

Autosport

1985 INTERNATIONAL RACING CALENDAR

A Haymarket publication

February 7, 1985 75p

Monte Carlo thriller



RAM's F1 contender
New JPS Lotus 97T
Saab 900 Turbo 16
Porsche Daytona



FRONT COVER

Main picture: They never learn. Some days after spectators were injured on a special stage when Vatanen's Peugeot spun, Monte Carlo Rally winner Ari is forced to power through a gaggle of spectators towards the end of the event. Report: page 32. *Comment*: page 10. Photo: Colin Taylor Productions. Below: Manfred Winkelhock is caught giving the new Gustav Brunner designed RAM-Hart 03 a shakedown run at Silverstone. Turn to page 25 for a full description of John Macdonald's latest Grand Prix challenger. Photo: Jeff Bloxham.

NEXT WEEK

Lotus Formula 1 driver Ayrton Senna interviewed — Rio de Janeiro F1 testing — Hillclimb and sprint review 1984 — New generation F3 cars described — *Backstage* on Monte Carlo — Pull-out poster-calendar — Plus all our usual news and features.*

*These items correct at time of going to press.

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Published every Thursday by: Haymarket Publishing (1980) Ltd. Editorial, Advertisement, and Circulation 38-42 Hampton Road, Teddington, Middlesex TW11 0JE (telephone: 01-977 8787; telex 8952440). Back Numbers & Subscriptions: Autosport Subscriptions Department, Haymarket Publishing Ltd, 12-14 Ansdell Street, London W8 (telephone: 01-937 7288).

Subscription (per annum): UK £53, Europe and overseas surface £60, Airspeed USA \$84, Airspeed Canada/Mexico \$70, Airmail — Middle East £72.50, South America, Africa, India \$83, Japan, Australia, Far East £93.

US Mailing Agent: Expeditors of the Printed World Ltd, 527 Madison Avenue, Suite 1217, New York, NY 10022. Second Class Postage paid at New York, NY USPS No: 454 280. Postmaster: send address corrections to Autosport, c/o Expeditors of the Printed World Ltd., 527 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022 (U.S. Mailing Agent).

Printed in England by: Thamesmouth Printing Co., Stock Road, Southend-on-Sea, Essex. Colour sections printed by: B. R. Hubbard Ltd., Callywhite Lane, Dronfield, Sheffield. Photosetting by: Quikset, 184-186 Old Street, London EC1. Registered at the PO as a newspaper.

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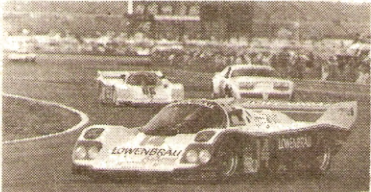
PIT & PADDOCK 4

All the latest international racing news — Surer quits F1 — Prost: no IROC — Toleman look to Yokohama — Birmingham GP latest — Shell back McLaren — No ATS in F1 — Rouse to use Ford Sierra Turbo in Group A — F3 and NASCAR testing pictures.

COMMENT 10

The problems of crowd control on the Monte: we look at the issue — Your views aired in the *Correspondence* columns — A trip down memory lane with *Then as Now?* — Plus a chortle or two from *Catchpole* . . .

DAYTONA 24 HOURS 12



Porsche sweep the board as Wollek/Boutsen/Foyt/Unser score late victory. Gordon Kirby reports.

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All the international and national rallying news — Mouton heads for Breakdown — Ford's concern for safety — Belgium classic in Spa — Wood takes Rover to National Series — Therier improving.

TONY FOWKES 21

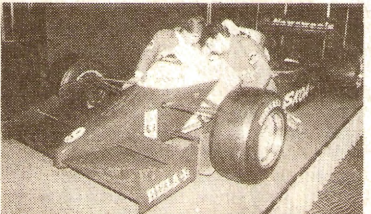


Alone across the desert on the Paris-Dakar Rally . . . A daunting thought, certainly, but Tony Fowkes did just that. Martin Holmes tells the story.

LOTUS 97T 24

Lotus presented their latest F1 design last week — the 97T — a refined version of last year's car.

RAM 03 25



We take a look at the radical new RAM-Hart Formula 1 design from the pen of Gustav Brunner.

LOLA T950 27



Lola Cars launched their Formula 3000 car at a press reception last week when the Beatrice Foods/Carl Haas/Lola F1 set-up was announced. We present a closer examination of the car.

CATHY MULLER 29



A racing driver first, and a woman second. That seems to be the attitude of the aggressively talented young French girl, Cathy Muller, who will be driving in this year's British Formula 3 championship with Dave Price Racing. Joe Saward looks at her career so far.

MONTE CARLO RALLY 32



Although the entry list may have looked rather thin for this year's running of the Monte Carlo Rally, the action was no less intense, with Audi battling against Peugeot and Lancia. Victory, however, went to Peugeot and the Vatanen/Harryman combination, as Peter Foubister reports.

REVIEW: NASCAR 42



Terry Labonte and the Piedmont Airlines Chevrolet Monte Carlo took the 1984 NASCAR Grand National title with three victories and some consistent finishes. Gordon Kirby looks back on the stock car season.

SAAB 900 TURBO 16S 48



Mike McCarthy took a whirl at the wheel of Saab's present top of the range model Turbo 16S. An eye-catching, comfortable and excellent performer was his conclusion. Plus news of Saab's SDI ignition system.

ARUNDEL C200 51

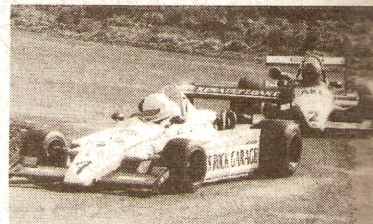


Our track tester, Tiff Needell, took to the circuits with the Gary Anderson designed Arundel C200 sports car that saw brief WEC action before concentrating on Thundersports last year. Tiff gives his verdict on Scorpion Racing's sports car.

SPORTS EXTRA 52

All the national racing news — Van Diemen win Ford contract for 25 cars — New MG Midget class — B & Q back Sports 2000 — Seldon sponsors HSCC — Exclusive photographs of Van Diemen's new RF85 FF2000 challenger — Lucrative GM bonuses.

FOC: SCOTLAND 54



Our Scottish correspondent, Bill Henderson, with a run down of last year's racing season north of the border.

SPORTSCARD 56

Crichton/Wilkinson beat Walkinshaw/Dickson combo to Pukekohe saloon victory — Van Rooyen's opening South African F2 win — Al Hajri takes Qatar Rally — Llewellyn begins season with victory on Wydean — John Price first on Longleat Stages — Ron Hudson rolls on at Mondello . . .

Surer quits Arrows F1 for rally programme

Marc Surer has decided to quit Grand Prix racing, and in 1985 will concentrate on rallying with a Peugeot 205 Turbo 16. "He told us of his decision at the weekend," said Arrows boss Jack Oliver. "I don't know that he's retired from racing completely, but he's decided to finish with Formula 1."

Surer's future with Arrows had been in doubt for some time, there being considerable speculation that he would be replaced by Gerhard Berger. "Even

though I hadn't lost all hope of driving a competitive Formula 1 car this year," he said on Monday, "I'm starting a new career in rallying. My car will be entered by the Swiss Peugeot importer, and we'll be running in most rounds of the European Rally Championship."

One of the most pleasant men in the business, Marc will be missed in Grand Prix racing. We assumed, in the light of his decision, that Thierry Boutsen's team mate at Arrows would be Berger, but

Oliver said this was not necessarily the case. "Gerhard is certainly high on the list," he told us, "but we are talking to other people, and we've made no decision yet. I hope we'll have it settled in the next few days."

In the meantime Boutsen is to begin testing the new Arrows-BMW A8 shortly. "If the weather stays good, we'll probably give it a shakedown run in this country," Oliver commented. "Failing that, we'll take it down to Ricard."

FISA extends F1 driver nominations deadline

As usual FISA deadlines were found to be expendable as the F1 entries' closing date (January 31) came and went last week. With Brabham, Arrows, Toleman, Osella and Spirit all unable to complete their driver line-up it was decided to extend the deadline to February 28.

The same date was supposed to apply to Germany's AvD who should have decided whether to hold their Grand Prix at Hockenheim or Nürburgring. This decision has now been deferred to February 15.

RAM line up announced

Manfred Winkelhock and Philippe Alliot were confirmed as the drivers for the Skoal Bandit RAM F1 team at the launch of the team's new car in London last week (see page 25).

The team had hoped to give Gustav Brunner's superb little design a

shakedown run at Silverstone last Friday but a faulty fuel relief valve restricted Winkelhock to just three slow laps. The car was immediately packed and sent off to Brazil for the Rio testing which begins this Friday. From there they go straight to Kyalami for further Pirelli tests.

Toleman's Orient Express

After a glimmer of hope from Japanese manufacturers Yokohama and Bridgestone to their tyre dilemma, Toleman's Alex Hawkridge and Chris Witty were preparing to visit Tokyo this week.

Meanwhile, despite firm refusals from Goodyear and Pirelli to supply tyres at this stage, the rest of the team went off to Rio for testing with the TG185 with just six Pirelli tyres to play with.

Hawkridge and Witty have been

advised that if they can secure the entry of a third tyre manufacturer into Formula 1 at some stage during the 1985 season then a lifeline supply of tyres might be negotiated from either Goodyear or Pirelli. The Toleman management hope to get an early indication from one or other of the Japanese companies so that they can elicit a supply of modern tyres from the companies participating in the Rio testing.

Rome GP in jeopardy

Over the last few days we have heard several rumours suggesting that the Rome Grand Prix (scheduled for late September) could be in jeopardy. Our Italian correspondent reports that a major ecological problem has arisen for the race to be run on the projected parkland circuit, it seems that a number of trees would have to be felled. And there is, understandably, considerable local opposition to such a scheme.

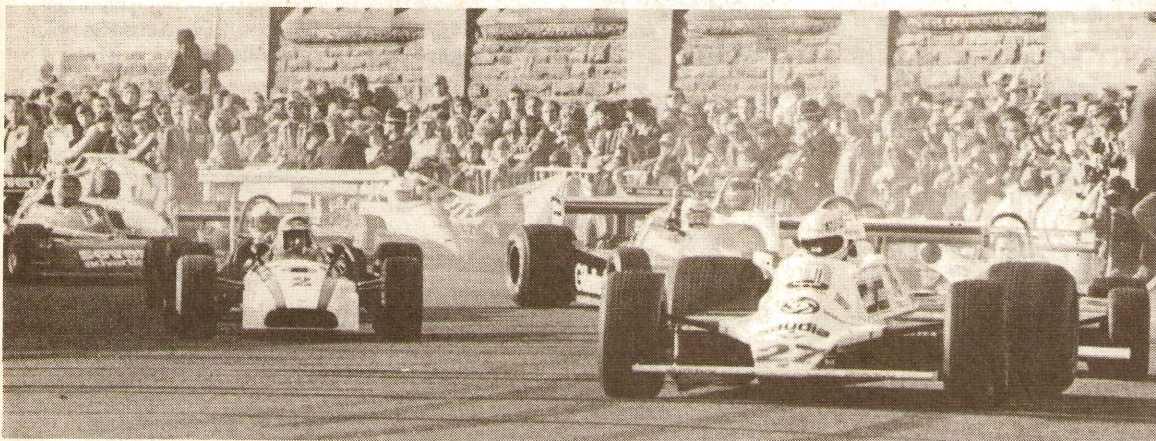
Now there comes a suggestion that the race might be transferred to Vallelunga, Rome's permanent circuit. Our man laughs at the thought, however, saying that the track would require enormous investment to bring it up to F1 standards. Its maximum crowd capacity is apparently something less than 30,000.

Brands for New York?

A familiar song this week. Yet again, it seems, the New York Grand Prix has evaporated. There is nothing firm yet from either the organisers or from FISA, but last week those in the know were saying that the race could be safely discounted.

The projected date for the NY GP is September 22. When the 1983 race was called off, it was replaced in the World Championship by a European Grand Prix at Brands Hatch. We note from MCD's 1985 programme booklet that September 22, one week after the British Aerospace 1000 WEC race, has been left clear. "To be announced," says the booklet of that weekend.

Birmingham GP bill progresses



Will Birmingham see racing on its streets? The debates continue in parliament.

The Birmingham City Council Act 1985, which is designed to empower the council to promote motor racing on the city streets, is expected to be debated in the House of Commons before the end of the month.

Currently the bill is going through its preliminary stages and this week nears the end of its First Reading procedure. Leading the presentation of the bill are the Conservative MP for Hall Green, Birmingham, Sir Reginald Eyre; and Labour's Shadow Minister of Sport, Denis Howell, who is MP for Small Heath, Birmingham.

Last week, a group of three left-wing Labour MPs from the West Midlands area asked for a series of amendments to the bill, all of a political nature. The MPs

— Jeff Rooker, Terry Davies and Robin Corbett — are seeking a ban on the participation of South African racing drivers, a ban on tobacco advertising during events in Birmingham, tree protection measures, and discounted admission prices for city residents.

The Act itself is concerned only with a specific street circuit in the Birmingham city centre, and does not apply generally to motor racing on closed public roads. It also specifies that any racing in Birmingham would take place on only one weekend each year.

The bill deals in detail with such items as the precise city streets which will be used for the circuit, their closure for the purposes of motor racing, erection of safety barriers and grandstands, charg-

ing members of the public for admission, broadcasting and advertising rights, liabilities and insurances.

In view of RAC MSA policy against the sanction of street racing, one particular paragraph is especially interesting, under the heading 'Power to provide motor races'. This states that, "The Council may provide or arrange for the provision of motor races on the whole or any part of the circuit streets, and may provide or arrange for the provision of all such services and facilities and things (including prizes) and do all other such acts as they may think necessary or convenient for that purpose."

This would appear to give the Birmingham City Council the legal right to sanction its own motor racing, with or

without the authority of the British national body, the RAC Motor Sports Association. We understand that it is emphatically not the intention of the promoters to attempt to put on events without the cooperation of the RAC MSA, even though that organisation is currently opposed to the Birmingham scheme. But that clause would seem to leave the way clear for less scrupulous promoters, were they to achieve control over the event in the future, to bring a non-FIA category to Birmingham.

Meanwhile, one of the scheme's opponents, Silverstone Circuits Ltd. has issued a formal statement indicating the reasons for its opposition. "Racing on the public highway is against the law," says Silverstone. "Therefore to cater for the needs of racers, permanent circuits had to be built by private investors — individuals and organisations alike. Over many years they have ploughed their resources into purpose-built circuits to cater for all the needs of the sport from club racing to Grand Prix level. Additionally the country's permanent circuits actively encourage all aspects of motor racing, helping the beginners, subsidising the enthusiast's events and providing training grounds for drivers, officials and marshals, plus facilities for testing racing vehicles which would not be provided by temporary street circuits. The permanent circuits are able to provide the best, safest facilities for competitors and spectators alike. With two circuits in this country licensed to run Grands Prix, and others catering for a wide cross-section of events, we do not see the need for the law to be changed to permit street racing."

Bridgestone in F3000: no progress at FISA

Bridgestone officials visited FISA in Paris last week to discuss the F3000 30% supply regulation. It was, and still is, Bridgestone's intention to supply the Ralt team exclusively with tyres for the formula as they had understood from the meeting with FISA at Pau last June that effectively all F2 regulations would apply to the new formula, save the change of engines specification.

However, according to Bridgestone's European Motor Sport manager Hiroshi Yasukawa, FISA were adamant that the 'new' regulation would stand. "It is a very difficult situation for us," said Yasukawa, "we cannot supply 30% of the field. We made no progress at all in Paris."

Bridgestone took with them a telex from Dunlop in Japan which affirmed that if the 30% rule was dropped both they and Yokohama, along with Bridgestone, would be willing to support the formula on a limited scale.

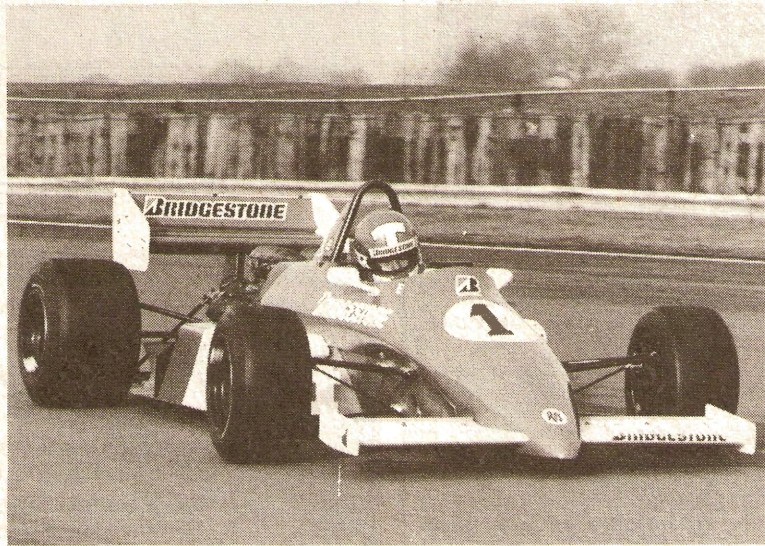
There is no shortage of teams prepared to use the Japanese tyres, the problem is one of supply. Thirty per cent of the entry is likely to be 10 cars and the Japanese companies firstly don't have the capacity for such growth, and face enormous costs when importing their tyres.

We understand that the FISA Sporting Regulations will state, when they are finally published, that any tyre company wanting to participate in the Championship must indicate their plans by Feb 20 and nominate their contracted

teams. Also the tyres must be realistically priced and be, as near as possible, of an equal specification.

While a solution to their problem is sought, Ralt and Bridgestone are continuing their test programme, Mike Thackwell driving the F2 based prototype. "Our proper car won't be ready for another month" said Ron Tauranac on Monday and both he and Yasukawa

Mike Thackwell has been testing the Ralt F3000 prototype — with Bridgestone markings.



were adamant that "we will be in Formula 3000 together".

On the possibility of Formula 1 with Toleman, Yasukawa was not in a position to comment other than it was obviously an attractive and ideal way for the company to enter Grand Prix racing, although at this stage their competition budget for the season was already committed.



Rick Mears — keen to get back to CART.

The amazing Mr Mears . . .

Rick Mears may have a little trouble walking at the moment, but the 1984 Indianapolis 500 winner proved last week that his enforced five month layoff has done nothing to impair his driving ability. In a mere handful of laps at Phoenix last week, Mears took the Penske Racing March 85C round in 23.70s — half a second faster than team mate Danny Sullivan had managed a few days earlier.

The Californian admitted afterwards that driving the car had caused him quite a lot of pain. And that, together with the fact that the car was entirely new to him, makes his time the more remarkable. Rick's feet were dreadfully injured in a testing accident at Sanair last autumn, and he is still confined to a wheelchair most of the time. There is very little strength in his legs at present, but he is adamant that he will be on the grid at the CART opener, at Phoenix on March 31.



A.J. Foyt — racing in IROC this year.

No IROC for Prost

Alain Prost will not, after all, be taking part in the 1985 IROC series. The French Formula 1 star's availability was, we understand, dependent upon his negotiating a release from a single McLaren test session, and this Ron Dennis has apparently declined to give.

Taking Prost's place in the four-race series will be A. J. Foyt, one of four men to share the winning Porsche 962 at last weekend's Daytona 24 Hours (see report on page 12). The Texan, incidentally, confirmed in Florida that he has bought a couple of new Lola T900s to go with his pair of March 85Cs, and added that he intended to run the entire CART season in 1985.

Robbery at ATS: three turbos gone

Although ATS will not be competing in this year's World Championship a skeleton staff has been retained with an eye to a return next season.

However, the premises attracted the attention of thieves last week who took three brand new KKK turbo units, tools and machinery worth about £30,000. Any clues as to the whereabouts of these items may well be rewarded after a call to ATS on Bicester 245550 or Bicester CID on 0869 252022.

Good F3000 prize funds

After years and years of putting up with pathetic prize money funds in Formula 2 we understand that things are looking brighter for the Formula 3000 runners. Figures in excess of £150,000 per race have recently been circulated to organisers who have responded positively.

Shell deal for McLaren

A very shabby press release issued by Shell International confirmed this week that they have signed a commercial and technical agreement with McLaren International. Shell were introduced to McLaren by Porsche and supplied the TAG engine car with lubricants for the best part of their championship season.

Spirit set for F1 and F3000

Spirit Racing officially entered one car in the World Championship by FISA's closing date last week although like a number of other teams they were unable to nominate their driver.

"We are very close to securing our Formula 1 and Formula 3000 deals," said director John Wickham from the team's new Reading premises on Monday.

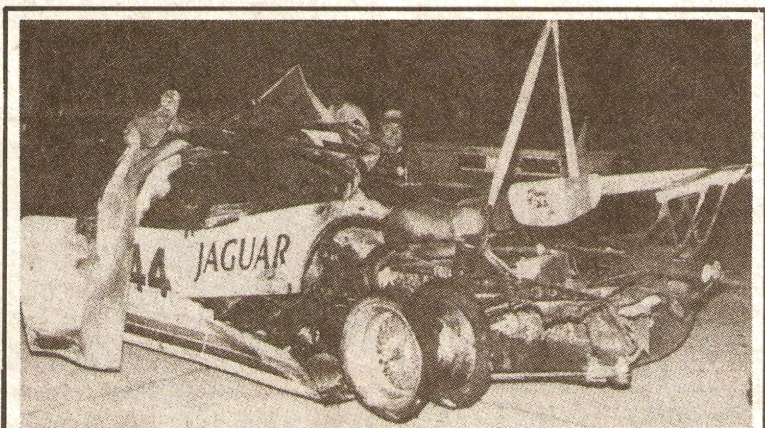
Spirit themselves have found a large proportion of the Formula 1 sponsorship which has eased their driver negotiations considerably. On the Formula 3000 front Spirit, too, have been successful in negotiating sponsorship and fully expect to field a two car team of either Lola or March chassis powered by John Nicholson tuned DFVs.

World Group A calendar?

Although FISA has yet to sanction the much rumoured new World Group A series, a likely calendar of events is beginning to emerge.

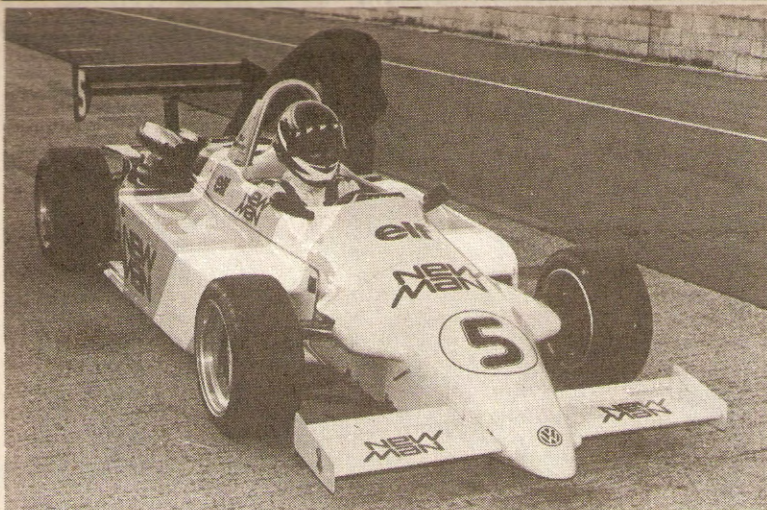
It seems probable that the series will

kick off with the Spa 24 Hours (Jul 27/28) followed by Silverstone (Sep 8), Bathurst 24 Hours (Oct 5/6), Fuji (Nov 9/10), Macau (Nov 16/17), and the finale at Pukekohe on Dec 7/8.

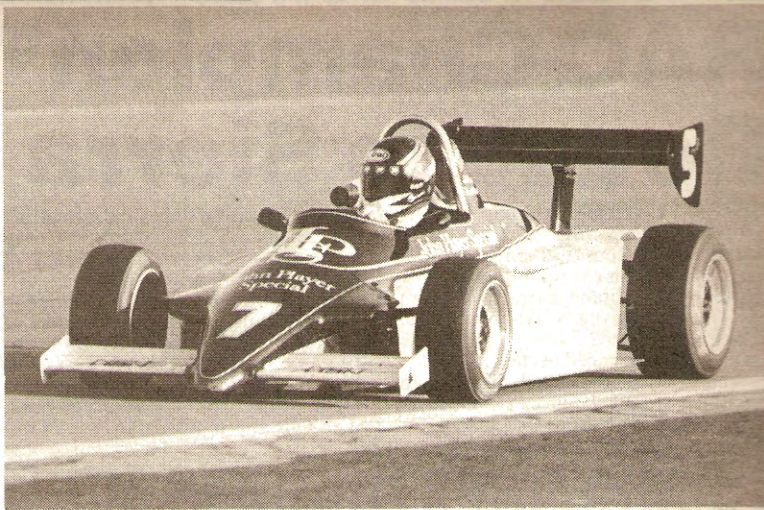


Tullius's lucky escape

The remains of Bob Tullius's Group 44 Jaguar after his accident late at night during the Daytona 24 Hours. The car burst into flames, but Tullius escaped with minor burns to his hands. Report page 12.



Dumfries tested the New Man chassis with DPR's own flat-bottom conversion for the RT3.



Dumfries tried the standard flat-bottom kit on the second DPR RT3 still in its JPS livery.

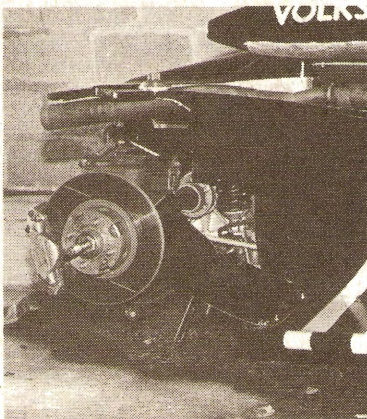
Countdown to British Formula 3

Leading contenders prepare flat-bottomed cars for the forthcoming Marlboro championship.

With the first Formula 3 championship race just three weeks away on Sunday, Silverstone is starting to buzz to the sound of the strangled engines again with the drivers learning and developing flat bottom theories.

With the first pukka Ralt, Reynard and Anson flat bottom cars still not seen, most of the teams are busy trying their own ideas on the faithful RT3 chassis. Dave Price Racing, last year's Marlboro Championship winning team, are leading the way and last Friday Johnny Dumfries was trying two flat bottom solutions. On one chassis, still in Macau JPS livery, DPR had the Glenn Waters built standard flat-bottom kit while on a second in NewMan colours, they were trying their own variation.

Dumfries did a lot of laps in both cars and found that other than extreme



DPR pods on 'Belmondo' Ralt.

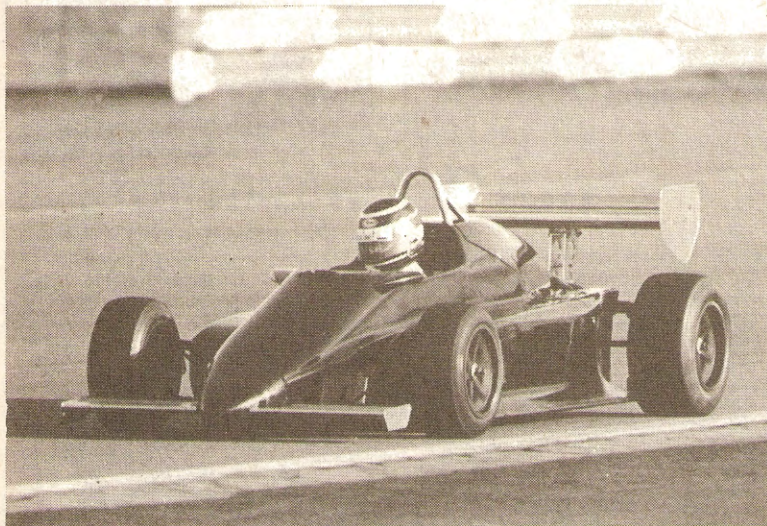


Intersport pods on second DPR RT3.

sensitivity in setting up there was little to choose between the flat bottom and ground effect cars. It was an extremely windy day which was causing severe understeer at Copse but Dave Price reckoned that "in good conditions we would probably only have been a second off a competitive ground effect time on the Club circuit."

A more severe test was planned on Tuesday on the Grand Prix circuit when Dumfries and DPR's French championship contender Jean-Paul Belmondo were to share the driving.

Also out at Silverstone last week was Autoclenz sponsored Phil Kempe getting used to F3 with Glenn Waters' team (see separate story) and Steve Harrington, the Tasmanian saloon car ace, having his first taste of single seaters under the eye of Eddie Jordan's team.



Ian Flux was pleased with the Roni T85 — formerly Cygnus — in its latest flat bottom guise.

Revised Pegasus RT3

Pegasus Motorsport's ex-Radisich Ralt RT3 will be considerably different to the *marque's* other representatives in the Marlboro British F3 series. The Trevor Foster-run equipe has commissioned its own flat-bottom kit and bodywork

revisions from the pen of the talented Andy Thorby.

As yet, however, Graham de Zille's team-mate is unknown. Or could Andrew Gilbert-Scott return to the Pegasus fold?

Autoclenz at Intersport

Welshman Phil Kempe had his first run in an Intersport Ralt TR3 at Silverstone last Friday, the Welshman acclimatising himself to the ex-Spence chassis, complete with team boss Glenn Waters's flat-bottom kit, while they await delivery of their new RT30 version.

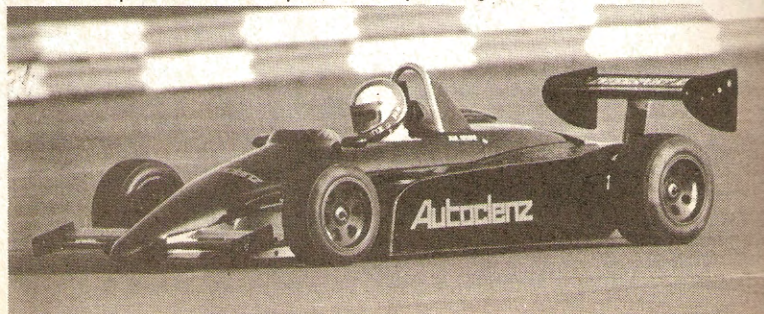
which specialises in vehicle cleaning and refurbishment systems.

Autoclenz is entering motor sport on two levels this year, Kempe's F3 activities backed up with an FF1600 programme for Steve Robertson, son of the company's MD David Robertson.

The Rhiwderin farmer, Dunlop-AUTOSPORT FF1600 'Star of Tomorrow' in '81, also took the opportunity to introduce his new sponsor, Autoclenz, the successful Radlett-based company

Kempe has been coaching Steve through the Brands Hatch Racing school over the past 18 months, during which time the Autoclenz racing initiative was evolved.

Former Dunlop/AUTOSPORT champion, Phil Kempe, tuning himself into Formula 3.



For Cygnus, for Roni T85

Ian Flux shook down the Roni T85 F3 car (née Cygnus) in flat-bottomed specification at Silverstone last week, the former FVee champion professing himself most satisfied with its progress. "We ended the day second quickest to Johnny Dumfries," enthused Flux, "with a Mike Rowe-loaned Toyota engine installed. When the new bodywork arrives, and a race engine (the team hopes to run Alfa Romeo units), we'll hopefully be right on the pace from the start."

The pukka 1985 version of the car will feature completely different body panels, with a more streamlined front and pronounced 'coke bottle' insteps around the rear wheels, as is the trend. Its builders, Rob Gustavsson and Nick Wasyliv of Roni Developments, changed its name, having put so much effort into the project over the past months. A couple of customer chassis will also be supplied, if current deals reach fruition.

RAC Champion Rouse in Sierra

The worst kept secret in Group A racing is officially out. To no-one's great surprise Andy Rouse has announced that he is replacing his championship winning Rover with a brand new Ford Sierra XR4Ti for this year's Trimoco series. The four cylinder 2.3-litre turbocharged machine will be raced in class A.

This exciting new car will be prepared in Rouse's workshops in Coventry in conjunction with Ford Motorsport in Cologne. Production of the model has

been underway for some time in the USA and Canada and it should receive Group A homologation before the beginning of the season. Work on the first racing car is well underway and testing is expected to commence in earnest at the end of February. To begin with there will be just the one car for Rouse, but there are plans for more cars once it is competitive.

The project will be backed by Ford, Shell Oils and Industrial Services Control Ltd.

Search for a Supra star

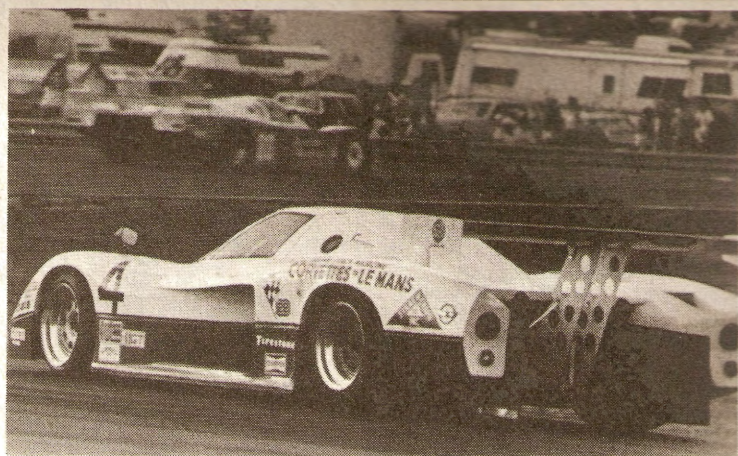
Team Toyota GB's Group A racing plans for this season have yet to be finalised, although four of the candidates for the plum Celica Supra drive were tested at Goodwood last Friday. In addition, the Hughes of Beaconsfield-run equipe will be giving motorcycle ace Barry Sheene a run — as confirmed in the national press this week — in the next few days.

A Toyota spokesman confirmed that Robin Brundle, David Sears and John Morris ventured out in heavy rain at the Sussex circuit, and it is thought that a fourth (unnamed!) driver crashed the

Supra during the day. John Watson, who was apparently being considered for the GpA seat, is now out of the equation.

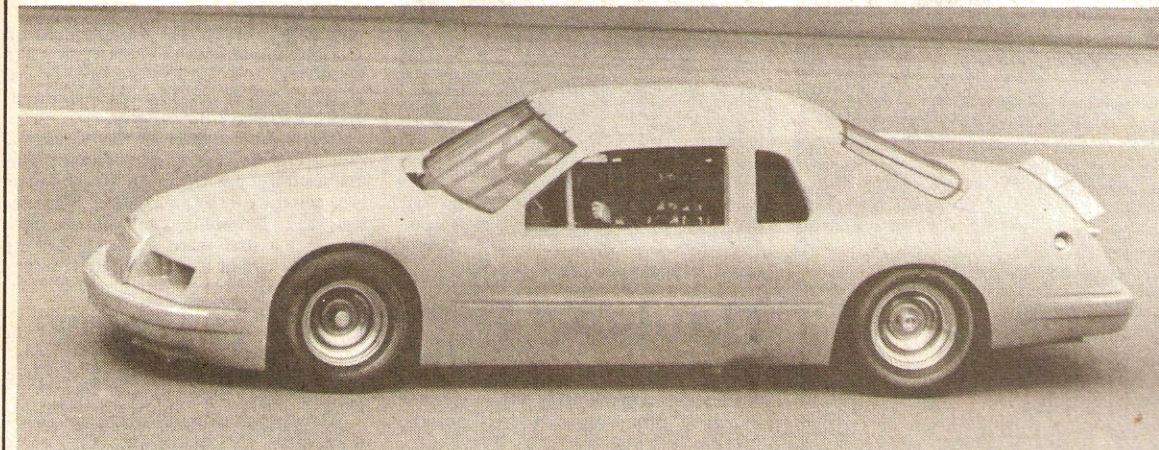
"Obviously we want a driver capable of winning races, and we think we have our best chance to date this season. Yes, Barry will drive the car, but he is not interested in racing anything unless he is going to be fully competitive. He asked for a go to satisfy himself that this would be the case."

One thing is certain: Win Percy is proving to be a hard act to follow in the Toyota camp. . .



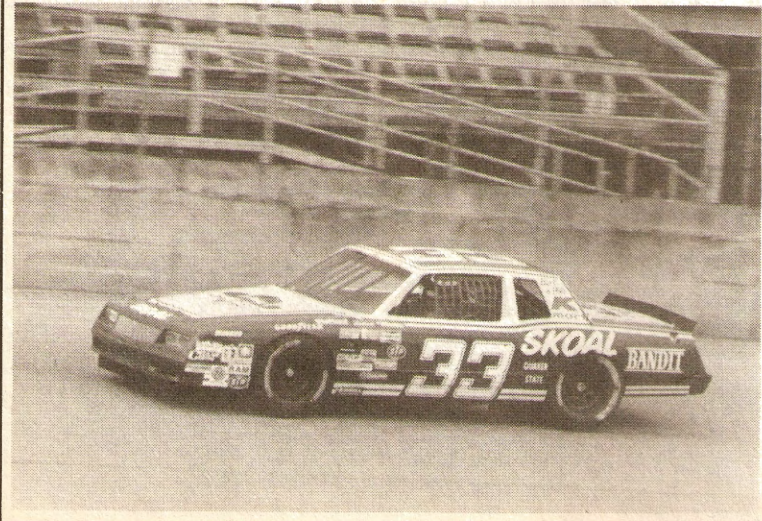
Lola-Corvette GTP debuted at Daytona 24 Hours

The Lola T-710 made its race debut in last weekend's Sunbank 24 at Daytona. Commissioned by Lew Price (who crashed the car heavily during practice but managed to repair the damage for the race), this particular car is similar to the prototype Corvette GTP but is powered not by a turbo Chevrolet V6, but by one of the familiar V8 power plants. Running on Firestone tyres, the private entry is supported by a US magazine in an attempt to gain sponsorship for a full 1985 race programme to include the Le Mans 24 Hours. The American and European Corvette owners clubs are also involved in the project. Meanwhile there is no firm news of the progress of the official Corvette GTP programme which has had its chassis for the past 10 months; wind-tunnel testing is still being carried out in Detroit.



Ford Thunderbirds fast in testing for Daytona 500

Above and right: The signs are that the super-smooth Ford Thunderbirds will be the cars to beat this season. Winner of the last two Daytona 500s, Cale Yarborough (top right), has reverted to Ford for 1985 after many years with General Motors and is now favourite for the pole. In testing, Cale has already lapped at well over 203mph. A hat trick of wins looks on . . .



Left: Certain to be a front runner in the 500; the Chevrolet Monte Carlo of Harry Gant. Right: Kyle Petty, still showing no real sign of emulating Daddy, will drive the Wood Brothers' Ford this season.



Carrera Panamericana revived on Mexico's Baja Peninsula

We have received from Mexico details of an intriguing plan: the famous Carrera Panamericana road race, last held in 1954, is to be revived!

Thirty years ago, however, this was a long and very serious road race which attracted many of the world's greatest sports car drivers. The 1954 event, for example, was won by Umberto Maglioli's 4.9-litre Ferrari, with Phil Hill/Richie Ginther crewing a similar car to second place. It went on for several days, and it was highly dangerous . . .

The revived race, though, will be run

along the Baja Peninsula's paved road, from San Felipe (on the Gulf of California) and the city of Ensenada, over a total length of 145 miles.

To be run on Saturday, October 5, the rules of the race appear to be quite straightforward: race what you bring — so long as it conforms to one of four 'street stock' and 'street GT' classes. Each car is required also to have a navigator since "it is considerably safer for a driver to do his job properly when there is someone reading the road for him." Yes, we can see that . . .

It does not finish there, however. The event is also open to motorcycles (of up to 600cc) — which will start 20 minutes before the cars. All will leave, Targa-style, at 30-second intervals. Ambulances, they say, will be "located conveniently." At 20ft intervals would seem to be a sound plan . . .

If your interest is aroused, further information may be had from Editorial Gran Premio SC, Montevideo 303-408, Col. Lindavista CPO7300, Mexico DF. Entries close on August 31.

BRIEFLY

■ Ermanno Cuoghi, Niki Lauda's long-time mechanic at Ferrari, has left Autodelta to work for the new Minardi F1 team.

■ Puerto Rican endurance driver Diego Febles has ordered a pair of Royale R39 (nee Argo JM16) chassis for IMSA GTP events. The cigar-chewing Febles is fitting Porsche engines to the pretty, and effective, coupés.

■ In Indy circles, they're saying that the Lotus 96T Indycar will be seen, whatever else, at the Indianapolis 500. But there is still no word on driver or sponsor . . .

■ Parmalat, we understand, will definitely not be seen on the works Brabham-BMWs this season. Bernie Ecclestone is talking to Mateus, but this is believed to be a secondary sponsorship deal.

■ In Jacksonville, Florida, John Paul Jr was arraigned last Friday, pleading not guilty to the charge of 'racketeering', which has been brought against him. Paul's trial was set for March 11 and, against the advice of the judge at the arraignment, he has chosen to be defended by his father's lawyer. Paul Sr is still in Geneva, awaiting extradition to the USA.

■ Jan Lammers is considering returning to single seaters in F3000. Rumour has it that Peter MacIntosh's team has been in close contact with the rapid Dutchman.

■ Yet another new team has announced its intention of racing F3000 this year. The Ekstroem team from Switzerland is keen to talk to drivers for their two Tyrrell Cosworth 011s. The team will be managed by Mrs Cecilia Ekstroem. Drivers interested should contact her on 010 4181 393 704.

■ Following on from the Bangalore GP, Tiff Needell and Jim Crawford took part in the first part of the Madras GP, with the latter taking his revenge by winning when Tiff's car was sidelined with a water leak. The second part of the GP is this weekend.

■ Tony Trevor will once again be racing in class A of the Marlboro British Formula 3 series this season. Trevor has teamed up with Tarry Racing and will campaign a flat-bottomed RT3 with backing from builders Johnson and Bailey.

■ The F3 world was buzzing last week with the news that Gary Anderson, co-founder of Anson, was leaving the company to join Van Diemen to design their CanAm car. However, after a week or so of uncertainty, Anderson has decided to stay put at Anson.

■ With the defection of Dany Snobeck Racing to Mercedes for the coming season, Alfa Romeo France have announced that they will not be officially involved in the French production car series. Alfas have won the title for the last two years with Snobeck and Alain Cudini respectively.

■ Olaf Manthey will continue his association with Austin Rover in the German Group A saloon car series this year with backing from Massa supermarkets. The preparation of the cars will be entrusted to Tom Walkinshaw Racing. Manthey's entrant last year, Automobiltechnik Nickel of Aachen, will field one of last year's cars for Harald Becker.

■ Three times World karting champion Mike Wilson is rumoured to be switching to cars this year, racing a Ralt-Volkswagen in Italian Formula 3.

■ Hans-Peter Pandur will be racing in American Super Vee next year with Gary Rubio's team. He will use a modified RT3/84 with a Speiss engine.

Button on IMSA Grid

One time FF1600 hotshoe David Button, who made an impressive F3 debut in a one-off with Gerry Amato's Ralt at Donington last season, is looking towards sport car racing in the USA for his future competition plans.

The Buckinghamshire lad, who has not raced regularly for two years, was at Silverstone on Tuesday, testing Dudley Wood's revised Grid-Porsche IMSA GTP contender.

