in England there were around 30 engines of various shapes, sizes and vintages. There were fours, V6s and what looked like a strange little 4-cylinder. There were V12s with inside and outside exhausts, some with fuel injection, some with carburetters. Mechanic Bryan Morely had before him a great variety of engines to rebuild.



Little big end, with a balanced crank and oil system revealed.

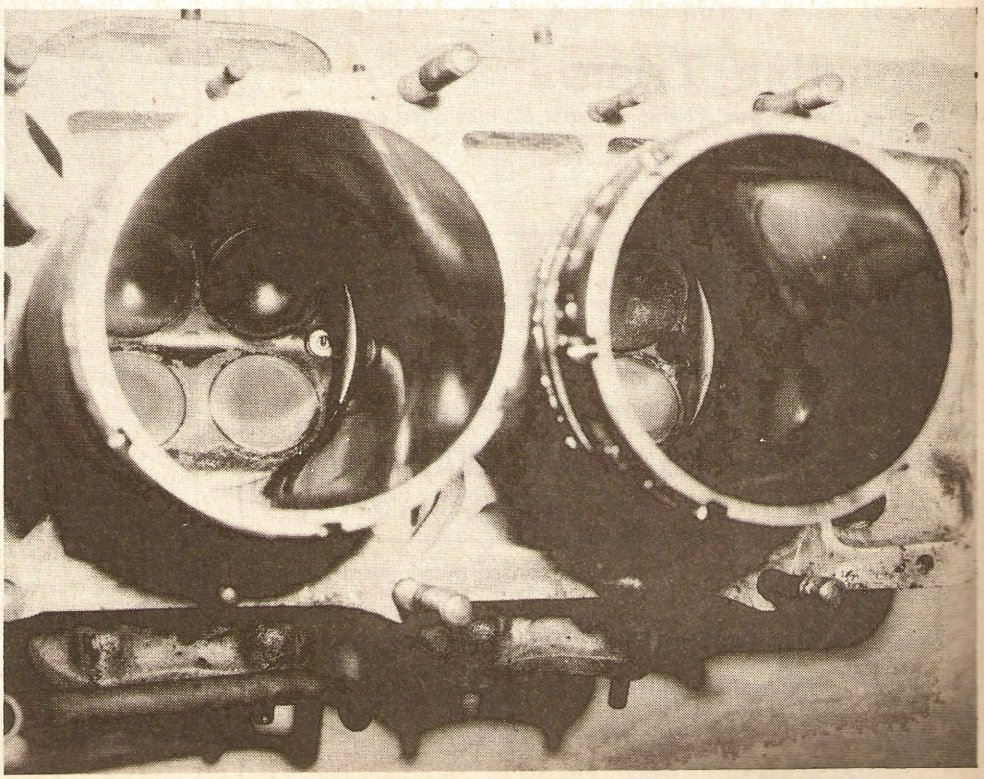
"When I bought the engines about five years ago, Mr Ferrari probably thought I was some sort of mad Englishman," says Anthony Bamford, no doubt delighted at discovering this pearl among the pebbles. "Mr Ferrari told me there might be some strange engine in the load, but at first we thought the twin was some weird sort of small four. . . . Everything was very dirty and it was hard to tell what was what. . . ."

Since then Bamford has become something of a Ferrari collector, confessing to owning "less than M Bardinon but more than anyone else."

He owns a 1947 Type 166 Ferrari numbered 002 which he claims to be the first Ferrari built in the factory as the cars carried only even numbers in those days. The latest addition to his collection is a Type 312 long-distance racing sports car.

Obviously the Commendatore has revised his opinion of Bamford as just another slightly unhinged English car nut. "He told me he regretted not having kept more of his older cars, but he's an engineer—he thinks only of the future. They were always experimenting and throwing things away as projects were superseded. . . ."

Four valves per cylinder for Lampredi's twin.

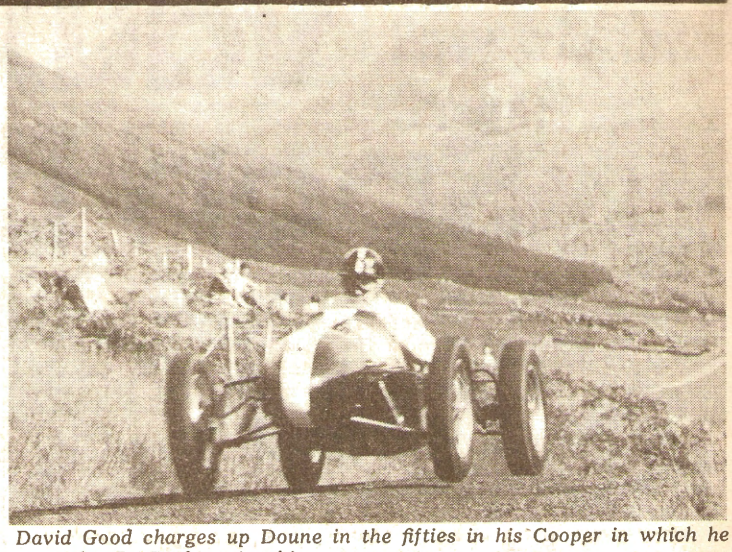


Regs changes denied

A major row was brewing at the end of last week as a rumour spread around modsports circles concerning body modifications disallowed and that suspension pick-up points remain as standard. However, in between phone calls from angry modsports competitors, the BARC's John Wickham told us on Tuesday that the copy of the regs that he had intimated no such changes.

