A Haymarket publication

16 October 1975 18

INSIDE - PRODUCTION CARS IN COMPETITION

AUTOSPORT

Gunnar Nilsson triumphs in Atlantic again




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AUTOSPORT

BRITAIN'S MOTOR SPORTING WEEKLY

October 16, Vol 61 No 3

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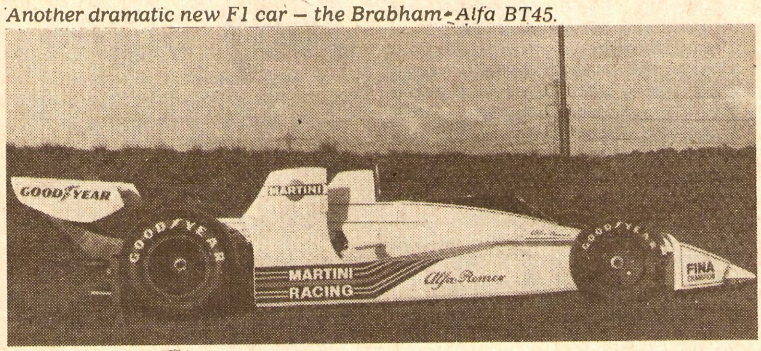
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Published every Thursday by Autosport, Haymarket Publishing Ltd, Regent House, 54-62 Regent Street, London W1A 2YJ. Tel: 01-439 4242, 01-439 9133 (Editorial), 01-439 9339 (Advertising). **Telex:** 23918 Haymarket LDN. **Subscriptions and back numbers:** Craven House, 34 Foubert's Place, London W1. Tel. 01-439 4242 (subscriptions); 01-437 3272 (back numbers).
Annual subscription: Home: £14.50; Overseas, surface mail: £14.50; Airmail, Europe: £24.00; Airmail, USA and Canada: £34.00. Other airmail rates on application. Text printed in England by QB Ltd, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex. Cover printed by B. R. Hubbard Ltd, Callywhite Lane, Dronfield, Sheffield. Registered at the PO as a newspaper.

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EDITORIAL

Now that Formula One racing is finished for this year the political side of the sport seems to be wrapping itself in even more turmoil than before. It comes as nothing of a surprise to find that arguments are raging about almost every aspect of the premier formula in the world. A head-long clash between the weak official governing body, the CSI, and the very strong self-appointed, self-administrators, the Formula One Constructors' Association.

A new president of the CSI took office last week and is already threatening ultimatums to the Constructors. There has been talk of running the World Championship for Formula 2 cars, dropping the Constructors championship, and so on. But is there really any point in saying these things? If they don't get agreement from the Constructors on their proposed contract and they decide to run an alternative World Championship, Formula One as it is today will surely continue. We can envisage a championship devised by promoters for F1 cars running in non-championship events. The promoters know what the public wants — Formula One. In the last three or four years this has become increasingly *the* class of racing that the public wants. The World Championship run for Formula 2 cars may well be less expensive to put on but crowd return, we predict, would be cut by even more.

The CSI say they have agreement from all Grand Prix organisers to make a stand against FICA, but once one breaks away the rest will follow – they cannot afford to miss out. Two Grand Prix promoters we have spoken to this week have said they will run their Grand Prix come what may.

The Formula One Constructors' Association is made out to be the big bad wolf in all the wrangling, but looking at the last few years when Formula One has grown in stature enormously, it has been the FICA who have made it possible. They have put together a complete show and can sell and guarantee to an organiser a complete money-spinning package. Both sides know they will do well out of it and both want a good slice of the return. It's not greed, it's big business.

Grand Prix racing, like world championship heavyweight boxing, a public performance by Frank Sinatra, World Cup football final and so on, is the very best you can get in that particular sphere. The logical world of supply and demand dictates you pay a lot of money for such performances.

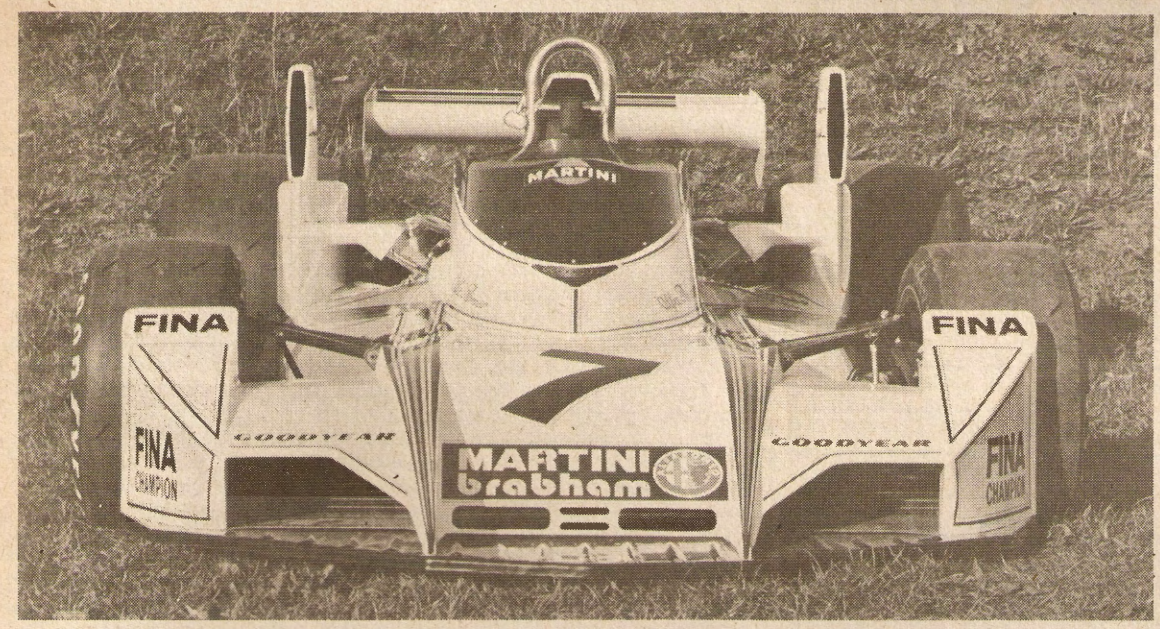
Perhaps the problems have arisen because for too many years motor sport was amateur and undersold itself. In the last five years it has grown up; the first people to realise its potential were the constructors, so they got themselves together in a professional group and started to operate it as a business. Because they started making demands before anyone else they were seen as the bad boys. If the rest of the sport had progressed in the same way at the same time, especially the governing body, the present situation would never have arisen and Grand Prix racing would probably be even stronger than it is now.

Perhaps the promoters are worried that they've got to raise admission prices, so that they can afford to put on the show. This country in particular has always charged among the lowest prices in the world for Grand Prix racing. Compared to any other major sporting or leisure activity the best show in town has been undersold. If the promoters charged a realistic entrance fee of, say, a minimum of £5, they wouldn't be conning anybody as far as the spectacle was concerned. Their big problem, which is another subject entirely, is that they don't have the proper facilities to cope with a large audience. British circuits, in the main, are scruffy and have poor facilities. The owners may argue that the demands of FICA make it impossible for them to improve the position. However, if they hadn't been so terribly British and offered cut-price motor racing for so long the demands for putting on a Grand Prix and looking after the public would not seem as big as it does at the moment.

our cover picture

Swede Gunnar Nilsson scored his fourth win in five Atlantic races last Sunday at Thruxton in the Rapid Movements Chevron B29 which has made him one of the most wanted drivers in racing at the moment. Photo: David Winter

Opposite: *One of the leading challengers in the up-to-3-litre class of the British Touring Car Championship this year has been the works Dealer Opel Team AC Delco sponsored Opel Commodore GS/E of former European Touring Car Champion John Handley. Photo: David Winter*



The Alfa-Romeo-powered Martini-Brabham BT45 F1 car, designed by Gordon Murray, was unveiled last week.

Brabham-Alfa BT45

"It's not a lash up" said Gordon Murray, designer of the new Brabham-Alfa BT45 which was unveiled late last week. The South African then went on to explain that the car had been designed specifically around the Italian Alfa-Romeo engine and, because of this, it was totally different from their current BT44 as the illustrations will undoubtedly show.

The flat 12 cylinder configuration of the Alfa Romeo engine means the car is much wider and flatter than the BT44 and because of the tremendous differences between the Cosworth Ford engined car and the Alfa project, a whole new concept has been created.

Moving through the various stages of the new car, Murray told us that the only parts used concurrently on the BT44 and BT45 are the front and rear hubs together with the front upright castings. Everything else is new.

Because the BT44 had such a small frontal area, Murray's aim with the BT45 was to produce a Grand Prix that was as compact as possible around a 12 cylinder engine. In fact, the frontal area of the new car is slightly less than the BT44 (although the front track is the same) because of a slightly reprofiled nose and narrower rear track. The cockpit is also slimmer and the section through the nose is smaller. "It's 1% or 2%" said Murray.

Another aim has been to keep the centre of gravity as low as possible. This has been done by designing a flat and low monocoque which flares out to the new legal limits of next year's revised F1 regulations. The fuel is now housed in four separate bag tanks and, unlike the Ferrari, they are mounted flat on their sides. The monocoque, as can be seen from the side view, carries on right back stopping just short of the rear wheels. The fuel is housed from about the centre of the car rearwards. There is no seat tank and all the fuel system has been grouped together in a separate compartment behind the drive fed by a fire extinguisher as an added safety precaution.

Because the engine is 11 inches longer than the Cosworth, there is no fuel tank between the engine and driver although there is room for a small oil tank. Although the engine is longer, the overall wheelbase of the car is only an increase of 2in over the current BT44.

A striking feature are the two airboxes which rise up like dorsal fins on either side of the car and double up as air deflectors over the rear wheels. Murray hopes they will work in this position because it allows much cleaner air to flow onto the rear wing, which at the moment is to the current regulations. However, they have three or four different versions to try.

Because the Alfa engine is so much lower than the Ford, the area behind the driver's head is now 8in lower than before. There is still a little air duct, taken from behind the roll over bar, into the engine to cool the electrics. As already mentioned, the monocoque is both low and wide. It is lower than the BT44, by about 2in where the engine picks up off the back of the chassis in relation to the Ford.

The suspension geometry is naturally quite different, although conventional in approach. The front suspension remains similar to the BT44's rising rate arrangement.

At the rear there are twin parallel bottom links, a single top link and four radius rods. Because of the lack of space with the installation of the Alfa Romeo engine, all the links and coil spring/damper arrangements are rather cramped while, like the Ferrari, it's impossible for the mechanics to change sparking plugs!

Murray mentioned that the project has received a lot of co-operation from Alfa Romeo in Italy, especially as the entire casting components (except the cylinder head and block) had to be redesigned to make the unit as a viable Formula 1 proposition.

The car ran at Silverstone on Monday of this week, resplendant in its Martini and Rossi livery and driven by Carlos Reutemann. Unfortunately, the engine pumped out all its oil and the car only completed a handful of very slow laps. Murray reckons the cause of it was down to the violence of the scavenge pump arrangement on the 12 cylinder engine but, bearing any more mishaps when they run it up in the workshops, it'll be running again later this week.

The planned testing programme will ultimately show whether Motor Racing Developments' will pursue the 12 cylinder trial in preference to the Ford V8, or like UOP Shadow, remain loyal to a proven cause.

Quite an eye catcher. The new ultra-low Martini Brabham BT45 with its Alfa engine could give the Ferraris something to think about next year.



CSI changes

The long awaited changes at the CSI were announced last week. Pierre Ugeux of Belgium has been elected President for a three year term replacing Prince Metternich who becomes president of the FIA.

His working committee for one year will consist of Tom Binford (USA), Huscke von Hanstein (Germany), who will both act as vice presidents, and Michel Boeri (Monaco), Bob Hanna (Canada) and Italian Antonio Rogano.

After the announcement the new president declared that: 'Sixteen countries who organise Grands Prix are represented by us and all have accepted to be represented by the CSI and abide by their decisions. After the exorbitant and mercenary demands by the F1 Constructors we've held discussions with all the countries involved and formed a committee comprising all the interested parties in motor sport. We have drawn up a contract for F1 races with regard to the constructors' demands but costing considerably less than that proposed by F1CA.

'Not until November 1 will we know if there will be a Constructors' Championship next year.' Presumably this indicates that non-co-operation by F1CA will mean no championship for them.

Bernie Ecclestone, representing the Constructors, along with GPDA and circuit owners representatives met with the CSI on Friday of last week, when the new contract was placed before them. Ecclestone then hurried back to England and was presenting it to a F1CA meeting at London's Excelsior Hotel on Tuesday morning. A meeting has been called at the CSI for November 1 when all parties have to sign the agreement.

Jody signs

Jody Scheckter's presence was widely noted at Laguna Seca last weekend, but he wasn't driving. 'I'm a guest of Jackie Oliver' he said, Which was very true as he had just become Oliver's team mate in the UOP Shadow F5000 team.

Scheckter will do eight races in the US F5000 championship which, of course, he won two years ago when driving the Sid Taylor/Jerry Entin Trojan and Lola.

Scheckter said of the new deal, 'I enjoy driving in F5000, it makes a change from the tension of F1, it's nice and relaxed.'

Jody's first race for the team will be at Riverside on October 26.

Shadow have apparently decided to put most of their Chevrolet engines up for sale and will almost certainly run Dodge engines at all future races.

Ending months of speculation, Scheckter announced last Wednesday that he will be staying with the Elf Tyrrell team — the team that has given him all three of his Grand Prix wins. Scheckter made the decision following his sixth place at the American GP. "I am staying with Ken because I feel that in the long term it will be best for my career."

Scheckter has yet to drive the new six wheel Tyrrell although he should get his first opportunity next month.

Evans replaces Scott

After a couple of weeks of rumour it was no surprise to find at Mallory Park that Bob Evans was driving the Durex F5000 Lola which is run by Alan McKechnie racing. The dismissal of Richard Scott from the team though has caused a certain amount of friction. The following statements were issued by the two main parties, Durex and McKechnie Racing.

Durex said: "Durex driver Richard Scott is to race John Turner's Lola T330 at Mallory Park in a bid to maintain his high placing in the Shellsport European F5000 Championship. This news comes following a decision by McKechnie Racing,

Bob Evans — in



who run and operate the Durex-owned Lola T400, to invoke a clause in their contract which gives them freedom to choose the driver.

"The Turner Lola will carry full Durex identification and support. Durex made their first entry into motor sport as a direct result of presentations made to them by Richard Scott who, in turn, invited the McKechnie Organisation to prepare and run the car for him.

"Durex have been more than satisfied with Scott's performance this year both on the track and as a personality. It was Scott, of course, who took the Durex car to a magnificent victory in the most prestigious event of the year, the televised International Trophy meeting at Silverstone.

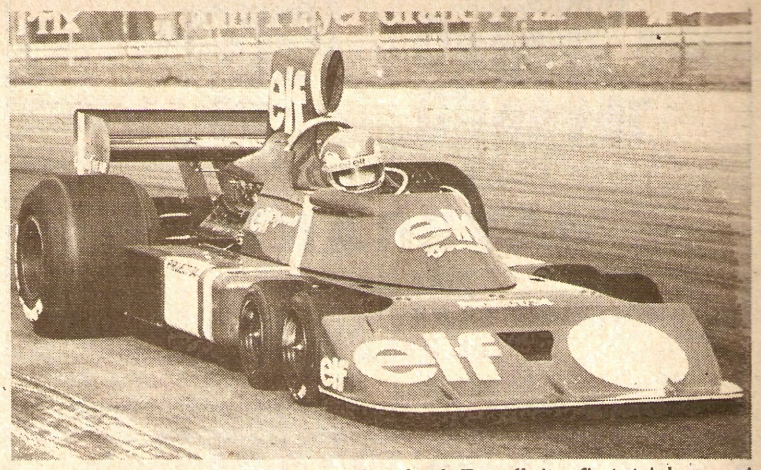
"The McKechnie team have, for some weeks, been insisting that another driver is substituted for Scott. On Thursday of this week they informed Durex that they refused to race at Mallory Park unless a driver they nominated took over the Durex T400. Durex deeply regret this decision but as they were informed of it at such short notice they were left with no opportunity to find another team to manage their car."

The other side came from McKechnie Racing: "McKechnie

Richard Scott — out



Racing regret there has been ill feeling over the choice of driver for Mallory Park. They appreciate the appearance of a new sponsor in motor racing and have done all they can to provide the London Rubber Company with a competitive car. However, taking into account Alan McKechnie's financial involvement in the car and the lask of recent results they felt that a new driver had to be found. They feel that Mallory Park proved their point and with second fastest in practice and a lap record, Evans will again he driving at Brands Hatch and they hope to give the London Rubber Company a win at the end of the season."



Patrick Depailler gave the new six-wheel Tyrrell its first trial run at Silverstone last week.

New Elf-Tyrrell tests

The Tyrrell six wheeler has made it to the circuits. Shrouded in secrecy Patrick Depailler had the honour of being the first man to drive the car when he took it round the Silverstone Club circuit last Wednesday.

The Elf Tyrrell team were delighted with the first showing of the most advanced racing car of this decade.

Depailler said after the test: "If I was given a choice between a development of the present 007 car or the new six wheelcar for next season I would choose to drive the six-wheel car." He reported that the steering was too light during the test which disproved theories that the four wheel steering would be too heavy and cumbersome to control precisely at racing speeds. Designer Derek Gardner says that this can be countered by making a new steering rack and pinion with less pinion teeth. "It is extremely difficult to make heavy steering light — it is easier to make light steering heavier.'"

Another problem was that the little front tyres were running too cold at Silverstone and were not reaching correct temperatures for maximum performances.

Ken Tyrrell was happy with the results of the initial tests: "Patrick says that it handles well, stops well and he is enthusiastic about the car's potential."

Gardner's reaction was of typical cautious optimism: "Now we have to refine it. It's like a piano . . . it looks superb, but now we have to refine it. We haven't exceeded anything, but we're not that far away. The new car shows great promise. . . ."

The car is now stripped and is being modified before further tests at Silverstone and later at Paul Ricard.

Incidentally, whatever type of car Tyrrell decides to run next year for Patrick Depailler and Jody Scheckter, they will officially be named Elf-Tyrrells. "We will be calling the cars Elf-Tyrrells next season to emphasise the close co-operation the team enjoys with Elf." The French oil company have, of course, sponsored Tyrrell since his move into F1 in 1968.

Jim Miller is reported missing

The motor racing world in Britain was shocked last week when news leaked that Sidney 'Jim' Miller of Southern Organs and his partner John Bellord had been listed as missing persons. No official statement has bee forthcoming and all callers are referred to Horsham ploice where the officer in charge of the case, which reputedly involved the Fraud Squad and Interpol, confirmed 'We have circulated their names as missing persons.'

John Webb was acting under legal advice and just said, 'I cannot comment on any part of it.'

An RAC spokesman said, 'As far as we know it's pure supposition. We've heard the rumour and we will find out whether it is fact or fiction before we decide what to do.'

Miller's Southern Organs company and its offshoots are, of course, the major sponsors of many British national racing championships and many individual drivers. A number of drivers have expressed concern to us as they have outstanding sponsorship fees still to be paid while we also gather a number of championship prize funds have not been paid in full as yet. However, the championship promotors have decided that all the remaining rounds will be run in the hope that Miller can be traced and the money paid out.

● Maurizio Flammini, by virtue of his fine third place in the final F2 race at Vallelunga last Sunday, has clinched the Italian national F2 Championship. Up until the race, Gabriele Serblin was half a point in front but his problems in the race ruined any chance he may have had of defending such a slender position. Giorgio Francia, Italy's most consistant F2 performer this year, was third in a series that only took in the driver's best five results.

Viceroy Lolas dominate Laguna Seca F5000

The Vel's Parnelli Viceroy Lola F5000 team scored an impressive 1-2 victory at the penultimate US F5000 race at Leguna Seca last Sunday. Mario Andretti took pole position, won his heat, took pole for the final and lead from start to finish. Team mate Al Unser qualified second, won his heat, started the final from the front row and ran second all the way, finishing a dutiful 2s behind.

Britain's representatives filled the next four places. Brian Redman, the new champion, had a nasty accident in the first practice session in the Hass/Hall Lola T332, which took off all the right hand suspension and damaged the steering and gearbox. Although their T400 was sitting in the paddock it remained untouched and the older model was rebuilt for the heats although Brian didn't practice again. It worked well though and he finished second in his heat and ran third throughout the final, finishing 12s behind at the end. Tony Brise had numerous troubles in practice with the Theodore Racing/Sid Taylor Lola, which appeared to be 40 bhp down anyway, but finally qualified fifth behind Graham McRae. During the race he ran with Redman but tyre problems and then running out of fuel on the last lap saw him drop to a 5s gap.

Fifth, after a race long dice, was Jackie Oliver in the Shadow-Dodge. He took David Hobbs' Hogan Lola just five laps from the end. Hobbs was troubled with lack of vision for most of the race after the fuel gauge had broken and sprayed petrol onto his visor which then started to break up. McRae ran fifth initially before spinning to eighth behind Elliott Forbes-Robinson and ahead of Warwick Brown, John Cannon and Jon Woodner and an impressive John Morton who had qualified seventh. Major retirements from the 40 strong entry included Vern Schuppan and Eppie Wietzes.

Full report next week.

Wheatcroft goes for F2

Together with a number of other leading Atlantic runners Tom Wheatcroft is thinking very seriously of running in Formula 2 next year. 'I haven't really made up my mind yet, I might run two F2s or one F2 and one Atlantic. I've won every championship I've ever entered except Atlantic this year and I'd like to win it.'

The neat Mike Pilbeam penned Wheatcroft was the sensation of the Silverstone F2 race with Brian Henton at the wheel using a Ford engine, but if plans come to fruition a new car will be built using BMW engines. The existing Wheatcroft was bought last Sunday by South African entrepreneur Alex Blignaut.

On the Donington front Wheatcroft hopes to hear the result of his appeal very shortly and is still quietly confident that the planning permission will be granted.

In the meantime Bob Evans, formerly one of development staff at March and before that a stalwart of Frank Williams' team, has been appointed general manager of the Donington Collection. Any clubs or organisations requiring dates or visits to the Collection should contact him at Derby 810048.



Mike Pilbeam (left), designer of the Wheatcroft, listens to South African GP organiser Alex Blignaut (right) place two orders for his cars.

South African invasion

A posse of South Africans arrived in England last week and after visiting various manufacturers they were at Thruxton at the weekend to take a close look at Formula Atlantic which, of course, takes over from F1 down there.

Other than Alex Blignaut buying the Wheatcroft, none of the others would commit themselves to chassis, but it's thought that Team Gunston will have two Ralts while Ian Scheckter heavily favours a Chevron. Dave Charlton, of course, has already bought a couple of Modus chassis.

Blignaut was very enthusiastic about the series' prospects saying that he hopes there would be a dozen or more cars competing in the national championship next year.

Waltrip's NASCAR

The Capital City 500 NASCAR race at Richmond, Virginia was run last week having been postponed earlier in the year. The big names Richard Petty and Benny Parsons dropped out with engine trouble while lying first and second and Darryl Waltrip took a one lap win in his DiGard Chevrolet Chevelle. This was his first win in this car but his second of the season. Next up were Lenny Pond (Chevrolet Chevelle), Richard Brookes (Ford Torino), Cecil Gordon (Chevrolet Chevelle) and Jim McDuffie (Chevrolet Chevelle).

● American FSV ace Tom Bagley will head the Fred Opert attack on the Canadian Player's Formula Atlantic championship next year.

Crawford continues

Jim Crawford has been continuing his testing programme with Team Lotus on their new John Player Special Formula 1 car (*nee* Lotus 77). Further tests have been carried out at the Hethel track where Crawford has now lapped regularly around the 1m 3.2s bracket and reckons that the minute barrier could be on, providing "you're not worried about spinning off into Colin Chapman's office!"

More tests will be carried out this week using a Lotus 72 for comparison purposes. Commenting on the attitude felt by all toward the new car, Crawford replied that "everything's rosy up here. The car's really great and it'll do anything. It's so much better, and lighter, than the 72."

Parnelli F1 carries on

Both Mario Andretti and Vels Miletich confirmed at Laguna Seca last weekend that they would be continuing their Grand Prix challenge next year and Miletich said that he hoped to announce a new sponsor in a few weeks. A new car is currently under construction and engines will be maintained by Ryan Falconer in the States and John Dunn in England, according to Andretti although Miletich wouldn't confirm this. Team manager for the F1 programme will be Jim Chapman who has been in charge of the USAC and F5000 programmes in the US up to now.

Andretti appears to be the prime mover in the continuation telling our man that if he was to do his own deal he could only go to Ferrari, Tyrrell or McLaren for a better drive. He intends to do F1 exclusively next year just taking in F5000 races when he wants to, although Miletich says that he'll do the whole lot.

This week Andretti will be at Phoenix testing the revised Parnelli-turbo DFV USAC car which features revised suspension and body work and which will run in the final championship race.

● Jo Vonlanthen, the Swiss F2 privateer who hired a drive in the Frank Williams F1 team at the Austrian and Swiss GPs, intends to raise sufficient finance to be able to do some more F1 racing next year.

Dennis runs Cheever

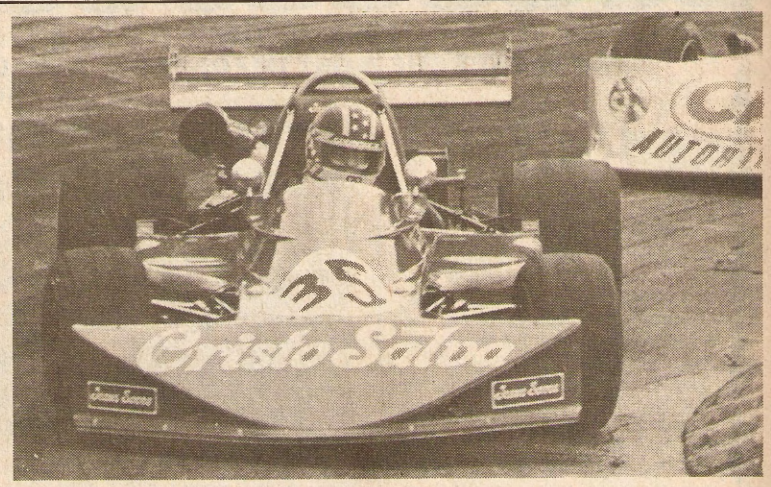
Now that the Formula 2 season is now over, Motor Race Consultants have enlisted the services of Project 3 team boss Ron Dennis to run Eddie Cheever's Shand Carpets Modus for the remaining Formula 3 races this year.

This has been done to help Cheever, who is still relatively inexperienced, to learn the many valuable tips which Dennis can pass on in a carefully controlled test programme.

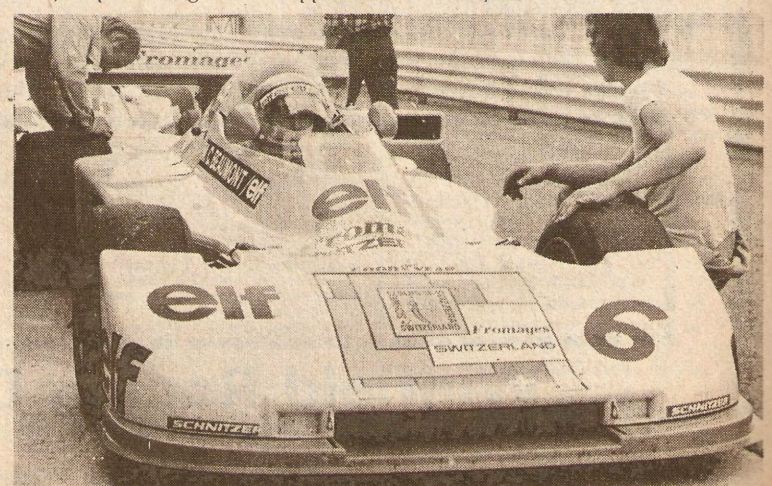
Cheever, who is only 18, came on the F3 scene following a brief introduction to racing through Formula Ford and immediately became a front runner, winning two races at Silverstone. Although it is a privately run car, it has until now been kept at Modus, the factory going out of their way to help the young American, and will be returned to Modus after the test programme.

There are no plans for Dennis to run Cheever next year and indeed it is widely rumoured that he will be run as a full member of the works Modus team.

● Joint leaders of the lucrative Porsche Cup at the moment are John Fitzpatrick and Reinhold Joest. Next up are Claude Haldi, Tim Schenken, Clemens Schickentanz and Toine Hezemans. Fitz has the best chance of retaining the title as he has one more race (at Jarama) and Joest's season in the turbo 908/3 is now over.



Among several new driver/car combinations at the final F2 race at Vallelunga last Sunday were Alex Ribeiro (above) who drove the third works March and Marie-Claude Beaumont (below), the French girl who made her first public single-seater appearance in an Elf 2J.

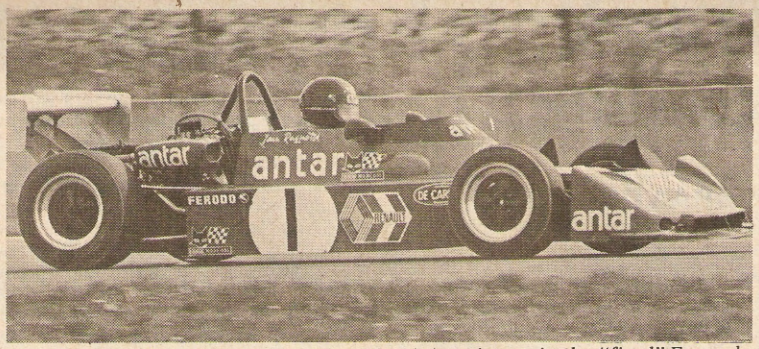


Next year's . . .

Ken Tyrrell's presence at the Vallelunga Formula 2 race last weekend did enough to make the French Elf F2 drivers subconsciously put on an extra special effort, especially as the Elf hierarchy were making a concerted effort at entertaining one and all at this, the final race of the season. It was a polite gesture on behalf of the French petrol company who have steamrollered the European F2 Championship this year with their five supported drivers filling the first five places in the series.

However, a big question mark hangs over Elf's plans for next year. Francois Guiter, Elf's competition director, was present in Rome but said that their plans, apart from their Formula 1 involvement with Tyrrell, were yet to be officially decided. "It will probably be later this month", he said, "before we will announce anything."

One question that has to be answered is their involvement with the works March team F2. Patrick Tambay, Michel Leclere, the Renault V6? Who? What? When and where?



Jean Ragnotti (above) took his Antar Martini to victory in the "final" Formule Super Renault race at the Le Mans' Bugatti circuit last Sunday. Team-mate Marc Sourd led initially as did Dany Snobeck before they both retired as did Rene Arnoux and Didier Pironi, the latter's being a big shunt. Richard Dallest and Lucien Guitteny (March) filled the next places.

Bad period

One reason why Lella Lombardi wasn't able to transfer to Jacques Laffite's vacant Williams F1 at the American Grand Prix last week was, according to one wag, because the Frenchman's crutch straps were too short . . . !

. . . confrontation in F2 . . .

The smiles in the engine shop at BMW's Munich headquarters are beginning to grow a little wider as the news filters through that the 2-litre Renault V6, the engine that the French claim will make them dominant in Formula 2 during the next few years, is having reliability problems.

The works March team have been conducting tests with the unit for some time using a selection of drivers, the latest of which has been Alex Ribeiro. However, the engine has proved somewhat troublesome and three have expired during recent weeks although "the problem's trivial" according to Robin Herd.

The French are committing themselves into running the unit because pressure has been forthcoming from various parties, including Elf, Renault and, more important, the government.

. . . between France and . . .

With the possibilities of a three cornered engine fight in Formula 2 next year between France, Germany and England, the news that Michelin are being pressured, again by the French government, to move into the formula means that Goodyear will now have the opposition they've waited for since Firestones withdrawal last year.

Michelin have been heavily involved in the Alpine Renault sports car programme this year where the French turbo sports prototype has exclusively used the French company's radial ply tyre in competition.

The radially constructed tyre makes, as we've already stated, the car much heavier to drive than a conventional racing cross-ply design and the lap times in private testing between the Goodyear and Michelin have been upwards of one second per lap difference in the former's favour. It's only the extra power output of the French turbo engine that makes up for the deficit over the slower, Goodyear-shod Alfa Romeos, a car which is notorious for wearing out tyres anyway.

We asked Alpine Renault sports car driver Jean-Pierre Jabouille earlier this year if there were any prospects of his running Michelin radials on his F2 Elf 2J. At the time he said "no", but the signs were plainly evident at Vallelunga last weekend that Michelin are about to come in.

The tyre may well be inferior to the present advantage held by Goodyear but the French are obviously hoping their Renault V6 will have a sufficient power advantage over the other engines, certainly the German BMW production based unit, to enable them to enjoy a similar lead over their rivals.

. . . . . Germany looks good

As an answer to the expected French engine challenge in F2 apart from the Michelin/Goodyear confrontation creatintg a tyre war from which there will be advantages and disadvantages for F2 competitors, BMW GmbH are proceeding to continue their involvement in the formula next year.

Work will continue over the winter months on the existing 2-litre production based engine because, as one BMW employee put it at Vallelunga, "if we went ahead and produced a six cylinder engine to compete against the Renault, it would take us at least two years to make it fully competitive."

Although Alex von Falkenhauser is due to officially retire at the end of this year his engine development department, led by Paul Rosche, will continue to extract more power out of the engine with camshaft, cylinder head, injection trumpet and exhaust pipe modifications. The firm is quietly confident they can match the best France has to offer.

F1 Minardi?

Giancarlo Minardi, who runs the Everest sponsored Scuderia del Passetore March-BMW 752 for fellow Italian Giancarlo Martini in Formula 2, may well end up running an Fl Ferrari next year.

Martini, you may remember, was one of three Italians who were given trials in a Ferrari 312B at the Fiorano test track earlier this year. Martini impressed sufficiently to be asked to test a 312T at a later date and once again, the Italian did well enough to create further interest.

There are talks in Italy at the moment, and Martini was heard to comment on this, that Minardi will run a separate 312T Grand Prix car for him in selected F1 races next year. We wait.

● Peter Brock/Brian Samson, driving a Holden Tonara, were the winners of the Bathhurst 500 touring car race which was held in Australia on October 5. Second and third were the similar cars of Frank Gardner/Bob Morris and Colin Bond/Johnnie Walker but post-race scrutineering problems looked likely to exclude the latter pairing.

Marie-Claude Beaumont/John Leffler won the small class in their works supported Alfa Romeo 2000 GTV and could well end up by finishing as high as 5th overall. Team-mates Tim Schenken/Paul Bernasconi retired their GTV when a wheel (or tyre) broke while Tim was well placed. The car hit a bank and rolled.

Championship positions

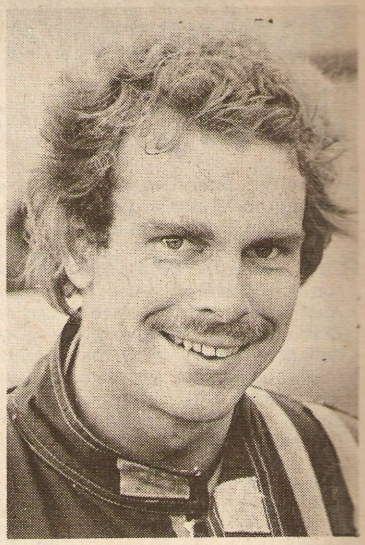
Southern Organs Formula Atlantic Championship (leading positions): 1, Ted Wentz, 42* points; 2, Tony Brise, 31; 3, Richard Morgan, 28; 4, Gunnar Nilsson, 27; 5, Val Musetti, 15; 6, Brett Riley, 11; 7, Ray Mallock, 10; 8, Alo Lawler, 8; 9, Derek Cook, 7; 10, Nick May, 6 pts, etc. *Champion.

Shellsport European Formula 5000 Championship (leading positions): 1, Teddy Pilette, 144 points; 2, Guy Edwards, 122; 3, Peter Gethin, 103; 4, Ian Ashley, 101; 5, David Purley, 98; 6, Richard Scott, 85; 7, Alan Jones, 64; 8, Bob Evans, 40; 9, Brian Robinson, 37; 10, Gordon Spice and Vern Schuppan, 30 pts, etc.

Tarmac British Racing Championship (leading positions): 1, Tony Brise, 221 points; 2, Stuart Graham, 210*; 3, Richard Lloyd, 202*; 4, James Hunt, 190; 5, Andy Rouse, 168*; 6, Derek Lawrence, 166*; 7, Guy Edwards, 151; 8, Vince Woodman, 142*; 9, Derek Bell, 135; 10, Bernard Vermilio, 134* pts, etc. *Best results.

European Formula 2 Championship (final positions): 1, Jacques Laffite, 60 points; 2, Michel Leclere and Patrick Tambay, 36; 4, Gerard Larrousse, 26; 5, Jean-Pierre Jabouille, 24; 6, Maurizio Flammini, 22; 7, Claude Bourgoignie and Giorgio Francia, 16; 9, Alessandro Pesenti-Rossi, 13; 10, Gabriele Serblin, 11 pts, etc.

European GT Championship (leading positions)*: 1, John Fitzpatrick, 73 points; 2, Clemens Schickentanz, 61; 3, Hartwig Bertrams, 58; 4, Claude Haldi, 56; 5, Tim Schenken, 32; 6, Claude Ballot-Lena, 30; 7, Toine Hezemans, 28; 8, Arturo Merzario, 25 pts, etc. *Subject to Imola/FIA appeal.



Ted Wentz – champion.

Wentz' wins

The Philadelphia flyer has finally done it, and deservedly so. American Formula Atlantic driver Ted Wentz clinched the Southern Organs title at Thruxton last weekend despite finishing second, yet again, to Swede Gunnar Nilsson in the Rapid Movements Chevron B29. Wentz was, of course, driving the Wella Hair Care Lola T360, the last two races being in the 1976 development chassis.

Nilsson can take the runner-up slot in the championship with a good placing at Brands this weekend, although you can be sure that Tony Brise will be out to prevent it happening in the works Modus.

Pilette near

Teddy Pilette has all but retained his European Formula 5000 title. Having won the last two qualifier rounds, the Belgian and his Team VDS Lola T400 just have to finish in the points at the final round at Brands this weekend to become champions.

The only man who has a chance of overhauling Pilette is Guy Edwards in the Encyclopaedia Britannica Lola T332, but it is a daunting task as he has to win outright with Pilette retiring. Still, in F5000 anything is possible.

Gold Medal

One of the coveted BARC Gold Medals has been awarded to Lord Alexander Hesketh. Announcing the award this week the BARC cite his "contribution to motor racing" — a contribution outstanding in a world of multi million pound sponsored teams.

The Gold medal will be presented to Lord Hesketh by the BARC's President Earl Howe, in front of BBC TV's Grandstand cameras at the televised Thruxton meeting on November 15. This is the first time since 1973 that a BARC Gold Medal has been awarded.

On the same day Thruxton race goers will be treated to the sight of James Hunt lapping the Andover circuit in the latest F1 Hesketh.

Donington's library

Recently published under the Donington Monomarque banner by Macmillan are three new books, *The Tyrrell Fords* (by Doug Nye), *The 250F Maseratis* (by Denis Jenkinson) and *The Four Wheel Drive* (by Alan Henry). All three are priced at £2.95 and representative of the most definitive history of Tyrrell and the Maseratis and the story behind four wheel drive in the history of motor sport, all three of which make fascinating reading. All the books are extensively illustrated in both colour and black and white and no self respecting enthusiast should miss out on them. The easiest way to obtain the books is by visiting the Collection and picking them up direct.

Also carrying the Donington stamp of approval is a collection of fine art prints of famous racing drivers of the past and present. The series of prints by Michael Turner is based on the Donington Collection. Each print will be strictly limited to 100 personally signed and numbered by the artist and autographed by the driver pictured.

The first picture which sets a very high standard commemorates Graham Hill's five victories at Monaco, chosen by himself as the most memorable experience of his career.

Other subjects in preparation include Stirling Moss (Vanwall), Jacky Ickx (Ferrari) and Mike Hailwood (MV and Honda).

The price of the unframed prints will be £40 and they are only available from Jeremy Nightingale Associates, 45 Kelso Place, London W8.

● Errors department. Just to put the record straight, our caption in last week's issue stating that Ronnie Peterson's JPS Lotus 72 was competitive again because it ran on 1973 specification tyres at the US GP was wrong. Goodyear's Bert Baldwin told us earlier this week that the tyres were an entirely new construction, although out of a previous mould. They were tested by Emerson Fittipaldi on his McLaren at Silverstone just prior to the US Grand Prix and proved very satisfactory.

This weekend...

BRANDS HATCH

The last major meeting of the year takes place this weekend in the shape of the Motor Show 200 on the Brands Hatch GP circuit. Traditionally an event featuring the final round of the British Saloon Car Championship, this year is no exception.

As last year the premier saloon car championship goes into its final round still far from decided. Prior to this meeting three drivers have scored the same number of points at the top of the table. Andy Rouse, who drives the works British Leyland Broadspeed Dolomite Sprint, finds himself in the same position as last year when he lost the title at the last round. However, if he and challengers Stuart Graham (Camaro) and Win Percy (Toyota) all win their classes the title will be Rouse's as he has scored more second places than his rivals.

Stuart Graham will be in his Brut Camaro, of course, and his opposition will come from Vince Woodman and Richard Lloyd. Rouse's main challenge comes from Brian Muir's Shellsport Dolomite which, of course, won the last controversial Oulton Park round when Rouse could have clinched the title. In the small class Percy 's Samuri Toyota has reigned supreme all year and it would only be a failure of some sort that would prevent the car from winning.

All the other usual runners will be taking part — remember this is the last chance to see the Camaros in action too — and it promises to be a really thrilling and tense championship decider.

Also building up to a dramatic finish is the Shellsport F5000 series. The circus returns to Brands for the final double points decider with Teddy Pilette and Guy Edwards still battling it out at the front of the table. Pilette has a good lead in the series and the VDS Lola T400 seems to be going extremely well. However, the team have had a number of engine failures of late and this will be the critical part of their preparation. Edwards has amassed points throughout the year in the Britannica Lola T332; he certainly hasn't got the speed of the T400 but it is very reliable and remember he won this race two years ago. However, there are others looking for a good end of season result and Peter Gethin, Alan Jones, Ian Ashley, Bob Evans and David Purley will all be right up there too.

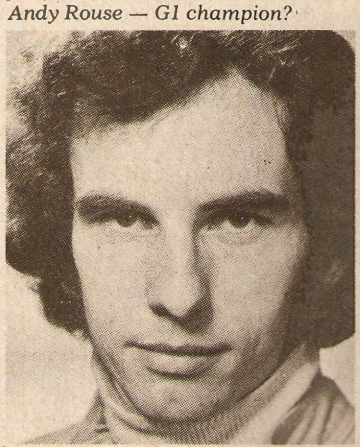
An interesting entry is a third VDS Lola for Vern Schuppan who won the corresponding race last year in the same team's Chevron.

Although Ted Wentz has already clinched the minor Atlantic championship the racing in this series has really turned red hot recently. The man who has stirred it all up is Gunnar Nilsson, the sensational Swede who drives the Rapid Movements Chevron. He'll be looking for his fifth successive win in the car and a big spur for him will be the presence of John Player Atlantic champion Tony Brise in the works Modus. Brian Henton hopes to be there too, if the Wheatcroft can be rebuilt in time so this too promises to be a real cracker.

Vern Schuppan — VDS F5000



Andy Rouse — G1 champion?



The APG FF2000 series has really shown strength at the end of its first year and the battle between local FF1600 champion Tiff Needell, Derek Lawrence, Bernard Vermilio, Adrian Reynard, and Jeremy Rossiter should be good value.

The programme is completed by the final round of the JCB/Speed Merchants Historic race where Willie Green and Simon Phillips are still fighting for overall championship honours.

The meeting is on the long circuit to test out the tarmac repair work which Wimpeys have made during the last two weeks.

Practice is on Saturday starting at 9.30 am with the popular Brands disco opening at 8 pm.

Sunday starts with more practice at 9 am, the Opel diesel record breaking demonstration at 12.05 and the racing itself kicks off with the Atlantic race at 12.30 pm.

SNETTERTON

The man everyone will be watching at Snetterton this Sunday is young Geoff Lees, who will be continuing his bid to take all three FF titles in the National Organs round. He currently has a three point lead in this series over Kenny Gray, while further opposition comes from Matthew Argenti, Mike Blanchet and Phil Dowsett.

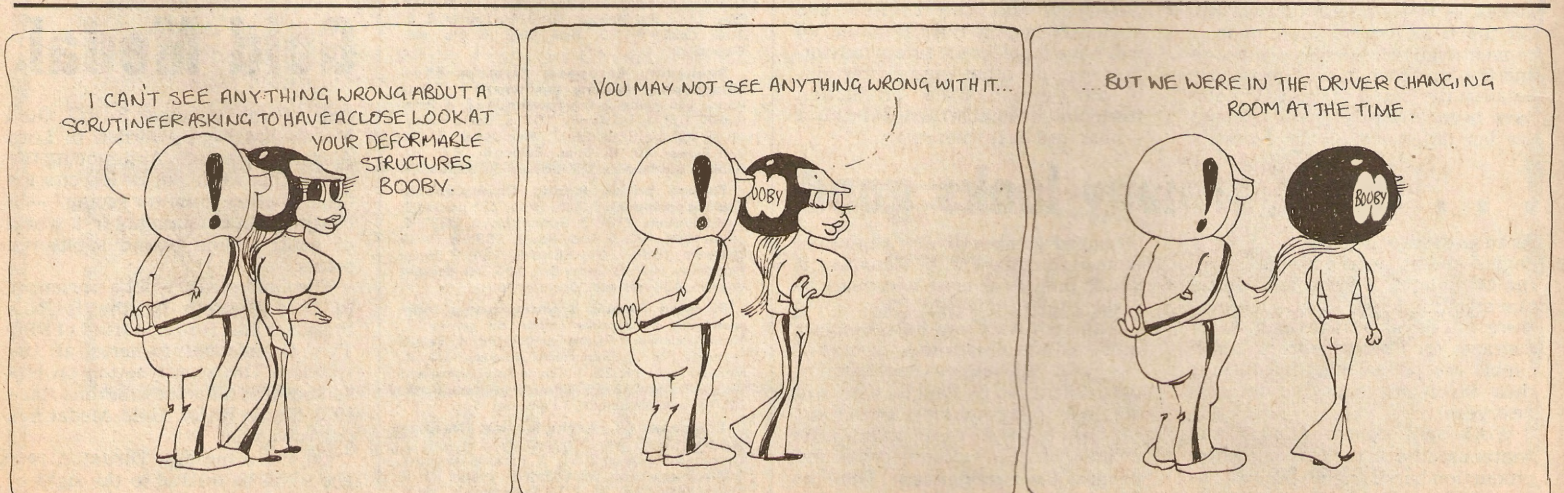
The Radio One saloons will be out again with all the usual Camaro, Capri, Mazda, Mini and Lada runners. One change will be the Anchor Records Capri of Mike Smith which for some reason best known to himself and obviously kept very quiet from his insurance company will be driven by the more often than not very hairy Jeremy Walton. No really Mike, he's ever so nice and good, although he still has a few scores to settle with Ivan Dutton we seem to remember. Actually this is part of the famous journalist's countdown to a single handed effort at Le Mans next year in a Bond Bug.

Other races include rounds of the TEAC Mini 7, Lec Clubman's Supersports and a Special Saloon event all of which have got full entries.