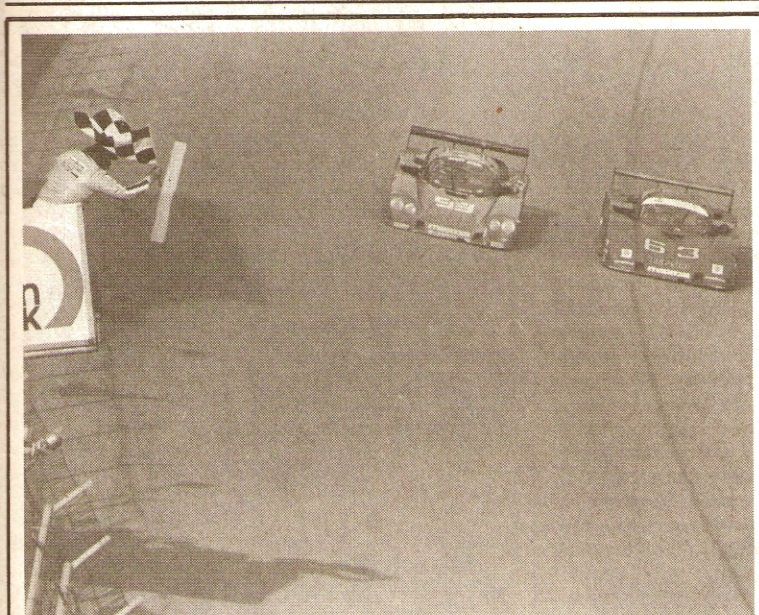
Having found some support from the McGean-Rohco corporation ("the only American company I've had contact with"), Button hopes to team up with Wood at the Miami GP IMSA counter in Florida on February 24!

HARRY DOWNING

We regret to report the death last weekend of Harry Downing, formerly the very popular Competitions Manager of BP.

Downing, 70, joined BP before World War II, rejoining the company after spending the war years with the RAF. From a position within the marketing department he took over the competition side of BP's activities in their heyday of the 1960s. A serious illness in the mid-70s curtailed his activities but he stayed a fiercely loyal BP man throughout, helping his successor Les Thacker whenever he could.

Even in retirement Harry Downing was a familiar visitor at both car and motorcycle events and his presence will be sadly missed by all who knew him. To his wife and family AUTOSPORT extends its deepest sympathy. His funeral will be at Boston Crematorium, Lincs, on Friday Feb 8 at 2.30.



Argo's royale finish

Taking the chequer at Daytona last Sunday evening are the two British-built Argo/Royale cars which finished one-two in the 700-kilo Camel Light class in the 24-hour IMSA season-opener. On the left is the class winning JM16 of Mid-O Rusty Jones team, on the right RGP 500 Racing entry which is two laps behind its rival. Both cars are powered by Mazda rotary engines.

Ludwig's Mustang GTP set for Miami GP run

Klaus Ludwig will start testing the new mid-engined Ford Mustang IMSA GTP car at West Palm Beach next week, and it will make its first appearance at the Miami Grand Prix later this month — although not necessarily as a competitor. It could be that the car will merely be demonstrated at Miami.

When a second car is completed, probably in June or July, it will be driven by Bob Wollek. The brilliant Bob looks like having a busy season. In addition to his Lancia WEC commitment and Mustang drive, he will run a few early season IMSA races in Bruce Leven's Bridgestone-shod Porsche 962.

WEEKEND SPORT

OFF TRACK

Date	Venue	Event/Details
Feb 10	Frylands Wood, Nr Croydon	Walsingham Trial (750 MC) <i>Another round of the BTRDA/RAC Fiveways Tyres championship. All the southern contenders will be there including Chris Highwood, John Sheldrick and Simon Durling starting at 10.30 am.</i>
Feb 10	Launceston Cattle Market, Cornwall	Launceston Trial (The Launceston and North Cornwall MC) <i>The event will promote the fourth annual 'Launceston Trial' for the Fulford Cup, a classic reliability trial approved by the RAC and the ACU, with a maximum entry of 100 cars and motorcycles. The route runs through East Cornwall and West Devon starting at 9.00am.</i>
Feb 10	Brands Hatch, Fawkham, Kent	CCH Sprint (Harrow CC and Hampton & District MC) <i>This is the only sprint held each year on the Brands Hatch circuit and is the largest unsponsored event run by the organising clubs. There will be an entry of over 120 cars with two timed runs, comprising one standing, one flying and three practice laps. Practice starts at 10.00 am and timed runs begin at 12.30 pm.</i>

Secretaries of the Meeting are requested to send details of forthcoming events to Fiona Grant, AUTOSPORT Editorial, Haymarket Publishing Ltd, 38-42 Hampton Road, Teddington, Middlesex TW11 0JE.

Gambling with the future

The problem of spectator safety on major rallies again bounced into the limelight last week during the Monte Carlo Rally when Ari Vatanen's Peugeot was involved in an incident, pictured in last week's issue, which could have had the most serious consequences. Spectators lined a special stage forming a human barrier and leaving the drivers absolutely no room for error. When Vatanen's car arrived at the fast, snow-covered corner on a different line, he was suddenly faced with the horrific situation of careering through this wall of people.

Thankfully, injuries were restricted to one individual who suffered a broken leg and a number of others who were badly bruised, but the consequences could have been tragic. Yet again, the safety arrangements for spectators were minimal, and yet again rallying missed the world news headlines by a whisker.

How much longer can organisers of such rallies continue to invite disaster? Can the Monte Carlo Rally expect to survive if a dozen youngsters are eliminated in one horrific incident?

The accident on St Bonnet last week had all the familiar ingredients, with no sustained effort either to educate the thousands who turned up, or even to direct them away from the most dangerous areas. Instead, whole families, who often have absolutely no comprehension of the speeds involved, wandered aimlessly along the roadside, inching ever closer to the action.

Because drivers have traditionally been forced into facing such dangers, it seems that their cries for sense are falling on deaf ears, but perhaps the manufacturers can improve the situation. This week, Stuart Turner of Ford has highlighted the problem underlining that his new rally car may not even be entered on events where crowd control is known to be woefully inadequate.

The problem is one which cannot be ignored any longer. The consequences are far too serious, and the increasing interest in the sport



means that the dangers multiply with each season. Educating spectators will surely be a difficult task, but the RAC MSA has introduced new measures in recent years, and many other sporting authorities would be advised to follow this lead before it is too late.

The recipe for disaster is already there, and

FISA must react quickly and strongly to accelerate a new awareness in certain countries. Perhaps FISA may be forced to take some unpopular decisions if the worst offenders fail to react, but anything less would be to ignore a fundamental responsibility to the sport and all involved.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE EDITOR IS NOT BOUND TO AGREE WITH READERS' OPINIONS

Rally dangers

The incident pictured in your interim Monte Carlo Rally report (AUTOSPORT, Jan 31) once again brings into question the issue of spectator safety in rallying. What is it going to take before the organisers do something about it? Circuit racing suffered in the wake of the 1955 Le Mans disaster, will rallying have to go through the same nightmare before something is done? WORCESTER, WORCS JOHN SUTCHING

'Real' racing

Well, at long last a British race organiser has cottoned on to the idea that WEC cars can be raced in events of under six hours in length. Congratulations to the BRSCC for coming up with the Battle of Brands. I shall certainly be among the, no doubt, huge crowd come the day in August.

Quite why there are not more sprint events for these sports cars, such as the sprints at the Norisring, is beyond my comprehension as they show these extremely powerful cars racing in a manner that they ought — ie 'balls out'. If ever there are even a handful of WEC cars dicing in close contention then the viewer is particularly lucky, but race tactics tend to preclude this from happening very often in World Championship events, so why not put top drivers into the 'false' situation of *having* to race nose to tail without having to worry about long term race tactics?

I simply cannot wait to see a field of 20-25 sports cars fighting to overtake round the limiting confines of the Brands Indy circuit. At last, sports cars on the limit . . .

WEST KINGS DOWN, KENT MATT WILLIAMS

Something is wrong

What is wrong with the Formula 1 world at present? With the final driver nomination date passed there still appear to be a number of seats to fill, the Grand Prix calendar is anything but settled, and some teams are without rubber on which they are to run their car (\$).

While all this is ridiculous in a highly expensive and competitive sphere, I think that the greatest stupidity of all has got to be that the Toleman team, on the strength of their end of season form plus their stunning new car, is still without a tyre contract for 1985. If a team with as much potential as this one — they surely must win in 1985, especially with the immensely talented Stefan Johansson at the wheel — can't fix a tyre contract, or attract any British sponsorship, then something must be very wrong somewhere . . .

IPSWICH, SUFFOLK MICHAEL COATHUP

FF1600 TV championship

The withdrawal of BP from motor racing has taken away the lifeline of the talented, aspiring young British driver. Without wishing to detract in any way from the

talents of Miss Cathy Muller, I am sure the irony of a French girl backed by a French petroleum company in his British Dave Price Ralt is not lost on Julian Bailey.

I do not wish to lay any blame at BP's door, they have more than done their bit for the sport over the years, but I would rather consider what can be done to interest potential new sponsors. The perennial problem of the young British driver is that he now needs approaching £30,000 to contest competitively a full grass-roots FF1600 championship. When a potential sponsor asks what he gets in return for his outlay, the driver has a hard time providing a satisfactory answer. If he's a complete novice, he can't even look to any results to justify himself. Result: 'Catch 22' situation — no results, no money, and no money, no results.

The juiciest carrot to dangle in front of a sponsor is TV coverage, and looking forward to the forthcoming Formula Ford Race of Champions set me thinking — why not a regular series of televised FF1600 races in identical cars to decide a 'TV Series Champion'? The racing would undoubtedly be spectacular and the drivers would quickly establish an identity at an early stage of their career. The series could operate along similar lines to the Yamaha Pro-Am 350 Motorcycle series where riders draw lots on their mounts on the morning of the event.

One interesting problem — which marque would be used? This would certainly encourage much competition among rival manufacturers!

NEWCASTLE, TYNE & WEAR M CARLING.

Formula fudging

It was with some alarm that I read in last week's magazine that the March Formula 3000 car had been timed through the Estoril speed trap faster than the Tyrrell F1 cars (*Estoril Feature*, Jan 31).

With F3000 performance getting close to that of Formula 1, and very considerable budgets in the new formula, it seems to me that there is a danger of teams and drivers deciding to forego F3000 and go straight into Grand Prix racing. Should this occur on any large scale, F3000 is bound to suffer. Has FISA got the equation right?

CHEADLEHULME, CHESHIRE BPMAGUIRE

"E" for Economical!

In response to Mike Dalton's letter about Formula E Ford (*Correspondence*, Jan 31), I would like to make the following observations.

Formula E will not "effectively be a Pre '81 formula". Certain models manufactured in the 1970s are not eligible for Pre '74 or 74-78, although they date correctly. Other models built in 1981, 2, 3, 4, 5 may be eligible for Formula E — a manufacturer (Zeus) advertised its 1985 model as being for Formula E in last week's AUTOSPORT.

If a car complies with four simple regulations, it complies to Formula E. It's as simple as that. Yet I have seen the same car and driver racing as both a Pre '74 and 74-78, so this kind of thing loses a formula its credibility.

If Mike is interested in "Economical" FF1600, I suggest he joins the many other people who 'phoned me after the story in *Sports Extra* (AUTOSPORT, Jan 24) on 051-531 8716, or writes to Formula E Association, 60 Bull Bridge Lane, Aintree Village, Liverpool L10 6LZ. AINTREE, LIVERPOOL IANSMITH

Reid between the lines

May I through your letter column express my encouragement for Racing For Britain. I feel this organisation is doing tremendous work in helping young British drivers make it to the top of motor racing. I would also like to encourage your readers to vote for Anthony Reid to be awarded help in Formula 3 this year. Like many drivers from Scotland he has the talent and above all the determination to succeed. Last year he underlined this by his results throughout the season in Formula Ford 2000, justifying the backing given.

CAMBUSLANG, GLASGOW TOMBROWN

Scottish FF1600 champion

Unnecessary obscurity

Can we please have the Formula 1 drivers' names written legibly on the sides of their cars? On the latest Toleman, Stefan Johansson's name is written on the headrest, so how are we supposed to read it when the driver is in the car? Mind you, Toleman are not the only culprits of this crime...

Of course, we all know that such and such a car is driven by Mr X, but not everyone knows all the helmets, and the numbers are too small to help. One good idea was that used by Renault with the use of coloured wing parts. Please could others follow suit?

CROWBOROUGH, EAST SUSSEX MCCOPEMAN

10 The snows of the Arctic Rally proved ideal conditions for Saab as their 96 V4s claimed a memorable 1-2-3 victory (AUTOSPORT, February 6, 1975). Stig Blomqvist in the factory entered car was undisputedly the fastest man on the event, taking 34 quickest times from 45 stages, but a couple of 'offs' put him behind the similar car of Simo Lampinen. Lampinen had driven consistently, ensuring no dramas, while Saab's triumph was completed by Jari Vilkas.

Across the water, the Daytona 24Hrs (pictured below) was won for the second consecutive year by Peter Gregg/Hurley Haywood in a Porsche Carrera, the German marque claiming a clean sweep of the top six places. In the first hour Gregg's chances of victory seemed slim when, dicing for fifth, he collided with a similar Carrera and limped into the pits. Fortune smiled on them, as trouble hit the leaders and Haywood took the Porsche to the front during the 13th hour. This was held to the end and in the final minutes Haywood was able to organise a selection of the dominating Carreras into a five-car train behind him.

On the Formula 1 front, March unveiled their new 751 Grand Prix challenger, resplendent in its orange 'Beta tools' livery. This car was to be handled with some verve in the months to come by 'Monza Gorilla', Vittorio Brambilla.

Grand Prix columnist Jody Scheckter (pictured, incidentally, relieving himself at an interlagos urinal) reviewed a personally disappointing Brazilian GP which saw a split oil tank reduce him to the role of spectator. His competitive urge was satisfied on the return flight, however, when he managed to relieve James Hunt of 30 dollars playing backgammon!

Chris Whitty (now of Toleman) interviewed Shadow boss, Alan Rees, who refused to be drawn on the Peterson/Pryce transfer saga. There were no developments and both drivers were now on holiday.

Ian Titchmarsh reviewed the British club racing scene that had seen Formula Fordster Richard Morgan the winning-most driver with 32 successes. Fears of government restrictions on racing had not come to fruition, the energy crisis easing somewhat. Titchmarsh reported that "while the country recovered from the after-effects of the miners's strike (sounds familiar — Ed!), the government was appeased by some careful behind-the-scenes talking from the RAC and race organisers..."

Meanwhile, Silverstone invested in a new £120,000 pits complex which, it was hoped, would satisfy all requirements for at least 10 years.



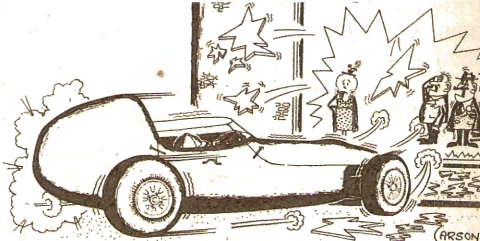
25 The talk of the moment 25 years ago this week (AUTOSPORT, February 5, 1960) was Stirling Moss' attack on the FIA. Stirling's first grievance was that a country such as Switzerland (which had banned motor sport within its borders) should have as much voting power in the CSI as the three mainstays of the sport, Britain, USA and Italy. The FIA also came under scrutiny for their interpretation of their own regulations...

There was very little sporting action taking place around the country, but TL Woods was caught in action on the Salisbury Trial in his Messerschmitt (above). However, there was racing across the Atlantic at Palm Springs with Bob Drake taking a new 2.8-litre 'bird-cage' Maserati to victory after Eric Hauser's wonderful 'Old Yaller I' had conceded to terminal transmission bothers.

Chris Nixon unearthed the story behind Maurice Trintignant's nickname 'Petoulet' in an interview with the dapper little Frenchman. In 1946 Maurice retrieved his Bugatti, dubbed 'Grandmère', from a barn and entered the Coup de la Liberation in Paris. The car retired due to a blockage in the fuel filter which was caused by droppings from a family of rats who had seemingly camped there during the War. *Petoulet* means rat-dropping, so...

Graham Hill extolled the virtues of the Austin A35 on both road and track, having owned one for two years prior to moving on to the new A40 model. Graham found that a car as low-powered as an A35 could be drifted and this led to an amusing incident during the 1958 750MC Six Hour Relay at Silverstone... Denis Jenkinson had noticed Graham's unusual line through Woodcote in the Austin and had tried to take his Porsche through in a similar manner. Next time round, Graham spotted DSJ stationary in the middle of the track, facing the wrong way!

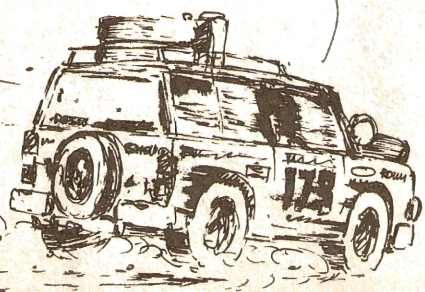
The Formula Junior series continued to be looked forward to with anticipation, as shown below:



CATCHPOLE

BY BARRY FOLEY

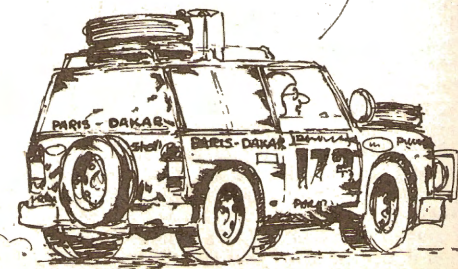
WE'VE BEEN GOING FOR THREE WEEKS WITHOUT A BREAK, I'M HOT, TIRED AND DIRTY - LET'S ASK THIS CHAP THE WAY...

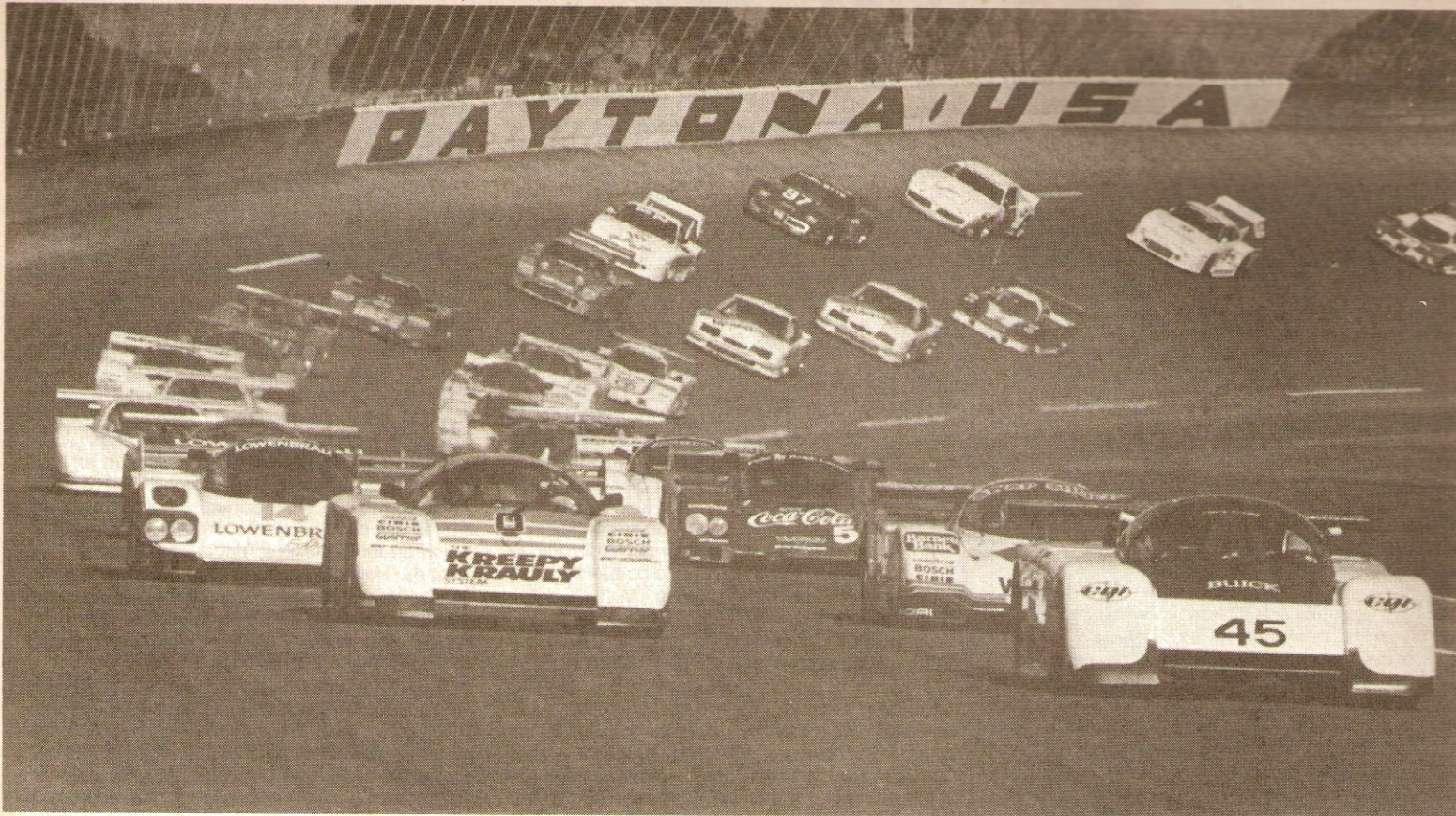


...IT'S NO GOOD - HE DOESN'T SPEAK ENGLISH...



...FORGET DAKAR, I'D BE HAPPY TO FIND OUR WAY OUT OF PARIS!





The flag drops at 3.30 on Saturday afternoon and Paul Jr is already pulling away from van der Merwe's Porsche-powered 84G. However, both front row men were to retire.

Another T-Bird triumph

Porsches sweep IMSA season-opener — Wollek/Boutsen/Foyt/Unser score final hour victory — Jaguars challenge strongly but Tullius crashes — Report: GORDON KIRBY — Photography: DAYTONA INTERNATIONAL SPEEDWAY

Porsche's IMSA-specification type 962 GTP cars dominated last weekend's Daytona 24 Hours race. They finished first through to fourth, and dominated the opening hours of the traditional Florida speedweek season-opener.

With 90mins to go to the chequered flag, it looked as if Al Holbert's top flight, Lowenbrau-sponsored team would score an expected victory, but electrical troubles robbed Holbert/Derek Bell/Al Unser Jr of an apparent triumph. Bell struggled through a frustrating series of stalls and pitstops as the spotlight shifted to Preston Henn's 962, driven by Bob Wollek/Thierry Boutsen/AJ Foyt/Al Unser Sr. After chasing Holbert's car through the night, Henn's car came through to score a good win, the team's second in three years at Daytona.

Boutsen started the race in Bruce Leven's 962 but was drafted into Henn's car by Wollek in the middle of the night after Leven's car had dropped out. Subsequently, Wollek and Boutsen did the lion's share of the driving and their

American team mates were happy to defer to the pair of more experienced long-distance racers.

For the first seven hours of the race, Bob Tullius/Brian Redman/Hurley Haywood kept the pressure on Holbert's 962. The revised, more powerful Group 44 Jaguar did a fine job of making a race of it, only to retire in a ball of fire after a blown tyre tore into oil lines and cooler barely an hour before midnight. Tullius was driving at the time, and was fortunate to escape with nothing worse than some minor burns to his right hand.

Earlier in the race, the pace was set by John Paul Jr's March-Buick turbo V6, but a combination of drivetrain, cockpit ventilation and electrical problems, and finally a blown tyre, put paid to the Anglo-American threat. Another leading contender to fall by the wayside was the March-Porsche of van der Merwe/Scheckter/Martin, which lost a lot of time through various incidents, tyre failure and bodywork damage.

Al Holbert's Porsche 962 took the lead in the night, but was to lose it in the last half hour...



QUALIFYING

On paper, the entry for this year's 18th running of the Daytona 24 Hours looked to be one of the strongest in years. Forty GTP cars were entered, including seven Porsche 962s, 10 Marches of varying vintage and specification, a pair of Jaguars and a new Lola T710.

When the teams and drivers finally got down to work in the Daytona garages, however, the facts of the matter appeared less compelling. There were the fleet of 962s, and the Jaguar team, and two or three of the Marches to consider; but most of the large number of GTP cars were in the hands of teams with limited horizons and abilities. Their tow rigs may be large and impressive, but look inside the cavernous trailers and you won't find much evidence of tools, equipment or pragmatic, racewise organisation.

Of course, John Bishop's IMSA organisation is dedicated to amateur spirit and, aside from the teams run by Al Holbert, Bob Tullius and one or two

others, it is correct to say that most of the Camel GT regulars conform to that spirit. This is not to fault IMSA, because there is no question that the wealthy amateur and avid clubman are the backbone of the organisation.

A few years ago, however, there was much fervent debate about GTP versus Group C: when would the two be brought together? When would the differences between IMSA and FISA be forgotten? Today there seems to be little interest in that discussion. The differences between the two worlds are too elemental, too pervasive, and it now seems clear that IMSA and FISA are forever separate.

When the field for this year's IMSA season-opener finally took shape, there were 29 GTP cars among the 76 starters. Eight of the GTP machines were Marches. There were six Porsche 962s. A pair each of Jaguars, Lolas and Argos, and one apiece from Royale and Alba. There were also seven 935s of varying specification and three of the Camel Light (700-kilo) GTP cars. Two of these were Argos and the other was a Tiga.

Most notable of those entered to miss the race was the turbo Buick V6-powered March 85G driven by Emerson Fittipaldi/Tony Garcia/Mauricio de Narvaez. Owned by Miami GP promoter Ralph Sanchez, the team arrived late and put in only a handful of laps before packing up and going home, because of problems within the team itself.

Meanwhile the other March-Buick, run by Phil Conte Racing for John Paul Jr/Whitney Ganz/Bill Adam, was setting the pace, as expected. Debuted last November at Daytona, the turbo Buick-engined 85G was a terror on the banking, with more than 800bhp available for qualifying. In the end, Paul Jr took the pole by nearly a full 2 secs, with a new record for the revised (shortened by a quarter of a mile) Daytona road course.

In race trim, Conte's team cut back on manifold pressure to 55ins Hg (0.9 bar) which translates to something like 700bhp. Developed by McLaren Engines, the Buick V6 boasts an extremely fat power curve which makes for a real test of the 85G's power train. The big concern for Conte's team, therefore, centred on the March's transmission.

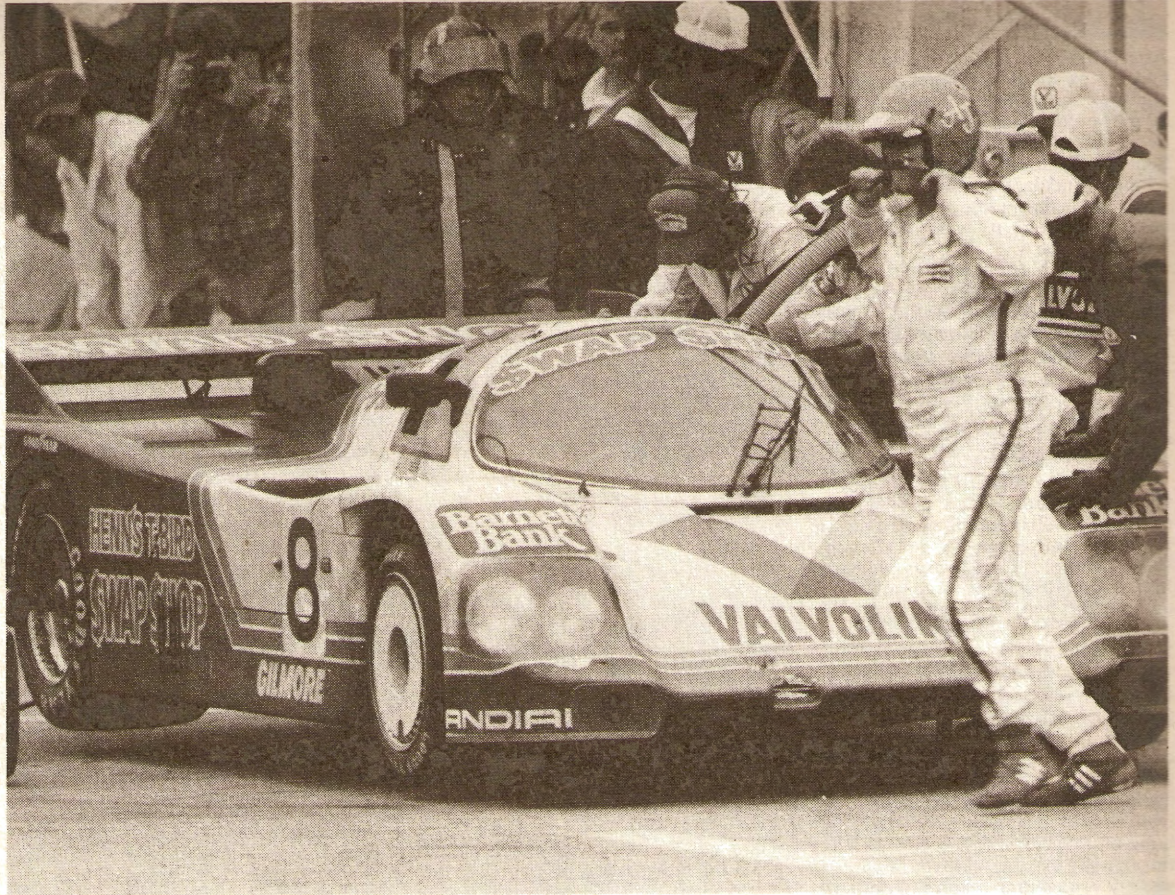
Paul was enjoying himself, deeply thankful to Conte for standing behind him during his current troubles with the law. Paul steadfastly and correctly refused to discuss his legal travails, while talking enthusiastically about the potential of the 85G-Buick and his hopes to do at least some Indycar racing this year.

Fastest of the rest was another March, the Porsche-engined version sponsored by Kreepy Krauly and driven by the South African triumvirate of Sarel van der Merwe/Ian Scheckter/Tony Martin. Winners of this race a year ago, the Indianapolis-based team has done a deal with Yokohama tyres for the 1985 season and was speaking confidently about the Japanese rubber after practice and qualifying.

In fact, the Yokohama-tyred March-Porsche was the first evidence in the GTP category of a tyre war in the making. At the top levels of American motor racing, Goodyear remains the dominant force in tyre engineering, although IMSA has recently seen various rubber manufacturers make efforts to challenge Goodyear's position. This year could see the development of a full-blown tyre war in IMSA, with Yokohama paying a reasonably large fee to the Kreepy Krauly team, and BFG committing a major budget to Jim Busby's 962-equipped team. Bridgestone are also taking a run at the GTP category, teaming with Bruce Leven's 962-equipped operation, while Hoosier and Firestone tyres were also evident on lesser GTP cars at Daytona. There was a singleton Dunlop-shod car in the 76-car field, the Australian Mazda RX7 driven by Allan Moffat/Gregg Hansford/Kevin Bartlett/Peter McCloud.

Starting from the second row behind the Marches were the heavily favoured, Goodyear-shod 962s of Wollek/Foyt/Unser Sr and Holbert/Bell/Unser Jr. Preston Henn's Valvoline-sponsored team looked in better shape than ever — with highly-rated IMSA crew chief Mike Colucci running the show, and ex-Bromos man Jack Anderson also involved. Holbert is Porsche's US competition parts agent, and runs an efficient, unpretentious operation — the benchmark for IMSA. Camel GT Champion in 1983, Holbert is returning to the series on a full-time basis this year after a season of Indycar racing.

The third row comprised Bob Akin's Coca-Cola 962 with Hans Stuck/Paul Miller co-driving, and the Leon Brothers' March-Porsche with IMSA Champion Randy Lanier and runner-up Bill Whittington driving with Al Leon. Lanier's Blue Thunder operation has



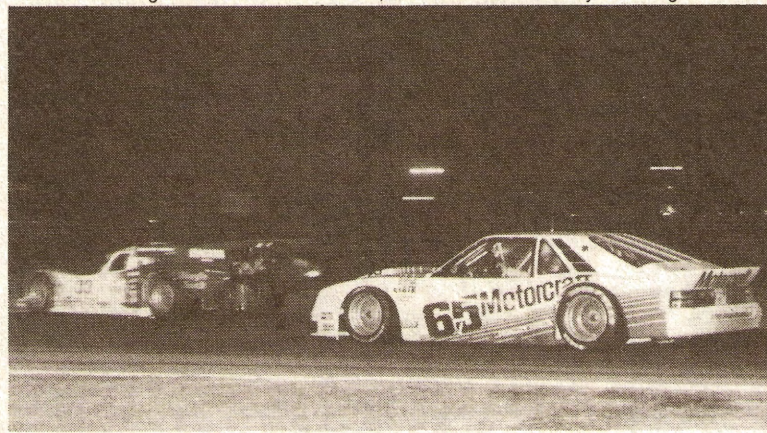
'Anthony Joseph' prepares to take over as the winning Porsche 962 makes a routine stop.

merged with the Leon Brothers for the opening races of the new season, and a second, Chevy-powered March was entered and qualified 14th by Art Leon/Skeeter McKitterick/Terry Wolters.

Thierry Boutsen/Henri Pescarolo/Bruce Leven qualified Leven's Bridgestone-tyred 962 on the inside of the third row beside the faster of the two Jaguar

XJR-5s. Both Jaguars were revised cars, new from the firewall back. Engineer Lee Dykstra has developed a new underbody and the cars also feature strengthened gearboxes and more powerful (by approximately 10 per cent) and consequently thirstier, engines. Bob Tullius/Brian Redman/Hurley Haywood (the last still nursing a broken foot)

The Ford Mustang was the dominant GTO car, with Dallenbach Jr/Bundy/Jones eighth overall.



qualified eighth fastest, while Chip Robinson/Claude Ballot-Lena/Jim Adams started 10th.

12th and 15th in qualifying were Jim Busby's pair of BF Goodrich-tyred 962s, while the Lola T710 qualified 13th fastest. Driven by Lew Price/Carson Baird/Terry Labonte/Billy Hagan, the car had been neatly repaired after price had crashed in testing a week earlier. Also, it was on Firestone rubber.

An interesting last minute addition to the field was NASCAR star Bobby Allison brought in by Buick to co-drive with Ken Madren/Wayne Pickering in a turbo V6-powered March 84G. Allison qualified the car 19th for his 103rd start at Daytona.

Fastest GTO qualifier was the Trans-Am-style Roush/Prototfab Ford Mustang driven by Willy T. Ribbs/Jim Miller/John Bauer. Team-mates Wally Dallenbach Jr/Doc Bundy/John Jones were two places behind.

Fully half the field qualified 20secs (120 per cent) or more slower than the poleman, while the last half-dozen of the 76 starters were added to the field despite not being able to record a qualifying time.

Pos	No	Drivers (Nats)	Class	Tyres	Car-Engine	Time
1	45	John Paul Jr (USA) Whitney Ganz (USA) Bill Adam (CDN)	GTP	Goodyear	March-Buick 85G	1:41.49
2	0	Sarel van der Merwe (ZA) Ian Scheckter (ZA) Tony Martin (ZA)	GTP	Yokohama	March-Porsche 84G	1:43.21
3	8	A.J. Foyt (USA) Bob Wollek (F) Al Unser Sr (USA)	GTP	Goodyear	Porsche 962	1:43.59
4	14	Al Holbert (USA) Derek Bell (GB) Al Unser Jr (USA)	GTP	Goodyear	Porsche 962	1:44.74
5	5	Hans-Joachim Stuck (D) Bob Akin (USA) Paul Miller (USA)	GTP	Goodyear	Porsche 962	1:45.47
6	1	Bill Whittington (USA) Randy Lanier (USA) Al Leon (USA)	GTP	Goodyear	March-Porsche 85G	1:45.58
7	86	Thierry Boutsen (B) Henri Pescarolo (F) Bruce Leven (USA)	GTP	Bridgestone	Porsche 962	1:46.38
8	44	Brian Redman (GB) Bob Tullius (USA) Hurley Haywood (USA)	GTP	Goodyear	Jaguar XJR-5	1:47.00
9	15	John Kallagian (USA) John Lloyd (USA) Tommy Grunah (USA)	GTP	Hoosier	March-Chevrolet 84G	1:47.77
10	4	Claude Ballot-Lena (F) Chip Robinson (USA) Jim Adams (USA)	GTP	Goodyear	Jaguar XJR-5	1:48.04
11	29	Darin Brassfield (USA) Tommy Byrne (IRL) Michael Roe (IRL)	GTP	Goodyear	March-Chevrolet 84G	1:48.29
12	67	Jim Busby (USA) Rick Knoop (USA) Jochen Mass (D)	GTP	Goodyear	Porsche 962	1:48.38
13	4	Lew Price (USA) Carson Baird (USA) Terry Labonte (USA) Billy Hagan (USA)	GTP	Firestone	Lola-Chevrolet T-710	1:48.76
14	2	Skeeter McKitterick (USA) Art Leon (USA) Terry Wolters (USA)	GTP	Goodyear	March-Chevrolet 84G	1:49.20
15	68	Pete Halsmer (USA) John Morton (USA) Dieter Quester (A)	GTP	Goodyear	Porsche 962	1:49.60
16	61	Steve Shelton (USA) Don Courtney (USA) Brent O'Neill (USA)	GTP	Goodyear	Argo-Ford JM16	1:49.78
17	25	Kenper Miller (USA) Dave Cowart (USA) Mauricio de Narvaez (COL)	GTP	Goodyear	March-Chevrolet 84G	1:50.04
18	30	Gianpiero Moretti (I) Massimo Sigala (I) Jim Trueman (USA)	GTP	Goodyear	Alba-Ford AR3	1:50.64
19	3	Bobby Allison (USA) Ken Madren (USA) Wayne Pickering (USA)	GTP	Goodyear	March-Buick 84G	1:50.73
20	7	Jim Mullen (USA) Ray McIntyre (USA) Kees Nierop (CDN)	GTP	Goodyear	Porsche 935	1:50.84

First-named drivers started race.

RACE

After a late January blast of cold weather had swept the Florida peninsula and damaged the state's all-important citrus crop, weather conditions turned positively balmy for the France family's Sunbank 24 Hours. Usually the weather on this particular weekend is quite cool, and frosty in the middle of the night. This year, however, it was shirt-sleeves weather all the way.

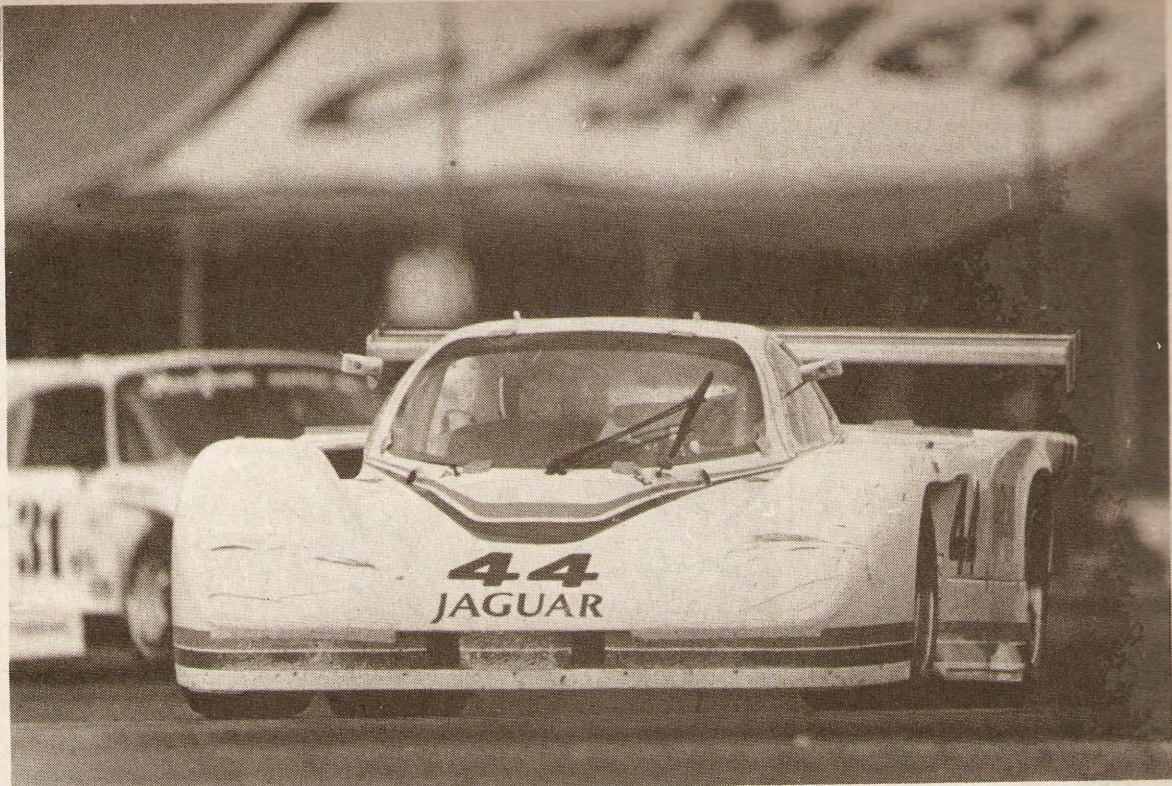
A stiff and blustery wind heralded the start, bringing in a short rain shower a couple of hours later, as the sun was setting. Once that had passed through, the wind dropped and the temperature and humidity fell a few percentage points. During the night and early morning, there were a few more light rain showers, but generally the weather was much better than normal.

From the 3.30pm start, John Paul seized an immediate lead, jumping clear of the field well before the green flag, in fact. The only man to go after the Buick-powered March was van der Merwe, and for the first three-quarters of an hour this pair staged an entertaining dice clear of Holbert, Whittington and Stuck. Boutsen and Redman were also well in the hunt, while Foyt slipped judiciously to the back of the leading group.

After 27 laps van der Merwe suddenly coasted into the pitlane, the victim of a fuel pick-up problem. Before the car could be retrieved and refuelled, the team lost four laps and, although they hung on tenaciously among the leaders through the evening, last year's winners were never again to feature as potential victors.

It was not long before everyone started to make for the pits and the first round of refuelling. Once the shuffling from the first stops was completed, Holbert's car emerged at the top of the leader board ahead of the Redman/Tullius Jaguar.