He said that a meeting was held last August to discuss the regulations, and it was then that Neil Eason-Gibson of the RAC wanted to tidy up the regs. The intention, said Wickham, was that they remain the same however; tidying up without changing the meaning. The basic idea was to say that the chassis pan should remain in the same material as that when manufactured.

To clear the matter, Wickham visited the RAC yesterday in the hope of clearing up the matter. "If they have been changed in the way inferred" said Wickham "it is not what we agreed last August." Should the regulations indeed be changed, which may well outlaw many of the regular competitors, then there is a facility whereby the regulations can revert to last year's specifications. Whatever happens, there's no doubt that modsports competitors will want a far stronger say in their classes and regulations, which seem to come under review for no great reason every year.



David Good charges up Doune in the fifties in his Cooper in which he won the RAC championship.

Midget beats the Escorts

Very nearly winners of the Welsh Rally Championship last year, Pat Jerome and Lee Vincent scored a near 2 minute win last Saturday night on the Vale of Cothi MC Snowball Rally down in south west Wales. On the 100 miles route which started in Ammanford and concluded in Llandovery, they finished on 21 m 55 s in their Midget to beat a field of 50 competitors, of whom 30 were classified as finishers.

In the first half John Pugh and Bernard Hill built up a 2 minute lead in their Mexico and shortly into the second half they overshot, reversed into a bank and got well and truly stuck. Second at the petrol halt were Graham Hollis and Euros Jones in their Escort RS2000 but they had ripped away the tail section of the exhaust and their noisy machine was excluded.

1, P. Jerome/L. Vincent (Midget), 21 m 55 s; 2, G. Evans/M. Thomas (RS1600), 23 m 35 s; 3, I. Lindsay/A. Bryer (Mazda), 27 m 55 s; 4, E. Bardos/J. Bevan (RS1600), 29 m 45 s; 5, D. Douch/A. John (RS1600), 31 m 30 s; 6, J. Denny/P. Robinson (RS1600), 32 m 10 s. **Semi-experts**: D. Evans/R. Wheeler (Mini), 46 m 20 s.

Allen keeps up pressure

Midland businessman Reg Allen followed up his first ever RAC Sporting Trial Championship trial win of the previous weekend by collecting best score at the Yorkshire SCC White Rose Trophy Trial near Leeds on Sunday.

On frozen ground, which remained very hard even after the top surface had been taken away, he took his Kincraft round with the loss of 74 marks to hand a hefty defeat to his arch rival Jack Pearce (Kincraft), by some 17 marks.

The pair were only a mark apart at the break in an event in which 21 starters did a total of 23 sections, but in the afternoon Allen drew steadily away. Third at lunch and at the end was Ralph Needham in his Cannon who dropped 102 marks but Dennis Allen, fourth at the break in his Kincraft, retired when his wife felt ill and Alan Bush brought his Special home in fourth on 122 marks. Ray Hatton (Cannon) and Mike Barnes (Cannon), were fifth and sixth on 123 marks and 134 marks respectively.

David Good retires

After Malcolm MacDowel's withdrawal from hillclimbing last week, it is especially sad to have to announce the retirement from the hills, at least in a competitive sense, of David Good. A most popular competitor in hillclimbing, Good has delighted crowds in a career that has lasted for just 21 years, not the least for his handling of very powerful cars, despite the handicap of having one hand.

"All good things have to come to an end, and we shall miss it an awful lot," said Good, explaining his reasons for pulling out. In a career that has spanned an ex-Seaman ERA, a Cooper in which he won the RAC championship in 1961, Tony Marsh's BRM, a Lola T70 (in which he entered Roy Pierpoint at Kyalami), Chevron B8, McLaren M10B, McLaren M1, 2.0 BRM and finally, the Lyncar-DFV, Good has always wished to remain competitive, and admits that in some ways, he is responsible for the escalating cost of hillclimbing. "My whole car in which I won the championship in 1961, cost me as much as a gearbox casing does now," he said. So the cost of remaining competitive, the fact that he works a good deal abroad, and a growing family, have spelt the end of Good's spirited career.



David Good — spirited.

However, David Good will still be seen on the hills, for, with Sir Nick Williamson, he is on the committee of Wiscombe hillclimb, and was well known for his commentaries in the past. "I've had lots out of the sport, and would like to put more back in," he said.