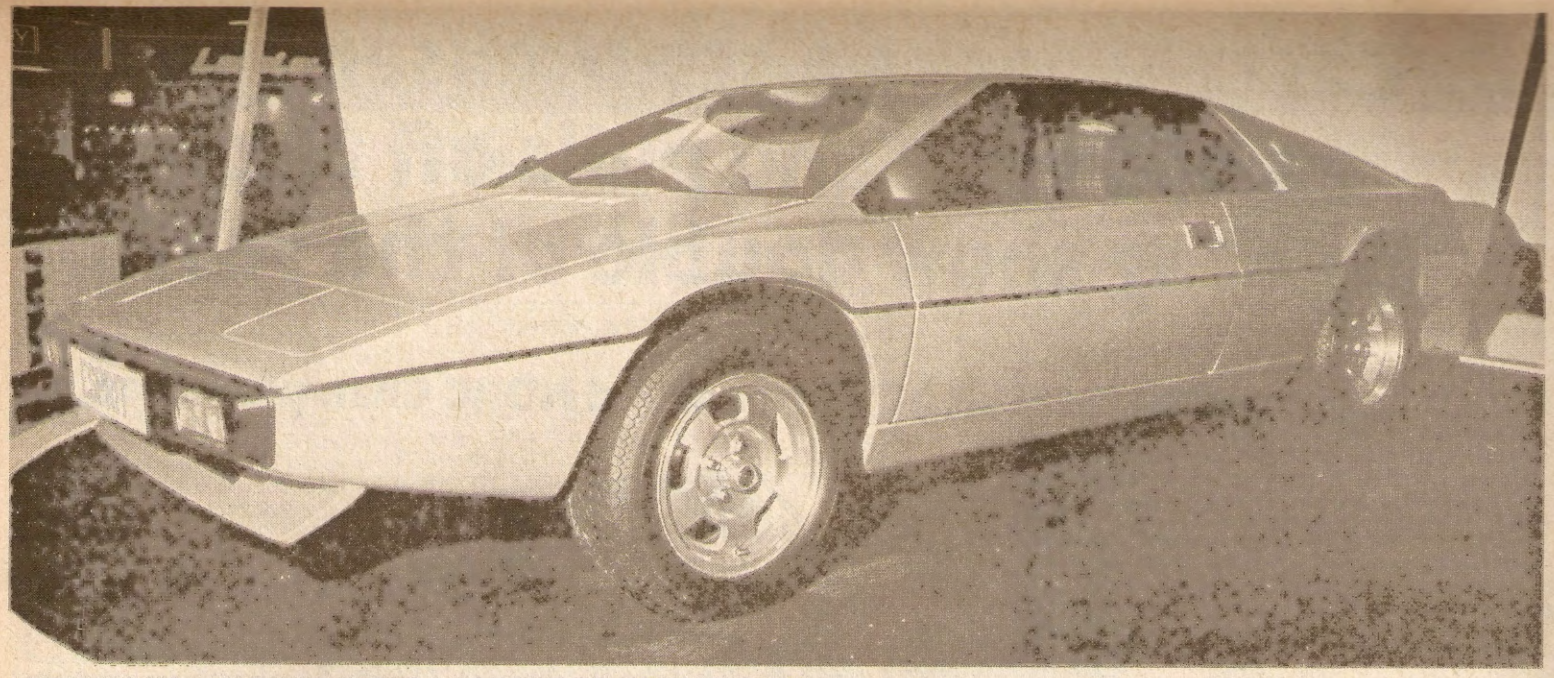
Racing starts at 2 pm.

CATCHPOLE

By Barry Foley



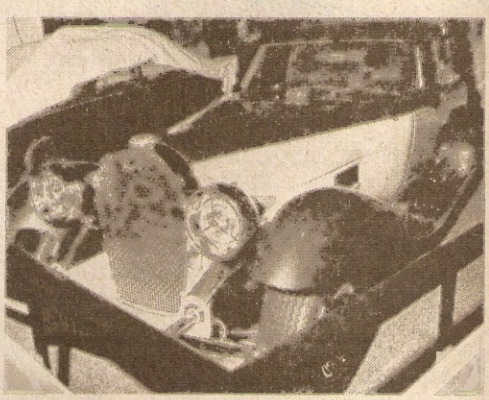
© Autosport 1975



DIAMOND JUBILEE MOTOR SHOW 1978

War of the warranties

By JOHN BOLSTER Photographs by DAVID WINTER





The power unit is mounted fore-and-aft, ahead of a bellhousing and a Citroen SM transmission. The delectable body is the work of Giorgio Giugiaro (let's spell him right this time), who has worked with the Lotus engineers to modify his original dream car so that its shape can be moulded. Some typical prices are £5,729 for the Eclat 2+2, £5,844 for the mid-engined Esprit and £7,970 for the automatic air-conditioned, power-steered Elite.

Economic clothing

The bugbear of the steel car is rust, and the use of a glassfibre body on a heavy-gauge steel chassis is one way of overcoming it. Lotus employ this method and now it has the blessing of Ferrari, who is using a glassfibre shell for the first time on the new 2-seater Dino 308 GTB by Pininfarina. Going down-market a little we find the latest version of the Reliant Scimitar GTE, which still has a glassfibre body but of greater width and length. This greatly increases the attraction of the car, both in looks and utility.

The Reliant Kitten is a small 850 cc car of similar construction, which is bound to make a considerable impact among those of us who have been fighting a losing battle against rust. Technically, the Kitten is of considerable interest because it is lighter than cars of roughly similar size but with orthodox steel sheels — it costs £1,499, which is perhaps a bit pricey.

Yet another glassfibre body is found on the TVR, but in this case a multi-tubular space frame is waisted at the centre to form a backbone. The 3000 M, with Ford V6 engine, now costs £3,685, but the slightly cheaper and much more economical 4 cylinder 1600 M is priced at £2,995, For the ultimate in performance, a Broadspeed turbo version is on view, again with the V6 engine.

Another approach is that of Morgan, who show a special lightweight Plus 8, with aluminium body panels and light-alloy wheels having 6 in rims, which carry 195 VR 14 tyres. This one costs £3,653, and also on the stand is Chris Alford's Prodsports winner.

Let us move on to the big guns of the British industry. Leyland Cars has undergone many changes on the executive side and the cars have been given an engineering facelift. The Allegro 2 has more interior space, better ride and handling, while there are styling improvements. The Marina 2 has been refined on the same lines, notably as regards ride, while the recently introduced 18-22 range has been rationalised into fewer models and re-named Princess. Above them all is the Jaguar XJ-S and if you haven't driven that car you don't know what real motoring can be like. Among the lesser lights, it's hard to admire the Triumph Stag — always a bit disappointing — and the Rover 3500, which suddenly looks curiously old-fashioned at Earls Court. As for the Triumph range, the 2500 S has at last become the sort of car that earlier Triumphs should have been, while the Dolomite Sprint is a splendid competition car because it has proper valves and porting. The Triumph TR7 is reserved for the Americans and perhaps its styling will appeal to them. Obviously, the innumerable cars in the Leyland catalogue cannot be justified and the vast collection at Earls Court must be ruthlessly pruned.

The Vauxhall programme is even more difficult to analyse: To an already full list of models the Cavaliers have suddenly been added. These have the Opel Ascona engines of 1584 cc and 1897 cc, but the front-end styling follows that of the Chevette.

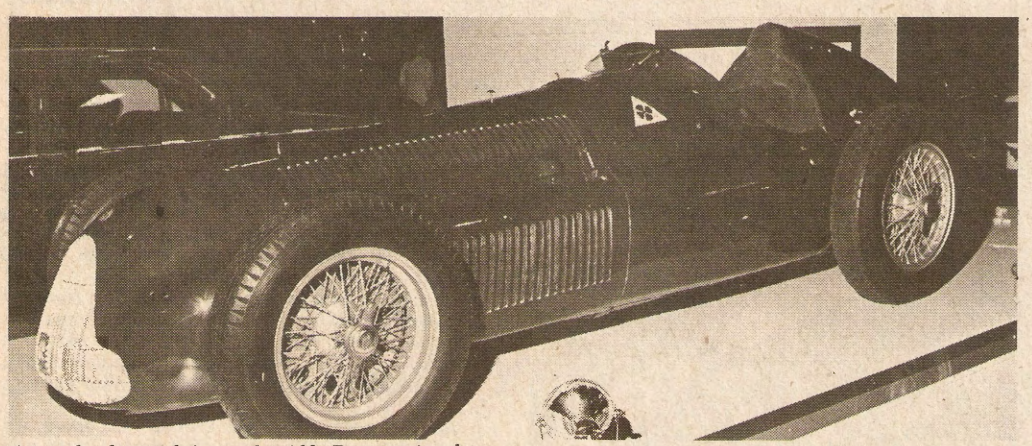
Chrysler, on the other hand, have a fairly logical arrangement of models, but the new Simcas, which I reviewed in the Paris Salon report and tested at Montlhéry, suddenly appear as Alpines in London. In the competition world, the name Alpine can only mean the productions of Jean Rédélé under the Renault banner and this duplication seems pointless. In any case, the name on the bonnet is Chrysler.

Ford have nothing new to show us and we must wait for the little front-drive car. The best, looking car on the large Ford stand is a black Capri S 3.0 with a gold line. It's sad that two of Britain's best-loved cars are in the doldrums financially. Nevertheless, the V8 Aston Martin and 4-door Lagonda models are on view. The Jensen is also to be seen, both as the Chrysler-powered Interceptor and the Lotus-engined Jensen GT and Jensen-Healey.

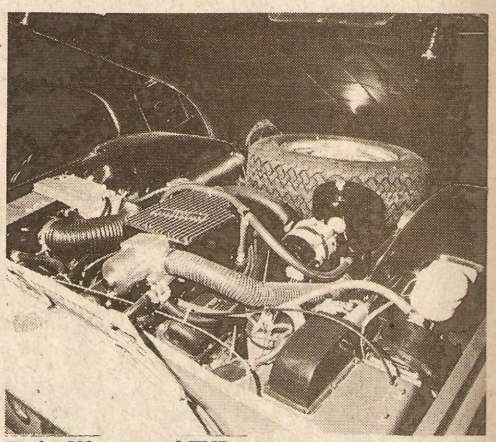
One of the architectural features of this year's motor show is the magnificent Renault erection, of which more anon. We found it an ideal place



Longer and wider, the new Scimitar GTE should prove even more of an all-purpose thoroughbred.



A touch of nostalgia on the Alfa Romeo stand.



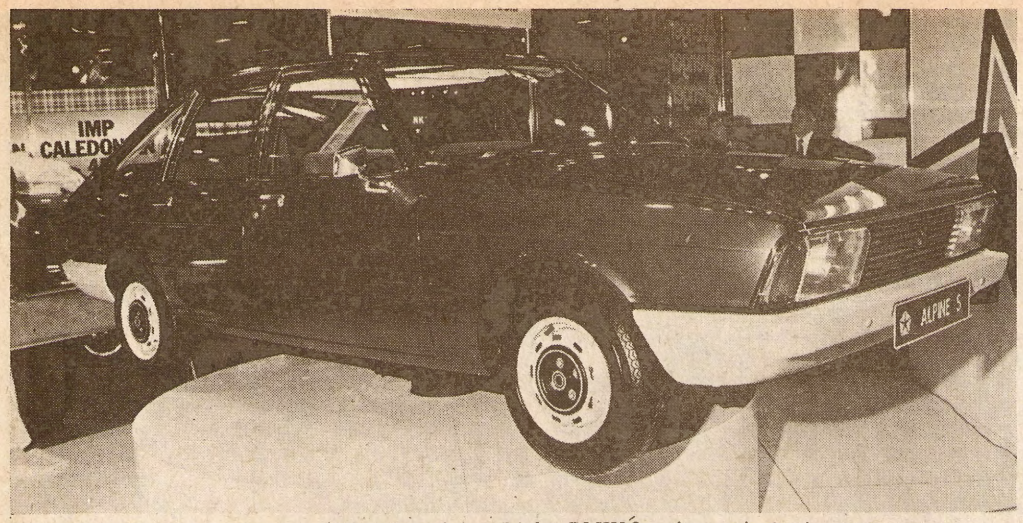
Turbo V6 powered TVR.

Keeping the name bright — Andy Rouse's Leyland ST Sprint.



Reliant's new Kitten with exceptional economy.



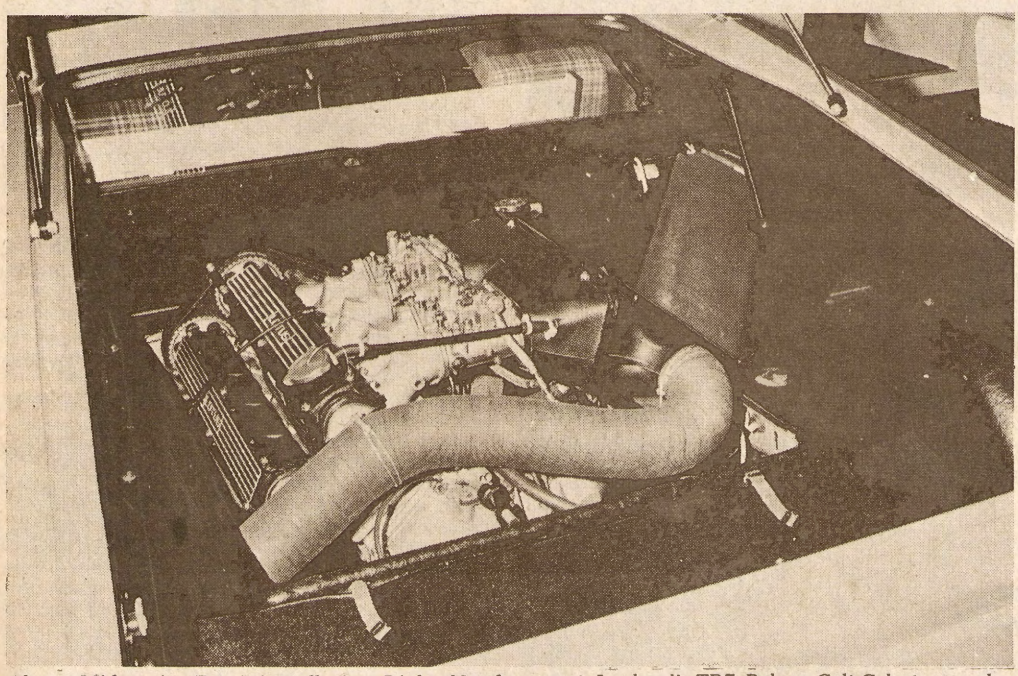


Above: attractively proportioned Chrysler Alpine. Right: BMW 3 series, an instant success.

from which to photograph the Rolls-Royce Camargue, for which it was never intended. It's marvellous that Rolls Royce Motors can sell all and more of their immensely costly products and it's delightful that British engineering is still admired the world over. Nevertheless, it is to be hoped that Rolls-Royce have a smaller car up their sleeves for the day that must come when such huge sums of money are no longer available. A modern version of the old 20 hp Rolls-Royce would have a colossal following.

Perhaps illogically, the customers still buy Bristols with their big Chrysler V8 engines, though the saloon is scarcely modern in appearance and the convertible is far from attractive. The Panther seems like an extravagant car to buy and to run, but there must be some rich customers who like it and even if it combines most of the worst features of vintage cars, it's well made. Finally, the AC is now, they swear, almost ready





Above: Mid-engine Esprit installation. Right: Not for us yet, Leyland's TR7. Below: Colt Celeste — a show surprise.

for a road test, and our stopwatches are waiting.

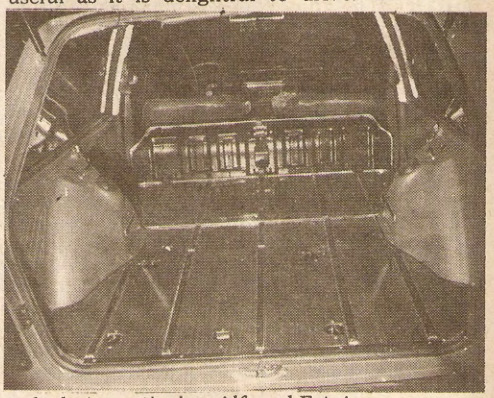
Among the foreign cars, the Japanese now have a firm hold in Britain. We have just been testing the excellent Colt GTO and now this firm are producing, as a last-minute show surprise, an entirely new car called the Colt Celeste. It's really a sports estate car, like the Reliant GTE and the Lancia HPE. It has a 2-litre overhead camshaft engine and the lines of this hatchback coupé are very pleasing. The Colt is claimed to be a tough car, which recent rally successes prove.

Toyota have several new cars in their range, notably the 2000, a compact 4-door saloon. The little Corolla 30 is now in 4-door form and the big Crown 2600 has electric windows and every conceivable luxury fitting. Mazda show the 616, a 1586 cc 4-door saloon, and the little 2-door 1000, which can also have a 1300 cc engine and four doors. The Honda Civic is deservedly popular here and the Hondamatic transmission might have been designed for London traffic.

The continental makes were given ample space in the Paris Salon report. Nevertheless, I must advise you to visit the Alfa Romeo stand and see the supercharged straight-eight 159 that Fangio drove. At Paris, I said that the Alfasud Estate was not good-looking, but now that I have examined its luxiorious interior it makes more sense.

Electric City Car

We have seen the De Tomaso Pantera and Longchamp at many shows. Though the Zagato Sele electric city car has often been seen on the continent, this is the first time such a vehicle has appeared at a London show. The Lancia stand must be visited, if only to see the HPE, which is as useful as it is delightful to drive. Citroën are



Ugly, but practical — Alfasud Estate.

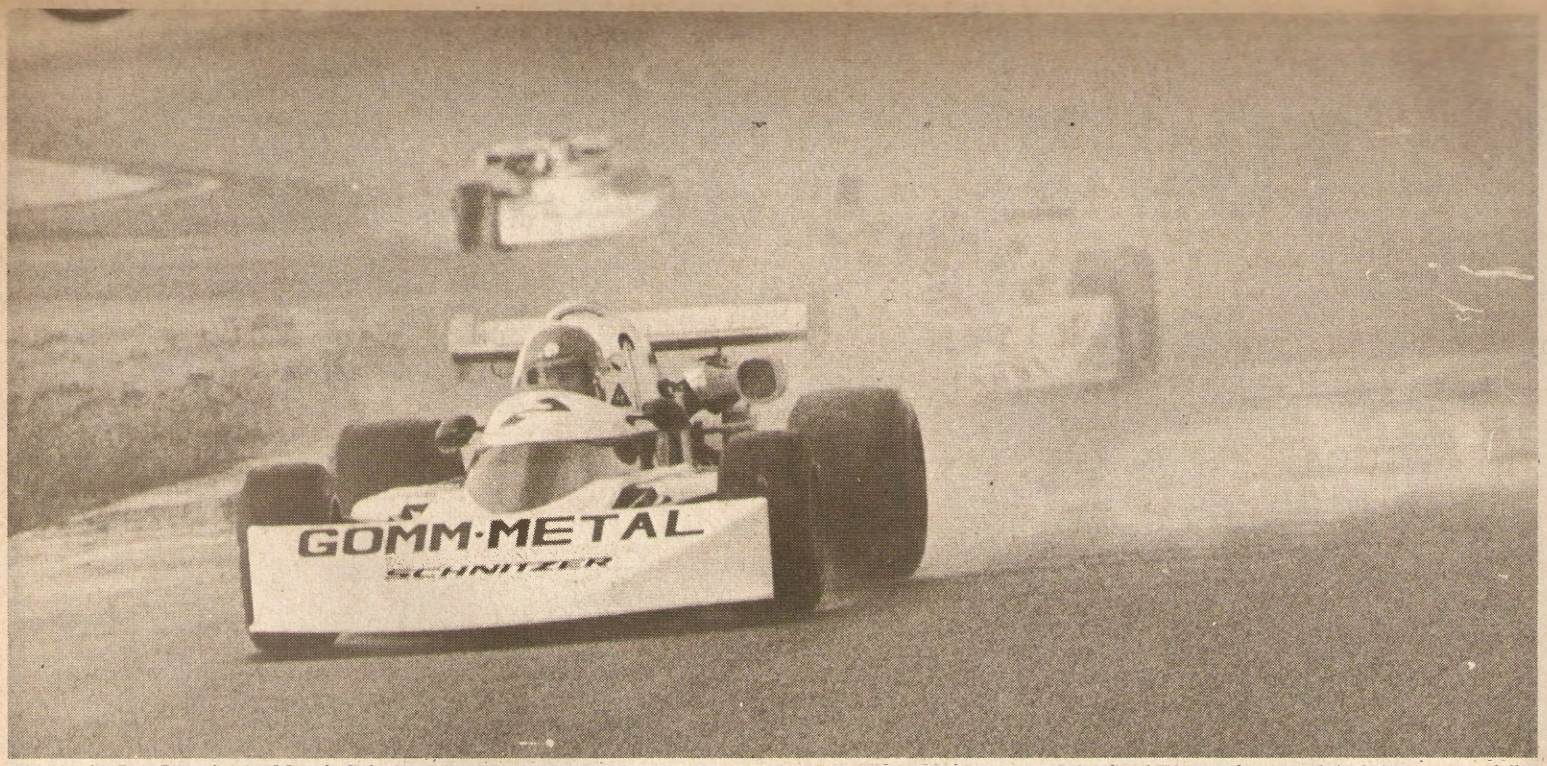
cautious, showing neither the 2 CV Spécial nor the long-chassis CX prestige. Renault, on the other hand, have an immense display on their skyscraper stand, notably a sectional 30 TS, which repays the closest study. The patrician Peugeot 604 has at last come to England, but the splendid little 104 ZS coupe has not reached these shores, or at least it was absent during sneak preview. The Simca stand does not show the latest models, in deference to the Chrysler Alpine display elsewhere.

Although German cars are expensive, I forecast that the Volkswagen Polo will scoop the market here, as its the first really quiet small car. The BMW 3-series, too, is destined for instant success, for it's exactly the right size of car under present conditions.

Apologies for those few stands that have not been mentioned. When you visit Earls Court, you may well enjoy the early cars that are displayed even more than the new ones. For those of us who are no longer young, they bring nostalgic memories of happy days when motoring – dare I say it – was much more enjoyable than it is today.







Driving the Ron Dennis-run March-Schnitzer BMW 752, Italian Vittorio Brambilla was the hero and winner of the final F2 race last weekend. Impressive fellow Italians, Gorgio Francia and Maurizio Flammini gave chase.

VALLELUNGA

Vittorio's Gran Premio

Story and Photos by CHRIS WITTY

Outside the paddock garages the darkness had already descended and yet the race had only finished 15 minutes or so beforehand. A short, stocky man, hands in pockets, wearing a cloth cap and cardigan, stood peering over the damaged works Elf Marches. He shuffled around, looking up as a local offered his congratulations. For Vittorio Brambilla it was all in a day's work. He was happy but without visible elation. It typified his character. After all he'd made everything look so easy as he took his Ron Dennis-run Schnitzer BMW-powered March 752 to his first F2 win of the year in this, the final round of the European F2 Championship trial.

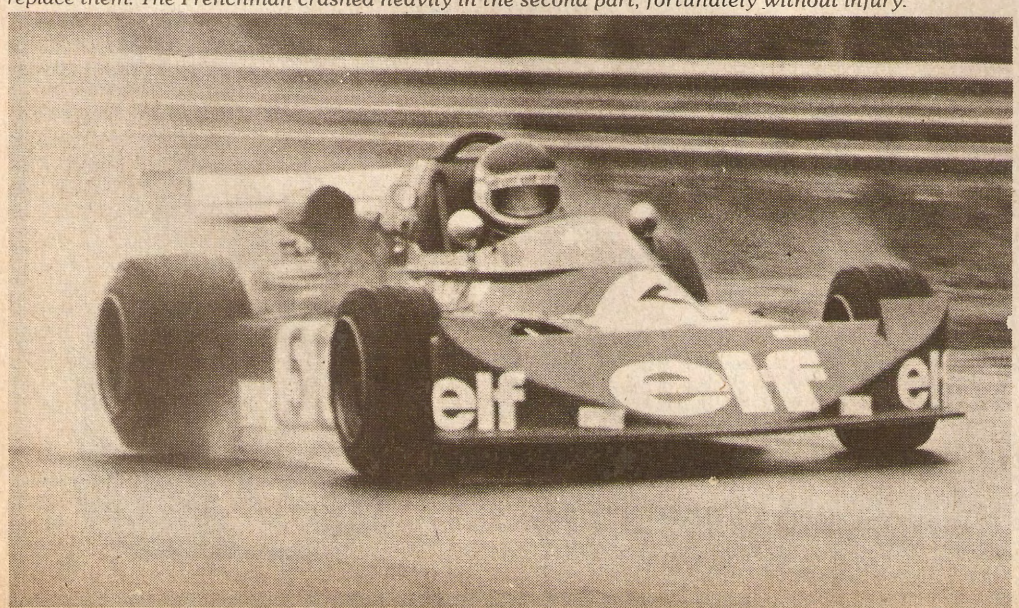
Following the chaos that had reigned during the previous day's practice, the Italian hero had effortlessly placed his March on the second row behind two works Marches. Being their works Grand Prix driver, Vittorio wasn't unduly worried. The only worry was that he would repeat his Enna *contretemps* when he tried the big outbraking act into the first corner and took both the Frenchmen off.

On a track that was still wet following a heavy rain shower, many of the runners elected to remain on dry tyres. Patrick Tambay didn't. He took his Elf March into an immediate lead from team-mate Michel Leclere but it wasn't to last. Brambilla soon disposed of Leclere, who then fell off on the still slippery surface. He then caught and passed a slowing Tambay and that was it. He cantered the first heat, allowed Jacques Laffite to briefly lead the second, and eventually ran out the winner by 39.3s.

Tambay, following a pit stop to change on to dry tyres, was running well in the second heat dicing with Laffite and the impressive Maurizio Flammini in his privately-entered March 742. Tambay exited the race in a spectacular manner, rolling the car after contact with the barrier at close on 160 mph. He escaped unhurt.

As for Lafitte and Flammini, they both encountered problems, but still ran hard in both parts to be eventually rewarded with good places, a mere 1s covering the pair of them at the end.

No luck for Nogaro winner Patrick Tambay who, having led the first heat on wet tyres, had to stop to replace them. The Frenchman crashed heavily in the second part, fortunately without injury.



ENTRY AND PRACTICE

If the Automobile Club di Roma get away with this, especially after the farcical happening during last weekend's penultimate round of the European F2 Championship, then you can't blame most of the non-Italian F2 regulars if they give two fingers to this race next year. Quite how the organisers were allowed to make up the rules as they went along is totally unforgivable. This was a total Italian cock-up, a situation tailor-made for the Formula 1 Constructors' Association, a situation just right for a militant strike by the drivers, a situation that brings the sport into disrepute. How did it all start you may ask? Well, are you sitting comfortably? Then we'll begin.

Well it all started when most of the English contingent missed their plane from London and, after much shuffling around, the party arrived in Rome somewhat weary and wondering whether the compulsory beef curry on the Air India Jumbo was an Italian plot toward the happenings that were about to follow.

For this, the 14th and final round of the F2 series, a vast entry of 39 cars had been accepted by the organisers. Now came the big mistake. In accepting all the entries, only the fastest 22 would be allowed to start the race.

Having had the use of the circuit on the Friday for unofficial practice, Saturday would be the only day in which to qualify. That's customary. However, by the time darkness fell on Friday evening, the organisers still hadn't decided how to run practice and no one knew when it would start. "We'll decide in the morning after scrutineering," they said.

The problem was that although scrutineering (for what eventually amounted to 37 cars) was scheduled to start at 8 am, it didn't. An early morning plan to start practice at 9.30 am was altered to 10.30 am and then dropped. The organisers had the idea of running practice in four one-hour sessions. This was thought as being unreasonable by many. Thus it was changed to two 90-minute sessions starting at 12 noon. So far, most people had accepted this vague form of organisation which, under the circumstances, is a total prostitution of the word.

Okay, so everyone began to warm their cars up and, one by one, they got into line waiting to be released on to the circuit Fine, 12 o'clock comes and some seedy Italian opens the gates and out they file. Suddenly, clang! The gate is closed. "Ees impossible, no more cars on di track," "You are joking mate," retorts a mechanic. The works Marches have yet to come out, both Bang and Olufsen cars are still there, there's a hoard of cars still sitting there, totally bewildered.

You've guessed it. The organisers have decided to only allow 22 cars on the track at the same time. They haven't told anyone, they haven't split the practice into sessions to accommodate such a

large entry, they've just set the scene for World War Three.

Meanwhile those fortunate enough to be through and on to the track are rushing around while confusion reigns the length of the pit road. It's like a Marx brothers' comedy. Sandro Angeleri, March Engineering's Italian "secret weapon," looked likely to repeat the previous year's feat when he received two black eyes after a similar argument, while Brian Lewis starts blocking the pit road with wet tyres, having threatened, in Brian's very own distinctive manner, just how high old matey on the bloody gate will fly if his fist connects.

The organisers make excuses about circuit insurance, something which is quite valid but an item that had obviously been overlooked when they accepted all the entries. In their own pathetic way, they couldn't do anything but after 15 minutes or so, they eventually agreed to allow all the cars out and on to the track at once. Crazy. "This would never happen in F5000," wisecracks a mechanic.

Furthermore, they didn't cancel the 10 minutes advantage enjoyed by the others, especially as a shower of rain struck and soaked the track thereafter. Exactly 90 minutes later, the session finished and that was it. Actually, it really was *it* for the rain returned and this time it stayed making the second session a total washout. It was utter chaos and that, in a nutshell, was what will make the 25th Gran Premio di Roma remembered by many, especially those who were cheated out of their right to practice fairly.

Perhaps the final dirt-kicked-in-the-face attitude taken by the organisers was the fact that of 16 Italians entered, no less than 13 managed to qualify and of those, five were regarded as "wrist jobs." The coincidence was too great. The whole thing smelt . . . of spaghetti!

Heading the entry was Italy's favourite son, Arturo Merzario, making another F2 appearance in the works Osella FA2 which he had last raced at Silverstone. It was exactly a year ago, at this meeting, that Merzario had debuted the Osella chassis in F2 form.

There were two other neat Osellas present, those of Giorgio Francia and Robert Filannino. The latter is rather slow and he didn't qualify.

All three cars were powered by Munich-prepared BMW engines and much interest was focused on who would be quicker around the Italian circuit, Merzario or the impressive Francia.

The answer was Francia, but not by very much. Both cars looked fast, if unspectacular, and had trouble free practice periods. Francia was always quick throughout on both days.

Italy's other hero, although not quite so publicity and image conscious as Art, is Vittorio Brambilla. Well, he was back to have another go at F2 for the first time since Enna in July. The car was one of the Ron Dennis March 752s which Jean-Pierre Jaussaud had taken to fourth place at Nogaro a fortnight earlier.

The Ron Dennis team of three cars, the other two Marches for Italian Sandro Cinotti (back again to please his Scaini sponsors) and Italian/Swiss Bruno Pescia, arrived at the circuit on Friday *sans* engines. Apparently the team had a dispute with Joseph Schnitzer, along with Ecurie Elf Ambrozium (Jacques Laffite) and Ecurie Elf Switzerland (Gerard Larrousse), and there was some internal problems in securing the release of the Schnitzer-BMW engines.

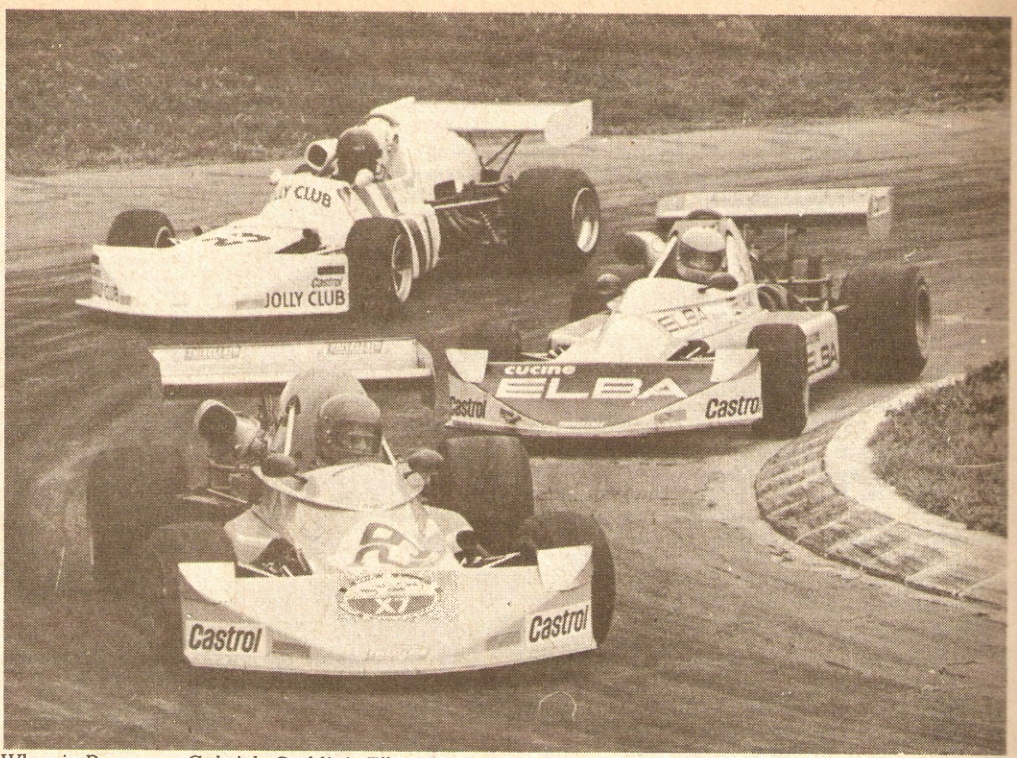
However the pony express got through, or rather chief mechanic Jimmy Tulley arrived late on Friday evening in a van loaded with four engines and each car became a runner.

It was therefore particularly noteworthy that Brambilla should run hard and fast early on to push hard for the pole position. His pit got him consistently in the 1m 10s bracket (the lap record stands to Patrick Depailler set up last year at 1m 09.79s) and they thought they'd made it having caught him at a 1m 10s dead. The organisers thought otherwise. It was a typically gritty performance from the gusty works March F1 driver.

The other two cars, with such a large entry, wouldn't have looked like qualifying anywhere other than Italy and Ron Dennis could smile, especially as all the Italian sponsors were there.

Despite his tempamental outburst after the last Nogaro race, Jacques Laffite arrived at Vallelunga with a Schnitzer BMW engine neatly installed in the back of his regular Martini. However, there were some changes.

As already mentioned, Joseph Schnitzer and his clients aren't seeing eye to eye and what the Martini team had done was to rebuild their blown Nogaro engine themselves. It gave no trouble throughout practice and Jacques, despite being slower than the works Marches, was happy with things and he had recovered from his American GP mishap and was seeing clearly now.



When in Rome . . . Gabriele Serblin's Elba March 752 (above) splits the older cars of "Gimax" and Carlo Giorgio. All of them finished, albeit well down, although Alessandro Pesenti-Rossi (below) came through to a well earned fourth place.

The team to beat in F2 at the moment are the works Marches and this time there were three of them, the regular spare being race prepared for March F3 works driver Alex Ribeiro.

As Fred Opert wisecracked, "Alex has had this drive planned all year. He had to, he's on the home ground of his sponsor!" Fred was, of course, referring to the "Jesus Saves" decals all over the Brazilian's car.

The other two works cars were handled, as always, by Michel Leclere and Patrick Tambay. As the pair of them have dominated the last three races, the inter team rivalry is friendly but forceful. They are now a real match for each other.

During Friday's unofficial testing, the pair of them ended up the quickest with Tambay posting a 1m 10.4s, just 0.2s quicker than Michel. Both cars were unaltered, structurally, since Nogaro.

Ribeiro was content to feel his way around in strange surroundings and his approach to the job in hand showed just how much he has matured over the past few months. His progress was hampered by a faulty clutch slave cylinder.

After all the chaos surrounding the practice and just who should be out and who shouldn't, Tambay and Leclere seemed to shrug this aside and set about the job of forming the front row.



It would be difficult to get in a good lap because there was so much traffic on the circuit but anyhow Tambay began to repeat his Nogaro form and apart from an alarming spin when, on unscrubbed tyres, he lost it cresting the 140 mph blind brow coming back into the stadium, the Frenchman was clocked at a 1m 9.6s on his very last lap by the March pit. But not by the organisers. What was incredible about Tambay's time was, following the heart stopping gyrations into the stadium, his excursion onto the rough had bent the bottom clevis pin and cracked an upright!

It was Leclere who in fact was given the pole. Michel had run close to Tambay throughout but even his pole time was slower than what the team timed him at.

As for Ribeiro, he found the traffic running against him and, coupled with several niggling problems, he wasn't really in the groove and found himself toward the back, behind a whole bevy of non-descript mobile chicanes who must have slipped someone a few million *lire* in order to make the grid because they are dead cert non-qualifiers anywhere else. What makes you laugh is the fact that half of them kid themselves they've done the time.

If Elf March fortunes were high, then Elf Switzerland fortunes were at a really low ebb. With Jean-Pierre Jabouille away in Japan for a sports car race, the second Elf 2J was being driven by Marie-Claude Beaumont. This was Marie-Claude's first public single-seater outing, although she had done a few laps in Depailler's F2 car late last year at Ricard. Larrousse was in his regular car.

On Friday Gerard wasn't quite as quick as the works Marches recording a 1m 11.3s. A slight oil leak from the Schnizter engine proved to have worsening effects on Saturday for Gerard felt the engine tightening after ten laps and switched off early. By then he had only done a 1m 12.89s which the team thought would be enough to qualify. It wasn't and the rain in the later session ruined any chance he might have had of making the grid. At first he thought he'd made it as last qualifier but then the timekeepers changed the time of "Gimax" and then altered Xavier Laperye's.

As for Marie-Claude, she bagan to get into the swing of things although finding the new experience of single-seaters extremely precise. On Friday she got down to 1m 13.5s and team manager Jean Sage reckoned that there was still another second too come.

However, after a couple of laps of the first session she found herself spinning off in avoidance of Jose Chateaubriand who, having hired Brian Henton's March-Ford, had suffered a rear tyre puncture at the end of the 165 mph back straight. The Brazilian spun "six or seven times" but didn't hit anything. Nor did Marie-Claude but enough dirt jammed in the trhottle slides to necessitate outside assistance in getting her back to the pits. By then it was too late for her to have

any chance of returning a qualifying time.

For Chateaubriand, his F2 debut was a miserable one. Besides the punture which effectively ruled him out, he'd become involved in one of the two major incidents that happened on Friday.

Loris Kessel, back again in his March 752, had the Heidegger BMW blow at the end of the main straight. Merzario and one of the ROC Chevrons had spun on the oil while Chateaubriand slammed on his brakes. American Super Vee star Tom Bagley, driving the Fred Opert Chevron B29 usually handled by Hector Rebaque, hadn't seen the incident and cannoned into the back of the March.

The Chevron had the tub kinked but the Opert mechanics straightened it out. Both cars were in fact repaired for official practice although neither made the race.

For Bagley, this being his first European appearance, it was a disappointment, especially as his Kent Oil sponsors had flown over from Texas to see him. Fred Opert tried to ask the organisers to run a separate qualifying race for the non-qualifiers but they wouldn't hear of such a suggestion. A similar attitude was, correctly we might add, taken toward a proposed official qualifying session on race day in *lieu* of the practice farce. Anyway it rained on race morning, and how!

The other incident on Friday eliminated Alberto Colombo's March 752. Following a pit stop, his mechanics had fitted new brake pads. At the end of the main straight, one of them popped out! The car was written off but it wasn't until Tambay came steaming into the pits to tell the officials what had happened that anything was done. There were no marshals on duty you see. Anyway Alberto was all right as it turned out. He tried to qualify in Lorenzo Niccolini's ex-Scuderia Passetore 742 but reckoned the car was "dangerous" after just two laps.

Naturally there was a heavy Italian contingent at this race. Aside from those already mentioned there was Maurizio Flammini, back in his regular Mercury March 742, Gabriele Serblin, back in his Elba March 752, plus Giancarlo Martini and Duilio Truffo in the Passetore/Minardi 752s, the latter making a reappearance in F2 since driving an Osella at Mugello.

Flammini ran out of petrol near the end of the first session while arch-rival for the Italian national F2 championship, Serblin, had a braking and engine problem. Like a red rag to a bull, most of the Italians rushed around in the wet session, Serblin and Martini looking very spectacular and very lucky.

Then there was Alessandro Pesenti-Rossi, "Gianfranco", Cosimo Turizio, "Gimax" and Carlo Giorgio, all of them in their regular 742s. "Gimax" was in Serblin's 742 which Lele had used at Nogaro while Giorgio's car was the only non-BMW runner, his car, as always being fitted with a Ford Hart BDA. Incredibly all these runners made the grid.

. The only other Ford runner to make the grid was Britain's Ray Mallock. That in itself was an excellent achievement. Ray's set-up succeeds through enthusiasm rather than finance.

His Swindon Ford BDG engine had now done rather a lot of miles and during the first session it began to blow out a lot of smoke. Ray was lucky it rained later on as he reckoned the rings had gone. He hoped that by topping the engine up with oil between both heats, it would last and save him having to change over to his spare 1600cc Atlantic BDA.

Completing a total of 25 Marches present at the circuit were the two regular Bang and Olufsen cars, neither of which were able to qualify although the Brian Lewis set-up deserves a far better return for the effort they put in, Brazilian Antonio Prado, who was unlucky not to get in after a display visibly better than some of the Italians, Roland Binder's elderly 732 and Austrian Ewald Boisitz, the latter in Hans Binder's 752 and not Lella Lombardi as first suggested. None of these qualified and were never likely to.

There were two more Austrian's in the entry, one of which made it and on who failed again. The failure was Hans Meier who, despite more laps than anyone in his Space Racing-run ex-Watson Surtees TS15, wasn't able to get it together and even kerb hopping didn't help.

The success, predictably, was Hans Binder in the works development Chevron BMW B29. Hans went well again and was always in contention, although not quite in the ball park.

There were two other Chevrons, the regular Simca ROC B29s of Xavier Lapeyre and a certain Laurent Ferrier. The latter didn't get in but Lapeyre did for some reason. He reckoned he'd done the time but his past record will show otherwise. Still, maybe he's of Italian origin!

Finally there was the first, and long-awaited, appearance of Freddy Kottulinsky in the Lochmann Racing Ralt RTI.

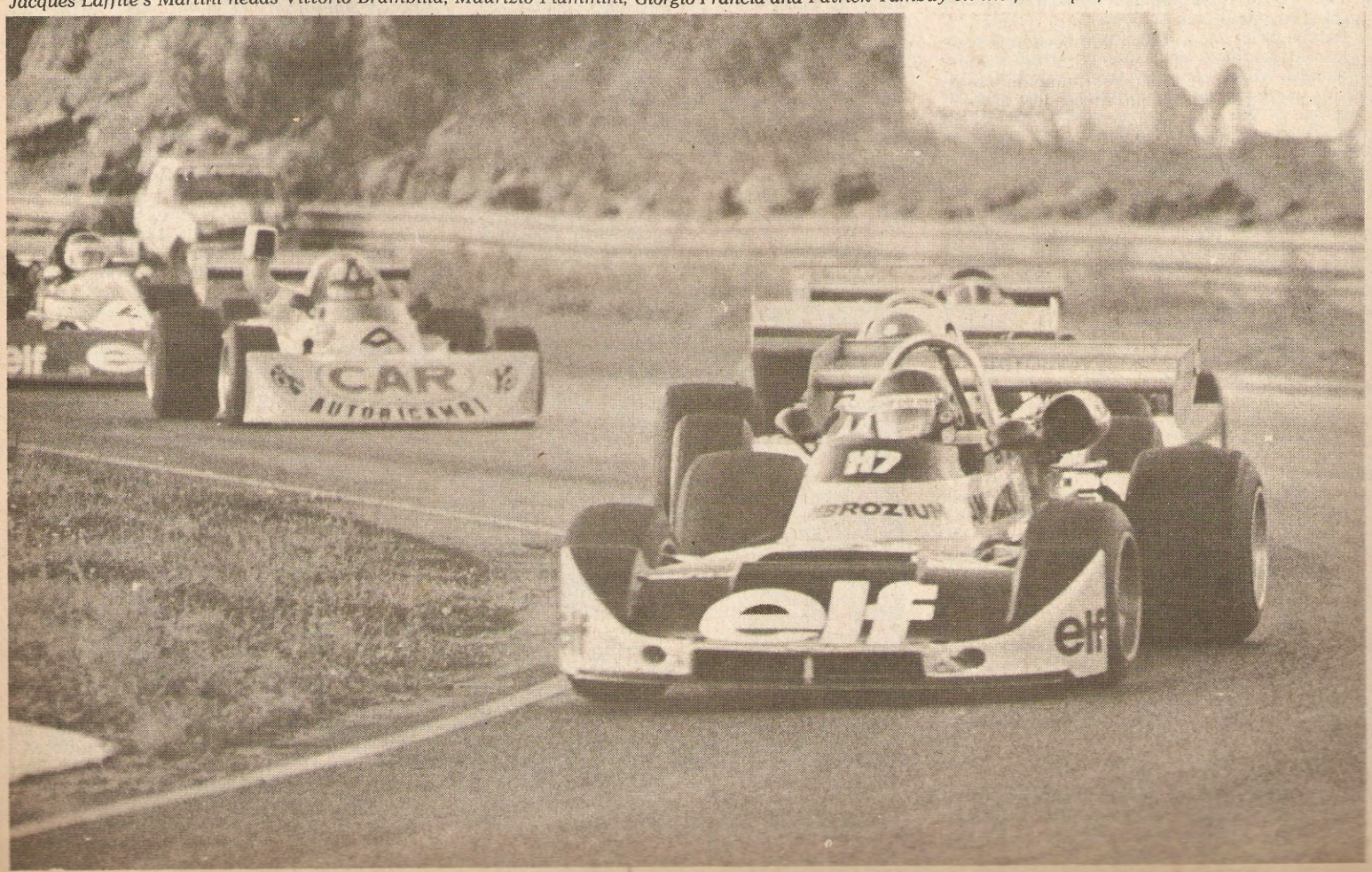
The car had never turned a wheel but it was too prove a disastrous weekend for them. Firstly the BMW engine ran its bearings while being warmed up. That effectively made the former European FSV champion a non-qualifier. However, he gave the car a run in the rain (on slicks!) before the replacement engine blew, an oil line having come adrift.