The Paul/Ganz/Adam March was soon



The Jaguar XJR-5s ran with the leaders, before Bob Tullius unfortunately had a huge shunt in the night when exiting the chicane.

in trouble, losing time first of all because Ganz was overcome from heat. Hot air from the radiator was being ducted into the cockpit, and Conte's team had to spend time modifying and retaping the fresh air duct to the driver. Later the team lost time because of an electrical fault, and about six hours into the race they had to replace the drivebolts to the right hand CV joint. This piece of maintenance was expected to become a regular job in order to make the finish,

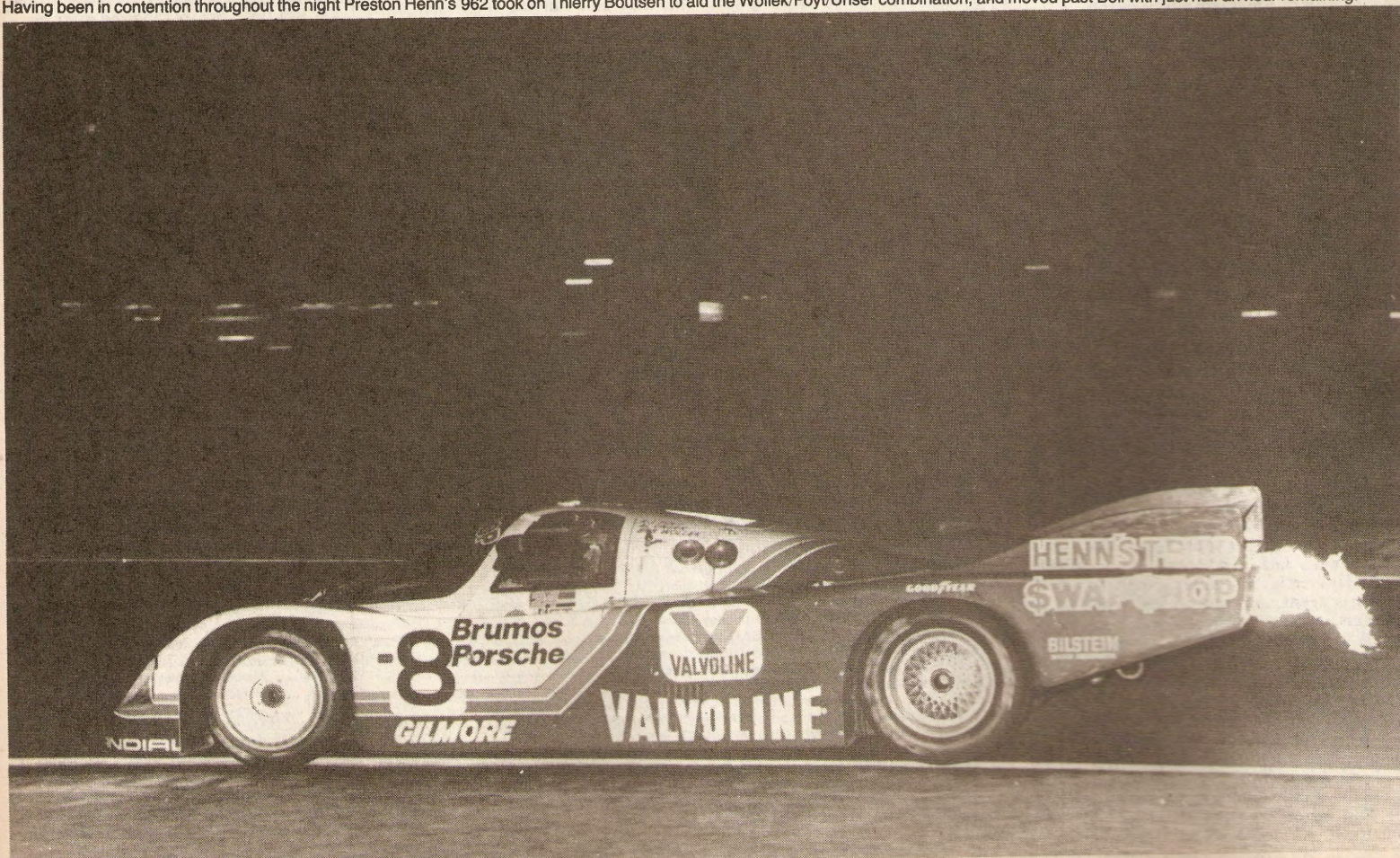
but in the middle of the night the car was forced into retirement by a tyre failure which ruined bodywork and oil lines.

Others to hit early trouble included Akin's 962 which lost time to a difficult-to-trace electrical fault, and the Leon/Lanier/Whittington March-Porsche which was the first of the leaders to limp into the pits with bodywork damage after an incident with one of the many slower cars.

As the long night closed in, the race

settled into a protracted struggle between the 962s of Holbert/Bell/Unser Jr and Wollek/Foyt/Unser Sr, and the Group 44 Jaguar of Tullius/Redman/Haywood. The only other car to stay in the reckoning was Busby's 962 after the second BF/Goodrich-shod car was eliminated in a nasty accident immediately before the pits when a Corvette cut directly into the path taken by Pete Halsmer. The car was destroyed, and Halsmer was lucky to escape with only

Having been in contention throughout the night Preston Henn's 962 took on Thierry Boutsen to aid the Wollek/Foyt/Unser combination, and moved past Bell with just half an hour remaining.



some bad midriff bruising.

Halsmer's accident brought out the second yellow light, with a pace car marshalling the field. Before the night was over, there were to be more yellow flags, this cautionary tactic now accepted, integral part of IMSA long-distance racing. The longest yellow of all occurred just before 11 o'clock on Saturday night when Tullius had a spectacular accident as he exited the chicane and powered into the east banking. Debris and burning pieces of metal and plastic were scattered along the banking and it took some 45mins to clean up the wreckage and get the race rolling once more.

Through the small hours, therefore, the race became the theoretical property of Holbert's team. Slowly, steadily they ran away from Preston Henn's car, building a cushion of laps by dawn. Inevitably, there were a few problems to contend with, including a couple of blocked fuel filters and a small nose-banging incident with a slower car when Unser Jr was at the wheel.

The biggest problem, however, was one that everyone had to contend with, a filthy track which left windshields and headlights covered in thick, greasy grime. After the race, Derek Bell made the point that this was caused by a complete lack of kerbing around the course, which encouraged cars to slide through the dirt and shower the track with sand. At the same time it became ever more difficult to judge the apexes of the turns. Indeed, numerous drivers complained about being unable to see during the night, and Bell was entirely correct in suggesting that proper FIA kerbs be installed through the infield and the chicane on the backstraight. "I really feel the track owes it to us," commented Bell. "I don't think this is some type of luxury. It's important to the safety of the drivers and the event as a whole. Truthfully, I can't understand why it wasn't done years ago."

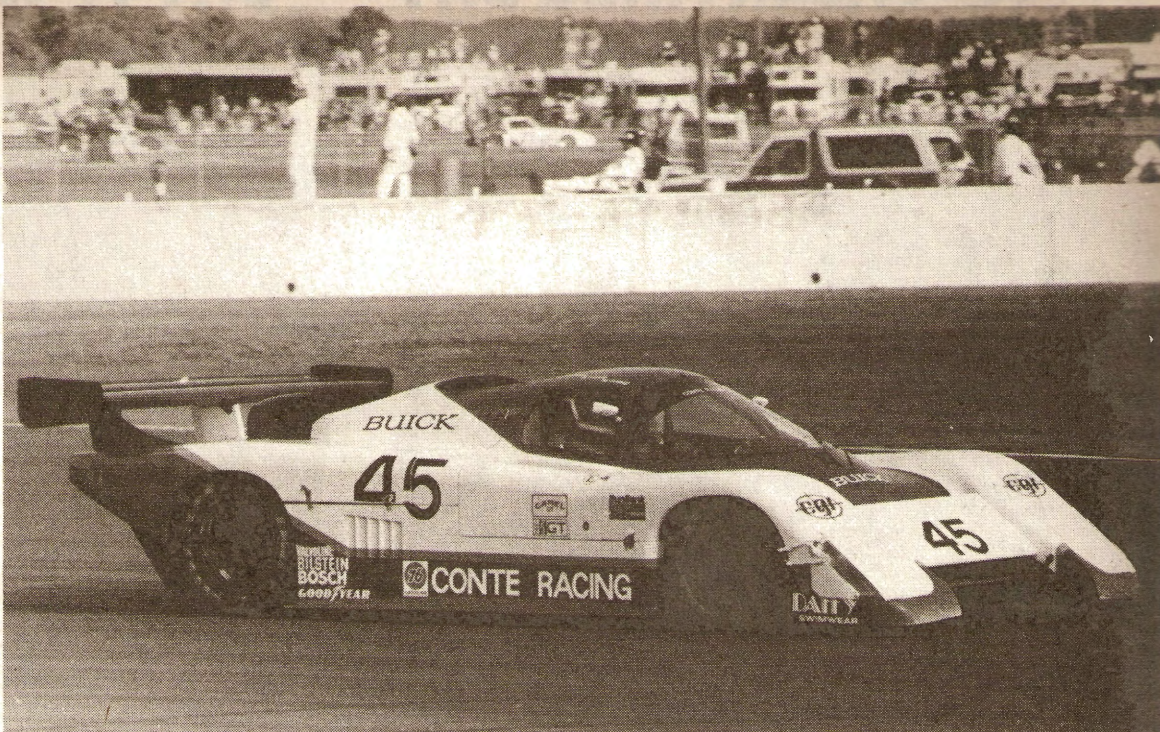
Meanwhile, the pivotal piece of drama in the race was lying in wait for Bell. Not until after midday on Sunday, a mere 90mins before Holbert came in to hand the 962 over to Bell for the final stint did the drama unfold. Out climbed Holbert, and in went Bell, but there was no response to the ignition button.

It took 3mins to find some spark and, after a lap and a half, the engine cut out again, leaving Bell stranded on the back straight. Naturally enough, it was thought that the earlier problem with clogged fuel filters had recurred and, as Bell struggled to restart the car, Holbert's crew scratched their heads and wondered what the best strategy might be. Four times the car came to a stop on the track, once while Bell was at the top of the banking. "It felt very lonely up there, all alone with no power", he commented after the race.

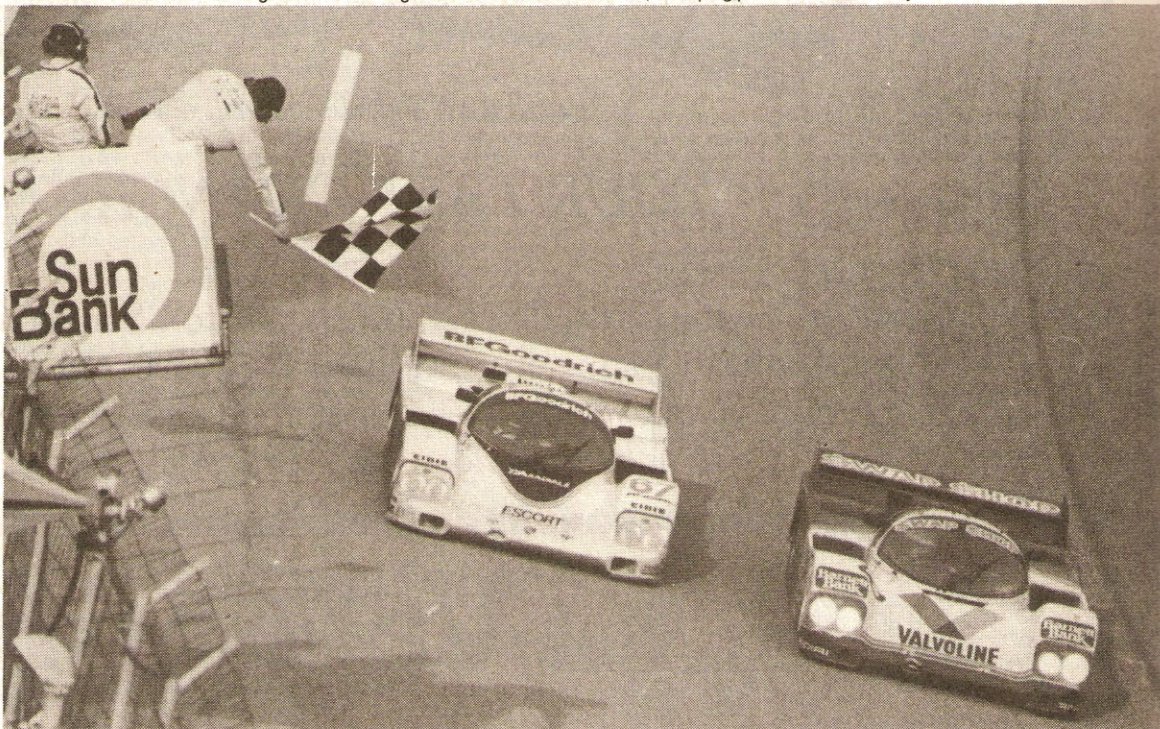
In the end, Bell himself suggested to the crew that they attack the electrics rather than the fuel system, and a quick change of a transistor resulted in an immediate cure. Barely a lap later the problem was back again, and Bell had to fiddle with the wiring harness to get the engine to fire again. It must have been an incredibly frustrating 90mins as he finally lost the lead to Wollek.

In the final hour, Bell was able to complete only seven laps and there was only half an hour to go when Wollek took the lead.

The Wollek/Boutsen/Foyt/Unser Sr 962 also had to change a couple of fuel filters around dawn on Sunday. That aside, there were no problems for the team. Both Wollek and Foyt were fighting a 'flu bug during the weekend, and that as much as anything was the reason for Boutsen joining the team in the middle of the night. In fact, Boutsen wound up driving no less than 220 laps, compared to 279 for Wollek, 125 for Foyt



Above: John Paul Jr put the Conte Racing March-Buick 85G on pole position and led until team mate Whitney Ganz was overcome by heat from a radiator leak. Below: The winning car takes the flag with Bob Wollek at the wheel, sweeping past one of Jim Busby's BF Goodrich 962s.



and 79 for Unser.

Finishing third was the Busby/Knoop/Mass 962, which lost almost an hour changing the exhaust system in the middle of the night.

Eighth overall and winner of the GTO category was the Roush/Profab Mustang driven by Jones/Dallenbach Jr/Bundy after an excellent run. Winner of the Camel Light GTP category was the Argo/Mazda, which finished 10th overall, 101 laps behind the winner. Three more laps down and 12th overall was the GTU class winner, a Mazda RX7 driven by Amos Johnson/Jack Dunham/Yojiro Terada. It was the latter's third class win over the years at Daytona, although for much of the race the GTU category was dominated by the AAR Toyota Celica driven by Chris Cord/Dennis Aase. Early on Sunday morning, however, a transmission failure stranded Aase out on the track and, after lengthy repair work the car finally made it home in 19th place among the 30 finishers.

DAYTONA (USA)

Feb 02/03

Sunbank 24 Hours

Camel IMSA GT Championship, round 1

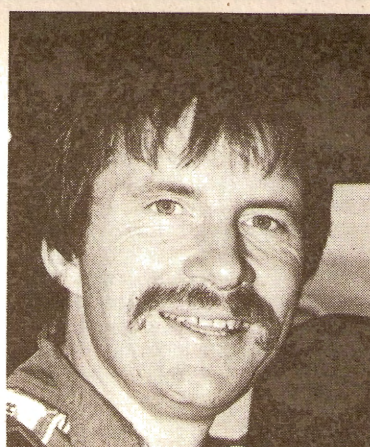
- 1, Bob Wollek/Thierry Boutsen/A.J. Foyt/Al Unser Sr (GTP Porsche 962), 703 laps, 104.162mph, 2502.68 miles;
 - 2, Derek Bell/Al Holbert/Al Unser Jr (GTP Porsche 962), 686 laps;
 - 3, Jochen Mass/Jim Busby/Rick Knoop (GTP Porsche 962), 674 laps;
 - 4, Bob Akin/Hans-Joachim Stuck/Paul Miller (GTP Porsche 962), 670 laps;
 - 5, Jim Muller/Ray McIntyre/Kees Nierop (GTP Porsche 935), 668 laps;
 - 6, Art Leon/Skeeter McKitterick/Terry Wolters (GTP March-Chevrolet 84G), 654 laps;
 - 7, Al Leon/Randy Lanier/Bill Whittington (GTP March-Porsche 84G), 652 laps; 8, Wally Dallenbach Jr/Doc Bundy/John Jones (GTO Ford Mustang), 637 laps; 9, Wayne Baker/Jack Newsom/Chip Mead (GTP Porsche 934/935), 624 laps; 10, Kelly Marsh/Don Marsh/Ron Pawley (GTP Argo-Mazda JM16), 602 laps;
 - 11, Tom Waugh/Diego Febles/Danny Smith (GTO Mazda RX-7), 599 laps; 12, Amos Johnson/Jack Dunham/Yojiro Terada (GTU Mazda RX-7), 599 laps; 13, Jim Downing/John Maffucci/Yoshimi Katayama (GTP Argo-Mazda JM16), 599 laps; 14, Mike Schaefer/Peter Uria/Jack Refenning (GTO Porsche Carrera), 586 laps; 15, Les Delano/Andy Petery/Tommy Riggins (GTO Pontiac Firebird), 578 laps; etc.
- 76 starters/30 finishers.
Fastest lap: not given.
Leading retirements: Gianpiero Moretti/Jim Trueman/Massimo Sigala (GTP Alba-Ford AR3), 505 laps, engine; John Paul Jr/Bill Adam/Whitney Ganz (GTP March-Buick 85G), 330 laps, bodywork damage; Sarel van der Merwe/Ian Scheckter/Tony Martin (GTP March-Porsche 84G), 262 laps, accident; Bob Tullius/Brian Redman/Hurley Haywood (GTP Jaguar XJR-5), 203 laps, accident; Willy T. Ribbs/Jim Miller/John Bauer (GTO Ford Mustang), 157 laps, engine; Chip Robinson/Claude Ballot-Lena/Jim Adams (GTP Jaguar XJR-5), 154 laps, bodywork damage; Pete Halsmer/John Morton/Dieter Quester (GTP Porsche 962) 107 laps, accident; Henri Pescarolo/Thierry Boutsen/Bruce Leven (GTP Porsche 962), 101 laps, electrics.



Mouton — leading lady.



Airikkala — Lancia 037.



Pond — Group A challenge.



Therier on the mend.

New faces head for first Open round in Yorkshire

Already the 1985 World Rally Championship is well under way with a few new faces making their mark on the competition, and the scene is set for a similar development in the new Shell Oils Open series, due to start in Yorkshire towards the end of this month.

The newly announced entry list for the National Breakdown Rally reveals a wealth of talent, led — to the delight of rally fans — by Michele Mouton, Audi Sport UK's number 1 signing for the season. The French girl is at the top of the list, and part of Audi's strongest ever Open challenge; current National Champion David Llewellyn the back-up, having already won the Wydean for the team last weekend.

It is nearly two years since Pentti Airikkala first appeared with a Lancia in the Open series, the Finn returning for the first round of the 1985 series with one of the latest Rally 037s, eager to take a good result. The intention is to take the

season on an event by event basis, but if he can get the Italian racer well up the results board over the weekend of February 23/24, then appearances on the remaining five rounds must be likely.

From a home point of view, Tony Pond is sure to chase the Group A title for Austin Rover, using one of the Vitesses, and again it is now some time since Pond was a regular performer in the British forests. The prospects for a vintage season are therefore excellent; these new names forced to face up to a whole list of more familiar people, including current Open title holder Jimmy McRae, and GM Dealer Sport team mate Russell Brookes with their Mantas.

Further down the entry list, Mike Stuart is hoping to make a return to the scene with an ex-works Rover Vitesse (one of the old Rallysprint cars built at TWR), while lots more variety will be provided through the arrival of Peugeot's Group A 205GTI; Skoda's 130 LR; and the latest Vauxhall Astra GT/E.

NATIONAL BREAKDOWN INTERNATIONAL RALLY

Leading entries

- 1, Mouton/PonsB..... Audi Quattro
- 2, Eklund/Whitlock...A..... Toyota Corolla GT 3, —
- 4, Airikkala/WilsonB..... Lancia Rally 037
- 5, McRae/Grindrod...B..... Opel Manta 400
- 6, Brookes/Broad.....B..... Opel Manta 400
- 7, Wilson/HarrisB..... Audi Quattro 8, —
- 9, Kaby/Gormley.....B..... Nissan 240RS
- 10, Pond/ArthurA..... Rover Vitesse
- 11, Llewellyn/ShortB..... Audi Quattro
- 12, Fisher/FraserB..... Opel Manta 400
- 13, Sundstrom/White A..... Peugeot 205 GTI
- 14, Haugland/SaundersB..... Skoda 130LR
- 15, Bolton/ErvineB..... Opel Manta 400
- 16, —
- 17, Collins/Freeman ...B..... Opel Manta 400
- 18, Lord/VarleyB..... Audi Quattro
- 19, Brise/tba.....A..... Talbot Sunbeam ti
- 20, Wood/Nicholson ...A..... Vauxhall Astra GT/E

Jet-setter Haugland helps Group B Skoda 1-2-3 debut

The Skoda 130LR made its international debut at the weekend, the cars finishing first, second and third on the Vlasska Zimmer Rally, one of the first Czechoslovakian Internationals this year.

Winner was Ladislav Krecek, John Haugland was next, and Svatopluk Kvaizar finished third, the trio beating a couple of Quattros *en route* to victory. Conditions certainly favoured four-wheel-drive machinery, with all the special stages on snow, but it proved an impressive success for the home team; the rally based at Skoda's "home" town of Gotwaldov.

The team must now be hoping that the 130LR, which was recently homologated into Group B, can rekindle the image of the 130RS from the middle seventies. Certainly both Kvaizar and Krecek have fairly ambitious programmes around Europe, including this weekend's Boucles de Spa, while some five World Championship events are planned.

Norwegian John Haugland is not involved at Spa, taking a short break back home before giving the 130LR its British debut on the National Breakdown. He crammed quite a lot into last weekend, as, until Friday, he was one of Ari Vatanen's ice note boys on the Monte!



Haugland — globe trotter.

Having covered the final stage of the world event, Loda, early that morning, John went directly to Nice airport — fitted in a fast dash to Monte Carlo and back to collect his passport — and just caught the plane to Geneva. The connection took him to Vienna, a specially arranged border crossing got him into Czechoslovakia, and he arrived at the rally headquarters late that night. Then he started a fast recce of the stages, completed the route in time for a short break, and started the event at 6.00am, the only unscheduled moment being a quick roll which meant second place behind Krecek...

Ford's fear for the future...

With the Ford RS200 continuing its development quietly in the background, Stuart Turner, Ford's Director of European Motorsports, has surprisingly stated that it is not necessarily the company's intention ever to chase the world titles.

"There may be many straightforward reasons for not contesting events in certain parts of the world," explained Turner on Monday, "and we are anxious at this stage to avoid anyone assuming that we are automatically going for the World Rally Championship."

Formula 1, explained Turner, would surely continue to have greater impact, partly through the now established television coverage available. Marketing reasons would justify avoiding certain events in the World Rally Championship, while other rounds where spectator safety gave cause for concern, could also be ignored.

The Ford Motor Company seems anxious not to expose either itself, or its drivers, to some of the most hazardous events, and so any chance of scooping the World Championship in the future must be slim.

Therier makes good progress

Jean-Luc Therier, who was badly injured in a Paris-Dakar accident, is now recovering in hospital, having been in considerable danger for some time.

Doctors were worried about the loss of feeling in his left arm but an operation to release what is thought to be a trapped nerve will take place shortly. Meanwhile, the French driver is happily receiving visitors and looking forward to further improvement.

Corsican prospects

At a press conference in Nice last Friday, the President of the FFSA, Jean Marie Balestre, outline his proposals for the 1985 Rally of France, otherwise known as the Tour de Corse. It was an all-French affair, but it is obvious that the event is under even greater control of the national association.

The Président has already committed himself to finding around £500,000 to help finance the 1985 event, but while this year's world counter will start as planned on May 4, little details of the future were available. It must be remembered that there was an attempt to demote the Corsican affair for substitution by a mainland rally which the FFSA would still presumably prefer.

Amazonian raiders

Following increasing interest in his Paris Dakar Raid, organiser Thierry Sabine has released plans of another adventure proposed for later this year in the Amazon! Entitled the Trans Amazonian Rally, the brochure nominates the start date as July 18, the route heading north from San Paulo towards the Amazon, before diverting towards the coast, Salvador and the finish in Rio de Janeiro on August 5.

A total of 12000km are planned with 80 per cent of the competition over gravel roads, and two parallel events catering for two and three wheelers; and for those with at least four wheels. As with the Dakar event, service barges will have to be registered, no air support is allowed, and prize money will be considerable, \$40,000 going to the winner. Entries close on May 17, and the telex number for TSO in Paris is 614731.



Llewellyn at speed in the Shell sponsored Quattro last Saturday.

Debut win for National champ

David Llewellyn stepped into his works Audi Quattro for the first time last Friday and the following day took it to victory on the Wydean Stages, pleasing the assembled masses of Audi Sport UK no end.

"It was quite a revelation," commented the Shell Oils/AUTOSPORT Champion as he reflected on the test session. "Up until now, I have got off the start line by revving around 5000 rpm and then dropping the clutch. With the Quattro you must take it to 7500 rpm before letting it go or else the revs just drop. It still seems a bit cruel . . ."

But, with Phil Short alongside, the Welshman produced a controlled drive with Short only shouting once! "There was a blind brow," explained the co-

driver, "and David was committed to it. I wasn't sure of what lay ahead and so I told him to be careful. He was right and I was wrong!"

Team boss, David Sutton, flew from America to watch his new charge at work and found the win a perfect cure for jet lag. He was unashamedly pleased for Llewellyn at the finish and admitted that the mechanics had to do no more than fill the petrol tank and change tyres all day.

Llewellyn, having begun to master left foot braking, is now on his way to Sweden where he will be part of the British Junior Rally Team. A good run there will set him up nicely for the National Breakdown Rally, the first round of the Shell Oils Open Championship, where he will be teamed with Michele Mouton.



Gooding's new car in action on the Wydean after clutch problems.

Gooding's shakedown

Russell Gooding drove his recently acquired Group A Rover Vitesse for the first time on the Wydean Stages, finishing 13th but nevertheless reasonably pleased with the performance of the ex-Rallysprint machine.

Clutch problems on the first stage cost a minute but the powerful car soon climbed back from 43rd place. "I am impressed with the car," commented Gooding at the finish. "It has lots of power but I was beginning to get the feel of it by the end of the event."

Gooding now intends to contest the

FISA Group A Challenge, tackling nine of the 12 rounds and starting with the Hankiralli on February 22/24. The series is open to unseeded drivers who will count their best eight scores.

Tom Walkinshaw Racing have supplied the technical expertise — they are to supervise Austin Rover's Vitesse programme — and the car will be prepared by Bob Brain Developments during the season. During the year, Hywel Thomas (who occupied the left hand seat on Saturday) and Rob Arthur will co-drive.

Cullen's Nissan opening

During last year's STP Tarmac Championship, journalists were invited to vote for the driver who, in their opinion, was the most entertaining or promising driver on each event. The prize was a free entry on a round of this year's series.

Not surprisingly, the winner was Davy Evans but last week it was announced

that James Cullen — voted second — would take over the prize drive following the death of Evans at Christmas.

It is likely that Cullen will opt for the Ulster Rally to claim his prize and, as a special tribute to Evans, Fred Kane (who prepared the Nissan last season) will provide a car free of charge for the event.



Problems for Eklund amid a typically enthusiastic Belgian crowd.

Classic contest in Spa?

The Boucles de Spa takes place this weekend and sees the regular Belgian aces contesting not only a round of their home series but also the third event in the European Rally Championship.

Porsche will be represented by the Bastos backed car of Thierry Reginster while Belga will have Robert Droogmans and Jean-Luis Dumont on hand. Guy Colsoul will have his regular Manta 400 for the event but Patrick Snyers steps into his new Lancia Rally 037 for the first time in Belga colours.

Another Belgian ace, Marc Duez, will represent Mazda Rally Team Europe on his first drive in one of the powerful Group B RX-7 Turbo cars and could well

surprise the regular drivers if all goes well.

Visitors to the 400kms stage event include Bjorn Waldegaard and Harald Demuth in Audi Quattros and Per Eklund in the new lightweight British run Corolla GT. Last year the Swede drove the old car for the first time but retired with a burnt out clutch after the famous ford.

And further down the entry list are a couple of the new Group B Skoda 130LR models in readiness for a few World Championship events this season.

The rally starts on Friday evening and finishes in the early hours of Sunday, crews tackling the 12 stages four times.

Hold up for Dawson's 037

Andy Dawson is still seeking finance to run the Lancia Rally 037 which is waiting for him in Turin. If a deal can be struck, Dawson will purchase the car from Lancia and contest the Open Championship.

"I thought that I had clinched it with a sponsor," explained Dawson after the Wydean Rally on Saturday. "Unfortunately the money went to Chay Blyth's yacht at the last minute and so I am back to square one. Perhaps it will be better to debut the car on the Circuit of Ireland

rather than the National Breakdown anyway."

Dawson, who was the last non Scandinavian to win the Yorkshire event since it went International (he took the Chequered Flat Stratos to victory in 1976) was contesting the Wydean at the wheel of a standard Renault 5 and found that, despite an embarrassing lack of horsepower, there was still fun to be had, netting 36th place, 10 places and 2m 24s ahead of the highest placed Vauxhall Nova!

McHale heads for Galway

While Austin McHale will represent Dealer Opel Team Ireland on this weekend's Galway International, in his Group B Manta 400, the Group A category will see Frank Fennell at the wheel of a DOTI Kadett GSi. This will be only the second appearance of the car in the British Isles since Kenneth Eriksson's appearance on the RAC Rally last November.

Heading the entry list for the event is last year's winner, Brendan Fagan but,

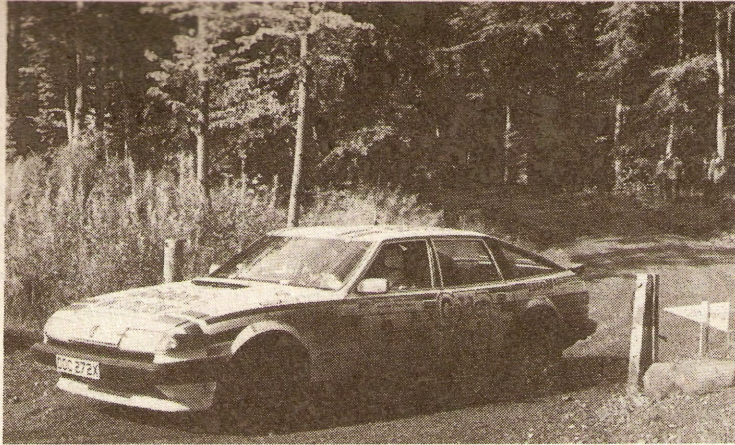
with the Chevette apparently sold to Pat Callaghan, there are doubts that Fagan will start. This would leave the way clear for McHale to open his account with relative ease as Cyril Bolton (in the ex-McRae Manta 400) and John Coyne's Nissan seem to offer the only real threat.

Indeed, while the entry list totals just under 80 crews, the quality level is not too high for the opening round of the STP series.



Elsmore: dry bank account

Graham Elsmore drove his Group A Corolla for possibly the last time on Saturday as he produced vintage Elsmore style on his 'home' event, the Wydean Stages. Funds have now run out although he is still hoping that a sponsor can be found to back an Open Championship programme. Hereford Toyota Centre and Toyota GB have expressed their support but further cash is needed if Elsmore is to join the Group A battle which starts in a couple of weeks.



Ken Wood will not be defending his Scottish title, heading for the National series instead.

Wood to chase crown for Golden Wonder team

Reigning Scottish Rally Champion, Ken Wood, has decided not to defend his Esso Scottish title this year and will concentrate his efforts on the Shell Oils/AUTOSPORT Championship instead.

The Golden Wonder Rover is currently being re-prepared by Wood and Dom Buckley but will not be changed to Group A specification from its current Group 2 configuration. Wood has not entirely abandoned his home series, however, and is

intending to tackle a couple of events during the year. However, the air traffic controller from Aberdeen Airport is sure that he can now give the National drivers a run for their money and the sight of the big car rumbling through the stages will be a welcome sight.

Wood, who won an emotional Granite City Rally last year, has already set himself a task for the season beyond winning the National title. With the blessing of Golden Wonder, he is seeking a 6R4 for the 1986 season...

Gwynedd entry list is open

Regulations for the Skip Brown Gwynedd Rally, organised by Caernarvonshire & Anglesey MC with the Imperial Hotel, are now available. Immediately it will be noted that the event is far more compact than in recent years without the long trips to Bala and Dolgellau for service. The entire event will be contained within the Clocaenog, Penmachno and Coed-y-Brenin forests and offer 70 gravel stage miles in addition to the traditional opening run over the two mile tarmac road around the Great Orme.

The entry fee is £150 and the organisers are already reporting that enquiries are 50 per cent higher than last year. The rally will start from Llandudno promenade (being

used for the first time) at 10am on March 9 with the first cars due back at around 5pm. Scrutineering will take place on Friday evening although some crews may be able to opt for a Saturday morning inspection.

Group N cars will start, probably, behind the top 20 entries and not, as some events are contemplating, being given a clear run at the head of the field. A suitable gap will be left before the rest of the field starts a stage, although there will inevitably be some degree of controversy over this decision...

Further details are available from Jim Jones, 36 Kersley Drive, Rhyl, Clwyd. Tel: 0745 53014

Cash boost from GMDS

GM Dealersport are offering healthy awards to winners of National Championship events this season. Apart from cash prizes in all significant series (£15,000 if a GM driver wins the Open) the Shell Oils/AUTOSPORT Championship can boast a healthy fund.

Winning the series outright will net £7500 while the Group A category will have £2500 available. Group N and class champions will receive £1000.

Bonuses for GM drivers scoring individual event successes amount to £2500 for overall, £1000 for Group A, £350 for Group N and £250 for a class success.

Details of how the bonus scheme operates and how to register are available from PO Box 200, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands. The bonus awards are only available to drivers not already receiving direct support from GM Dealersport.



Shell Oils

NATIONAL RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Early rush for series

Registration for this year's Shell Oils/AUTOSPORT National Championship continue to flood in. Significantly higher than last season at this point, a fine contest is assured.

Added to the top names already mentioned in recent weeks (Clinton Smith, Mark Lovell and Roger Chilman), Allan Edwards, Bob Fowden and Ken Wood have opted for the series, along with Vince Wetton. Among the Group A entries is the nomination of Sanjiv Shah, a stylish driver in one of John Midgley's immaculate Corollas.

Registration forms are still available from John Horton, PO Box 200, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands.

David Clibbery has moved up from both a Mini and the BTRDA Rally Championship to tackle the National series in a Group A Rover Vitesse. Support will come from Baugh Decorators but the team are anxious to link with a local dealer. Interested parties should contact Gordon Waddington on Doncaster 784663 (evenings).

EARS wag

Escort and Rally Spares (EARS) are continuing their support for the Shell Oils/AUTOSPORT series. Subject to drivers buying 12 covers during the season, Bob Ellard will award £150 to the highest placed EARS customer in the overall championship and £100 to the highest placed customer in Group A.

The Skoda photographic competition, announced in last week's *Special Stage*, is open to all photographers and not just professionals as we mistakenly suggested.

Manx tale

A recent merger between the Steam Packet Company and Sealink will complicate travel arrangements to the Isle of Man in the future on the only ferries now sailing from Heysham. The Liverpool service will be stopped from April, so the Manx Stages the following month will be the first problem area.

The Manx event has a new secretary. Kevin Jones has replaced Peter Dudley and can be contacted on at 46 Snaefell Road, Willaston, Isle of Man. Tel: 0624 73211 (daytime) or 28570 (evenings).

Gough heads list for Solex

This Sunday's Solex Stages sees the Nicolet Welsh Championship contenders in action for the first time this season, and brings the Lada Challenge crews into the fray for the first time as well.

There is a healthy entry list of 84 crews, including 25 Ladas, starting the event from the Craven Arms Hotel, Craven Arms, Shropshire, and 13 stages await them.

Heading the entry list is Richard Gough, testing his new Escort RS for the Shell Oils/AUTOSPORT Championship and Les Hurdley's Janspeed car will offer the greatest threat. Bill Jones has returned from Australia in time for the event and will not be in his Sunbeam, rather an Escort which will be a new experience.

Full spectator information will be available from the 9am start.

SOLEX STAGES

1, Gough/Jones	Ford Escort RS
2, Hurdley/Owen	Ford Escort RS
3, Jones/Fellows	Ford Escort
4, Fear/Wheatley	Ford Escort
5, Ballinger/Davies	Ford Escort

BRIEFLY

Marc Duez will not now be entered by Mazda Rally Team Europe on the forthcoming Portuguese round of the World Championship. The Belga Belgian had been released from his ARG contract for the rally, but Achim Warmbold has withdrawn the entry.

Swedish youngster Torjorn Edling will do the Scandinavian World Championship counter next week in a Mazda 323 Turbo. Developed from the front-wheel-drive saloons which appeared on last year's Monte Carlo, this Group A machine will have 215bhp. Meanwhile a four-wheel-drive version is in the pipeline, at Mazda's headquarters for next season.

While most European countries have Fiat Ritmos run by the importers, the Swedish team are using a Uno. With a turbocharged version not so far off, and four-wheel-drive also planned, the car will be driven on the Swedish International by Cemoni Ohlsson.

Happily, Fabrizia Pons has not contracted smallpox after a testing trip to Kenya — as we suggested last week. She has chicken pox.

Regulations for the Circuit of Ireland Rally are being distributed from Ulster AC (Tel: Belfast 221607) and already the organisers have received an entry from last year's winner, Billy Coleman in his Rothmans Porsche 911SC RS. The clubmans event is also receiving widespread support.

Jan van der Marel has bought the Opel Manta 400 which took Billy Coleman to the Circuit of Ireland win last season. The car was built by Sydney Meeke and was sold last week.

Oops department. Our video timer seems to have gone haywire and as a result the reviews of several tapes from Action Video were printed incorrectly in last week's *Armchair Enthusiast*. To set the record straight, *In-Car RAC/Manx 2* lasts for 55mins (£21.95) and the *RAC 1984* tape is 60mins long. *Man against Man* and *The Vatanen Touch* are both 40mins while *Finnish Rallies '84* last for 60mins and costs £24.75. It seems the tapes are better value than we first thought...

WEEKEND SPORT

INTERNATIONAL RALLYING

Date	Venue	Event/Details
Feb 8/10	Spa	Event/Details Boucles de Spa. European Rally Championship, coeff 2. <i>The Belgian regulars unwrap their new cars to do battle on the first of the Belgian Euro rounds. Bjorn Waldegaard makes a one-off trip with a Belga Quattro while Per Eklund debuts the new Group A Corolla in readiness for this season's Open Championship.</i>
Feb 8/10	Galway	Galway International. STP Tarmac Championship, round 1. <i>Brendan Fagan, Austin McHale and Cyril Bolton head a somewhat disappointing entry list for the opening round of the Irish series, McHale clearly favourite with his DOTI Manta 400.</i>

NATIONAL RALLYING

Date	Venue	Event/Details
Feb 10	Craven Arms, Shropshire	Solex Stages. Nicolet Welsh Stage Championship, round 1. Lada Challenge, round 1. <i>The premier Welsh rally championship gets under way this weekend with the Shropshire based event. Richard Gough heads the entry and should take an easy win. The Ladas, too, offer their own particular brand of entertainment.</i>

Secretaries of the Meeting are requested to send details of forthcoming events to Keith Oswin, AUTOSPORT Editorial, Haymarket Publishing Ltd, 38-42 Hampton Road, Teddington, Middlesex TW11 0JE.



Tony Fowkes competed solo on the Paris-Dakar Rally in his Subaru when his co-driver withdrew just before the event.

Alone across Africa

MARTIN HOLMES talks to Tony Fowkes about his solo desert raid

"It's when you are stuck in the Sahara, off-route, and you have a problem with your car that you feel all alone. It can make you quite religious." Tony Fowkes was stranded, in more ways than one, when his co-driver backed out 10 days before the start of the Paris-Dakar Rally without any chance of a replacement. He had a major decision to make — whether to pull out or do something very few would attempt — to drive a car on this event alone. Having a sponsor and the use of a Subaru, Tony had no wish to withdraw, so for better or worse he decided to press on with his plans. . .

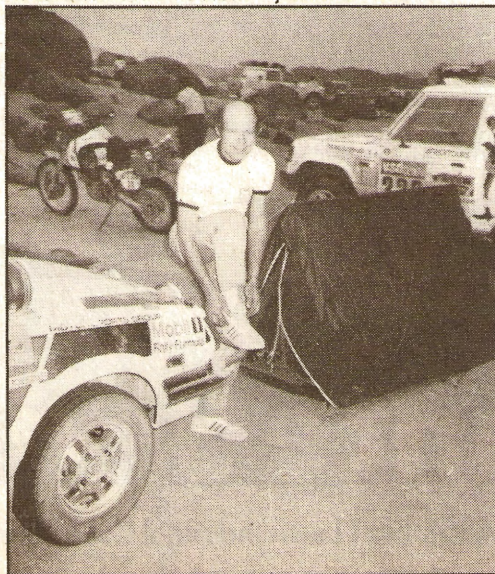
"Going off-route is something I think every competitor will do on Paris-Dakar, the good ones are those who realise their errors quickly. That makes things more difficult when you are on your own. Going along a track parallel to the official route is normal. Often the tracks go side-by-side for ages. The trouble comes when you realise you are going the wrong side of a range of mountains, and then you get really alarmed. You go off-track all the time so you can drive on the darkest coloured sand which is the firmest. This has little specks of stone in it. The lighter coloured sand is the freshly-blown variety that you want to avoid. It's strange, but the sand changes colour during the day, depending on the angle of the sun. It can often help show up the dips by throwing shadows across the hollows. Furthermore the same stretch of sand can be quite firm or very soft, depending on the time of day and the temperature."

This was Tony's second trip across the Sahara, the first being on the 1983 Paris-Dakar when he drove a service car (which had to be officially entered as a competitor) for Mitsubishi. That adventure taught him many basic truths about desert life, especially to take care of yourself and your possessions. Everything done to the vehicle has to be done meticulously, taking time to make sure the job is finished correctly. If you shear a thread or the bolt breaks, you have to sort it out yourself. You have to have a good wash every evening, clean your teeth twice a day and keep in proper shape. The rally organisers make sure you take a survival kit, including five litres of water per person, a compass, reflecting mirror, flare signal, a rocket which issues smoke, a bleeping radio and a long-lasting flickering light for the top of your car.

If you get stuck, you must expect to spend the night on your own but the organisers reckon to find you the next day. They check you in and out everywhere and if you have trouble they know very soon. "Funnily enough, when you are on the rally and going well, crossing the desert is not frightening at all — everyone really enjoys it. They team up with friends, meet each other every

night and so on. I teamed up with the British motorcyclist Neil Bruce (he and Tony were the only British privateers on the event) and we made sure we stuck together. We even went on together to Dakar when we had to retire. It's when things go wrong you get scared. I have been in motor sport for 15 years and have always accepted the risk of getting hurt even in the bleak places you get in Portugal. I am used to that sort of thing, but the risk of being stuck in a place like the Sahara was quite new to me. I can understand how Mark Thatcher must have felt."

Physical fitness is essential. Tony came across motorcyclists who had fallen, often towards the end of one of the longer sections, physically too tired to pick up their machines. He found that chores like putting up a tent, which at home in the garden would take five minutes, would take 20. Success on the rally is as much a matter of experience as luck. Tony overloaded the car thinking that without a co-driver he could take a lot more spares with him. On the first section, which was rough, he broke the shock absorbers. All four! He soon found how people overcome the problem — they rent space from trucks. Trucks run along towards the back of the field, and those which are not being run by the big teams are kitted out with compartments inside them, in which a competitor can put his spares. For the use of his 'mobile locker' Tony paid FF2500 to a driver from Grenoble. This meant that he could run much lighter and had no trouble with broken shock absorbers which No home comforts in the desert — just a small tent.



had already cost him an inordinate amount of time.

The Subaru was a good car for the job. Although it only had 13in wheels Tony had no trouble with his Bridgestone tyres and had no punctures all the way till he retired at Agadez, in Niger. The serious trouble came when a bad oil leak started to develop from the back of the crankshaft bearing and the car used up to two litres a day, with every risk of getting on to the clutch as well. If he could make the rest day after the desert loop, he could get the engine out, but not before. Unfortunately the worry of the car developing a terminal problem, coupled with uncertainty as to whether there was a big enough fuel tank, caused him to abandon before the loop. If he had broken down on the loop the organisers would have rescued him, but the desert would have claimed another car for itself. . .

Tony saw many signs of debris littering the desert. "People just throw away their tyres rather than carry a punctured wheel. There had been quite a few by the side of the road on the rocky stages in Algeria. I saw Therier's wreck beside the road. He had hit a ditch on a very fast section. Maybe it had been concealed in the sunlight. Then I saw Mass's Porsche just over the top of an undulating dune. You could tell there was something odd about the crest when you came up to it. Quite a few cars had already been burned out, some were even there from previous years.

Even with the benefit to the organisers' roadbook, Tony reckoned he had to navigate by the sun, moon, stars and compass. "The sun is very good for a quick reckoning. The rally is held in winter so the sun is fairly low in the sky. It took me about four days — even with help from other competitors — to understand the roadbook which was written only in French.

"It took me about four days — even with help from other competitors — to understand the roadbook which was written only in French."

"The Paris-Dakar has quite a different character from other marathons I have done, mostly because it is so French. You need to be crazy like the French to put on an event like that! I wouldn't say it was as hard as the Australian sections on the old London-Sydney but you do at least get a night's sleep every night on Paris-Dakar and the organisers provide all the food. Some of the sections are very tough, and for me it is perhaps the most adventurous event I have done."