BTRDA presentations

The BTRDA held their excellent get-together and luncheon last Sunday in Solihull when most of their major awards were presented and nearly 300 people attended. Among the guests were the RAC's Dean Delamont who, in particular, was applauded for his remark about "environmental cranks" who wished to upset the programme of motor sport in this country. Others present included Tony Fall (Dealer Opel Team), Stuart Turner (Ford), Brian Culcheth (British Leyland) and various trade representatives.

Among those who collected their awards were George Warren, Nick Garner and Martin Barnard (Autocross), Trevor Smith and Phil Darbyshire (Autotest), Mike Harrison, Colin Valentine, Brian Betteridge, Bill Moffatt and Geoff Spencer (Production Car Trials) and the rally men: Gordon Batchelor, Graham Lepley, John Edwardes-Parton and Tony Baines.

For 1975, the Association will continue in all their usual fields despite the loss of their sponsors, Castrol, in Autotest and Autocross. However, they feel that they are better equipped than most to continue in the hard times in which we seem to be heading, and are confident that their aims in continuing to provide the friendly club level spirit and competition will prosper during the coming season.

Birkett makes it by 82s

Nipping over the Pennines to tackle the Croft & Blackburn Riponian Rally for the first time the Opel Ascona of Geoff Birkett and Dave Orrick scored a 1 m 22 s win on a tough night in northern Yorkshire and the Dales where ice and snow made conditions difficult as well as interesting. On a 186 mile route which contained one selective of 10 miles, they dropped 19 m 9 s to defeat Peter Kirk and Stephen Bye in their RS1600. Birkett and Orrick pulled a quick lead in the early part of the event and just managed to keep their noses in front with the pressure maintained right to the end.

One of the best performances of the night was put up by the top novice crew of Miss Jane Merry and John Potter in a Saab who finished on 50 m 16 s. This was Jane's second event. Another lady to do extremely well was Miss Gwen Watson who crewed S. Smith to the mixed team award in a Cortina and they finished in a fine seventh spot, easily beating the best semi-experts M. and G. Wilson (Escort) who were 21st.

1, G. Birkett/D. Orrick (Ascona), 19 m 9 s; 2, P. Kirk/S. Bye (RS1600), 20 m 31 s; 3, M. Taylor/A. Dixon (Mexico), 22 m 46 s; 4, R. Beacroft/J. Millington (Mexico), 23 m 40 s; 5, P. Davies/D. Davidson (Saab), 25 m 8 s; 6, P. Murray/G. Grundy (Saab), 27 m 2 s. **Semi-experts**: M. and G. Wilson (Escort), 38 m 17 s. **Novice**: Miss J. Merry/W. Potter (Saab), 50 m 16 s. **Mixed**: S. Smith/Miss G. Watson (Cortina), 28 m 15 s.

Merridale the master

Tony Merridale was complete master of the conditions at the second round of the Snetterton Winter Rallycross Series on Sunday, setting BTD on each of his timed runs in the Team Castrol Ford Escort-BDA. His massive 18 points for two class wins shoots him up to fourth in the championship, for Mick Bird failed to capitalise on his first round maximum and only added another six to his score with an ailing car on his first run of the afternoon. Nevertheless he stays in joint first spot with his Airey Tuning team-mate Nick Brice who scored another class maximum to carry forward 24 points to the final on February 23.

Just about everything went well for Sporting CC of Norfolk and West Suffolk MC for their second event. Castle Street Garage (Thetford) continuing their first round sponsorship on an increased basis, the sun shone throughout, the racing was close, the entry list was full and the crowd was even larger than last time. Even though the drivers don't object too much to the ever-forming ruts the state of the gravel pit is becoming an embarrassment to organisers and circuit staff alike, while the course is far too long. Certainly there was a fair bit of carnage and the later runs were over very quickly with the reduced field. Of the day's more spectacular moments, Les Lunn's was the most incredible, his ex-Dave Fuell Mini leaping over the top of the banked corner by the Norwich Straight only to rejoin the course right foot hard down before the marshals had converged on his point of departure expecting to find the worst. Dave Keeler and Mike Smith were less lucky. Keeler, after a very good first run, rolled his Cooper S into a ball on the banking while Smith, who took the 1300 Class with his first time, had a tie rod pop out as he entered the chicane and in the roll the glassfibre roof of his Cooper came away *à la* Sardine can.

Barry Crump (1.0 Mini), leading Class 1 prior to Sunday tangled with Stan Rolfe's Rally car and went away pointless and let Tim Fraser into a class lead, Fraser being narrowly beaten by Ken Self's 1-litre Mini for the class pot. The two Tom Airey cars of Bird and Brice had the 1600 class sewn up, Bird taking over Brice's car for his second run as his Mini was clutch and brakeless but he was still out of luck as the Brice car developed a fuel line blockage. Bruce Rushton also featured well in his 1500 cc Mini. Hugh Wheldon failed to arrive due to difficulties in obtaining parts for his VW but in any event the circuit conditions suited the Escorts more than the rear-engined cars. Tony Merridale stormed away in both his races and was relieved when brother Bob, whose own car failed to start, brought the car back in one piece and nicely warmed up for him to set a BTD target of 4 m 23.2 s in his second race. Showing well amongst the Escorts was Peter Robertson's Avenger which, according to the timekeepers, was the fastest car on circuit in the practice period, a time which was substantiated by the second fastest time in his class on the first official runs. John Smith's 2-litre Escort-BDA was also very impressive and deserves the sponsorship he so avidly seeks. Trevor Hopkins and Paul Eaton completed the Escort domination.