Patrick Tambay March-BMW 752 1m 10.29s	Michel Leclere March-BMW 752 1m10.23s
Jacques Laffite Martini-BMW Mk16 1m 10.61s	Vittorio Brambilla March-BMW 752 1m10.42s
Giorgio Francia Osella-BMW FA2 1m 10.86s	Maurizio Flammini March-BMW 742 1m 10.84s
Duilio Truffo March-BMW 752 1m 11.12s	Arturo Merzario Osella-BMW FA2 1m 10.99s
Giancarlo Martini March-BMW 752 1m 11.28s	Hans Binder Chevron-BMW B29 1m 11.24s
Alessandro Pesenti-Rossi March-BMW 742 1m 11.32s	Gabriele Serblin March-BMW 752 1m 11.39s
Loris Kessel March-BMW 752 1m 11.86s	Carlo Giorgio March-Ford 742 1m 12.04s
"Gianfranco" March-BMW 742 1m 12.15s	Cosimo Turizio March-BMW 742 1m 12.13s
Alex Ribeiro March-BMW 752 1m 12.24s	Sandro Cinotti March-BMW 752 1m 12.23s
Bruno Pescia March-BMW 752 1m 12.60s	Ray Mallock* March-Ford 75B 1m 12.40s
Xavier Lapeyre Chevron-Simca B29 1m 12.79s	"Gimax" March-BMW 742 1m 12.63s
	Gerard Larrousse Elf-BMW 2J 1m 12.89s

*did not start

Did not qualify: Antonio Prado (March-BMW 742), 1m 12.89s; Tom Bagley (Chevron-Ford B29), 1m 13.03s; Claude Bourgoignie (March-BMW 752), 1m 13.11s; Bernard de Dryver (March-BMW 752), 1m 13.37s; Roberto Filannino (Osella-BMW FA2), 1m 13.59s; Hans Meier (Surtees-BMW TS15), 1m 13.59s; Laurent Ferrier (Chevron-Simca B29), 1m 14.17s; Marie-Claude Beaumont (Elf-BMW 2J), 1m 15.24s; Jose Chateaubriand (March-Ford 752), 1m 15.59s; Alberto Colombo (March-BMW 742), 1m 16.44s; Ewald Boisitz (March-BMW 752), 1m 16.44s; Lorenzo Niccolini (March-BMW 742), 1m 25.29s; Roland Binder (March-BMW 732), 1m 27.41s; Freddy Kottulinsky (Ralt-BMW RT1), 1m 34.82s.

Jacques Laffite's Martini heads Vittorio Brambilla, Maurizio Flammini, Giorgio Francia and Patrick Tambay on the first lap of the second heat.



HEAT ONE

It was the weather's turn to play havoc on race morning when a deluge struck that would have done justice to Noah's Ark. It subsided a little as everyone splashed around for their pre-race warm-up before cascading down again.

However, by the time that the start time drew near, the skies were clearing but the track was still wet, although drying fast.

The morning splash about didn't claim any casualties although Larrousse did eventually get a race after Mallock had to sadly withdraw having found a crack in the front bulkhead. It was in a difficult place and you'd have to be an elf to have seen it.

After a couple of warm-up laps, several runners decided to switch over to dry tyres which many of the Italians were already on. Tambay, however, chose to remain on wets as did Binder, Martini, Ribeiro, Pescia and Lapeyre.

It was still damp enough for Tambay to rocket away at the start and he immediately opened up a lead which, by lap 2, was 2.8s. But it wasn't to last.

Leclere initially held second place chased by Brambilla and then already a gap to Francia, Serblin, Laffite, Flammini, Pescia (on wets remember), Merzario, Martini and the rest, all of them in one howling mass. It was quite impressive. Unfortunately for some their race wasn't to last much further than the first corner. Turizio and "Gianfranco" tangled and just when he thought he'd avoided the *melee*, Turizio's car spun back and collected the unfortunate Ribeiro. It hadn't been a happy weekend for Alex.

Larrousse counted himself lucky afterwards to have missed them and proceeded to make progress upwards through the lesser lights.

Brambilla soon swept by Leclere and the pair of them closed in on Tambay who was not visibly having handling problems. The gap was down to 2s by lap five and then just 1s a lap later. Two laps later Vittorio was in front and Leclere followed suit. The scene was set.

Tambay slipped down toward Francia, who was going well yet again and keeping a distance between himself and the huge dust up that was taking place between Flammini and Laffite. Merzario and Serblin had dropped back, the latter having spun early on, but he retook Art although he wasn't to make any more progress. The Italian was having problems with his fuel pressure and the engine suddenly cut at one point, sending him spinning off and kissing the barrier. It took him a long time to get the engine to fire up again but by then the ailment had put him out of the running.

Laffite and Flammini were still hard at it, the Frenchman having problems with a sticking throttle and first gear which kept jumping out at the hairpin. This had lost him the leaders but not Maurizio.

On lap 12, Tambay dived into the pits and March mechanics Mike Smith, Tony Cottier, Dick Bennett and Gary Clare, under the guidance of crew chief Vince Higgins, had the car rolling again with dry tyres in 25s or so. It dropped him from third to 14th and Patrick began a tigering climb back into contention.

At the same time as Tambay pitted, Leclere made his exit. He was still in close company with Brambilla and as the pair of them came up to lap a slower car, Leclere braked a little off line and hit a puddle. The front tyres locked up and he slid off into the barrier. The monocoque was finished and Michel hopped out, his effort wasted. A sticking oil pressure relief valve was found afterwards so it was doubtful whether he'd have finished the race anyway.

That left Vittorio well out on his own by something approaching 18s. Francia was now second but Flammini and Laffite had pulled themselves up right behind him and this great dice now formed three cars. Laffite managed to slip by Flammini on lap 17 and then three laps later, he did the same to Francia. The Frenchman was then able to pull away leaving Francia to fend off his fellow countryman until the end, although he was no doubt obviously unaware that Maurizio's engine had lost all its oil pressure.

So Brambilla ran out an easy winner from Laffite with Francia just pipping Flammini. Merzario came next, complaining of a useless engine but was able to keep clear of the consistent Pesenti-Rossi who had run well yet again. Tambay's progress had brought him back up to seventh and still on the same lap despite the stop, while Martini and Larrousse were the next recognised front runners, the latter coasting the final stages and losing a lap as the engine began to tighten.



The works March mechanics prepare for the off. They were to be disappointed.

HEAT TWO

There was work to be done on Brambilla's car before the second heat started as the Italian had complained of a misfire during the last 15 or so laps which meant him having to change gear 1,000 revs too early. Anyway, the team changed and checked most of the electrics and things looked to be in order.

Just sixteen cars formed up on the grid for although Ribeiro's car could have been repaired in time, the officials didn't bring his car back from the country. Allowing Alex to start would have cost them extra money!

Flammini too had problems because there wasn't time to change the engine so he crossed his fingers and filled it up with oil in the hope that it would last.

There was drama on the grid when Brambilla couldn't get his car to fire up on the button and it was only lightning work by mechanic Jimmy Tulley with the slave battery that prevented startline chaos. There was only 10s to go you see!

Anyhow Laffite burst away in front this time while Flammini banged wheels with Brambilla and pushed him down to third. But it wasn't to last. Laffite led the first lap but Vittorio beautifully swept inside him at the hairpin on lap two and pushed away in the rapidly dwindling light.

Two groups then formed and each produced some really forceful racing. The premier of the two consisted of Laffite, Flammini, Tambay, Francia and Merzario while the other comprised Serblin, Loris Kessel, Larrousse, Pesenti-Rossi, Martini and Hans Binder. The latter wasn't faring too well having run on wets throughout the first heat and was now finding his replacement engine 400 revs down.

Kessel soon left this group with a sickening engine as did Serblin with a recurrence of his fuel pressure problems. Further up, the battle for second place now had Flammini to the fore despite his suspect engine, as Laffite struggled to cope at times with his first heat problem — a sticking throttle. Francia was unfortunately destined to retire when the engine cried enough and then a frustrated Merzario, although running better now, tried unsuccessfully to pass Tambay, dropped back, spun and then quit altogether.

With half of the heat gone, Brambilla was holding a handy 9s cushion over Flammini, Laffite and Tambay, the latter pair often swopping places in heart stopping style. Heart stopping was the operative word for on lap 20, Patrick unaccountably had the car get away from him racing through one of the flat out curves that form the back straight. Laffite, who was behind, saw the car spin off, strike the Armco and flip over through the air. He fought to control his Martini as it skidded across the mud in avoidance. Patrick's March eventually landed, thankfully the right way up with, miraculously, just the four corners bent. "That's the *biggest* accident I've ever had," he reflected afterwards as he walked back to the pits.

This incident put Flammini well clear of Laffite and now Larrousse was rushing up to fill the Italians mirrors. Gerard, like Flammini, was finding his engine holding out. Pesenti-Rossi had also moved past Laffite who now looked in danger of losing second place on aggregate to Flammini. In the style of a champion, he tigered back, opposite locking through every corner as he strove to make up the deficit. His progress was helped toward the final stages when Flammini lost third and fourth gears and this allowed Larrousse through into second with three laps to go. Laffite kept up his charge and it paid off, there just being 1s in it on overall times.

It was a fitting way to end the year for him, especially as he fought to show that although the championship was his long ago, he was still prepared to fight it out until the final flag, despite the gathering, and extremely dangerous, gloom which had enveloped the circuit. The heavens had drawn their own curtain it seemed.

25th Gran Premio Rome
Vallelunga, Italy
2 x 35 lap heats — 140 miles

1, Vittorio Brambilla (March-Schnitzer BMW 752), 1hr 26m 08.7s, 156.1 kph;

2, Jacques Laffite (Martini-Schnitzer BMW Mk16), 1hr 26m 48.0s;

3, Maurizio Flammini (March-GmbH BMW 742), 1hr 26m 49.0s;

4, Alessandro Pesenti-Rossi (March-Novamotor BMW 742), 1hr 27m 21.3s;

5, Giancarlo Martini (March-Minardi BMW 752), 1hr 27m 55.6s;

6, Gerard Larrousse (Elf-Schnitzer BMW 2J), 69 laps;

7, Carlo Giorgio (March-Hart Ford BDA 742), 69 laps; 8, Loris Kessel (March-Heidegger BMW 752), 68 laps; 9, Hans Binder (Chevron-GmbH BMW B29), 67 laps; 10, "Gimax" (March-GmbH BMW 742), 67 laps.

Fastest lap: Laffite, 1m 12.01s, 159.88 kph.

Heat 1 — 70 miles: 1, Brambilla, 44m 05.6s, 152.399 kph; 2, Laffite, 44m 21.2s; 3, Giorgio Francia (Osella-GmbH BMW FA2), 44m 26.4s; Flammini, 44m 27.5s; 5, Arturo Merzario (Osella-GmbH BMW FA2), 44m 52.8s; 6, Pesenti-Rossi, 44m 55.9s. **Fastest lap:** Pesenti-Rossi, 1m 12.01s, 159.88 kph.

Heat 2 — 70 miles: 1, Brambilla, 42m 03.1s, 159.802 kph; 2, Larrousse, 42m 17.0s; 3, Flammini, 42m 21.5s; 4, Pesenti-Rossi, 42m 25.4s; 5, Laffite, 42m 26.9s; 6, Martini, 42m 35.9s. **Fastest lap:** Laffite, 1m 12.01s, 159.88 kph.

Lombard RAC Rally—

leading entries include four Kadetts

Leading entries for the forthcoming Lombard RAC Rally look like this at present: Mäkinen (Ford); Waldegaard (Lancia); Blomqvist (Saab); Rohrl (Opel); Andersson (Toyota); Clark (Ford); Munari (Lancia); Eklund (Saab); Mikkola (Toyota); Lampinen (Lancia); Aaltonen (Opel); Vatanen (Ford); Kallstrom (Datsun); Coleman (Ford); Walfriddson (Lancia); Pond (Opel); Airikkala (Vauxhall); Sclater (Toyota); Kullang (Opel); Pregliasco (Lancia); Sparrow (Vauxhall); Malkin (Chrysler); Saaristo (Skoda); Culcheth (Triumph); Kuun (Toyota); Rockey (Ford); Fowkes (Ford); Haugland (Skoda).

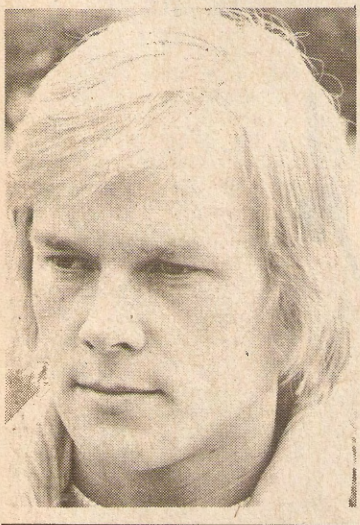
'At the time of going to press there were two reserve entries for Ford and Opel respectively. We understand that negotiations were still underway between Boreham and a fourth "team A" driver when we went to press so no one was saying who might get the drive, but there remains obvious speculation over Markku Alen who must be favourite to get the seat. It is more than possible that the entry may remain vacant however.

The spare Opel entry was originally made for Ari Vatanen before he was bought by Ford, and we have been informed that it is definitely to be filled although it was not finally resolved as to who this might be for as we went to press. Tony Pond's Kadett arrived in Shipley last Friday and work started on the rolling shell on Monday. There will be at least four Kadetts altogether; DOT servicing joining forces with the Euro Handler team arrangements for Rohrl and Aaltonen. Anders Kullang will have the fourth Kadett and this car is being loaned to him by the German team but will be run privately.



Mauro Pregliasco — Beta coupé.

Ari Vatanen — big chance.



Peugeot head for Bandama bonanza in December

Peugeot have now confirmed their Bandama entries and it seems almost certain that Ove Andersson will be joining the team on this occasion. The works will not be alone, however, for a further three Esso team Aseptogyl 504s have been entered for the girls (Claudine Trautmann, Marianne Hoephner and Christine Dacremont) and then there are a further four Peugeots entered by the local importer (SARI) to be driven by Assef, Orio, Ly and one other to be nominated. Of the remaining entries it appears that Gerard Larrousse is currently involved in negotiations to bring a Lancia Stratos, and Renault have made known their intention to bring two cars although what they will be and for whom has yet to be disclosed. In any case Jean Paul Hoephner (Marianne's husband) is almost certain to bring his ex-works R17 TS. Datsun are also expected to enter two cars.

...and bikes head the marathon entry

Following the Bandama is the marathon Cote d'Ivoire-Cote d'Azur, again organised by the Bandama team under Jean Claud Bertrand and apparently there has been a good response from motorcycle importers so far. Honda have confirmed entries for eight bikes and two cars and both Kawasaki and Yamaha have expressed interest. Peugeot, Citroen and the French Landrover importers have also intimated that they will run cars.

Gemmell's Avenger dominates on Mull

Last weekend's Shellsport Tour of Mull was won by Ian Gemmell/Frew Bryden in their Chrysler Avenger GT. The Scottish pair dominated the event, taking almost a minute and a half from the nearest opposition over the first two selectives and never again being seriously challenged. On a dry and warm night the Tour of Mull was again a great success and thoroughly enjoyed by all who participated. Of the principal contenders, John Price non-started and Phil Davies/Don Davidson, in Price's old Porsche, broke the gearbox. Alan Conley had an exciting night in his 998 cc Clan Crusader as the tyres were consistently overheating and adhesion was in consequence a serious problem. He is apparently now considering fitting a rotary engine to the car. John Burton (RS2000) rolled but nevertheless still managed to finish eighth; while a fine performance came from the MacInnon brothers, two locals in a Mexico, who finished a praiseworthy sixth overall. Willie Crawford, with Nigel Raeburn co-driving, was well up with the leaders during the afternoon run, but broke his clutch early on in the evening sections and never reappeared. Last year's winners, Chris Coburn/Rodney Spokes finished third this year, having brought along Chris' 16-valve road car. As Chris put it, "I was out of practice and trying too hard . . ." Nevertheless the longer the event progressed the faster he became, so that on one of the last tests he took 45 seconds off the leading Scotsman. Next year Chris is determined to bring back the cup south of the border. The carousing afterwards was apparently well up to the high standards expected on Mull.

Ian Gemmell — dominated the event.



● Bengt Lundstrom has taken delivery of a new twin-cam Celica and has obtained an eight-valve works engine from Ove Andersson. He will be doing a lot more rallying in 1976 as he has now got his own bodywork business running well. He should be seen on the Mintex, Galway and Circuit of Ireland rallies at least.

● Erik Aaby as well as doing the RAC Rally this year is seriously considering taking out a British licence and contesting all of next years RAC Championships. If this does come about Fred Gallagher will be co-driving for him.

Another foreign tarmac test for Boreham very soon

Ford's plans between now and the RAC involve a team entry on the Criterium St Amand, an all-tarmac mini Tour de France type of event run over the 1st-2nd November along the French/Belgian border, and including two circuits on the agenda. There will be a car for Roger Clark, and probably for Makinen as well. Testing continues with the racing suspension set-up and one of Roger's cars at Bagshot last Thursday was tried on the loose with this arrangement. Unfortunately the track was so rough that realistic back-to-back tests were impossible, but Roger reported that the system might offer advantages in stability. The team may well move in this direction for the RAC. Driver contracts for next year are apparently still to be finalised and there will be an announcement at RAC time but World Championship events will be the principle goal next year. The RAC cars will all be newly built for the event.

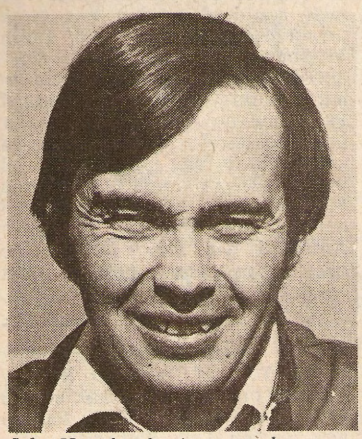
Two more in championship

The RAC championship was originally planned with 12 events in mind for 1976, but this has now been increased to 14 in order to give competitors a better choice (they may count their best nine scores) and to balance the geography in a more satisfactory manner. The two new additions to the list which we published in October 2 issue are the Granite City and the Castrol '75. The schedule is now as follows: Shellsport Dean January 11; Snowman January 31; Mintex International February 19-21; Granite City March 13; Circuit of Ireland April 16-20; Welsh May 6-9; Scottish June 3-7; Jim Clark July 3-4; Burmah August 21; Manx September 17-18; Lindisfarne October 2; Castrol '75 October 16; Lombard RAC November 26-December 1 (+ N. Ireland round).

Chris Sclater showed the national media round Bagshot last Thursday. It was his first ever Toyota Levin trial and he was reportedly very impressed.



A Skoda coupé for RAC



John Haugland – impressed.

Skoda have announced that they will be using the new 130S Coupe on the RAC Rally for their four car effort. The team will consist of regulars John Haugland and Markku Saaristo — Haugland to be co-driven by Fred Gallagher, and two Czechoslovakian crews. First of the Czech crews will consist of the 1975 Czechoslovakian Rally Champion, Vlastimil Havel with regular co-driver Ing Jiri Syrovatko. The second Czech crew is made-up of Milan Zapadlo (reigning Rally Champion of Bohemia) whose father just happens to be the Director General of the Skoda factory. Co-driver is not known at the present.

Haugland is impressed with the new car and is convinced that the RAC debut will be successful, commenting that: "The most important change is that the Coupe is quite a lot lighter than the saloon and that must help us, as we only have a small engine. I have started a testing programme in Scandinavia with the car and I am convinced it will be considerably faster down the British forest special stages than the saloon."

John Haugland will continue as usual with Skoda next year. However, having scored that make's first World Championship points on the 1975 Swedish he has decided to try for a few more next year and will probably do the Acropolis, Portugal and Morocco as well as the usual events. He still hopes to continue to do the British events as he has an excellent relationship with Skoda GB.



Second overall on the Illuminations, Briant hurries over the Halton Camp stage.

Strike four to Cowan

Andrew Cowan has again won the Total Oil Southern Cross rally in Australia driving his works Colt Lancer. This is the fourth consecutive time that the Scot has dominated the event, Cowan, with local man Fred Gogentas co-driving, finished 14 penalties ahead of Australian crew Ferguson and Adcock in another Lancer. Another Australian crew, Carr and Gregson finished third in a Datsun 180B.

Return to sender

Adrian Boyd has now returned his works-built 1800 cc Alpine motor to Dieppe and is awaiting the return of the original "cooking" 1600 engine with which the car was equipped when he bought it. He was not as impressed with the works unit as he had initially hoped. Most of his time is being taken up with the quarry rallycross track at present. On the Texaco the course came in for some (perhaps justified) adverse criticism from principal contenders. Since then the track has been re-dug and 80 yards of it tarmacced. It is said that some £20,000 has been spent in the latest revamp operations and it is now apparently a very respectable course. The next event at the Boyd quarry complex will be a rallycross meeting on Saturday week.

Tense decider

The Hercock Simpson on October 25, the closing round of the BTRDA championship, promises to be a real thriller, for Randolph Whittal-Williams has scored 91 points from seven events and David Stokes has 89, also from seven. Both contenders must drop 11 points and both are uncatchable in the championship; so Stokes, to wrest the laurels from W-W, must finish in the first four BTRDA contenders, and three places ahead of Whittal-Williams.

With nothing to lose, he will be going all out to do just that. Bill Andrews has already clinched the co-drivers section, and Brian Rainbow is expected to be second.

The Hercock is also the final round of the *Cars and Car Conversions* championship and Terry Kaby leads that man R. W-W again by just one point in the overall positions. If both win their classes the situation will be resolved in Kaby's favour as he need only drop three points while R. W-W will have to drop four. But if the latter takes a class win and Kaby is second in the 1300 class, the series will go to the Escort driver by one point. Again, neither driver can be caught either overall or in class.

Native total

As we stated two weeks ago, the South African Total Rally is not being included in the World Championship next year and there has in consequence been a shift in emphasis away from the European style of event which was intended to lure top crews and eventually WCR status down to South Africa. Dave Hastie, the past competitors' liaison officer, is to be the new Clerk of the Course, and Don Tait is to take a well-earned rest. In keeping with the new African style format the stages are to be longer and tougher and the route is now to go south into the North Cape Province areas around Lesotho where many of the high altitude roads used on the Roof of Africa Rally will again be employed. Stages of over 150 kms are currently being planned.

Mick is Man of the Month

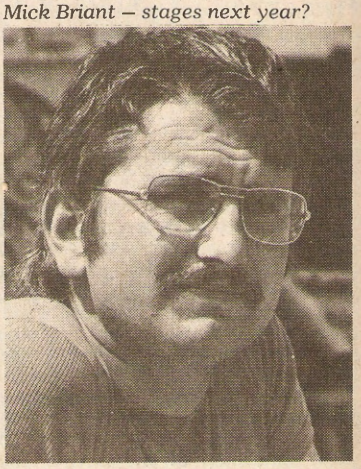
An organiser has won it, several stage rally drivers have received it . . . and now — a road rally driver has collected it. Last week the Ford-fed panel of experts decided that their "Ford Rallyman of the Month" laurels should go to 28 year-old Mick Briant for his massive lead in the *Motoring News*/Weber Road Rally Championship. Not only that — Briant is also leading the BTRDA Silver Star series and has won seven out of seven in the Welsh Association Championship.

Briant, who finished second to George Hill in last year's *MN* series has an impressive points total this year and it is very unlikely that he will be beaten, having scored four firsts, one second and one seventh. He is also likely to win the other two series. The car Briant uses is an Escort RS2000, completely standard mechanically apart from group two suspension.

Mick has been a serious competitor for three seasons, first starting by "mucking about" on twelve car specials in 1969. He laid-off from competing during the 1972 and '73 seasons, taking up again in July '74 for the *Motoring News* events. Now, for next year Briant has decided to head for the special stages — money and sponsors permitting — and is currently figuring out just how much more costly his rallying is going to be. Obviously Mick is not in the slightest disenchanted with road rallying, but realises that they have had their day as a major, publicity-conscious and publicly-acceptable form of the sport.

Although no newcomer to special stage rallies, Mick has only competed in a handful of events, but on these he has scored wins on the Suffolk Stages and Banbury Cross with second placings on the Bruern and Lancia Pointer rallies.

Mick Briant – stages next year?



Tynemouth MC hold marshal's night out

For the second year running, Tynemouth and District MC are holding a marshals evening by way of saying "thank you" to those who supervised on the Lindisfarne. This year however, the club are planning a bigger and better jamboree, feeling that those marshals who braved the evil conditions have more than deserved some return. Accordingly drinks will be "on the house," as will snacks, and a pile of goodies are to be given away. The night is open to any marshal who put his signature on one of the official signing-on sheets. The date is October 21 and the fun kicks off at the Tynemouth and District Clubhouse, Billy Mill Lane, Billy Mill, Tynemouth at 8.00 pm. The telephone number there is Northshields 77686, and any queries to Sam Moore on Wallsend 628921 ext 61 (days) or at home on Northshields 75062.

Two car attack by Russell in '76?

Russell Brookes will definitely be seen in a Ford next year and he most certainly *is* doing the RAC. A misunderstanding over entry fees delayed the entry somewhat, however, so that at the initial meeting of the seeding committee his form was not present. It appears that for next year he will be retaining his '75 RAC championship car, with a new car joining in so that at present he hopes to have one car for the rough and one for tarmac. Initial plans to contest European championship events have been shelved at present for sponsorship reasons, although Russell is still involved in protracted conversations with sponsors for the coming year.

● Idem Wiggins Teape have gracefully withdrawn their support of the '76 Lindisfarne Rally.

Buffum goes back to Broadspeed

American rally driver, and winner of this year's SCCA Pro-Am Rally Championship John Buffum is planning to come over to Britain at the end of October in readiness for the RAC. Buffum hopes to fit-in a couple of "acclimatisation" events prior to the international and will also be taking his '72 Escort back to Broadspeed (who assembled the car originally) for a total rebuild.

Buffum has enjoyed considerable success in the Pro Championship this year, winning five consecutive events to clinch the series, using both the Ford and a Porsche. Buffum is at present hoping to attract sponsorship and should anyone be interested they should contact Chris Bodsworth at Broadspeed on Southam 3191.

Howells fleet

Last weekend's Howells sponsored Rali Morgannwg was won by Pat Jerome in one of the Howells Allegro 'fleet'. Pat clinched the event by just four seconds on a recount from Norman Allen's Mini. The 120 mile route consisted of tight Targa sections and five selectives. Pat was using the 1750 G1 car and although he was consistently losing out to the 1275 GT Mini on the selectives, his times on the Targa sections clinched it for him. These two cars totally outpaced the rest of the opposition and were some six minutes up at the final control. Another Howells driver, Doug Dawe, had a tough weekend, for in addition to competing on this rally, he went on to do the Wyedean Stages the next morning. He could well have forgotten about rallying completely last weekend however for he lost third gear during the night on the Allegro 1300 (this one has been slightly tweaked by the Newport Howells branch) and the following morning he broke the differential on his own 1500cc example during the Wyedean Stages. All this misfortune included having to push the 1300 car over a ¼ mile to find somewhere off the narrow lane in which to dump it, and then a further two mile walk to find a lift home.

Another accident

Alan Allard/Nick Yoward totally dominated the Southern Stages last weekend in their supercharged Escort R5 setting fastest times over eight of the 13 stages on the agenda.

However, the Southern Stages results are still in doubt following a number of protests concerning the Woolmer stage where sand bogged down a number of cars causing some leading runners to be delayed. The event was further marred by a serious accident on the two mile Douai stage (tarmac) where a brand new Opel driven by Nick Smith left the road and hit a tree. Smith suffered cracked ribs but co-driver Peter Conner is still hospitalized with a fractured spinal column. Peter was alleged to have been wearing lap and diagonal belts while the driver had a full harness set-up.

Good progress for Dukeries casualties

The three competitors who were hospitalised following the three major accidents on the National Dukeries Rally are progressing well.

Jock Brader, co-driver to David Bell, has a broken arm and hand lacerations but has now been discharged. John Mullord, co-driver for Mike Brown, has been transferred to a hospital near his home town of Aylesbury. He has a compressed spine and has had regular visits from Dukeries members during his stay in the local hospital.

Clive Ward, also a co-driver, was moved from the intensive care unit into a ward last Wednesday and is making favourable and cheerful progress. He has multiple leg fractures.

Two of the accidents occurred on the Clipstone stage run by the Soar Valley Motor Club and the rally organisers are full of praise for the first class job done by Soar Valley. They made immediate contact with the emergency services, cleared a direct way into the scene and escorted the fire engines and ambulances to the spot.

Hartford move on

Hartford Motors (Banbury) man, Charles Eveson, is at present rebuilding his Mk I Escort along with John Wilcox. The car will be twin-cam powered for the rest of this season. The team have now acquired additional support from Shell and the car will be painted accordingly in the colours of Shell and Hartford Motors. Business commitments have resulted in insufficient time to do the whole CCC/BTRDA championship, but three good results have kept their name in the points tables.

Also now coming under the Hartford Motors banner are Bill Gwynne and Terry Thorp who are in third place in the *Motoring News* championship after an eighth place (due to water troubles) on the Illuminations. Bill now works for Hartford Motors as Service Manager for their new motor cycle division while Charles has moved from Rallye Sport sales to be general manager of this department.

'hopper action

Maidstone and Mid Kent MC's "Uniflo Grasshopper" will be happening this Sunday, starting at Greens Garage on the A2 at Rainham, Kent, on the morning of the 19th. The organisers have a last-minute plea for marshals — those willing should head for the start venue to arrive before 8.30 am.

Spectating points are as follows: Church Wood 1 (11.40 am) 179/0985586 — entrance, 0965610 — exit; Lydden Circuit (12.30 pm) 179/0965610 — entrance; Church Wood 2 (14.40 pm) locations as above. Spectators are reminded that there has been a police request that every care should be taken to avoid causing any obstruction around the entrances or exits of stages, and if in doubt you are requested to park away and walk.

Malkin rides the 'big Imp'

Colin Malkin will be returning to defend last year's victory on the Cheltenham Festival but not in his usual Avenger, for the works are going flat out to get the car properly sorted for the RAC following the Lindisfarne setback. We are pleased to say his "co-driver" of last year, sometime impressario and fun-loving bachelor, John Foden, has come to Colin's aid. The Bohemian Coleshill emigré has managed to acquire the Berni Inns Porsche Carrera 2.7, which is prepared and driven by Del Lines of Atlantic Garage (Weston-Super-Mare) for the event. The near standard engine has been prepared by Charles Ivey. Colin Malkin has just acquired a "Roller" and the duo are currently threatening to outdo the previous exploits of Paul Faulkner himself with their grandiose service arrangements. In any event it has got to be well worthwhile watching the talented Mr Malkin in what is after all nothing more than a "big Imp." AUTOSPORT will carry a full preview of the Cheltenham Festival next week.

● Cahal Curley rallying the Chequered Flag Stratos again on the first of November? That is a rumour emanating from across the Irish Channel. The rally in question would be the Forward Trust event, to be held in place of the Causeway Coast, previously supported by the same finance company. The rally, being organised by the North Ulster CC, is scheduled to take place — in its entirety — at the Adhadowy stock car racing stadium. "Adhadowy" is (apparently) some peculiar Irish word for "flat," which does tally with the fact that this outpost used to be an airfield. Motor Cycle racing is reputed to take place in the car park. It sounds like it could be an interesting event.

● Sixty-two cars left the Turin start of the Tour of Italy last Sunday morning in cold, rainy weather and as we went to press Carlo Facetti was leading Lele Pinto; the two Stratos (Pinto's us turbocharged) ahead of Andruet's Alfa Romeo 33 Stradale; and Munari in fourth place with another Stratos Turbo.

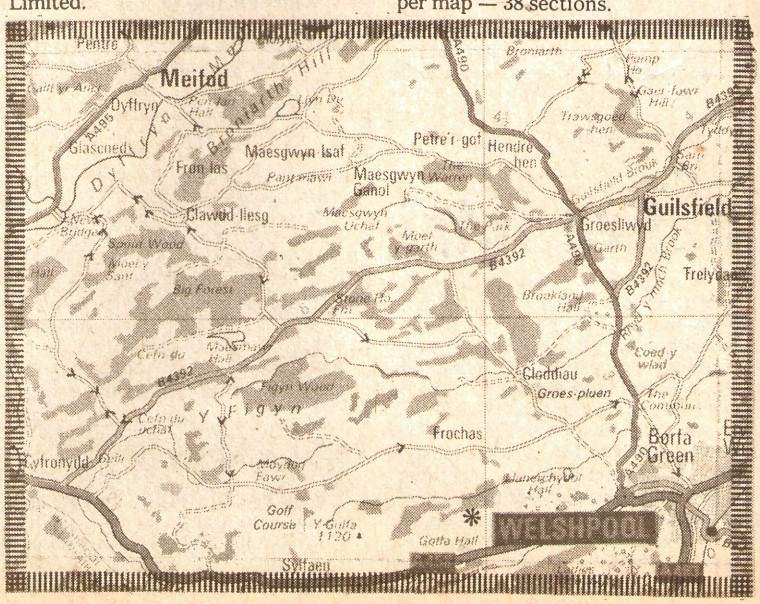
● Ron Channon is looking for a quick driver with a view to teaming-up on the forthcoming RAC Rally. Ron intimates that he might possibly have acquired a "chunk" of sponsorship to go with it, which could help considerably with cost. Ron can be contacted at 35 Church Road, Bishopsworth, Bristol BS13 8JL. Telephone: Bristol 668880.

All mapped up

John Brown, who needs no introduction to any readers of these columns, has pointed out to us a new series of maps that could, and should, be of great interest to all who like to move around this country of ours with more accuracy than is offered by motorway route-boards. The maps John is enthusiastic about are being produced by Map Productions Limited for the RAC. These beautifully printed sections are 1:100,000 scale and cost 65p each. They therefore cover a much larger area than 1:50,000 OS and faithfully mark all yellows and many white roads — John assures us "all very accurately." Before going further, perhaps we should state that Mr. Brown does not have any financial connection with Map Productions Limited.

Elsewhere on this page (below) we have reproduced a section of one of the 38 sheets to actual size. John reckons that they are wholly adequate for every purpose except navigational road rallies, the main drawback being lack of a grid. This new series would appear to be a more sensible alternative than the Ordnance Survey for stage rallies, and also for service crews' use. The same firm also publish, again for the RAC, a series of 3-miles to one inch (four to one for Scotland) which John would also recommend over the OS ¼-inch series for general getting about. Indeed, John is surprised that the RAC does not recommend its own map series in the regulations.

Comparative costs (to cover England and Wales) works out at £96 for 1:50,000, at 80p per map — 120 maps and £24.70 for the 1:100,000, at 65p per map — 38 sections.



Correspondence

The editor is not bound to agree with readers' opinions

Wanted: big time...

Leaving aside the fact that Formula Super *Libre* will probably fall on its face in the biggest possible way without any help from the correspondence columns of the press: has nobody stopped to think that the prospect of mixing Atlantics with F5000 will effectively score off the American competitors, who were tentatively showing interest in contesting the earlier European F5000 Rounds.

If Mr Webb wants to emasculate F5000 for his Club races, that is his privilege. The only thing that will bring *people* to the meetings will be the prospect of bigger and better shunts — and that is what everything boils down to in the end, attracting more *paying* spectators (not complimentary ones! but that is another story).

Given a choice between promoting five top class F5000 promotions at the start of the season (with drivers like Hobbs, Andretti, Unser, Oliver, Redman, Brise, Scheckter and other drivers who campaign on the other side of the Atlantic) and a whole season's nondescript destruction derbies, presumably billed as "Giant-killing contests", I know which I would choose.

At the very least an effort could be made to attract the American circus to the Race of Champions/International Trophy meetings – perhaps by having one sponsor putting all he had into each, instead of spinning out a large sum in a series of races.

Bill them as "a two round match between Britain and America", better still stage another round at Thruxton with the Formula 2 International and make it best of three!

How people can just sit back and resign themselves to losing a chance to see the best in F5000 in Great Britain, just because of a plan to generate more interest by creating *yet another* class of racing, is beyond me.

Names draw crowds. The IROC must indicate this. If top drivers appear they can be driving anything as far as the public is concerned.

I don't think I'm in a minority in wanting to see top drivers from the States racing against top European drivers *in Britain!* – and we are very unlikely to see it if super *Libre* goes ahead.

The ball has to start rolling somewhere – it may as well be AUTOSPORT – since everyone who matters in motor racing seems to read it.

If the spectacle of good F5000 Transatlantic Challenge racing doesn't inspire *somebody* to show some enthusiasm, then we're doomed to "superior club racing" for a long time.

GERRY FERGUSON

TAMWORTH-IN-ARDEN, WARWICKS.

...F5000 drivers

Oh well! I suppose it had to happen eventually. What should have been Britain's, and perhaps Europe's, premier single seater formula is going the same way as most British ideas, to America. Surely Mr. Webb doesn't think that teams like VDS will bother to race their expensive machinery on this side of the Atlantic when the Atlantic drivers will be taking their prize money and championship points simply because of the "Micky Mouse" circuits that they have to race on.

It seems a shame that we should lose F5000 simply because the circuit owners could not keep pace with its growth. I feel sure that spectators and top drivers would have been attracted by a series of fewer races on the five or six "proper" British circuits and in Europe for better prize money. It could perhaps have replaced Interserie which must be boring enough to make a Group 1 Camaro race seem like a Formula Ford final and anyway a Lola T400 must cost less than a Porsche 917 turbo.

Never mind though, when future generations are watching ten heats and a final of formula Super Atlantic 2000, I will be able to tell them about a different single seater formula that we once had and when Oulton Park used to be a real circuit.

NANTWICH, CHESHIRE — DAVID BOOTE

FF is best

I think that after a season in which we have seen complaints about the quality of racing in nearly every class, a few words should be written in praise of a formula that has, without any doubt, provided the best racing at the majority of meetings held at all circuits this year. The formula is of course FF1600.

It has been quite noticeable this season at Brands Hatch that the spectators have tended to wander off to the cafeterias during quite a lot of the other races, which have become predicatable processions, and yet for the full grid Formula Ford races interest has remained throughout the usually exciting races.

The Formula is often knocked, the drivers accused of leaving their brains in the paddock, but when it really boils down to it, the crowd are entertained in the true sense of the word, by cars and drivers that are all of a remarkably high standard (at Brands Hatch there is normally a gap of only 2 seconds between the 1st and 20th driver in practice), all very keen, and all prepared to race, not just a drive around the circuit playing at being a racing driver. Obviously incidents are going to occur because, by definition, Formula Ford drivers are learning the art of single seater racing.

The other thing that is in its favour is the fact that it is not easy to predict the winner of a Formula Ford race. In other types of racing one can often say that Joe Bloggs will win again, because he always wins here.

I feel strongly that circuit owners should bear in mind that their bread and butter comes, not from the once a year Formula One meeting, but from the 'clubbie' regulars, and of these Formula Ford drivers must receive a lot of credit for providing such good entertainment throughout the year. A little bit more imagination in presentation, and more people will be attracted to these regular weekend events.

RAINHAM, KENT — BRIAN SIMS

We're there

We have to hand your issue of September 18, and have to thank you for presenting some little known facts on the government of the sport as seen through the eyes of Mr Delamont.

There is one point however, upon which we must comment — that is the sentence "Some members, like the Australasians, Argentinians or Japanese, are seldom seen."

Now, we cannot speak for the New Zealanders, Argentinians or Japanese, but we must insist that our delegate's twice yearly visits (since 1968) to the FIA Conferences amount to being seen more than "seldom". I might add that CAMS members are very conscious of the need to support the world government of their sport by participating in that government, even though this becomes a highly expensive exercise.

I do not expect Mr Delamont expected the comment to be denigrating; he is, probably as much as anyone, aware of the presence of our Mr Thomson at the various meetings — nevertheless, we are perhaps a little sensitive in this area, as many countries outside Europe do feel that the concept of the "European Club" is one which is no longer valid in this day and age when we talk about world motor sport.

J. A. KEEFE

(Chief Executive officer, Confederation of Australian Motor Sport)

CAMBERWELL, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA.

Unfair report 1

It is with regret I find it necessary to comment on the somewhat unfair report of the Peterborough Motor Club's Silverstone race meeting which was published in the edition of September 25.

The main points of contention in your report are:

a) The comments regarding a quart in a pint pot — the decision to run ten races was fully justified in view of the 291 entries received and the aim of the meeting (to promote club racing for the benefit of the clubman) was obviously achieved.

b) The comments regarding the approaching hours of darkness — as the meeting finished at 17.35 hours this is obviously a silly remark; in fact the meeting finished 40 minutes earlier than scheduled. The total of ten races (nine ten lappers and one fifteen lapper) were in fact run in four hours five minutes — not bad for a "once a year" club!

c) The comment regarding the starter — this statement is disproved by the fact that only one car throughout the meeting was adjudged to have made a false start.

The only explanation for your jaundiced report would appear to be the unfortunate performance of your competing reporter and we trust he has a better day at our race meeting next year so that his comments are more accurate.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Silverstone Circuits Ltd, all sponsors, competitors, marshals and look forward to their continued support at our next Silverstone Race Meeting on Saturday September 25 1976.

BOURNE, LINCS — JOHN GADDES

(Deputy Clerk of the Course)

Unfair report 2

Further to your report on the September 28 Brands Hatch meeting, and your reporter's rather unthinking comment about the future of kart racing at the circuit, I would point out that accidents happen in every form of motor racing, not karting alone. Where he gets the idea that Brands Hatch is any more dangerous than other circuits used for karting, is beyond me.

Karts race at Oulton Park, Cadwell Park, Aintree, Knockhill, etc., and have been doing so for a number of years. There have undoubtedly been a number of accidents at these circuits, but I do not recall anybody questioning the future of kart racing at these circuits because of them.

Has your reporter been to a motorcycle meeting at Brands Hatch and seen the accidents that occur? Presumably, if he has, he wants that stopped as well.

Perhaps he finds the speeds of the karts an embarrassment when compared with other forms of racing at Brands Hatch. I notice no mention was made of the fact that the kart lap record was broken again, leaving it at 51.3 s, surely an impressive speed for a machine with an engine capacity of 250cc!

EMSWORTH, HANTS — R. LOCKWOOD

A gay day?

There has been much comment in your magazine from dissatisfied spectators who complained that they pay large entrance fees and only see cars shoot by every minute or so.

May I suggest that they try Drag Racing. In this form of Motor Racing they can see the start, finish and every other part of the race from *all* spectator areas.

They can also walk in the pits and see at very close quarters the F1 drag cars, the pro fuel cars and so on.

I think and hope that they would enjoy a very entertaining day or night's racing.

LONDON, NW2 — MIKE KASON

HGV required

May I suggest that in the light of recent F1 developments at least two drivers in the near future will require an HGV licence!

STONEY STANTON, LEICS. — CHRIS BLOCKLEY

PRIVATE EAR



NICK BRITTAN

Grade One psued's disappearing act

Sidney Miller, self-styled faith healer, amateur psychologist and the *eminence gris* at Southern Organs has recently added to his many dubious distinctions. He has perfected the technique of evanescence.

Evanescence is a word that Miller would have approved of. For he lives in that demi-monde of pseudo-psychological, par-medical mumbo jumbo quackery. The word means to disappear. And that's precisely what motor racing's great pseud has done. He's scarpered.

It is said that the Fraud Squad and Interpol are keen to have conversations with him.

At the beginning of the year Miller was rushing around by fast car and helicopter impressing only the hungry and the gullible with his "if it moves I'll sponsor it techniques."

Students of race programmes will have noticed that various championships which carried the Southern Organs name now trade simply as MCD championships.

Miller is a man endowed with the natural personal magnetism of a smoked trout, but he made bold attempts to cover this with transparent stories of his past life which were designed to arouse admiration and sympathy. Those who failed to be impressed by these child-like outbursts were given the pound note treatment. And he flashed enough of those around to buy the admiration of the more venal in motor racing.

Miller is a man who collects ologys; that is to say he will claim a deep and all-embracing knowledge of anything ending in ology. He claimed to be into psychology and astrology. However his knowledge of the former wouldn't have fooled a first year medical student and for the latter he would have found it difficult to run a clairvoyant's booth at a fairground. He is the living personification of the Grade One pseud.

Should a man answering to these descriptions approach you with a whinging smile and the offer of a cut-price Southern Organ please contact Detective Sgt Stoner at Horsham police station who heads the enquiry team and is keen to have the evenscent Mr Miller assist him with certain enquiries.

Best laid plans

When Roger Clark retired from the San Remo rally because Dunlop failed to turn up with his supply of tyres, Ford Competition Director Stuart Turner was annoyed and furious. He was annoyed with Dunlop but furious that his perfectly hatched and timed plan to air-lift Roger to the start of the Lindisfarne rally in England would have to be scrapped.

Clark had a leisurely dinner and caught a scheduled flight home and started the Lindisfarne with no drama.

The dramatic lift out operation that Turner had planned for him sounded as if it had been scripted by Alistair McLean.

It all depended on Roger finishing on time in San Remo and being able to start the Lindisfarne as number 68, sixty-eight minutes after the first car left the ramp. There was a powerful Riva speed boat to whisk him out of San Remo to a point further along the coast where a helicopter was waiting to lift him to Nice airport, where a private Lear Jet would be ticking over to fly him to Manchester and another chopper at the other end.

The fact that Clark won the Lindisfarne by a handsome margin in his Cossack Escort appeared to be a poor consolation for Turner as he unscrambled his master plan.

Barry Lee or Edward Heath

Hot rod racer and sometime rally driver Barry Lee is to his sport what Henry Cooper and Muhammed Ali are to boxing. Except that Lee sounds more like our 'Enery. He's a chipper honest down to earth Cockney with a rate eye for self-publicity.

His conversation is engagingly peppered with Cockney witticisms and the occasional dropped aitch. Tuned into London Broadcasting the other morning it came as no surprise to hear an introduction to a commercial proclaiming that ace racer Barry Lee was endorsing someone's handy little do-it-yourself arc welder. Then came the endorsement from Mr Lee.

In beautifully modulated pure BBC tones he told the listening audience of the virtues of this splendid little machine. The sad thing was that the tastefully elocuted Mr Lee sounded more like an announcer than the announcer did.

Come off it Barry, hot rod racers aren't meant to sound like Ted Heath delivering an election manifesto. Give the arc welders back the plum they've put in your mouth and tell it like it really is.

Electronically or contracturally protected?

Will Durex pull out? Squabbles between Formula 5000 driver Richard Scott, Durex and McKechnie Racing who run the car indicate that they might.

The problem is simply that Durex believe that their driver Richard Scott is the bees knees while McKechnie reckon that almost anyone is a second a lap quicker and that Scott is a bit of a no-hoper.

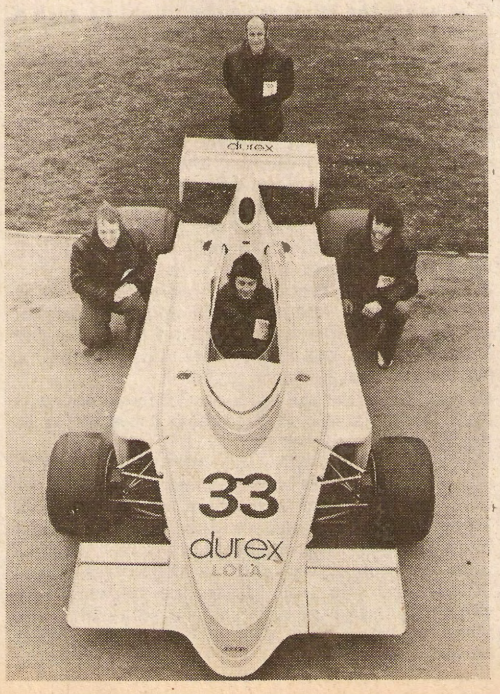
So McKechnie have sacked Scott and taken on Bob Evans, who it must be admitted is quicker than Scott. Meanwhile Durex are very upset about Scott's withdrawal.

Despite the fact that they have funded the operation to the tune of a sum reportedly not unadjacent to £74,000, they appear to be powerless to get their way and have their man at the wheel of the car they own.

The whole thing sounds more and more like the cock-up of the year.

Motor racing needs big-spending sponsors like Durex and it's sad to see them being pushed about in this fashion. John Thornburn, McKechnie's manager, is not a man renowned for his great diplomacy or tact. Two factors which, if employed, could well have smoothed the matter over and avoided the scandal. Durex management appear to have put their agreement together in a half-cock fashion and would appear to be in need of strong protection against themselves.