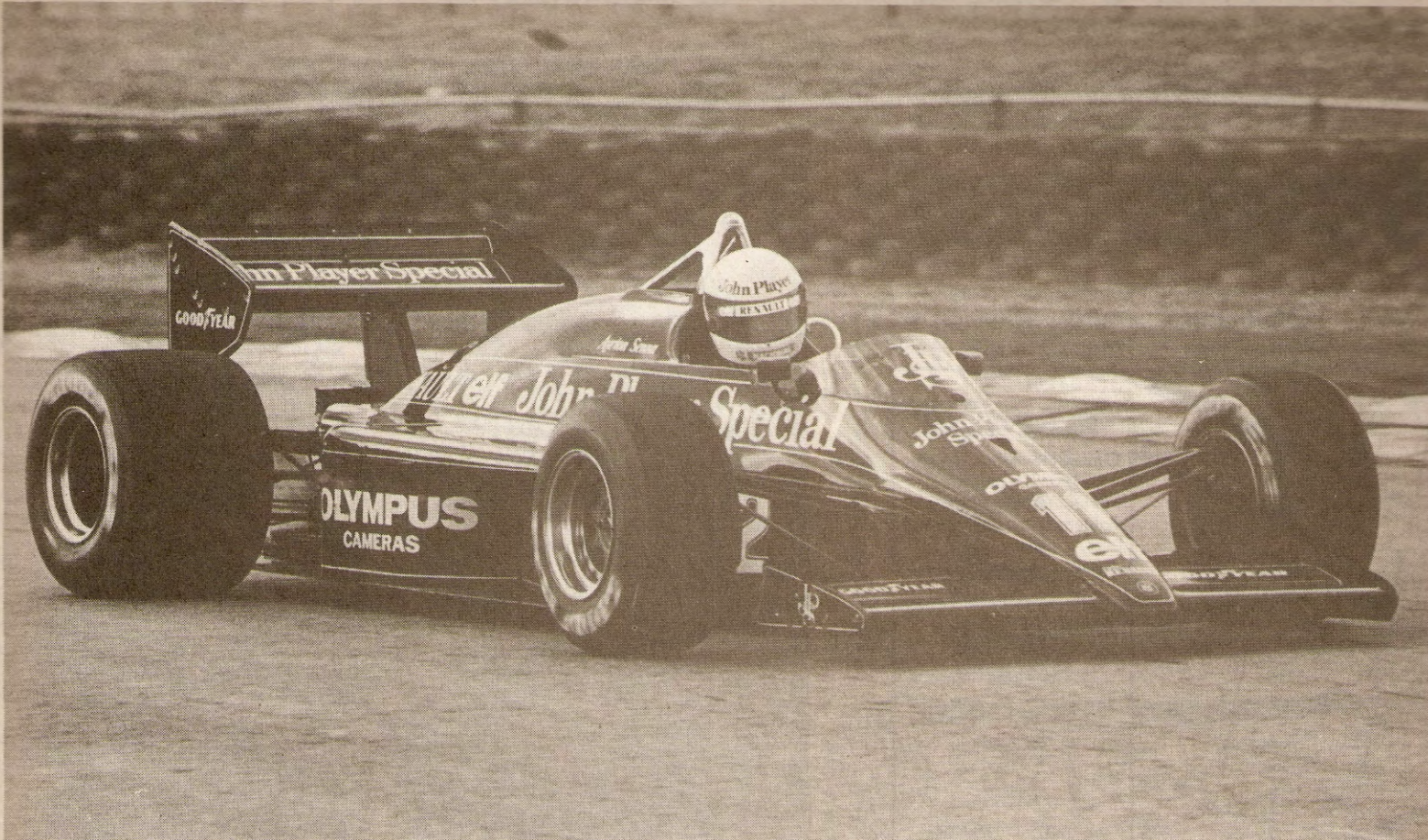
Other problems? Overtaking the trucks, particularly when he had been delayed and forced to run behind them. And, the later you run, the longer you have to queue up for petrol at the organisers' supply depots — even when they are set up in mid-stage. "On one section, going into Agadez, I ran out of petrol altogether. I cruised over a brow, wondering whatever to do, when I saw a video film crew and was able to siphon some fuel from their car. The hardest thing was the decision not to go into the Ternere section. You are out of the event if you do not complete the route. I was determined to reach Dakar, one way or another — I had paid for all the Africatours food which they provide every night! I intend to have another go next year and wanted to see what the rest of the route, particularly the new sections in Mauritania, were like. Of course it is obvious that everything was left too late. The car only arrived from Japan early in December. It was not prepared to the rally's special rules. I had to fit a bigger fuel tank, alter the rollcage, modify the rear shock absorbers to increase their travel and add the special red lights on the roof. This took a long time. It just wasn't the sort of smooth operation I like, but I would never have missed the chance. I'll be back again!"

PARIS-DAKAR RALLY

Jan 01/22

Final results

1, Zaniroli/Da Silva	Mitsubishi Pajero	48h27m00s
2, Cowan/Syer	Mitsubishi Pajero	48h53m19s
3, Fougerousse/Jacquemar	Toyota FJ6	54h01m23s
4, Ratel/De Belabre	Toyota FJ6	60h39m29s
5, Marreau/Marreau	Renault 184x4	60h43m41s
6, Marci/Janssens	Range Rover	62h02m52s
7, Tezekdjian/Dolla	Mercedes 280GE	63h11m55s
8, De Deyne/Beckers	Land Rover	69h46m30s
9, Bosteels/Vanneslande	Toyota BT45	70h57m20s
10, Bouchet/Villepigue	Mercedes 280GE	71h41m34s



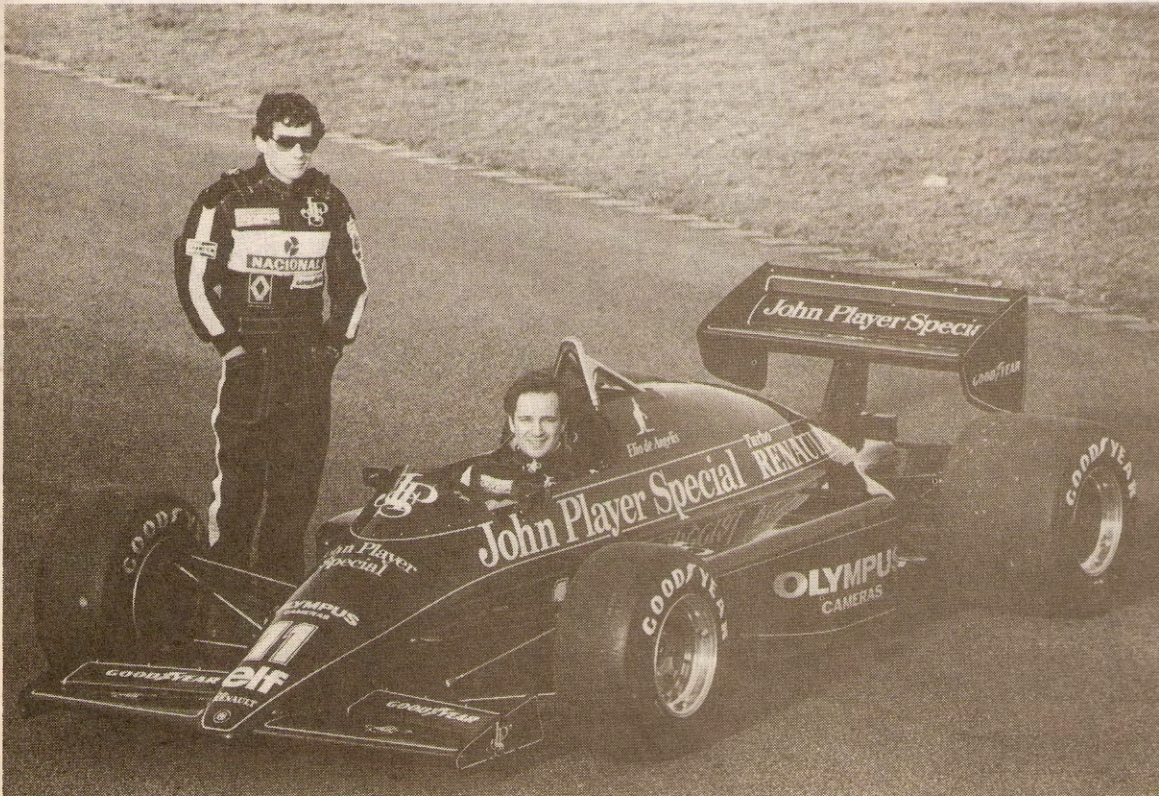
The new Lotus 97T is a logical progression from last year's car. Smaller and neater, it is expected to be right down on the weight limit. Will we be seeing Lotus back in the winner's circle?

Lotus-Renault 97T

"It is," says John Player Special Team Lotus chief Peter Warr of the new Lotus-Renault 97T, "a stronger, more refined and developed version of an already good car." And, true enough, the new Formula 1 car is outwardly very similar to last year's 95T, which threatened to win so often, yet never did.

The 97T, which ran in shakedown tests behind locked gates at Donington Park last week, is smaller and neater than its predecessor, and is claimed to be right down on the 540-kilo minimum weight limit. It is intended that carbonfibre brakes will be used throughout the season as a matter of course.

The driving force: new recruit Ayrton Senna joins Elio de Angelis, entering his sixth year with the team.



The car's front suspension is by fabricated steel wishbones with pull rod operated inboard spring damper units and wide-base lower wishbones, and the rear is by fabricated steel rockers and wishbones, with a rocker and pullrod operated inboard spring damper unit. Uprights are of fabricated steel at the rear, cast magnesium at the front.

The monocoque is of aluminium honeycomb with carbonfibre/Kevlar skins and Kevlar rope reinforcing. Unlike some of its rivals, the 97T retains separate bodywork, this a one-piece nose, cockpit surround and tail, also of Kevlar. The wings and underbody are carbonfibre.

Although the new car completed basic system tests at Donington last week, its first real workout will be in the Rio de Janeiro tests, which begin tomorrow (Friday). And Ayrton Senna, while relishing the opportunity to get back to driving race cars, could probably do without much of the enormous publicity he is bound to receive at home.

The Brazilian has gone through a difficult winter, recovering from the virus infection which attacked him soon after the final Grand Prix of 1984, in Estoril, where he finished a brilliant third for Toleman.

"I have had two months without any exercise," he said on Monday, "so I am trying to compensate for the enforced layoff. I am training hard, but what I really need is track time in the new car. The team has lots of tests planned, starting with Rio, and it's lucky for me

that the season is starting late this year."

There have been suggestions that Senna contracted the virus because his fitness was not 100 per cent, but Ayrton denies this: "The virus had nothing to do with poor health — anyone could have caught it. In the early races last year, I was not as fit as later in the season, that's true; but Kyalami was effectively my first Grand Prix, because the car had lasted only five laps in Brazil.

"In South Africa I lost the nose of my car during the race, which made it even heavier to drive. In the early races I was trying to drive at 100 per cent for the whole distance — like in short F3 events — and now I don't think that's possible. I don't care how strong or fit the driver, you can't drive flat out all the way."

Professor Watkins, Formula 1 racing's 'in-house' surgeon, examined Senna



Peter Warr — optimistic for 1985.

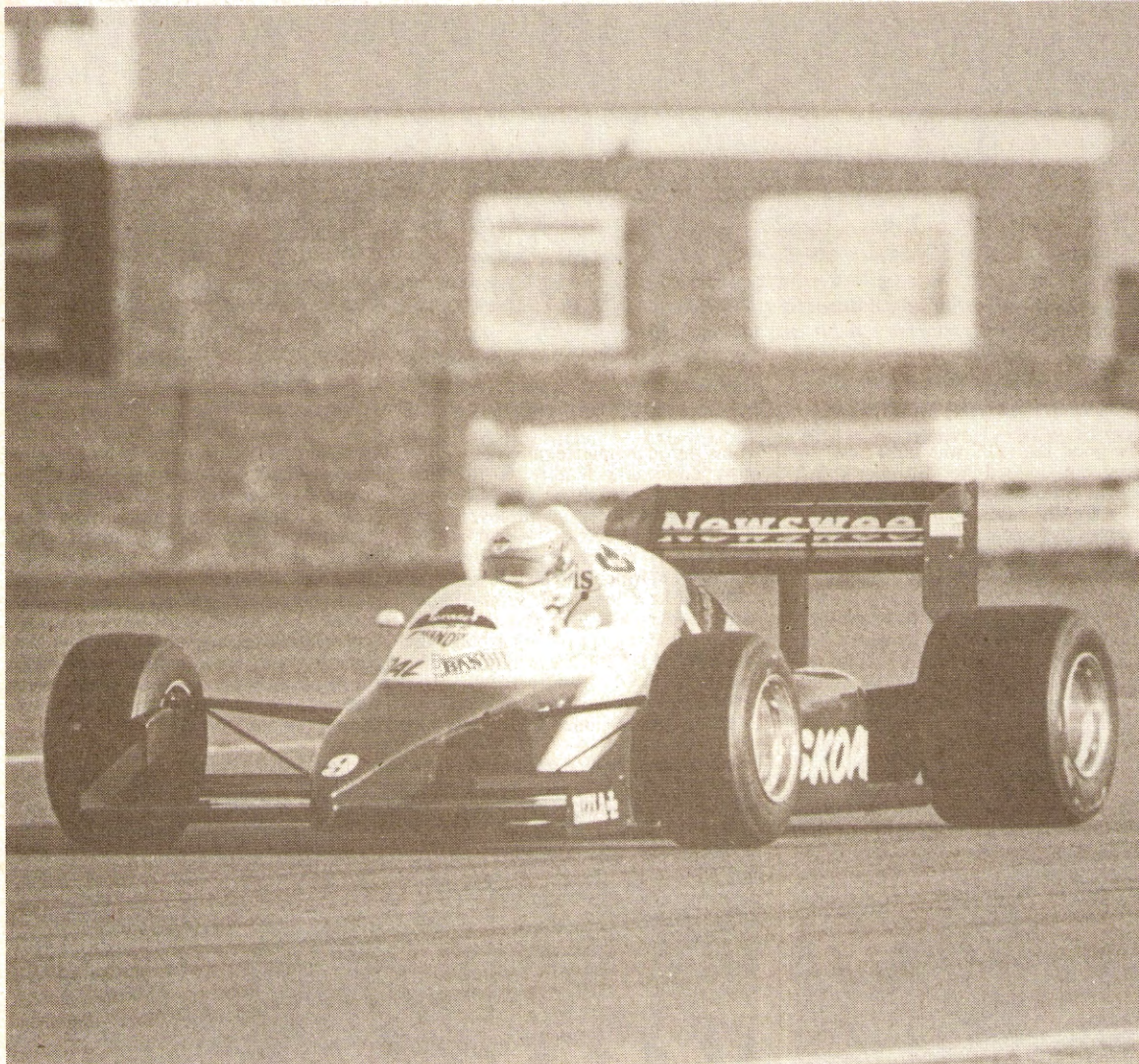


Ducarouge — his third F1 Lotus design.

recently, afterwards pronouncing him fit to drive again. Inevitably it will be some time before he is back to full strength, but we keenly await news of the 97T testing times from Rio.

Ayrton's team mate, Elio de Angelis, started last year's Brazilian GP from the pole in the 95T and, as Peter Warr points out, "Most of our rivals will be on the same tyres (Goodyear) as ourselves this year, and I think we will all be racing on fairly level terms. I am much more confident than at the start of last year..."

Dimensions	
Wheelbase	107.09ins
Front track	71.50ins
Rear track	63.78ins
Overall length	166.14ins
Overall width	84.65ins
Weight	540kgs



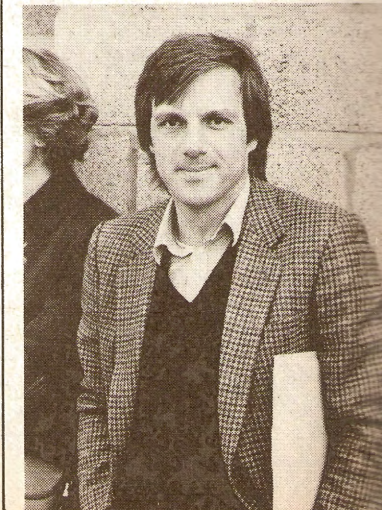
Manfred Winkelhock tests Gustav Brunner's sleek new design at Silverstone — the RAM 03 should see the team competitive this year.

ever a reference to their circumstances, sacrifices or efforts. But they unflinchingly attend every race, bravely smothering the knowledge that they face yet another uphill battle to even qualify. Yet the cars are always immaculately turned out and always a credit to the Grand Prix paddock and the sponsors. John Macdonald admits there are times when you have to think of quitting; but the inbred competitive streak which conceived the aspirations, initially, reactivates the optimism and enthusiasm.

John Macdonald and his partner of some 23 years, Mick Ralph, hatched The RAM Plan, in the middle of last year. With no disrespect for their designer Dave Kelly who, with little experience and even less financial freedom, had produced a car which had developed into a qualifier but whose potential was zero-rated, Macdonald and Ralph decided that the key to the future was a 'name' designer. They wanted a man with a proven track record and all round credibility. Since technology took over from driver skill as the main ingredient of a successful team, top designers and engineers are more often than not as good as tied to their present drawing board for their or the team's active life. RAM's task was not an easy one because the field of choice was very narrow but they got their number one choice, Gustav Brunner.

Two years earlier they had tried to tempt the Austrian who lived only a couple of miles from their Bicester factory. But in returning to Formula 1 from designing the Maurer F2 cars, Brunner opted for another Grand Prix team on the same Telford Road Industrial Estate, ATS, where he had twice previously worked. Frustrated that his innovative ATS D6 design would never realise its potential within the ATS set-up, Brunner joined Alfa Romeo.

Gustav Brunner — joins RAM from Alfa.



Skoal Bandit RAM 03

The superb Skoal Bandit RAM 03 was launched at the Intercontinental Hotel last Thursday, Gustav Brunner's elegant new design justifying US Tobacco's continued faith in the RAM outfit. John Macdonald had to fight the hardest battle of his life to keep the Skoal sponsorship in the face of repeated poaching attempts from teams with superior track records. The 1985 Grand Prix grid will be richer for the survival and veritable rebirth of RAM Automotive.

There can be no lonelier place in motor racing than the back of a Formula 1 grid. The eyes of the world are on you and there is no escape from the glare. The team's performance is cynically dismissed and the drivers berrated for being in the way as the leaders lap them. With the overpowering presence of the mega-buck, manufacturer-supported teams the efforts of the less well financed operations trying to climb the ladder to Grand Prix success are easily overlooked.

It should never be forgotten that, to a man, everyone involved in those teams (which more often than not are the only ones bringing in new money and talent to the game) is trying his hardest within unrealistic financial and technical constraints. Nobody expends the effort or money needed merely to attend Grands Prix just for the sake of being there; in such circumstances their presence is because the heart rules the head, because of a burning passion to succeed at the highest level.

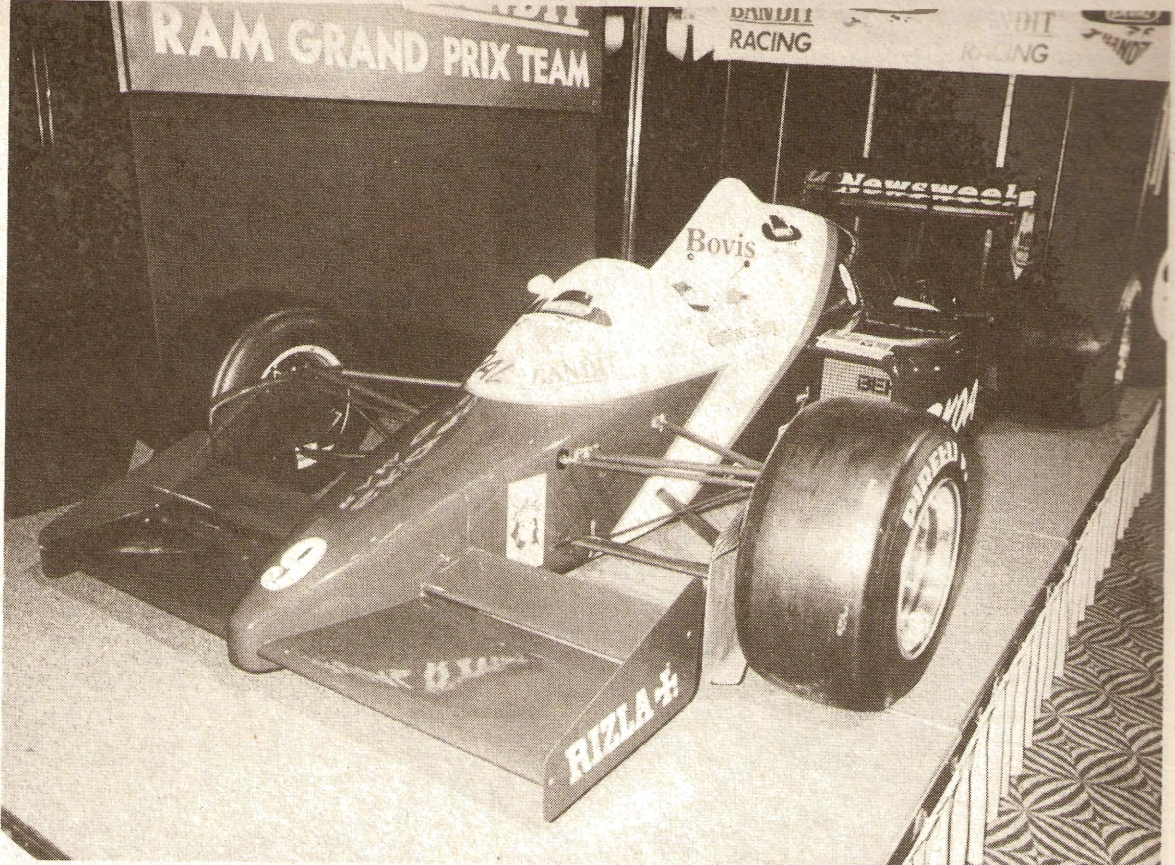
RAM Automotive is typical of one of those teams; constantly criticised by the popular media for their efforts without

NEW RACING CARS

►►
 Euroracing just before the start of the 1984 season. Always honest and open, Brunner doesn't say too much about his time in Italy "there's nothing positive to say". Suffice to say that the internal politics served to stifle the talent of Brunner. Macdonald made his approach in the middle of the year. He tempted Brunner with the offer of *carte blanche* to design and build a car "that would do the business". Conditionally the deal was on but the press were asked to keep it quiet as Macdonald went about funding the designer and the car and buying a driver with a straight forward and 'give-it-all' approach. With the team's commercial backing delicately balanced, the support of his good friends, Vaughn Davies and Nick Mason, enabled it to happen.

Giving a man like Brunner *carte blanche* in 1985 requires a mammoth financial investment; like Ron Dennis did for John Barnard, Frank Williams for Patrick Head and Toleman for Rory Byrne, Macdonald knew that to get what he wanted there could be no restraints. Brunner began the work on a three month consultancy basis allowing for the fact that the money might never materialise to see the project through. In the pre-Christmas month he looked a good deal older than his 34 years as he and two draughtsmen, Tim Feast and Sergio Rinland, created the RAM 03 which takes the company beyond even state-of-the-art. It is not revolutionary but a logical development of a number of proven principles. Brunner nonchalantly says "Williams nose, Tyrrell cockpit and McLaren tail", but he has a style of his own which is distinctive and he is clearly a man who is going to influence design trends in the coming years.

In starting the design of the RAM 03 there was never a question of using a single item from its predecessor. Every item had to be new including the team's entirely self built six speed gearbox. Only the continued use of Hart turbo engines and Pirelli tyres were to provide any link with what had gone before. It was interesting to note Manfred Winkelhock's comment after sampling the Brabham and Toleman at Estoril at the end of last year — "I never realised just



Probably the smallest chassis in Formula 1, the RAM 03 is a beautifully engineered car which should see the team prosper this year.

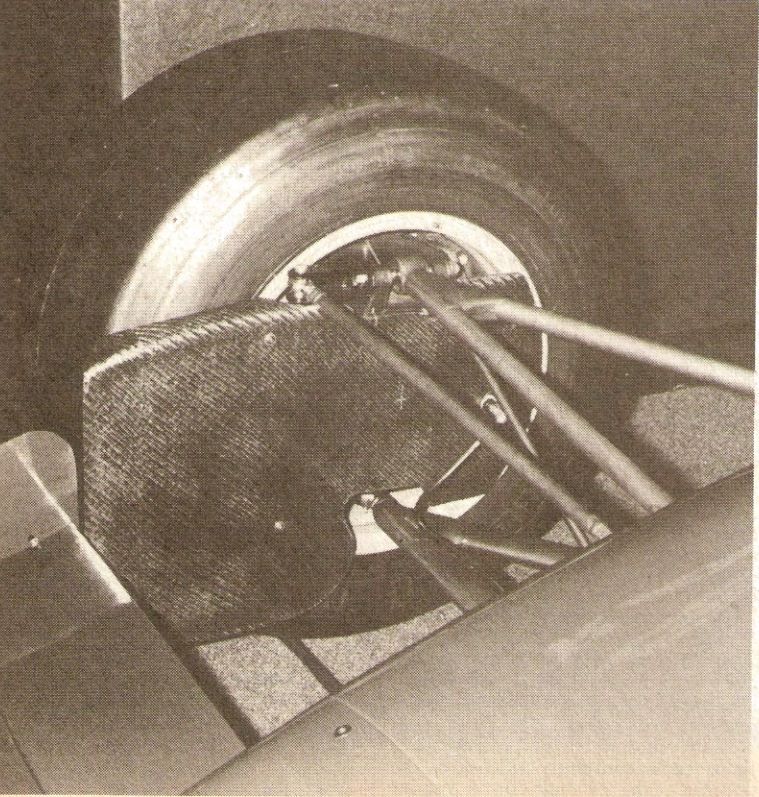
how good the ATS was until now" — testament indeed to Brunner's last design. The monocoque of the new RAM has a passing resemblance to the single piece oval-shaped ATS tub. But rather than being made in Switzerland this complex carbonfibre construction is produced by RAM themselves in conjunction with neighbours Ralston Auto Technique. Brunner's ATS was the first of a generation of F1 cars to utilise the carbon chassis as the bodywork. On the RAM 03 he has taken this principle even further sculpturing the entire monocoque

to his aerodynamic requirements. The most noticeable feature is the pronounced bubble shape cockpit front. Under the one-piece engine cover — the only bodywork section — you see the dramatically tapered rear end of the monocoque, which narrows down to the width of the alloy block semi-stressed four-cylinder Hart engine. Brunner reckons that the chassis is probably the smallest in F1, "and the next one will be smaller".

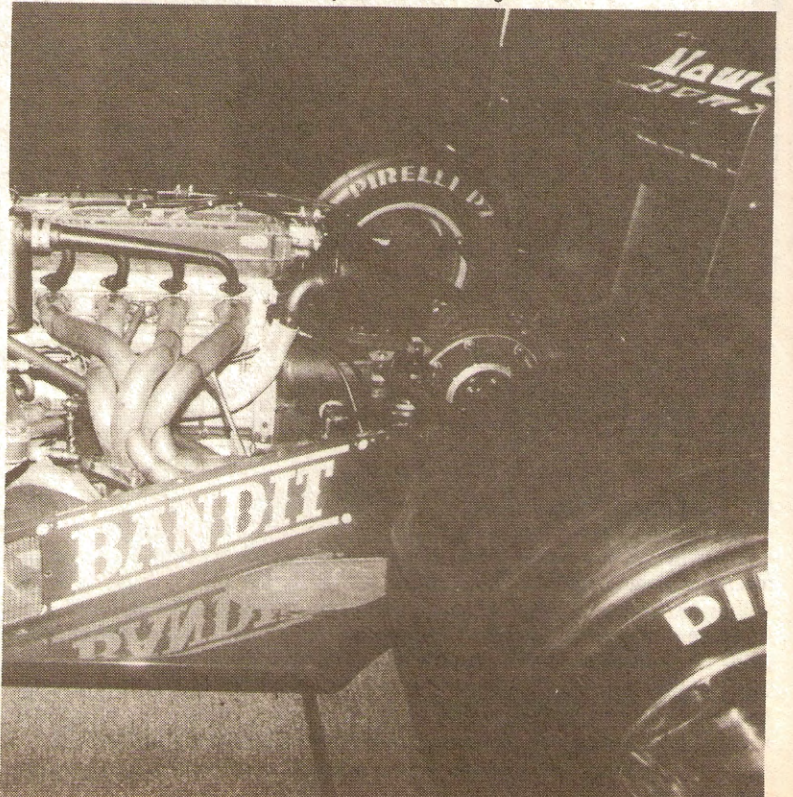
To achieve this size and required shape Brunner commissioned a very specially

shaped fuel tank from ATL in America. The principle behind the tiny 'waist' on the car was to be able to produce the correct level of cooling without having to compromise the aerodynamics. The stout, thick core Behr radiator and intercooler, mounted on the left- and righthand sides respectively, effectively utilise space traditionally taken up by the chassis. The cooling air exits through the upswept body underneath the rear wing, none of it 'dumped' earlier to interrupt the air flow to the wing, the primary requirement of the 1985 regulations.

Large carbonfibre brake ducts are an interesting feature on the car. Airflow is all-important.



The dramatically tapered rear end is only the width of the engine block.



With the single Holset turbo unit tucked tightly into the lefthand side of the engine and RAM's own gearbox, Brunner's immaculately detailed packaging of components has produced what appears to be the most pronounced coke-bottle shape yet seen in F1 with a broad, deep section flat bottom floor extension. The only deflection to the otherwise totally clean lines of the engine cover is to accommodate the induction pipe. To the eye the car looks absolutely *right*. About the only question which embarrasses Brunner is "how much wind tunnel work produced this shape?" The answer is none; in fact since he started designing racing cars for McNamara back in 1969, the only time he ever worked in a wind tunnel was with Alfa last year on wing development.

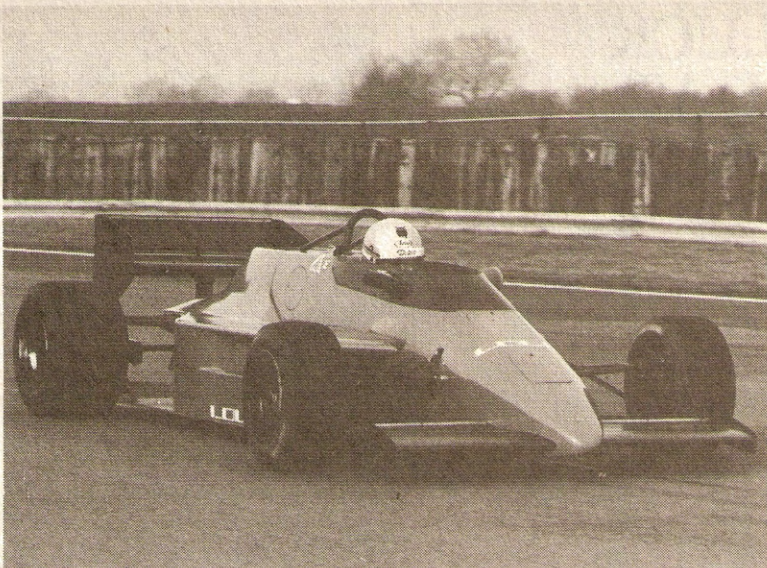
The suspension utilises fabricated wishbones and pull rod operated inboard Koni spring damper units. The rear anti-roll bar passes through the cast magnesium oil tank bell housing. Carbonfibre brakes are fitted all round with, naturally, carbon brake ducts too. Macdonald will have 15 of the latest specification 740 bhp Hart engines complete with electronic management system (which they didn't have in 1984). The Marelli ignition pack is floor mounted behind the water radiator while the ERA systems management boxes are inside the cockpit on either side of the driver's knees.

Every item of chassis and bodywork on the car is made from carbonfibre composite and overweight is one adjective that will never apply to this RAM. A total of four chassis will be built and Brunner is adamant that the subsequent models will be a further improvement: "If a designer was ever satisfied with his work he wouldn't carry on working..."

The RAM 03 certainly justifies the expensive gamble which John Macdonald and Mick Ralph took. Skoal Bandit's continued support of this dogged enterprise is commendable. The RAM is a superbly executed and engineered design and if there is any sense of justice in this uncompromising sport, Manfred Winkelhock and Philippe Alliot will produce results which will do justice to the persistence and dedication of the 31 man team who created it.

IAN PHILLIPS

Manfred Winkelhock and Philippe Alliot.



Belgian Thierry Tassin was entrusted with testing the new Lola at Silverstone on Tuesday.

Lola T950

Lola took advantage of the internationally attended Beatrice Formula 1 announcement to show off the first purpose-built genuine Formula 3000 car. The T950 was typically immaculately presented and gave the audience an interesting and forceful reminder of just what a serious category Formula 3000 is going to be.

One of the main technical problems posed by the F3000 regulations, given the limited time scale in which the first generation of cars have had to be conceived, is whether to scale up existing F2 designs, convert existing F1 cars or scale down an Indycar design.

In comparison to the prototype F2-based Ralt and March F3000 cars which have already been tested, the Lola T950 looks big. Lola's chief designer Eric Broadley is adamant that the car "is a genuine size for a 3-litre racing car. I have tried many times fitting big engines into small cars and it has never been right."

Lola, of course, did not have an F2 size design to adapt and not unnaturally many of the principles employed on the T950 are descended from the CART series winning T800 Indycar although only the carbon composite monocoque top section is common to both cars. This top deck is actually 2 ins shorter than on the Indy car and, following common practice, forms the main bodywork profile. The aluminium honeycomb lower section is entirely new, making the complete chassis a rigid but weight-effective structure. The reduced fuel capacity requirement for F3000 has allowed the shortening of the chassis and the Lola, in the light of reputed consumption figures from other teams test programmes, has a 28 gallon tank instead of the originally proposed 25.

The suspension design is unique employing pushing rather than pull rods at the front and a rocker arm, trailing link and narrow based wishbone system at the rear operating the inboard Koni spring/damper units. The flat plane rear wishbone is a nicely fabricated, beefy component designed to accommodate the fullest rearward extension of the flat bottom floor pan. Cast magnesium uprights are featured front and rear with two twin pot AP brake calipers at the front and single four pots at the rear.

The John Nicholson prepared DFV is used as a stressed member and is mated to the Hewland FGB gearbox via a traditional cast magnesium bellhousing oil tank.

Conscious of the fact that proper 'housekeeping' in the engine cooling department will do wonders for keeping rebuild costs down, Broadley admitted that the current sidepod arrangement (with oil radiator in the left and water in

radiators are angled forward with the air released through the side of the pods.

With an all-enveloping engine cover and neat packaging of the rear suspension, Lola have achieved a smooth and clean airflow to the carbonfibre rear wing, the lines following the state-of-the-art 'coke-bottle' shape. The bodywork and flat bottom floor are currently a pre-preg/honeycomb composite construction for practicality in the coming test and development programme.

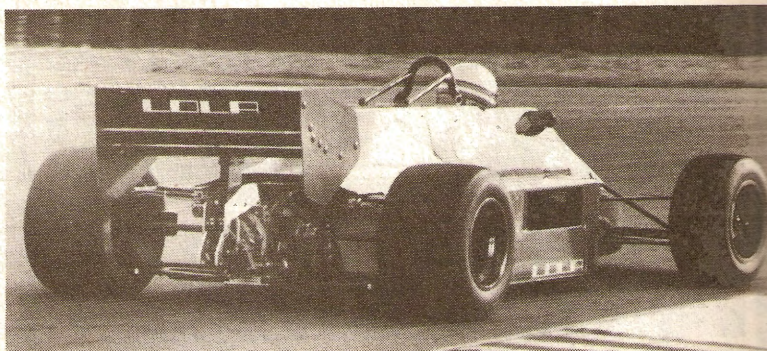
The 540 kg minimum weight limit is a tough target for cost-conscious commercial manufacturers like Lola, however Broadley reckoned that the final car would not be far off the limit. The T950 is priced at £45,000 for a rolling chassis and the testing programme began at Silverstone on Feb 5 in the hands of Johnny Dumfries and Thierry Tassin before Corrado Fabi takes over at Vallelunga from Feb 11-17. As previously announced, a Huntingdon-based works team, run by Jean-Francois Mosnier and engineered by Mark Williams, Lola's wind tunnel engineer, will contest the Championship. It is planned to build 12 cars.

Lola have steered a purposefully straightforward and simple design path with the T950, using proven rather than innovative solutions to the necessarily still theoretical problems posed by the new regulations. For 25 years Eric Broadley's Lola name has been revered in motor sport and their enthusiastic commitment to Formula 3000 and European single seater racing is a tremendous boost to the new Championship.

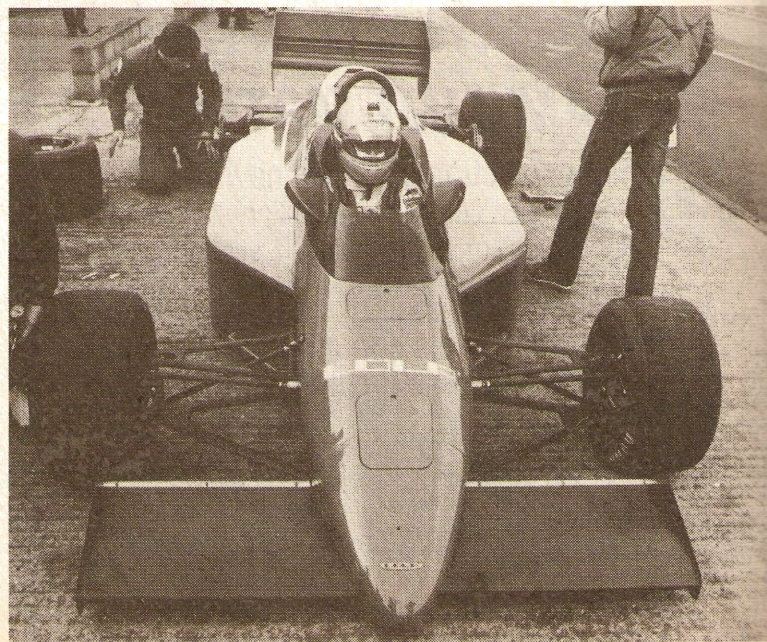
IAN PHILLIPS

Dimensions	
Wheelbase	103 ins
Front track	65 ins
Rear track	62 ins

the right) make ample provision in this department. As on the Indy car the



Above: Rear-end treatment. The Lola is a big car, Eric Broadley certain that fitting large engines in small F2-type cars does not work. Below: The F3000 adopts many of the T800's design principles.



Specification	
Chassis	Carbonfibre monocoque
Bodywork	Carbonfibre
Wings	Carbonfibre
Brakes	Carbonfibre and discs
Suspension	Fabricated wishbones front and rear with pull rod operated spring damper units
Dampers	Koni
Wheels	BBS
Radiator	Behr
Intercooler	Behr
Fuel tank	ATL
Engine	Hart 4-cylinder 415T
Electronics	ERA
Ignition	Marelli
Turbo	Holset
Tyres	Pirelli
Dimensions:	
Wheelbase	110 ins
Front track	70 ins
Rear track	64 ins



In a male-dominated sport Cathy Muller has shown that she has the potential to win.

Karting Championship, beating the likes of Emanuele Pirro, Ivan Capelli and Ruggero Melgrati.

The next step was to get into cars, and Cathy duly made the switch, starting out racing Renault 5s in Germany in an all-girl team sponsored by *Penthouse*. It was hardly the way to be taken seriously, but finding sponsorship at the start of a career for any driver is difficult. "The money was there, so I used it." Later that year, 1981, she teamed up with an aspiring German driver called Stefan Bellof and they raced Renault 5s with little success, mechanical problems blunting their challenge.

At the end of the year there was the usual round of racing school scholarships in France and Cathy went for the most prestigious of them all — the *Volant Elf* at the Winfield School at Magny Cours. No girl had ever won the award and if some of the famous judges had had their way no woman would have won it. As things turned out in the final run-offs Cathy topped the times. The judges had a brief discussion and it was decided to run the timed laps again . . . Cathy won again.

The *Volant Elf* receives a year's backing in Formula Renault turbo and at the end of the year the girl from Alsace was fifth in the championship with one win to her name. Formula 3 was the next step and she made her debut, driving for Eddie Jordan as team-mate to James Weaver at Nogaro in 1982. She qualified 14th and had a good race despite a couple of pit stops.

In 1983 she was back fulltime in the European series under the watchful eye of Roger Heavens. "It was a difficult year for me, I had to learn the circuits and how to set up a car." Did she find other drivers a problem? "Not as much as they were in karting, but several times there were silly accidents when someone thought I would give way. When you are a girl and someone is behind you and you let them pass easily, they think 'She's a girl, no problem' but in a race I like to fight a great deal and I am not afraid to brake late. At the end of a straight when you are together I always say to myself he can brake first."

The year with Heavens was a season of learning and that process continued last year with Luciano Pavesi. The Italian was looking for a couple of talented drivers to replace Pierluigi Martini and he chose Cathy and her erstwhile karting rival Ruggero Melgrati. It was a disappointing year for both — although they enjoyed a number of dices which left Mr Pavesi looking to heaven for assistance.

The frustration however paid off towards the end of the year when Cathy went to Albi and beat the French national runners fair and square. She made an impressive Group C debut at Sandown Park in a Gebhardt and recently signed to drive with Dave Price in the British series. The team is proven, the driver experienced and the sponsorship from Elf available. But how does Cathy see the future? "Well, I'm sure it is the dream of every Formula 3 driver to get to Formula 1 and I am no exception. Lella Lombardi scored half a World Championship point and I would obviously like to do better than that. I would like to go as far as I possibly can in the sport, but I still have a lot to learn. I'll race anything I can."

That obvious relish for racing was something that struck me one day at Monza when Cathy was having a look at one of the heavy ETC Jaguars. Tom Walkinshaw was not convinced that a girl could handle the car, but Cathy was willing to give it a go. She didn't get a chance.

Dave Price is a canny operator, signing Cathy is no publicity stunt. He has won the Marlboro series with Johnny Dumfries and believes he can do the same with the young lady from Alsace. Watch out for her. . . ■

Cathy comes over

After two seasons of European F3 Cathy Muller is joining Dave Price's championship-winning team in England. JOE SAWARD looks at her career to date

Formula 3 drivers be warned. Cathy Muller is on her way to England, her sights set firmly on winning the Marlboro British F3 series. She wants just two things: to be accepted as a racing driver; and to win.

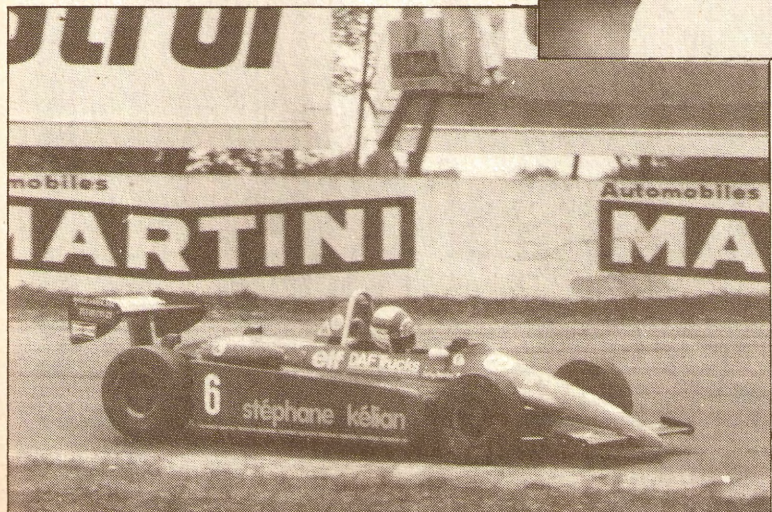
Cathy is a racing driver, so if you have a vague idea that she will brake early into a corner, think twice! If you underestimate her and the two of you end up in the catchfencing be prepared to face her wrath. It's not that she is on any great feminist crusade, she just wants to race on equal terms. Take heed of the words of a young Formula 3 driver last year: "You know, I had heard she braked late, but I didn't think it would be *that* late. . ."