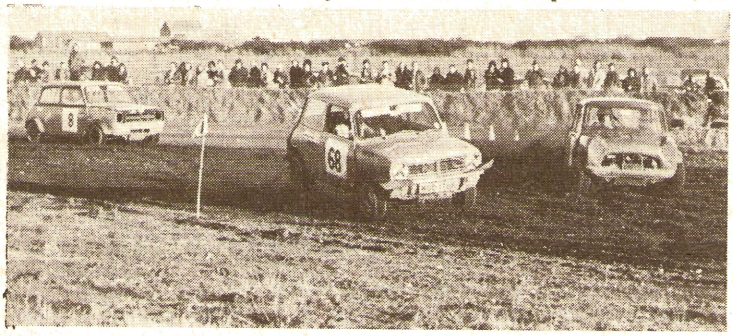
The two Willhire Escorts of Dave Wallis and Keith Webb featured in the Rally Car class, Wallis moving into the class lead with Webb recovering from a spin to take class award on the day. Tony Ford (Escort-BDA) lived up to expectations with a fine first run but class leaders Peter Banham and John Harmer were out of luck with a stripped gear in practice although Banham did both the runs in his wife's shopping car and managed another three championship points.

BTD: Tony Merridale (1.8 Ford Escort-BDA), 4 m 23.2 s.

Class winners: Ken Self (1.0 BLMC Mini), 4 m 38.7 s; Mike Smith (1.3 BLMC Cooper S), 4 m 28.3 s; Nick Brice (1.3 Austin Mini), 4 m 26.3 s; Tony Merridale (1.8 Ford Escort-BDA), 4 m 23.2 s; Keith Webb (1.7 Ford Escort BDA), 4 m 29.7 s.

Championship positions. Overall: 1, Mick Bird and Nick Brice, 24 points; 3, John Winsor, 21 points; 4, Tim Fraser 19 points.

Derek Scarrow jumps his rally Mini over the bumps at Snetterton.



Easy win for Saunderson

In spite of floods in many places, everyone enjoyed last Saturday's Wivenhoe & District MC Leeder Game Rally over a 150-mile route which started and finished in Wivenhoe. Winners, by a comfortable margin, were Ted Saunderson and Martin Taylor in their Mexico who dropped 480 marks to beat Robin Ainger and Graham Etheridge (Escort estate) who finished on 670 marks and, as best Wivenhoe members, collected the Roy Leeder Trophy.

Second best in the masters class were John White and Malcolm Maghee in a Cooper S while the novices award went to David Barker and Ray Bussitt in their Cortina who dropped 1020 marks. Best team were the Eastern Counties MC.

MGB heads varied field

The best known MGB in Southern rallying circles owned by Dennis Skinner scored a 1 m win last Saturday on the Farnborough and District MC Winter Mixture rally. Partnered by Peter Rushforth, the team dropped 4 m on a tight 135-mile route in Wiltshire and Hampshire in which 47 of the original 50 crews reached the finish, the seven selectives totalling 15 miles. Best semi-expert crew, T. Arnold/V. Clark (Mexico), finished fifth and the best Farnborough crew, Brian Cunningham/Mike Smith were 10th in their Mini.

1, D. Skinner/P. Rushforth (MGB), 4 m; 2, M. West/M. Smith (Escort), 5 m; 3, P. Trinder/J. Morris (Datsun 240Z), 6 m 20 s; 5, Mr and Mrs. B. Hazell (Imp), 6 m 30 s; 5, T. Arnold/V. Clarke (Mexico), 8 m 26 s; 6, R. Neighbour/G. Dorr (Cortina), 8 m 40 s. **Novice**: B. Tanner/R. Dix (Mexico), 14 m 7 s. **Best Farnborough**: B. Cunningham/M. Smith (Mini), 10 m 7 s. **Best BAMA**: P. Grant/A. Jones (Mini), 19 m.

Webb/Bricknell's comfortable win over ten

Gaining their best result for something like two years Clifford Webb and Roger Bricknell took their Escort RS1600 to a comfortable win on last Saturday's Camel Vale Rally over the 150 miles of twisting lanes in the heart of Exmoor and Dartmoor.

From a field of only 20, of whom half retired, Webb, who collected the Shaw Challenge Trophy, and Bricknell (Walters Trophy), dropped 140 marks.