Richard Scott in the Durex Lola with team manager John Thornburn standing behind.



Pop star or rally driver

The popular image of the modern rally driver is of a grubby fingered hero with a bobble hat and a grease stained rally jacket driving something with a rorty exhaust with stripes down the side and scrutineering labels hanging on the gear lever.

Colin Malkin, Chrysler's ace wheelman, is about to revise that image.



Colin Malkin – sartorial?

At a recent Lombard RAC rally press preview, half of Fleet Street were gathered in the heart of Surrey on a forest stage preparing to meet the heroes of the night and be chauffered by them. Into the clearing pulled an ice-blue Rolls-Royce Silver Shadow. It glides to a halt on the loose surface. The door opens and out steps a chunky, jut-jawed, blond hero.

Under an expensive camel jacket, the shirt was open to reveal most of his chest, delicately toned light sand-coloured trousers with their knife edged creases swung over the tops of gold-trimmed, patent shoes. "Who is the pop star?" said the man from the *Evening Standard*.

"That's no pop star, that's Colin Malkin," explained the mechanic.

"Cor," said the man from the *Evening Standard*, "these rally blokes got more style and class than the Grand Prix blokes."

Then came the news that Roger Clark would be late because his private plane had been fogged in at Leicester and he was driving down.

Brian Culcheth was hurrying to get away to his Scottish estate for a spot of fishing and bird watching.

The event and rallying were beginning to take on a new tone. Had it not been for the other top rally drivers with their grubby hands and grease-stained rally jackets, I would have believed that it was a concerted effort on the part of the IRDC to improve the image of the professional rally driver.



Familiar Makinen exploits — here in the forest of Ae on this year's Scottish Rally. Brake and electrical troubles prevented a higher placing.

INTERVIEW

Makinen—twenty years on...

By MARTIN HOLMES

As a Scandinavian rally driver, Timo Makinen's name is, without doubt, still the best known to the British general public — and even then, many newspaper readers know him as "Tim McKinnon," such are the vagaries of our national press . . .

Most of us, when we think of this original Finnish "superstar," conjure up treasured memories of Makinen's amazing RAC drives — his approach first heralded by the sound of sumpguard and straight-cut gears in the halcyon Mini days and subsequently with the adrenalin-inducing induction and cam-drive noises of his Clarke and Simpson, and later, works Ford Escorts.

Many of us tend to overlook the fact that Makinen, in his two decades of rally driving, is one of the world's most versatile and experienced drivers for every conceivable condition in both hemispheres. MARTIN HOLMES interviewed this Finnish grand master of the sport just before the abortive San Remo outing two weeks ago.



Timo, how did you begin rallying?
It's a long time ago, I don't remember. First of all I did some ice racing, first one in 1957, I borrowed my father's Citroen. The ice racing is just a track made by a snow plough over a frozen lake and it's quite a popular sort of racing in Finland. After that (I was doing that for small kind of races for about two years) and then in 1959 I did my first time rally — The Thousand Lakes Rally with Triumph TR3.

Had you been interested in cars for long?
I was driving newspapers every day. My father's business was driving newspapers every night, delivering round Finland, and afternoon papers, so every year I was driving about 200,000 kilometres by road and always very fast, no matter if a lorry — or what you have. At the time we were trying to compete with aeroplanes, if the lorry was taking the newspapers to the airport to load on the aeroplane, we went a bit faster. We were delivering the most newspapers around Finland.

How did you become a professional rally driver?
I did the Monte Carlo rally in 1962 with a privately entered Mini and I was driving Minis at that time in Finland by local Morris dealer and I borrowed the car from the Morris dealer and I get BP sponsoring me just for the petrol and my service crew was my wife — in those days she was my girlfriend, and my mother — and I did the Monte. I didn't finish very well but I did a very good time in the Circuit at the end and after that the local Morris dealer was talking with Stuart Turner, the team manager in those days, and we get a borrowed car for the RAC, 1963. I won my class and I was, I think, seventh overall. At the same time entering car for the Monte Carlo rally and I asked car for Monte Carlo but there was no Mini available but Stuart say if I go with Christobel Carlisle I would be entered in an Austin Healey and I can drive that.

Did you let Christobel do any of the driving?
Christobel drives very often the road section, but I was driving the special stages and I think what amazed me was so fantastic driving with a girl, she is much more accurate and much more worried for everything. I remember one control it was very cold and a lot of snow, somewhere in Belgium I think, where Christobel ran into the time control. I fell asleep in the car and left the engine running. Christobel ran back and say "Racing engine — do not do that," but it was so cold when she ran away I started the engine again.

What did your period with BMC under Stuart Turner teach you so far as rally driving was concerned?
When Stuart Turner was in BMC it was a fantastic time. First of all Stuart was the team manager and never left anything out, if you wanted better tyres in Monte Carlo specially, you know you have better. OK, you try them and if you think you win one second per kilometre he would let you have them, immediately.

Was there any other team in existence at that time that was as well organised as BMC?
Not really, I don't think so. I remember the 1966 Monte Carlo Rally. I was driving Group One, same year as we were disqualified for lights. We were at Mont Ventoux, a hill climb in France. The Minis were doing I think the three best times there, a lot better than anyone else in Group One, and only then because we have a very good ice crew and we were using SP 3's that are the normal tyre, everybody else had heavy winter tyres and studs and this is why we did a good time.

How was it the Minis managed to put up such a good time at Mont Ventoux on that rally?
There was ice-note crew who had the same set of pace notes as the drivers had. We had a system that we had everybody — doesn't matter what language was used — had to have same many corners in one line in the pace notes and the ice note crew went over the test and I think at Mont Ventoux it was Morley and Stuart Turner, and so many times they were exactly right, for 5-6 kilometres each, showing some little piece of ice. Black ice is very difficult to see, so many came off. What annoyed me in the rally — I was running No. 2 and I came up first on top of Mont Ventoux, it was very windy and very cold and the marshal was drinking coffee in a bar when I arrived at the finish line and I lost about 20 seconds taking him out from the bar to stamp my card.

Do you think that the times the Minis achieved at Mont Ventoux started the whole crisis so far as the lights were concerned?
Yes, absolutely so. After the rally we did a test to prove the rally cars were standard. We take the one Mini out of the showroom, a test car from Monte Carlo dealer and we take a team car. They had one driver, I was the other driver and we did a little test, about two or three kilometres. I was driving and the time difference between the standard car and the rally car was something like half a second in three kilometres. But the time at Mont Ventoux was so good that I was thinking

that we had done something wrong with Group One regulations. This is why they was putting my car into thousand pieces. I remember it was wheels off — how heavy the wheel was, the con-rods, everything was weighed and checked, but didn't find anything bad except the lights.

Your early successes have been with Minis, but you have driven rear wheel drive cars in the meantime, what cars have you driven?

When I started it was Citroen first of all, my father's 4-cylinder berlinette or what you call it, after that I had 6-cylinder Citroen which at that time was very powerful front wheel drive car. After that we get the Mini, after that the Triumph TR3 that I was using for two or three years and I have done quite a lot of rallying with Volvos, I have done rallies not with Ford and Peugeot and things like that. I would like to say that the front wheel drive cars never so nice to drive as the rear wheel drive cars. Put more power in the front wheel drive cars you get more understeer and you have to play the understeer with the left foot braking and things like that, try to get the car to oversteer, and this is why I like much much more the rear wheel drive cars. I remember when I drive first the Austin Healey, no one really liked that car so much, there was a heavy engine in the front and there was understeering if you went slowly in the corner, but if you put on a lot of power there was oversteering and I learned that way. I used to race in Finland D-type Jaguar and I was using it for racing, but at the same time we were using it for ice-racing, a 1000-metre horse track and places like that. Nobody didn't like that car in Finland and it's why it was available for me — I really loved it.

What was the first time you drove a Ford?

I drive a Ford I think '69. Yes, Ford was not taking part for the RAC although it was spending a lot of money on London/Sydney Rally. Clarke and

"Put more power in the front wheel drive cars you get more understeer and you have to play the understeer with the left foot braking . . ."

Simpson was asking me to drive Escort for the RAC and it went well, very very well, I was leading by about five minutes, but the head gasket blew and was misfiring about half way through and after that I did second drive for Clarke and Simpson in the Circuit of Ireland.

How do the Fords of 1968 compare with the Fords in 1975?

I think mechanically it's not so much different, it was twin cam at that time, today we have BDA, but we had a very bad time at the beginning when we had the BDA, we had about 50-60 horse power more before and we started with the clutch problem then a gearbox problem, then we get a back axle problem, but now it's everything sorted out. I think everyone has the same problem when you put that much more power in at once.

Are the cars now any different to drive?

Not that way, the cars are much better balanced with the brakes. We have a very good system now, we have a balance bar and two different brake systems and we can very easily balance the car in gravel where we need more rear brakes — we can very easily do it. In an asphalt we want more front brakes, when we are braking the weight is moving forward and you are locking backwheels too easily and that is very easily done now. Before it was only front brakes and that was very dangerous to drive.

Ford are now developing cars for asphalt driving. How does an Escort prepared for asphalt differ from an Escort prepared for forest rallies?

We did first time using more like racing suspension in Monte Carlo. 1971 or '72, and we were using what we call Watts linkage in the back and coil spring in the back and the handling was quite good. At this moment we have left out the Watts linkage on the back and we still have leaf springs in the back, but it doesn't matter if you have leaf springs or coil spring. In the front we get more solid. We take all the rubbers away and when you are braking with racing tyres you don't change the cambers or toe-in or anything like that and so we take this rally car that I was having now here (in San Remo) was unbelievably good for the asphalt. The roll-centre for the car was much lower than they are in rough rallies, but I think even for the RAC which is a very rough rally we are going more for the racing suspension.

And how do you change your style of driving between tarmac rallies and forest rallies?

It's very difficult to say, but when you are going



Sponsored by his favourite drink – milk (?), Timo first won the RAC Rally in 1973 after several attempts.

on racing tyres you must be very accurate to driving lines, you are more like racing driving lines; of course you use your driving lines in the forest, but in the forest you are always playing, looking where you can brake where there is the best grip and things like that and before the corner you put the car maybe sideways opposite way, but you never do that on asphalt, you are losing time. When you know your driving line on asphalt you can do it on gravel very easily you know. If you have never done any asphalt rallies you never can do it at all, you have to do quite a lot of racing before you find the right lines for the asphalt and I think one of the best schools for me was the Tour de France many years ago when I was in Minis, when every day you did some circuits and you have about 50-60 cars there in one start — you learn the line you know, one corner somebody is faster and you catch him at another place and you think why did that happen — you learn the lines very easily there.

Back in the BMC days you were the first driver to be well known for using the left foot on the brake, do you still use the left foot on the brake?

I started that when I had the very heavy front end Citroen 6-cylinder. I was driving ice-racing and it annoyed me when I went in a corner understeering and that way I learned my left foot braking and I was using that with the Mini, I was using that with Volvo 544, but I was not using that for the Escort or any rear wheel drive cars for a long time, but now two years I have been using it, even in the Escort. But it is quite a difference if you have front wheel drive cars or you have rear wheel drive cars, you are using it completely differently. I would say it is more like the balancing of the weight of the car. If you are going in a corner and there are ruts or something like that and the front end wants to come out or understeer, by touching the brake pedal, not braking, you get the weight more forward and you get better reception from the steering.

"If you have never done any asphalt rallies you never can do it at all, you have to do quite a lot of racing before you find the right lines for the asphalt . . ."

How does left foot braking work when you are driving a front wheel drive car?

In a front wheel drive car you need left foot braking. If when you have a lot of power you put the full power on the car is understeering, you get wheel spin and the front goes free, but when you are keeping the power and touching the left foot on the brake pedal, it is exactly the same as if you are using the hand brake — you get locking the

Safari leisure and still working hard – helping the game park move some Zebra.



back wheel or almost locking the back wheels and you get car go sideways, mostly you are steering with the brake pedal.

Why are the Finnish rally drivers so well known for this technique; is it something which is most particularly needed in Finland?

No, I don't think so but this is — if you take Finnish or Scandinavian rally drivers we have used a hell of a lot of Saabs — I have done some rallies with Saabs before I used the Citroen and a lot with Minis and you have to do something for the understeer. I remember that why I learned my left foot braking was, I think, that Saab was using a big big lever in handbrakes, the handbrake was up to the panel almost and when it was understeering I was touching back with the handbrake. If you do ice-racing without studs or something you can see one car go round the corner and one goes straight. I think this is why Scandinavians use more and more left foot braking.

Do you use a handbrake on a rally?

I use a handbrake, the handbrake is very very important in a rally car, even rear wheel drive car, especially on rally like the RAC or something that

"I have been looking in England for years why there is not one newcomer who does not have fight, and all Finnish drivers are just crazy with fight."

are unpractised when you do not expect T junctions and hairpins and things like that are coming, when you put your handbrake on you just get it back in line and after you use the power and balance the car. But it is very important — when you know your handbrake doesn't work you drive slower.

Finnish rally drivers seem to have a special determination of their own, is there any reason for this, is it perhaps because Finnish rallies have been very hotly contested in previous years?

I think it is mainly why, in Finland and Sweden rallying started earlier, there were special stage rallies a long time before, and we left the navigation not so important in the rallies. The competition has been so hard and the people and the press make you try much harder. You like to win! I think a Finnish driver does like to beat me and this is why. I have been looking in England for years why there is not one newcomer who does not have fight, and all Finnish drivers are just crazy with fight. If you can beat the young ones you know, you are the king.

Your other particular achievement is in the field of development of tyres. Do you think this is the area in which we can expect the most development in the years to come?



One of rallying's most long-standing and successful partnerships — Timo Makinen and Henry Liddon.

I don't think you can find so much more new things with the tyres, of course they are going more like racing tyres and things like that but for years now we have been using mainly radial tyres, what is made by many tyre manufacturers. On every test has been done, the rally has not been so good with cross ply tyres and this kind of development has been done, but you don't see it on the road really. I don't think it will be a very long time before the manufacturers go back into cross ply for normal cars but at this moment there has been spent so much money for developing the machines for the radial tyres and there has been a hell of a lot of advertising about how good it is and now it doesn't go very quickly. But definitely, the cross ply is faster and that is why most racing tyres — Michelin is the only one where they are not cross ply.

Next year we have new regulations for the Monte Carlo, we are allowed only one type of tyre, you have to send a picture before you are allowed to have more or less studs in the same tyre, but that will be a very good regulation for me, but I don't think this is very clever regulation for everybody else.

What type of tyre do you think will be the best at Monte Carlo?

Definitely it must be racing tyres with studs — but it is still impossible for the private entry.

Will the racing tyre at Monte Carlo be a radial or a cross ply?

Definitely cross ply, for me anyway.

And snow tyres, do you think there is a lot of development still to be done with snow tyres?

If you get some funny or new regulations you have to do some developing work with it. Last winter in Finland we had new regulations where we are not allowed to have studded tyres with studs set in the middle of the tyres, so we take the middle strip out of the tyres and we get more contact pressure in the sides and things like that, but normally if you go in the snow you should have a very narrow tyre, you get more contact pressure. If you've got wide tyres you don't get the same pressure for the road.

Finally, if you had a choice and you were not bound by any contract of any sort, what type of rally car would you like to drive?

It depends, if you take the Monte Carlo Rally I should like to have Alpine or something like that which are made for the mountain roads, if you are in rough rallies, or the type of rallying they do in Finland or England, I would like to have Escort, it just depends what kind of rally it is, but I always like to drive much more rear wheel drive car. A lot of people think I like the front wheel drive car, it's nice, but you have to work it with left foot braking and things like that.

Familiar Makinen style on this year's Tour de France. Engine trouble caused an early retirement, having just attained the lead.





Action on and off the track

There was almost as much action off the track as there was on it at the American Grand Prix. If it carries on like this some of the national newspapers will have to send two reporters to races — one to cover the racing and another to deal with the business/legal hassles.

First came the news that the Canadian organisers had found a way to get their own back on the constructors, who had been responsible for the cancellation of their event this year. They'd taken out a court order freezing the prize fund due to be paid by the American organisers.

I understand that they are claiming loss of income as a result of not running their event. This didn't please the drivers since pretty well all of us get a percentage of the prize money that we win.

After a short meeting between the drivers and the constructors, they agreed that the drivers would receive their part of the prize money whether it was released by the court or not. In other words the constructors would pay it out of their own pocket if necessary. So that temporarily made the men in Nomex a little happier.

Then came the great hassle over the celebrated Driver Transfer Fee Scheme. It seems that Bernie Ecclestone asked Roger Penske for a transfer fee for John Watson of £30,000. Roger was as surprised as we were when we discovered it because we had all been led to believe that there was no such thing as a transfer scheme in operation. Personally I find it difficult to see how an employer can ask for a transfer fee for a man's services *after* the term of his contract has expired. But I'm only a driver and not a lawyer. Anyway, the whole thing resolved itself when we were assured that the Transfer System, that we had been told didn't exist, would now be dropped.

So what happened about the real stuff of the weekend — the racing?

On the first day things looked pretty good for me and I was fifth fastest. Then on the second day I didn't start getting everything really well honed until it was almost too late. I'd got the car well balanced and really going well and the times were coming down nicely when the flag came out to signify the end of practice. I was 10th on the grid with the time I'd done so that was that.

At the start I cooked my clutch and was about 450th into the first bend. Bad news. But once the clutch began to cool off I got back through the field and joined onto the back of a little scrapping bunch that was just out of sight of the leading twosome of Lauda and Fittipaldi.

My little high speed traffic jam consisted of Jarier, Hunt, Peterson and Mass. And that's the way we went round for thirty odd laps. I could just keep pace with them. No way I could overtake anyone — just keep up. And I was working really super hard to do that. Very frustrating.

I think I must have been a bit short on engine power because after the morning practice we'd cranked just about all the wing off so that we'd get maximum speed on the straights. She was handling really quite well and even with almost no wing showing we were down on the rest of them.

Jarier dropped out and there was some heavy drama going on up front between Emerson and Niki and that left the four of us scrapping together. On the last lap Hunt managed to slip past Ronnie and rearrange the order to his advantage. I tried it too but it was one of those moves that if I'd gone through with it we'd both have been off. I think there was a point when we both had smoke coming off our wheels but we got it sorted and Ronnie took what was rightfully his corner and I tucked in behind him to finish sixth and earn one championship point.

I think there was something like two and a bit seconds covering the four of us, which from all accounts kept the spectators amused and entertained.

The big drama between Clay and Emerson nearly came to fisticuffs after the race. Emerson believed that if Clay had got his way and stretched the gap from one second to twelve he would have given Niki a real go for the lead. Whether Emerson would have won or not is another matter. But like he said, he was entitled to have an uninterrupted go at it.

"Political dramas and rain-offs have left me feeling that it wasn't a properly complete season. I'm sure that it had an unsettling effect on all the drivers."

I think what happened is very sad for both Clay and Ferrari. Clay has always been the "bad guy" in racing. If you look back through the books you'll find that every year he's been involved in something controversial. He's always been the Marlboro cowboy in the black hat.

He'd almost got over his reputation as a bad guy after a season of winning a race and staying out of trouble. Then this.

Ferrari had never won the US Grand Prix in a country which is a very important passenger car market for them. A nice clean win was just what they needed to help their marketing programme. I think Niki would have won anyway the way he was going. But the American public who have been weaned on Hollywood films of motor racing where team tactics play a big part just could not believe that it wasn't a fixed race. To them it must have looked just like a replay of the worst sort of Hollywood film. And then to have the normally calm Luca Montezemola trying to stick one on the clerk of the course and then call his car in and retire it in a fit of pique was all too much.

Just imagine if you'd written all that as a film script and shown it to the editor of AUTOSPORT. He'd have torn it up and tossed it in the trash can saying . . . "don't be silly, things like that don't happen in real motor racing."

So on a somewhat confused note the Grand Prix season closed. It's been a funny season. Political dramas and rain-offs have left me feeling that it wasn't a properly complete season. I'm sure that it all had an unsettling effect on all the drivers.

I'm staying

Patrick Depallier has started testing the new Elf-Tyrrell 6-wheeler and first reports are encouraging. I've signed with Ken again for a further year. It hasn't been a brilliantly successful year for the team. But it's a good team and I believe that the measure of a really good team is its ability to stick together during the bad times as well as the good times.

I did have serious offers from other teams and, like every driver does, I gave them serious consideration. Ken runs the best team in motor racing and I'm delighted to be staying on with him.

Good Long Beach

I did the F5000 race at Long Beach and stayed on after the US Grand Prix to attend to some business matters over here so my chance to test the new 6-wheeler will come when I return. I must say I'm really curious to get behind the wheel of it.

The Long Beach circuit turned out to be really very good. It's through the streets just like Monaco, and it's on the ocean front just like Monaco is. Long Beach is a smart residential and retirement area just outside Los Angeles. Apparently the crowds came and the local police and the organisers were happy at the end of the day. So we can expect more racing there. Maybe even an American Grand Prix one day in the near future. There is talk of the US having two GPs a year. It makes sense when you think that Watkins Glen and Long Beach are three thousand miles apart. The Dutch GP takes place all of 150 miles from the Belgian!

It's equally encouraging to find a new circuit growing up in these harsh financial times when others are talking of financial troubles and closures.

I was running in fourth place in the F5000 race behind the eventual winner Brian Redman when my half shaft let go.

Clay Regazzoni looks worried as he talks tactics with team manager Luca Montezemola.



Group One in racing . . .

Group One racing, in both National and club events, had their problems this year. When conceived, Group One was intended to provide the clubman with cheap, close racing which was spectacular for spectators. The British Touring Car championship, for which Group One contested for the second year, was a showcase for manufacturers where, in close races, one manufacturer could prove his machine and compare it in performance and quality to another at the extended limits of racing. At least, that was one aspect of the idea.

Perhaps with this realisation, Group One racing of production cars has become of age. It isn't much chaper, it can be a sight more expensive, so it's really like any other type of racing.

But even with that glib statement, this year's season has been worth a lot more than that. The two things that have arisen this year in the racing side is that there's been a tremendously popular and well-supported championship at club level: the Radio One series; and at national level, the Southern Organs-sponsored series has seemed to lack in status, has been dominated by one make of car in virtually every class, has been poorly supported and promoters have found the lead cars unspectacular.

At club racing, the enthusiast's shopping list is short if he should want to win. For this year, he can try and win in a Camaro, or go for either a Capri or a Mazda RX3 in the next two classes down. It's only in the tiddlers exciting class that the manufacturers vary considerably. Perhaps that, at least, justifies the class structure.

The cost of racing myth, however, is blown apart by the competitiveness of the contestant's cars. The final effort to reduce costs in motor racing hasn't worked. In past years, tyres have been bought from abroad and some contestants have to send to Europe for homologated parts that they can't find in this country. It's all expensive and perhaps reduces the interest in a large column of G1 contestants, but with a quick peek at any G1 grid, there's no more room for any competitors, such is the popularity.

The Radio One championship this year has been the most tremendous success and talking to any competitor, one finds out that this is the one that they want to do. In some ways, they'd prefer to race Radio One much more than get involved in the British Touring Car championship. It has very quickly gained its own status, and it wouldn't be surprising to see manufacturers take a genuine interest in the series, for the radio gives it such coverage that it has frequently attracted larger crowds than other races for which the national touring car championship is a supporting race. Thus going Group One racing at club level can be a tremendous advantage, if only to boost the ego.

So what has happened to the sophisticated world of the British Touring Car championship? This year's sponsor was Southern Organs, one of Mr Sidney Miller's organisations, and quite a pride he took in his series. But an early criticism was that few people knew what the Southern Organs Touring Car championship was. At one point British Leyland were the only manufacturers who were in evidence to the press as actually being involved as a British manufacturer contesting the series. But their complaint was that the public hadn't a clue what this championship was and, unlike Castrol, the previous year's sponsor of the series, weren't making themselves known.

But that was the least of the trouble. There was a string of American V8s in the field which only one in a hundred spectators would dream of owning; a works-supported Triumph Dolomite seemed to have things sewn up without anyone to chgallenge it, and in the smaller class Toyota GB had found someone to prepare their cars and someone else to drive them well and they were streets ahead of their competitors.

Where was the race? Well, it was closer at the head of the field in the 2500 cc to 4000 cc class than anywhere else, but then there were only two makes of car: Opel Commodore and Ford Capri.

But following some processional races at the front of the field, the promoters got together early last month and decided what they wanted to see race. The Camaros were thrown out and the Capris and Opels will top the entry lists backed up by Dolomites and Toyotas and a new small class which has proved successful in the club championships. Time will tell if it was the right decision.

But whatever the cost or size of the car, it is always of the utmost importance to remember that a competition car in Group One isn't something that you take out of the garage on Sunday morning, drive to the circuit, unload the picnic basket, practise, eat lunch in, race, drive to the pub and then home to the garage again. It's still an expensive hobby.

But a more important point is the status of the British Touring Car championship. It's meant to be a showcase for British cars. It should be the place that Vauxhall bring their Chevette to prove that it's the best up to 1300 cc car available in this country. Triumph have done it, with admittedly small but threatening competition. With the right attitude, the right promotion, the right sponsor, the British Touring Car championship could become the series which it deserves to be. Until then, it will be just another slightly longer race than normal, with a bunch of amateurs enjoying themselves instead of manufacturers proving their wares. This series could be so much more, whatever the advantages that are claimed for quicker saloon car formulae.

So is this proving ground for production cars going to stay with us? There seems no lack of interest, no lack of sponsorship, and no lack of spectators, at least at club level. National level will have a year proving itself after the disillusions of this year, and then we'll see what form the British Touring Car championship will take. The promoters had better be right, after their decisions a month or so ago. If they're not . . . who knows?

. . and rallying

Without reproducing pages and pages of regulations and homologation bumph, it can become a very serious business for the grey matter to dictate to the typewriter anything more than "Group one rallying is a category for mass production passenger vehicles with certain modifications – some mandatory and some at the entrants discretion – to enhance safety and related aspects only."

Of course, in practice, that is nothing like the complete picture. Certain products dominate the scene while other models, if so much as pointed in the direction of a forest, would immediately become completely-knocked-down examples.

In this country, the Ford Escort RS2000, Vauxhall Magnum Coupe and Hillman Avenger tend to take top honours in the standard vehicle categories. Fortunately for the group one campaigners, the longest rally held in the British Isles can offer no more than 5/600 miles of competitive motoring. Theoretically, if such driving could be continued until there were just two or three standard cars left in the running, then the picture would likely change from the Anglo-American three's products to something like a Peugeot 504, a Saab 99 or Volvo counterpart and, possibly, an Eastern-block product.

Quite simply, these are the vehicles that can best demonstrate their sound engineering design and quality of construction on the demanding un-made roads used for rallies. The models mentioned, plus certain others, don't figure at the top of the RAC National Championship (Paul Faulkner — Vauxhall and Robin Eyre-Maunsell — Chrysler) or the Castrol/AUTOSPORT series (Paul Appleby – Ford from Ian Lawless – Ford) because they are not suited to the events – the majority of which are single day "sprints" – and these staid but admirable cars lack the prerogative of speed; both straight-line speed and agility.

The cars leading the RAC championship – and both drivers are level on points – are, to a considerable extent, manufacturer supported and are followed around by estate cars packed with spare parts and driven by highly skilled technicians capable of effecting very quick repairs.

Although it may well be slightly over-simplifying – these are the only drivers able to *afford* to go competitively rallying group one cars. Even after all the usual "low profile" ways and means of making the car more suitable for its purpose (while remaining within the regulations) have been carried out, these cars are fragile. They are very much quicker than straight showroom cars but no stronger, so they only destroy themselves more quickly.

So, although group one does mean "standard" – although there are none "as showroom" and some are much less standard than others – more importantly it also means, in many instances, that the exercise is more expensive than would be the running of a highly modified car. This aspect slightly nullifies the base reasoning for having a category for standard cars. There is obviously no performance advantage; certainly no cost advantage (especially on a speed + number of events basis) and only very questionable ethical publicity to manufacturers – who are not, thankfully, allowed to officially advertise a non-international win in this country.

Group one rallying is nothing new. Go back 20 years and the majority of British Monte Carlo Rally competitors cars would pass current scrutiny with very few removals or alterations. However, since those times we have witnessed the evolution of truly purpose-built rally cars, good for very little except taking its crew from the start ramp to the winners rostrum. A recent example of this name-of-the-game specialisation was Ford's thwarted effort on the San Remo World Manufacturers Championship round. With the non-arrival of that tyre van (quite separate from mechanical service) Roger Clark was snookered after only five special stages. It would have been potential suicide to have continued. This comparatively new and exciting form of rallying can be regarded as a specialised sport in its own right. It might just be stating the obvious – but in composing a short article about group one cars in rallying, it appears to be overwhelmingly *the obvious* and for that reason the criticism is very difficult to avoid.

In rallying "Standard" should mean just that – and no more than that. In the same way "servicing" should be factory recommended time for the job. The latter would be far too much to ask for, and quite impracticable, but, just to be awkward, it would certainly sort out the campaigners and bring a new respectability to this much-abused category.

Vauxhall go into the forests with the DTV Magnum driven by Paul Faulkner, seen here on the Welsh



That big, bad (banned) V8 Chevrolet throb

CHRIS WITTY drives VINCE WOODMAN's Chevrolet Camaro.

"How fast is it going at six five in top?" I asked. Vince paused for a second, asked his mechanic what diff they were using and casually replied, "one hundred and forty seven miles per hour." For an instant the reaction was that of shock but then I felt proud, proud to be able to tell everyone, with the customary sigh of alarm, that I'd been pulling almost 150 mph under the *Daily Express* bridge into Woodcote.

The circuit was Silverstone, the Grand Prix track just a few weeks before the buzz of Formula 1 cars would officially grace the Northants motor racing Mecca. Today there was no chicane. It had already been talked about and the plans laid but no work had been started. Even with the thought of changing the circuit, this did nothing to detract competitors from testing there. One such man was Vince Woodman, the acclaimed West Country saloon ace who, for the last two seasons, has been campaigning a thunderous Chevrolet Camaro Z28 as opposed to a customary Ford in the British Touring Car Championship. Today was my turn to have a whirl in his pristine machine, hailed by many as the best Camaro currently racing in Britain today.

Vince Woodman needs no introduction to regular saloon car fanatics, his exploits in a G2 Escort have seen to that. Quite recently Vince has managed to achieve something he's longed for – to beat the similar cars of Stuart Graham and Richard Lloyd. Apart from the recent Tourist Trophy, it's been Woodman's Esso Uniflo-backed Z28 that's been winning the national races.

The position of the Camaro in British saloon car racing is virtually at an end. Personally I am sad to see such a move taken by the organisers and race promoters to influence the authorities into kicking the car out. They say that the current series is totally dominated by the American cars and this makes for boring racing. I disagree in some respects. For instance, the "Camaro" class is often the best supported and it's an insult to Messrs Graham, Lloyd and Woodman who, on more than two or three occasions, have put on some superb dices. It is fair to say that the better prepared cars are so much quicker and tend to lumber off into the distance, but if a properly constructed set of rules were drawn up, based along the equality of NASCAR rulings, thereby restricting the big cars on tyre sizes, brakes and engine breathing, you could find the smaller capacited cars duelling on far more level terms.

I remember when Frank Gardner dominated the British touring car races in 1973 with the SCA Camaro. It was regarded as bad for the series and G1 replaced G2. It's amazing just how many people went racing just to see Gardner, on his own. That was enough. You'll probably find the same result at this year's TT, Stuart Graham's L'Avenir Z28 was phallic and brutish enough to draw people's attention. Super saloon's are an example, especially Gerry Marshall and Baby Bertha. The sight of that combination is enough to excite. It's too late now I'm afraid, to do anything but I will always feel that American V8-engined cars should have a place in touring car races, providing their specifications are carefully and intelligently planned.

Woodman's particular Z28 won its class on the gruelling Tour de France driven by Jean-Claude Ronger. Vince took delivery of it, having imported it from France, and raced it at the opening round of the new RAC G1 championship at Mallory Park early last year.

The car was fitted, as all Camaros were then, with a 5.7-litre seven-bearing crank, water-cooled V8 Chevrolet. It wasn't until much later in the year that the 7.4-litre optional unit was adopted by Lloyd and latterly Graham. Vince tried it briefly earlier this year, having had to follow suit to the other two, but it wasn't until after we tried the car that the larger unit was properly installed.

The 7.4-litre possesses a lot more torque but not that much more power. By virtue of having alloy cylinder heads as opposed to steel, the bigger engine is only about 80 lb heavier.

The 5.7-litre unit fitted to the car when I tried it was prepared by Broadspeed and had been since the middle of last year. At maximum revs, the lazy throb of the Chevvy would be churning out something in the region of 360 horses. The unit is fed by a single four-barrel Holley carburettor.

Early races with the car were spent sorting out the handling and braking. It becomes difficult stopping a 33 cwt monster down from 150 mph. I know, I found out for myself.

As for the handling, that became a question of playing around with springs, dampers and so forth. In a nutshell, everything that was possible within the G1 regulations was tried.

Vince's record with the car gave him several pole positions, usually because of his superior Firestone wet weather tyres, but only one win. He became the bridesmaid to both Graham and Lloyd.

It stayed that way at the beginning of this year but his luck changed at, would you believe, the tiny Ingliston circuit up in Scotland.

The day we tried the car, the weather was perfect. It meant, sadly, that I'd have to cope with this animal while others were screaming past. Anyhow, undaunted, I hopped into the passenger seat (on the right 'cos these 1970 model cars are all left hookers) and Vince took me for a run up the Club straight to show me where everything was before swapping over. "Don't drag the clutch," said Vince, "otherwise it'll smell." It smelt! I'd moved off in 3rd gear. Fool. Once I found the premier cog, I let in the clutch and gave it a bit of Wellie. Wow! Real laid back stuff. That rumble was just t-r-e-m-e-n-d-o-u-s and this Z28 just creamed down the disused runway. What a car for the Kings Road I thought. *Custom Car* take note. I must buy that Trans Am Firebird after all.

Anyway, after the brief initiation ceremony Vince decided that it was time for me to have a crack at cornering the white Crusader. Fitting very comfortably into Mr Woodman's Morlands sheep skin covered driving seat (and the rest of the upholstery!), I gazed out over this enormous bonnet in front of me. As Vince tightened up the seat harness, I made mental notes of what he was telling me. I turned the ignition key and the starter motor churned labouriously. Reminding me of a NASCAR stocker, the engine caught and bellowed into life. It was thrilling just to be able to control such awesome power with my plimsoled foot.

So taking care not to drag the clutch too much, this unlikely pairing trundled off down the nice wide pit lane towards, how can we call it, the realisation point (of no return?)

After a couple of laps getting acclimatised, especially to the pleasant feel of the power steering and having to set the car up for right hand corners from a left hand driving position, we began to make progress. I completed about 10 laps using 3rd gear for Copse, Stowe and Club with 2nd at Becketts. Everywhere else was top. I was particular cautious in not allowing the back end get out of line which disappointed our photographer so much I doubt whether he ever pressed the shutter. Anyway I was brave enough to take Maggotts and Abbey flat out in top, the latter a bit of a heart stopper (for me), but it allowed me to reach maximum speed approaching Woodcote. I chickened out then. It was a similar story arriving at 147 mph going into Stowe, except that I was braking heavily here and at times she didn't want to know.

After a stop to change to a stiffer rear roll bar, which I didn't like because it made oversteer too much, I learnt that my first session times had resulted in a steadily conducted 1 m 45.3 s. It wasn't as quick as the aces but it would have got me onto the second row at last year's TT . . .

Thanks Vince, now where's Stuart's telephone number?

Vince Woodman takes his Esso Uniflo sponsored Camaro round Ingliston for the first of his three recent wins. He'll be at Brands Hatch on Sunday





The Dolomites of Andy Rouse and Brian Muir. Rouse races for Ralph Broad, Muir for Bill Shaw, both of whom have cars to run from British Leyland.



Brian Culcheth took this Sprint on the Tour of Britain, seen here at Cadwell Park. He was troubled by a faulty rev counter, but still finished second.

Triumph Dolomite Sprint

What can you say about the Triumph Dolomite Sprint? You can take it racing, you can take it rallying and you can win in either class of event, and there aren't many cars you can do that in, and still have a nice quiet, economical drive on the road in the car as well.

The Triumph Dolomite Sprint is now an established part of the racing and rallying world. In that famed combination of both, the Tour of Britain, the Sprint might well have won but for a faulty rev counter which deceived Brian Culcheth sufficiently to lose out to Tony Pond's RS2000 and finish a deserving second overall.

On the racing side, the Sprint this year is in its second season. In the first year of G1, Andy Rouse and Tony Dron showed the potential of the car and both drove with great distinction. Once again the Leyland works effort was divided this year between Bill Shaw and Ralph Broad, and the latter placed his cars on the grid at the beginning of the year with the feeling that the Sprint had been developed as far as it would go. "Now we'll have to wait for the others to catch up" he was quoted as saying

But rarely has anyone been on hand to challenge. Occasionally Barrie Williams' Mazda, occasionally Tom Walkinshaw's RS2000. But for consistency, it's been the Sprint all the way in the 1601 cc to 2500 cc class. Rouse is one of three drivers currently tieing for the lead of the championship, and it'll all be sorted out this weekend at Brands Hatch. But Bill Shaw has also been showing that his car's up to the standard of Broad's and at the last event, Brian Muir beat the Broadspeed model of Andy Rouse.

In club production saloon car racing, Bob Saunders has been running a Sprint in the Capri class, and although he occasionally mixes it with the Capris, he's giving away a whole litre to them, so it's understandable that he's not quite on a par.

Apart from the Tour of Britain, the G1 rallying scene is pretty limited for the Sprint for the only driver really to do anything in one is Ron Smith of Fife, but even that is fairly limited, with his own preparation and a limited programme of events.

The Sprint then is *the* G1 car. For the future, there's no doubt that the Sprint will be about on the tracks, and possibly in Europe but in the new G2 form. In this country, if Ralph Broad's employee Mr Rouse continues to drive it, we may see the G1 Sprint as an overall winner in the British Touring Car championship events, as the 3-litres still have some way to go to catch up and find the speed of the Sprint.

Andy Rouse waves a Sprint wheel at Ingliston. He currently jointly leads the Southern Organs Touring Car championship.





Gordon Spice in the Wisharts Capri has been the main 2500 cc to 4000 cc challenger in the British Touring Car championship this year. Below right, he took the car on the Tour of Britain and despite occasional stage misdemeanours, finished fourth overall.

Ford Capri II

The new style Ford Capri was introduced in March, 1974 to replace the successful 3000GT and this year the car finally made it to the race tracks in both club Formulae and the British Touring Car championship. Under RAC rules, the Capri GT was still allowed in the races so an interesting comparison could be made.

Last year of course, the top dog in the 2500cc to 4000cc class was Tom Walkinshaw in the Boreham-prepared Capri GT which trundled round to a number of class wins and an overall victory at Ingliston. This year there was no works representation from Ford and in the major G1 championship, the effort was left up to the privateers.

In fact the only team to regularly campaign the new Capri II was the Wisharts Garage equipe which had Gordon Spice as the main driver and Bill Gubelmann backing him up. Spice in fact ran away with the class usually, occasionally having an Opel Commodore to contend with and some of their dices were the highlight of the racing. His Capri competition usually consisted of the Adlards older model or the similar 3000GT of Stuart Rolt, but his well sorted car usually had the legs on the older cars, and he has more experience himself anyway.

Spice took his Capri on the Tour of Britain, an event in which he has excelled since its inception coming a very close second in 1973. For much of this year's event, he ran with the leaders but was slightly troubled with fuel vaporisation in the closing stages. However, he still finished fourth and first in class, well ahead of his opposition and keeping up his own personal reputation as being a front runner in the event.

In the club production racing formulae, the Capri IIs still have their older counterparts to contend with, as well as the Vauxhall Magnums, Triumph Dolomite Sprints and the occasional Mazda RX2. There aren't very many of the new models, these having been Mike Smith's Anchor Records car and Noel Edmonds' Castrol model. Both have been front runners at some time or another but found, especially early in the season that it wasn't too easy to get the new car handling as well as the older Century Oils model of Ivan Dutton. Mike Smith, and his namesake Marc have been dicing for honours in the Under 21 Radio One award, with Capri II and GT respectively and it's interesting to note that Marc has the upper hand, although Mike Smith's season has been fairly dramatic.

For next year, it seems that the Capri GT will be excluded as being a car that is now out of date, so that there may well be many more Capri IIs around, especially in the British Touring Car championship where the upper limit is 3-litres and the Capri will be battling with the Opels for overall honours.

In Europe, the Hermetite Trophee de l'Avenir cars have been Capri IIs, and their main trouble with the slightly high revving engines have been gearboxes which have frequently given trouble. They've also had a number of dramatic blow-ups, but their season in the slightly modified Capris has been sprinkled with success, even though they've been competing against more expensive cars.



Below, the unrelated Smiths, Marc and Mike, display different cornering attitudes at Brands Hatch. They're currently battling for Under-21 honours in their differing Capris.



Chevrolet Camaro

The Chevrolet Camaros have been the main contestants for overall honours in production saloon car racing this year. Both at club and national level, the Camaro has been the car, either with 5.7 or 7.4 litre power. There are nearly 20 cars contesting the three championships.



The big change in Chevrolet Camaros came this year when Richard Lloyd decided to go into the world of 7.4 engines. As any observer will know, Chevrolet Camaros dominate overall both the British Touring Car championships and the club championships in 5.7 versions, and only when Richard Lloyd went for a version of the 7.4 did any development take place. Up until then, Richard Lloyd and Stuart Graham dominated the big championships and John Brindley, Derrick Brunt and Roger Payne did their things in the club championships.

But when Lloyd went for the 7.4 engine, he was ready. After a couple of wins, Stuart Graham came along too, but with another type of engine. There are differences between the two. Graham believes his engine is legal as is Lloyd's, Lloyd believes his is legal but Graham's has dubious differences, and both have been deemed legal by the RAC. The differences lie in the combustion chamber, but don't get hot under the collar about it — the Camaros are being excluded at least in that championship next year so neither will be seen again in the world of production saloon car racing. The Camaros are being held responsible for taking the championship into the doldrums by the promoters and are thus excluded.

On the other hand, the club production racing scene has been remarkably problem-free apart from an illegal camshaft and some close racing has taken place between Camaros.

So whither the big cars? The Camaro, which gave British club racers the option to become overall winners in club and national formulae by being so light and with considerable power is being channelled into a formula of its own. So they may be back next year, who knows? Certainly the big cars rarely have huge problems, and can still hold their own around tight circuits as well as the long ones which are obviously to their advantage.



Escort Sports were seen in the hands of various journalists in the Penthouse championship this year. Here Tony Dron gets a helping nudge from Gordon Rigby.

Ford Escort Sport

With the new range of Escorts came a replacement for the well known, all purpose Mexico. This was the Escort Sport and one of the first things Ford did was to replace one or two of the Mexicos on the track with Escort Sports to challenge the old Mexicos. Not only this, they replaced the entire Motor Circuit Developments Shellsport Mexico fleet with the new Escort Sports. On the rallying side, few drivers have quickly changed to the Sport but perhaps there are more variables in rallying.

In fact that is also noticeable in the *Penthouse* Escort series. There are just three Sports that have appeared in the series, those for Tony Dron and Gordon Bruce, and rather late and briefly in the season, our Sports Editor Chris Witty. There has been great rivalry between the former two as to who would be the first man to take an Escort Sport win over the Mexicos. Both Dron and Bruce have been in the leading bunches of races, but somewhere, something is missing.

Bruce in fact got one win in a non-championship race, but it almost seemed that Ford in-built a disadvantage so as not to disillusion the regular Mexico runners. One way and another, with what seems to be better roadholding, the Mexicos have stayed ahead. At some circuits the Escort Sport's slightly different gear ratios held an advantage — for instance at Croft and Cadwell Park where Bruce led and Dron held a certain second place respectively.

Thus the Escort Sport seemed just as good as the Mexico to the spectator and that's perhaps the way Ford wanted it to be. But for next year things may be different and the Escort Sport may have the upper hand. Anyway, the way the Sport missed out was certainly in lacking handling out of corners but this may well be ironed out by the time cars hit the tracks again next year. Whatever happens, Mexico/Escort Sport racing will again be one of the closest forms of racing that there is.



Paul Appleby is the great G1 RS 2000 rallying exponent. He currently leads the Castrol/AUTOSPORT G1 series in his almost totally unserviced car.



Usually a class winner in the British Touring Car championship is Win Percy in the Toyota Celica. He currently ties for the lead in the series.

Toyota Celica GT

You could put the Toyota Celica in with the Sunbeam Imp this year. Both cars have shown the most remarkable amount of cheek in their respective championships by challenging much bigger capacitied cars. The Toyota Celica is a five speed twin cam 1600 engined two-door car. It was campaigned last year without too much success and most of the time the Avenger GTs walked all round it.

But what a change this year. The Samuri Motor Company of Kempston near Bedford took over the preparation of the car, started testing really early in the season and put their driver Win Percy into the car. Percy had previously only driven their brutish Datsun 240Z on the tracks. But he took to the high class world of the British Saloon Car championship world like a duck to water and after a brief flirtation with the bank at Brands Hatch, proceeded to sail to an incredible number of victories. Until the Tourist Trophy, the car had suffered no mechanical difficulties.

Samuri were particularly interested in gaining a 1-2 with their two cars for Toyota and Rex Greenslade, Barrie Williams and Brian Cutting have all driven their second car, with Williams and Cutting principally bringing home second places, especially Cutting who took a very good class win at the TT with help from Percy and Patrick Cobb.

Toyota were very interested in going G2 next year, and hoped that British regs would head that way, but if they haven't, then Samuri and Toyota have a new Celica up their sleeve next year to challenge the 2.5 class battle. If this year is anything to go by, the chances of the championship going to Toyota should be considerable.

In the slightly modified world of Trophee de l'Avenir, the cars haven't been quite so well prepared as the British Samuri versions. Consequently they've lost out to Avenger GTs on occasions and also the Alfa Romeos in the same class, but at least a foreign Toyota helped the marque to a win in the team award at the recent Access Tourist Trophy.

Ford Escort RS2000

The RS2000 is the all-purpose G1 car. It races, rallies and races *and* rallies as the past two Tours of Britain have shown. Last year, with a newly homologated G1 twin carb and cam kit, the RS2000s of Roger Clark and Gerry Marshall took a tremendous 1-2 in the Tour, and this year, with immaculate preparation, Tony Pond proved himself as fast on circuits, on which he had limited experience, as on the stages.

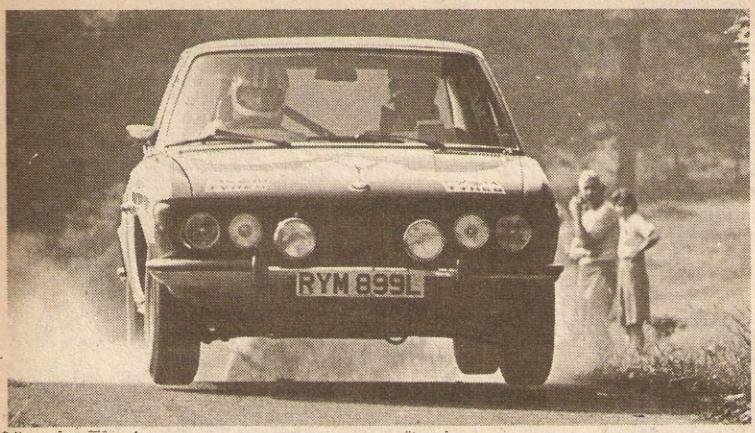
On this year's Tour, as on last year's, a phenomenal number of RS2000s seemed to appear as if from nowhere, for unless they are road rallied or club rallied, there is little available area where they can be campaigned. In racing, there are just two which are regularly seen on the G1 grids, those for Tom Walkinshaw and Allan Wilkinson, and the latter doesn't appear very often. However, Walkinshaw and to some extent Wilkinson have showed up well on the tight circuits where the class leading Dolomite Sprint has a weight disadvantage, but Walkinshaw's car took a dive performancewise after an accident and never really showed again.