The first question that came to mind when I first saw Cathy race was why someone would want to try and succeed in a world where women racing drivers were clearly not taken seriously. Quite innocently I asked if she was a feminist. It was a mistake. "I am a racing driver!" she announced with a steely glare. Point taken.

If you stop and take a look at Miss Muller's racing history you begin to appreciate that she is very serious.

"My father used to do hillclimbs and I would go along to watch him. Then I decided I would like to try it." Try it she did, for six years she trekked the karting scene netting every available woman's karting title and then in 1979 she took on the men — and she won. It may sound incongruous, but Muller won the 1979 European

Cathy without a helmet. Below left: A strong F3 runner. Below right: The only girl Volant Elf and a few well known faces. . .





The Monte Carlo seafront finale, with victor Ari Vatanen flanked by new team mate Timo Salonen, and runner up Walter Rohrl. Below: Vatanen and Terry Harryman in full cry.

Monte Carlo roulette

Vatanen stars in classic duel — Hazardous conditions but the frontrunners all finish — Peugeot's early World Championship lead — Report: PETER FOUBISTER — Photography: COLIN TAYLOR PRODUCTIONS

While the 53rd Monte Carlo Rally demanded much of driver and co-driver alike in the special stages, testing their bravery to the limit in very difficult conditions, it would be fair to say that the rally was won — and nearly lost — elsewhere. The service areas were constantly the setting for all-important tyre choices, the lead drivers frequently heading for a stage on slicks, knowing that they faced much snow and ice before reaching safer — faster — conditions.

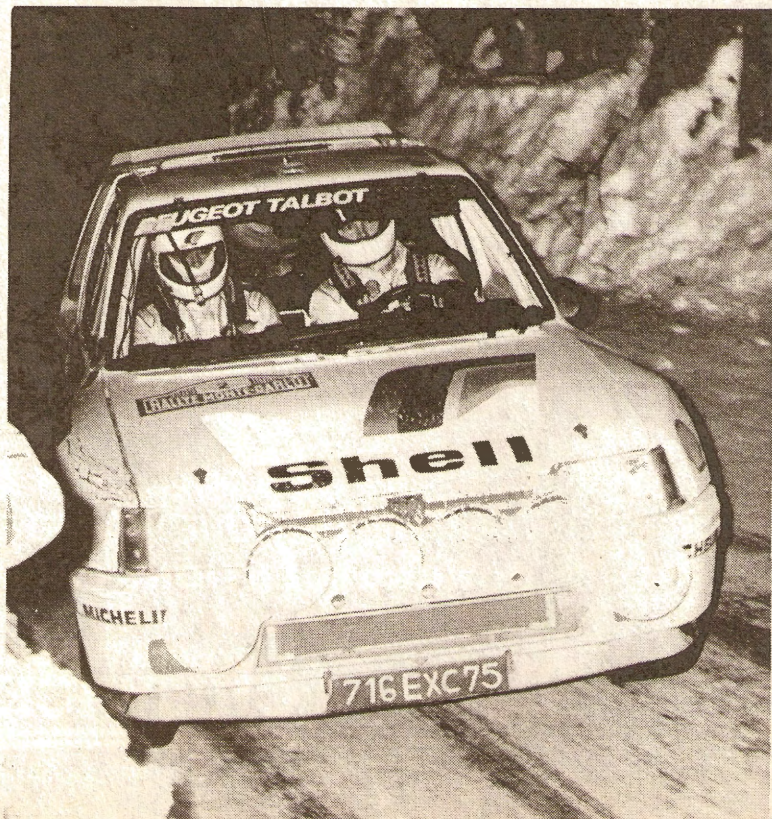
One time control in particular changed the whole picture of the rally as Terry Harryman made an unheard of mistake and collected an 8min penalty. His comfortable lead transformed into a 4min deficit, Ari Vatanen was called on to attack like never before for Peugeot, the 205 Turbo 16 carving chunks of time from Monte expert Walter Rohrl in the rejuvenated Audi Sport Quattro.

It was a famous contest, ultimately decided in a little roadside service area high in the Alps, the sun streaming down on the valley floor, leaving the mountainside stage filled with danger. The German knew that time was running out; that his lead was evaporating in the sunshine, and if he was to stay ahead, he had to gamble.

Slicks were fitted, but within seconds his chances of a fifth Monte Carlo victory were gone. Vatanen, on snow tyres, overtook him just 2kms from the start as the Audi struggled up an icy hill, the Peugeot at last *en route* to victory. Rohrl was satisfied with second, Peugeot enjoying remarkable reliability with third and fifth places for Timo Salonen and Bruno Saby.

Lancia soon dropped out of the game, but both Henri Toivonen and 'Micky' Biaisson were impressive, although the Italian was delayed and ultimately finished behind Jean-Claude Andruet's Citroen Visa Mille Pistes. Without four-wheel-drive, the Lancia pilots had more than their fair share of excitement, for this was a difficult Monte, run to a high standard and crammed full of incident.

British involvement was, however, at an all time low, only one Briton appearing on the entry list. It is pleasant to consider therefore, that despite the odd moment of depression, Terry Harryman emerged as the first Briton to win this event for 14 years . . .



The opening hours of the event provided compulsive viewing, with question marks hanging over so many different aspects of the competition. Everyone knew that Rohrl was the expert on this event, but how much improved was the Sport Quattro? They knew that the Peugeot 205 Turbo 16 already had an enviable record, but how would Messrs Salonen and Saby perform? What about the revised Lancias? And what about the weather?

That last question would provide many of the answers, and as detailed fully in last week's issue the weather ensured that everyone was kept on their toes. More than ever this would be a rally won and lost by the ice note crews, responsible for updating the co-driver's notes with the latest changes to the road surface.

In daytime, with sunshine peering through above the mountain tops, the remaining snow often melted; just as easily a cold breeze late in the day could transform the slush to sheet ice. The problem was quickly highlighted on St Bonnet when many drivers reported big spins around half way through the test.

What had been marked as ice in Henri Toivonen's notes had melted for about 1 kilometre, luring the driver into a false sense of security until he reached a corner where the ice remained. The resultant spin taught the crew a lesson.

That second stage was more notable for the incident near the finish when Vatanen's Peugeot went wide and into the crowd, stupidly standing so close to the fast winding path across the fields. Resting at last after the finish, the Finn remembered the incident, and told his story of the opening days of competition.

"I did not enjoy that second stage at all, because it really is unpleasant driving with winter tyres on asphalt. It feels like you are on a piece of chewing gum, and during that stage I already had a couple of half spins.

"Then there was another snowy patch which I hit on worn tyres, trying very hard and we went round, but not off the road. There were thousands of spectators up on the hill with a perfect view, but hundreds were on the road and we hit them . . . so many of them with the back just like a row of poles.

"We were going at some speed when this started and at the end I just said to Terry that surely the worst thing cannot have happened.

"Of course the car was damaged, and the mechanics had to change the radiator, so we were busy right up until the start of the next stage. It would not have helped to think about what had happened so I just tried to concentrate on the stage which was 1km snowy, and then tarmac.

"I thought on that test that the steering was heavy and the car twitchy, so Walter beat us by 9 seconds, and Henri beat us by 1 second. Only afterwards did we find that we had used four rear tyres, so that explained why the steering was not right.

"The fourth stage was completely dry and only Biasion was faster than us, but psychologically that was a difficult one because I knew that Walter had been testing there before Christmas, and it was on this stage that I went of in the Publismo Escort back in 1980.

"The last stage before the Sunday halt was La Souche where I went on racing tyres and caught Stig just before the snow, then he pulled away with his A2s. Walter beat us by 11 seconds, so the following morning we beat him by 6 seconds.

"I suppose at this point I felt I was driving as fast as possible, but that Walter was going faster. That was the way things were supposed to be; he has a reputation on the Monte Carlo and we felt a little bit like the underdog.

"At Burzet I tried very hard, and at the finish where Walter had beaten us, I said



Cheered on by his fans, Walter Rohrl revelled in the mixed conditions — snow, tarmac and gravel — that were such a feature of the event.

to Terry, 'I am sorry, I cannot go any faster than that.' I realised that if I pushed to the limit then I could go at the same speed as Walter.

"So coming to Moulinot I had racing tyres, and an incredible flier. He was 27 seconds slower, and there was just so much tyre grip. I pushed faster and faster, I just didn't want to stop . . . just keeping pushing.

"I started to wonder if I had the physical ability to keep going and the determination to keep pushing, but I lasted to the end of the stage where I couldn't believe that he was so much slower.

"That was the turning point.

"Only when I had done that time did I realise that I hadn't been going as fast as I could. There was another gear that I had suddenly found. Walter does not give up easily, but that stage gave me an enormous boost of confidence.

"There was some more snow towards Grenoble, obviously I felt more in control of things, the car was going so well, and the rest was up to the driver."

VATANEN: "... there was just so much tyre grip. I pushed faster and faster, I just didn't want to stop . . ."

Rohrl was in a rather different position, as his car seemed to have drifted away from the specification decided upon at those pre-event test sessions. Just as Vatanen was finding new confidence and attacking, the German opposition was rather unsettled.

Aside from the snow there was also thick swirling fog, particularly affecting the 10th stage and further complicating the driver's task. It was not a nice night, but it was developing into a real challenge, not just for the front runners, but for those all the way down the field, the familiar traffic jams and convoys already adding to the pressures.

With so many of the stages routed through villages, there are always fabulous opportunities for the spectators to relax in the comfort of a local hostelry for some time before the cars perform. In

this part of the world, Chartreuse is a well known haunt, fresh snow falling as the enthusiasts chose their spots in the village square to cheer on the heroes. Vatanen was quickest by 21secs, and can now be considered a French hero.

Grenoble brought a few hours sleep, with a growing feeling of confidence from Peugeot, Vatanen now boasting a 2min advantage, and concentrating hard. Tuesday afternoon would see a leisurely re-start for the run to Gap. Blue skies topped the crisp mountain outlines, the seemingly endless valleys reduced to a strange monochrome by the snow.

The first stage was down the wrong side of the valley, most of it in the shade, but fairly clear of snow. Biasion was quickest, attacking the closing sequence of fast bends with the little 037 understeering, scrabbling, fighting for fractions of a second, the driver's task made more difficult by the swirls of snow thrown onto the asphalt by the earlier cars cutting corners.

It was a perfect opportunity to compare the vastly different characteristics of the front running cars. First through — after the early re-seeding on Sunday at Grosperriere — was Rohrl in the Sport

The classes

As if the trio of factory drivers did not give Peugeot enough to celebrate, the final results held yet more successes for the factory, Paul Gardere winning the lucrative Promotion — private entrant — category in a standard road-going 205 Turbo. This was the first such car to appear in the hands of a privateer, running with around 200bhp, to finish in 12th position, just ahead of Group A winner, Bertrand Balas.

An established name in French rallying, the Grenoble-based Balas driving an Alfa Sud, engaged in a rally-long struggle with Gardere and fellow Group A man Guy Chasseuil, running a new Golf GTI. It was the VW man who held the early lead in the group, Balas sneaking ahead as the conditions deteriorated, but coming under threat again as the more powerful Golf responded on the tarmac sections.

Turini on the final night saw Balas caught by Biasion, but Chasseuil could not quite close the gap, eventually returning to Monaco in 14th place, missing Balas by just 33secs. The only other driver involved in the Group A contest was Alain Beauchef in an Escort RS1600i, but he retired while drifting out of contention, so Jean Pierre Ballet brought a 205 GTI home third in the category, and 15th overall.

Surprisingly, Ballet was only just ahead of the Group N winner, Alain Oreille, who used his 125bhp Renault 11 Turbo to good effect on his first Monte Carlo, despite admitting that this was indeed a tiring event. Second, some distance behind, was Jacques Pan-

ciatici in an Alfa Romeo GTV6, obviously missing the power of his Yacco-backed Audi Quattro.

Many of the lower numbers underlined the enormous difficulties in simply meeting the target times for the road sections, blaming spectators, and service vehicles, for the inevitable road penalties. For them, the race to get to the next arrival control was often as difficult as the special stages themselves. It cannot have been harder for anyone than the Coupe des Dames winner, Elisabeth de Fresquet, partnered by Marie Charlotte Valette in a little Autobianchi A112. Running in Group A trim they survived to reach the finish in 61st position after an enormous list of adventures. Virtually unsponsored, and without proper service, they were on their seventh 'Monte', having already won the Ladies award back in 1982. As the rally developed, other crews lent a hand, the organisers even appealed on their behalf, people gave them used tyres, and they were delighted simply to finish, with a list of problems including wrecked shock absorbers which left them feeling, "as if we were in a boat . . ."

Group A battler, Guy Chasseuil's Golf GTI.

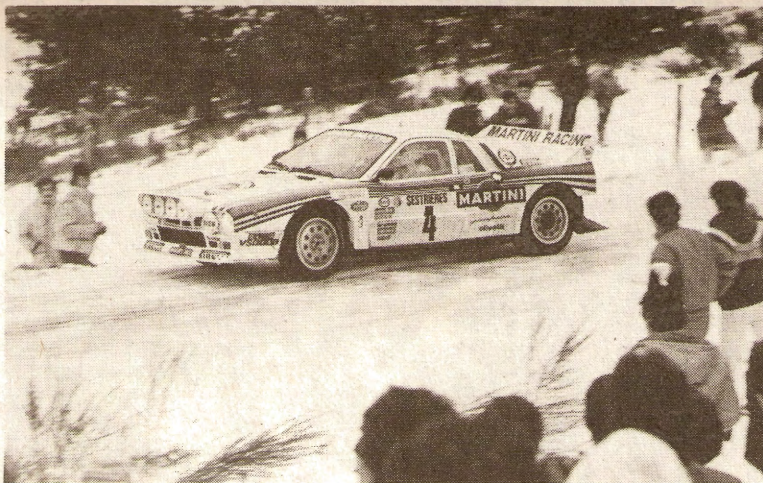


►► Quattro. Now without some of the wandering characteristics which first afflicted it, this is truly a powerful beast, its entrance more often than not accompanied by belching flames, easily visible from the front underside of the car, the machine gun crackle from the five cylinder lump doing nothing to promote an image of *Vorsprung durch Technik*, as they say in German.

VATANEN: "I did not enjoy that second stage at all, because it really is unpleasant driving with winter tyres on asphalt."

In contrast, the mid-engine Peugeot is striking. The little French machine is deceptively quick, with its silenced four-cylinder unit ticking away merrily, powering naturally through whatever corner comes up and at home in its environment. Ari is already a little nervous that his string of victories have led people to point the finger only at the car; not the man — "they must remember it is not automatic". But it is the similar problem Hannu Mikkola faced when he ran the Audi for the first time, and like his countryman the 32-year-old Marlow resident is a top class professional. He would have the perfect opportunity to prove that fact as the rally progressed south.

For the time being, he would concentrate on the job in hand, gaining more satisfaction with each passing stage as he continued to take time from Rohrl. Before Barcelonnette, the final stage prior to the Gap rest halt, Peugeot's service point was at the local dealers. In the warm — almost luxurious — service bays the mechanics worked efficiently, as the



Above: Henri Toivonen faced a hopeless challenge, but, typically, rose to the occasion and delighted the Italian fans. Below: Andruet shone as Citroën's new recruit, finishing eighth.



Notes on the cars

Lancia

Considering the role that Lancia has played on this event in the past, their representation on the first counter in the 1985 world series was at an all time low. "The smallest ever", claimed Nini Russo, with one Martini 037 and one Jolly Club car. Crews were Henri Toivonen/Juha Piironen and Massimo Biasion/Tiziano Sivilero and the operation acted as one.

Improvements to the 037 have been limited, in view of the 4WD Delta project due for debut in August, but the change in tyre regulations has benefitted the 037, and while previously cars were limited to a specific width dependant on engine capacity, there is now more flexibility. Whereas the Lancia (under 2.5 litre category) used to have a limit of 10ins per corner, the total is now 20ins for front and rear. Turin's engineers therefore expected to run 9ins rims at the front, and 11ins at the rear, dependant on road conditions.

Pirelli found it impossible to produce sufficient tyres for more than the two cars, but even so they had some new offerings, particularly a compound developed from Formula 1 qualifiers, and intended for use in damp conditions.

There had also been efforts to improve the *Biasion hurtles through the human corridor.*



engine, by increasing the pump pressure for the supercharger, and by further modifications to the fuel supply so that the water injection system worked at a cooler temperature. The benefit was about 25bhp, so that both Henri and Micky had around 340bhp. Toivonen's car was new, while Biasion had Bettega's Tour de Corse chassis, both weighing in at 970kg. Backing the cars were just four factory vans and two cars; Jolly Club providing similar cover.

Peugeot

With Jean Todt's period of "learning" now finished, the Peugeot Talbot Sport department arrived for this all-important event with its full complement of three cars for Ari Vatanen/Terry Harryman, Timo Salonen/Seppo Harjanne, and Bruno Saby/ Jean Francois Fauchille. To maintain the challenge, back up arrangements were impressive, with a team of 35 people. There were 12 vans, two "fast intervention estate cars", three chase cars, another three for the managers and a further nine 295 GTIs for the ice note crews. It was enough to make Audi personnel look twice.

Both Vatanen and Salonen had new cars, while Saby was in the 205 used by Nicolas in Sanremo; all running in asphalt trim at around 960kg, and using the shorter sumpguards. Saby tried a 45/55 front/rear torque split in testing and although it was found to be as quick as the more normal 33/63 split, it was not used in any car.

From the start in Paris all three were fitted with short — close ratio — gearboxes, but on the route south to St Etienne, Vatanen swapped to a medium unit, in consideration of the improving weather conditions; the other two following suit later. The machine usually get through a 'box change in around 17mins. Ice Aste crews included Colin/Malkin/ Ian Grindrod; John Hayland/Fred Gallagher, Kalle Grundle/ Peter Diekmann,

while Timo Makinen, and Erkki Pitkenen were also included.

Audi

Three major test sessions over the 'closed' period led Ingolstadt personnel to believe that the Sport Quattro was a much more competitive package than it had been through 1984. Walter Rohrl undertook most of the work on suspension and tyre testing, while attention had also been paid to the five cylinder power source.

Team boss Roland Gumpert estimated that the units now give about 400bhp, but that there is much improved torque, something which the drivers have been desperately seeking. While the sessions with Rohrl had been encouraging, the drivers would have to use asphalt suspension, because the car's production-derived system did not allow quick suspension changes as regularly completed by both Lancia and Peugeot. On snow, therefore, the Audis, would be a compromise.

Just two of the team's pool were entered,

Huge crowds line the route as Bernard Dongues' BMW 323i slithers its way to 20th overall.



hierarchy of Todt, Vatanen and ice noters Makinen, Grundle and Co discussed the next tyre choice.

Ari gave the thumbs down to suggestions of a harder, rougher A2 choice, suggesting that it was "awful in the snow", opting instead for the softer A3, unwilling to risk anything.

Audi, servicing at the roadside just a 100m away were feeling ever more out in the cold. In contrast to the French force, the Germans had not had a good day, with Stig Blomqvist's push to get onto terms with the front runners abruptly halted when the turbocharger blew in a big way, the car limping on to service before Chorges and picking up 7mins road penalties as the mechanics worked quickly to replace the smoking unit.

Rohrl later stated that his engine was the best ever — only had four routine turbo changes — and apart from, a slow speed fluff, it worked well. His Swedish team mate was not so lucky, and he would lose another turbo quite soon, although the telltale signs of ever worsening throttle lag ensured that the team swapped the offending item in time, and without further loss of road time.

Messrs Blomqvist and Cederberg had effectively opted out of the competition by this stage, unable to make an impression on the front running trio and sandwiched between Toivonen and Biasion, the top 10 completed by Saby, Andruet (giving his 1400cc Visa good aggravation but delighted with the way it was going — especially downhill); privateer Dany Snoeck in the entertaining Renault 5 turbo; and Citroën's youngster Maurice Chomat.

To complete a bad day for Germany, Rohrl listened to the Michelin men, and for SS18 took the slick SOA tyre, a thermal contact cover designed to get up to normal working temperature within a

with Walter Rohrl/Christian Geistdorfer and current World Champions Stig Blomqvist/ Bjorn Cederberg flying the colours. The cars ran five speed gearboxes, and 16ins wheels were brought for the long tarmac tests. Ice note crews for Rohrl included some familiar names, both cars having three teams, including Harald Demuth, Simo Lampinen, Bjorn Waldegaard, and Sales Billstam.

Citroen

This was the last major appearance for the little four-wheel-drive 1000 Pistes, so Guy Verrier's team were anxious to prove their previously troublesome Visas. Adding to their strength was Lancia outcast Jean Claude Andruet, joining regulars, Maurice Chomat, Philippe Wambergue and privateer Francois Chauche.

The cars were the same as used last year, but the transmission problems has been cured by a new heat treatment of the gears. All the cars had 145bhp engines and weighed around 770kg.

short distance, and designed for such cold conditions. It did not work, another 40 secs were lost, but the day was not quite finished.

First into parc fermé in Gap that cold Tuesday night was Vatanen's Peugeot, the crew believing that their rivals must have been delayed on the run into town.

Only as Vatanen met Christian Geistdorfer did the reality hit home, the Audi co-driver leaving the Finn in no doubt about the position. The leaders had booked in 4mins early, incurred a penalty of 8mins, and the balance had swung firmly back to Audi.

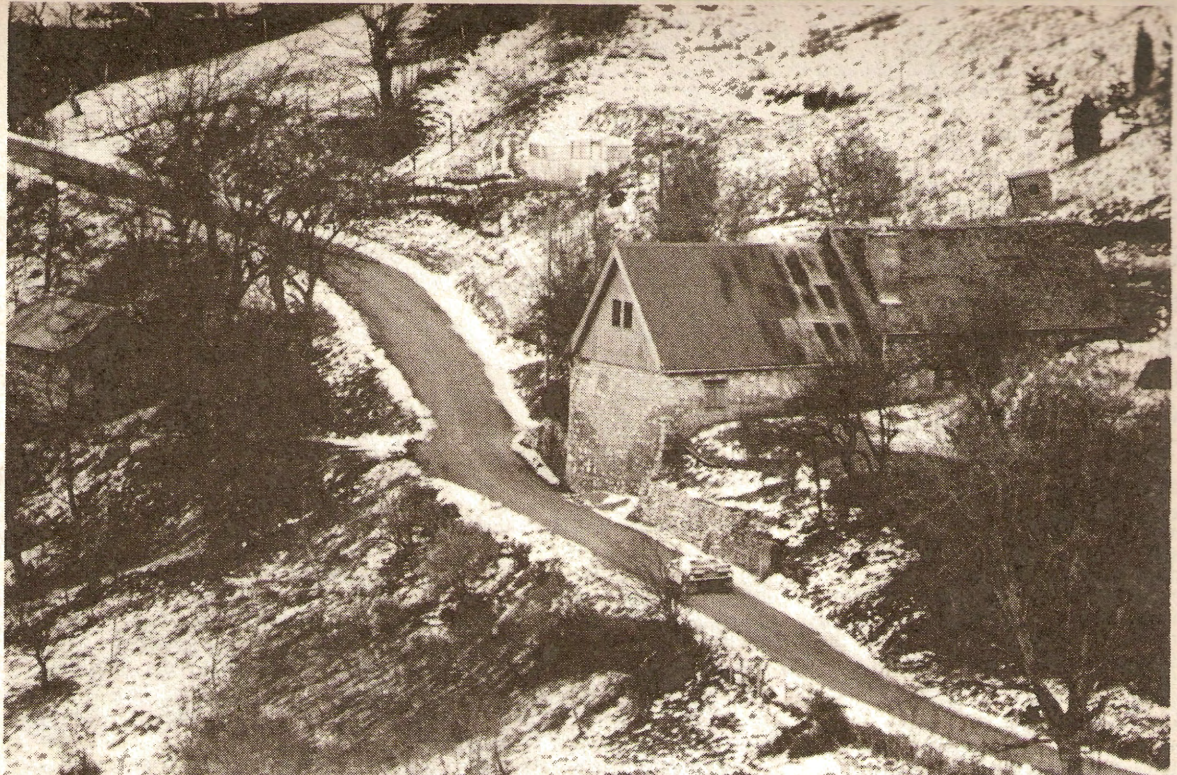
Harryman: "I just went to my room and smoked more cigarettes in two hours than I have ever done before."

The circumstances had been exceptional, a 4min delay at the start of that last stage not being considered by the official when he updated the Peugeot's time card with regard to the Gap arrival time. So while PTS boss Jean Todt announced that he would protest, because of the official's mistake, there was little hope of escape.

"I just went to my room," explained Harryman afterwards, "and smoked more cigarettes in two hours than I have ever done before." The penalty would mean that Rohrl was in front by a massive 4mins 41secs; that three days of hard work had been wiped out.

The raw facts showed that 394kms remained in the competition, and the German's advantage was 281secs. Against Rohrl on this event, that would indeed be a tall order, but it certainly lived up to the final days of the event.

Vatanen reacted with absolute professionalism, as did Harryman, the two



Micky Biasion hurries through the changeable Monte conditions, icy patches on the dry tarmac often catching the unwary.

putting it behind them and concentrating on the job ahead. Soon the calculators were clicking again, as the Wednesday stages passed with fastest times always going to car no 2. It was 19secs on the first 20km stage; 26secs on the 37km Sisteron test; 13secs on the next 21km; and a massive 44secs on Castellane.

This really was the old familiar Ari Attack, finishing Castellane beaming from ear to ear, cruising out of the stage

to stop alongside Rohrl's parked Audi. An animated conversation with the two men still seated in their cars was easily understood, Walter winding on armfuls of imaginary opposite lock, wiping his forehead, and shrugging his shoulders - Ari nervously joking, wiping real sweat from his forehead and almost bouncing for joy.

Conditions in that stage were typical, but with the ice and snow confined to the

final downhill twists, described by the ice note crews as "maxi-dangerous". The final stage before the Monte Carlo halt also contained its share of ice, and held moments which must have aged the occupants of both lead cars considerably. Firstly Ari went off in the early snow, about 10kms into the stage, relying on spectators to heave the car back onto the thin white line, but escaping with the loss of a few seconds.

Further on, and probably almost simultaneously, the Audi was also in trouble. "It was on an asphalt section of the stage," explained Walter, "and I just touched a stone. My thought was that I had a puncture, so I had to drive slowly for the last 8kms, but at the finish we found that the wishbone was broken and only the half shaft was holding the wheel in place. If I had driven fast...

"My problem is that after 15kms I can have no steering as the engine is at the front and it's so heavy. My tyres are getting too hot and they cannot work so well, whereas the Peugeot has the engine at the back and is light at the front with perfect steering, which makes it handle much better." He shrugged his shoulders, denied that 1min 58secs was sufficient to retain the lead, suggested that 4mins might just be enough and headed out of the Monte Carlo parc fermé for a quiet room in the Beach Plaza hotel.

Others followed, the Lancia forces being met by Cesare Fiorio, strangely in the shadows on a major World Championship event, but doubtless aware of the sterling work from his two crews.

Toivonen had been enjoying himself, running a special soft Pirelli tyre on Puimichel and discovering new limits. "It's derived from a Formula 1 qualifying compound," he explained, "but we can only use it on the short stages and if it is cold. After 13kms of the stage we were only 15secs behind Walter and I caught right up with him and was sure that we could overtake him.

"Then the tyres went off, and he went away from us again, but that time was fantastic. Medium corners were flat, incredible cornering, I've never experienced anything like it before." Certainly he had made the most of the good conditions, but with such mixed surfaces two-wheel-drive cars were in a different

Special stage times

Table with 19 columns (SS 1 to SS 19) and 19 rows of driver names and times. Includes a 'CANCELLED' section for stages 17-19.

Ari discusses tyre choice with Michelin and the ice note crews.



competition; Lancia fairly regularly using their old trick of posting mid-stage tyre change points when the road surface changed drastically. Even with the cars stopped for at least 50secs it was the fastest, safest, alternative.

It was not always possible, however, Henri having a moment on that stretch of ice on Castellane, getting a front puncture and working for his living all the way to the flying finish.

Others shuttled to the Beach Plaza included the Citroen runners, still led by Andruet, but with Philippe Wambergue now missing, having fallen foul of that same stretch of ice on the penultimate stage before the mid-afternoon Monaco time control. Wambergue had been recruited at the last minute, replacing the injured Therier, and had struggled with Chomat's notes, tracing his team-mate throughout the first four days of the rally.

Chomat was going sensibly, privateer Christian Dorche following behind, but all underlining the fact that a more powerful engine would have helped the cause considerably.

One of the last into his room that afternoon was Harryman, lengthy trips around the Permanence a necessity to establish how the protest was going. By a majority of 6:1, the answer was in the negative; the Peugeot claim was kicked out. Heading up for the Casino Square restart on Thursday morning, the position seemed clear. Rohrl again underlining that he had no chance, would be happy to settle for second — and promptly stealing 3secs from Vatanen on the first stage.

Turini was the second stage of this monster lap of five stages, packed to capacity as always with Italians who found this time that the French really did have something to shout about. The top 100m section through the buildings was slippery, fans had thrown plenty of snow onto the road at other points, so the test provided the fans with plenty of entertainment, but did not really give so many clues about who would win.

That came just a couple of hours later, following St Sauveur, and before the cars headed for the Col St Raphael.

Vatanen arrived at his major service point a short distance before the start of St Raphael furious about his tyre choice for the last test. On the advice of Michelin he had used slicks, taken 22secs from Walter, but was absolutely sure that they had been the wrong choice. Saby had used cut slicks and been quicker still, his first fastest time on the event.

Vatanen: "When a man with the experience of Walter makes a move, you must watch."

Attention turned to the familiar problem.

"How long since the ice crew returned from the stage?" enquired the Finn. "Now there is sunshine, maybe it is melting." The problem centred on the opening 7kms of uphill snow; the rest of the stage was asphalt with some gravel dotted around.

Michelin's A3 was selected, then rejected for the A2.

A quick scout round the half dozen service barges and the problem was solved; there were no A2s.

"Simple," confirmed Ari, "we take A3."

It was about this moment that Peugeot learned of Rohrl's decision to run a racer; the T1. Just down the road, the Sport Quattro had sat high on its axle stands for a long time, the same debate being conducted in German, and the gamble being taken.

"Do we have any?" enquired Vatanen



Dany Snobeck put in a spirited performance with his now aged Renault 5 Turbo.

of team boss, Jean Todt, who hustled him round to where the slicks lay ready. Anxiously, the debate continued, the two returning convinced that their first choice was correct.

"When a man with the experience of Walter makes a move, you must watch," explained Ari later, "because it is not like him to make mistakes. There is always so much conflicting information from the tyre people, the ice note crew and so on. I suppose the answer is that we each have our own helicopter and go to see for ourselves . . . no, that was just a joke!"

"As I drove to the start of the stage, I was sure that we had the wrong tyres, because the surface was OK, but then after just 2kms we came to a hairpin right. I don't know why but I looked up at the exit, and there was Christian looking back down on me, watching over his shoulder. It was a fantastic feeling."

Quickly and efficiently, the Peugeot was through, Rohrl struggling up the hillside, and being overtaken, just 2.8km later by Salonen's third placed car. In one swift movement, the battle seemed at last to be won. The Peugeot returned to the short 3 hour break in the Principality up front once more, and the smiles were only too evident; even Harryman seemed to have lost that sick feeling somewhere in the bottom of his stomach. The gap was 1m 13s to the home team; Rohrl again stated that his was a hopeless task, and everyone at last believed him.

He was sure of second however — and in terms of the World series that is a fair start — with Salonen much more settled, and established, almost casually in third place and instantly at home with his new team, taking the role of support vehicle, and over 12mins ahead of fourth placed Blomqvist, the second Sport having been delayed on Raphael when it hit a wall, breaking a front driveshaft and reducing the car to a rear-wheel-drive monster.

Positions were therefore rather less clear at this part of the top 10 with around 1min covering the Swede, Toivonen, and Saby; Renault hope Dany Snobeck securely ahead of the Citroens, and now joined by BIASION'S Lancia. One of the Lancia tyre changes had not worked, shortly after the pit stop in stage 27 — St Raphael — a front rim detached itself and the Italian was left to scuffle clear of the stage, taking 42mins to get out and then incurring road penalties as the service crew repaired the damage.

Attention turned to the Audi-Lancia-Peugeot competition which had some fine moments as cars tackled the final six stages, with a format similar to that used for the first Thursday circuit. "After four days of just driving," explained the Martini man, "it is nice for us to be in a race. I think that I can catch Blomqvist, but Saby?" The Finn started well enough, but lost crucial seconds on the ice, ultimately slipping well behind on the same section which ended Rohrl's hopes at St Raphael. With a tyre gun

jammed in the test, a wheel change was impossible, Henri was forced to run a wildly unsuitable cover, and a deficit of over 2mins meant that Blomqvist was left at the head of this private battle.

Otherwise that last night was quiet, everyone hoping to avoid dramas. For Rohrl there was a last minute indication that this was never to have been his rally, an electrical fire breaking out at the end of St Sauveur, and then complete electrical failure bringing the Sport to a halt for 4mins on the final test.

Still, he was there to fool the crowds on the run in to the harbour front finish,

heading the Peugeot for a while and causing all sorts of sudden urgent conversations to fly around until Vatanen took up his rightful position at the head of the pack.

An 8.00am Friday finish may have seemed early in the day, but for the survivors it had come not a moment too soon. For the winners, certainly it had been perhaps the most difficult event ever, but it had proved the absolute skill and determination of both Vatanen and Harryman. The ability to put such a shock cruel blow behind them and look forward showed real strength, particularly against Walter Rohrl, the man who knows this event better than anyone. The Peugeots had proved ultra reliable, only a routine turbo replacement being required on the winning car, and the mood being further cheered by a congratulatory message from the spectator injured on the second stage.

"It was a tremendous feeling," admitted Vatanen afterwards, "because the last Finnish driver to win this rally was Aaltonen in 1967, so not so many have been there to take first award at that prize giving, and they even played the correct Finnish national anthem!"

FACING PAGE

Top: Ari Vatanen's victorious 205 Turbo 16 in service. Below left: Walter Rohrl who led much of the event, finished second. Below right: The top placed Lancia 037 was sixth, driven by Toivonen.

MONTE CARLO RALLY (MC)

Jan 25/Feb 01

World Rally Championship for Drivers, round 1

World Rally Championship for Manufacturers, round 1

1 Ari Vatanen/Terry Harryman	Peugeot 205 Turbo 16	10h20m49s
2 Walter Rohrl/Christian Geistdorfer	Audi Sport Quattro	10h26m06s
3 Timo Salonen/Seppo Harjane	Peugeot 205 Turbo 16	10h30m54s
4 Stig Blomqvist/Bjorn Cederberg	Audi Sport Quattro	10h40m11s
5 Bruno Saby/Jean Francois Fauchille	Peugeot 205 Turbo 16	10h40m45s
6 Henri Toivonen/Juha Piironen	Lancia Rally 037	10h43m16s
7 Dany Snobeck/Jean Pierre Bechu	Renault 5 Turbo	11h09m05s
8 Jean Claude Andruet/Annika Peuvergne	Citroen Visa 1000 Pistes	11h13m12s
9 Massimo Biasion/Tiziano Siviero	Lancia Rally 037	11h13m51s
10 Maurice Chomat/Didier Breton	Citroen Visa 1000 Pistes	11h20m00s

Group N overall: 1, Alain Oreille/Sylvie Oreille (Renault 11 Turbo), 12h 19m 54s; 2, Jacques Panchiati/Francoise Sappey (Alfa GTV6), 12h 27m 16s; 3, Romain Feitler/ Nico Demuth (Audi 80 Quattro), 12h 30m 13s. **Up to 1300cc:** 1, Marc Andre Poyaud/ C Andre Poyaud (Talbot Samba), 13h 26m 33s; 2, Dieter Noellner/ Karl Fries (Talbot Samba), 13h 50m 11s; 3, JL Danile/ Claude Rigoulot (Talbot Samba), 14h 01m 30s. **1300cc to 1600cc:** Michelle Brunasso/ M de Faria (Peugeot 205 GTI), 12h 53m 38s; 2, Francois Guyot/ Eric Berthier (Peugeot 205 GTI), 13h 09m 21s; 3, Claude Trimoleit/ Robert Ravon (Peugeot 205 GTI), 13h 47m 31s. **1600cc to 2000cc:** 1, Oreille/ Oreille; 2, Rene Sarrazin/ JM Rouger (Renault 11 Turbo), 12h 50m 35s; 3, Jean Louis Vial/ E Gaual (Fiat Ritmo 130), 13h 35m 23s. **Over 2000cc:** 1, Panchiati/ Sappey; 2, Feitler/ Demuth; 3, Bernard Dongues/ Michele Rousseau (BMW 323i), 12h 31m 22s.

Group A overall: Bertrand Balas/ Eric Laine (Alfa Sud), 12h 10m 22s; 2, Guy Chasseuil/ Christian Baron (VW Golf GTI), 12h 10m 55s; 3, Jean Pierre Ballet/ P Vuillemin (Peugeot 205 GT), 12h 19m 02s. **Up to 1300cc:** 1, Zavier Thuriot/Remy Levivier (Talbot Samba), 13h 32m 21s; 2, J Ch Lafon/ Serge Martin (Talbot Samba), 13h 40m 28s; 3, Henri Perillat/ Marc Perillat (Talbot Samba), 14h 32m 29s. **1300cc to 2000cc:** 1, Balas/ Laine; 2, Chasseuil/ Baran; 3, Ballet/ Vuillemin. **Over 2000cc:** 1, Klaus Guenther/ Helmut Barth (Mercedes 280), 13h 34m 40s; 2, Ph Chaboseau/Alain do Amaral (Alfa GTV6), 15h 17m 59s; no other finishers.

Group B overall: As overall results. **Up to 1300cc:** 1, Marc Janiaud/ Jean Bourgoin (Talbot Samba), 13h 10m 04s; 2, Daniel Monchal/ Gerard Coutelen (Talbot Samba), 13h 20m 44s; no other finishers. **1300cc to 2000cc:** 1, Snobeck/Bechu; 2, Andruet/ Peuvergne; 3, Chomat/Breton. **Over 2000cc:** Results as overall.

Starters/finishers: 117/88 — 9 cars completed the course.

Rally leaders: SS 1, Vatanen; SS 2 to SS 8, Rohrl; SS 9 to SS 18, Vatanen; SS 19 to SS 26, Rohrl; SS 27 to SS 34, Vatanen.

Leading retirements: Alain Beauchef (Ford Escort) XX stages completed; Philippe Wambergue (Citroen Visa 1000 Pistes), accident.

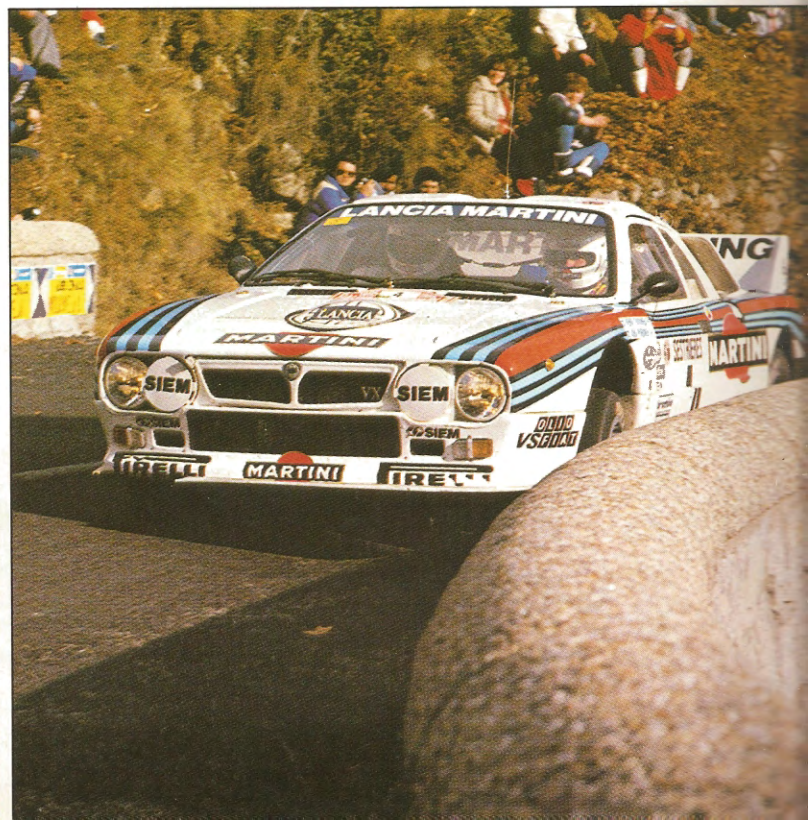
Rally timetable: Starting points at Bad Homburg (D), Barcelona (E), Lausanne (CH), Monte Carlo (MC), Paris (F), and Sestriere (I) for the Concentration Run to St Etienne, arriving Sunday morning. Restart at 1320 on Sunday January 27 for 5 special stages (111km), arriving at Domain du Rouret (GrosPierre) at 2139. Re-start on Monday at 1015 for the Common Run including 17 stages, (one cancelled before the start) of 490km. Halts at Grenoble (Tuesday 0415 to 1430), Gap (Tuesday 2306 to Wednesday 0400), arriving in Monte Carlo Wednesday, at 1525. Final Run re-started on Thursday at 1015 with one rest halt in Monte Carlo between 1854 and 2034, including 11 special stages (258km), finishing Friday at 0810. Total route averages 3883km with 33 special stages of 860km.

Analysis of fastest stages times

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
Vatanen	21	6	4	1	1	—
Rohrl	5	16	4	3	1	—
Toivonen	3	2	1	6	6	5
Biasion	3	1	1	3	6	6
Saby	1	2	4	7	11	4
Blomqvist	—	4	11	4	3	5
Salonen	—	4	8	6	4	7

World Rally Championship for Drivers, after 1 round: Vatanen, 20pts; Rohrl, 15; Salonen, 12; Blomqvist, 10; Saby, 8; Toivonen, 6; Snobeck, 4; Andruet, 3; Biasion, 2; Chomat, 1.

World Rally Championship for Manufacturers, after 1 round: Peugeot, 18pts; Audi, 16; Lancia, 8; Renault, 6; Citroen, 4.