An Imp Sport handled by Clifford Julian and Ron Haswell were runners-up on 250 marks, a long way ahead of Norman Anstis and David Boggs (Escort RS2000).

The best semi-experts were Greg Thomas and Alan Smith in their Escort RS1600 on 640 marks and the novice prize went to Howard and Susan Stephens in their Mexico with 5380 marks.

Minshaw buys 5.0 Daf

Production saloons to Super Saloons is quite a jump, but that is what Alan Minshaw will be doing for the coming season. Last year's Triplex Production saloon series champion has bought the V8-engined Daf built by Tony Hazellwood and entered of late by Colin Folwell's Corbeau Equipe.

The Daf will naturally be supported by Demon Tweeks of Tattenhall but Minshaw has sponsorship from Manchester Liners, one of the biggest container companies in the north west. The Daf will be prepared and tended by both Robin Gordon, who has looked after John Lepp's sports cars, and Autovita's Jeff Goodliff and Harry Ratcliffe.

Minshaw drove the car last Thursday at Snetterton to seal the sale and settled in quickly, a legacy of modsports and F3 experience. He will contest the Super Saloon series mainly: "We don't want to do unnecessary races," he said.

His championship winning Avenger has probably been sold to Belgium for a native of that country to contest their G1½.

Heywood's winning ways

Automotive Products AC autotest champion last year, Brian Heywood, carried on his winning ways by taking BTD at the club's first autotest of the year at the company's car park at Leamington Spa last Sunday. From a field of 21 he did the 11 tests in 482.2 s in his Sprite and he finished some 29 s ahead of his nearest rival.

Steve Vials, the club's chairman, won Class 1 in his Hornet on 525.9 s, P. French took Class 2 in his 998 Mini on 547.7 s and Chris Bayliss brought his Elan to a class win in 511.0 s.

FF and FF2000 tyres now confirmed

The RAC have now confirmed that the Dunlop 13 in CR65 compound racing tyre will be used for Formula Ford in the coming season. They have also confirmed that the Dunlop tyres will be used for FF2000. Slicks will be used for the latter Formula, with the CR120 compound used for wet weather racing. Rim widths of 6 in (fronts) and 8 in (rears) will apply for both wet and dry in FF2000. Price of slicks will be £28.41 plus VAT for the fronts, and £37.71 each for the rears. Wets will be £33.44 plus VAT for fronts and £44.37 plus VAT for rears. Any price rise will be notified one month in advance to give competitors time to stock up.

Modsports championship

The BRSCC Midland centre will be running a non-sponsored championship for modsports and special saloons during 1975. Both championships will be run over 11 rounds, of which the best eight results will count.

Classes in each championship will be as normal for both categories of cars. Prize money will in effect be entry money refunded, but less the organisational costs, and will be accrued on a points basis throughout the season, and paid off at the end. Dependent on starters, first in class will be awarded 3 points, 2 for second and one for third. It is thought that, based on last year's entries, prize money will be paid at the rate of £4 per point. There will be additional prize money for first, second and third in the championships, with an approximate prize fund of £200.

Modsports dates are: March 31, Mallory Park; April 20, Mallory Park; May 11, Donington; May 26, Mallory Park; June 22, Mallory Park; July 13, Mallory Park; August 3, Mallory Park; September 7, Mallory Park; September 14, Donington; October 5, Donington; October 12, Mallory Park.

Special saloon dates are: April 20, Mallory Park; May 11, Donington; July 6, Silverstone; August 3, Mallory Park; August 10, Mallory Park; September 7, Mallory Park; September 14, Donington; October 5, Donington; October 12, Mallory Park.

The Donington dates are provisional and if these are not confirmed, these rounds will be run by other BRSCC Centres. Further details from the BRSCC Midland Centre.

Prodsport Morgans

Morgans should provide an excellent spearhead to the prodsports racing this coming season. John Britten is continuing with his Plus 8, while his Arkley sales manager, Chris Alford, will have a 4/4. Sponsorship has already been obtained from a leading supplier of photographic equipment.

Among the other Morgan runners is Charles Morgan, son of *the* Peter Morgan in a Plus 8, along with Bill Hopkins, a Morgan stalwart, and Datsun 240Z modsports driver, Win Pearcy, who'll use his sponsor's wife's shopping Plus 8.

Garton easily

Potteries driving school instructor Brian Garton brought out his 998 Mini to wipe up the Stafford & District CC's production car trial at Salt, near Sandon, Staffs, last Sunday. On 28 sections, he dropped 72 marks to win the event with considerable ease for none of the rest of the entry of 26 finished below three figures.

East Midlands rally champion navigator Eric Cowcill found daylight navigating round posts not to his ultimate liking for his wife Leslie beat him in the family Clan by 10 marks.

Only one contestant retired — he tried a short cut between sections—got bogged down and had to be recovered by tractor.

Overall: B. Garton (Mini), 72 marks lost.