In rallying, the RS2000 of Paul Appleby, the ex-Marshall car from last year's Tour has been a regular Castrol/AUTOSPORT G1 winner, with absolutely no servicing on, during, or after the events. It has run like clockwork and another RS2000 is that of Ian Lawless which also runs well. But on RAC rally championship events, it is the Avengers and Magnums who regularly win, and the RS2000s aren't really in with a chance.

Returning briefly to the Tour of Britain, the RS2000 was *the* car to have and to get some idea of this, four RS2000s finished in the first ten. All had the twin carburetter kit and the winning car of Tony Pond's was set up to a Ford blueprinted handling specification. This was gained by simply telephoning Boreham and the "ideal set-up" was read over to the mechanics. That's how certain Ford are of their product. Now the RS2000 is no longer made in the old form, and it'll be interesting to see how the new RS1800 hits the scene next year.

Tom Walkinshaw has found some success in the London Sports Car Centre RS 2000, especially on the tighter tracks.





John Cooper / Martin Holmes go yumping in this year's Tour of Britain. They went well but retired in the last day when the diff broke.

BMW 3.0 Si

Many enthusiastists will remember the early feats of the BMW 3.0 Si, perhaps one of the largest cars in British saloon car racing after the V8s. Roger Bell, Tony Lanfranchi and Donald MacLeod all used the 3.0 Si to good effect in 1973 and last year John Cooper drove one in his own very marked style.

This year, however, John Cooper departed the scene for other racing and left his BMW in the hands of Alison Davis. In the club production saloon races, she had the Camaros to contend with in her class and never really got near them. After a while, she too departed the scene and Cooper took the car back for the Tour of Britain. As usual he found himself back racing against myriads of Capris in his class. With Martin Holmes co-driving he was always competitive with Gordon Spice in his Capri II and had a really excellent fourth quickest time over Eppynt II where he used the power to its best advantage.

But sadly he never made the finish for the diff broke at the very last race when Cooper was assured second in class to Spice.

With next year's British National Touring Car championship for cars up to 3.0 we may see more G1 BMWs on the scene although probably in CSi form.

Moskvich 412

To imagine a Moskvich on a racing circuit when you've never seen one before is rather difficult. It's rather upright, looks heavy and seems to lurch around a bit. But in years past, Satra Motors have had the most phenomenal success with their Moskviches. They may roll, they may not handle fantastically but with a 1.5 engine and a very reasonable price, the Moskvich has been just right for the smallest class of Group One racing. However, even with the largest engine in the class, the Moskvich didn't always win its class last year even if it did the year before.

This year, Satra have been more interested in the Lada 1200 (details elsewhere) so that the Moskviches which have raced have been more secondhand examples and haven't perhaps benefitted from the attention of the works. As such, they've not had the success which has come their way in the past and have rather found themselves at the back of the very competitive fields.

Satra Motors themselves have usually found, too, that their wisdom in plumping for the Lada has reaped them more success than they might otherwise have had with the ageing Moskvich.

There haven't been many Moskviches around this year, and they haven't been very competitive.



BL 1275 GT

The most important thing about the 1275 GT is that next year, hopefully, full grids of these 'bins' will be seen in races of their own. When the Renault 5 championship was mooted a couple of years ago, our Northern correspondent Ian Titchmarsh asked why French cars when we have our own British equivalents? And next year, it seems that he will see his suggestion come to fruition.

But this year British Leyland became involved in a joint promotion to put Peter Jopp on the grid in the smallest club production saloon car rounds in one of British Leyland's 1275 GTs. The Mini, which has been around so long, only seemed to fit in the G1 scene so it was good that BL with the *Evening Standard* took up the challenge.

Jopp won his first race, and since then has become involved in the remarkably close dices for the small class club production saloon car honours with occasional placings. The British Leyland involvement is something that is most encouraging, and many observers look forward to next year's series.

Tim Dodwell is one of the main exponents in the Club series, often dicing with the class leaders.



Chrysler Hemi-Cuda

The Hemi-Cuda turns up all over the place. A car has been racing at Spa for the last two years, and we've had two cars in the British Saloon Car Championship over the last couple of years.

Last year that most experienced saloon car driver Gordon Spice tried to campaign one of these 6.9 litre V8 monsters from Chrysler's American works and came up against huge problems which ultimately led to complete disappearance of the car.

This year Tony Lanfranchi, with Southern Organs attempted to campaign a car in the British Saloon Car championship. Chris Lawrence prepared the car, a model brought from France having already been raced, but while it provided novelty to the Camaro class, it rarely ran higher than third place, and only then for a few laps.

There were two problems to be encountered. The weight of a 6.9 V8 proved difficult to stop and the team encountered the usual fuel surge problems. In fact, it wouldn't be unfair to say that the car proved mainly uncompetitive and might not be such a good idea for future competition. Despite many efforts, it just doesn't seem to last, and is too much of a burden for weeny British tracks.

Tony Lanfranchi's Hemi-Cuda has often been a front runner in the British Touring Car championship, but has never really lasted.





Renault 5s everywhere! There are around 800 racing throughout Europe in some form or another.

Renault 5 TL

During the year, we heard that there are something over 800 Renault 5s of various types racing throughout Europe. When France introduced Renault 5s this year to replace R12 Gordini racing, they had around 300 cars for their elimination races, and those that didn't qualify in a special session early in the year were sent away and told that they couldn't race in the events. Such is the Renault's popularity.

In Britain, Renault 5 racing is now two years old. The front wheel drive 956 cc cars provide fantastic racing, real door-handle to door-handle stuff, which may not prove that the driver is the greatest in the world, but is certainly going to provide him and all but the real straightlaced purist with tremendous entertainment.

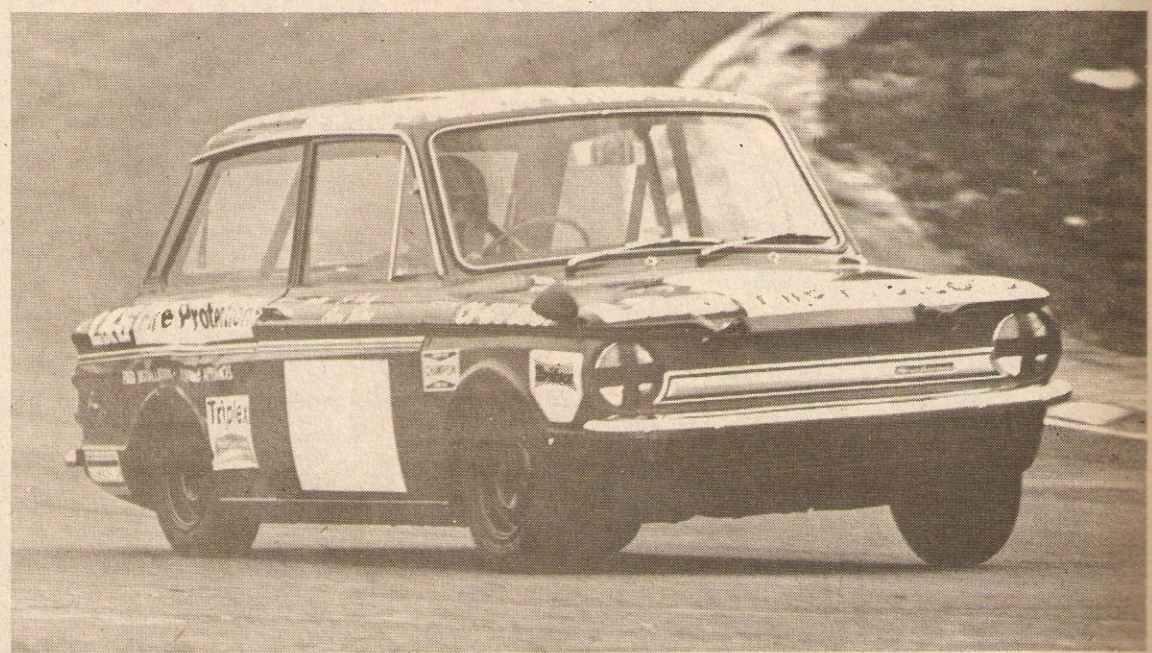
Unfortunately, this type of racing has brewed a certain amount of illegality and the occasional case of dubious driving but it started off very successfully and shows every sign of continuing in the same vein. As with all French organised formulae, there is money to be won and the whole thing is very well organised by the British Racing and Sports Car Club.

Renault 5s also went rallying this year. The up to 1.0 class of the Tour of Britain comprised Richard Piper's lone Imp against four Renault 5s and lots of entertainment the class provided. The real man for Piper to beat was former rallyman Gethin Jones who has been racing and rallying on the cheap for some years and entertaining in his own inimitable style. Jones' speed over the stages was considerable, but he contrived to have a Tour full of his own kind of incidents but even so he rolled home second in class.

There have been various suggestions that the British Renault 5 class should step in line with the French class and run 1300 cc cars, the TS, but this hasn't been agreed and it seems that, rightly or wrongly, Renault 5 racing in its present class will still be for the little 1.0 cars. No doubt they'll provide as good as entertainment as before.

Chrysler Imp

Major Imp runner in the club racing series is that of Simon Watson. With the L and G Fire Protection sponsorship, Watson is well on the way to winning the competitive small car class in the Radio One series. But at the weekend the Imp had a bad accident and is unlikely to reappear, so Watson's chances of the overall title look slim.



Under this rather lax title we cover two titles, the 1.0 Imp and the 875 cc Imp Sport. As many who have driven this superb alloy blocked rear engined car would believe, the Imp is a winner. In the world of Special Saloon car racing, the Imp has taken over from the Mini but perhaps the most incredible thing is that the smallest car in the small car class of the G1 scene at club level dominates its class in the Radio One G1 championship.

This is, of course, the little 875 cc Imp Sport of Simon Watson. This hasn't exactly been cheap for Watson, and if anyone asked him for a balance sheet of his costs in G1 racing, it would blow the G1 for cheapness myth apart. But with the help of ADA Engineering, who prepare his engine, and his sponsors L and G Fire Protection, Watson is right up at the head of the championship just waiting for championship leader Jock Robertson to make a mistake.

Watson's campaign has been a full time one, to the extent that he is a professional racing driver — the smallest class leader in a club formula a professional racing driver? It seems unthinkable but that's what it takes to prepare the little Imp to be a class winner, and it usually is. Not only that, it takes a lap record nearly every single time it races, even though the Imp has been to that circuit before several times during the year. Watson misses out on at least 125cc to his competitors every time he races, and sometimes, to the Moskviches, as much as 625cc, so his achievement is considerable.

The other notable achievement of a G1 Imp is that driven by Formula Fordster Richard Piper with Swedish Actress Leen Skoog on the Tour of Britain. Piper managed to keep his 1.0 Imp ahead of lots of Renault 5s throughout the three-day event, despite the occasional problem, backed up Andy Dawson's experiences the previous year in the same car. It only goes to show that the Imp is exceptional: not only a good G1 car with the right preparation, but also in rallying too.



Sideways antics on the Tour of Britain, Barrie Williams went off at the next corner.

Mazda RX3 Coupé

In case you haven't heard of the Rotary Club, it's the merry band of racers who make up the phenomenally competitive £1300 to £1699 class in club racing. And the reason it's called the Rotary Club is that all these competitors drive the 2.0 rotary-engined Mazda. Jock Robertson, Jean-Pierre Aux, Tony Lanfranchi, Cozy Powell, Peter Salde, Eric Cook, Mick Leary, Ivan Dutton, Barry Andrews, Wendy Markey – the names go on and on and they've all enjoyed the variation and excitement of racing in Formula Mazda.

Their main competition has been in the Radio One Production saloon car championship where Jock Robertson has been all but unbeatable. He prepares the cars himself, cars because Marshall Wingfield, his entrant, have also entered cars for Aux and Leary. Lanfranchi's DJM sponsored Mazda has usually run closest to Robertson and occasionally beaten him, but Lanfranchi has had other commitments in the motor racing world and hasn't run regularly throughout the season.

With so many cars competing in one class, with one manufacturer involved, what has been important is preparation. Apart from Robertson preparing his own car, Aux's and Leary's, Lawrencetune have looked after Lanfranchi's and John Markey's Arian concern have mainly looked after the others.

The result has been that many people have tried to find ways of cutting corners and making their cars go faster, and unfortunately, this has led to the occasional rumpus with the scrutineers but after it's all ironed out, it seems that Robertson's car is still untouchable. And his car has been troublefree (in the scrutineers' eyes) throughout. So what's his secret?

Well it's back to preparation again. Robertson formerly worked for Dealer Team Vauxhall and has all the right notions on how to prepare a Mazda to the right specification. Many of his competitors feel that apart from his driving, Robertson's Mazda puts the power down to the road rather better, and in a more stable fashion than those Mazdas of his competitors.

Whatever the pros and cons of Robertson's car, there's no doubt that the Mazda is the only car in the class. If one doesn't win for some reason there's always another to back it up, so it's a completely Mazda dominated class.

The same cannot be said for the 1601 cc to 2500 cc class of the British Touring Car championship. Just one Mazda has appeared in this class, an RX3 with the 2.3 rotary engine, Barrie Williams has been the driver of this lively car, but having reached a virtual peak last year, Mazda moved their preparation of the car from Mathwall Engineering to Arian Automotive and the big problem which has plagued the car throughout the season is that Arian don't seem to have been able to get to the bottom of a fuel surge problem.

On the tighter circuits, the Castrol sponsored Mazda has often found that the fuel surge wasn't active, and then it has really challenged the Triumph Dolomite Sprints and RS2000s in the class. But on the long, faster airfield type circuits, the Mazda has been plagued with fuel surge in the carburetters which has driven the team to distraction. Barrie has to deal with a car that cuts in and out, shoots flames out of the exhausts and slings the car sideways every time the power comes on. His greatest coup was to have been the British GP meeting where the Mazda was fractionally faster than the Dolomites, but the car wouldn't fire on the grid and the driver set off after all the others had gone. But his meteoric drive was the spectacle of the meeting and earned him the Driver of the Day award. Williams and his family were financing this outing as, following the withdrawal of a sponsor and a notable lack of results, the team were in financial problems.

Once again, Mazdas were prominant in the Tour of Britain. In the 2.0 to 2.5 litre class, they proved quick in the hands of Barry Andrews and Williams. But both had problems on the stages, mainly due to drivers' errors and after this, the class itself really wasn't very competitive with the rest of the rally at all. However, for what it is worth, Williams won his class with an ailing motor car and finished fifteenth overall.

No doubt the Mazda RX3 will be with us in all its forms in the future. It certainly needs cossetting on the race track, for although it may have its thirst as a disadvantage on the road, the power from the rotary engine is certainly forthcoming and it would be interesting to see how the Mazda compares with the Triumph Dolomite Sprint when the RX3 is really in the peak of health.

"Rotary Club" competitors going for a buzz around the track . . .





A spectacular sight in Group One – Robin Eyre-Maunsell with Neil Wilson on the '75 Circuit of Ireland.

Chrysler Avenger GT

Last year the Avenger scooped all three production saloon car championships, but from their own admission, they've concentrated this year more on rallying. The main effort is channelled towards Robin Eyre-Maunsell for the RAC G1 rally championship. In this, his main contender is Paul Faulkner's Vauxhall Magnum but each has its own advantage. The Magnum has the more power, while the Avenger is lighter so that the two are tussling at the head of the championship. On the Lindisfarne, Eyre-Maunsell had the first 1.8 Brazilian blocked car to be rallied in this country so the innovations are on the way. The Avenger also handles better, but while the Magnum lasts, the Avenger misses out on power. Thus Eyre-Maunsell has a number of wins, while the Vauxhall has had a good number of places which now means that the two cars are equal in the G1 championship.

Other cars which are also in contention in this series are the Avengers for Chris Field, Bernard Banning and Ian Gemmell. Field is also in contention in the Castrol/AUTOSPORT championship, although he has a brace of RS2000s to deal with.

As they were concentrating on the rallying scene, Chrysler Competitions left the G1 racing scene in the hands of Halesfield Motors, and possibly their finest hour was on the Tour of Britain, where Bernard Unett brought home their first car into third position. Andy Dawson brought home his car in fifth position, and Chris Field brought home another in eighth so it was a good event for the rather underpowered (in comparison to their competitors) Avengers. With another car in twelfth position and another further back, Halesfield pulled off the Trade team award.

But it was unfortunate that just a couple of weeks later, Halesfield should be placed in the hands of the official receiver. They'd been running the racing side for Chrysler throughout the year, but in the class where Avengers were so successful last year, they had little to shout about this year. The up to 1600 cc class of the British Touring Car championship has been dominated by the Celica so that Unett and Jennifer Birrell always found themselves playing the bridesmaid to the Japanese cars. Perhaps it was the lack of development with Chrysler concentrating on rallying, or perhaps it was that Toyota had improved. One way or another, it wasn't the season it had been last year for the Avenger. With the price structure against them in the club production saloon car championships, Avengers could do no more than watch Mazda tail lights throughout the season, so the bias may have favoured rallying, but it did nothing for racing.

Bernard Unett – out of luck this year against the Toyota Celica.



Alfa Romeo Junior 1600 GT

In the British Touring Car championship, the up to 1600cc class has been extremely hard fought. Even the little 1600cc Alfas have a five speed gearbox, but unfortunately all 1600cc cars have had a really hard time to beat the Toyota Celicas this year. But with the inimitable Italian styling, the 1600cc twin cam 1600 Junior GT in its *Penthouse* colours has been *the* stylish car in the up to 1600cc class.

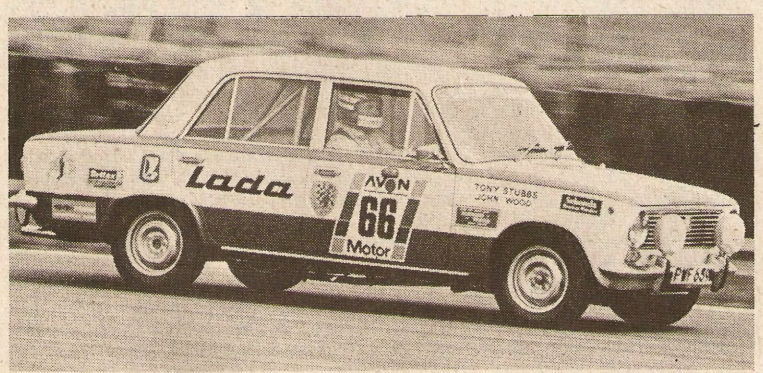
Drivers this year have been Stan Clark, who under his brother's Roger Clark Cars banner, has prepared and entered the cars, and journalist Tony Dron. Their progress has been steady. Testing has slowly brought the cars up to be competitive with the Avenger GTs but getting up to the leading Toyota has been difficult.

The Alfas have only competed in the Touring Car championship and their only real contest was at the British GP round of the series where they fought hammer and tongs with the Avengers in a really splendid dice where Dron took second in class to the Toyota in front of Bernard Unett with whom he diced for many laps.

Tony Dron and Stan Clark have campaigned two Alfa Junior GTs this year, gaining their best result here at Silverstone.



Lada 1200



The Lada is a Russian-built Fiat 124 with 1.2-litre engine. Tony Stubbs has been the driver this year.

Take a Fiat 124, do a deal with the Russians, have them build it super cheap and fit their 1200 engine and you have the Lada 1200. Because that's what it is — a Fiat 124 built in Russia. With their Russian tie-ups, Satra Motors this year moved on to the Lada 1200. Tony Stubbs has been the man in charge of the car this year, a car that is remarkably cheap, almost to the extent of the Moskvich which they promoted last year.

With this cheapness, the Lada qualifies for the small class of racing in production saloon car races at club level and it is there that Stubbs has been racing. The big problem for all small class racers is the demon little Imp that runs around with such amazing speed. But even so, the Hondas, Lada, 1275 GTs and Simca Rallye 1 all seem to have a pretty good dice if they can't keep up, and everyone has a turn at leading if they can.

The Lada also took part in the Tour of Britain, with a phenomenal back up crew. The fact that it wasn't taken up on price structure (it was on capacity) meant that the Lada found itself up against Alfasuds, Chevettes, Fiat 128s, Escort Sports, etc, and it found itself well outclassed despite a good run.



Simca Rallye 1 fun. The little French cars have contested the small class of the club production car series.

Simca Rallye 1

A mainstay of the European rallying scene is the little Simca Rallye 1, the 1.3 rear-engined slower version of the Rallye 2. It is the Cooper S of Europe, but there aren't many around in this country, at least in rallying.

The main area for the Simca Rallye 1 is in the world of production saloon car racing at Club level. The varied world of the small class, up to £1,299, is just right for the Rallye 1 and in the hands of Simon Kirkby and Neville Knight, the Simcas have had a number of wins this year.

At the start of the season, it was generally thought that the Rallye 1 would be the car to beat. It has lots of power, the engine is over the driven wheels and it still handles well. But it appears that this is not enough, and it still has to give best to its Chrysler stablemate, the Imp. But Knight and Kirkby have had their share of success when the Imp hasn't been around, although they've had to share it with the likes of the Lada, Honda Civic and Mini.

In the Tour of Britain, just one car was entered in the competitive 1300 cc class, but it was in the hands of slightly inexperienced drivers, and didn't rate in the results. For next season, the Rallye is another car which could contest the up to 1300 cc class of the British Touring Car championship, so it should be a very interesting class.

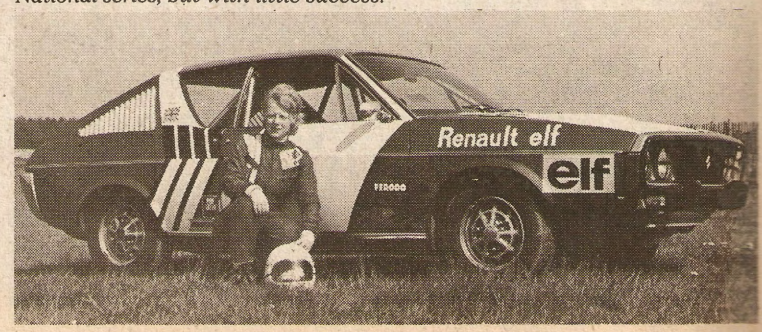
Renault 17TS

The 1600 cc Renault 17TS has only been seen in two forms this year. For their Elf purposes, Renault had a car built up as a promotional car to take journalists round GP circuits chauffeured by the likes of Jackie Stewart, Patrick Depallier and Maggie Anderson.

The next car to appear was one that Martin Thomas built up to campaign in the British Touring Car championship, but after a very brief and rather unsuccessful flirtation, the car disappeared.

Its next appearance was in club racing where it was up against the Mazdas but proved to be rather uncompetitive again, despite Maggie Anderson's efforts. Since then, she has raced and rallied in the Tour of Britain, running well until the very last event where she ran out of petrol. Subsequently she has reappeared in the British Touring Car championship again. Once again, she's had a frustrating time at the back of the field but no doubt finding out how competitive this class of racing can be. The Renault really doesn't have legs on the Celicas, Avengers and Alfas but it provides variation in racing.

Maggie Anderson and her Renault 17TS have campaigned both club and National series, but with little success.





Using all the road and another Magnum-width more – Gerry Marshall shakes off a couple of pursuers.

Vauxhall Magnum Coupe

After an excellent season last year in both racing and rallying, Vauxhalls have mainly shone this year in rallying. In the RAC G1 rally championship, the 2.3 Magnum has been up against the Avenger GT of Robin Eyre-Maunsell, Paul Faulkner stepping into Will Sparrow's driving shoes in the G1 DTV model. With a five-speed gearbox and twin Dellorto carburetters, the Magnum is certainly a powerful car on the stages, but it weighs rather more than the Avenger and has been prone to more trouble. However, several good placings now sees the Magnum of Faulkner equal first in the championship with Eyre-Maunsell and the season draws to a close with an exciting duel, and more power for the Avenger.

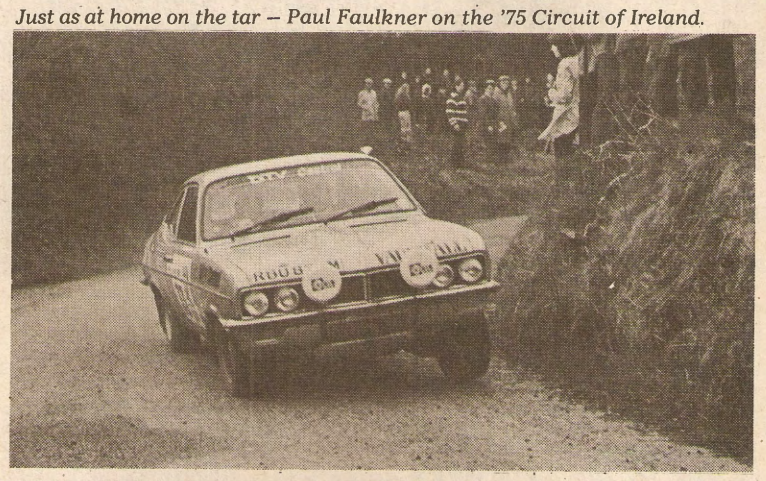
The other main Vauxhall Magnum exponent is Jim McRae, a Scotsman who has been rallying for some years and who now has some backing from the influential SMT garage group, whose Perth based workshop under Walter Gray have taken the car under their wing.

In the Tour of Britain, the Magnum of Gerry Marshall really didn't have a very happy time. After a blow-out in the first race, Marshall was immediately rather a long way behind so Vauxhall responsibilities rested with the Ryland Group Magnum of Will Sparrow. Sparrow really had a first-class time, excelling, as a rally driver would, on the stages, and keeping up a good placing in the races. His placings on the stages were nearly always in the first four, and usually in the first two. He must have been fed up with finding himself second to Tony Pond's RS2000. But for Sparrow, the event fell apart at Oulton Park when the diff broke, and he finished third in class behind Gerry Marshall in the other Magnum, these two finishing twentieth and twenty-first overall respectively.

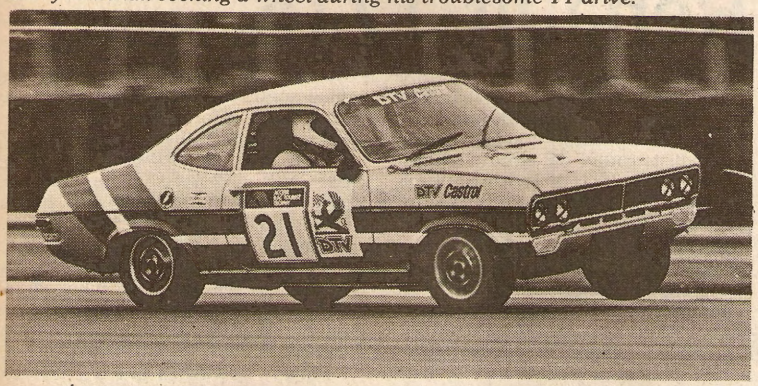
Marshall has virtually the sole responsibility of Vauxhall enthusiasm in the club production saloon races, but in his class is up against Capris and Dolomite Sprints so in such races, finds himself at a disadvantage, especially giving away 700 cc to the Capris. But with Marshall's entertaining style, the Magnum sponsored by Capital Motors and LBC is always noticeable on the track, even if it isn't in the leading bunch.

For next year, the up to 2300 cc class in the British Touring Car championship may interest Vauxhall, but they've still got to contend with the Dolomites, which they may find a rather tall order. But in rallying the Magnum is obviously still a car to be reckoned with, so watch out for further developments.

Just as at home on the tar – Paul Faulkner on the '75 Circuit of Ireland.



Gerry Marshall cocking a wheel during his troublesome TT drive.



Are all rent-a-cars driven like this?



Opposite: *After nearly two successful seasons of campaigning G1 Production Saloon Triumph Dolomite Sprints in the National Championship, British Leyland have recently made the first steps towards a European campaign for next year. The Dolomite Sprint pictured is the one-off car built specially for the recent Access Tourist Trophy at Silverstone run to European Coupe de L'Avenir regulations. This car, like the national championship contenders, was built and prepared by Broadspeed at the request of Leyland ST and driven by Andy Rouse, current joint leader of this year's national championship. Designed and built in just under two months, Rouse put the new car on the front row of the grid at Silverstone and ran very strongly at the front of the field against much bigger cars. The car is currently being rebuilt to next year's European G2 specification for Leyland to try to add the prestigious title to last year's National title.*

Centrespread: *One of the most successful cars in club racing this year has been the Radio Luxembourg Lotus Europa Special which seasoned campaigner Chris Meek has driven in Production Saloon Car races. Including last weekend the combination had scored 17 outright wins and won the Northern DC Cook Direct Tapes championship and won his class in the national series as well as setting lap records at Cadwell Park, Rufforth, Croft, Aintree, Llandow, Castle Combe, Brands Hatch, Silverstone and Snetterton.*

Radio Luxembourg have given tremendous support to the car and the Production Sports championships while Vegantine and Kleber have provided the best in engines and tyres respectively and Duckhams have provided further support.

Back Page: *Jon Dooley is an avid Alfa enthusiast and has driven both Alfasuds and Alfetta this year, both with MacInnes Amcron sponsorshhip. With the company's managing director, Ian Marshall, Dooley had an excellent ride on the Tour of Britain in the Alfasud, and at the Access Silverstone TT recently, looked likely to take the car to more success until a tappet broke. MacInnes Amcron are an electrical company producing amplifiers and other sound producing equipment.*


LEYLAND
38


LUCAS
RADIO LUX
208
CHRIS MEEK


EMBOURG
208
Radio
Luxembourg
LOTUS EUROPA


MACINNES AMCRON
GYH 200N
DUNLOP
AMCRON



The Editor in Cozy Powell's Hitachi Mazda RX3 saloon at a recent Brands Hatch test day.

A tale of two Mazdas

In racing terminology, the name Mazda means rotary engine, and their RX3 Coupe model in particular. Rightly so. Following a successful introductory programme with Barrie Williams last year in the national championship, the RX3 was homologated this year with the 2.0 rotary engine. In a very short time motor sport had its own Rotary Club. As many as 12 RX3 coupe models have been known to turn up to a Radio One Production Saloon Championship round. The Coupe is light and the rotary engine is very quick. The combination not only proved to be a comprehensive class winner but also a beater of bigger class cars also.

There has been one 'ugly duckling' among the Mazda family on the circuits this year, the four door saloon version of pop drummer Cozy Powell. 'Ugly Duckling' is an unfair name really for although showing its Japanese heritage the saloon body is not unattractive.

For a comparably small operation, Mazda have a good percentage share of the British market originally opened for them by the novelty of the rotary engine. But in these days of economy the rotary engine has to take a back seat. Mazda have devised a very sensible range of cars with the basic saloon and coupe bodies of their middle range cars being available with rotary and conventional piston engined cars.

Recently we have had the opportunity of racing the Hitachi rotary engined RX3 saloon of Cozy Powell and running the same piston engined road car, which is sold as the 818.

A full test of the 818 will appear at a later date but for the purpose of this article we will give a brief impression of the two cars. Powell's Hitachi sponsored racer is prepared by John Markey's Arian Automotive and was put at my disposal for a recent race at Mallory Park. Well, I could say I came fifth and leave it at that and you might say 'not bad.' In truth I was miles behind the RX3 Coupes and never looked like being in with a chance especially after a couple of spins. At the previous Mallory race Cozy had put the car on pole position so I know it's a good car. What I really like about it is the flexibility of the rotary engine and the easy controls of the car. The gearbox is exceptionally light and smooth in operation while the pedals and steering fall right in the correct places. For my preference the racer had far too much understeer to make life pleasant and I could have done with a little more feel through the brakes. The G1 regs don't permit much in the way of suspension adjustment and unfortunately I didn't have time to try it on stiffer damper settings. But I'm no driver anyway and the track record of Cozy Powell, who, incidentally, is in his first season of racing, shows it's as competitive as the Coupe.

Following this experience I was a little apprehensive when the four door piston engined 818 was delivered to my door and I must admit that my first impressions were that it was again perhaps too softly sprung. But any fears I had soon disappeared. This 1300 cc car is a gem. It's economical, it's quick, its handling is dead neutral, with a slight tendency to power oversteer, it's roomy, and it's well equipped.

Obviously it's not as quick as the rotary engined car but it has all the performance that one requires in this country with 100 mph showing on the clock in favourable conditions. The engine lacks a real punch low down in the range but the gear ratios are close and it doesn't take long to build up a reasonable speed. Top gear itself is very flexible and what is really nice is that when travelling at the legal maximum you can put your foot down and feel a real thrust as it willingly puts on another 20 mph.

I didn't find the car at all noisy even though it likes to be revved. In fact it is a little deceptive in its speed and initially one gets the impression that the brakes are not quite up to the job although this is a fallacy that one soon overcomes.

It shares the same gearbox as the racing RX3 and this is a delight although some people might think that the travel is a little too long, again its light and easy action soon compensates for this.

Some people have complained that as a four door saloon the 818 lacks in room at the rear, yet my test car regularly took three six foot plus gents and a couple of others and not one word of complaint was heard on the longest journey. Boot space was also more than adequate.

The whole reason for the 818 being in existence is the advantages of fuel economy of the piston engine. All the mileage covered so far in the 818 has been of a hard driving nature yet it returned just a fraction under 30 mpg in these conditions which was very good, believe me. On a short normal driving run which included a fair mileage of London roads I got 35 mpg which was most acceptable.

Although Mazda placed a lot of faith in the rotary engine, in the conventional 818 they've got a real winner.

IAN PHILLIPS

The piston engined 818 Mazda saloon which excells in economy and performance.





Group One Honda Civics abound in Ireland, but Danny Alderton is the main protagonist in this country.

Honda Civic

The little Honda Civic is one of the super competitive little cars to be found in the cheapest class of Goup One racing in the club field. It is powered by an 1169 cc transversely mounted engine driving through the front wheels.

In Britain the main car is that campaigned by Danny Alderton and it is he that class leader Simon Watson fears most. The little Honda especially seems to have the legs on Watson's Imp on the long circuits. However, the Civic is not confined to Britain, and examples may be found racing in Ireland with regularity and class success. There are even Group One Civics in autocross so its front wheel drive is put to considerable use.

The Tour of Britain which provides such an able comparison of cars both on stages and track, was divided into classes of course and although regular campaigner Alderton did not start, there were two Honda Civics which both finished, although neither in the class leading positions. Even so, the little Honda has proved competitive in its class in G1 racing, and should continue to prove a threat in small class racing.

Alfa Romeo Alfetta

The Alfettas in Britain are really only in the hands of Alfa Romeo enthusiasts. There is one in racing and at least one in rallying, but unfortunately, neither do as well as their Italian bred counterparts on Italian rallies.

The four door Alfetta has a 1.6 or 1.8 engine but isn't really quick enough to challenge the normal British campaigned competition vehicles in this country of similar capacity. Jon Dooley soldiers on with a 1.8 Alfetta in Radio One and Britax production saloon car races but as the Alfetta is rather expensive, he has to run with the Camaros etc and simply has no chance of honours against them.

In rallying the car is rather the same. It has very little chance against more nimble vehicles, and one rather gets the impression that this very comfortable car is only on the tracks and stages so that enthusiasts of the respective sports have a car of their allegiance with which to indulge in their favourite sport. Neither is competitive, neither is going to win, but it does provide variation.

The Alfetta racing in this country is not too successful, but this car won its G1 class in a foreign rally recently.



BMW 2002 Tii

The fuel injected 2-litre BMW 2002 Tii, an early class winner of Group One races in this country, was given a slight rebirth in Group One trim by a couple of Norwegians this year. The performance of Walter Jensen and his co-driver on this year's Tour of Britain was one that many competitors and spectators will remember.

However, it was principally on stages that the G1 car excelled. Jensen took the car straight from a Norwegian showroom, fitted regulation safety gear and came over to Britain to finish tenth on the three day event.

But on the race tracks Jensen could compare notes with Jon Mowatt. Mowatt has been campaigning a 2002 Tii in the up to 2500 cc class of the British Touring Car championship with little success, and Jensen had about as much in his races during the Tour. For while the 2002 Tii is a most desirable car on the road, it appears a little too heavy and lacks development from the factory in this country. BMW 2002 Tiis have been scarce in racing in this country despite their Group 2 rallying successes in Ireland, and it seems that they may be fast disappearing altogether.

Walter Jensen provided the main BMW 2002 Tii performance in Britain this year by coming tenth on the Tour of Britain.



Fiat 128 Coupé

Fiat 128s have appeared in various forms of racing for some years now — remember the Filipinetti team of saloon 128s in G2 managed by Mike Parkes? — but this year they've come to prominence more than ever.

For a start, Tony Dron and his attractive co-driver "Madeleine" won their class on the Tour of Britain. In Europe, the slightly modified 128 Coupe of Roger Berndtson and Ugo Meloni won the Trophee de l'Avenir.

Dron took his Fiat 128 to an exciting win over the similarly capacitied Alfasud of Jon Dooley and these two diced throughout over both stages and race circuits, with Dron usually winning the former and Dooley the latter. But in the end, it all came Dron's way.

In Europe, the slightly modified 128 prepared in Belgium was consistent. A number of class wins came the way of the Italian and Belgian drivers, but perhaps their major coup was coming second in class in the Tour de France. the combination of hillclimbs, races and special stages.

The Fiat 128 Coupe hasn't been seen regularly in racing in this country at all, but with a 1300 cc class in next year's British Touring Car championship the free running, front wheel drive 128 may be a car to be reckoned with.

Tony Dron had a splendid Tour of Britain in this Fiat 128, a car not often seen in competition in Britain.



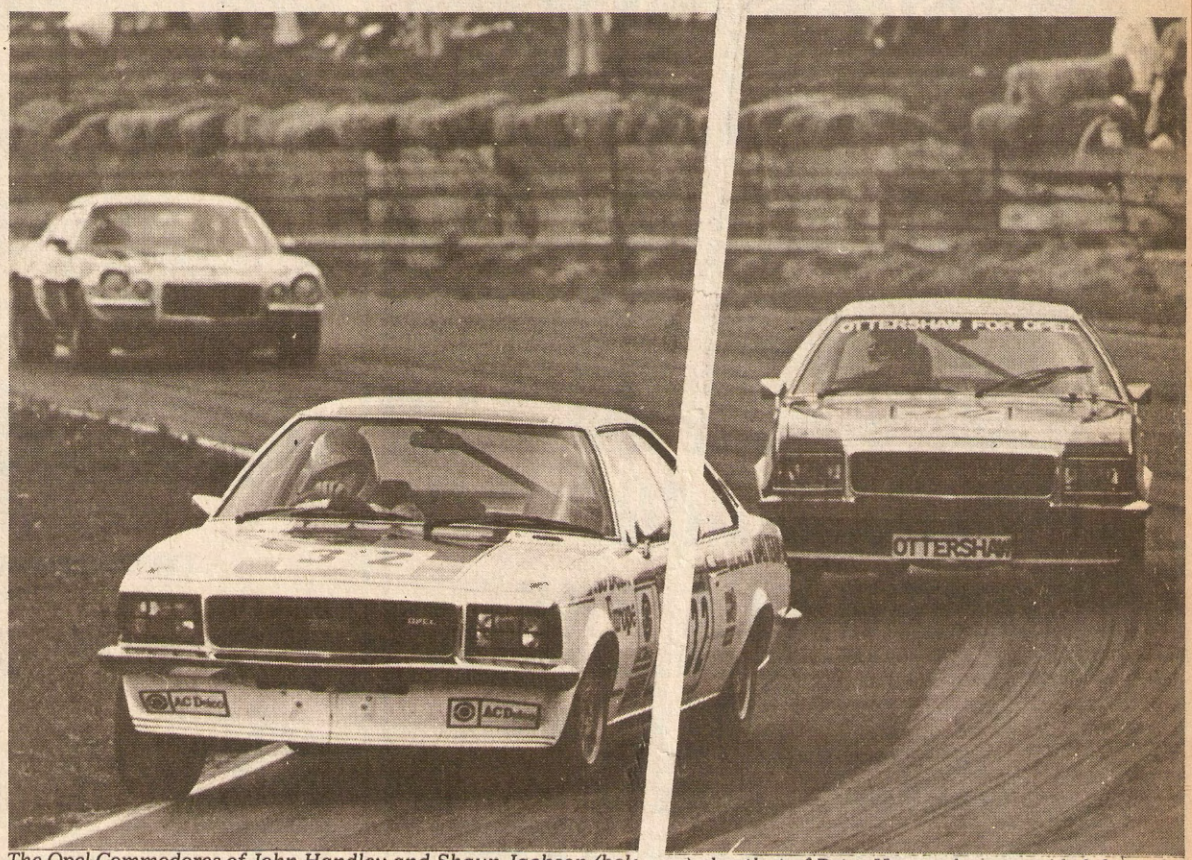
Opel Commodore GSE

One of the outstanding experiences this year at Spa's 24 Hours was to wander around to the side of the track at a quick part of the circuit and watch the phenomenal G1 Opel Commodores swishing down the track. Swish is the word because three of the cars were completely standard — silencers, road tyres, the lot. They were unbelievable. At Silverstone's Access TT British spectators had the opportunity to see one of these cars in action, not one of the BP cars, but a real G1 car in the hands of a Belgian couple who eventually finished ninth.

Then take the AC Delco G1 sponsored car of John Handley which finished a really fine third and you'll realise just how good these cars are. They have a 2.8 fuel injected straight 6 cylinder engine, superb styling and very reasonable roadholding.

The General Motors side of the sport in this country is run by ace rally man Tony Fall from Yorkshire and this year the marque has had three cars on G1 grids in the British Touring Car Championship. Their chief competition has been from the Ford Capris, but Fall has not felt that he has had a lot of feed back come from Germany, the car's origin.

However, John Handley, Peter Hanson (DOT's driver last year) and Shaun Jackson have all provided superb competition for the Capris in G1 races and their competition has often saved Camaro dominated races from complete boredom with lots of really exciting races. When the Capri of Gordon Spice has retired, one of these three drivers has invariably found himself in the class lead, and very often all three have found themselves in the lead, such has been the competition. Of late, in fact, a considerable number of Opel Commodore 1-2-3s have been scored.



The Opel Commodores of John Handley and Shaun Jackson (belo ow) plus that of Peter Hanson have provided the main battles in the British Touring Car championship. Next year, they will be front runners as the overall limit is 3 litres, and the Commodores fit the bill perfectly.

Of course, one of the most important points of all this is that next year the Commodore will be a front runner in the British Touring Car championship now that the upper limit is 3 litres, but also it is expected that the club productio n racing class structure will also be favourable to this 2.8 car.

The Commodore is also the favourite of G1 race rs in Europe, especially Belgium, and Holland, hence the number th at sing around the Francorchamps circuit each year. So with the support that Tony Fall expects and would like, the Opel Commodore should be the car to beat next year. If any of the G1 races this year are anything to go by, the Opel will be well in the thick of it in the British Saloon car championship next year.



Opel Asconas are strong and handle well in G1 rallying, but they lack overall power to keep up with RS2000s, Chrysler Avengers and Vauxhall Magnums.

Opel Ascona

The 1.9 2-door Opel Ascona first made its appearance in G1 rallying last year in the hands of Tony Pond. It has certain advantages over competitors in that it puts the power down well to the ground with excellent rear suspension and the car is very strong. But perhaps the one department in which it is lacking is the power field, and this precludes it from being an overall winner in G1 rallying.

Dealer Opel Team ran this first G1 car in rallying, and since then they have made provision to keep both engine and suspension homologated parts in stock so that it is virtually possible to buy a ready for rallying G1 Ascona off the shelf from Tony Fall's department.

The main representation in the G1 rallying scene is from Dan Grewer who has had few successes in this field, probably for the reasons above. The Geoff Birkett/David Orrick Ascona started off in G1 trim with lots of success on road rallies, but has recently been modified and no longer can be called absolutely G1.

With the Ascona as strong as it is, and the parts readily available off Tony Fall's shelves, the G1 Ascona would seem to be lacking in just one department to prevent it from being a popular and competitive rally car, and that is a marginal lack of power.

Alfa F Romeo Alfasud

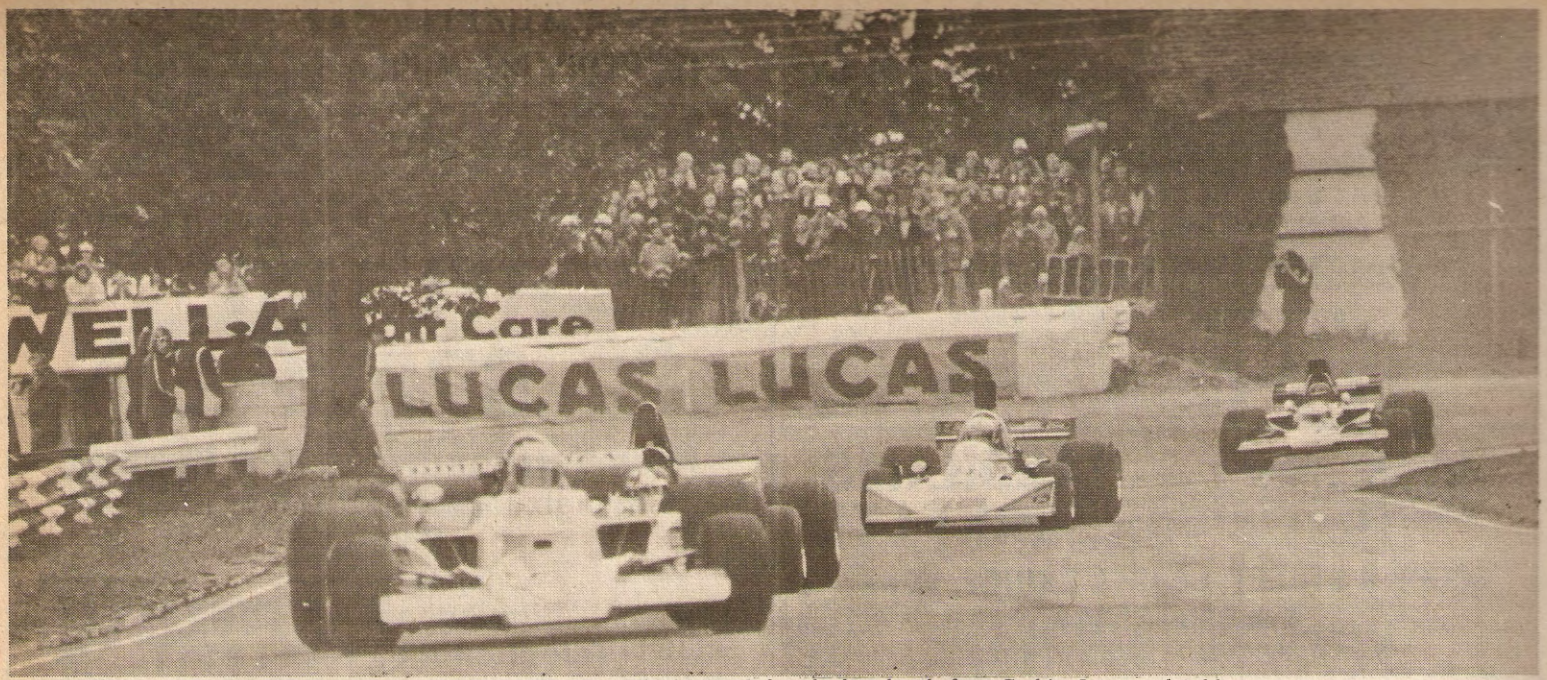
The little Alfasud ha s only been seen on a couple of occ asions this year, and both times perf ormed with some distinction. The fi rst instance was when the more po werful Ti version harried and diced with Tony Dron's Fiat 128 through out the Tour of Britain for honou rs in the 1300 cc class. In the end, I Dron took the class win, but Jon Doc ley in the Alfasud was most compet itive on the stages and it was a clos e struggle through- out which show ed the front wheel drive 'Sud to l e well in with a chance.