SKOAL BANDIT™ RACING

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1985 - FORMULA

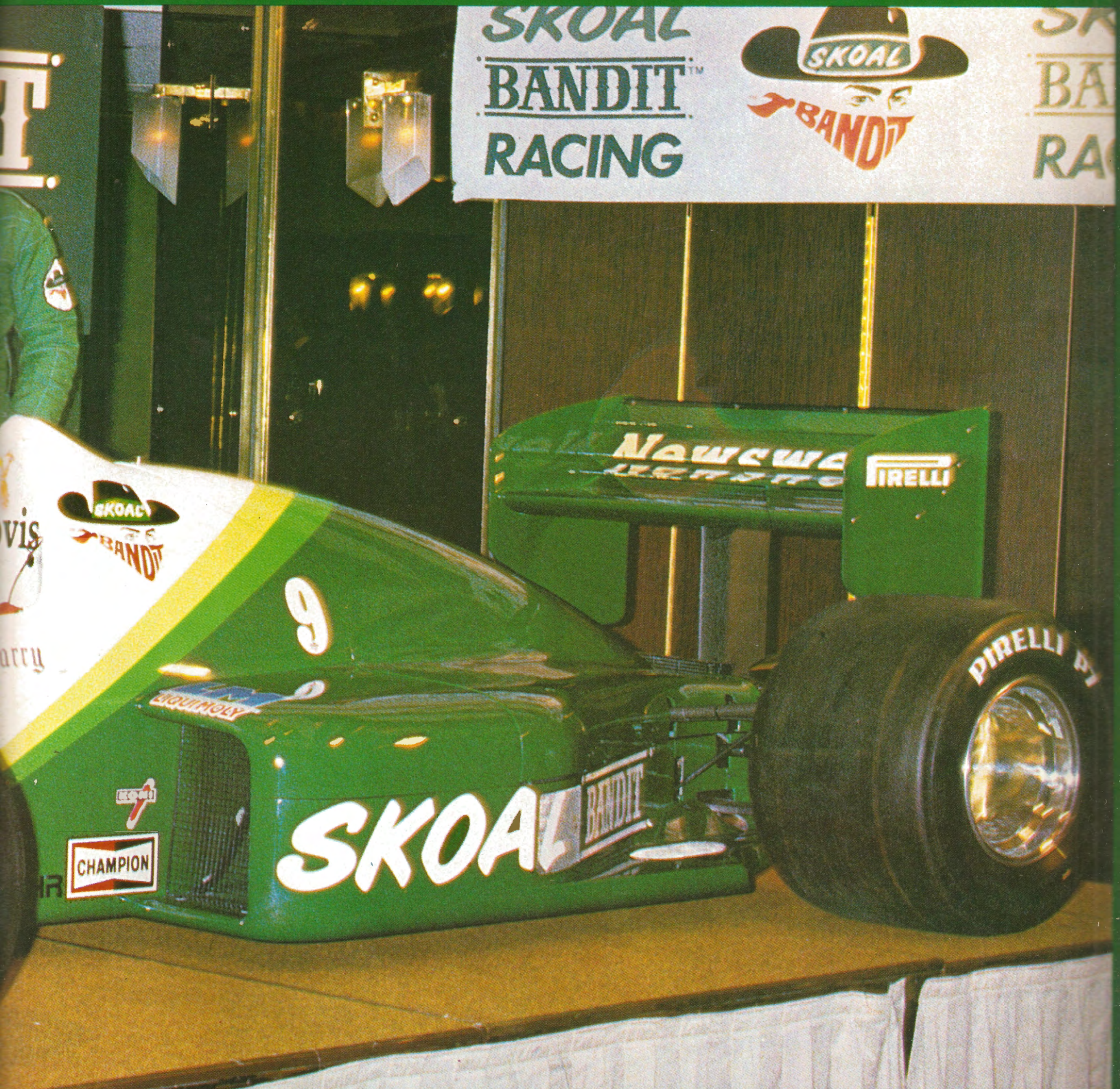
DRIVERS - PHILIP



RAM GRAND PRIX TEAM

ONE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

E ALLIOT – MANFRED WINKELHOCK



The ice man cometh

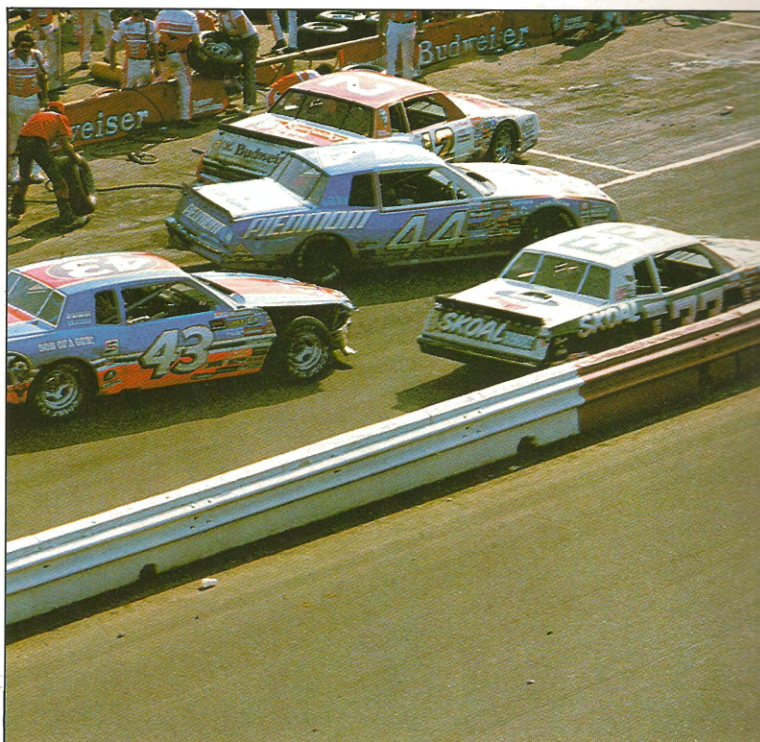
Terry Labonte finally reaped the rewards of competitive consistency and beat Harry Gant and Bill Elliott to the 1984 NASCAR Grand National title in his Piedmont Airlines Chevrolet, as GORDON KIRBY reports

Everything came together for Terry Labonte last year. The quiet, self-effacing little Texan has been a regular Grand National front runner for four years, and in 1984 he took full advantage of NASCAR's rewards for competitive consistency to win his first Grand National title. At the wheel of IMSA and long-distance driver Billy Hagan's Chevrolets — as he has been in all the 188 Grand National races he's started — the 28-year-old Labonte battled to three victories and 11 other finishes in the first three places into a down-to-the-wire championship decision over veteran Harry Gant and new superstar Bill Elliot.

Although beaten soundly by Labonte in the stretch run to the 30-race Grand National championship, both Gant and Elliott enjoyed their best ever seasons. Gant won three races and went a long way towards throwing off his 'Mr Second Place' reputation, while Elliott emerged as the fastest Ford driver on the circuit.

The 1983 champion Bobby Allison did not have a good year. He never really figured in the chase for the title and got more coverage about his complaints with NASCAR rather than for his exploits on the track. The 1981 and '82 champion Darrell Waltrip continued to be the Grand National driver with the most wins, scoring seven victories in Junior Johnson's cars but finishing only fifth in the points table. Seven-time champion Richard Petty was a distant 10th in the final standings although he did win the 200th Grand National race of his career at Daytona on July 4(!)

In a year in which 12 drivers won races, perhaps the most competitive driver of all was Cale Yarborough who was NASCAR champion three years running (1976, '77 and '78) with Junior Johnson's team. These days Yarborough runs a 'limited' schedule of 16 races and last year he won three races, broke qualifying records at both the Daytona and Talladega superspeedways and scored more points per race than anyone else.



The stirring sight of a full NASCAR field taking the green at Talladega. Above: Neil Bonnett (12), Terry Labonte (44), Harry Gant (33) and Richard Petty (43) fight for space in a crowded pitlane.



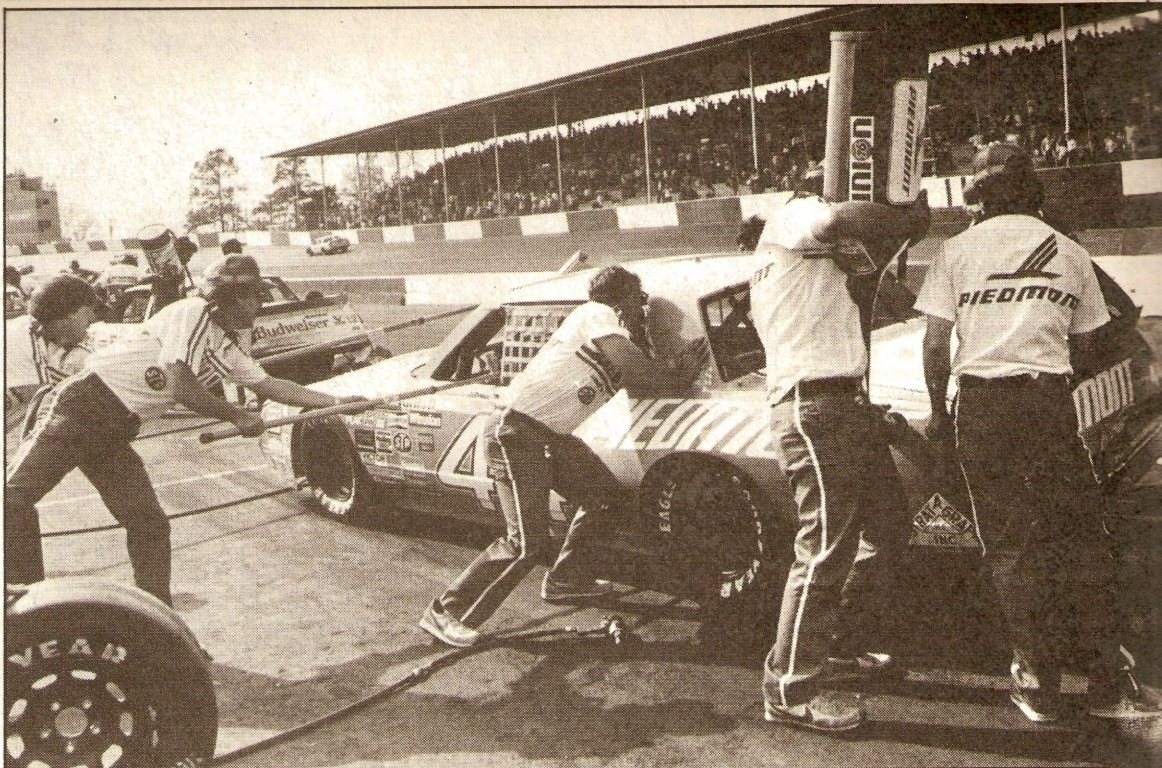
Bill France Sr's National Association for Stock Car Automobile Racing (NASCAR) enjoyed another stable, happy and successful season in 1984. The organisation continued to extend and strengthen its influence over stock car racing throughout the USA as its premier championship for Grand National cars — 3800 lb, 600bhp, tubeframe monsters — enjoyed a 15th season of sponsorship by R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company's Winston cigarette brand.

In the decade and a half that Winston has backed NASCAR's major championship, the cigarette brand has become the most persuasive commercial name in American automobile racing. NASCAR also sanctions a lesser West Coast GN series as well as championships for Late Model Sportsmen, Modifieds, small capacity cars called Darlington Dash and a northern series centred in New England and Quebec. Although Winston doesn't sponsor all of NASCAR's series, the tobacco brand does buy billboard space at most NASCAR tracks, usually paying a bonus or point fund money and perhaps footing the bill for a new control tower, press centre or grandstand. R. J. Reynolds' Camel brand is also a major motor sports sponsor in North America (primarily in IMSA and motorcycle racing), and between the two products, the tobacco company has a considerable presence in the sport as a whole.

In addition to attracting Winston's longterm commitment, NASCAR has also done an excellent job of attracting and maintaining other contingency sponsors for pole positions, lap leaders, fastest team in the pits and numerous other promotional gambits. Every conceivable idea is skilfully marketed through the press and turned into exposure for both the sponsors and the series in turn, resulting in more bodies through the gates. NASCAR thoroughly deserves its reputation as the most commercially-minded and pragmatically-managed automobile racing organisation in America and probably the world.

These days NASCAR's day-to-day activities are run by the founder's son Bill France Jr and grandson James France. Other key men include competition director Bill Gazaway and administration VP Jim Hunter who work out of a busy labyrinth of offices located outside the gates to the France family's Daytona International Speedway.

Last month NASCAR got together with its sponsors and competitors for the now-traditional annual banquet in midtown Manhattan and R. J. Reynolds took the opportunity to announce an increase



Terry Labonte accredited a good deal of his success to the slick teamwork of his crew, run by Dale Inman.

in its sponsorship package of the Grand National series. Reacting to CART's claims with PPG Industries of the largest sponsorship package in American racing, the tobacco company wanted to reassert both its own and NASCAR's position in the business and they did so by announcing a five-year prize money package of £11.25 million for the Grand National championship.

The new package

This figure comprises a \$250,000 annual increase in Winston's point fund payoff which therefore totals \$750,000 for 1985-89. There's also a new race, called 'The Winston', which will be open only to the previous year's race winners and will pay a total purse of \$500,000 with \$200,000 to the winner. Finally there's a million-dollar bonus offered to any driver who can win three of four major races — the Daytona 500, the Winston 500 at Talladega, the World 600 at Charlotte and the Southern 500 at Darlington. M. Balestre should have it so good...

Terry Labonte's push towards last

year's Grand National championship began at the end of 1982 when Dale Inman was hired by team owner Billy Hagan to run Labonte's cars. Inman is Richard Petty's second cousin and was chief mechanic on Petty's cars from the time Petty started his legendary career in 1958 until February of 1981. Shortly after Petty won the 1981 Daytona 500, Inman shocked the Grand National world by announcing that he was leaving Petty's family operation to work elsewhere. He joined J. D. Stacy's team with Dale Earnhardt doing the driving and then switched to Tim Richmond's car before finding a home with Hagan's operation.

Hagan runs a business called Stratagraph which is based in Louisiana on the Gulf of Mexico. Stratagraph uses various electronic equipment to monitor oil wells and as the company has grown, former amateur SCCA racer Hagan began to entertain a more serious interest in automobile racing. In 1975 Hagan went Grand National racing with his own car and team. The following year he hired Skip Manning to drive the car and also began to sponsor an up-and-coming

short track driver in Texas.

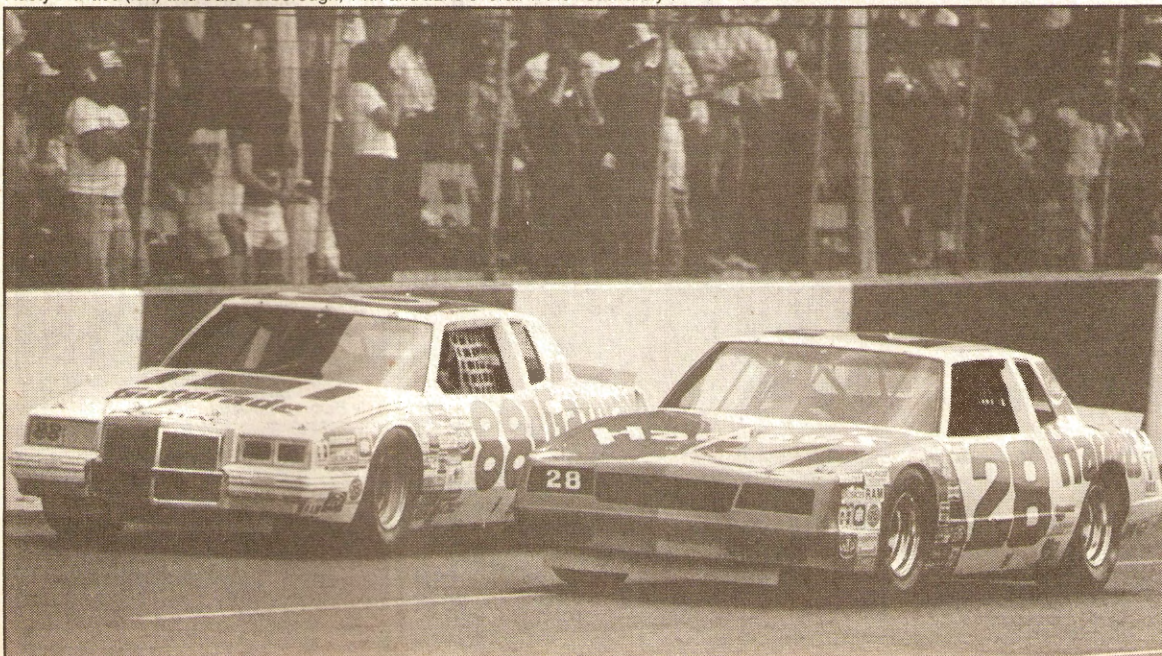
The short track driver's name was Terry Labonte who raced cars built and prepared by he and his father. A native of the far northern state of Maine, Bob Labonte had moved south to pursue a life of stock car racing and son Terry quickly and comfortably took to the sport. In 1978 Hagan gave young Labonte his big chance, entering him in a Grand National race at no less a track than Darlington for September's Southern 500. Labonte, 21 at the time, responded by driving a steady race into fourth place — the best result ever for Hagan's cars.

Hagan ran Labonte in four more races that year and in 1979 the youngster found himself as a regular starter in all GN races. In 1980 he won his first race at the very event in which he had started his frontline career two years earlier. The following year Labonte finished fourth in the championship, albeit without winning a race. In 1982 he was third in the points and although he again failed to win a race Labonte finished second in six races and also had another dozen results in the first six places.

For the '83 season Hagan's team had Dale Inman on board as crew chief, but it took a while for the new organisation to find its feet. Also, Labonte himself was admittedly a little off the pace in the early part of the year following a big accident in the last race of 1982. Towards the end of the year, however, he finally scored his second GN victory, this time at Rockingham, NC, and before the '84 season got underway both Labonte and Hagan were quietly predicting they would win three or four races in the new season. With the intense state of Grand National competition, suggested driver and team owner, that might be enough to win the championship...

Indeed, that was exactly what happened. Labonte was right on the pace in most races and was a consistent finisher among the leaders — the key to winning the Grand National title. Able to race with the best of them he scored a thoroughly deserving win at Riverside in mid-summer, and 10 weeks and eight races later he scored a magnificent come-from-behind victory with a tattered car in a torridly fraught short-track race on the half-mile track at Bristol, Tennessee.

Over the second half of the season as it



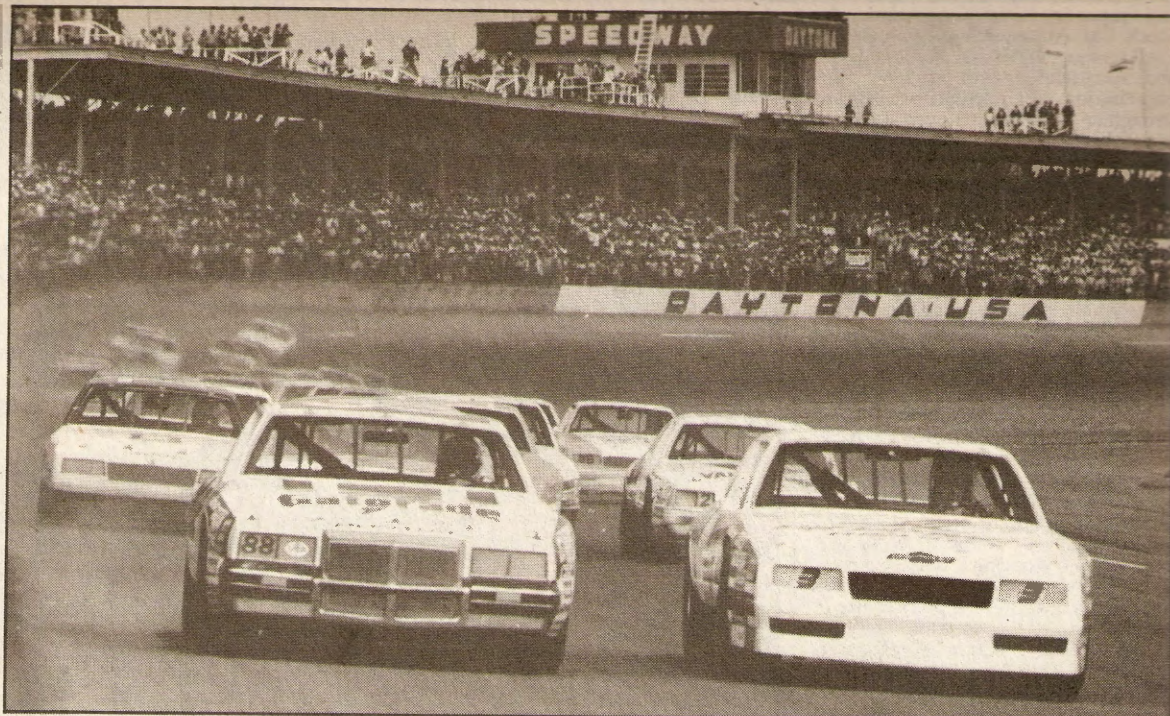
▶▶ became clear that neither championship favourites Darrell Waltrip nor Bobby Allison had the consistency or luck to stay in the point battle, Labonte emerged as the best bet to take the title. Ranged against him were Harry Gant, Bill Elliott and 1980 champion Dale Earnhardt, none of whom seemed to have the combination of personal or team abilities to threaten Labonte.

An unflappable man of few words, Labonte is totally unlike the conventional image of a Texan. Nor is he like the flamboyant personalities who have won most Grand National titles such as Waltrip, Richard Petty, Cale Yarborough and Earnhardt. Known as the 'Iceman', Labonte is the second youngest driver (after Petty) to win the Grand National championship and with Hagan and Inman behind him, he would appear to have a long and fruitful career ahead.

Typically, Labonte credits Inman as being the key to his championship. "Dale is a big part of our success," says Labonte, "because he is a real leader as well as an innovator. The 15 members of the team do a much better job of working together because Dale is the kind of guy he is."

"It took us half the season in 1983 to get going because the set-ups Dale had introduced were a lot different to run than what we had been used to. And that's the biggest thing about Dale. He's never afraid to try anything new. A lot of teams that are used to winning suddenly become uncompetitive because they are hung up on what used to work for them. But not Dale."

Baker, Yarborough, Elliott, Bonnett, Pearson, Kyle Petty, and Marcis head a string of typically nose-to-tail horsepower round Daytona.



Earnhardt (3) and Wallace head the field at the start of the Daytona 500, a race that the phenomenal Yarborough won.

Says Inman about Labonte: "He and I seem to agree on most things — except for football. He's a Dallas fan and I pull for Washington. But aside from that we get along real well. He's the youngest driver I have worked with in a long time, but he is very willing to learn. In the last

year and a half he has increased his feel of the race car enormously and his ability to race speaks for itself. He can run with anyone."

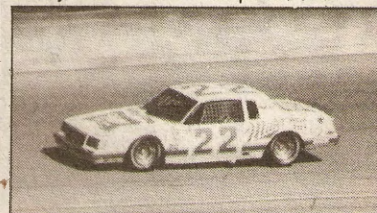
Another important ingredient in last year's championship was sponsor Piedmont Airlines. Centred in Charlotte,

NC, where Hagan's and most other Grand National teams and suppliers are based, the airlines moved over to the Labonte/Hagan operation last winter after one year with another team. Hagan, of course, continues to race in IMSA and at Le Mans with a fleet of Corvettes and Camaros which Labonte occasionally co-drives. And Labonte's father Bob works for the Grand National team building transmissions and carrying tyres on pitstops!

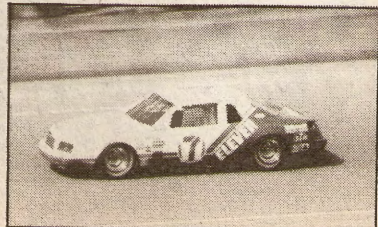
Late bloomer

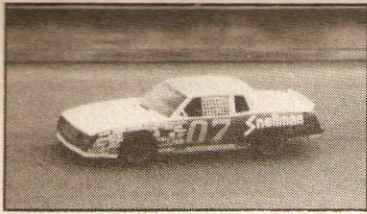
Chasing Labonte all the way last year was **Harry Gant** who had his most successful season in his fourth year with actor Burt Reynolds' and stuntman Hal Needham's Skoal Bandit-sponsored team. Gant, 44, raced his own Late Model Sportsmen cars for many years and was NASCAR champion three times. He finally graduated to Grand National racing in 1979 and two years later got a prized seat in the fledgling Reynolds/Needham team.

Gant finished a distant third in the '81 Grand National championship and won his first GN race the following year. An extremely consistent, tidy driver, Gant was failed by engine reliability problems in 1983, finishing seventh in the point standings. Last year was much more mechanically correct, however, and Gant won three races, finished second in six other races and was in contention all year in the team's Travis Carter-prepared Chevrolets. With a three-year contract with Reynolds/Needham in his Bobby Allison — from champion to sixth.



Kyle Petty — a distant 16th.

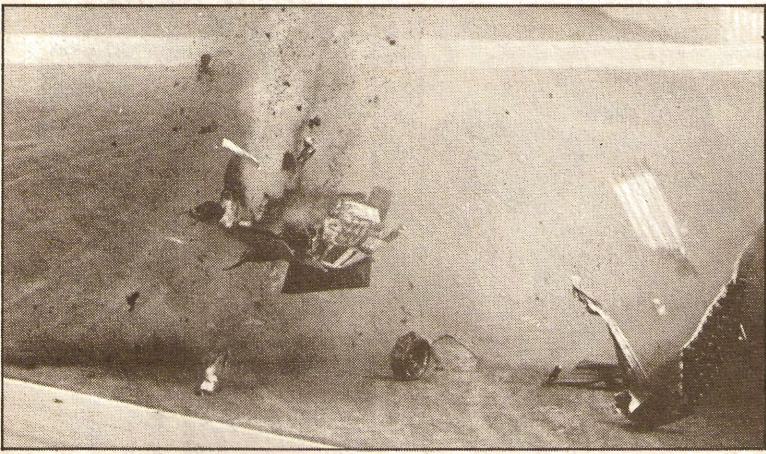
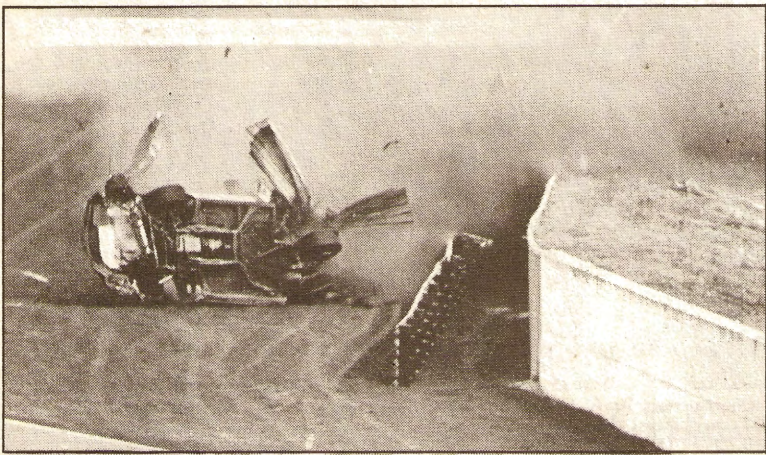
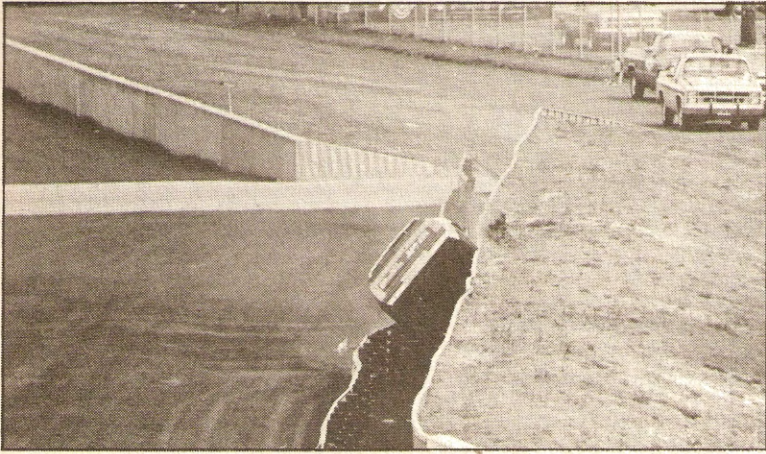




pocket, Gant is a classic example of a late-blooming, grass-roots stock car racer.

Third in last year's Grand National championship was **Bill Elliott**. A Georgia country boy who is even more 'down home' than Gant, the 29-year-old Elliott has raced GN cars for nine years, although it wasn't until two years ago that his family-run team got the sponsorship

Randy La Joie — before and after at Daytona . . . He walked away unhurt.



to be able to run the full schedule. Ford dealers by trade, the Elliott family's big break came in the shape of fuel and oil pump manufacturer Harry Melling and for 1984 the Melling/Elliott combination was further strengthened with sponsorship from Coors beer.

Elliott scored his first GN victory in the season-closing race of 1983, and as the new season took shape he quickly established himself as the fastest of all the Ford drivers. On superspeedways he was particularly fearsome, scoring a convincing victory in a yellow flag-free race at Michigan Int'l Speedway and also winning the October race at Charlotte.

Fourth in the points was **Dale Earnhardt** who moved from Bud Moore's Ford team to Richard Childress's Chevrolet outfit for 1984. Grand National champion in 1980, Earnhardt drove for Childress in 1982 following the demise of the 1980 championship-winning Osterlund team. A year in a Ford convinced Earnhardt to return to Chevies, however, with Childress and sponsor Wrangler jeans and sportswear. The revitalised operation worked well together as Earnhardt won two races and stayed in the chase for the championship through most of the long season. The Earnhardt-Childress-Wrangler combination continues in 1985 and should become a real force to reckon with.

Waltrip and Johnson

A disappointing fifth overall last year was **Darrell Waltrip**. The 1984 season was Waltrip's fourth with Junior Johnson's legendary team and on the record it was the weakest of the four years. Champion in 1981 and '82, Waltrip finished second in 1983, but last year Johnson ran a two-car team (virtually unheard of in NASCAR) and the reliability required to win the championship just wasn't there. Waltrip won seven races (four more than anyone else), but was not a major factor in the point battle while team mate **Neil Bonnett** failed to win a race and only twice finished among the first three. Bonnett was eighth in the championship.

Bonnett was brought into Johnson's team (Grand National champions five times since 1976) by Warner Hodgdon, who had sponsored Bonnett with the Wood Brothers for a couple of years. Johnson took on Hodgdon as a partner and also completed a lucrative sponsorship deal for both cars with Budweiser beer. By the end of the year, however, Hodgdon was in financial trouble, although he continues to be a part owner of Johnson's team for 1985, just as Bonnett continues in the second car. Meanwhile it should be remembered that Waltrip has won 37 races in the four years he's driven for Johnson and has not won fewer than five races in any season since 1977. Waltrip is adamant that in 1986 he wants once again to be the only driver in Johnson's team . . .

Finishing sixth in last year's point standing was '83 champion **Bobby Allison**. Like Waltrip he was a leading contender in many races, but lacked the reliability which had taken him to the previous year's championship. Continuing with DiGard Racing and sponsor Miller Beer, Allison last year reignited a long-standing argument with NASCAR, complaining constantly about capricious rule enforcement and levelling accusations of favouritism. Sometimes Allison was justified, but much of the time he left listeners bored and sceptical. An excellent driver (he won two races last year) and inveterate experimenter, the 47-year-old Allison continues with DiGard's Chevy-powered Buicks in 1985.

Seventh in the '84 championship was **Ricky Rudd**, who took over Earnhardt's seat in Bud Moore's Fords and was often very competitive. He survived a giant crash at Daytona in February to win the following weekend's race at Richmond and stay in the hunt for much of the year. Reliability was a big problem, however, and Rudd was not to win another race last year, although he continues with Moore's Fords and Wrangler sponsorship in 1985.

Ninth in the '84 standings behind Bonnett's Junior Johnson Chevrolets was **Geoff Bodine**. A former champion in the powerful Modifieds, northerner Bodine broke into Grand National racing on a regular basis in 1982, and last year he moved into a new, Charlotte-based team called All-Star Racers. In April, Bodine scored his first GN victory on the half-mile track at Martinsville, and won two more races before the year was over, including the season-closer at Riverside. Bodine also was on the pole three times and, at 35, he has clearly arrived in stock car racing's big-time.

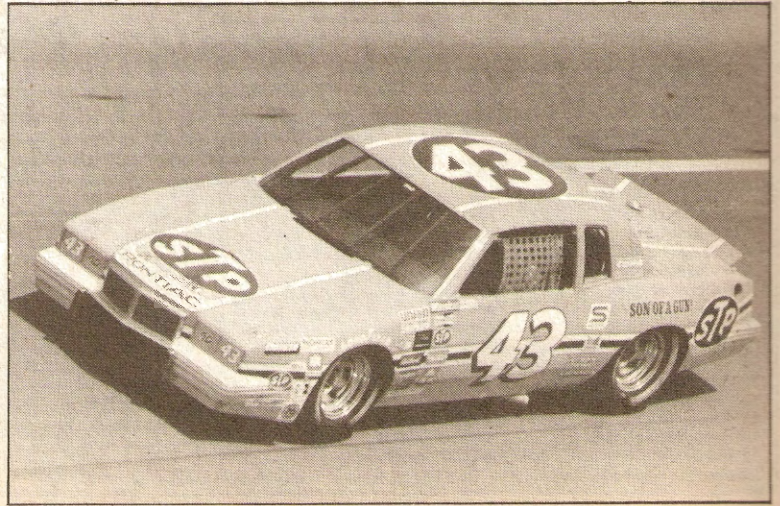
The King's 200th

Completing 1984's top 10 was **Richard Petty**. The seven-time champion left his family team for the new year to drive for a new team owned by California politician Mike Curb, who partners Dan Gurney in Indycar racing. In his first year away from home Petty had a rough time, particularly with engines, although he did manage to win two races including the 200th of his career at Daytona's Firecracker 400 on

Bill Elliott — top Ford runner in '84.



Richard Petty took two wins in '84, including his 200th Grand National at Daytona in July.



GN facts

POLES

Rudd	4
Yarborough	4
Waltrip	4
Elliott	4
Gant	3
Bodine	3
Parsons	2
Labonte	2
Baker	1
Ruttman	1
Pearson	1

MILES LED

Waltrip	1577
Gant	1511
Yarborough	1485
Allison	1216
Labonte	1140
Elliott	814
Parsons	707
Earnhardt	650
Bodine	562
Petty	459

MANUFACTURERS CHAMPIONSHIP

Marque	Points	Wins
Chevrolet	241	21
Ford	107	4
Pontiac	64	3
Buick	63	2

the fourth year, Bouchard failed to win a race last year although he did beat Richmond in the point standings.

Also starting all 30 races in 1984 were veterans **Dave Marcis** and **Dick Brooks**, as well as **Kyle Petty**. The latter has raced Grand National cars since 1979 but has yet to win a race. Last year he drove Fords out of the family shop but finished a distant 16th in the championship.

Two other drivers started all the races. **Rusty Wallace** and **Trevor Boys** were both rookies, and Wallace was a handy winner of NASCAR's rookie-of-the-year award. A multiple champion in lesser leagues, Wallace, 28, finished 14th in the point standings.

Most notable of those to run less than the full schedule was **Cale Yarborough**. Continuing with Harry Ranier's excellent Chevy-equipped team, Yarborough started only 16 races, but led more laps than anyone save Waltrip and Harry Gant! Yarborough had a couple of 200+mph poles and was a convincing winner of February's prestigious Daytona 500.

Another occasional starter to win a race and run at the front was 1973 champion **Benny Parsons**. Starting 14 races in Johnnie Hayes' US Tobacco-sponsored Chevrolets, Parsons was competitive enough to rank seventh overall in the lap leaders' statistics.

Veteran **Buddy Baker** started 21 races in the Wood Brothers' Fords, but was conspicuously unsuccessful and lost his seat to Kyle Petty — of all people — for 1985. Another veteran still at it is **David Pearson**, Grand National champion in 1966, '68 and '69. Pearson drove his own car in 11 races last year.

Finally, it should be noted that Grand National racing suffered a rare death last year. Newcomer **Terry Schoonover** had started only one other GN race before crashing at Atlanta in November and dying from massive head injuries. It was the first time since Tiny Lund's accident at Talladega in 1975 that a driver had been killed during the running of a Winston Cup points race.



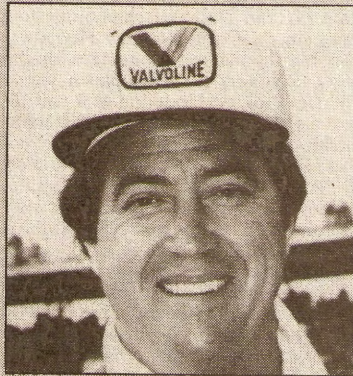
Midfield runners: Tim Richmond, Dick Brooks, Lake Speed, Ricky Rudd (left) and Benny Parsons.

July 4 with Ronald Reagan in attendance. It was one of those uncanny occurrences in a remarkable career. With some changes in personnel and engines from Gurney's All-American Racers, the 47-year-old Petty continues with Curb's Pontiacs in 1985 as well as lifetime sponsor STP.

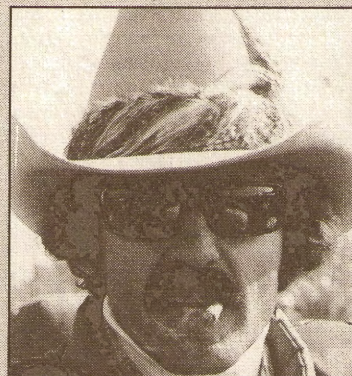
Other regular contenders last season included **Tim Richmond** and **Ron Bouchard**. Richmond won a race but was all too rarely around at the finish in drag racer Raymond Beadle's Pontiacs. Fast and aggressive, Richmond allows his mouth to get him into trouble and may be out of work in '85. Bouchard is an opposite in personality to Richmond, yet is equally if not more competitive. Driving for the Race Hill Farms team for



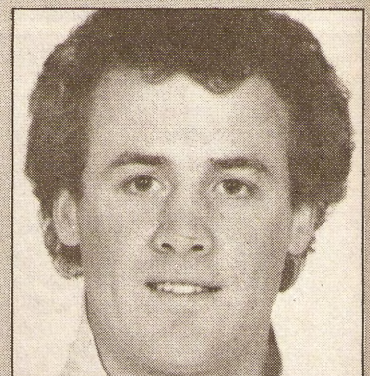
Labonte — the 'Iceman'.



Gant — grass roots stocker.



'King' Petty — 200th win.



Wallace — Rookie of the Year.

1984 NASCAR WINSTON CUP GRAND NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

	Feb 19 Daytona 500	Feb 26 Richmond 400	Mar 04 Rockingham 500	Mar 18 Atlanta 500	Apr 01 Bristol 500	Apr 08 North Wilkesboro 400	Apr 15 Darlington 500	Apr 28 Martinsville 500	May 06 Talladega 500	May 12 Nashville 240	May 20 Dover 500	May 27 Charlotte 600	Jun 03 Riverside 400	Jun 10 Pocono 500	Jun 17 Michigan 400	Jul 04 Daytona 400	Jul 14 Nashville 420	Jul 22 Pocono 500	Jul 29 Talladega 500	Aug 12 Michigan 400	Aug 25 Bristol 500	Sep 02 Darlington 500	Sep 09 Richmond 400	Sep 16 Dover 500	Sep 23 Martinsville 500	Oct 07 Charlotte 500	Oct 14 North Wilkesboro 400	Oct 21 Rockingham 500	Nov 04 Atlanta 500	Nov 18 Riverside 500	Total points
1 Terry Labonte (USA)..... Chevrolet Monte Carlo	12	3	2	7	2	4	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4508
2 Harry Gant (USA)..... Chevrolet Monte Carlo	6	8	—	6	—	2	6	13	2	—	—	4	—	2	4	2	9	1	7	4	5	1	—	1	4	2	4	2	—	8	4443
3 Bill Elliott (USA)..... Ford Thunderbird	5	4	8	11	9	10	3	7	9	—	—	4	—	10	4	1	6	7	3	10	3	6	—	—	3	8	1	1	2	4	4377
4 Dale Earnhardt (USA)..... Chevrolet Monte Carlo	2	6	14	2	7	8	5	9	—	5	2	5	8	2	8	3	10	1	7	10	—	—	3	5	—	7	—	—	—	—	4285
5 Darrell Waltrip (USA)..... Chevrolet Monte Carlo	3	2	10	10	1	6	1	3	—	2	6	—	11	6	3	—	—	—	6	1	—	—	1	10	1	1	1	—	4	—	4230
6 Bobby Allison (USA)..... Buick Regal	—	—	1	5	—	—	—	4	4	—	—	1	3	7	6	4	5	—	4	10	2	10	—	—	6	5	4	—	—	—	4094
7 Ricky Rudd (USA)..... Ford Thunderbird	7	1	7	8	6	3	9	—	4	8	11	9	—	—	—	—	—	14	—	14	—	5	2	3	—	6	8	—	—	—	3918
8 Neil Bonnett (USA)..... Chevrolet Monte Carlo	4	5	—	—	11	9	10	5	—	1	—	12	2	14	—	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	5	4	—	—	—	—	—	3802
9 Geoff Bodine (USA)..... Chevrolet Monte Carlo	8	9	6	13	—	14	—	1	3	10	5	4	—	7	—	1	12	—	—	—	—	4	9	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	3734
10 Richard Petty (USA)..... Pontiac Grand Prix	—	15	4	4	8	12	7	12	6	1	1	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	9	—	—	5	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	3643
11 Ron Bouchard (USA)..... Buick Regal	—	—	—	12	3	7	—	2	10	5	9	3	—	—	—	—	4	7	—	—	13	—	8	—	—	11	—	—	—	—	3609
12 Tim Richmond (USA)..... Pontiac Grand Prix	—	7	—	—	5	1	—	—	—	2	10	6	5	—	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	3505
13 Dave Marcis (USA)..... Pontiac Grand Prix	—	11	9	—	4	13	—	—	8	—	—	—	15	—	—	—	—	—	13	—	4	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3416
14 Rusty Wallace (USA)..... Pontiac Grand Prix	—	—	—	12	—	—	15	—	6	—	15	—	—	14	—	—	—	6	12	—	—	4	—	—	—	5	14	—	—	—	3316
15 Dick Brooks (USA)..... Ford Thunderbird	—	—	—	14	—	11	—	11	—	—	—	13	12	—	11	—	—	11	—	—	3	6	—	7	—	11	13	—	—	—	3265

*shared drive with Benny Parsons because of injury to Bonnett. Top 15 places only recorded.



Deep front spoiler and side skirts make the Turbo 16S easily recognisable.

Best Saab yet?

MIKE MCCARTHY samples Saab's exciting and sporty 16-valve Turbo 16S

You don't have to be all that old to remember when Saab were a potent force in rallying. When a large Swede in a small car screamed his way to victory in the RAC and other events, few who saw — or heard — the pair 'ping-ping-pinging' their way through the forests will forget them in a hurry. Today Eric Carlsson has retired from sport, acting as a popular roving ambassador for Saab, and two-strokes are long since gone, as are rallying victories.

Saab developed the worthy, but slightly boring 90, 99 and 900 series, and seemed set in middle-aged ways. Then, a few years ago, they produced a limited production flagship, all black and turbocharged, the 99 Turbo, and the company took on a whole new lease of life, not to mention a very sporty image.

The current top of the crop model (pending the arrival of the 9000) is the exciting 900 Turbo 16S, about as far removed from little two-stroke machines as you could get.

Saab were among the first to develop a turbocharged power unit because, simply, they couldn't afford a brand new, bigger engine. Back in 1983, they introduced what they saw as their third generation engine: the single over head camshaft was replaced by a pair, prodding open 16 valves, four per cylinder. The new 16 valve head took them firmly into the power game: they were taking 175bhp (DIN) at 5300rpm, (up from 145bhp), and a massive 200lb ft (DIN) torque at 3000rpm (up from 173lb ft). Part of the reason for the very high output per litre (the H-type unit has a capacity of only 1985cc) is that the addition of an intercooler and their APC (Automatic Performance Control) system — which monitors and controls boost and therefore allows the engine to be more octane tolerant — means that both a high (9.0:1) compression ratio and a high (0.85 bar) boost pressure can be used, where they would be normally incompatible.

It is an open secret that we will soon see the engine in F3, but it was developed for use in Saab's family saloons. Thus it is available in the 900 Turbo 16 and the new 9000 (which has yet to arrive on these

shores). For the extrovert, though, it is fitted in the most sporting Saab ever, the subject of this test, the 16S.

Based on the three-door 900 hatchback, the 16S is instantly identifiable by the deep front and rear spoilers and side skirts, not to mention the wide, three-spoked alloy wheels. Unique to the 16S, too, is the fitment of anti-roll bars both front and rear. At £14,900 the 16S is competitively priced — the Audi 200 Turbo is £19,300, the Rover Vitesse £15,500, and the BMW 528i £14,035.