Class winners: D. Gwyn-Jones (Mini), 100 marks; P. Wood (Escort), 170 marks; C. Wild (Imp), 100 marks. **Ladies**: Mrs L. Cowcill (Clan Crusader), 117 marks.

Smith wins despite "off"

Although they went off into the saplings on the notorious Hucking Nineties, Tony Smith and Bob Young recovered smartly to win last Saturday's Spyder's Webb Rally by 5 m. On the 120-mile route, arranged by Borough 19 MC, they dropped 17 m in the Escort Sport to beat Frank Gardiner and Jim Anderson (Cooper) on 22 m. Smith and Young initially had strong opposition from Chris Daisy and Paul Claydon in their RS2000 but the latter missed a code board and that put paid to the chances of the crew who were second in the Clubman's section of last year's RAC Rally. The all ladies crew of Miss Linda Menny and Miss Margaret Greenland put 36 other all-male novice crews to shame by taking their category.

1, T. Smith/B. Young (Escort Sport), 17 m; 2, F. Gardiner/J. Anderson (Cooper), 22 m; 3, J. Boulden/D. Athow (Escort), 33 m; 4, C. Daisy/P. Claydon (RS2000), 1F 18 m; 5, A. Cutherbertson/D. Prayford (Cooper), 3F 29 m; 6, B. Laver/J. Watts (Escort 1600), 3F 42 m. **Novices**: Miss L. Kenny/Miss M. Greenland (Mini), 9F 45 m.

Consortium for specials

The Bicester Racing consortium has been formed to assist private enthusiasts contemplating building specials for any branch of sport. The consortium have negotiated with March Engineering Ltd to buy obsolete or second hand components at rock bottom prices to hand on to special builders at rock-bottom prices.

As the consortium members, Steve Butterworth and Colin Marshall are employees of March, they have considerable experience with the parts that they are selling. They have the approval of March and envisage dealing with autocross, hillclimbs, clubmans or even road car builders. They have already designed a single seater hill climb as an exercise.

Jaybrand continue

Jaybrand are continuing their sponsorship of the only commercially sponsored *Formule Libre* championship in the country. This will be their third year in the championship and once again the championship will be over six rounds at Silverstone. Both the previous championships have been won by Bobbie Bell in 5.7 BRM-Ford and 5.0 Trojan-Chevrolet respectively.

The 1975 championship opens on Sunday, March 16, and concludes on October 5 when the race will be over the GP circuit. Points will be scored on the 9-6-4-3-2-1 basis with double points for the final. Prize money will be paid at £36, £24, £16, £12, £8, £4 for the first six finishers, and £100 and Jaybrand Racewear Trophy goes to the overall winner of the championship with £50 and £25 going to the placemen.

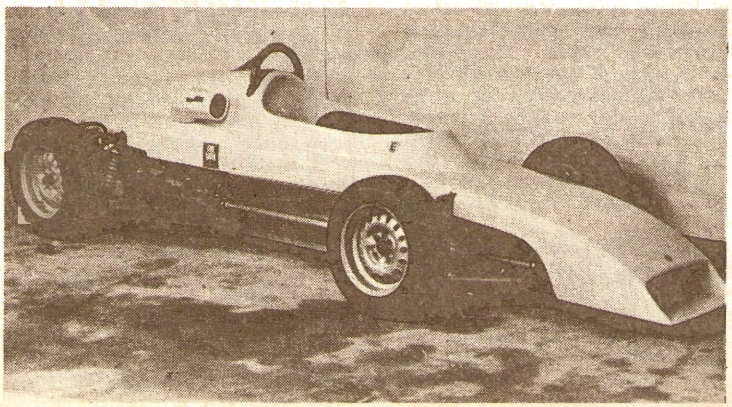
All six rounds are organised by the BRDC at Silverstone. Dates are: March 16, March 31, May 26, June 22, August 25, and October 5.

Needell's problem

It seems that sponsorship has again deserted Tiff Needell. The young Weybridge driver, whose career started with a Lotus 69 won in a competition in this magazine, has always been dogged by running cost problems, but was sponsored towards the end of 1974 by Durex, the contraceptive manufacturers.

Needell hoped to go into FF 2000 with Durex as his sponsors in an Elden, but last week, Needell learnt that Durex were pulling out, and so once again, he is without a sponsor. Unless another fairy godmother is forthcoming, the young civil engineer will remain in Formula Ford for yet another year, even though his performances justify greater things. At present, he hopes to continue with an Elden contesting the major championships. As one of the few top Formula Ford drivers not to be moving up into another Formula in 1975, he would seem to be a very good bet for the championship this season.

Elden's new Mk 17 FF car has already been well received with as many as 22 cars sold. The FF 2000 is closely based on this car.



Webb suffers from brakes

An overlocking brake on his newly built standard 1075 Sprite cost Ray Webb 20 s for two poles and left him runner-up by some 17 s at the Dunlop MC autotest meeting at the rubber company's East Car Park last Sunday.