The other app earance was in the recent Access TT. Dooley entered one car for himself and journalist Rex Greenslade and another car came out for John Myerscough/John Raffo. But it was the Dooley/Greenslade Alfasud which raced so competitively and was right up with the second in class modified Fiat 128 when a tappet broke.

But the whole exercise was to see what would happen in next year's British Touring Car championship where it will be eligible for the up to 1300 cc class. It may be yet another contender for this class.

Jon Dooley goes flying over Eppynt in his class — challenging Alfasud. The car only did a couple of events this year, but was well placed in both.





With Pilette, Purley and Evans already through Guy Edwards leads the tough fourth place battle from Gethin, Jones and Ashley.

MALLORY PARK

F5000s show their worth

By IAN TITCHMARSH **Photos by BARRY EDEN**

What a perverse class of racing Formula 5000 is! Just when it was being written off after a dismal showing at Snetterton the previous week, it all comes together again and produces racing of a type which is unique not only in this country but throughout Europe. Big, powerful, spectacular single-seaters twitching and roaring round a short circuit with battles raging throughout the field. All right, so Teddy Pilette won by half a lap or so but just about every other driver in the race was involved in a running battle all the way to the line. Only 4.2s covered second to sixth places after 50 laps. Perhaps it's not up to American standards but it's certainly a whole lot better than Formula 2/Atlantic etc when it works. More money and broader horizons should make it work instead of the restricted series to which we've become accustomed. Assuming double points are awarded at the final round, the Belgian VDS Lola T400 driver has still not clinched the 1975 championship for his nearest challenger Guy Edwards in the Encyclopaedia Britannica Lola T332 snatched second place on the last lap from Bob Evans in the Durex Lola T400, who was ultimately elbowed down to fourth by Alan Jones too.

In the supporting races at the efficiently organised BRSCC Midland Centre meeting, pride of place when to Jean-Pierre Aux, who at last defeated Jock Robertson in the Mazda RX3 class of the Radio One Championship while Bernard Vermilio won a thrilling National Organs Formula Ford 1600 final in the works Merlyn Mk 29. The large crowd should have gone away well pleased with the last Mallory offering of 1975.

ENTRY AND PRACTICE

The main interest among the entries as the 17 cars arrived at the circuit for practice centred on the change of driver in the Durex/Alan McKechnie Lola T400 which has so far been driven with mixed fortunes by Richard Scott. Conflicting stories were bandied about but the net result was that Richard appeared at the wheel of John Turner's ex-Lella Lombardi Lola T330 with some hasty Durex lettering on the side while the 1974 Rothmans F5000 champion Bob Evans took over the T400 for his third different car of the year in the category. Bob didn't take pole position, but came very close, while Richard was struggling in the older car.

One thing no one can accuse Teddy Pilette of is not trying and now that he can see the 1975 championship within his grasp his form is almost irresistible, but not quite for pole position was taken away from him at the last minute by David Purley, driving without a rev counter and relying on the rev limiter, in the LEC Chevron-Ford V6. David's time of 41.4s equalled the circuit record. Teddy was 0.2s slower, using the team's spare car with which he had won at Snetterton and which he had found to be lighter to handle in all departments despite being apparently identical to his usual T400. As usual the VDS team were running Morand engines. Equalling the Belgian's time was his successor to the championship Bob Evans, who had had 20 laps of Silverstone in mid-week to accustom himself to the latest type of Lola. He found nothing wrong with it and was well pleased with his time and the team's efforts with the car. Sharing the second row with Bob was second man in the championship Guy Edwards in his Britannica Lola T332 using a Roy Fewkes engine against Evans' Whitehurst. A minor confrontation in the pits between Evans' and Guy's team manager arose after allegations that Edwards was baulking but it all blew over.

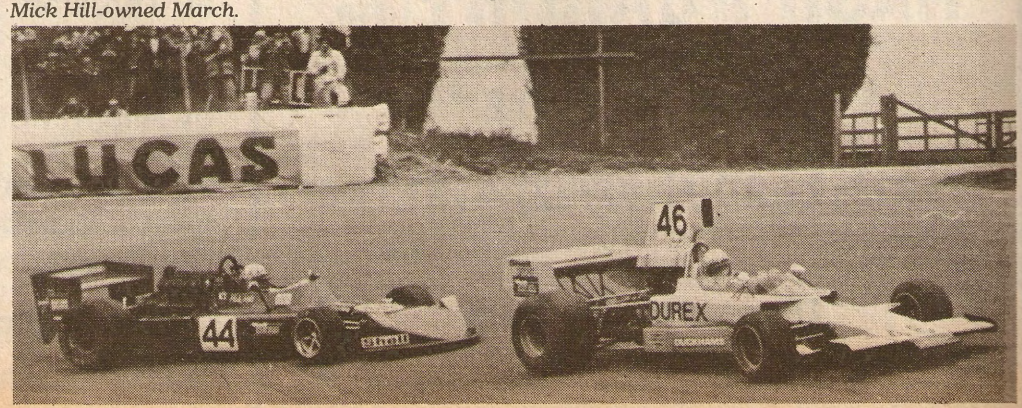
Guy's time was 41.8s, just 0.2s ahead of Alan Jones in the Thursdays/RAM March 751 which was not going as well as usual, which is very well indeed. The car was running a fresh-from Boreham Ford V6 to replace the one blown at Snetterton but an oil leak hampered the early part of practice and later the handling went awry. The Australian's time was equalled by Peter Gethin in the other VDS Lola T400, who was unhappy with his engine, one of the team's more extensively used examples. Ian Ashley found it difficult to taking the Mickey Mouse circuit seriously, the confined pits preventing any serious work on setting up the car and his practice ended with a broken cwp after a time of 43.2.s. After the engine disasters of recent meetings, the Richard Oaten Lola T330 was on its last Roy Fewkes motor. Going very well was Brian Robinson in his smartly turned out McLaren M19C for a time of 43.4s.

The grid was completed by Brian McGuire (Lola T332), 43.4s; Mike Wilds (ex-Mike Wilds, Mick Hill-owned March 74A), 43.6s; Damien Magee (Jim Kelly Trojan T101, with an oil leak and a seat full of petrol), 44.0s; Richard Scott (John Turner/Durex Lola T330), 44.0s before the water pressurised out of the radiator; Bill Gubelmann (Gordon Spice Lola T332), 44.0s; and Tom Walkinshaw in the ShellSport March 752. Tom never practised because the team's transporter broke down on the way to the circuit but he was allowed to start with a 10s penalty, never having driven the car in its latest long-chassis form which makes it similar in specification to the Thursdays machine. His knowledge of the correct aerodynamics to use was therefore more or less non-existent. Three non-starters were Ingo Hoffman in the Tony Dean Chevron B28, the Morand engine of which broke several valve springs (45.8s); Trevor Twaites, who had rebuilt the Fewkes engine of his Lola T330 himself during the week only to have something drastic happen to the internals (51.2s); and Dennis Leech who had something break on his ex-Steve Thompson Chevron B24 on the warming up lap at Gerards, the car crashing quite heavily but Leech escaping unhurt (47.6s).

RACE

Leech's accident delayed the start a little but allowed the few spots of rain which were falling to be blown away by the cool breeze. Most teams were running the softer type of Goodyear which was brought in last week to allow sensible operating temperatures now that the weather is colder. Pilette made a perfect start when the flag fell and was first into Gerards from Purley with Evans third and these three were already pulling away as they completed the first lap. Fourth at this point was Edwards hounded by Gethin and Jones, while Ashley was striving to stay in touch in seventh, having lost his visor and his place on Stebbe straight. Wilds led the rest from McGuire, Magee, Scott, Gubelmann, Robinson and the delayed Walkinshaw who found almost at once that the handling on his untested car was far from right.

Old cars, new faces. Richard Scott in the Durex logoed John Turner Lola T330 leads Mike Wilds in his old Mick Hill-owned March.



While the three leaders settled down in the opening laps, the main interest centred on the efforts of Jones to find a way past Gethin. Several times the March would draw alongside on the inside line for the Esses but never early enough to prevent Gethin holding his line and chopping across. Jones was finding the March reluctant to exit Gerards properly and, as often as not, was coming on to the straight well sideways which was no way to build up speed for the straight. Gethin in his turn was doubtful whether his engine would last and found the Ford V6 was able to pull back most of the lost ground by the end of the straight. Tantalisingly ahead of the pair was Edwards in fourth. Lower down the order, McGuire's good start came to naught when the gearbox started playing up as early as the second lap, leaving him groping at the hairpin so that he eventually dropped to last before retiring without any cogs at all on lap 30. Walkinshaw was so unhappy with the handling of his March that he never improved on last place except when McGuire was running at his slowest, but the Scot plugged on to finish six laps behind.

After 10 laps or so it seemed that Purley was gaining again on the leader, but this was partly artificially created by the backmarkers and the status quo between first and second places was eventually restored. Not so between Purley and Evans, however, for by lap 20 the McKechnie car was right with the LEC Chevron just as Jones forced his way past Gethin at Gerards while lapping a dice for 10th place between Scott and Gubelmann. For several laps Evans chased the Chevron hard, the Ford-engined car noticeably twitchy and on the limit at times. It was great racing and ended temporarily at the hairpin just after half distance when the Lola went through. But Purley was far from finished and fought back hard. Ten laps later he had reduced the gap to nothing but, on lap 42, he thought he saw a gap at the hairpin which wasn't really there. The Chevron rammed the Lola in the side, sending it six feet or so in the air and bending the offside exhaust pipes. The Chevron's nose section was shredded. However, both drivers had sorted themselves out before the Edwards/Gethin/Jones dice arrived on the scene, the VDS car having repassed the March when Jones got very crossed up at the hairpin on lap 28.

The Purley/Evans incident ensured that Pilette, who had never looked to be in serious danger, was now completely on his own and he ran out the winner by 25s. But Evans and Purley were both in trouble, Evans with a misfire from the the damaged exhaust and Purley with huge understeer from the damaged nose. Purley was the first to succumb, falling behind Edwards and Jones with five laps left. Gethin had slackened his pace, allowing Jones to repass again, the Australian celebrating with a very hair-raising moment at Devils Elbow which almost saw the car in the barriers. Evans hung on to second as long as he could but, on the last lap, it was no longer possible and the Lola/March battle went past. Purley stayed fifth, fractionally ahead of Gethin.

Everyone else was lapped, with Wilds taking a steady seventh in Mick Hill's March in only his fourth race of the year. Magee had been hounding Wilds for the first half of the race but the engine kept on cutting out from fuel starvation and only picked up properly again on the last couple of laps when he had fallen to ninth behind Gubelmann, who he just failed to repass. In the early laps Scott had led the American in the Reed Racing Lola but he found the handling difficult and ended up only just holding off Robinson's challenge for 10th. What of Ashley, so recently the convincing championship leader? For the third race in succession, the engine failed, this time probably because of a melted piston and he had to retire from seventh with 20 laps left. To add to his fine drive in the Durex car, Bob Evans equalled the circuit record, set at the same meeting last year by Ian Ashley.

SUPPORTING RACES

Geoff Lees started off his busy day's racing in fine style by winning the first Formula Ford heat for National Organs points in his yellow Royale RP21. At first Phil Dowsett's Crossle 25F led the pursuit from John Bright's Royale RP21, Mike Blanchet's Crossle 30F and David Harbour's Crossle 20F. Bright, running an Aldon engine for the first time, had one lap in second before Blanchet took over and began to close on the leader. On the last lap the red Crossle just got its nose in front on Stebbe Straight but Lees had the inside line for the Esses and held on to win by 0.2 s before dashing for his helicopter, Bright was third from Harbour while Dowsett retired when the engine "just stopped".

Geoff's main rival for the championship, Kenny Gray, came badly unstuck in practice on the wet track, bending the rear of his Van Diemen very badly. However, some sterling work by Ralph Firman in the paddock saw the South African lining up on the front row with seconds to spare but only able to select second and top. Into the lead went Rad Dougall from pole position in his Royale RP21 from Bernard Vermilio's Merlyn Mk 29, running a new, all-enveloping engine cover for the first time and David MacPherson's Dulon MP17. Matthew Argenti slotted into fourth in his Van Diemen while Gray fell all the way back to 16th as he struggled round the hairpin. Dougall stayed in the lead throughout, despite a very strong challenge from Vermilio who, in turn, was having to work hard to keep MacPherson behind. On the seventh lap the Dulon grabbed second but a lap later the MRS instructor was out after an incident at the hairpin. Vermilio kept the pressure on Dougall to the end, finishing 0.4 s behind. Argenti was third from the similar Van Diemen of Rob Orford while Gray just scraped into the final with 10th place.

Next on the agenda was the first of two Radio One Group 1 races, for the cheaper classes. Mazdas seem to be thinning out a little these days but Jock Robertson was there with the Marshall-Wingfield car while Jean-Pierre Aux had earned pole position. *Et, mon dieu and scare bleu,* it was Aux in front all the way with Robertson having to hang on to the Aux tail. He made one or two bids to pass but it was JPA's race. Barrie Williams enlivened things a little in third place until the exhaust pipe fell off his loaned Mazda. In the cheapest class of all, things became rather fraught at the first corner when Danny Alderton's Honda Civic tangled with Simon Watson's Imp, both cars ending their racing careers in the bank with happily undamaged drivers. Peter Jopp won as Neville Knight's Simca lost its fan belt, but the Henly's/*Evening Standard* Mini-Clubman was excluded for being underweight. Very embarrassing for the BRSCC to have to disqualify its chairman but, as Jopp pointed out, his car was over the homologated weight even if it was less than the *Autocar* Buyers' Guide, and anyway the weighbridge was without a certificate. No doubt the RAC will decide the results in due course.

Brian Murphy's immaculate E-type won the Modsports event, the final round of the Midland Centre Championship, quite convincingly from Dave Moore's similar red car, Eike Wellhausen's E-type having to retire from second place on lap seven with a broken rotor arm. May Payne's Elan led Moore for a few laps and was still close at the finish, winning its class easily from a host of Spridgets.

It was Brian Rice's turn to win the Camaro class this week, Roger Payne pressing him all the way in the second Radio One race without ever finding a gap. Only 0.2 s separated them at the finish. Derrick Brunt retired from third, unable to select other than first and second gears. Five Capris dominated the £2,299 class. Ivan Dutton's Century Oils car led all the way to clinch the championship class but he had to contend with Marc Smith, Phil Dowsett, Mike Smith and Noel Edmonds. Greatest pressure came from Marc until he was elbowed out at the Esses and dropped to fourth in class behind Dowsett and Edmonds. Mike, after setting a new class record, pitted when the fan belt came off. It was all very close.

It was not to be a fairy-tale ending to a busy day for Lees. After winning at Thruxton he went straight into the lead on the FF final and seemed to be pulling away only to find the engine cutting out and misfiring. He slipped further and further down the lap chart and finally called it a day on lap 11 after falling to ninth. Dirt in the carburettor was the diagnosis. His place was taken by Vermilio in the Merlyn with Blanchet and Dougall in pursuit. A missed gear at Gerards sent Vermilion sideways and almost into Blanchet at one stage, which caused some ill-feeling and a rejected protest from Blanchet afterwards. Vermilio used all his experience to hang on go the lead and won by 0.6s from Blanchet with Dougall 0.8 s further back. Geoff Smailes climbed up to fourth in his Royale RP21 but even more spectacular was the progress of Gray from the back of the grid to fifth ahead of Bright and Orford. However, his two points do not count as he already has 15 better scores so Lees remains just three points ahead. Argenti retired with a down on power engine.

Noel Edmonds, Melvyn Hodgson and Bob Sunders force their way round the hairpin.



ShellSport European Formula 5000 Championship, Round 15
Mallory Park, October 12
50 laps, 67.5 miles

1, Teddy Pilette (5.0 Lola-Morand/Chevrolet T400V8), 35m 27.6s, 114.21 mph;
2, Guy Edwards (5.0 Lola-Fewkes/Chevrolet T332 V8), 35m 52.6s;
3, Alan Jones (3.4 March-Cosworth Ford 751 V6), 35m 53.4s;
4, Bob Evans (5.0 Lola-Whitehurst/Chevrolet T400/T332 V8), 35m 54.4s.
5, David Purley (3.4 Chevron-LEC/Ford B30 V6), 35m 56.8s;
6, Peter Gethin (5.0 Lola-Morand/Chevrolet T400 V8), 35 m 56.8 s;
7, Mike Wilds (5.0 March-Hill/Smith/Chevrolet 74A V8), 49; 9, Damien Magee (5.0 Trojan-Whitehurst/Chevrolet T101 V8), 47; 10, Richard Scott (5.0 Lola-Turner/Smith/Chevrolet T330 V8), 47; 11, Brian Robinson (5.0 McLaren-Close/Morand/Chevrolet M19C V8), 47; 12, Tom Walkinshaw (3.4 March-Racing Services/Ford 752 V6), 44.

Fastest lap: Evans, 41.4s, 117.39 mph **(Equals circuit record).**

Formula Ford 1600, Heat (10 laps): 1, Geoff Lees (Royale-Minister RP21), 8m 45.4s, 92.50 mph; 2, Mike Blanchet (Crossle-Minister 30F), 8m 45.6s; 3, John Bright (Royale-Aldon RP21), 8m 48.4s. **Fastest lap:** Blanchet, 50.8s, 95.67 mph.

Formula Ford 1600, Heat 2 (10laps): 1, Rad Dougall (Royale-Scholar RP21), 8m 43.4s, 92.85 mph; 2, Bernard Vermilio (Merlyn-Scholar Mk 29), 8m 43.8s; 3, Matthew Argenti (Van Diemen-Scholar RF75), 8m 46.4s. **Fastest lap:** Dougall and Vermilio, 51.2s, 94.92 mph.

BBC Radio One Production Saloon Car Championship round up to £1,699 15 laps): 1, Jean-Pierre Aux (2.0 Mazda RX3 Coupe), 15m 13.4s, 79.81 mph; 2, Jock Robertson (2.0 Mazda RX3 Coupe), 15m 13.6s; 3, Eric Cook (2.0 Mazda RX3 Coupe), 15m 33.6s; 4, Roger Bell (2.0 Mazda RX3), 15m 33.8s. **1,300 to £1,699 class:** 1, Kay, 79.81 mph; 2, Robertson; 3, Cook. **Fastest lap:** Aux and Robertson, 1m 0.0s, 81.00 mph **(record). Up to £1,299 class:** 1, Tony Stubbs (1.2 Lada 1200), no speed given; 2, Rodney Posner (1.3 Simca Rallye 1); 3, Tim Dodwell (1.3 Mini-Clubman 1275GT). **Fastest lap:** Stubbs, 1m 4.0s, 75.93 mph **(equals record).**

BRSCC Midland Centre Modified Sports Car Championship round (10 laps): 1, Brian Murphy (4.4 Jaguar E), 9m £1.2s, 89.80 mph; 2, Dave Moore (4.2 Jaguar E), 9m 11.6s; 3, Max Payne (1.6 Lotus Elana), 9m 12.4s; 4, John Wilmshurst (1.3 MG Midget), 9m 37.6s. **Over 3000 cc class:** 1, Murphy, 89.80 mph; 2, Moore; only finishers. **Fastest lap:** Murphy, 52.8s, 92.04 mph. **1151 to 2000 cc class:** 1, Payne, 87.98 mph; 2, Wilmshurst; 3, Geoff Weeks (1.3 MG Midget). **Fastest lap:** Payne, 53.8s, 90.33 mph. **Up to 1150 cc class:** 1, Peter May (1.1 Arkley SS), 78.95 mph; 2, Peter Fontes (1.1 Austin-Healey Sprite); only finishers. **Fastest lap:** May, 59.4s, 81.82 mph.

BBC Radio One Production Saloon Car Championship round over £1,699 (15 laps): 1, Brian Rice (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28), 14m 31.4s, 83.66 mph; 2, Roger Payne (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28), 14m 31.6s; 3, John Brindley (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28), 14m 52.8s; 4, Ivan Dutton (3.0 Ford Capri 3000GT), 15m 11.2s.

Over £2,300 class: 1, Rice, 83.66 mph; 2, Payne; 3, Brindley. **Fastest lap:** Payne, 56.6s, 85.87 mph. **£1700 to £2299 class:** 1, Dutton, 80.00 mph; 2, Phil Dowsett (3.0 Ford Capri 3000GT); 3, Noel Edmonds (3.0 Ford Capri II). **Fastest lap:** Mike Smith (3.0 Ford Capri II), 59.4s, 81.82 mph **(record).**

National Organs Formula Ford 1600 Championship round (15 laps): 1, Bernard Vermilio (Merlyn-Scholar Mk 29), 12m 54.6s, 94.11 mph; 2, Mike Blanchet (Crossle-Minister 30F), 12m 55.2s; 3, Rad Dougall (Royale-Scholar RP21), 12m 56.0s; 4, Geoff Smailes (Royale-Scholar RP21), 13m 2.2s; 5, Kenny Gray (Van Diemen-Scholar RF75), 13m 2.2s; 6, John Bright (Royale-Aldon RP21), 13m 3.2s. Fastest lap: Dougall, 50.2s, 96.81 mph.

Colt Galant based GTO Coupe debut

The Colt Car Company of Swindon, Wilts, sells cars manufactured for them in Japan by Mitsubishi, trimmed and equipped to British requirements. A new version is making its first appearance at Earls Court, a GTO 2-litre coupé, based on the Galant. This retains many of the mechanical components of its predecessor but the body shell is new, with a more sporting appearance. Unlike many sports coupés, this one has rear seats in which adults may travel comfortably over long distances.

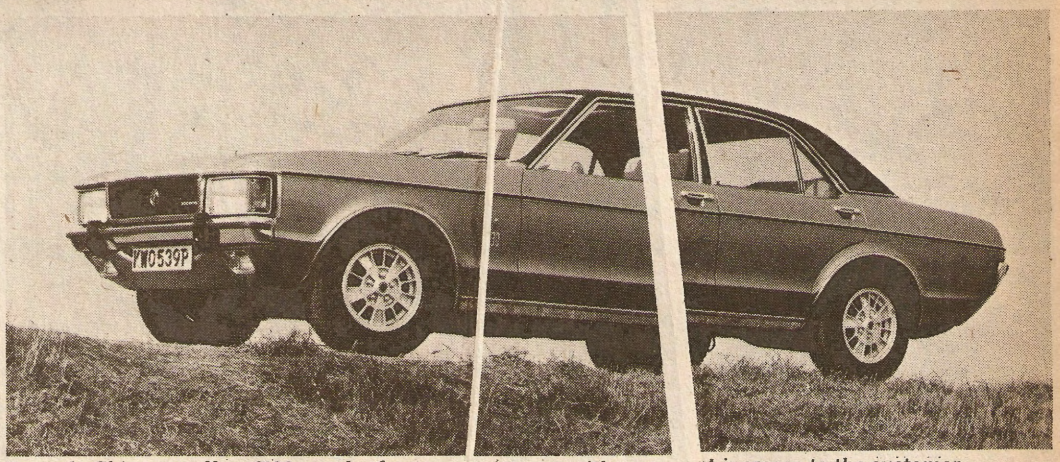
The cast-iron 5-bearing engine has a light-alloy head, upon which is a single camshaft operating inclined valves through rockers and driven by a duplex chain. Carburation is by two twin-choke horizontal Solex instruments. The gearbox is that excellent 5-speed unit on which I have previously heaped praise and there is a live rear axle on semi-elliptic springs. In front there are struts and lower wishbones with an anti-roll bar, and a recirculating ball steering gear is used. The brakes are discs in front with drums behind, the dual-circuit operation being servo-assisted, while the wide wheel rims carry 185/70 HR 13 steel corded radial tyres.

I was able to drive the GTO 2000 both fast and far for a couple of days on the Continent. Once again, I was charmed with the 5-speed gearbox, which I simply cannot fault. The car accelerates well, aided by the quick change, and the maximum speed is around 108 mph on a reasonably accurate speedometer, though I shall time the car both ways over a measured distance when I have it for a full road test. I kept it at its maximum over considerable distances and it seemed happy with such treatment; the direct fourth gear is good for 100 mph. Though not a particularly silent car when pressed, the Colt has an acceptable standard of refinement.

Time was when most Japanese cars suffered from brake fade when driven hard. I treated the Colt brutally, making excessive use of the brakes in mountainous territory, but there was not a sign of fading, while the usual smoke and smell were absent.

The suspension coped very well with continental conditions and I shall be interested to see how it fares later on in truly rural Britain. After a delectable visit to la maison Moët et Chandon at Epernay, I thought it advisable to travel in the back-seat, which was surprisingly comfortable. The car is well-balanced on corners, the response being largely neutral, and it can be really forced through curves at 100 mph or so, without fear of entering the *décor* upon striking unexpected bumps.

For a full appraisal of the new Colt, a complete road test will be carried out as soon as possible, but in the meantime I can say, after a couple of days of hard driving, that it's enjoyable to handle and a useful performer.



Granada Ghia now offers £138 worth of extra equipment with no cost increase to the customer.

SPECIFICATION

Car Described: Colt GTO 2000 2-door 4-seater coupé, price £2995 including car tax and VAT.

Engine: Four-cylinders 84 x 90 mm (1995 cc). 125 bhp SAE at 6200 rpm. Single chain-driven overhead camshaft. Two Solex twin-choke carburetters.

Transmission: Single dry plate clutch. 5-speed synchromesh gearbox with central control, ratios 0.865, 1.0, 1.360, 2.035, and 3.391 to 1. Hypoid rear axle, ratio 3.889 to 1.

Chassis: Steel monocoque. Independent front suspension by spring struts, lower wishbones, and anti-roll bar. Recirculating ball steering gear. Live axle on semi-elliptic springs. Servo-assisted dual-circuit disc/drum brakes. Bolt-on steel wheels, fitted 185/70 HR 13 tyres.

Equipment: 12-volt lighting and starting. Speedometer. Rev-counter. Ammeter. Oil pressure, oil temperature, water temperature and fuel gauges. Clock. Heating, demisting, and ventilation system. 2-speed windscreen wipers and washers. Heated rear window. Adjustable steering column. Flashing direction indicators. Reversing lights.

Dimensions: Wheelbase 7ft 11.3in. Track 4ft 4.8in/4ft 4.2in. Overall length 13ft 6.4in. Width 5ft 5.2in. Weight 1 ton.

Ford's 'VFM' policy: more for the money

Ford have announced similar revisions to all the other models making-up their range. The results of market research has shown that customer preference would be for extra equipment rather than a price cut in making their models a more attractive proposition. Examples include the base-Cortina improved with carpets, cloth seating, brake servo, heated rear screen and cigar lighter. New visual features for many models include the black window surrounds etc first seen on the Escort Popular.

Fuel conscious Kitten

Claimed to be the most economical four-wheeled car — both for fuel saving and long life — the Reliant Kitten is another rust-proof car from Tamworth. It has a really tough, separate steel chassis frame and an Ogle-styled glassfibre body. Of orthodox design, the chassis rides on coil springs and wishbones in front with a live-axle and semi-elliptic springs behind. The steering is by rack and pinion and the hydraulic brakes have drums all round, which are more than adequate for such a light car and much cheaper to maintain than discs.

The 2-door saloon body — an estate version is also available — has an overall length of only 10ft 11in, but by using cleverly-designed footwells on each side of the engine, an acceptable amount of space for four adults is provided. The engine is Reliant's well-known light-alloy four-cylinder unit, stretched from 748 to 848 cc by adding about 8mm to the stroke, which is still quite short, however. The gearbox is also Reliant's own and the Mini-sized wheels are obtainable in light alloy at a small extra charge. The price is £1,499, or for another £75 you can have the estate body style.

I found that the perky-looking little car was surprisingly easy to enter and the tiny, racing-type steering wheel was handy. The steering is very high-geared but pleasantly light and the turning circle of only 24ft makes parking simple.

With a weight of just under 10 cwt and 40 bhp to propel it, the Kitten is an unusually lively small car, easily out-accelerating such playmates as the Mini and the Renault 4. The gearchange is quick and easy to use, while the powerful brakes cope effectively with the moderate weight.

The car feels high-geared, cruising easily at 60 or 70 mph with no sensation of haste. It is deliberately over-geared in the interest of petrol economy, and long life, which is more sensible than gearing for maximum performance alone. The engine is not at all noisy during normal use and the gearbox is much quieter than earlier Reliant boxes. There is some wind noise and a slight boom period can be detected, but the standard of refinement is up to modern small-car practice, except for rather primitive ventilation.

Cornering in the Kitten is fast and fun, with little roll, moderate understeer, and a rear end that sticks down surprisingly well over bumps. The car gives quite a flat ride on the better roads, but it's definitely choppy over inferior surfaces. This hard-ride would probably be less noticeable if the seats were all occupied or luggage was carried, but I had no passengers on my test run.

The Reliant Kitten is such fun to drive that I have applied for one for a full road test — usually I let the manufacturer do the asking! Above all, I want to check its fuel consumption over a useful mileage, for that's what small-car motoring is all about.

Kitten saloon with lift-up tailgate.



SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA

Car described: Reliant Kitten 2-door saloon, price £1,499 (Estate £1,574) including car tax and VAT.

Engine: Four-cylinders 62.5 x 69.09mm (848cc). Compression ratio 9.5 to 1. 40 bhp at 5500rpm. Pushrod-operated overhead valves. SU carburetter.

Transmission: Single dry plate clutch. 4-speed synchromesh gearbox with central change, ratios 1.0, 1:319, 2.046, and 3.876 to 1. Spiral bevel rear axle, ratio 3.23 to 1.

Chassis: Steel box-section frame with chanel-section cross-members. Independent front suspension by wishbones, coil springs and anti-roll bar. Rack and pinion steering. Live rear axle on progressive-rate semi-elliptic springs. Telescopic dampers all round. Hydraulic drum brakes. Bolt-on wheels fitted 145 x 10 radial ply tyres.

Equipment: Speedometer. Temperature and fuel gauges. 12-volt lighting and starting. Heating, demisting, and ventilation system. Windscreen wipers and washers. Flashing direction indicators.

Dimensions: Wheelbase 7ft 0½in. Track 4ft 1in. Overall length 10ft 11¾in. Width 4ft 8in. Weight 9cwt 106lbs.

Performance: Maximum speed "around 80 mph." Standing quarter-mile 21.3s. Acceleration: 0-30 mph 4.9s, 0-40 mph 8.3s. 0-50 mph 12.3s (manufacturer's figures).

Fuel consumption: 60 mpg at 50 mph, 70 mpg at 40 mph (manufacturer's figures).

Fastback Lotus Eclat

In addition to the mid-engined Lotus Esprit, which was unveiled at the Paris Salon, another new Lotus is announced. This is the Eclat, a front-Engined car based on the Elite but with a more sweeping tail treatment and considerably less passenger space in the back. In other respects, the Eclat follows the design of the 4-seater car, with which we are already familiar, the power unit being the well-known 4-cylinder 16-valve light-alloy motor which is common to the whole Lotus range. A 4-speed or 5-speed gearbox may be specified, the backbone chassis and independent 4-wheel suspension being similar to those of the Elite.

The claimed maximum speed of the Eclat is 131 mph and the acceleration: 0-60 mph 7.9s, 0-100 mph 22s. The makers suggest an average fuel consumption of 28 mpg. A new luxury Lotus, the Elite 504, is also announced, this being the first standard production car of this make with automatic transmission.

Purely personal



"CB asked me why I didn't go over to Ireland for the Bushwhacker Rally, and share my car with him? Did he think I was quite mad? So, after five seconds deliberation, I accepted . . ."

JAN CHURCHILL

Twenty-four-year-old Jan Churchill is now a committed rally driver. When he left school, Jan went to work for Lawrencetune (the Morgan specialists) as a mechanic; and from there to Tony Hennin's AutoExtra (BMW) concern in London. Jan began competing in Hennin's G2 2002 Tii on British nationals where some good results were scored before he left to set up his own business. Recently Jan decided that if he did not manage a real 'go' at rallying, he would regret it for the rest of his days: so the garage (and nearly his house as well) were sold to pay for the running of an ex-Marek Gierowski 2.8-litre Porsche Carrera.

When it was mooted that I write an AUTOSPORT purely personal column, I asked if I had to moan about something, or could I just rabbit on about nothing in particular? "Woffle away all you want" Peter Newton said, so as I haven't got anything much to moan about, here goes. Well, when I said haven't got anything to moan about, perhaps it would be more accurate to say that I've got a fair bit to smile about, and not much to moan about. First the good news. . . .

Taking the plunge

Having taken the bull by the horns, or the bank manager by the ears, and decided to have a go at this rallying lark in a serious manner, I got off to a rather fraught start. The Porsche I bought from your own, your very own, Marek Gierowski, turned out to be a bit of a nail. After two very expensive rallies, the Tavern and the Welsh, it became obvious, even to a blind man, that the car needed a bit of sorting. So I set about this with limited finance, no knowledge of Porsches and not much time before going to Ypres. However, despite these draw backs the car didn't give any trouble, other than the gear linkage slipping and leaving me with only third gear for 30 kilometres competitive driving.

What a fabulous "rally" that event is. It's more akin to a road race with competitiors started at minute intervals, almost non-stop for 12 hours, twice! Peter Valentine said he'd never read so many notes in his rallying career, and that's saying something, when you consider he did the Gordon Bennett Trophy with S. F. Edge!!

The plot thickens

While in Ypres, I spent several hours chatting to the "King of Tarmac," Cahal Curley, and listening to his stories of full speed practice in a hired Peugeot 504, and how if the Stratos didn't show up they were going to swop it for the injection model and do the rally in that. During these natters in the hotel bar, CB asked me why I didn't go over to Ireland for the Bushwhacker Rally, and share my car with him? Did he think I was quite mad? So, after five seconds deliberation, I accepted, as the offer of being driven by the "king" was too good to turn down, especially when he'd agreed to pay all expenses once I'd arrived in the province.

So I arrived as arranged at nine o'clock on the Wednesday morning prior to the rally, all set to arrange service, for him to try the car and, generally get everything sorted. Several cups of coffee, and chats to Sammy Hammill later the man arrived, at one o'clock. "Hello kid, you're welcome to 'Derry. What about lunch?" Just what I needed. Off to lunch in the fabulous three litre Carrera. "Listen kid, I don't think this arrangement of sharing the driving is going to work, as we're both drivers, so I've got a plan" . . . :

So the new plan was for CB to sit with Phil Coulter, a big buddy of Cahal's, in the latter's newly acquired Carrera, and for Drexel Gillespie to sit with me. Cahal was really very generous to me, and I am most grateful to him. He provided service for me, paid the entry fee, and kept us all laughing with his stories of encouraging Phil by shouting at the top of his voice before every crest "Flat, flat, it's flat f.....k ye!!"

I got on extremely well with Drexel, and we had a great rally running at number one which was nice on a brand new rally, and ending up fourth behind Ronnie, Dessie and Adrian Boyd, despite the throttle pedal coming off six times, necessitating six stops to fix the "thing" back on again. So my appetite was whetted for Irish tarmac, and I decided to have a crack at the Galway International Hotel Rally, two weeks later.

I've never had so many disasters in one week and come out of it all with an outright win! It started with the wheels coming off the roof rack of the Porsche on the way up to Liverpool, not a pleasant experience, and a slight altercation with the gendarmery over that, with my 'unsafe load' being the culprit. Next disaster was Drexel being delayed in Belfast by three hours making us rather late for scrutineering which was a mere three hours and 250 miles away. So I set off along the M2 out of Belfast at a steady 120, only to be stopped by a plain clothes police car "sure ye must a bin dooin a hondred and forty miles an har."

Fortunately the rally itself went without a hitch until the last test when the engine went onto five cylinders, and when we stopped at the control it was clanking ominously, so we crept into the finish, having won, but with very long faces. The the drama of getting the car back home. Suffice it to say that it took 72 hours of pure hell, and many pounds to get it back.

Theatrical agents?

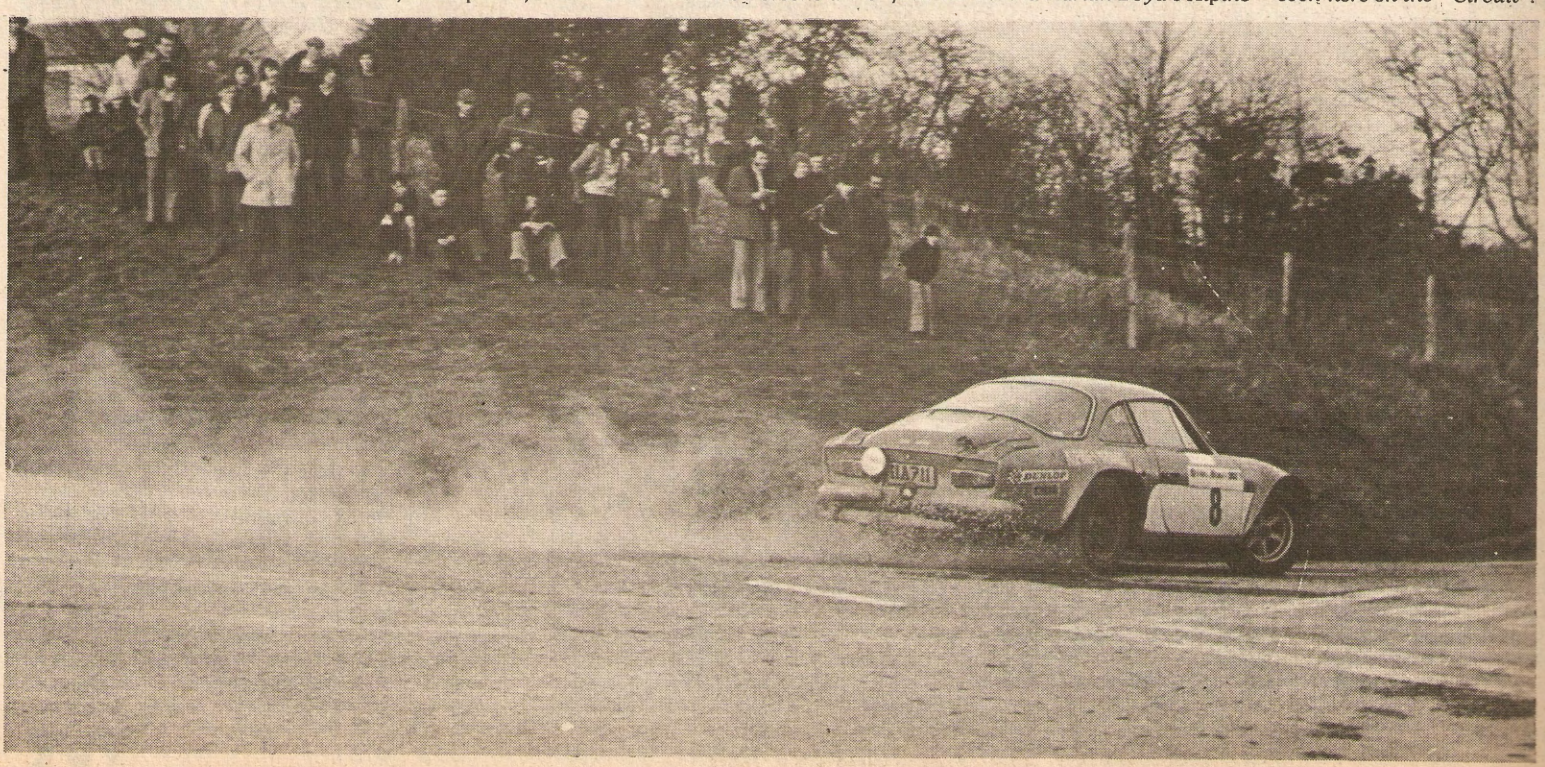
Now the bad news. I've got a very sick engine, and no money to make it better, and not a lot of prospect of getting the sort of sponsor that I need to continue next year. My aim is to do the European Drivers Championship, but that isn't exactly the cheapest series to tackle. So how to get the sort of sponsor necessary to continue?

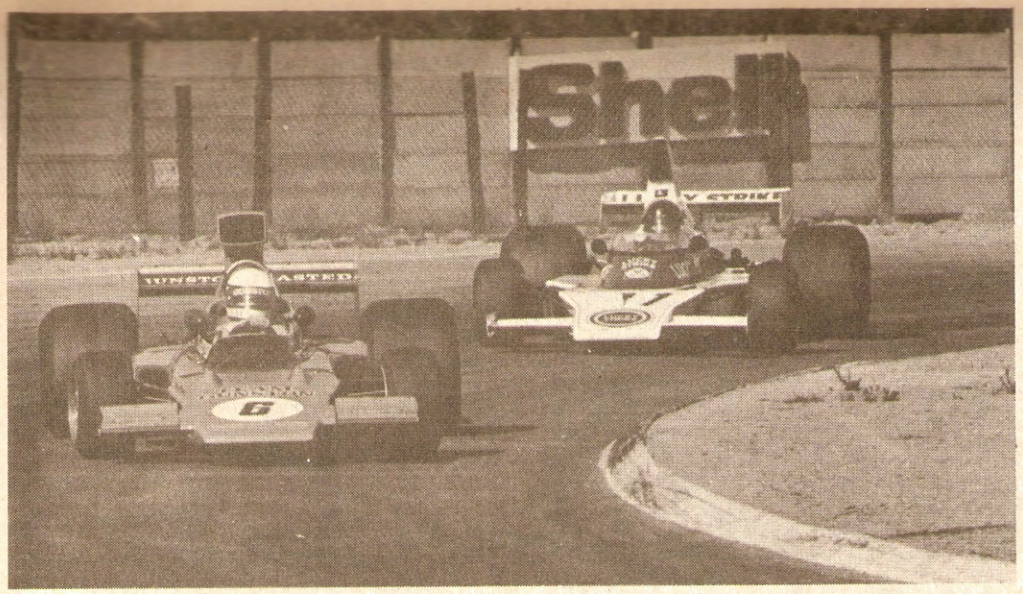
Like most drivers I have an engineering background, and as such am not in touch with the big business types who are likely to be able to sponsor me. So I have to try and tackle them on an impersonal basis and try to convince them that their "N" thousand pounds are going to be better spent if they give them to me, rather than to an advertising company. Not a job which an engineer is very well equipped to do.

Isn't there an opening for an enterprising young man with the right background and knowledge to start a service for rally drivers to assist them in their search for sponsors? Theatrical agents have been making a fortune for years by selling their clients talents in the right place, so why not the same for rally drivers? I for one would be willing to hand over a percentage of any money got for me by an agent, and it would surely re-assure sponsors to feel that they were dealing with a professional agent, in whose interests it would be to see that the recipient of the sponsorship upheld his side of the bargain.

Our sport is out of necessity becoming big business, but the people at the bottom of the ladder are finding it more and more difficult to climb up because of the lack of commercial interest. If we are going to breed top drivers in this country, we must have not only the enthusiasm, of which we have plenty, but also the "bread." What about the IRDC putting its corporate knowledge to work and trying to set up a full-time agency for its members to try and inject some much needed cash into the sport? . . . So I did find something to moan about after all!!

A crack at the Bushwhacker resulted in fourth place for Jan Churchill. The Porsche driver finished behind Adrian Boyd's Alpine – seen here on the "Circuit".





Tunmer's handling of the Lotus impressed – holding off Charlton, until chronic understeer intervened.

KYALAMI

Scheckter's fruitless effort . . .

The final Kyalami round of the nine race South African F1 series was to be the championship decider. Although Ian Scheckter had dominated the championship he had failed to finish in two of the rounds and thus went into the last round with 53 points to the 60 of Dave Charlton who had finished all the rounds although he was excluded from the results at Welkom for an infringement of the refuelling regulations. Scheckter had five wins to his credit plus a fifth place, he had failed to finish the other two events. Charlton had won two of the races and had scored five second places. This meant that Charlton only had to finish fourth to gain enough points to be unbeatable in the championship. Scheckter had to win and hope that Charlton did not get his fourth place.

This was to be the last race under the current Formula and it was hoped that even although the points situation was not conducive to a close race we would nevertheless have one. This was not to be, it in fact turned out to be one of the dullest races of the year with Scheckter disappearing into the distance. Charlton was second and so took the title. One high point of the race was the appearance of two new sponsors, namely Kenitex and Echlin. This augers well for the new year and the change to Formula Atlantic.

ENTRY AND PRACTICE

With this being the last race in South Africa under the current formula there was very little change in the cars from their previous appearance in Pietermaritzburg at the beginning of September.

Lucky Strike Racing had their ultra reliable McLaren M23 for Dave Charlton, the car being exactly as raced at Pietermaritzburg. In addition Charlton had brought out his March 721 from under covers and prepared this as a standby in case anything should go wrong with the McLaren at the last minute. Nothing did and he was happy to be second quickest at 1m 18.62s.

The Lexington Racing Tyrrell sported new paintwork this being brought about by Scheckter's excursion at Pietermaritzburg. The reason for Scheckter's retirement at Maritzburg had been a broken drive shaft, a problem which the Elf Tyrrells had also encountered and had overcome by minor modification to the profile to relieve the inbuilt stresses in the component. These modified shafts were now fitted to the car which was otherwise unaltered. Knowing he had to win Scheckter set the pace throughout and took pole at 1m 17.27s, after doing an unofficial 1m 16.4s.

Team Gunston had their two regular Lotus 72s for Eddie Keizan and Guy Tunmer. Handling problems restricted them to 1m 18.85s and 1m 19.25s respectively. Team Domingo had decided to alter their driver lineup by hiring out their Surtees TS9 to Len Booysen, who turned in a respectable 1m 21.05s. Mike Domingo retained his regular Brabham BT33 and did 1m 22.79s. The entry of Booysen into Formula One also saw the entry of a new sponsor, Kenitex, the wall coating specialists. It is possible that they will become involved with Booysen in Formula Atlantic next year.

The Formula Two section of the field was made up of four cars. The Lexington Racing Chevron of Roy Klomfass powered by a 1930 cc FVC motor heading the list on 1m 21.64s; the team's bigger Cosworth motor had been completely destroyed at Pietermaritzburg. Tony Martin had his regular Chevron with Hart BDA power and did 1m 26.09s, whilst Gary Ainscough had managed to raise a much welcomed injection of finance in the form of sponsorship from Echlin, the parts people, for his Lotus 69 (1m 26.57s). Also under the Formula Two list was André Verwey's March Formula Atlantic car having its first outing at Kyalami. This car started life as a March 722 but has been uprated to March 74B specification complete with the latest bodywork. The wider Formula Two tyres were being used on the car for this event and it did 1m 28.53s.

Only two cars were entered in the F5000 category, these being the McLaren M10B of Nolly Limberis (1m 29.85s) and the Surtees TS8 of Dave Hart (1m 29.56s).

RACE

It had been hoped that this the last race to be held in South Africa under the current Formula would provide the spectators with something to remember the good aspects of the formula. It did, however, only leave a lasting impression of disappointment. The championship was at stake and with a large portion of the field a quality one it should have been a good race such as we had seen on occasion through the year. It did, however, turn to nothing the moment the flag dropped and Ian Scheckter disappeared into the distance leaving everyone floundering in his wake.