Light weight

With only 27cwt to pull around, those 175 horses endow the 16S with a reasonable performance. *What Car?* measured a mean maximum speed of 125mph in fifth, which should be fast enough for most people's needs, and a 0-60mph time of 8.2secs, with 100mph coming up in 24.3secs. The Audi 200 turbo took exactly the same time to reach 60mph but went on to record 138mph top speed, a good reflection of its superior aerodynamics. The BMW 528i was a second quicker to 60mph (7.2secs) and also quicker at maximum (130mph),

while the Rover Vitesse comes out tops on both scores with 131mph and 7.1secs. Thus on paper the competitors are faster, but with this sort of performance the question of which is the faster is really rather academic — the 16S is *quick*.

On the whole, the performance is useable, but Saab, unlike others such as Citroën who have introduced turbocharged cars recently, haven't quite conquered the problem of lag. The high compression ratio and 16 valves give it a more spritely zing at low revs than the standard eight valve car, but there is still a noticeable and distinct gap between being on boost and off. Keep it over 3000rpm and there is instant power whenever you want it: below 2500rpm and you have to keep an eye on the boost gauge to judge when power is going to come in. In addition, you can occasionally feel that the car is going to run away from you because, if you hold a constant throttle setting, there is an increase in surge as the turbo comes in.

You soon become atuned to this, however, and the Saab is not the only car to display this characteristic, but it is worth noting. Thus the 16S is at its best when cruising at highish speeds on a motorway with the turbocharger working — it will take you from 60 to 80mph in fourth in a sparkling 5.7secs, fast enough to get you out of almost any sort of trouble.

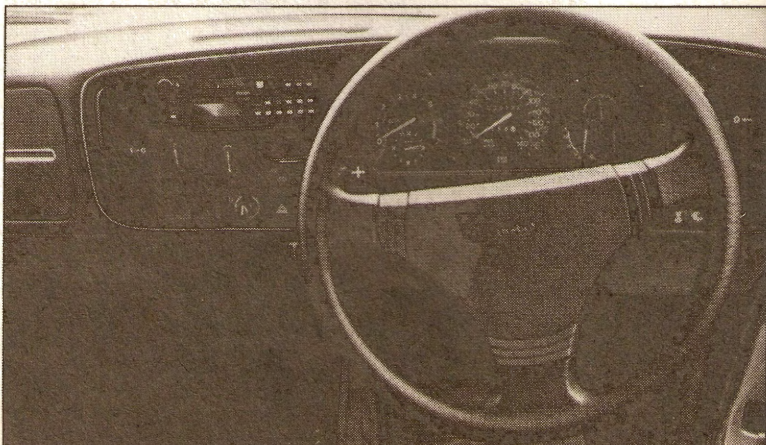
The suspension modifications — the anti-roll bars front and rear — have had their effect on road manners. Compared to its lesser sisters the 16S feels more stable, neutral and flat through corners. As with most front-wheel drive cars the dominant characteristic is understeer, but unless you are pushing it at silly speeds this never becomes uncomfortable and, on the whole, the 16S is vice-free.

There is plenty of grip from the fat 195/60 Pirellis, and the high-g geared steering is responsive and direct, though

Purposeful frontal appearance marked by heavy impact resistant bumpers.



Excellent easily-read instrumentation was a feature of the Saab



the power assistance does remove some feel. It's really quite surprising how this rather venerable design has been developed over the years — the basic chassis can cope with more than double the power output without feeling too dated.

Stiffer springing

The trade-off, as is often the case, is that the car feels more stiffly sprung than many of its competitors. The taut handling compensates in no small measure, but the 16S cannot match the Citroën CX Turbo, for example (but then few can) or the Audi or BMW, but is better than the harsh-riding Rover Vitesse.

Nor is the 16S particularly refined. Once again it is at its best cruising at speed on motorways when the overdrive fifth means that the engine is running at low to medium speed and light throttle openings, but conducive to quietness and it is indeed relaxing under these conditions. But if full use is made of the revs, the engine sounds surprisingly strained — surprisingly since most 16 valves we've driven tend to take on a crispness at the top end that the Saab lacks. Wind and road noise suppression, too, can only be judged as fair to middling.

Saab, like Citroën, tend to do things their own way, though they do not take things to the extreme that the French company do. Thus the instant you open the door you know you could only be in a Saab because of the way the bottom of the door sweeps under, and the way you feel you're climbing up into the car. There's the ignition key which is down on the transmission tunnel and not in the



The aesthetic qualities (or otherwise) of the side skirts will be the subject of much debate.

usual position on the steering column. I think that locking the transmission is more logical from a safety viewpoint: Saab's competitors clearly don't.

The driving position of the Saab can best be described as 'commanding'. You tend to sit upright, on pleasant, big, soft, comfortable seats with an excellent view all round which makes slotting into traffic gaps or parking easy for such a relatively big car. All the controls, both major and minor, are well placed and work smoothly, though the gearchange feels rather rubbery and vague at first. The instrumentation is near perfect, with bright yellow numerals on a flat black back-

ground, instantly readable and, possibly more important, falling well within the range of peripheral vision. Ergonomically, the Saab is difficult to beat.

It also tends to score over its rivals with the plethora of standard items fitted. Electric windows and mirrors, central locking and headlamp wash-wipe may not be unusual, but a sun roof and the heated seats most definitely are.

The car is probably the best Saab yet, and we await the arrival of the 9000 with interest. The 16S provides excellent performance and taut handling, is undoubtedly eye-catching, and superbly comfortable. A little more work on

turbocharger response would not go amiss, and it is going to have to work hard to compete with some of its rivals in other aspects. But if you want a car that is just that bit different — and particularly if you're a Saab enthusiast — the 16S could be the car for you.

SAAB 900 TURBO 16S

£14,090

Specification

Cylinders/capacity	Four in line, 1985cc
Bore x stroke	.....90 x 78mm
Valve gear	.....Twin ohc, four valves/cylinder
Fuel system	.....Fuel injection, turbocharger, intercooler
Power/rpm	.....175bhp (DIN) at 5300rpm
Torque/rpm	.....201 ft (DIN) at 3000rpm
Gear ratios	.....3.80, 2.15, 1.44, 1.04, 0.84:1
Final drive	.....3.67:1
Steering	.....Power assisted rack and pinion
Brakes	.....Servo assisted discs F/R
Wheels	.....Alloy 5½ x 15
Tyres	.....Pirelli 195/60VR15
Suspension (F)	.....Independent by wishbones, coil springs, gas filled dampers, anti-roll bar
Suspension (R)	.....Dead axle, four longitudinal links, Panhard rod, coil springs, gas filled dampers, anti-roll bar

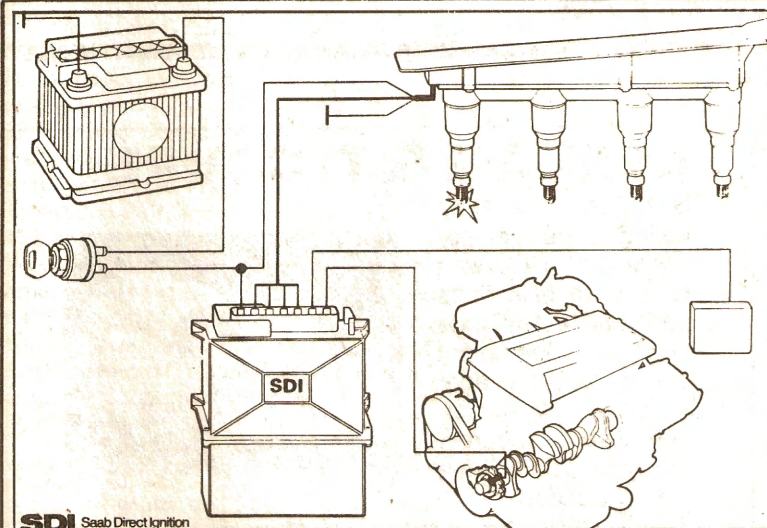
Dimensions

Length	.....186ins
Width	.....66ins
Wheelbase	.....99ins
Track	.....56ins
Weight	.....24.8cwt

Performance

(What Car? figures)

Maximum (5th)	.....125mph
0-60mph	.....8.2s
50-70mph (4th/5th)	.....5.7/8.5s
Fuel (Urban/56/75mph)	.....22.4/39.8/29.7mpg
Test consumption	.....22.5mpg



Schematic diagram of the SDI system.

Saab Direct Ignition

Some fairly extravagant claims have been made for a new ignition system developed by Saab: it 'will revolutionise', and is of 'decisive importance', the future of petrol engine development. Will it, and is it?

The Saab Direct Ignition (SDI) layout certainly has a number of important features: it has no distributor or high tension leads; it is entirely maintenance-free; lifespan of spark plugs increased three-fold are but three. Technically it is also beautifully simple, if you regard electronic 'black boxes' as simple, and nowadays there is no reason to regard them as otherwise once the initial design and development has been completed.

Like most electronic systems, the SDI arrangement can be divided roughly into three parts. A sensor or trigger mounted next to the crankshaft senses engine rotation (to high accuracy, within ±0.5 degrees) and sends a pulse to a microprocessor — this, in effect, tells the system when to initiate a firing sequence, the equivalent of top dead centre on the firing stroke on number one cylinder. This is necessary, of course, because with

an all solid state system there is no mechanical timing.

The pulse from the sensor is processed in the second part of the system, the microprocessor. This takes load and engine speed into account and then initiates a firing pulse at the correct instant to each plug.

The third part of the system is a spark plug/coil unit for each cylinder, fired by the impulse from the microprocessor.

The whole system is capacitive rather than inductive, which means that the voltage at the plug is of the order of 40,000v rather than 25,000v. With this arrangement — which is not particularly new, be it noted — the standard battery voltage is stepped up twice, first to 4000v, this being used to charge the capacitor which in turn gives the ten-fold step up to 40,000v.

Capacitive systems have their own advantages and disadvantages. The much higher firing voltage means that fouled or large gap plugs (on the SDI system plug gap is as high as 1.5mm) can be made spark and voltage build-up is about 20 times faster,

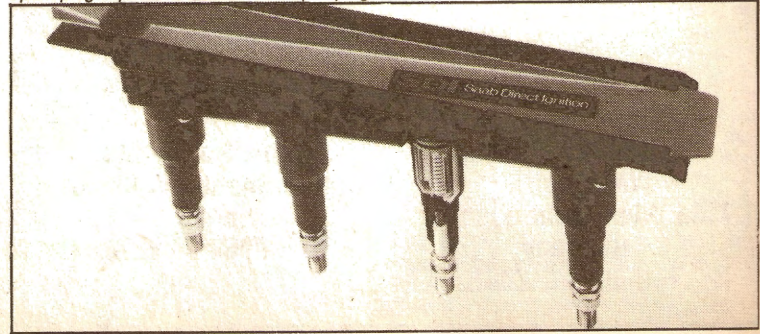
which means that there isn't time for current to leak out through cracked caps, dirty leads or damp insulators (and who hasn't suffered from one of those?)

On the other hand, the sheer speed and power of a capacitive system can mean that the fuel mixture may not be fired properly under certain conditions, such as running at low speed and part throttle, it makes heavy demands on conventional distributor and insulation, radio interference increases, and there is a potential safety hazard if someone touches an HT lead — 40,000v can give you quite a shock!

The unusual part of the Saab set-up is that there are four coils, one per cylinder, enclosed in a special cartridge or cassette which sits on top of the head between the camshafts (obviously on a twin-cam engine). This, in effect, eliminates the normal HT section of the ignition system, since the coil is connected directly to the spark plug, sitting on top of it, and from this flows many of the advantages claimed for the idea. The supply voltage to the coil/plug is only about 400v, so no HT leads are needed and thus reducing the risk of flash-over via leaks or dampness, and the sensitivity of the system when starting from cold or under other adverse conditions, and, of course, you can't get a 40,000v shock. The cartridge itself acts as a very heavy duty insulator and a radio interference suppressor.

Looking at the layout as a whole, then, the function of the distributor is carried out by the microprocessor so there are no moving parts (the crankshaft excepted), there are no high

Spark plug capsule — note coil on top of plug.



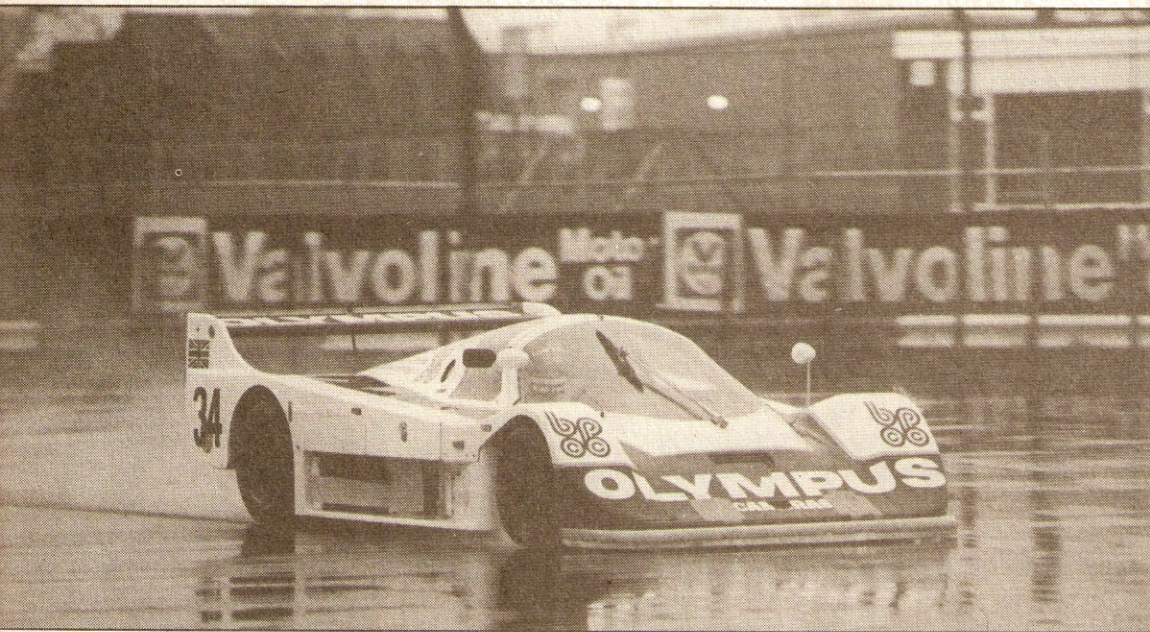
voltage components in fresh air, minimal high voltage losses, high accuracy, reduced susceptibility to rain, cold and other problem conditions, and a considerable potential for cost saving.

On paper, then, SDI has much to offer: so why am I a little sceptical that it is of 'decisive importance', or that it will 'revolutionise' engines? The main reason is that not all of the idea is new, and, in fact, other manufacturers have gone much of the way to having something equivalent to SDI in existence — some even in production. One of the most basic cars around today, the flat-twin version of the Citroën Visa, has a solid state system with no distributor, points and so on. This, like SDI, has sensors (two) on the cylinder block, triggered by a peg on the flywheel, and feeding pulses to a microprocessor which takes various other factors into accounts and sends off an appropriate firing pulse. Where the Citroën set-up differs is that it uses a double-ended coil and conventional HT leads — but all the French company need to do to come up with SDI is to fit coils onto the plugs and surround them with decent insulation. The BMW Motronic system is another that does away with ordinary points and is largely electronic.

Still, I'm probably talking semantics. If the Saab SDI system only does away with HT leads it could well be regarded as an advance, and there is no doubt that the whole layout is technically very clever. Even if it is only regarded as the next logical step in the evolution of the ignition system, this is progress.

Untapped potential

TIFF NEEDELL had his second run in Scorpion Racing's Arundel C200 Group C2 car, this time in the wet, and is sure of its potential in this class in 1985



The Arundel C200 in the wet at Silverstone. The potential is clearly there if the team can find a budget to do Group C2.

When I tested the Gebhardt C2 842 (AUTOSPORT, March 15, 1984) I forecast the success of DFV-powered Group C2 sports cars and, although the Gebhardt itself suffered misfortune and a degree of unreliability, from mid-season onwards it was the Spice-Tiga DFV that was the car to beat, winning at the Nürburgring, Brands Hatch, Spa, Imola and Sandown Park. The manufacturers championship was still won by Alba, with Lola-Mazda second, as the Spice-Tiga team was unable to afford to contest the rounds at Mosport and Fuji, and three of their wins were at 'drivers' rounds.

One other new DFV-powered C2 car was produced at the beginning of the year, but financial restraints kept it from ever showing its real potential. The Arundel C200 was just built in time for a too hurried appearance at Silverstone where it qualified a lowly seventh in class with a lap of 1m29.17s, after a multitude of teething problems, some way off the Spice-Tiga's 1m24.67s and the turbo boosted C2 pole of the Alba at 1m23.33s.

The race was shortlived, with the car soon stranded with an electrical problem. But a couple of weeks later I had the task of giving the Arundel its first proper test session and, with the car set-up the best we could on that day, I recorded a 1m25.8s lap. A couple of weeks later, with a few of my recommendations used and extra ideas from the team's number one driver, James Weaver, who drove on the day, the Arundel was hustled around Silverstone in a very quick 1m22.9s!

Sadly, there was no budget for Le Mans and a 'publicity' outing at the British Grand Prix Thundersports race turned to disaster when the project backer Eddie Arundel shunted the car heavily in practice. The car hasn't been raced since, but I recently had the opportunity to splash round Silverstone in the fully repaired C200 which the team hope will get the necessary backing in '85 to show its true potential.

The 26-year-old Arundel is actually a very accomplished driver and his shunt at Brands was mainly down to rustiness and, for 1985, he is very much in the back seat with family pressures and commitments virtually forcing him into retirement and leaving the project in the hands of Michael Eastick and his company Scorpion Racing Services. Michael looked after the likes of Jonathan Palmer, Derek Daly and Mike Thackwell during their early careers and Eddie Arundel went to him back in 1980 when Scorpion ran him in the novices FF1600

Thruxton that year and were always front runners with a reliable car and accident free driving. Much had been discussed about the team's next step, but it wasn't until Christmas '83 that a rather late decision was made to go ahead with the Arundel project. Gary Anderson was commissioned to construct the first car and 20 weeks later the car was racing.

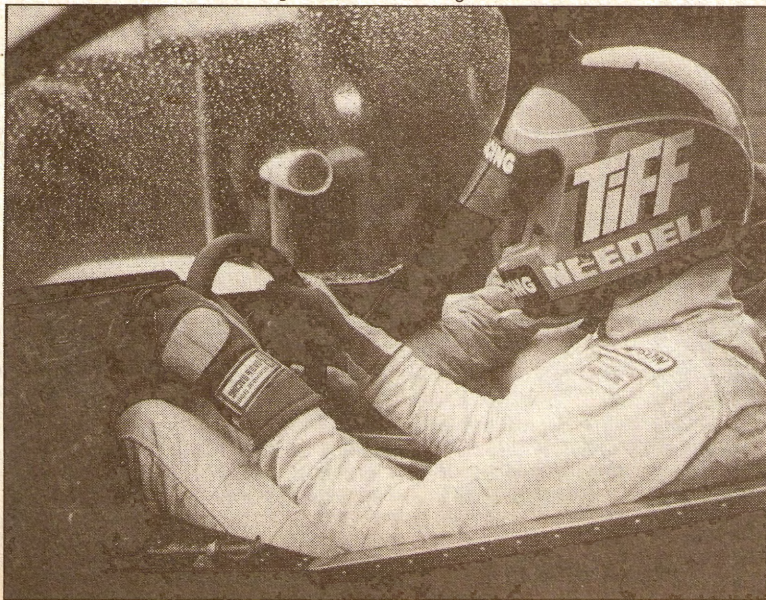
The Arundel has no pretension to ground effect, with the team feeling that most of the opposition have more psychological downforce than real grip. And so, they have concentrated on lightness and simplicity. A three quarter length monocoque is constructed from aluminium honeycomb for rigidity and lightness, with fabricated and heat-treated steel bulkheads.

The attractive bodywork is made of fibreglass and carbonfibre mixture with the doors being either on or off! Front downforce is regulated by a good old fashioned splitter and a simple full width

championship. There followed seasons of FF2000, Mazda RX7 saloons, Sports 2000 and then, in 1983, Thundersports, sharing a Chevron B36 with James Weaver — all under the Eastick management.

The pairing scored a memorable win at

The C200's cockpit feels like a single seater with a strong bulkhead on either side of the driver.



rear wing regulates the download at the back. The suspension is outboard upper and lower wishbone at the front, and inboard rocker arm top and wishbone at the rear. The Arundel uses Koni dampers, AP twin caliper twin pot brakes all round and runs Avon tyres on its 16in Dymag wheels.

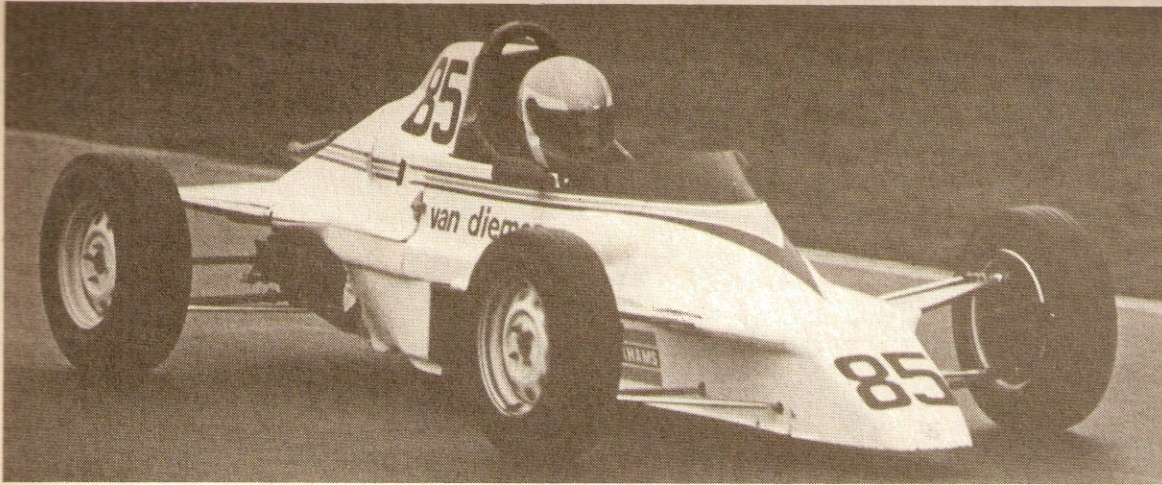
The team currently use a straightforward 3-litre DFV with soft cams and a rev limit of 9,400rpm for endurance work. The Spice-Tiga team did, of course, gain much of their success with a 3.3-litre unit but, when it comes to the fuel restricted race, there seems to be little in it. The oil tank is neatly housed in the adaptor plate that connects DFV to Hewland FGB gearbox with the usual five forward ratios. Radiators are fed by ducts in the side, below the doors.

Getting into the Arundel is actually more of a knack than for most Group C cars due to the long shallow rake of the windscreen, with the top of the entrance area a lot further back than normal. Inside, you feel as though you are sliding into a single seater because there is a high front to rear bulkhead between the two seats. Once slotted in, the all round support is excellent and the 'forward' driving position gives very good visibility. The Arundel is, of course, a 1984 legal C2 which puts the drivers' feet behind the centre line of the front wheels and it's only that long raking screen that gives the feeling of a forward driving position.

My 'dry' test of the Arundel is distant memory from last June, yet I can still remember the satisfaction of taking a very new motor car, changing a few things here and there, virtually doubling the spring rates and then very easily lapping faster than the C2 lap record. The Arundel was light to drive, positive in response and produced excellent lap times with little effort. Perhaps it's a reflection of teams trying too hard to gain ground effect without sufficient research facilities, thus creating more drag than downforce, or perhaps it's a reflection of Gary Anderson's design abilities; but certainly the simple approach of the Arundel design could reap dividends.

My recent test in the wet really proved little — except that Silverstone collects some mighty puddles on a wet day — and it was all aquaplane and wheelspin, with Mike Eastick trying to prevent James and I from having a bravado competition! As usual, the seat filled with water — no racing car ever stays dry — and visibility was reduced despite the best efforts of the pantograph windscreen wiper. Keeping screens clean on Group C cars is a major problem. The Arundel is available with a heated screen — which is expensive, but invaluable. While the external wiper seemed to cope as well as any. In a single seater you are close enough to 'your' windscreen — or visor — to see through the rain drops and I must admit the need to use wipers in Group C drives me mad, as they are an obvious distraction.

The Arundel C200 Group C2 could be a very competitive addition to the endurance sportscar ranks or even the IMSA ranks. The fact that it has lapped Silverstone so impressively and with such ease gives the car fantastic potential and must provide Michael Eastick and his enthusiastic crew with even more frustration as they are unable to find a backer. I sincerely hope we will see the Arundel — and many more new C2s — at Silverstone this year.



Ford's fleet of 25 Van Diemen RF85 FF1600 cars will go from the Race of Champions to found the formula in Portugal.

Van Diemen win Ford contract for RoC

Van Diemen International Racing Services has won the lucrative contract to supply the Ford Motor Company with a fleet of FF1600 chassis for its forthcoming 'Race of Champions' promotion. Ralph Firman's company, the most successful chassis manufacturers in the history of the formula, is to build 25 identical RF85 machines for the international 'run-off' — to be held at the British GP meeting at Silverstone, in July — and these will then form the basis of the launch of FF1600 in Portugal in 1986.

Several leading marques submitted tenders for the Ford contract. Van Diemen's superb new Dave Baldwin-designed car, and the Norfolk team's back-up service winning the day. Last year, when FF1600 was introduced to

France, it was rivals Reynard who were asked to provide the 'kits' which were subsequently built and marketed under the Rondeau banner, remember.

"We are obviously delighted with Ford's order to supply cars for this epic event", commented Firman, who received the glad tidings last Thursday. Stuart Turner, Ford of Europe's Director of Motor Sports, was similarly enthusiastic. "I was very impressed with

the efficient way the whole FF1600 industry responded to our enquiries, and am pleased that we will be working closely with Van Diemen on the project."

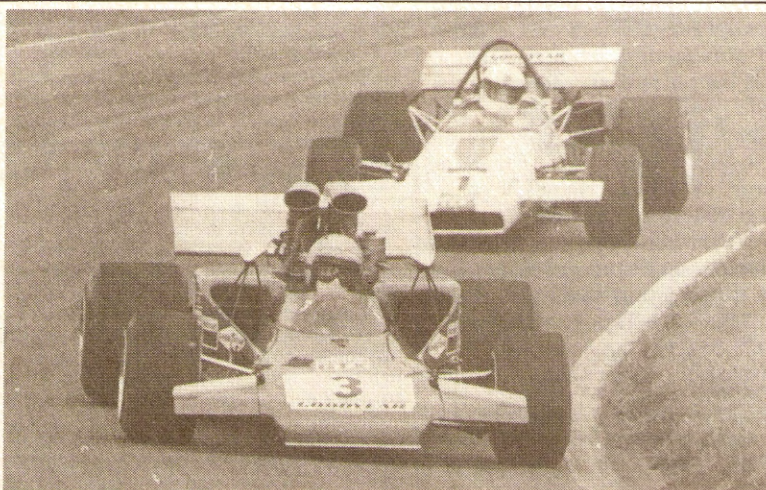
The 'Race of Champions' will bring together the 1984 national champions of every country participating in the world's most popular single-seater formula, to determine a 'world champion'. Engine contracts will be signed later.

Greenan in quick 84SF

After a year in which he appeared only occasionally, usually with his ageing but still rapid Delta T81, Joey Greenan is planning a more serious assault on the Irish FF2000 scene during the coming season. Joey has acquired the Reynard 84SF which took John McCracken to last year's Irish title.

The Delta has been handed down to hillclimber Barclay Bingham, whose old Reynard 80SF has been taken over by Terry Ingles, registrar of the Northern Ireland hillclimb championship. Another FF2000 regular, Leslie Wright, is also-looking to update his equipment.

Joey Greenan — updating his equipment.



Alex Seldon will race a Lola T300 (like Frank Gardner's 1971 car, above) this year.

Seldon return to HSCC

The Seldon Group celebrates its ruby anniversary this year, with the announcement of its return to motor sport sponsorship. The Guildford-based companies, which specialise in the design, installation and service of air conditioning, ventilation and commercial/industrial refrigeration equipment, is not only backing the HSCC's Pre-'70 Single-Seater series, but also a leading contender within it, Alex Seldon's own Lola T300 F5000 chassis.

Seldon's, formerly supporters of the HSCC Classic Sportscar championship, are hoping that their involvement (with options for 1986-7) will strengthen the category which caters — somewhat confusingly — for cars raced prior to December 1971. Three classes will be run this year (for over 1600cc, 1101-1600cc and up to 1100cc machinery), with division winners to receive £100, £60 and £30 respectively at each event. Brian Cocks has full details, on 066-63 543.

The Seldon Racing Services Lola —

similar to the Chevrolet-powered car which Frank Gardner used so successfully to clinch the Rothmans F5000 series in 1971 — should be a spectacular addition to the Historic championship.

New Midget racing division

A further class has been introduced to the MG Car Club's Midget Championship, catering for semi-modified cars. It is designed to appeal to a wide range of entrants including sprinters, hillclimbers, MGOC road-modified contenders and even owners of road-going cars with wide wheels.

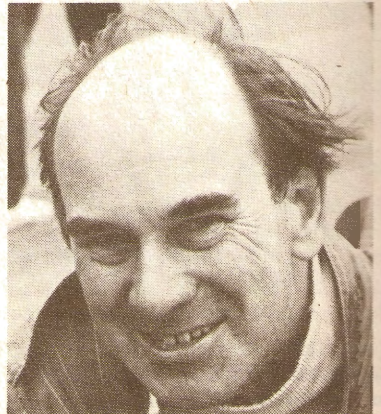
The cars will run as Class B in the Modified midget series and sponsorship is permitted. Regulations state that competing cars retain standard shape bodywork for the year of original chassis manufacture, Fibreglass body panels may be used but the minimum weight limit is 1250lbs (612kg).

B & Q back S2000 '85

The British Sports 2000 championship will be sponsored in 1985 by the B&Q Do-It-Yourself group. The B&Q British Sports 2000 Championship will take in 16 races at Brands Hatch, Oulton Park, Snetterton, Silverstone, Donington, Thruxton and Castle Combe.

The championship winner will receive a trophy and £1,000, with runners-up taking £500 and £250. Points will be awarded on a 20-15-12-10-8-6-4-3-2-1 basis at every round with a bonus point apiece for pole position and fastest lap. Each driver's best 13 scores will count. The championship is organised by The Brands Hatch Racing Club.

B&Q have a 150-strong national chain of DIY stores, employing 6500 people. They are planning a similar operation for motorists and see motor sport as an ideal promotional vehicle . . .



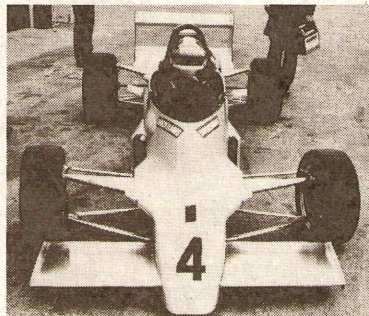
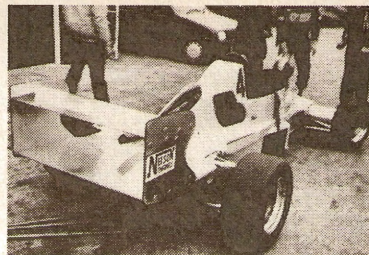
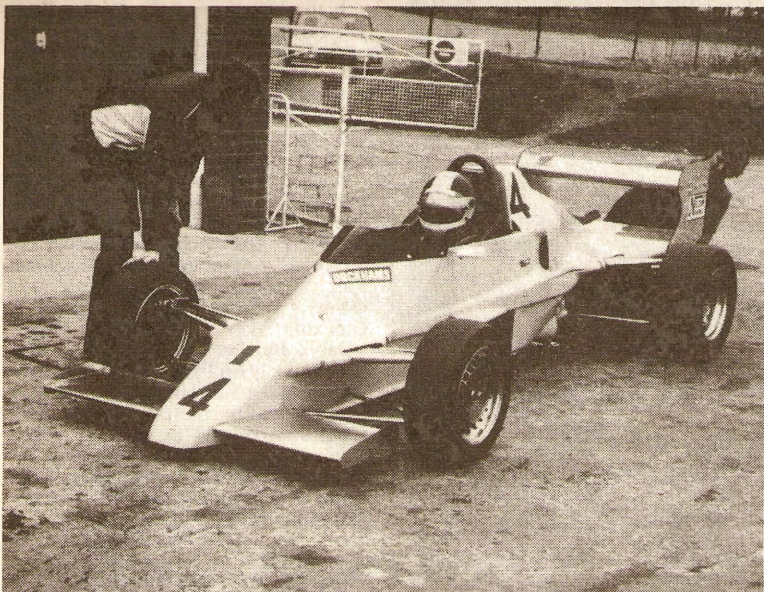
'Pop' Render — new Pilbeam sportsman.

Hillclimb changeover

With triple British champion Martin Bolsover taking to the circuits this season (with an historic McLaren CanAm car), the 1985 RAC Hillclimb championship promises to be a wide open contest.

Numerous major contenders have changed their mounts over the winter, in readiness for the title race which opens at Loton Park on April 7/8. Max Harvey and Martyn Griffiths have a new Pilbeam chassis on the stocks, Max having sold his 1983 tub to British Sprint champion Roy Lane and put last season's honeycomb car on the market.

David Render, that stalwart speed event competitor and sponsor, is set for a big challenge with the Pilbeam MP43 sports car, which Bolsover used to good effect last year. 'Pop' Render's ex-Lane/Simon Riley March 741 will be seen in selected rounds, in the experienced hands of Paul Edwards.



Large GM Dealersport bonuses

In addition to their extensive 1985 motor sport team, GM Dealer Sport is offering generous cash bonuses for users of Vauxhall-Opel cars (with GM engines) in competition this year. The awards scheme is open to all competitors, excluding those already receiving direct GMDs support.

On the racing side, an RAC British Saloon Car Championship event win is worth £1500 (£5000 for outright series victory); Uniroyal or Monroe prod-saloon race winners will receive £1000 (£300 for a class win) or £3500 for the overall championship (£1000, class win). Special saloon race victors can claim £500 per win or £1500 per championship.

Details of the lucrative fund are available from the UK Co-ordinator, PO Box 200, Sutton Coldfield B75 7TR.

LEP Libre looks promising

Interest is currently running high in the BRSCC's Lep Group *Formule Libre* championship, with numerous entrants of F1, F2 and F5000 machinery already having expressed their intention to compete in the promotion, which starts at Brands Hatch at Easter.

John Brindley's March 821, John Travis's RAM 01, Bob Baxter's Arrows, Norman Paine's Ensign and the Fittipaldi of Graham Williams are among the ex-GP cars down to run, while Tony Trimmer's Lola T330 and the Chevron B24 of Richard Piper are among the F5000 runners.

The Lep sponsorship deal sees the doubling of last year's prize fund, with £300 for the winner of each race, and £150, £100, £80, £60 and £50 to the next five finishers. Pole position merits a £25 bonus, while £50 will be paid to the first 2-litre driver home at every event.

Love thy Jaguar

The Jaguar Driver's Club will host a film show on St. Valentine's Day (February 14), for all lovers of the marque. The venue will be the Pack Horse and Talbot, 145 Chiswick High Road, London W4. Films will include some historic footage of Mk 11's and E-types in action as well as some more general saloon racing.

The show is open to everyone, and will start at 7.30pm sharp. There will be a charge of £2 to cover costs. Anyone in need of directions can obtain them from 01-994 0360.

BRIEFLY

■ Reynard Racing Cars's FF1600/FF2000 production line is well oiled at present, as heavy demand for the Bicester products is met. Last week, works mechanics Kenny Ferris and Steve McCaughey slotted an extra 85FF into the tight schedule, completing it from a kit in just 11½ hours.

■ Long-time FF1600 competitor Peter Bell has recently taken delivery of a new Ray 85F, to replace his ex-John Robinson 83F version. Last year, Bell impressed with his speed in the old car, so he should be an even greater force this season.

The sleek Van Diemen RF85 was most promising in early testing, with Dave Coyne at the wheel.

FF2000 RF85 rapid in Snetterton shakedown

The first FF2000 version of Van Diemen's sensational RF85 chassis was shaken down at Snetterton on Tuesday by British FF1600 champion Dave Coyne, the man who will lead the works 2-litre onslaught in Britain and Europe this season. Just as its FF1600 cousin was impressive from day one, the pretty winged device was quickly setting com-

petitive times at the Norfolk circuit. Coyne completed 83 laps, trouble-free apart from a punctured tyre, and whittled his lap times down through the 1m 05s bracket to a best of 1:4.7 by the end of the afternoon. Although the class record stands to Mauricio Gugelmin's Reynard 84SF (at 1:3.8, in perfect conditions), the new Van Diemen's mark would have

claimed pole for the last Racing Displays British FF2000 round at the circuit, by 0.1sec.

Needless to say, Ralph Firman's men are greatly encouraged by the car's debut performance. Coyne cannot wait to get his teeth into a full development programme with the RF85 this month!

New '85 FF for Ward

Gary Ward, the promising 21-year-old from Northampton, will continue in FF1600 this season, at the wheel of a new works-assisted Reynard 85FF. Ward will contest the major championships with motivation from factory Aldon engines.

The Reynard, due to be collected this week, will be prepared by its driver (who has worked with Abbey Farm Racing and SRS of late) between meetings, and run by works mechanic Kenny Ferris at the events themselves.

"We've got to look to youngsters like Gary," said Rick Gorne of Reynard on Monday, "and we will help him where we can. He's certainly quick enough — he proved that last year — and should be a winner with more experience."

Milldent to run FF1600

Milldent Motorsport, the Hinckley team run by Australian Steve Farrell, is to branch out into FF1600 this season, in addition to fielding cars in the British and European FF2000 championships.

Farrell, who has run Van Diemen and Reynard chassis in recent seasons, has a quartet of Ralph Firman's RF85 cars reserved, two for each formula. "I was undecided between the major marques," said the hard-working Steve early this week, "but I am opting for the Van Diemens, one of which will be driven in FF2000 by Steve Pettitt."

Milldent are currently seeking a second 2-litre driver, but are also speaking to several 'novice' FF1600 pilots for their Junior team. Farrell can be contacted on (0455) 617113.

Reynard 85SFs for RCRS

Rob Creswell Racing Services, winners of the Champion of Brands FF1600 series for the past three seasons (through Ray drivers Andy Ackerley, Franklyn de Karl Jones and Chris Ringrose), have decided to graduate to FF2000 this year, having tested the water in a low key effort with the development Ray last season.

The Faygate team has deposits on a couple of Reynard 85SF chassis which will be powered by Minister-prepared Pinto engines, as part of the Medway firm's big 2-litre push in 1985. Rob is presently negotiating with several drivers, with a view to running them in Britain and/or Europe.

Monoposto Awards

The Monoposto Racing Club's annual dinner dance and awards presentation ceremony was held last Saturday evening, at the splendid Tewkesbury Park Golf and Country Club in Gloucestershire. All the leading lights of the friendly organisation were present, to see their champions, and other luminaries, honoured in fine style.

George Whitehead and Simon Davey received their trophies for winning the Monoposto A and B (now Kent) series, while Tony Steele accepted the Lenham Storage Formula Junior spoils and Simon Hadfield the Historic F3 prize.

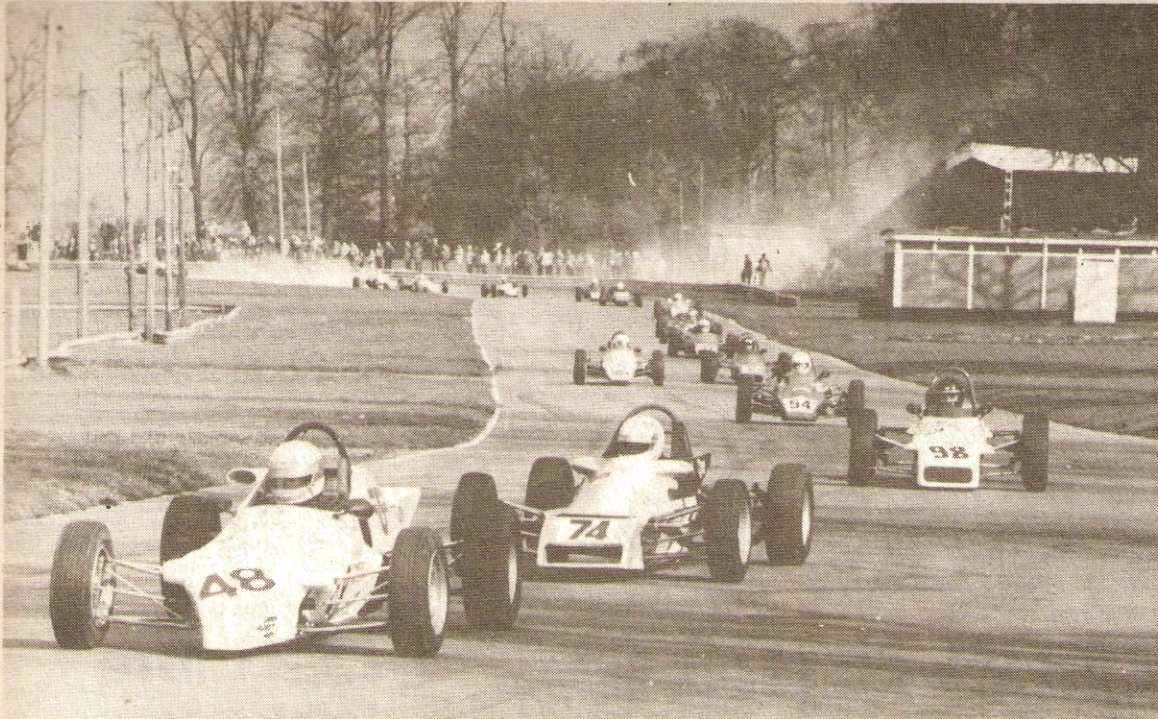
Mike Harrison took the rear-engined

FJ class title, while Mono newcomers Dick Draper and Mark Jeffrey picked up the 'New Members' and ABC trophies respectively, for staunch first-season efforts. The Newbridge Trophy, for best self-prepared Monoposto car, was accorded to March 733 driver Mike Adams.

A very special cheer was reserved for FJ sponsor (and car collector) Rod Tolhurst, as he stepped forward to receive a fine Michael Maule painting of his Cooper from Alan Putt, on behalf of all the Lenham Storage Historic FJ competitors. Thus, an enjoyable social gathering was rounded off.

Sponsor Rod Tolhurst presents FJ winner Tony Steele (left), and is rewarded himself by Alan Hutt.





Tom Brown won the Formula Ford 1600 title again — his fifth consecutive title — this year in a Crosslé 55F.

Tom Brown's salad days

BILL HENDERSON looks back at Scottish racing in 1984, with Road Saloons providing the most exciting action in one of the best seasons for a long time north of the border

Scottish motor racing enjoyed its best season for a long time, with the 10 meetings split six to four in favour of the Ingliston circuit over the windy Knockhill course. There was close racing, particularly in the Road car classes and FF1600, that led to larger than usual attendance figures. And the hardy Knockhill faithfuls were even treated to some race commentaries, something to which they have not been accustomed to date.

FF 1600

As a curtain raiser, meetings commenced with a Formula Ford qualifying race and this class, sponsored by Hubert Mitchell Insurance Brokers, continued to be highly competitive but was once again dominated by Tom Brown the Cambuslang heating engineer switching from a long association with Van Diemen to a Scholar engined Crosslé 55F. He took his fifth championship with victories at every meeting he attended, except when he tangled with Irish champion Anthony Murray on the opening lap at the August meeting. Brown provided the target for a pack of young hotshoes, but he would calmly stroke his Scottish Road Services car through to the flag as his challengers eliminated each other in their furious dicing.