Making no mistakes winner Mike Styles drove his 998 Mini round the 12 tests in 644.6 s to win his class handsomely, runner-up S. Wallis finishing on 689.6 s in a similar car.

Autocross man Geoff Silvester was going well in the same class until he made a complete mess of one test and he dropped back to third some 3 s down on Wallis. In the third class Mike Herbert (Escort 1300), led all day to beat Mel Taberrer's Simca Rallye by a street, while Webb had a similarly easy win ahead of S. Martin in a 1275 GT.

Overall: M. Styles (Mini), 644.6 s. **Class winners**: R. Webb (Sprite), 661.4 s; S. Wallis (Mini), 689.6 s; M. Herbert (Escort), 685.2 s. **Ladies**: Mrs. K. Bayley (Avenger), 973.0 s. **Novice**: M. Savage (Midget), 914.0 s. Redditch won the team prize.

Gilham's team

Making their first appearance at Snetterton were two members of the newly formed Don Gilham Racing team, Tony Stubbs in a 1230 cc Mini and Paul Springett in a 1220 cc car. Specifically formed for Rallycross and Autocross events the team of four cars will later contain Don himself in a Mini fitted with his 1380 cc Hot-Rod car engine. While the above trio will concentrate on Rallycross events, Dick Griffiths will be seen in another Mini in the Southern Counties Autocross Championship. Like all teams in these hard times, the Don Gilham team are looking for sponsorship.

● Doc Griffiths has bought the ex-Ron Hopkinson MGB to drive himself, but is said to be keeping the Jensen Healey for Geoff Till to drive.

Racers beat rallyists

That motor sport conscious newspaper *The Scotsman*, sponsored an excellent "Motor Sport On Ice" meeting on Sunday January 12th, when two teams, each of six well known Scottish race and rally drivers did battle against each other, on six tests laid out on the ice of Murrayfield Ice Rink, in Edinburgh. An enthusiastic capacity crowd watched as the drivers scratched their way around in four standard 850 Minis, provided by Christie Car Rental and Moir and Baxter all being shod with half-studded Kleber tyres.

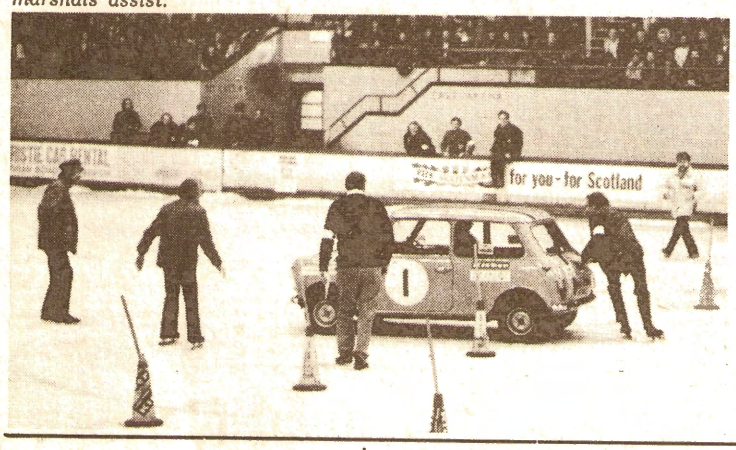
Ingliston commentator Jimmy McInnes was there to whip up enthusiasm, but this was hardly needed especially as two of the tests had the teams competing directly against each other on the ice at the same time, while at half-time navigator Hugh McNeill, on skates, gave his driver, Andrew Cowan in a Mini, a ten second start as they tackled test three, the skater handsomely beating the car, even to reversing on skates, over a line!

However, it was the racers who showed superb control, with Bill Dryden setting overall fastest time in the six tests followed by Iain McLaren and Eddie Labinjoh, while Andrew Cowan was the quickest rallyman, his score suffering after collecting a couple of markers on Test 4, and losing direction and time at the finish line of the next test. Graham Birrell displayed his usual expertise to head Doug Niven by one fifth of a second, the latter missing out, by forgetting to release the handbrake as the front Mini wheels burned their way into the ice. Jennifer Birrell was a bit unhappy with having to do so much reversing.

The rally drivers led by Andrew Cowan only won two of the tests, most seeming to take some time to adjust to the conditions, Willie Crawford missed the power of his Escort as he kept ahead of Alistair Findlay by 0.6 s, while Bill Taylor collected a couple of pylon penalties. Current Scottish Rally Champion, Arthur Jasper started off well, but went pylon collecting at mid-distance, to be headed by a lounge suited Jimmy Rae.

There can be no doubt, that despite the slowish speeds, this provides good crowd pulling motor sport, and has given Wendy Jones of *The Scotsman*, ideas for a Scotland, England, Ireland, Wales ice driving test meeting—with racing drivers?—the autotest drivers led by Grainger Robertson were heard voicing other ideas!

Embarrassment for Doug Niven — he can't find reverse! Skating marshals assist.