The first retirement came on the dummy grid as the cars moved up to the grip proper; Eddie Keizan, surely the unluckiest man around this year, had a drive shaft break as he moved up to start the race. Team mate Tunmer was more fortunate, he managed to slot himself in front of Charlton a position which he held for six laps until understeer caused by unmatched front tyres got the better of him and he was forced to drop back (a front tyre had been punctured on the warm up lap and no matching replacement was available). Surprising everyone was Len Booysen in the Domingo Surtees, he had got himself into fourth place and seemed to be pulling away from Mike Domingo in the Brabham. The handling of the Surtees was diabolical but Booysen persevered and tried to adapt his style of driving to the extreme understeer which was troubling him. He found that by applying loads of power he could get rid of the understeer but the car then became a real handful with loads of oversteer making its presence felt.

With eight of the 32 laps gone Scheckter had a lead of 8.5s on Charlton who had in turn pulled out 2s on Tunmer. Behind followed Booysen, Klomfass, Mike Domingo, Limberis, Ainscough, Hart and Verwey. Tony Martin had fallen out with a blown motor several laps earlier. With the field well and truly spread out there seemed little chance of excitement in the race.

Verway retired on lap 17 after puncturing a wheel at Crowthorne and it had become noticeable that the gap between second placed Charlton and first placed Scheckter had begun to close, it was now down to 6s but that was as close as the two would get, Scheckter started to pour it on again and seemed able to control the gap at will.

Lap 26 saw Mike Domingo have a big moment at Clubhouse when he missed a gear and went very wide just managing to avoid the catch fencing. Two laps later saw the crowd gasping. Charlton had had a heart stopping moment when he had tried to pass a struggling Booysen and had locked up everything, Charlton was fortunate enough to catch it in time and the only adverse effect was the loss of a couple of seconds, which did not alter the result as there was no way that he was going to catch Scheckter.

And so it was Charlton who took the 1975 South African drivers' championship, his sixth championship in as many years.

ALLAN TRIM

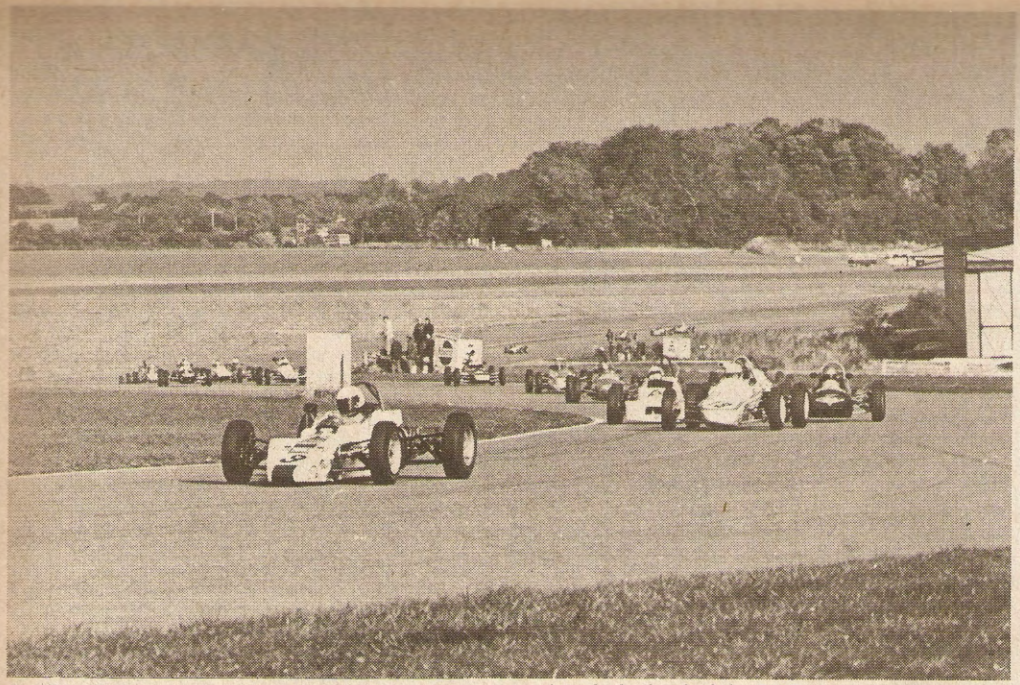
Rand Spring Trophy
South African F1 championship round 9
Kyalami, 32 laps

1, Ian Scheckter (3.0 Tyrrell-Cosworth Ford DFV 007), 42m 7.6s.
2, Dave Charlton (3.0 McLaren-Cosworth Ford DFV M23), 42m 17.0s.
3, Guy Tunmer (3.0 Lotus-Cosworth Ford DFV 72E), 42m 40.0s.
4, Len Booysen (3.0 Surtees-Cosworth Ford DFV TS93), 31 laps.
5, Roy Klomfass (1.9 Chevron-FVC B25), 31 laps.
6, Noilly Limberis (5.0 McLaren-Chevrolet M10B), 31 laps.

Final championship places: 1, Charlton, 68 points; 2, Scheckter 63; 3, Tony Marton (2.0 Chevron-Hart B25), 50.

A look of disappointment says it all for the unlucky six-wins in nine events Scheckter.





Geoff Lees was in a determined mood in the FF race and took the lead of the BAF championship.

THRUXTON

Lees takes BAF FF lead

A bright autumn day and eight action packed races were the ingredients for last Sunday's BARC Thruxton meeting. Geoff Lees helicoptered in to take a three point lead in the BAF Formula Ford Championship after leading the race from start to finish in his Rob Roy Racing with D. J. Bond Royale RP21. The Southern Organs Formula Atlantic qualifier was again won by Gunnar Nilsson who powered Ted Moore's Rapid Movements Chevron B29 round in impressive style despite an oil leak which forced Ted Wentz to drop back in the Wella Lola T362. However, the American's second place was enough to give him the Championship. Seven class records were broken — of particular note were those in the 1-litre Special Saloon car thriller which saw Jeff Ward beat Brian Prebble and Pat Mannion while Richard Jenvey put on another first class performance to beat John Cooper's Porsche in the Modsports race.

The first Simoniz Special Saloon car race catered for cars up to 1-litre and what a cracker of a race it turned out to be. Despite losing his clutch early on Jeff Ward led in his Epic Accessories lightweight Imp from the similar Chrysler products of Pat Mannion, Brian Prebble and Andy Holloway. Holloway dropped back soon to retire with a blown egine while Mannion harried Ward. The two came into the chicane side by side on lap three but Mannion was held up on the exit as Ward made a clutchless gear change. Prebble slipped past Mannion and tagged on to Ward who, with Prebble, established a new class record. Mannion could not get back into the dice and he settled for third ahead of a hairy dice between the leading 850 cars which ended with Roger Saunders and Alan Curnow colliding as they came into Club for the last time. Reg Ward was also forced to spin whilst Roger Gill stamped on his brakes and came through the melée to take fourth from Ward.

The second Simoniz race was not quite so thrilling. Nick Whiting spun away his lead at Village on lap two but it took only another four laps for the *Kent Messenger* Escort to wrest the lead from Tony Hazelwood's Jaguar XJ8 which was handling much better after the addition of a front spoiler. Tony Sugden's Brook Hire 1.8 Ford Escort just had a bit too much power for Graham Goode's 1.3 version, but the Autocare driver demolished Richard Longman's and John Buncombe's long standing record as he strived to pass Sugden. Pete Baldwin's Mini-Ford just does not go well round Thruxton and he finished a quiet fifth ahead of Brian Thackeray's Escort and Phil Winter's Mini which lost it's exhaust and had a troublesome diff. With David Enderby's Pole Position Mini retiring with a broken fan belt in the first race, Whiting now leads the Championship.

The strange mixture of Monoposto cars and Super Vees worked very well with John Morrison's Supernova leading all the way even though he had Woody Harris' Genie as a constant companion. Harris had made a terrific start to catch Morrison but any last lap bid was foiled as the American tripped over a backmarker at Club on the penultimate lap. Both Morrison and Harris spurred each other on to new class records such was the pace of the race. Barry Hopwood's Royale spun away third in front of the pack at Club on lap five. This allowed Mark Litchfield's Elden to extend a gap while Alan Baillie's Viking held off a swarm of Super Vees comprising Bruce Venn (Elden), Barry Hopwood, and Mike Young (Wallspan Modus), the latter being badly held up by Hopwood's spin.

John Pearson's spin on the warm up lap was a forewarning that his VRM Jaguar XK120 was not handling properly after practice when John found the engine leaking oil quite badly. Nevertheless he wrested the lead from John Cooper's Porsche in a particularly brave outbraking manoeuvre at Club on the outside line. Cooper retook the lead on lap three as Pearson dropped behind first Richard Jenvey and then John Evans. Evans' challenge ended with a trip up the chicane escape road on lap four while Jenvey's similar Elan chased the Porsche and got by round the back of the circuit. Cooper locked a front brake on the next lap as he strived to close the gap to the record breaking Elan. There was still two seconds in it at the finish with Jenvey increasing his Miller Organs Championship lead because Simon Packford's Davrian beat Ian Hall's MiniJem in the small class. Evans finished a chastened third with Pearson a long way back in fourth and then came Simon Packford and Ian Hall.

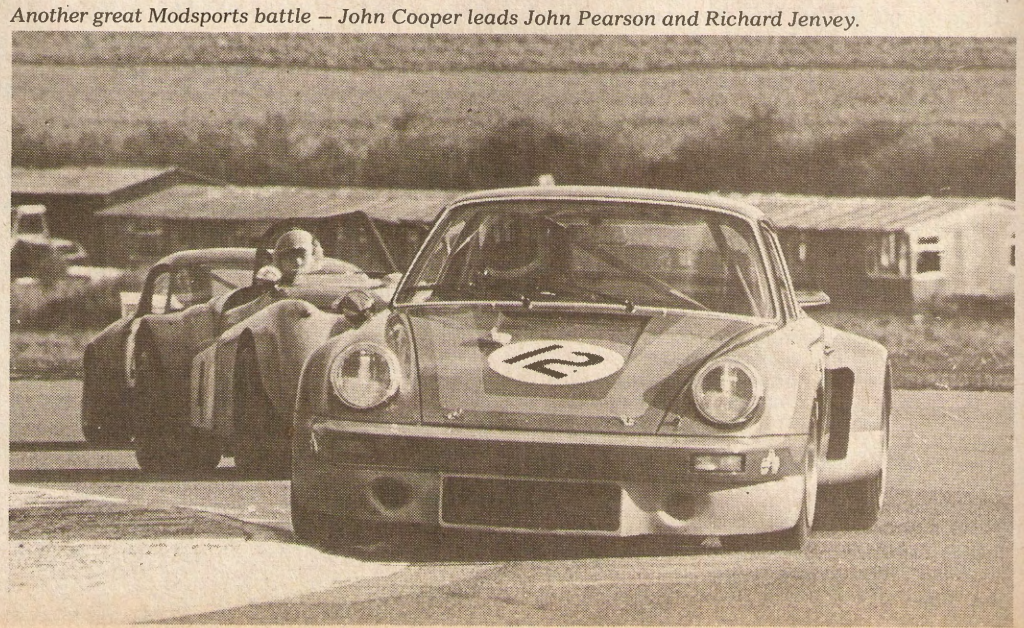
Geoff Lees totally dominated this BAF Formula Ford round while behind him some rank bad driving left some very battered cars round the circuit. Rod Bremner's Crossle came second after Frank Bayes' Image got away from him as he tried to outbrake the Canadian into Club for the last time. Bayes hit Derek Warwick's already damaged Hawke hard at the chicane entrance and stepped onto the bank to join a doleful Warwick. Rick Morris' Hawke steamed over the line third, his radiator having a hole punched in it with Lou de Marco's similar car not far behind in fourth. There was a small gap before Richard Wills' MRE who was closely followed by Neil Israel's Hawke.

Despite slowing over the last few laps as his Jaguar's water started to boil over, Dave Preece won this last Oldham and Crowther round while John Chatham's lovely 3.0 Healey waited a short distance behind. With Ian Moss' Aston Martin DB4 being blackflagged for spilling petrol, Reg Woodcock's TR3 took a lonely third place in front of a mammoth dice which ended on the last lap with Simon Phillips' Frazer Nash Le Mans jumping to the head of the queue with John May's XK120 and Alan Ede's TR2 chasing him over the line. Bruce Brown's Elva Courier Mk1 lost a lot of ground on the last lap as he grappled with no throttle return spring but he managed to keep ahead of Mike Gue's Elite which lost second gear, and thus took second place in class C in the Championship behind Bruce Brown.

Gunnar Nilsson was on pole for the Southern Organs Formula Atlantic race after recording an energetic 1m 12.6s, .2s faster than Ted Wentz in the new Wella Lola T362. Gunnar had two punctures in the first session but showed his real class in the second as he led a top class field on a slippery track. Behind Wentz was Brian Henton in Tom Wheatcroft's car with a Derek Cook engine once more. Henton had been fastest in the first session but suffered in the second with a punctured float in the carburettor and oil leaking onto the inboard rear discs from a broken engine seal. Brett Riley, John Nicholson, and Nick May all recorded 1m 14.6s while another close dice was promised with Richard Morgan, Derek Cook, and Bob Muir being bracketed on 1m 15.4s.

Although Gunnar Nilsson made a good start Ted Wentz matched it and the Formula's top two drivers sped out of Allard side by side. Nilsson was first into Campbell and that was that as far as the lead was concerned for although the Swede's Swindon engine was blowing out oil all round the circuit, making life very difficult for the others, it stayed together as Nilsson powered to a new lap record of 115.87 mph. A spectating Robin Herd must have been pleased with another faultless display from Nilsson. Wentz dropped back secure in the knowledge that he was Southern Organs Champion as the leading Chevron's oil covered his Lola. Brian Henton, who had been fourth behind Nick May's Lola, arrived at Club on the third lap with no rear brakes. The Wheatcroft knocked two wheels off on the armco as Henton took the

Another great Modsports battle — John Cooper leads John Pearson and Richard Jenvey.



escape road and carried on at unabated speed through the catch fencing finally stopping the other side of the chicane badly damaged but thankfully with Henton intact.

Nick May's good start had kept him in front of John Nicholson's Modus and Brett Riley's Chevron. Unfortunately the Lola went straight on exiting the chicane on lap nine and a surprised Nicholson spun in sympathy. This left the talented Riley with a secure third. Nicholson's climb back through the field was impressive as he chased Bob Muir's Birrana closer to Richard Morgan's Chevron. Having passed Muir, Nicholson latched onto Morgan who lost ground at the start having missed second gear and was suffering excessive oversteer. A slight mistake at Church on the last lap allowed the Pinch Plant Modus to tow past Morgan before Club.

The consolation Formula Ford race became the property of Garret Conklin's Hawke after pulling away from John Scannell's Merlyn and Tony Broster's Dulon which was plagued with carburettor problems in practice and thus missed qualifying for the BAF race. Scannell kept ahead of a subdued Broster with Ed Bunker just out of challenging distance in fourth.

COLIN MASTERMAN

Simoniz Special Saloon car championship up to 1000 cc (8 laps): Overall and 851 to 1000 cc: 1, Jeff Ward (1.0 Hillman Imp), 12m 22.6s, 91.37 mph; 2, Brian Prebble (1.0 Hillman Imp), 12m 24.2s; 3, Pat Mannion (1.0 Hillman Imp), 12m 26.8s; 4, Roger Gill (850 Hillman Imp), 13m 11.6s. **Fastest lap:** Prebble and Ward, 1m 31.4s, 92.80 mph **(record). Up to 850 cc:** 1, Roger Gill, 85.72 mph; 2, Reg Ward (Mini); 3, Clifford Watts (Hillman Imp). **Fastest lap:** Gill, 1m 36.4s, 87.98 mph **(record).**

Varley Batteries Monoposto championship and Volkswagen Silver Cup Formula Super Vee championship (8 laps): 1, John Morrison (Supernova Heidegger SS75), 10m 52.8s, 103.94 mph; 2, Woody Harris (Genie Mk13), 10m 54.0s; 3, Mark Litchfield (Elden PRH 14), 11m 09.0s; 4, Alan Baillie (Viking 1A), 11m 11.2s. **Fastest lap:** Harris, 1m 20.2s, 105.76 mph **(Monoposto record). Monopostos:** 1, Woody Harris, 103.75 mph; 2, Alan Baillie; 3, Nigel Howard-Jones (RTW 74/75M). **Super Vees:** 1, John Morrison; 2, Mark Litchfield; 3, Bruce Venn (Elden PRH14 Heidegger). **Fastest lap:** Morrison, 1m 20.4s, 105.49 mph **(record).**

Miller Organs Modified Sports car championship (8 laps): 1, Richard Jenvey (1.6 Lotus Elan), 11m 44.0s, 96.38 mph; 2, John Cooper (2.8 Porsche 911), 11m 45.8s; 3, John Evans (2.0 Lotus Elan), 12m 03.4s; 4, John Pearson (3.8 Jaguar XK120), 12m 27.6s. **Over 3000 cc:** 1, John Pearson, 90.76 mph; 2, Robin Gray (3.5 Morgan Plus 8); 3, Simon Watney (3.8 Jaguar E Type). **Fastest lap:** Pearson, 1m 27.4s, 97.04 mph. **2001 to 3000 cc:** 1, John Cooper, 96.14 mph only starter. **Fastest lap:** Cooper, 1m 26.6s, 97.94 mph **(record). 1151 to 2000 cc:** 1, Richard Jenvey; 2, John Evans; 3, Chris Cook (1.8 Morgan). **Fastest lap:** Jenvey, 1m 26.2s, 98.39 mph **(record). Up to 1150 cc:** 1, Simon Packford (1.0 Davrian Mk7), 12m 35.0s, 89.87 mph; 2, Ian Hall (1.1 Mini Jem); 3, Andy Bailey (1.1 Austin Healey Sprite). **Fastest lap:** Packford, 1m 32.2s, 91.99 mph.

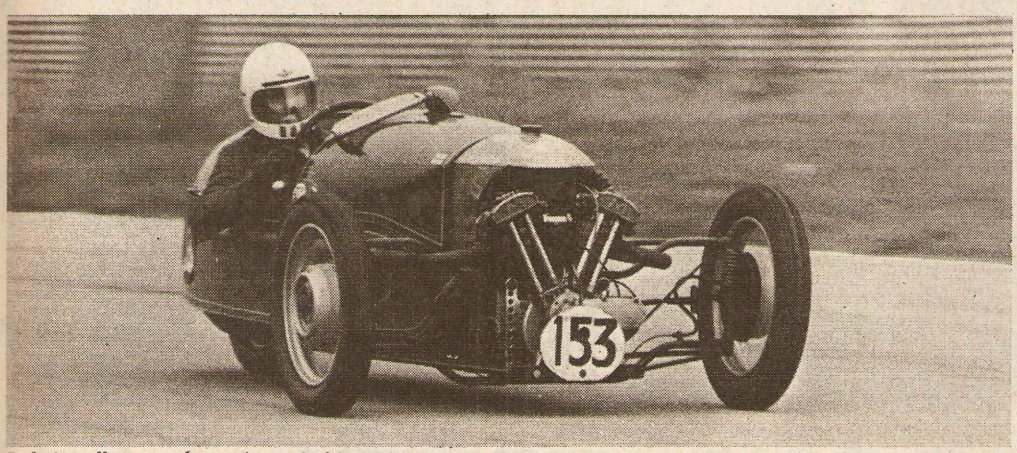
British Air Ferries Formula Ford Championship (8 laps): 1, Geoff Lees (Royale RP21 Minister), 11m 46.6s, 96.03 mph; 2, Rod Bremner (Crossle 25F Rowland), 12m 01.2s; 3, Rick Morris (Hawke DL12 Scholar), 12m 03.2s; 4, Lou De Marco (Hawke DL12 Holbay), 12m 04.0s; 5, Richard Wills (MRE 75F Osella), 12m 05.2s; 6, Neil Israel (Hawke DL11 Scholar), 12m 05.8s. **Fastest lap:** Lees, 1m 27.2s, 97.27 mph.

Oldham and Crowther Thoroughbred Sports Car Championship (8 laps): 1, David Preece (3.8 Jaguar XK120), 13m 13.0s, 85.56 mph; 2, John Chatham (3.0 Austin Healey) 13m 13.2s; Reg Woodcock (2.2 Triumph TR3), 13m 43.6s; 4, Simon Phillips (2.0 Frazer Nash Le Mans), 13m 52.4s. **Over 2701 cc:** 1, David Preece; 2, John Chatham; 3, John May (3.8 Jaguar XK120). **Fastest lap:** Preece, 1m 37.0s, 87.44 mph. **1651 to 2700 cc:** 1, Reg Woodcock, 82.39 mph; 2, Simon Phillips; 3, Alan Ede (2.2 Triumph TR2). **Fastest lap:** Phillips, 1m 40.6s, 84.31 mph. **Up to 1650 cc:** 1, J. Bruce Brown (1.6 Elva Courier Mk1), 13m 54.2s, 81.34 mph; 2, Michael Gue (1.2 Lotus Elite); 3, Jeremy Trace (1.6 Elva Courier Mk1). **Fastest lap:** Gue, 1m 42.2s, 82.99 mph.

Southern Organs Formula Atlantic Championship (15 laps): 1, Gunnar Nilsson (Chevron B29 Swindon), 18m 34.8s, 114.12 mph; 2, Ted Wentz (Lola T362P Swimdon), 18m 51.6s; 3, Brett Riley (Chevron B29 Nicholson), 19m 08.8s; 4, John Nicholson (Modus M1 Nicholson), 19m 10.8s; 5, Richard Morgan (Chevron B29 Swindon), 19m 11.0s; 6, Bob Muir (Birrana 273 Swindon), 19m 19.8s. **Fastest lap:** Nilsson, 1m 13.2s, 115.87 mph **(record).**

Simoniz Special Saloon Car Championship (8 laps): 1, Nick Whiting (1.9 Ford Escort), 11m 53.0s, 95.17 mph; 2, Tony Hazelwood (7.0 Jaguar XJ8), 11m 55.0s; 3, Tony Sugden (1.8 Ford Escort), 12m 02.8s; 4, Graham Goode (1.3 Ford Escort), 12m 04.6s. **Over 1300 cc:** 1, Nick Whiting; 2, Tony Hazelwood; 3, Tony Sugden. **Fastest lap:** Whiting, 1m 25.6s, 99.08 mph. **1001 to 1300 cc:** 1, Graham Goode, 93.64 mph; 2, Pete Baldwin (1.3 Mini Ford); 3, Phil Winter (1.3 Longman Mini). **Fastest lap:** Goode, 1m 28.0s, 96.38 mph **(record).**

Non Championship Formula Ford Race (7 laps): 1, Garrett Conklin (Hawke DL12 Minister), 11m 09.4s, 88.69 mph; 2, John Scannell (Merlyn Mk11A Piper), 11m 11.0s; 3, Tony Broster (Dulon MP17 Newbridge), 11m 11.8s; 4, Ed Bunker (Royale RP16A Holbay), 11m 12.6s. **Fastest lap:** Broster, Conklin, and Scannell, 1m 33.0s, 91.20 mph.



Bob Angell was a class winner in his Morgan 3-wheeler.

CROFT

Shunts spoil season closer

The last Croft race meeting of 1975 took place on Sunday with the BRSCC once again in the role of organisers. Unfortunately the day was marred by a couple of incidents, one on the track and one off which interfered somewhat with the smooth running and led to the meeting ending rather later than planned.

The Tate Trophy race for Formula Fords started the programme and there was no lack of entries so a full grid lined up; first away being the Crossle of Kelvin Hesketh. He was chased for the first eight laps by Peter Harrington (Lotus 69) until a spin at the end of Railway Straight allowed the Lotus driver through into an ever increasing lead. Behind the leaders a constantly changing gaggle of cars fought a close struggle which lasted for the duration of the race. At the head of this group in second place on the thirteenth lap was the Crossle of Bruce MacMichael, who appeared all set to come home in this position, but an unusual entry from the Chicane saw the Crossle hit the sleepers very hard. The ensuing damage meant that Bruce had to be cut from the wreckage and whisked off to hospital with a suspected broken ankle and heavy bruising. Even when the flag fell the drama was not all over as Harrington had practiced out of session and was therefore not placed in the results. The win was thus given to Mick Starkey (Merlyn Scholar) who had been a front runner throughout in the fight behind the leaders.

Next on the programme was a Prodsports and Modsports event which, of course, started late due to the accident in the previous race, in fact it nearly did not start at all because the track was blocked by the TVR of Colin Blower, who had been pulled off the grid by a scrutineer (see *Sports Extra*).

When the race did start the misfiring Europa of Chris Meek was pursued by Chris Alford (Morgan +8) for the whole of the race, Meek won the class and Alford set up fastest lap — but the overall winner was Jim Adamson (Davrian 998 cc) the only Modsports car to head the Prodsports leaders. Class winners were Meek, John Targett (MGB) and Terry Grimwood (Midget), who also set up a new class record. In what is possibly his last race in the car Dave Allen was unlucky enough to put the Roosters Europa over the bank at Tower on lap three, later to be joined by the E Type of Martin Dawson who seemed all set for fourth place.

After the dramas of the first two events the Clubman's, Formula Ford and Sports cars race which followed was almost an anti-climax with Ray Edge (Mallock) leading from flag to flag, John Holroyd's similar car coming in second. Interest was sustained, however, by the demolition of the Chicane in no uncertain manner by Barry Smith in his Mallock on the second lap and the resulting clearing up operations. With six classes this race was rather a spot-the-class event with runners from most of the other races and as such tended to show none of them to best advantage.

Event four was the Gentlemens race for MG T Types and Morgan three-wheelers. The lead never changed but the sight of the "Moggies" on two (one?) wheel out of the Chicane kept the crowd oohing and aahing for the whole 10 laps. Outright and MG class went to Gerry Brown (1500 cc MG) with Alistair Naylor (1500 cc MG) in second place after this position was surrendered by Nick Taylor who retired his 1466 cc MG on the ninth lap. Fourth overall and first Morgan was Bob Angell in the 1098 cc version, the only three-wheeler to complete the full distance. New lap records went to Nick Taylor and Gerry Brown for the MGs with Bill Tuer doing the same for the Morgans before his retirement on lap seven.

A full grid of Special Saloons and Mini Seven cars came under starters orders for the fifth race of the day. As is now usual the Turbo Escort of Jim Evans won but some new cars made an appearance: Chris Meek was in the ex-Martin Birrane Capri, still in Adlards colours but sponsored by 208 — he came in second. Peter Clark also brought a three-litre Capri still resplendant in Woolworths paintwork. Brian Whiting had the Escort well up early on in the race but he dropped back slightly to come home third after the engine went off song. In the small (up to 1000 cc) class Roger Matthews came in first some 26 seconds before the Fiat of Derek Walker, the first Mini Seven home was the one of Chris Hill from P. Ratcliffe. In the up to 1300 cc class David Muter (Mini) and Ian Rogerson (Mini) were the first and second.

For the *Libre* race we again saw some of the MGs but all the running at the front was done by Pete Clark (Modus F3 Neil Brown) from John Holroyd who really had the Mallock flying to demote Ted Payne (Brabham) into third. Joe Applegarth (Brabham) also got past Payne at one stage but was soon down to fourth again (which he held to the finish). In fifth position from start to finish was the Davrian of Jim Adamson with the first MG home down in ninth place (Alister Naylor).

PAUL BOOTHROYD

Tate Trophy Race for Formula Ford Cars (15 laps): 1, Mick Starkey (Merlyn Scholar), 18m 55.4s, 83.23 mph; 2, Stuart Baird (Merlyn), 18m 56.0s; 3, Eric Horsefield (Alexis), 18m 56.2s; 4, Kelvin Hesketh (Crossle), 19m 00.4s; 5, Allan Wilson (Van Diemen), 19m 4.4s; 6, Nigel Robinson (Merlyn), 19m 10.4s. **Fastest lap:** Hesketh, 1m 13.8s, 85.37 mph.

D. C. Cook (Datsun) and Direct Tapes Production Sports Car Race, £2,250-£4,000, £1,400-£2,250, up to £1,400. Modified Sports Cars, Over 1150 cc, up to 1150 cc (10 laps): Prodsports: 1, Chris Meek (Lotus Europa), 13m 45.6s, 76.31 mph; 2, Chris Alford (Morgan +8), 13m 47.0s; 3, Andy Roughton (Lotus Europa), 14m 15.6s; 4, John Targett (MGB), (9 laps); 5, Gerald Vaughan (TR6), (9 laps); 6, Terry Grimwood (1.5 Midget), (9 laps). **Fastest lap:** Alford, 1m 21.0s, 77.78 mph. **£2,250-£4,000:** 1, Meek, 76.31 mph; 2, Alford; 3, Roughton. **Fastest lap:** Alford 1m 21.0s, 77.78 mph. **£1,400-£2,250:** 1, Targett, 68.28 mph; 2, Vaughan; 3, Victor Smith (MGB). **Fastest lap:** Targett, 1m 30.2s, 69.84 mph. **Up to £1,400:** 1, Grimwood, 65.31 mph; 2, Dave Karaskas (Austin Healey); 3, Valli (Midget). **Fastest lap:** Grimwood, 1m 33.0s, 67.74 mph **(Record). Modsports:** 1, Jim Adamson (Davrian 998), 13m 22.4, 78.51 mph; 2, Ron Kirkman (Davrian); 3, Peter Tipton (4.2 TVR Tuscan). **Fastest lap:** Over 1150 cc: Tipton, 1m 29.4s, 70.47 mph. **Up to 1150 cc:** Adamson, 1m 16.0s, 82.89 mph.

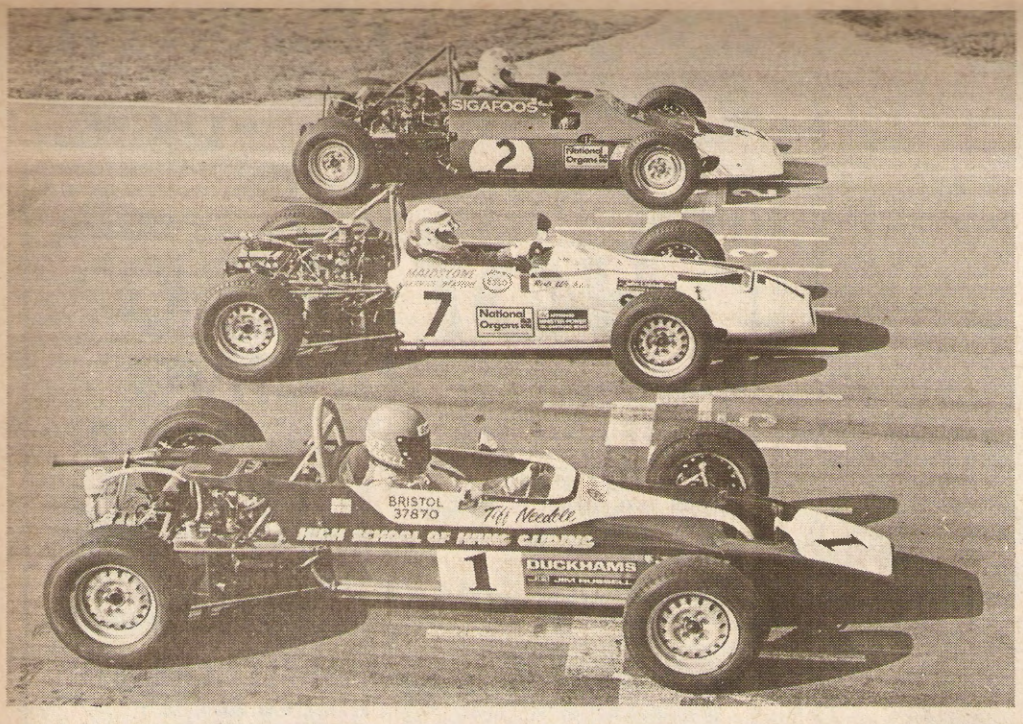
BRSCC Northern Centre Clubmens Championship race, 1000-1600 cc and up to 1000 cc and FF engines (10 laps): 1, Ray Edge (Mallock), 11m 46.6s, 89.16 mph; 2, John Holroyd (Mallock), 11m 48.6s; 3, Tim Wood (Magnum C75A), 12m 37.8s; Chris Hart (Mallock), 12m 45.4s. **1000-1600 cc:** Edge; 2, Holroyd; 3, Wood. **Fastest lap:** Edge, 1m 08.8s, 91.57 mph. **FF engines:** 1, Ken Shipley (Mallock), 80.08 mph; 2, Geoff Lambert (Mallock); 3, Alan McBeth (Groper). **Fastest lap:** Lambert, 1m 16.0s, 82.90 mph. **FF Class:** 1, Pete King (Royale), 73.79 mph; 2, Peter Warner (Mistrale); 3, Brian Storrs (Hawke). **Fastest lap:** King, 1m 23.0s, 75.90 mph.

MG T Types and Morgan Three-Wheelers (10 laps): MGs: 1, Gerry Brown (1500 MG), 14m 44.2s, 71.25 mph; 2, Alister Naylor (1r66 MG), 15m 46.6s; 3, Harry Whitehouse (1498 MG), 16m 12.2s; 4, Martin Prutton (1306 MG); 5, Richard Green (1350 MG), 8 laps. **Fastest lap:** Taylor and Brown 1m 27.0s, 72.41 mph **(record). Morgans:** 1, Bob Angell (1098 cc), 16m 14.2s; 64.66 mph; 2, David Hodgson (1172 cc); 3, C. F. Pilbeam (1172 cc). **Fastest lap:** Bill Tuer (1100 cc), 1m 32.4s, 68.18 mph **(record).**

Troy Tires and Auto Centres Race for Special Saloons. Up to 1000 cc, Mini 7s. BRSCC Northern Centre Special Saloon Car Championship Race. Over 1300 cc, 1001 cc to 1300 cc: Troy Tires up to 1000 cc: 1, Roger Matthews (997 Mini), 9 laps, 75.56 mph; 2, Derek Walker (997 Fiat); 3, George Hard (999 Cooper S); 4, David Haigh (848 Mini S). **Fastest lap:** Matthews, 1m 19.6, no speed given. **Mini 7s:** 1, Chris Hill (Mini 7), 8 laps, 67.43 mph; 2, P. Ratcliffe (Mini); 3, Phil Hepworth (BMC Mini). **Fastest lap:** Hepworth, 1m 31.0s, no speed given.

BRSCC Special Saloons, overall and over 1300 cc: 1, Jim Evans (1.8 Escort Turbo), 12m 10.8s, 86.21 mph; 2, Chris Meek (5.0 Capri), 12m 33.2s; 3, Brian Whiting (1.8 Escort), 12m 34.2s; 4, Paul Rhodes (1.9 Escort), 12m 43.6s; 5, Paul Storr (1.6 Escort), 13m 17.0s; 6, David Holmes (3.8 Anglia), 9 laps. **Fastest lap:** Whiting, 1m 11.6s, no speed given. **Up to 1300 cc:** 1, David Muter (1.3 Mini), 9 laps, 75.34 mph; 2, Ian Rogerson (1.3 Mini); 3, Anthony Smith (1.3 Mini). **Fastest lap:** Rogerson, 1m 21.4s, no speed given.

BRSCC Northern Centre Formula Libre Race (12 laps): 1, Peter Clark (F3 Modus-Neil Brown), 14m 05.4s, 89.43 mph; 2, John Holroyd (1.6 Mallock), 14m 15.8s; 3, Ted Payne (Brabham), 14m 41.8s; 4, Joe Applegarth (1.6 Brabham), 14m 56.4s; 5, Jim Adamson (Davrian 998 cc), 11 laps); 6, Allan Wilson (1.6 FF Van Dieman), 11 laps. **Fastest lap:** Clark, 1m 08.0s, 92.66 mph.



Although Needell was in a class of his own Wicken and Sigafoos had to work hard for 2nd and 3rd places.

BRANDS HATCH

Needell's title clincher

Last Sunday's meeting at Brands saw Tiff Needell clinch the Townsend Thoresen Formula Ford Challenge in fine style winning both his heat and the final, safely leading home (in both events), Fred Sigafoos and Rob Wicken who scrapped mightily the whole day. Wicken's third spot gains him the runner-up place in the series. A pleasantly varied day's racing, run-off effortlessly by TEAC, saw Geoff Friswell gain the full Lec Clubmans points; Graham Wenham took another Mini 7 victory, Zek Redjep the large saloon race, Nick Whiting having deserted Brands this time, while a small grid of 850cc saloons provided some of the closest dicing seen for a long time.

In cold weather, and a wind which might even have deterred his hang-gliding sponsors, Tif Needell took his Crossle from pole to chequered flag without any challenge in the first heat. Fred Sigafoos' Jamun edged past Rob Wicken's Merlyn into Paddock on the second tour, and thereafter these two changed places regularly as they chased home Needell, Wicken gaining the advantage at the finish. Doug Wood's Elden claimed fourth with John Poxon's Crossle inheriting fifth when Pato Nunez was blackflagged with his anti-roll bar adrift on the Ashtune van Diemen.

The second heat was run at a slower pace and again provided a racelong leader in the form of Mike Thompson whose Rostron pulled out 4.2s over Richard Maile's Homebrite Merlyn. In an unusually tedious event for Formula Fords, the next three places were taken by Ted Whitbourne's ageing Merlyn 11/17, Rob Newall's Jamun after a poor start, and Geoff Illes' Merlyn 20a.

For the double points Needell, Wicken and Sigafoos made up the front row and Needell, timing his start superbly, continued where he had left off in the heat, the Weybridge civil engineer having five seconds in hand by the end of the ten laps. Wicken and Sigafoos took up the cudgels again with further place swapping, the pair exchanging paintwork on at least one occasion. The Merlyn was ahead on the penultimate tour, with the Jamun trying to poke its nose through at Paddock. This threat thwarted, Sigafoos made his presence felt at Clearways but it was not until Paddock on the final lap that he made it. Thompson, Wood and Newall closed up on this duo after a couple of laps to make a fine five-cornered fight for the remaining points, just 1.4s covering this quintet at the end with Kenny Gray hunting points elsewhere and David Kemp abroad, Needell and Wicken jumped ahead of these two in the final table.

Initially it seemed as if Graham Wenham might have a challenger to his lead position in the TEAC Mini-7 championship race, but Alan Corbishley could not keep up his early pace and dropped back into the clutches of series-leader Andy Devine. As Corbishley lost ground so Bob Addison decided he should be higher than fifth, closing on Martin Moorhead and slipping by at half distance, before moving on to give Corbishley the same treatment a couple of laps later. Alan Seekings and Mick Collard both made up ground well from low placings on the first lap and became embroiled in a fine dice for sixth with Seekings crossing the line no more than six inches ahead. Further close dicing down the field was a feature of this event in which Wenham equalled Mick Moss's longstanding lap record.

The two scheduled Lec Clubmans races were merged and the drivers given fifteen laps after a F5000 starting procedure, which would work better if drivers did not spin on the warming up laps! Once Geoff Friswell had completed the first lap with his Langtonian Finance U2 Mk16 ahead of the rest of the pack, we knew there could be no other victor. Peter 'General' Evans suggested more interest might be generated if Geoff started at the back of the grid, and went in the opposite direction! Martin Mansell gave vain chase with his U2 but his mirrors were filled with a close tussle in which Vernon Davies' Hustler always just had the upper hand over Ruari Gillies' Gryphon. Caldwell Smythe (U2 Mk16) was the last to go the full distance, a possible challenge from Charles Tippet's Calor Gryphon disappearing at full speed into the bank at Kidney. Both the monocoque and Tippet's back were damaged.

In the small category Nick Adams held a four second advantage over Alex Ferrada at half distance but the Ace Plant U2 closed on the Camborough piglet and snatched the lead at almost the last opportunity. After practice dramas Frank Sytner moved rapidly through the field in our Ugandan commentator's U2 before spinning into retirement.

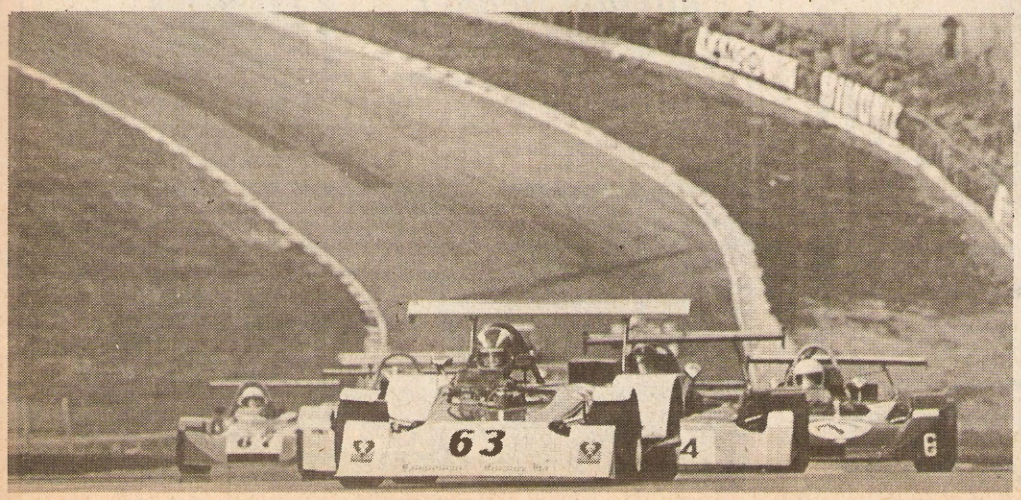
Eight of the lesser lights coming for the 850cc all Mini saloon race had no real right to capture the crowd's undivided attention, but five of them reminded us of what free-formula Mini racing used to be about. John Oxborrow spun out of things on lap five but Pete Knipe, Pete Northover, Eddy Arscott and Robert Harman continued to turn on a splendid display of ultra-close clean dicing. Knipe invariably held the upper hand but Nothover, Harman and Arscott changed places at intervals too frequent to chronicle. Northover made an even stronger bid to take the lead on the last tour, cornering side-by-side through Paddock with Knipe but the latter stayed ahead to the tune of 0.1s at the flag, with the other two all of 0.6s behind, and although Harman was credited with third he was only about an inch ahead.

It was a pity their larger brethren could match this display for theirs was a far less entertaining affair. The grid certainly provided variety with six different cars in the first six positions, namely Zekia Redjep's Escort, Alan Minshaw's DAF-Oldsmobile, wrongly geared for this circuit, John Homewood's inevitable Imp, Freddie Heaney's Motospeed Mini, Ginger Marshall's Mini Countryman (yes, really — see *Sports Extra*) and Geoff Bedding having an encouraging first outing in his 1720 Anglia. Redjep had no trouble in winning, while Homewood made second place his when the DAF went sick after five laps, John reckoning this to be his fiftieth class win at Brands.

Tony Whibley took his Viva GT up from eighth on lap two to third at the finish ahead of the dicing Heaney and Marshall who were only half a second apart. Richard Jockel's 1.3 Cooper S was chased home to sixth by David Hall's 1.0 Anglia.

JOHN ASQUITH

Inevitably Geoff Friswell powers his U2 towards another unassailable Clubmen's win.



Townsend Thoresen Formula Ford challenge, heat 1 (10 laps): 1, Tiff Neddell (Crossle-Scholar 25F), 8m 58.2s, 82.94 mph; 2, Rob Wicken (Merlyn-Minister Mk17A), 9m 2.3s; 3, Fred Sigafoos (Jamun-Minister T3C), 9m 2.3s; 4, Doug Wood (Elden-Scholar Mk10C), 9m 6.9s, **Fastest lap:** not given.

Townsend Thoresen Formula Ford challenge, heat 2 (10 laps): 1, Mike Thompson (Rostron-ASD), 9m 3.5s, 82.14 mph; 2, Richard Maile (Merlyn-Minister Mk25), 9m 7.7s; 3, Ted Whitbourne (Merlyn-Minister Mk 11/17), 9m 11.2s; 4, Rob Newall (Jamun-Minister T3C) 9m 15.0s. **Fastest lap:** Thompson 53.2s, 83.91 mph.

TEAC Mini 7 Championship round (10 laps): 1, Graham Wenham, 10m 27.6s, 71.13 mph; 2, Andy Devine, 10m 38.1s; 3, Robert Addison, 10m 44.3s; 4, Alan Corbishley, 10m 44.7s; 5, Martin Moorhead, 10m 46.2s; 6, Alan Seekings, 10m 56.4s. **Fastest lap:** Wenham, 61.6s, 72.47 mph **(Equals record).**

Lec Refrigeration Clubmans Sports Car Championship round (15 laps); Overall and fully modified: 1, Geoff Friswell (U2-Hart Mk16), 12m 16.5s, 90.92 mph; 2, Martin Mansell (U2-Piper Mk16), 12m 27.5s; 3, Vernon Davies (Hustler-Davron SS4), 12m 29.9s; 4, Ruari Gillies (Gryphon-Ford C4a), 12m 33.7s. **Fastest lap:** Friswell, 48.0s, 93.00 mph. **Formula Ford engined class:** 1, Alex Ferrada (U2- Davron Mk16), 84.36 mph; 2, Nick Adams (U2-Holbay Mk14B); 3, Chris Greville-Smith (Phantom-Ford RE P75). **Fastest lap:** Ferrada, 51.1s, 87.36 mph.

Special saloon cars up to 850cc (10 laps): 1, Pete Knipe (850 Mini), 10m 16.8s, 72.37 mph; 2, Pete Northover (850 Mini), 10m 16.9s; 3, Robert Harman (850 Mini), 10m 17.5s; 4, Eddy Arscott (850 Mini), 10m 17.5s. **Fastest lap:** Northover, 59.9s, 74.52 mph.

Townsend Thoresen Formula Ford final (10 laps): 1, Needell, 8m 56.6s, 83.19 mph; 2, Sigafoos, 9m 1.3s; 3, Wicken, 9m 1.5s; 4, Thompson, 9m 1.8s; 5, Wood, 9m 2.4s; 6, Newall, 9m 2.7s. **Fastest lap:** Needell, 52.7s, 84.71 mph.

Special saloon cars over 850cc (10 laps): 1, Zekia Redjep (2.0 Ford Escort), 8m 58.6s, 82.88 mph; 2, John Homewood (1.0 Sunbeam Imp), 9m 18.5s; 3, Tony Whibley (2.3 Vauxhall Viva GT), 9m 28.6s; 4, Freddie Heaney (1.3 Mini Cooper S), 9m 36.6s. **Over 1300cc:** 1, Redjep, 82.88 mph; 2, Whibley; 3, Bob Standeven (1.9 Ford Anglia). **Fastest lap:** Redjep, 52.5s, 85.03 mph. **1001 to 1300cc:** 1, Heaney, 77.42 mph; 2, Richard Jockel (1.3 Mini Cooper S); 3, Brian Leeks (1.3 Ford Escort GT). **Fastest lap:** Heaney, 55.8s, 80.00 mph. **851 to 1000cc:** 1, Homewood, 79.93 mph; 2, Ginger Marshall (1.0 Mini Countryman); 3, David Hall (1.0 Ford Anglia). **Fastest lap:** Homewood, 54.5s, 81.91 mph.



Jeff Churchill on Sallow Valletts. He only just had time to sample his latest two litre AVJ engine before a ruptured clutch pipe terminated his challenge.