Neil Cochrane showed a fair turn of speed, his Lola Hart T642E, indeed equalling Brown's Ingliston lap record in May. He led the abandoned race at Knockhill from Harvey Gillanders who forsook his Royale for a Van Diemen RF84 sponsored by Cameron Builders to achieve two sparkling race victories at the wet September meeting at the Edinburgh circuit, after a battle with Willie Rose. The latter settled rapidly into his sleek Reynard Minister 84FF at mid season, to enjoy a fantastic battle for the lead with Tommy Reid, ending only fractions behind the Irish veteran, which is no discredit, as Reid was a regular Ingliston victor and outright record holder aeons ago.

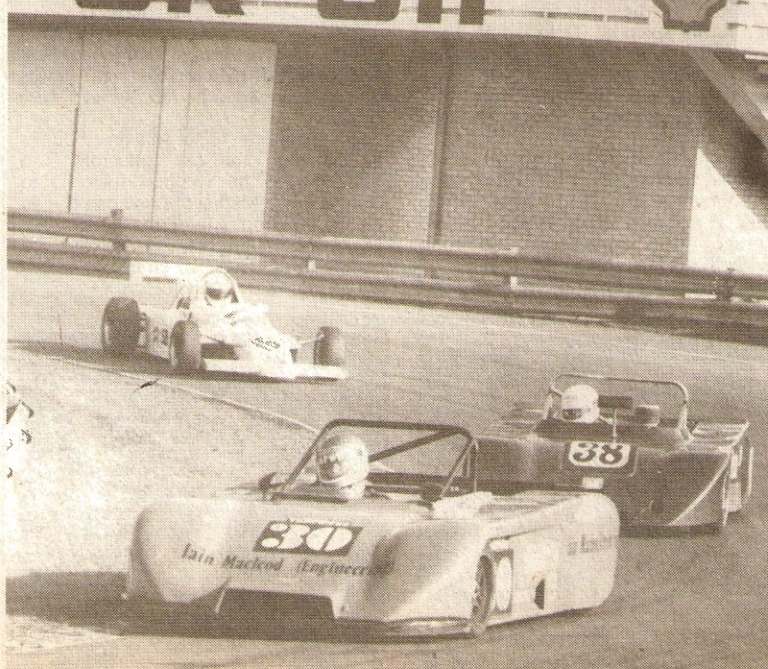
Stewart Roden trotted out an immaculate NCR Decision Mate Van Diemen RF84 and was extremely competitive, hounding Gillanders and Cochrane. A feature of Scottish motor sport is the number of chargers from the north of the country, including Geordie Taylor, who

performed wonders with his venerable Sparton-Minster FF80, teaming up with Kevin McCormick's similar car, acquired from William Lippe, who left the scene to set up his architectural business, while Mike MacPherson did not enjoy the best of seasons with his Van Diemen. From Peterhead came the brothers Harper, Cliff and Colin, the former starting and ending the season on a high note, as his brother's RF78 developed a penchant for

blowing engines, after consistent placings. Neil Gillanders had screwed together his brother Harvey's Royale RP 33 for the final meeting but rattled it into the Grandstand barriers, due to the radiator detaching itself and jamming under the car.

Of the local drivers, Peter Jamieson was consistently in the awards after victory in the opening race of the season, with his ever immaculate PRS, while similarly mounted Ken Le May dreamed of FF2000. Ken Dyer in an equally spotless PRS, opened a promising season with a fine third, improving to lead for most of the September Knockhill qualifier, as Tony Gemmell gave himself an excellent parting gift prior to moving south, with a victory at the May meeting

Laurence Jacobsen's Chevron B60 won frequently in the class A Sports Clubmans series.



with the Newtown Auto Centre PRS-Auriga 82F. Another to drop out, following a water-ski accident was Glasgow lawyer Sandy McEwan who had swapped his ancient Crosslé for the ex-Mike MacPherson Van Diemen RF80, annexing victory at the opening Fife circuit race.

From Carlisle came a strong duo, Colin Birbeck and Barry Nicholson, the former giving locals plenty to think about especially after taking delivery of the latest totally unsponsored Van Diemen prior to totally demolishing it when disputing the lead with Willie Rose at Knockhill.

Derek Butcher, rejoicing in the unaccustomedly brilliant Knockhill weather, acquired a Van Diemen to celebrate Easter with a fine sixth place, later to take a fourth, followed by a third at the Edinburgh circuit. Harry Minty went one better, inheriting second when Ralph Halley spun out in his Royale. Campbell Chisholm rented a Crosslé 55F from Tommy Reid ably backing him with a fourth place in July. Promising performances were put up by Alex Knox and Alex Mutter in Van Diemens frequently mixing it with the Crosslé 25Fs of David Thomas and J. Lindsay Mann.

FF2000

Being numerically low, the FF2000 class progressed but slowly, Van Diemen drivers Steve Buxton and Stephen Robertson joining Derek Palmer's Reynard SF81 to race with the spare Libre entry. In July, Chic Stenhouse joined the class with his Tredaire Van Diemen RF83 and set an electrifying pace to snatch victory and lap record to earn himself Man of the Meeting award. At the final meeting, against a phalanx of Irish drivers, he was outfumbled by Leslie Wright, but held off Tommy Reid and James Tollerton to finish first Reynard driver home.

Formule Libre

Libre fields ran pretty thin throughout the year, being augmented by a motley collection of Clubmans and Sports 2000s. Jim Stevenson was the man to catch in the Baker Ralt RT4, with George MacMillan, campaigning the Bass Rock Garage RT2, usually making the pace in the opening laps. However, Russell Spence changed that when he appeared in the ex-Chico Serra Fittipaldi F8 in July, blasting the big car past the Aberdonian to take the flag by 2 secs. At the following meeting it was the turn of Robin Smith to provide the opening shock, when he rocketed away in an original Chevron B36 into which he had shoe-horned a 3.0 DFV. Geoff Todd brought out his March 77B but it began to show its years as the season progressed. Apart from a retirement at the opening meeting and the Spence intrusion, Stevenson had an unbroken run to the Bernard Hunter Crane Hire Libre Championship.

The Ecurie Ecosse Chevron B54 was entered in this class for selected Scottish drivers, Peter Jamieson starting the ball rolling in May, with Jim McGaughay's opportunity coming when his motive power was being overhauled. Tom Brown returned from holiday to be given his first drive on slicks — coincidentally his Crosslé was being restored after his tangle with Anthony Murray, while Angus Young got his race after his Agra Scirocco was consumed by fire. FF1600 challenger Neil Cochrane sensibly conducted the blue car at Knockhill, leaving Road Saloon wizard Hugh Chalmers to round off the season.

Sports/Clubmans

The amalgamated Sports/Clubmans class promised a repeat of the previous season's Fyda/Allen duel in the Agra Mallocks, but while John Fyda headed the results, despite the presence at the opening meeting of Will Hoy and Vernon Davies in the Reid Wines Mallocks,

Road Saloons

Eagerly awaited highlight of most SMRC meetings was the boisterous antics of the Road Saloons, supported by the Luckenny Restaurant, whose owner Howard Fowler did battle in the spring meetings with the venerable 3-litre BMW of Walter Robertson. But it was the dapper Hugh Chalmers, whose impeccably smooth handling of the 2.2 Talbot Sunbeam Lotus, dominated the series after an opening second to Jimmy McRae who took Hugh McCaig's 2.3 Chevette to victory, but who for the rest of the season had to accept following the Edinburgh doctor, except when the rally man lost some gears and allowed Niall Mulloy ahead in a 3-litre Capri which had replaced his 2.0 Opel Kadett.

Somewhere behind, the desperados Ross in the SAS Motor Engineers Escort and Fleming in a mundane looking brown Toyota Celica swapped places with gay abandon, completing the season honours even. Just as incredible was the Sunbeam Stiletto, conducted by Sid Harrison, which outsmarted the more powerful machinery, leaving the spectacle to the various Escorts of Alistair Gray, Ronnie Irvine and Andrew Forrest, who did his car no good, understeering off the Knockhill circuit and rolling over the armco in practice. Other noted understeerers were the Scirocco of Steve Harvey, three wheeling in concert with the Renault 5 of Ken Shaw, in contrast to the more stately Mini of Ross Sutherland.

Jimmy McRae set the class record at the first meeting but Steven Jefferies' Escort chopped it down in July, fleeing from the Colt Lancer Turbo of Haig, in Acorn Computer colours, while Hugh Chalmers slashed a further half second off in the final meeting.

Historics

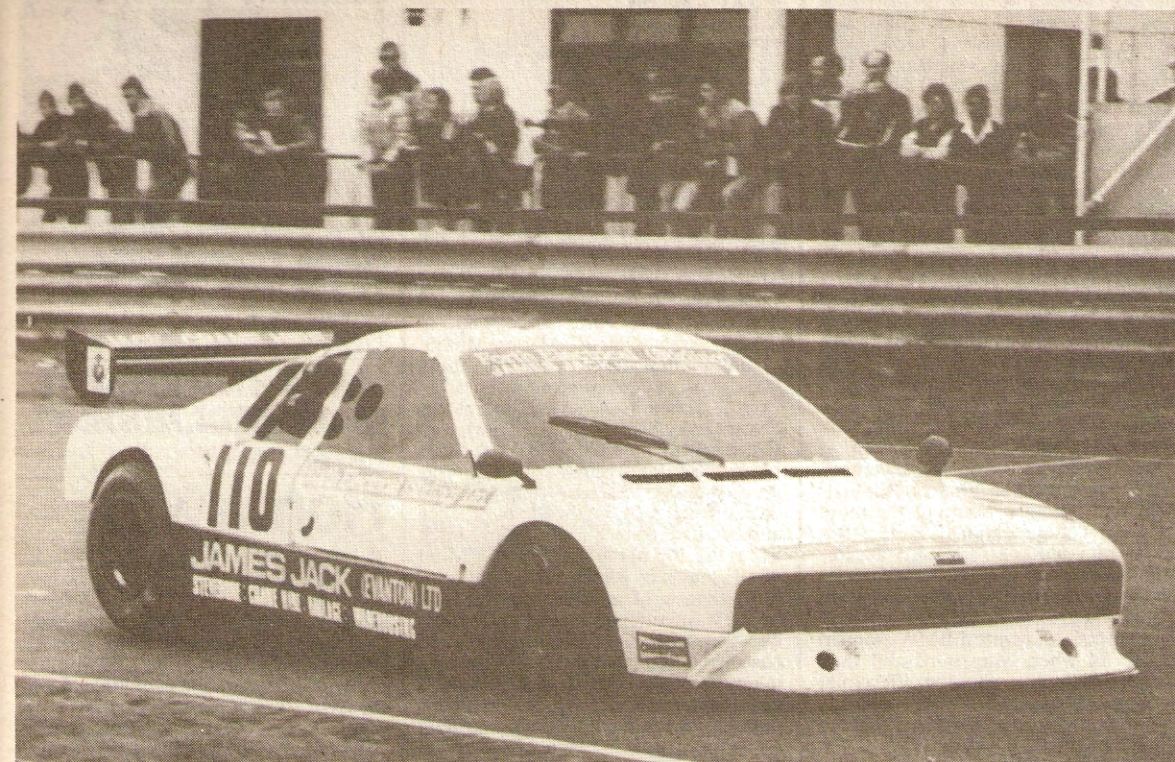
Ingliston hosted a Historic Grand Prix for the McLaren Trophy over two races as a feature of the July meeting with local favourite Roddy MacPherson in the Cooper-Bristol snatching the front until John Harper hauled the ex-Ecurie Ecosse Moriza Lister Jaguar past. This left Bill Black in the Tipo B Alfa-Romeo to keep Bruce Halford at bay, with Martin Morris's leading pre-war ERA in fifth. In race two, Halford took the lead from Harper with Morris in third, clinching that section as Black retired.

The normal October Historic event was down in entries but the Cooper-Bristols of MacPherson and Oliver Robertson were no match for the younger Vixen resuscitated by Alness butcher Charlie Munro, who eased away from the Brabham F2 of Bill Ness.

August at Ingliston found the GM Dealers sponsorship attract a very good crowd, with their circuit racing boss Bill Cleland from Peebles master-minding attractions including son John demonstrating his racing Monza and Jimmy McRae his Opel 400 rally car, and having to use his own Manta in the production race. Alas the Astra challengers were thin on the ground, and somewhat unspectacular, with James Kay heading Colin Aitchison.

The Ford Credit Trophy meeting one month later highlighted a round of the Ford Credit Fiesta championship, with 15 starters from which Brian Farminer grabbed the line from Robin Parsons with Ian Briggs maintaining third. The Fiestas circulated in line a stern, Mike Smith slipping down the field with an ailing car, as Vic Covey clanged his Canon Racing version off the barriers.

For Ingliston the season was one of the best, the close racing, particularly in the road car classes and FF1600 attracting the crowds back. It is hoped that while Knockhill is at the mercy of the elements, at least a commentary will be provided, and that feature events might be arranged to pull in more spectators. ■



No-one saw much of Jim McGaughay this year, he was unbeatable in GTs with his Lancia 037-bodied Toleman.

Kenny Allen had problems after demolishing his car against a tree at the Fintray hillclimb in June. However, despite a painful ankle and eye injury, he was back by the end of July complete with spectacles and Andy Smith Vision 84F—the combination proving quite uncatchable by other A class contestants. Jimmy Patrick and Eric Paterson returned to the fray in a Mallock, to be followed home consistently by the similar car of Bill Drummond. Reg Forrester-Smith continued his long racing career in his Marquiss Mallock.

The fleetest car in the B section was the Vision of Andy Smith, but Alex Dobbie amassed a greater pointage, having completed every meeting and all but snatched the Lowland Tyres and Exhausts Scottish Sports Car Championship which went to the Ian McLeod Engineering Chevron B60 in which Laurence Jacobsen frequently wrapped up the A class cars, but lost his lap record to the redoubtable Russell Spence with his solo effort in a rented sports Royale. Quite undeterred by this, Keith Bowmaker with his Lola T492 almost always won the battle with the Tiga of Bill Ness, with Andrew Houston joining in on occasion with the Link 2000.

GTs

The GT class sponsored by the Sports-tune concern of Bill Borrowman and David Ogilvy was like the FF1600 class in that when Jim McGaughay was present he was virtually unbeatable, in his neat Lancia 037 bodied F2 Toleman chassis with a 2-litre BMW engine. His main challenge came from the Claymore Shellfish Lotus Esprit wielded by Ron Cumming whose V6 power could blast it away from the start, but thereafter the Aberdeenshire driver had to be content with a string of second places apart from scoring at Knockhill and Ingliston in the absence of the Lancia-Toleman.

Bill Paul, once he got to grips with the potential of the potent ex-Barton AC 3000 ME, achieved some good placings but fell to the 1-litre Davrian of Kenny Coleman—resplendent in the colourful R. J. Cross livery. He was afforded no respite since Ian Forrest ran the ex-Tony Bridge Imp, with Drambuie support for the umpteenth year, to a string of good results.

Others to change mounts were Harry

Simpson, swapping his Davrian for an unhappy spell in a Wallinger Imp, results only coming when he switched to a Stiletto, while John Bothamley sold his sports Lola to purchase a Davrian, again in HAS for Gas signwriting, really coming on form as the season progressed.

Gus Young continued to pedal his Agra-Scirocco leading the up to 1500cc class until the car was consumed by fire at home, leaving gamekeeper Stan Share to achieve second place in the championship due to finishing at every meeting. Jim McDonald frequently led the midfield Davrians of Richard Green, Ricky Gauld and Rod McLeod who were often involved with the forcefully driven Imp of Bob Milne.

Road Sports

While there were some loosely termed Road Sports cars, no one worried overmuch as the racing was highly entertaining, dominated largely by Lotus variants, Robin Gray on his only appearances, at the opening and closing Ingliston meetings, taking smoothly driven victories in his Elan. Derek Butcher collected a string of wins at both circuits with an impeccable Super Seven, as

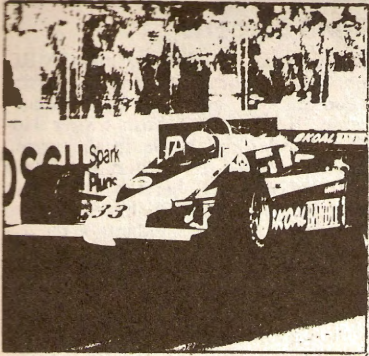
David Nisbet with his Caterham Seven kept the flag flying in July, with Tom McCallum signalling his intentions in second place, his turn coming in September with the colours of Data General Computers on the TR7 V8.

After a late start, Raymond Stewart in the Iain Graham Ltd Clan Crusader proved a potent force, after the possibilities had been tested by a one-off appearance of Brendan Mackinven at which meeting Roger Ealand with the Rolatruc Marcos GT, finished second. Tony Stubbs enjoyed his August visit so much, despite a corner cutting penalty losing him a place, that he returned in October to renew his squabble with Stewart. The Dutton Phaeton of Andrew Forrest was always competitive, more so at the Fife circuit against circuit-owner-to-be Derek Butcher, sharing race wins with him in April.

As mentioned earlier, to make up the grid, a number of Road Saloons were included, which gave Jimmy Fleming and Olly Ross a foretaste of their saloon antics and allowed Howard Fowler the opportunity to warm-up his Capri X, while Eric Haigh cottoned on quickly, getting his Colt Lancer Turbo in amongst the open-tops.

Hugh Chambers had a good year in Road Saloons with his 2.2 litre Talbot Lotus.





INTERNATIONAL RACES

PUKEKOHE SALOONS

Walkinshaw loses out

Although Tom Walkinshaw (Rover Vitesse) was the fastest qualifier at 87.27mph for the final round of the Nissan Sport 500 series at Pukekohe on Sunday, it was the Neville Crichton/Wayne Wilkinson BMW 635CSi that took the line honours, beating the Walkinshaw/Ron Dickson pairing by a clear 40secs over the 143 laps of the 2.176-mile 'long' circuit. One very smart stop about mid-race, at which point Crichton was race leader, sufficed for the

quickest was Frank Sytner (BMW 635CSi) on 1m 31.9s and next was Australian Dick Johnson (Ford Falcon) with 1m 32.2s. Then came Baigent (1m 32.4s), Delcourt (1m 32.8s) and Peter Brock (Holden Commodore, 1m 33.6).

As was to be expected, Walkinshaw led from pole on race day before the biggest crowd Pukekohe has seen in many a year and Crichton and Johnson were also prominent. However, Johnson did not last long. On top of brake bothers, the engine malfunctioned and blew out most of its oil, Johnson's early diagnosis being that, in the interests of economy, the mixture had been leaned too much. In the meantime, Walkinshaw held his lead reasonably comfortably until he pitted the Vitesse and handed over to Dickson after 48 laps. Dickson was not as fast as Walkinshaw who took over again with 60 laps still to run, at which stage the Crichton/Wilkinson BMW was more than 40secs in front.

At that juncture, some of the more favoured contenders had quit. After several pit visits the Brock/Larry Perkins Commodore had stopped permanently, having completed 69 laps and been running then in sixth place. Subsequently the Sytner/John Morton BMW stopped on lap 74 when lying third and then abandoned the race when the differential blew on lap 122.

Although it looked for a time that the Vitesse might reel in the BMW, as the race ran out and Walkinshaw plugged on, it was apparent that with the suspect rear tyre he had decided it was better to finish second than take the risk of being sidelined so late in the piece.

It was a grand climax for Crichton and



Neville Crichton/Wayne Wilkinson won through smart race craft at Pukekohe.

BMW and Wilkinson took over for the final stint without losing the place to Walkinshaw who plugged on to finish nursing a suspect rear tyre.

There was no doubt that the Rover was quickest car on the circuit, but it could not go through the race with only one stop and this was why the New Zealanders scored. The Kent Baigent/Neale Lowe 635 CSi finished third, also having completed 143 laps and two laps down were Michel Delcourt/Robbie Francevic (Volvo 240 Turbo). Curiously, they never looked like emulating their success of the previous week in the Wellington street race, even though Pukekohe should have been kinder than the stop-go circuit of the first Nissan round, as far as turbocharged cars are concerned.

Once again the Paul Adams/Alan Woolf Toyota Corolla GT finished fifth on 127 laps and sixth were Frank Ryan/Inky Tulloch (Nissan Bluebird Turbo) on 124 laps.

With a qualifying time of 1m 29.8secs on Saturday, Walkinshaw appeared to be in control. That was 3.2secs better than Baigent's pole winning time for the Pukekohe Benson & Hedges round last year and 2secs better than Crichton was able to achieve in his BMW. Third

Wilkinson, as well as their team manager Ray Stone. The Nissan Sport 500 at Pukekohe was their third win in the five endurance races of the New Zealand season, their other placings being a second and third.

PETER GREENSLADE

PUKEKOHE (NZ)

Feb 03

Nissan Sport 500 Group A round 2

311 miles — 143 laps

- 1, Neville Crichton/Wayne Wilkinson (BMW 635CSi), 143 laps;
- 2, Tom Walkinshaw/Ron Dickson (Rover Vitesse), 143 laps;
- 3, Kent Baigent/Neale Lowe (BMW 635CSi), 143 laps;
- 4, Michel Delcourt/Robbie Francevic (Volvo 240 Turbo), 141 laps;
- 5, Paul Adams/Alan Woolf (Toyota Corolla GT), 127 laps;
- 6, Frank Ryan/Inky Tulloch (Nissan Bluebird Turbo), 124 laps;
- 7, Ray Gulson/Grant O'Donnell (Alfa Romeo GTV 6), 124 laps;
- 8, Bob Holden/Glenn Clark (Toyota Levin), 123 laps;
- 9, Glenn McIntyre/Dennis Roderick (Holden Gemini SS), 122 laps;
- 10, Derek McDonald/Ross McDonald (Mitsubishi Mirage Turbo) 122 laps.

KYALAMI F2

Trevor to the fore

Trevor van Rooyen scored a flag to flag victory in the opening round of the South African F2 Championship at Kyalami. Van Rooyen was never fronted in the D&W Maurer MM83 with Bernard Tilanus his closest rival in the Duckhams Camec Ralt RT4 trailing home over 5 secs in arrears. Third place went to Wayne Taylor in the BP Maurer MM83.

In the initial stages of the race there was a close midfield dice between Brian Ferris (Maurer), American sprint car driver Micky Nish (Rack-rice Lant), Ken Critchfield (Scope March 832) and Klaus Grogor (Southern Sun March 832). This group was soon joined by John Moni who had suffered a stuck throttle in practice and had had to start his Gunston March 842 at the rear of the grid. By lap 7 Moni was through to fourth place, but with little chance of catching the leaders. There was drama at the end of that lap, however, when Grogor, Critchfield and Nish had a coming together at Wesbank, taking each other off. Moni retired seven laps later with tyre problems. This thinning of the field led to the leading non-winged car of Ivano Moavero inheriting fourth sport, but he was suffering from a failing engine and was passed on the line by Allan Dunlop — Dunlop thus clinching class victory.

The FF1600 race featured a great battle between Basil Mann and Graham Blankfield with victory going to the latter on the last lap — there was another representative of the Mann family in seventh place, Basil's sister Glenda.

COLIN WINDELL

KYALAMI (ZA)

Jan 26

South African F2 Championship, round 1, 18 laps — 46.66 miles

- 1, Trevor van Rooyen (Maurer MM83), 24m06.8s, 113.6mph;
- 2, Bernard Tilanus (Ralt RT4), 24m12.6s;
- 3, Wayne Taylor (Maurer MM83), 24m14.4s;
- 4, Allan Dunlop (March 76B), 25m01.4s;
- 5, Ivano Moavero (Ralt RT4), 25m01.5s;
- 6, Michael Bryan (March 77B), 25m22.8s.

Fastest lap: van Rooyen, 1m19.5s, 114.87mph.

FF1600 race

10 laps — 25.37 miles

- 1, Graham Blankfield (Royale RP21), 16m04.2s;
- 2, Basil Mann (Matro), 16m04.9s;
- 3, Mike Usdell (Royale RP31), 16m54.0s;
- 4, Denis Temple (Tempus 82), 16m54.1s;
- 5, Richard Brunt (Royale RP24), 17m22.2s;
- 6, Gerald Vorster (Ray 82F), 17m22.5s.

Fastest lap: Blankfield, 1m39.12s, 92.14mph.

Saeed Al Hajri and John Spiller moved into a six point lead by winning in Qatar.



INTERNATIONAL RALLIES

QATAR RALLY

Home win for Al Hajri

Reigning Middle East Rally Champion, Saeed Al Hajri, romped away with his home International event with a 6min victory over arch rival Mohammed Bin Sulayem from Dubai. Al Hajri's Rothmans Porsche 911SC RS finished the hard two days of rallying with a bigger margin than he had enjoyed throughout the event, when Bin Sulayem's Marlboro backed Toyota Celica Turbo punctured on the final stage. Oman's Tony Georgiou in a Nissan 240RS finished third after holding off a challenge from Kuwait's Michele Saleh debuting a Group A Toyota Corolla in the Middle East Championship. Saleh had dominated the running behind the two leaders on the first day, but a lengthy service break to renew his Corolla's suspension dropped him behind Georgiou, Fifth, after a stirring drive in his old Toyota Celica GT, came Kuwait's Ahmed Zaffeirie.

Punctures were to play a major part in deciding the outcome of the FISA championship's opening round. The Qatar event, held over two days, centred itself 40 kms from the capital, Doha, and relied on desert stages in the flat featureless surroundings. The surfaces were a mixture of sand and hard rock, and after crews voiced their concern about the quality of the tests, the Qatar Motor Sports Club organisers set graders out into the desert to smooth down the tracks. Yet, still there were problems for the top crews.

From the Thursday start, Al Hajri led briefly in the Porsche, only to find himself behind Bin Sulayem after a third stage puncture lost him 3 mins and damaged a rear hub. Bin Sulayem steered clear of the rocks to hold the





Above and below: Michele Saleh was in fine form in the Group A Corolla, finishing fourth.

number one spot until the 11th of the day's total 12 stages saw him too collect a puncture in the Toyota. He stopped halfway through the long 31km stage and changed the wheel, only for the car not to start — 4 mins later the engine burst into life and he charged off, but behind Al Hajri's leading Porsche.

Behind, Michele Saleh took his new, yet lower powered, car by the scruff of its neck and held a strong third place ahead of Abas Al Mosawi's Porsche 911SCRS, followed by Georgiou's Nissan; then tragedy struck the Mosawi Porsche. It coasted into service after four stages with a massive oil leak. The problem was traced to a split oil pipe and 9 mins were lost in the repair, only for the engine to shed a piston and catch fire on the following stage.

With Qatar's second driver out, Georgiou moved up to fourth place, chased by Kuwait's Zaffeiri and the talented youngster, Hamad Al Mazroui in his venerable Nissan 240RS. Then a timing error by Mazroui's co-driver saw him book in 19 mins early and drop out of the top 10 places, but at least he was first car on the road for the night stages, where dust could be a hazard. However, with temperatures positively arctic in comparison with the usual Gulf climate, and with a strong wind, any dust problem simply melted away and it was not long before both Al Hajri and Sulayem had moved ahead of the luckless Nissan in the running order. Saleh was crucifying the opposition in the diminutive Group A car, adopting much the same driving style as Per Eklund. Then after Thursday's final stage, it was decided to change the car's front suspension but at a cost of 19 mins lateness, dropping Saleh to fourth, only just ahead of Zaffeiri.

With alarm clocks primed, crews set off from the Doha re-start on Friday morning, facing the same 12 stages that were held the day before. Al Haiiri extended his lead to 4 mins over Sulayem, then settled back into a more relaxed driving style, leaving the Toyota driver to take the risks. Steadily Sulayem closed the gap, but his stage times were only handfuls of seconds faster than Al

Second place eventually went to Bin Sulayem by 6 mins following a final stage puncture.



Hajri's. Then, as if to rub salt into the wound, Sulayem punctured on each of the final two stages to give Ali Hajri an even bigger winning margin. Tony Georgiou raced on in his Nissan, suffering two punctures and a loose rear axle, but finished third ahead of Saleh, who had persistent brake trouble with the Corolla. Ahmed Zaffeiri too suffered punctures, but he was safely ahead of sixth placed Al Marri in his Subaru, with Hamad Al Mazroui recovering to finish seventh, but recording a string of fourth fastest stage times.

The Qatar result, Al Hajri's hat-trick of wins on his home international, gives the reigning champion an immediate six point lead in the 1985 series, followed by Bin Sulayem, with Georgiou and Saleh on equal points in third place.

STEVE FELLOWS

**QATAR RALLY (QA)
Jan 24/25
FISA Middle East Rally Championship — Round 1**

- 1, S. Al Hajri/J. Spiller (Porsche 911SC RC), 3h54m38s;
 - 2, M. Bin Sulayem/J. Daniels (Toyota Celica T), 4h00m34s;
 - 3, T. Georgiou/C. Dunn (Nissan 240RS), 4h19m33s;
 - 4, M. Saleh/Hassan Ali (Toyota Corolla), 4h29m58s;
 - 5, A. Zaffeiri/S. Ashkenani (Toyota Celica), 4h48m00s;
 - 6, A. Al Marri/H. Al Marri (Subaru), 5h01m35s;
 - 7, H. Al Mazroui/W. Al Kharusi (Nissan 240RS), 5h04m56s;
 - 8, M. Al Hajri/B. Abu Kura (Subaru), 5h32m20s;
 - 9, G. Al Kuwari/K. Kopti (Mitsubishi Lancer), 5h44m39s;
 - 10, A. Al Suwaiket/E. Al Shara (Mitsubishi Starion), 6h30m58s.
- 27 starters — 12 finishers



**NATIONAL RALLIES
WYDEAN STAGES**

Debut win for David

Reigning Shell Oils/AUTOSPORT National Rally Champion, David Llewelin, eased his works Audi Quattro to a 37sec victory on the Wydean Stages last Saturday, beating the similar car of Chris Lord on only his first drive as a member of the works team.



David Llewelin opened his works Audi account well with a victory.

But it would be wrong to suggest that the Welshman's win was a comfortable walkover. While Llewelin clearly revealed no first night nerves with his new mount, it still took time for him to fully relax and get into the swing of left foot braking. Indeed, for most of the day, Llewelin — partnered by Phil Short, whose expertise was no doubt of great comfort — had to fend off the challenge from Allan Edwards in his four-wheel-drive Escort.

Edwards led over the first four stages but eventually Llewelin closed the narrow gap and eased ahead on the fifth. Edwards' hopes of taking second place (or even regaining the lead) were dashed three stages from the end when a constant velocity joint failed, broke a drive shaft and left the 400bhp car with only rear-wheel-drive for the closing tests, something which Edwards described as 'hairy'.

The Griflex Quattro of Chris Lord therefore inherited second after a steady drive, the Yorkshireman concentrating on testing for his home international event in February.

Indeed the Wydean turned out to be a popular testing ground for other championships as several drivers took the opportunity to shake off the winter cobwebs. Clinton Smith returned to the BTRDA Championship event, not to defend his title but to prepare for the Shell Oils/AUTOSPORT series, and Russell Gooding was trying out his ex-Rallysprint Group A Rover Vitesse before an ambitious attack on the FISA Group A Challenge.

But for Smith, the event was to prove a fruitless outing as a series of thrown fan belts caused him to retire in order to preserve the engine of the Manta. Gooding suffered a first stage clutch failure but thereafter played himself in steadily to finish 13th.

And while some drivers were planning for the coming season, the King of the Dean, Graham Elsmore, was probably driving his Toyota Corolla for the last time due to lack of finance. Nevertheless, the many spectators were treated to a display of vintage Elsmore as he threw the Corolla towards fifth place and showed a degree of aggression and style that was sadly lacking in many of the other crews on the day.

Among the BTRDA crews, it seemed likely that top honours would go to the PCE Ascona 400 of Vince Wetton until a last stage roll cost the Midlands driver a popular maximum score. Wetton recovered to finish seventh overall but top marks went to David Maslen, driving the four-wheel-drive Manta 400 (demonstrated by Ari Vatanen in Sweden a couple of years ago) to a well deserved fourth place on his debut event. Keith Stones was also flying throughout the day with his Escort and netted sixth, ensuring that the clubmans series gets off to an intriguing start with new names cropping up to replace the familiar faces that seem to be missing this year.

The Production category fell, after a fine day's entertainment, to the Capri of

Jeremy Easson, while reigning champion, Mike Price, was next up with the newly acquired Audi 80 Quattro.

And the Vauxhall Rental Nova Cup crews — 12 of them in all — opened several pairs of eyes as they sped through the stages. These little 1300cc cars proved amazingly quick, all finished and, while Graham Holden has opened the scoring, there can be little doubt that a fascinating battle is to ensue in the coming months.

The Forest of Dean MC event is something of a one-off, attracting an entry of false quality to tackle the slickly run contest. David Llewelin, Chris Lord, Allan Edwards, Russell Gooding *et al*, are all on their way to higher things but the Dukeries Rally will offer another chance to view the second string championship regulars in action. What may be missing, however, is the exuberant driving of Andy Dawson in the standard Renault 5 which bounced its way around the Dean in fine style on Saturday. Who says rallying isn't fun?

KEITH OSWIN

Holden — first in the promising Nova Cup.





Easson — Production category victor.

WYEDEAN STAGES (GB)**Feb 02
BTRDA Rally Championship,
round 1
Vauxhall Rental Nova Cup,
round 1**

- 1, David Llewellyn/Phil Short (Audi Quattro), 55m42s;
 - 2, Chris Lord/Ron Varley (Audi Quattro), 56m19s;
 - 3, Allan Edwards/Paul Watkins (Ford Escort 4x4), 56m53s;
 - 4, David Maslen/Andrew Balfour (Opel Manta 400 4x4), 57m57s;
 - 5, Graham Elsmore/Neil Henderson (Toyota Corolla), 57m57s;
 - 6, Keith Stones/Craig Thorley (Ford Escort RS), 59m01s;
 - 7, Vince Wetton/Chris Allen (Opel Ascona 400), 59m06s; 8, Pete Doughty/Mike Smith (Opel Manta 400), 59m11s; 9, Mike Edmunds/Simon Warner (Ford Escort RS), 59m29s; 10, Jeff Churchill/Roger Jones (Ford Escort RS), 59m37s.
- BTRDA Championship:** 1, Maslen, 20pts; 2, Stones, 19; 3, Wetton, 18; 4, Doughty, 17; 5, Edmunds, 16.
- Vauxhall Rental Nova Cup:** 1, Graham Holden, 25pts; 2, Steve Davies, 22; 3, John Prichard, 20; 4, Andy Waddington, 19; 5, Andy Knight, 18.

GWALIA MIDNIGHT**Rogers —
in the dark**

Drivers with new cars filled the first two places on the poorly supported Gwalia Midnight Rally in south Wales last Saturday when only 20 crews took part in a route of 120 miles.

Lynn Rogers and Guy Woodcock won the event in an Escort RS 2000 which Rogers had 'on appro' from Roger Moran while runner-up Robert Davies/Ian Cooke were also airing a similar Escort. The route passed the famous Peter Vaughan accident spot on Map 160 and both leaders survived lurid spins on the 'blind brow, sharp left' section.

**GWALIA MIDNIGHT (GB)
Jan 26/27**

- 1, Lynn Rogers/Guy Woodcock (Ford Escort RS 2000), 42m04s; 2, Robert Davies/Ian Cooke (Ford Escort RS 2000), 43m37s; 3, Chris Summerfield/Kathie Cuzon (Ford Escort RS 2000), 47m42s; 4, Ewan Park/Gary Morgan (VW Golf), 53m44s; 5, John Smith/Adrian McDonald (Ford Escort 1600), 55m46s; 6, Andrew James/Mark Hopkins (Ford Escort RS 2000), 56m32s.

LONGLEAT STAGES**Balance
restored**

Having failed to finish the opening round of the Janspeed/Motoring News and Minicare Welsh Tarmac Championships, John Price redressed the balance on the second round, the Hoopers of Bristol Longleat Stages, last Sunday.

The Renault 5 Turbo driver maintained a steady pace over the slippery tarmac of the Longleat estate but used his superior knowledge at Cricket St Thomas Wildlife Park to really turn the screw. From that moment his victory was secure and there was nothing that Bob

Fowden, winner of the opening round, could do. Indeed, the Llanelli man started the final two Longleat tests in a furious mood after his service crew had arrived too late to do much about inappropriate tyres and the Rover slithered its way to sixth place, dropping four positions in those two stages.

Ian Donaldson, a regular challenger in Ireland and Belgium, confounded the seeding to take a fine second spot after a controlled drive in the ex-works Sunbeam but was pressed hard over the closing stages by Ray Radford in the rear-wheel-drive Escort. Having fallen victim to the Wydean's harsh timing system the day before, Radford was determined to collect something from the weekend.

Theo Bengry and Geoff Kitney were also having a fine struggle for fourth, resolved in the Herefordshire driver's favour, but were comfortably clear of Martin Freestone's Nissan at the finish.

Local star, Dennis Moody had been tipped by many as a likely victor — even though he did not have the amount of knowledge of the stages that some credited him with — but succumbed early in the event to distributor drive failure and, along with Andy Miers (whose new Escort blew a head gasket) spent most of the day as a spectator.

Graham Newby put his Astra Challenge car to its first test and emerged victorious from a 1300cc class battle with John Leppard's Samba, both front-wheel-drive cars proving better matched to the conditions than many of the other contestants who found that traction and caution were noticeably lacking in equal quantities!

KEITH OSWIN

**LONGLEAT STAGES (GB)
Feb 03****Janspeed/Motoring News
Stage Championship, round 2
Mini Welsh Tarmac
Championship, round 2**

- 1, John Price/Mike Bowen (Renault 5 Turbo), 63m51s;
 - 2, Ian Donaldson/Keith Wareham (Talbot Sunbeam Lotus), 63m59s;
 - 3, Ray Radford/Steve Radford (Ford Escort Mk3), 64m07s;
 - 4, Theo Bengry/Paul Watkins (Opel Ascona 400), 64m20s;
 - 5, Geoff Kitney/Alan McCann (Davrian), 64m39s;
 - 6, Bob Fowden/Hywel Thomas (Rover SD1), 65m13s;
 - 7, Martin Freestone/John Gittins (Nissan 240RS), 65m35s; 8, David Carter/Terry Carter (Ford Escort RS), 66m08s; 9, Gordon Batchelor/Geoff Maybank (Ford Escort RS) 66m12s; 10, Roger Matthews/Phil Suckling (Ford Escort RS), 67m01s.
- Janspeed/Motoring News:** 1, Fowden, 28pts; 2, Bengry, 24; 3, Price, 20; Freestone, 16; 5, Donaldson, 15.
- Minicare Welsh Tarmac:** 1, Mal Stuart/Martin Hyde, 22pts; 3, Fowden/Radford/ Dai Thomas/Sam Leasson, 20.

John Price took victory at Longleat by just 8secs in his Renault 5 Turbo.

**OFF-TRACK
SPORT****MONDELLO RALLYCROSS****Hudson
home**

With the outcome to the STP Rallycross Championship still wide open, Ron Hudson took a lucky victory in round five of the series at Mondello Park last Sunday when the A final leaders hit trouble. True to current form, Colin Richards had proven the quickest in qualifying, recording a 3m 57.28s best, but the Porsche driver was to be denied an outright win yet again. Leading the A final by about 10 car lengths from his nearest rival Con Carey, a broken drive-shaft at Esso corner on lap 4 put Richards into retirement.

Almost at the same moment, Carey's electrics failed and he too coasted to halt as a surprised Hudson swept past to win, with fellow Escort drivers Tom and John Farrell taking second and third places respectively. Hudson still leads the series on points overall, but after dropping their worst scores Tom Farrell takes over at the head of the table closely followed by Richards, then Hudson, leaving it all to be decided at the final round next month. Fourth in A final was Mini man Dennis Biggerstaff.

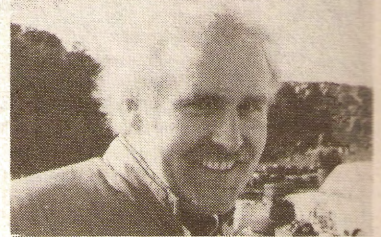
The B final was won by Seamus Murphy from Jimmy Peak, Tony Melvin and John Moloney, after rally driver Ian Corkhill in the ex-Ken McKinstry Escort had spun to the tail end of the field during a great dice for the lead with Murphy. McKinstry himself had been forced to miss the event as he was out doing pace-notes for the forthcoming Galway rally.

Richard Dillon once again looked most impressive in his Porsche as he flew to victory in the C final over Welsh driver Geoff Thomas and Davey Self-

ridge. Thomas only just made that race, his Escort having suffered a broken half-shaft in the second timed runs which proved troublesome to repair. Then in the final, the Welshman was chasing Dillon's Porsche when mud blocked the screen and he was forced to ease off, although he managed to hold second.

BILL MANTOVANI

Carey — missed a golden chance.

**MONDELLO PARK (IRL)****Feb 03
STP Rallycross Championship,
round 5**

A Final: 1, Ron Hudson (2.0 Ford Escort); 2, Tom Farrell (2.0 Ford Escort RS); 3, John Farrell (2.0 Ford Escort RS); 4, Dennis Biggerstaff (1.5 BL Mini); 5, Colin Richards (3.5 Porsche 911); 6, Con Carey (2.0 Ford Escort).

B Final: 1, Seamus Murphy (2.0 Ford Escort); 2, Jimmy Peak (1.5 BL Mini); 3, Tony Melvin (1.5 BL Mini); 4, John Moloney (2.2 Talbot Sunbeam); 5, John McNiece (2.0 Talbot Sunbeam); 6, Ian Corkhill (2.0 Ford Escort).

C Final: 1, Richard Dillon (3.2 Porsche 911); 2, Geoff Thomas (2.2 Ford Escort); 3, Davey Selfridge (1.5 BL Mini); 4, Vincent Hayes (1.6 Renault Alpine); 5, Ivan Thompson (1.5 Alfa Sud); 6, Peter White (2.0 Ford Escort).

Class winners: Larry Hogarty (1.3 Fiat 128 3P); Andrew McCorkhill (1.3BL Mini); Biggerstaff; Pat Harney (1.3 Ford Escort); Thompson; Farrell; Richards.

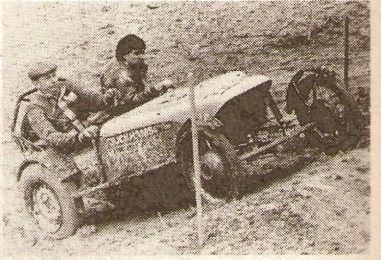
COOMBER TRIAL**Never hurry
a Flury**

The 750 Motor Club held their Coomber Trial at Yetnor Farm on January 27. This round of the 750 Championship attracted 21 starters who did battle over 28 hills. The lunch time scores showed Martin Wright on five from Norman Flury and Keith Minister on seven, with Tim Brise on eight. Alan Gisby and Tony Bristow had dropped 11 while Alan Wickham was also in contention.

As the conditions deteriorated it was Norman Flury who emerged the winner by seven marks from Keith Minister. Rod George retired with chassis problems and Nigel Brown's steering rack seized. Alan Gisby took third spot from Tony Bristow with Tim Brise in fifth place. Martin Wright had slipped down to sixth spot ahead of Alan Wickham, while Paul Liddiard, Stan Randall and Robin Mannerling made up the top 10.

DON WILLIAMSON

Norman Flury — victory in tough conditions.

**COOMBER TRIAL (GB)****Jan 27**

- 1, Norman Flury (Ibex) 18pts; 2, Keith Minister (Mintersport) 25; 3, Alan Gisby (AEG) 31; 4, Tony Bristow (Ibex) 37; 5, Tim Brise (Ibex) 41; 6, Martin Wright (Ibex) 43.

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WIMBLEDON INSTALLED TURBO INTERCOOLER BOOSTS PERFORMANCE.

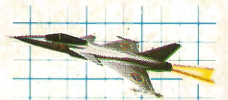
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