Superloons for Gerry

After last year's ambitious effort with the renowned Vauxhall Ventora Super Saloon, DTV will be going slightly lower key for 1975. Gerry Marshall will continue with his Firenza which will, no doubt, climb even closer to 100 victories.

A new Super Saloon, a Firenza with a V8 engine, will be constructed, "although how new it will be remains to be seen," said Gerry, DTV, it appears, have little budget for racing, and even less time for the circuit side of things. Apart from the Super Saloon series, where Gerry hopes the 2.3 Firenza will be a winner in the up to 2.5 class, the Firenza won't be seen apart from the usual end of season races.

Incidentally, Marshall currently is trying to dispose of the ex-Pierpoint V8-engined Rover which has recently been in Barbados. It has now returned to this country, and Marshall himself firmly believes in its potential.

Howes' Javelin

After sadly infrequent appearances in 1974, the AMC Javelin of David Howes is currently up for sale. The Javelin is essentially a G2 car, and would be even more successful once converted into Super Saloon specification and a considerable amount of weight could be removed. As it is, Howes reckons to have lapped in around the same times as Frank Gardner's Camaro at Silverstone.

Howes quotes economical reasons for the sale, and the car itself naturally represents a considerable amount of money tied up. Having reorganised his business, he feels that he cannot afford the time that should be spent on preparing the car. The Javelin is fitted with much expensive equipment, but is up for sale "very cheaply." However, if it isn't sold, Howes will probably have the occasional outing during the forthcoming season.

● Mark Litchfield wishes to make it known that his connection with Elden is through Elden International Racing Ltd, and that neither he, nor Roger Manning, have any connection with Design Formula. Although they had an option to take up directorship of the latter company, neither have wished to take up the option, for reasons which are obvious.

Snetterton visitors

Seen at Snetterton and taking a more than passing interest in the facilities for rallycross and the general feel of the meeting were some of the senior officials of TEAC. With the sport seemingly catching on well in East Anglia, the signs are that with a few changes a really exciting rallycross track could be developed on Snetterton's sandy wastes. Other visitors of note came from FoMoCo who seem very pleased that one of their local dealers (Castle Street Garage (Thetford) Ltd) are sponsoring all events of the Winter Series; whilst the Competitions Manager for Duckhams Oils was also on hand to see Tony Merridale's Team Castrol car set BTD.

Three litre class blues

After a year of keen competition, it seems that in 1975, the two to three litre class of mod-sports racing will be on the decline again in 1975. Two of the chief protagonists, the Super Samuri Datsun 240Z of Win Percy, and the Ryford Porsche conducted by Alan Broad, will not be seen this year.

The Datsun will be retired due to the Samuri Motor Co's involvement in another class of racing and will hopefully contest Le Mans and then be for sale.

The Ryford Porsche, owned by David Pennell, is being placed in mothballs for the coming season, with prototypes in mind for the 1976 Silhouette formula, so Alan Broad is currently out of a drive. Which means that the class is likely to sink back into its TVR/Austin Healey days, after a brief burst of glory.

● Ron Davis of the North Thames Centre of the BARC has reluctantly had to retire from active participation in motor sport due to ill health, but has decided to start a duplicating and typewriting agency for all connected in motor sport. He may be contacted at: 15 Ruskin Gardens, Kenton, Middlesex HA3 9PX. Tel: 01-204 6787.

All-rounders championship

For the coming season, the BTRDA will be instituting an All-rounders championship, open to all members, irrespective of what other championships they may have entered. The events include gold or silver star rallies, autocross, autotest and sporting or production car trials. Competitors can score points in three or four different championship groups to count two events in each group. The onus is on the competitor to register his scores for various events. The all-rounders championship is a major BTRDA competition of Gold Star status.

Donoghue loses out

Although they lost less time on the road in their ex-works Escort BDA, Steve Donoghue and Max Horne had to be content with second spot on the tight navigational Night Run Rally over a 100 mile route in the Scottish borderland last Saturday. The Berwick & District MC event, which attracted 29 entries, was won by Gerry Balmbra and Dennis Nixon in their RS2000.

In collecting the Stoddart Trophy, the Alnwick crew lost 430 marks during their trip round 14 controls in extremely tricky conditions. Donoghue and Horne weighed in with a total of 690 marks and W. Hunter and William Virtue brought a Datsun Violet home third on 900 marks.

Entries from the semi-expert class took fourth and sixth places in the form of P. C. Brown/Roger MacFarlane (Escort TC) and Derek Hill/Walter Duguid (Escort). But the star of the lesser lights was undoubtedly the novice class winning crew of Andrew Leitch and Peter Spencer, who, on only their second event, were fifth in their Cortina.

● A Birmingham university team will challenge the BRSCC's Midland Centre at a motoring quiz this coming Tuesday at Birmingham University. It starts at 8 pm and further details can be obtained from: Ron Overend on Lichfield 24380; or Gerry Taylor on Lichfield 23212.

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