WYEDEAN STAGES

Local man makes good

Smiles were very much the order of the evening last Sunday at the Anchor Hotel, Tintern. Smiles on the faces of competitors who had a thoroughly enjoyable day's stage rallying in the Forest of Dean, and returned to the hotel to discover that provisional results and stage times were already there to greet them — a most unusual occurence these days; and smiles on the faces of the organisers (of both satisfaction and relief one feels) as having never organised a stage rally in its entirety before, the Forest of Dean MC, ably directed by Clerk of the Course Phil Turley and Club Stewards John Thurston and Spencer Thomas, achieved a notable success in providing competitors, spectators, police and other forest users with a polished and PR-conscious sporting event that was as easy to avoid as it was to enjoy.

The Dean is one of the most picturesque areas in the country. The woodland areas are deciduous and rambling in character and in the soft light of a mild yet crisp October day, the first tints of autumn shone and shimmered in the leaves above the meandering Wye Valley, the perfect natural host for a new and significant stage rally debut. By definition, events run in the Dean area are compact and the organisers had amassed over 50 miles of loose road competitive mileage within an enviable 130 mile total. On paper the recipe was well nigh ideal; in practice the situation remained largely unchanged; and in a convivial atmosphere perhaps imparted by the comparatively minor status of the event (it was a qualifier for the Welsh special stage rally championship only) and certainly encouraged by the sunshine and the scenery, the Wyedean Stages turned out to be almost exactly the carbon copy of the draft that the organisers had originally drawn up. One feels that the event cannot help but have its status rapidly upgraded next year.

The attractions of the Dean as a rallying area were reflected in the entry list which in view of the state of the major championships and the proximity of important events was above average — again a tribute to the efforts of the organisers who had involved themselves in energetic canvassing to lure some of the "names" along to Lydney last Sunday. Perhaps it was fitting in view of the event's debut that it should have been a local man who won the rally in such convincing style. For Graham Elsmore the victory was a hard won affair and although he is not without extensive knowledge of this area (his haulage business still occasionally brings him onto the local forestry roads) this should in no way detract from a consistent performance that saw him 10 seconds behind David Stokes at the Whitchurch lunch halt; a situation he retrieved during the afternoon so that the Team Avon Tyres 1800 BDA ended the day some 15-seconds up. Graham in fact was always a prominent figure and would have been comfortably in the lead after the morning's activities were it not for a puncture in Saintlow on which he was forced to run for some distance, so that he eventually parted company with the tyre before the finish of the test. The drama cost an estimated 30 seconds, and with failing shock absorbers (changed at lunch) and a bruised Stuart Harrold, whose seat had partially collapsed early on; there was everything to fight for in the afternoon. Effectively the situation was resolved over High Meadow, the first test after the halt, where a determined Elsmore extracted 14 seconds from a very surprised Stokes, this in spite of a removed clutch linkage which resulted in David having to help push-start him away from the next test; and in the closing stages, a disintegrating steering joint which had one bolt remaining in position by the end of the last stage — it was no easy victory.

For the man who had pushed Elsmore hard throughout the event, there was the consolation of a relaxed second place. Although he had been in the lead at lunch, David had not seriously expected to hold the leading Avon Tyres car for the rest of the day; and although he continued to maintain the pressure in his now impressive style, he was too concerned about the forthcoming BTRDA final to risk last minute heroics. David finished the day pleased with REV, from which he seems to have finally coaxed some reliability, and he remarked that should the car go as well on the Hercock Simpson as it did on Sunday, then the BTRDA championship is anything but settled.

For the other favoured runners, there was wholesale misfortune. Robert James, starting at two, and with a revitalised clutch and gearbox to try, courtesy of Terry Samuels, had little chance to sample it all as he rolled in Serridge (Triple C 1); the car coming to rest on its wheels, only lightly damaged. In accomplishing this manouevre the redoubtable James succeeded in upsetting a brave tripod camera artist. The latter, showing a profound determination, set up his apparatus immediately, only for the Thomases' Ascona to perform a similar trick which again sent both artist and camera scurrying for cover. The imperturbable Robert was not unduly dismayed however as the Carrefour car has just one more event to complete (the Cheltenham Festival) before a Mark 2 shell replaces it next year.

Just a mile further into the stage, Gordon Batchelor, who had been going as though there was to be no tomorrow, had his throttle jam wide open and, irrevocably committed, he careeered into a very solid gatepost at around 80 mph. Fortunately he had got the car sideways and the rear wheel took the initial impact which snapped it off and badly savaged the back axle. Although not rolled, the car was a sorry state indeed. Jeff Churchill started the event with his latest 2-litre AVJ unit just completed and installed. He was playing himself back into the hunt with commendable verve when a flexible clutch pipe touched the exhaust manifold, and time lost effecting repairs led to another unfortunate retirement. Thus it was that Terry Brown, despite a lively morning which involved two offs and a puncture, still found himself fourth overall at lunch. He disappeared from the leader board later however with failing oil pressure. Amid all this drama there was a typically tidy and secure run from Frank Pierson who finished third overall after lying in the same position at halfway.

With the demise the favourites and the two front runners totally dominating proceedings in the afternoon there was room for a good performance from Ray Radford's Escort to come to the fore. He finished fifth from a start number of 64. There was also a mature run from *Cars and Car Conversions* young editor Paul Davies who secured sixth place for the Chrysler Avenger.

Perhaps a bizarre tale emanating from the heater of Gordon Cameron's Mini provides a fitting epitaph . . . accompanied by Keith O'Dell, Cameron set out on the first stage in a car which had been lying "fallow" under a chestnut tree in his garden for three years (its last outing was the '72 Welsh), and it was not long before the crew began to be increasingly troubled by a particularly pungent odour flooding the cockpit. Almost overcome by the putrid, festering fumes, they feverishly ripped open the heater ducts at the end of the stage – to find two mouse nests complete with delicately roasted carcases!

PETER NEWTON

Wyedean Stages

1, G. Elsmore/S. Harrold (Escort RS), 767 penalties; 2, D. Stokes/S. Bennett (Escort RS), 782; 3, F. Pierson/J. Smith (Escort RS), 881; 4, J. Priestly/T. Withers (Escort RS), 1012; 5, R. Radford/B. Luxton (Escort), 1042; 6, P. Davies/R. Jenkins (Avenger), 1154; 7, J. Simpson/P. Cresdee (Escort), 1181; 8, T. Phelps/B. Robinson (Opel Ascona), 1182; 9, C. Mack/J. Braid (Chrysler Avenger), 1195; 10, P. Fear/N. Forrest (Escort), 1200.

SPECIAL STAGE TIMES

SS1 Devil's Pulpit: 1, Batchelor, 77; 2, Elsmore, 86; 3, Churchill, 90; 4, Stokes, 91; 5, Priestley, 92.

SS2 Sallow Valletts 1: 1, Batchelor, 82; 2, Elsmore, 85; 3, Stokes, 89; 4, Churchill, 92; 5, Pierson, 98.

SS3 Triple C 1: 1, Elsmore, 31; 2, Stokes, 36; 3 = Pierson and Churchill, 45; 5, Brown, 51.

SS4 Russells 1: 1 = Elsmore and Stokes, 32; 3, Churchill, 37; 4, Pierson, 38; 5, Brown, 49.

SS5 Saintlow: 1, Stokes, 53; 2, Pierson, 67; 3, Brown, 82; 4 = Ferguson and Radford, 84; 6, Elsmore, 86.

SS6 Staple Edge: 1, Elsmore, 41; 2, Stokes, 51; 3, Pierson, 55; 4, Brown, 59; 5, Priestley, 64.

SS7 Crabtree Hill: 1, Stokes, 27; 2, Elsmore, 28; 3 = Pierson and Brown, 32; 5, Tucker, 37.

SS8 High Meadow: 1, Elsmore, 86; 2, Pierson, 97; 3, Brown, 99; 4, Stokes, 100; 5, Priestley, 111.

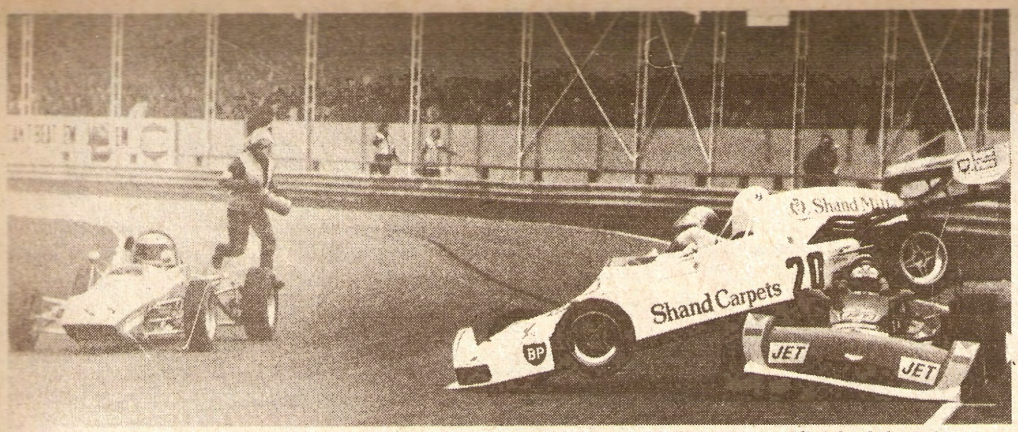
SS9 Mails Corn: 1, Elsmore 63; 2, Stokes, 66; Pierson, 67; 4, Radford, 74; 5, Brown, 75.

SS10 Sallow Valletts 2: 1, Elsmore, 76; 2, Stokes, 78; 3, Pierson, 84; 4, Ferguson, 93; 5, Priestley, 95.

SS11 Triple C 2: 1, Elsmore, 13; 2, Stokes, 23; 3, Pierson, 28; 4, Priestley, 35.

SS12 Russells 2: 1, Stokes, 28; 2, Elsmore, 32; 3, Pierson, 34; 4, Priestley, 43; 5, Griffiths, 56.

SS13 Saintlow 2: 1 = Elsmore and Stokes, 108; 3, Pierson, 141; 4, Priestley, 144.



The result gave the gap as .2s, but this is how Patsy McGarrity and Eddie Cheever finished the Libre race.

INGLISTON

Two for Dryden and McLaren

The final event of the Ingliston season was held on Sunday last, in dull but dry weather, with a nine event programme, which despite a number of incidents was run off with little loss of time. Most of the events fielded a healthy number of starters from which Bill Dryden, still without his new Firenza, drove Graeme Walker's car to two victories, as did Iain McLaren who displayed great speed in his Chevron B32, to take a resounding win in the *Libre* event. Ian Forrest in his Imp annexed the small saloon race after John Fyda's Agra version was eliminated on the Armco after their coming together. Mike Nugent (Elan) held off the Clan of Kenny Allen, John McGilvray (Crossle 25F) doing likewise to Stu Lawson's Hawke in the battle for Formula Ford championship places, while Eddie Labinjom (Alfa Romeo 2000 GTV) clinched the production saloon championship with his accustomed win and the Hon Patrick Lindsay (ERA) took the historic event after Bill Morris (ERA) spun away his advantage.

The opening event featured an exciting nose to tail battle for the lead, between the Imps of Ian Forrest and John Fyda, during the small saloons 10 lapper. Initially Laurence Jacobson had his Imp with them but he retired after one lap leaving Bill Donald and Jim McGaughey, again Imp mounted in lonely third and fourth places, but well behind. As with the lead, Sandy Sellar and Angus Young in their Minis had a real ding-dong for fifth place, this eventually going to the Agra version of Young. Up front, however, Fyda made his move on the long straight up to the hairpin but Forrest held the line until, on the penultimate lap, the pair closed on a backmarker and touched, the Agra Imp ending its race on the Armco.

When the Modsports were flagged away it was the Elan of Mike Nugent who fled from the Crusader of Kenny Allen and the Ginetta of Peter Baker while Eric Liddell (Jenscot Healey) could not hold the Elan driven by John Fyda, who reeled in the Ginetta and passed at half-distance into third place, Baker eventually losing his place on the last lap to the hard charging John Kirk (Davrian) when he spun at Caravan.

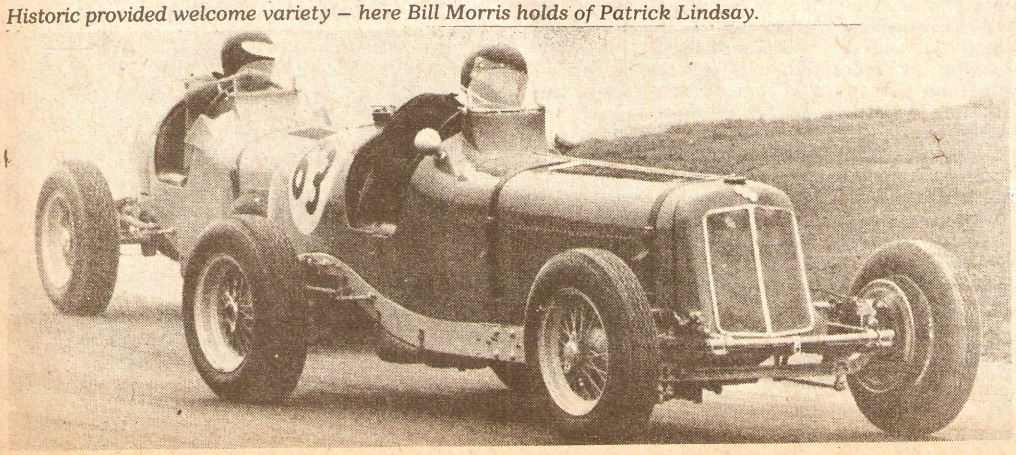
The Formula Ford event started with a fantastic rush by John MacGilvray who took the Crossle 25F away ahead of his rival Stu Lawson (Hawke DL12) who had Pete Morrison (Crossle 25F) pushing him along. Fourth place was forever in dispute between a battling nose to tail quartet, led mainly by Colin MacLean's MRE from Richard Parson's (Crossle 25F) whose Irish countryman Gibson (Crossle 30F) had his work cut out holding Duncan Hall (Hawke). Clive Reeves spun his venerable Mallock at Left-hander letting through the squabble between Bryan Gowans and P. J. Shand. On lap eight, Parsons retired as did Colin McLean at Left-hander allowing Gibson and Hall to move up.

The following event for the big engined special saloons, as usual, provided a fight for the lead as Hugh Chalmers whistled ahead in the Ross/Lothian Avenger, from Bill Dryden's Firenza, which perceptably ate away the advantage and took charge after seven laps. Behind it was Jim Dryden in his Longman Mini followed by the Escorts of Ralph Bryans and Colin Simpson, then the Minis of Eric Paterson and Jim McClements with Walter Robertson (Escort) overcoming the Mini of Eric Smith leaving George Lynn (Rover-Escort) and David Farrer who achieved the doubtful honour of smashing his Escort fair and square into the infamous tree out of the hairpin. Meanwhile all did not appear well with the Mini of Jim Dryden who was gobbled up by McClements, Simpson, Smith, Robertson and Eric Paterson in the Colvend Mini.

Iain McLaren stroked the Chevron B32 away from the rest to win the sports and special GT 10 lapper, but was hotly pursued by the Chevron B23 driven by Tony Charnell. Sandy Watson held third place in his Gryphon C75 some distance ahead of the Mallock of Bob Insh who was hounded by the Gryphon of Roy McNab. He in turn had overwhelmed the ASM Elan driven by John Fyda whose team mate Allan retired at the start line. Eddie Labinjoh retired the Fisher Spyder due to damage after contacting another car in front of the main stands.

A rare crackle of exhausts heralded the historic cars, with Bill Morris fractionally leading Patrick Lindsay in their ERAs, Tony Merrick retiring his version after two laps leaving Ron Rootitt (Cognac SP) to flee from the attentions of Ray Fielding (Maserati) who eventually eased through to third place at the Left-hander, as Morris lost the lead through a spin. Randal Stewart boomed his Bentley along, a secure fifth, but Andrew Fletcher in his Frazer-Nash, with hood erect, succumbed to the Lotus XI Le Mans of Tony Rodgers. Fred Damodaran hustled his Allard J2X along, some way in front of the Crosby Jowett Jupiter as Mark Josland in his stately 1926 Frazer Nash brought up the rear, Keith Schellenberg having retired his 4½ Bentley early on.

Historic provided welcome variety – here Bill Morris holds of Patrick Lindsay.



A full field, augmented by numerous Irish entries, took the flag for the production saloon 10 lapper, but it was Eddie Labinjoh who led from pole in the Fisher's Alfa Romeo 2000 GTV from Tom Meldrum (Escort) who relinquished his place to the Magnum driven by Jennifer Birrell at mid-distance. Fourth place was in contention between the Mazda of Ian Smith and the Mexico of Roy Knowles, the former setting a new class lap record in his flight. After a gap, Chris Jones recovered his Mazda from the Hairpin Armco and set about the Capri of George Windrum getting the better of it and leaving the Capri of Andrew Small to take up the cudgels followed by Bill Montgomery in his Firenza, Davidson's Capri dropping a little out of contention. Further back Tom Irvine overcame and held off the similar Honda Civic of Gerry McGarrity.

Fifteen laps of *Libre* racing followed, Iain McLaren essaying his Chevron B32 against the open wheelers and dictating the race, from Eddie Cheever who was out with his Modus M1 under the MacDonald Shand/Ecurie Ecosse banner, followed by John Pollock (Chevron B25), Norman Dickson (March 74B), Patsy McGarrity (Chevron B29), then the March of Andy Barton who had Ken Fildes in the Britannica Lotus 69 chasing him and followed by Doug Thomson (Chevron B27) and Stu Lawson trying the MacDonald Shand/EE March 753. Dickson spun and dropped to ninth place while by lap 12 Pollock was closing on Cheever but spun and retired leaving Barton and McGarrity to reel in the Modus which apparently had a slowly deflating tyre. On the last lap McGarrity screamed into the Arena to take Cheever on the outside but the cars touched and the tail of the Modus climbed on to the Chevron stopping just short of McGarrity's helmet. As the cars ground across the finish in pick-a-back fashion, the wily Barton streaked his Lotus through to second place. Cheever climbed out unhurt as did a somewhat shaken Irishman just before the marshals doused the mounted pair in foam.

The last event was for special saloons in a 15 lap final, which Bill Dryden took command of in the Firenza, from the Avenger of Hugh Chalmers. Jim McClements' Mini held third, but gave best to the Escort of Walter Robertson after five laps but keeping out of the reach of Jim Dryden's Longman Mini which retired after 11 laps. Eric Smith whose Mini started last, hauled up through the field to challenge McClements and just got the edge out of the hairpin only to slow up and retire.

This was an excellent end to the Ingliston season with interesting racing in each event.

BILL HENDERSON

Special Saloons (10 laps): 1, Ian Forrest (Forrest-Imp), 9m 31.4s, 64.89 mph; 2, Bill Donald (Hillman Imp), 9m 57.0s; 3, Jim McGaughey (Hillman Imp), 10m 03.2s; 4, Angus Young (Agra Mini), 10m 08.2s. **Fastest lap:** John Fyda (Agra Imp), 55.6s, 66.69 mph.

Modified Sports Cars (10 laps): 1, Mike Nugent (Lotus Elan), 8m 54.2s, 69.41 mph; 2, Ken Allen (Clan Crusader), 8m 54.8s; 3, John Fyda (Lotus Elan), 9m 03.6s; 4, John Kirk (Davrian), 9m 14.6s. **Over 1300 cc:** 1, Nugent; 2, Fyda; 3, Kirk. **Fastest lap:** Nugent, 54.4s, 70.76 mph. **Up to 1300 cc:** 1, Allen; 2, S. Robb (Midget). **Fastest lap:** Allen, 52.2s, 71.03 mph.

Formula Ford (10 laps): 1, John MacGilvray (Crossle 25F), 9m 10.7s, 67.33 mph; 2, Stu Lawson (Hawke DL12), 9m 11.8s; 3, Pete Morrison (Crossle 25F), 9m 13.0s; 4, G. Gibson (Crossle 30F), 9m 13.9s. **Fastest lap:** Colin MacLean (MRE 73/75F), 54.0s, 68.67 mph.

Special Saloons over 1000 cc (10 laps): 1, Bill Dryden (Vauxhall Firenza), 9m 08.2s, 67.64 mph; 2, Hugh Chalmers (Hillman Avenger), 9m 08.8s; 3, Jim McClements (BLMC Mini), 9m 30.3s; 4, Colin Simpson (Ford Escort), 9m 31.6s. **Over 1300 cc:** 1, Dryden; 2, Chalmers; 3, Simpson. **Fastest lap:** Dryden, 53.0s, 69.96 mph. **Up to 1300 cc:** 1, McClements; 2, Eric Smith (Mini 1275 GT); 3, Eric Paterson (Colvend Mini). **Fastest lap:** Smith, 54.6s, 67.91 mph.

Sports & Special GTs (10 laps): 1, Iain McLaren (Chevron B31), 8m 30.7s, 72.61 mph; 2, Tony Charnell (Chevron B23), 8m 31.9s; 3, Sandy Watson (Gryphon C 75), 9m 11.6s; 4, Bob Inch (Mallock U2 Mk17), 9m 14.0s. **Over 1300 cc:** 1, McLaren; 2, Charnell; 3, Watson. **Fastest lap:** McLaren, 48.3s, 76.77 mph. **Up to 1300 cc:** 1, Alistair McIntosh (Mallock U2 MkIIB); No other finishers. **Fastest lap:** McIntosh, 55.0s, 67.42 mph.

Historic Cars (10 laps): 1, Hon Patrick Lindsay (ERA), 10m 34.0s, 58.49 mph; 2, Ray Fielding (Maserati), 10m 49.4s; 3, Ron Footitt (Cognac SP), 10m 58.2s; 4, Bill Morris (ERA), 11m 08.0s. **Pre-war Cars:** 1, Lindsay; 2, Footitt; 3, Morris. **Fastest lap:** Lindsay and Morris, 62.0s, 59.81 mph. **Post-war Cars:** 1, Fielding; 2, Tony Rodgers (Lotus XI Le Mans); 3, Andrew Fletcher (Frazer Nash). **Fastest lap:** Fielding, 62.4s, 59.42 mph.

Production Saloons (10 laps): 1, Eddie Labinjom (Alfa Romeo 2000 GTV), 10m 54.2s, 55.68 mph; 2, Mrs Jennifer Birrell (Vauxhall Magnum), 10m 57.6s; 3, Tom Meldrum (Escort Mexico), 11m 06.4s; 4, Ian Smith (Mazda RX Coupe), 11m 06.7s. **Over £1,699:** 1, Labinjoh; 2, Mrs Birrell; 3, Meldrum. **Fastest lap:** Labinjoh and Mrs Birrell, 63.8s, 58.12 mph. **Up to £1,699:** 1, Ian Smith; 2 Chris Jones (Mazda RX3 Coupe); 3, Vic Covey (Mazda RX3 coupe). **Fastest lap:** Smith, 65.3s, 56.78 mph **(record).**

Formule Libre (15 laps): 1, Iain McLaren (Chevron B31), 12m 07.4s, 76.46 mph; 2, Andy Barton (March 74B), 12m 16.7s; 3, Patsy McGarrity (Chevron B29), 12m 17.0s; 4, Eddie Cheever (Modus M1), 12m 17.2s. **Fastest lap:** McGarrity, 47.0s, 78.89 mph.

Special Saloons (15 laps): 1, Bill Dryden (Vauxhall Firenza), no times issued; 2, Hugh Chalmers (Hillman Avenger); 3, Walter Robertson (Ford Escort); 4, Jim McClements (BLMC Mini).

ADO fits in another

Alister Douglas-Osborn scored his second RAC Sprint championship win in a week when he won the final round at Wellesbourne near Stratford-upon-Avon last Saturday. In his 2.2 Pilbeam he had a best run of 39.86s which he achieved in the Top Ten run-off. In second place was the new champion David Harris in his McLaren M10B who did 39.76s. Douglas-Osborn came from behind for he was only second in the class runs and nearly two seconds down on Harris. However, he had a superb start to his final run and was a deserved victor of the day.

Another driver to put up a vastly improved time in the Top Ten was the other McLaren driver Martyn Griffiths. He was advised to try getting off the line in third gear and he showed an improvement of nearly two seconds. Fourth spot went to David Render in his Brabham who returned 41s which beat last year's champion Bob Rose (McLaren) by nearly 0.25s. After winning the up to 1600cc class, Rob Turnbull (Brabham) improved on his class time to finish sixth ahead of Jonty Williamson (Manpower Surtees) who in turn led David Franklin in the Huntsman Ensign. Franklin spun on his second run but despite this he gained enough points to clinch the runner-up spot to Harris in the series.

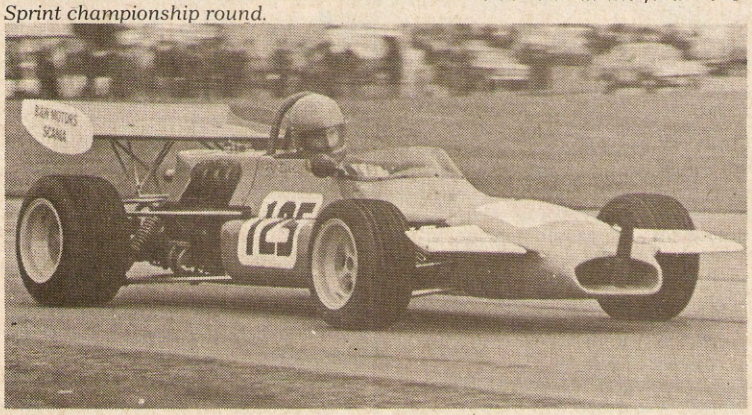
BTD: Alister Douglas-Osborn (Pilbeam), 39.68s.

Class winners: C. Milner (Capri), 58.2s; D. Stephenson (Imp), 56.8s; K. Waterhouse (Cooper), 57.5s; W. Horton (Firenza), 50.9s; D. Depper (Cooper), 51.1s; M. Lock (TVR Tuscan), 51.1s; M. Cann (Aston Martin), 71.7s; D. Cranage (Midget), 60.6s; R. Williams (Mallock U2), 49.6s; T. Osborne (MGB), 53s; R. Turnbull (Brabham BT35), 41.8s; D. Harris (McLaren M10B), 39.8s.

Top ten run-off: 1, Douglas Osborn, 39.68s; 2, Harris, 39.76s; 3, Martyn Griffiths (McLaren), 40.15s; 4, D. Render (Brabham), 41.00s; 5, B. Rose (MCLaren), 41.22s.

RAC Sprint championship, final positions: 1, Harris, 68 pts; 2, D. Franklin, 54; 3, Rose, 54; 4, Render, 49; 5, Williamson, 49.

Rob Turnbull took his Brabham BT35 to another class win at the final RAC Sprint championship round.



A grey Gray day

South African Kenny Gray, who is currently lying second in the National Organs FF series, had a troublesome time at Mallory Park on Sunday. He crashed his Van Diemen very heavily during practice almost totally destroying the rear end. It looked as though his chances of improving his championship placing was lost.

However, Ralph Firman came to the rescue and welded up a new rear end and with the assistance of Clerk of the Course Don Truman, who held up the start for a couple of minutes he made his heat. By finishing tenth he earned a place on the back row of the grid for the final. Really fired up, Gray put everything into the race and finished an excellent fifth. However the resultant two points were of no use to him as they didn't better any of his best 15 scores.

● Hadrian and Cramlington are co-promoting this Sunday's penultimate round of Journal Trophy/ANECC Autocross championship at Grangemoor Farm, Scots Gap, Pontyland.

● The BRSCC are organising another Night at Scott's evening out at Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club this Sunday. The feature band will be the Paul Davis Big Band with Janice Hoyte, a band that specialises in reproducing the sounds of Glenn Miller, Count Basie and the late Ted Heath. Cost of tickets is £2.25 per person, and they'll be available on the door.

Geoff Lees flies on

Geoff Lees' bid for the Big Three continues. At the weekend, apart from celebrating his wedding anniversary and flying (four times) for the first time, he had mixed fortunes in his FF racing.

Geoff Lees climbs into the helicopter for the first of his flights from Mallory last Sunday.



In his first heat at Mallory Park, Lees found success and duly moved on to the final. However, in between, he flew back to Thruxton to compete in the BAF Formula Ford round and duly won this, which gives him a three points lead in the series with one race to go. Then it was back to Mallory Park to race in the National Organs final race, the penultimate round of the series. While easily leading, the engine cut out with dirt in the carburetter and Lees retired, gaining no points at all. But his main rival Kenny Gray finished back in fifth after his dramas (see elsewhere in *Sports Extra*) so Lees still holds on to a three point lead. So it's three points in each series, and he's already clinched one series and leads two others. Rumour hath it that Lees has been offered a F5000 test drive in the near future.

Howells' double

Although they were fastest on four of the five selectives, Norman Allan and Paul Hudd had to be satisfied with second place at the end of a thrilling 120 mile route last Saturday night on the Howells Rali Morgannwg run by the Bridgend club. In their 1275 GT Allan and Hudd had to play second best to Pat Jerome/Lee Vincent who made the event sponsors doubly happy by bringing the Howells Allegro home to victory on 42m 6s, just four seconds ahead of the Mini crew.

Despite suffering tummy trouble Des Douch/Cenfyn Davies finished third in an RS1600 on 48m 32s and were fastest on the other selectives. Best of the semi experts and fourth overall were Rod Dwyer and Islwyn John in another Escort in 51m 32m with H. Clarke/Phil Jones fifth in another Escort on 53m 8s. The Lotus Cortina of T. Baynham/D. Lloyd was sixth on 55m 46s.

Just over half of the sixty starters — a full house — finished the event which had taken the club nearly twelve months to organise, based as it was within fifteen miles of Bridgend. About half a dozen crews were excluded for breaking rules. The novice award went to Paul Harris/K. Morgan (Avenger) who dropped 97m 44s.

JCB's final final

When the final round of this year's JCB/Speed Merchants historic car series takes place at Brands Hatch this weekend, it will be the end of five years of JCB Racing. With Speed Merchants they are taking a rest.

This is because they in turn feel that the competitors should be given a rest too. Bill Allen, of Speed Merchants, gives the reasons: "We've noticed that the very high standards we required are no longer quite being met. We need full grids of very reliable cars – we owe it to the circuit owners, race organisers, sponsors, and, of course, the spectators. Our drivers are all amateurs, some wealthy and some not so wealthy. Many are feeling the pinch in these difficult days, and it's beginning to show in the races.

"We believe that it will be to everyone's advantage if the historic scene, at this level, is given a rest for a season. The cars can recuperate and be fully prepared, the drivers will be keener than ever, and we hope that the spectators and circuit owners will be looking forward to their return.

"I'm not saying that JCB themselves will come back, or even that Speed Merchants will necessarily be involved, but there'll be a great scene there for someone to promote and we'll help them all we can."

The JCB grids have provided much pleasure in both preparation, visual appreciation and racing over the past five years. This year's series once again has become an excellent race to the final. Willie Green (Maserati 250F), has five class wins so far and Simon Phillips has four class wins and a second. But they only score in five rounds. So if Phillips wins his class at Brands, Willie must win his class to be champion. If he only comes second in class there would be a tie, and if Willie comes third in class, Phillips would be champion. Brands on Sunday is where it all happens.

Easy for Braintree crew

The Braintree crew of John Walters and John Porter took their Escort to an easy win last weekend on the fifteenth Britvic rally run by the Chelmsford MC over a 300 mile route in Norfolk and Suffolk. Walters and Porter dropped only 24m to win by 11m in a field of 95 competitors who tackled an event comprising sixty time controls.

Second were Rod Cattini and Tony Thorne in their Ascona who dropped 35m to beat Peter Cook/Dave Kirham (last year's winning navigator) who dropped 36m in their Escort TC.

Two crews tied on 45m but Roy Collins/Phil Smith (Escort 1600) were fourth ahead of Roger Harding/John Harmer (Mexico) while the sixth placed crew were John Rule/Tony Delaney in another Mexico on 47m.

A special economy award called the Britveconomy was won by Duncan May/Bob King in a Mini. The best of the semi-experts and eighth overall were Bryan Nash/David Johnson (Cortina) on 59m while the novice award was won by Monty Seaman/Phil Catchpole (Mini) on 8f 86m.

● The NSCC are organising this weekend's sprint at Curborough starting at 1.30 pm.



John Lindores seems virtually unstoppable in north-eastern autocross. He took BTD again on Sunday.

Buckley heads Escorts

With all four leading contenders gaining class wins there's no change at the head of the Journal Trophy/ANECC autocross championship following last Sunday's As-Nu event run by Hexham and District MC at Hedden-on-the-Wall near Newcastle.

With a first run time of 2m 3.8s John Lindores was a runaway victor yet again in his Escort BDA and the only interesting class battle was in the standard car class over 1300cc where Dominic Buckley finished only 1.2s ahead of Les Eagleton in their Escorts.

Trevor Olds survived a nasty moment on his first run when a constant velocity joint broke on his 1.3 Mini. The car did a ballet on its nose before landing on all four wheels and later on the revived Olds stormed back to produce second quickest time from 50 competitors.

BTD: J. Lindores (Escort), 2m 3.8s.
Class winners: G. Manners (Mini), 2m 16.k2s; T. Olds (Mini), 2m 11.6s; H. Currell (Anglia), 2m 33.4s; V. Hart (Escort), 2m 19s) B. Finkle (Mini), 2m 26.2s; D. Buckle (Escort), 2m 12.8s.

Young's power loss

A qualifying round in two championships, last weekend's Red Garages Cambrian rally attracted a reasonable quality entry for the 170 mile route in North Wales and included two selectives. On a dry night power was the ultimate requirement and Escort RS2000s filled the first three spots.

Using three miles of Gwydir forest and another seven mile flat out new road north of Clocaenog the North Wales organisers found some tricky navigation to keep the co-drivers up to the mark particularly in the second half.

Local resident Roland Young was predictably the fastest on the Gwydir stage but was surprised when Avenger driver D. McBurnie equalled his time. On the second selective Howard Davies was fastest by eleven seconds from Young who spent the rest of the night cursing the lack of power in his Escort twin cam which left him only fifth overall.

Winners by a margin of 1m 23s. were Mike Pattison and David Taylor on 29m 45s from Howard Davies and Phil Jones on 31m 7s. Third — only sixteen seconds down — were the local twins Gareth and Gwynn Mawby in the third of the RS2000s while Eric Davies/Mike Cowburn were fourth in their BDA-engined Escort on 33m 41s. Young, with Brian Goff came next on 35m 10s. The only major front runner to encounter serious problems was Ian Hughes who comprehensively rolled his Escort RS off a rough white fairly early on in the evening but without personal damage to himself or his navigator Arthur Davies.

Hutchinson runner-up

Fifty-six crews contested last Saturday's Empire Trophy rally run by the Poachers MC on a 190 mile route within a 20 mile radius of Grantham. The event, a round in the East Midlands rally championship, contained 38 miles of whites.

Winners by three minutes were John Leyland/Neil Fairhurst in an RS2000 who dropped 23m with the current champions Mike Hutchinson/Eric Cowcill (Escort) runners-up despite stalling in the first half. A delighted Bob Wells with Peter Halfyard brought their Magnum Coupe into third place on 27m, this being their first finish for several months.

Fourth place went to P. Johnson/M. Gregory in a Mexico on 34m while provisionally placed equal fifth were the novice award winners S. Bryan/N. Hall who dropped 39m in their Propane gas propelled Escort TC with Tony Newsam/Eric Scoffin (Avenger GT) on the same time. The semi-experts class went to David Clibbery/A. Willey (Cooper) on 40m and were seventh overall.

Meek's Lotus position

It appears that we got our wires crossed over the Chris Meek disqualification at Snetterton on October 4. The car was found to be 15 lbs underweight, but this is taking the weight of the Europa Twin Cam not the Europa Special which Meek drives. The homologated and catalogued weight of the Twin Cam is 1513 lbs. Meek's car weighed in at 1452 lbs which, allowing for the RAC regulation tolerance of 5% would have meant that the car complied easily.

However, applying FIA appendix J regulations allowing a 3% tolerance it was 15 lbs underweight. The main bone of contention at the appeal will be whether or not the meeting was being run to RAC or FIA regulations.

The Special itself is not homologated but runs with special dispensation in the class. The big problem is, though, that there is no homologated weight to base the car on anyway. If there were it would not take into account the eligible lightweight fuel tanks that are allowed and then, so we are told, there's a question of whether five or four speed gearboxes are allowed, the weight difference being quite considerable.

Hopefully the tribunal will sort the whole situation out once and for all as what is a very cheap and popular form of racing is being threatened with the continual wrangle over regulations.

In the meantime Meek is running his Radio Luxembourg car with 28 lbs of lead ballast.

Blower storms off

A very stupid misunderstanding at Croft at the weekend saw Colin Blower storm off the grid complete with the keys to his Prodsports TVR which was left on the grid. A scrutineer had passed his car, after wrangles about the oil filler cap, and lack of undertray (not required) and then told him that his car was dropping oil on the grid and should have an undertray, the same scrutineer incidently.

At a stewards meeting afterwards, Blower was asked why he was about to race a car without a scrutineers ticket, which he duly produced. So the stewards said, shall we forget it? Blower had been forced not to race thanks to a steward's awkwardness and lack of knowledge of the rules. Perhaps this is why the RAC want to implement exams for officials.

0.7s victory

Terry Westley took his 2.1 VW to BTD by 0.75s at the Mid-Cheshire MRC autocross at Kinderton Hall Farm, Middlewich last Sunday. He beat a field of 68 starters with a time of 113.6s with Derek Chadwick in 1.0 Mini second on 114.3s. Only close class battle saw Trevor Buckle (1.5 Mini) beat G. Woodcock (1.3 Mini) by 0.3s.

The current Mid Cheshire autocross championship leader Miss Muriel Banks collected her class with ease in her Cooper.

BTD: T. Westley (VW), 113.6s.
Class winners: J. Hopwood (Mini), 117.3s; D. Woodcock (Escort), 125.2s; D. Salter (Imp), 122.3s; D. Chadwick (Mini), 114.3s; J. Clarkston (Escort), 118.7s; T. Buckle (Mini), 115.0s; R. Watmough (Special), 118.6s; Miss M. Banks (Cooper), 125.6s; J. Holt (Escort), 123.8s.
Ladies: Mrs D. Clarkson (Escort), 123.9s.

● Croydon and District Motor Club will be organising an Inter Club autotest at Crystal Palace on October 26. Teams of five cars will represent the clubs of Croydon, Austin Healey, Dartford, East Surrey, Mid Surrey, Rainham and Southern. Some of the autotests will take place on the skid pan, which should be spectacular. The meeting commences at 10.30 am.

Spencer in the Valley

Geoff Spencer, RAC production car trials champion, successfully defended the Valley trial top award when he won the Bewdley organised event at Heightington near Bewdley last Sunday. Spencer (Cooper) dropped 57 marks on 40 sections to head his class of 15 by nine marks. In the morning Nick Pollitt (Mini) was only 6 marks adrift of the champion but finished nine behind but a commanding 12 marks ahead of the best of the class contenders.

Mike Stephens brought along expert rally co-driver Mike Broad with his Mexico and although Stephens was hard pressed by Dennis Wells (Skoda), initially Stephens got to grips with the situation later on and won the class by six marks with Broad third of eight. A ding dong struggle for sports car class honours finally went to Mike Harrison (Midget) by a single mark over Malcolm Brown (Sprite) while Rob Main had a runaway win in the rear engined class in his Imp, beating Bob Gilhooley (Imp) by 20 marks.

Overall: G. Spencer (Cooper), 57 marks lost.
Class winners: N. Pollitt (Mini), 66; M. Stephens (Mexico), 30; M. Harrison (Midget), 45; R. Main (Imp), 42.

McKinstry's FF event

The November 2 consolation FF race for non-National Organs points qualifiers at Brands Hatch is to be known as the McKinstry Trophy race, when competitors will race for a silver salver and cheques for the first three finishers in the race. The donor of the extra awards is that colourful character Bob McKinstry. McKinstry has been the man behind Syd Fox's Formula Ford Career and more recently has been associated with Tiff Needell in FF2000. Now Mac wants to put something back into the sport which he so enjoys, hence the awards.

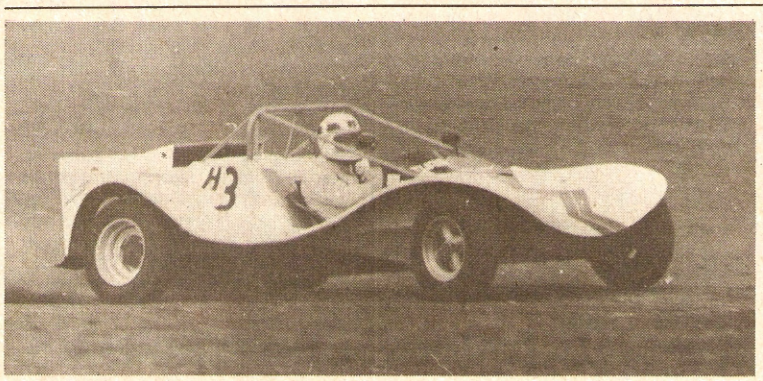
● An interesting F1300 entry at Lydden was that of Geoff Rumble in a Dastle. Rumble, of course, is the man who builds and designs Dastle single seaters and midget racers.

Winfield offer FF drive

You have just three and a half months to get down to Winfield Racing Drivers' School at Goodwood and win a free fully backed drive in Formula Ford for 1976. The well known Winfield School, which has its English base at the Sussex circuit, has been responsible for bringing many French drivers to top line grids including Jacques Laffite, Jean-Pierre Jarier, and Jean-Pierre Jaussaud from their school at Magny Cours.

From their intake at Goodwood starting last May, they'll be selecting a short list of 20 drivers early in 1976 who have come through the school and shown promise. Then the idea is to select the top five and select the winner through the jury system used in France. This involves various top team managers and press representatives who judge the drivers for talent, ability and consistency, among other qualities. The winner will then receive a fully backed drive in a championship of the school's choice. Winfield, with their French connections, are hoping that Tico Martini will be the builder of the car.

So far this year, Winfield have taught around 80 students, but have come up with only a few who they would consider for the drive. Mike Knight and David Cole are the instructors, and they may be contacted at Chichester 0243 81545.



Nick Seymour opposite locks Volnik as usual to another BTD award.

Seymour the unbeatable

Postponed a fortnight ago because of a waterlogged course, the Chess Valley MC autocross finally took place at the new venue at Hall Barn, near the Beaconsfield home of Lord Burnham.

On a very fast sixteen hundred yards course, Nick Seymour proved the man of the day and was undefeated in the class and the eliminator. He took his Volvo engined special round two laps in 1m 34.5s to collect the Rothmans Trophy and in so doing he defeated a very determined Terry Smith in 1.6 Mini-Ford who gave him a real run for his money in the knock-out final.

On such a fast course, several competitors came to grief, the most spectacular of which was the Bournemouth golf course manager Trevor Smith who looped the loop twice in his 1.0 Mini. Several other inversions took place while Alan Smith had the misfortune to break both front stub axles on his Ufo special, one in practice and one on his second run.

Two of the three Mini classes were hotly contested. Nick Garner took the 850 class by 0.4s from Ian Thomson while the Norfolk undertaker Roger Frere came from nowhere to snatch the 1.0 class from Trevor Smith with Frank Morris a split second away in third. By contrast Smith ran away and hid from the opposition by almost ten seconds in the over one litre category.

Borrowing brother Bob's 1.3 Escort, Tony Merridale inflicted a rare defeat on the Suffolk champion Graham Hathaway in the small capacity Escort/Anglia class but the margin was only 0.4s. Success in the over 1.3 class went to Alan Jones' 1.6 Escort who was almost one second ahead of Anglia man Graham Wilkinson who fought off the Escort TC of Ian Bidmead by 0.2s.

BTD: N. Seymour (Volnik), 1m 44.5s.
Class winners: M. Barnard (Datsun 240Z), 1m 50.5s; N. Garner (Mini), 1m 40.8s; T. Merridale (Escort), 1m 40.2s; R. Upton (Elan), 1m 43.4s; R. Frere (Mini), 1m 40.2s; A. Jones (Escort), 1m 44.2s; T. Smith (Mini-Ford), 1m 35.5s; I. White (Scorpion), 1m 38.0s; M. Brown (Escort), 1m 47.0s.

Sims shines in Starlight

The High Wycombe crew of Martin Sims and Tony Hardware took their RS2000 to a comfortable 2m plus win on the Esso Uniflo Starlight rally run last weekend by the CSMA (West Middx) Club. On a 190 mile route mainly in Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire, they totalled 1063s on an event which contained five selectives.

Another Escort crewed by Mick Linford/Andrew Thorburn was second on 1192s with the Avenger Tiger of Ray Perry/A. Pettie third in 1250s. Jos Way and Peter Rain were fourth in a 3.0 Capri on 1315s while Alan Warne and Barry Cooper (RS2000) were fifth on 1415s only six seconds quicker than Graham Parker/Nick Verney (Firenza).

The semi experts class was won by the Mexico of A. Wilkinson/L. Gay on 1708s while the best novices were M. Przyrembal/J. Shapley in a 3.0 Capri on 2345s.

Hillclimb forum

In Mike Wilson's latest BARC/Guyson hillclimb bulletin, he announces that there will be a meeting of all interested parties in the championship at the Donington Collection's premises at Castle Donington this Sunday at 11 am. The idea is to thrash out any differences and ideas for next year's series.

Among the subjects on which he has already received comment are the class structures, the RAC's 40 per cent supercharging penalty, road going cars, the Lotus 7, and Top Ten run offs. He already suggests that the meeting will be well attended, so it is in the interest of competitors and would-be competitors to turn up.

While there, those attending the forum are offered a special reduction in admission price to the actual Collection should they want to visit it.

It is hoped that next year's championship will visit Prescott, Harewood, Pontypool, Scammonden, Gurston Down, Cadwell Park, Wiscombe and Doune. However, the last three are in doubt, as the former two have problems due to resurfacing and availability of hill, while the visit to Doune is up to competitors, although the BARC have been offered the Scottish hill.

Fitting Buxton's bill

Runner up in 1974 Reg Fitt won last weekend's Buxton Trophy rally run by the Shenstone Car Club. Driving a borrowed 1275 GT — his own engine is being rebuilt — Fitt, accompanied by Ron Smith from the South Derbyshire club scored a deserved win on the unusual event which embraces several types of motor sport.

Included in the 175 mile route were rally stages, autotests, production car trials and a very high degree of navigational skill. Starting in the Midlands and finishing with an autotest on Southport beach, this year's 25th running of the event attracted 66 crews.

The semi-experts class went to David Wickham in his Cortina GT from Taff Batley (Morgan) with Roger Newton third in an HRG.

Fitt's main rival for the overall win was A. G. Lapley in a BMW 2002 but despite losing out on the production car trial sections, Fitt more than held his own on the stages with the highly tuned engine in his car.

The ladies award went to Miss F. Clarke in a Midget and the top novice was Mike Hall in a Morgan.

● John Poxon, the Formula Ford driver, took his Car-Setyres sponsored Crossle over to Holland the weekend before last for a round of the Benelux and Netherlands National FF championship. He came sixth overall, less than three seconds behind the winner and the highest placed non-Dutch competitor.

Shellsport successes

Shellsport are currently boasting six championships won by their drivers. A further eight drivers, at the time of writing were heading their championships and no less than 16 drivers headed their various classes. Winners before last weekend included Ian Flux (Formula Vee), Peter Baldwin (Esso Uniflo Special Saloons), Nick Adams (Tricentrol Clubmen's), John Homewood (*Kent Messenger* up to 1000cc Special Saloons), and Alan Curnow (Mini Miglia).





John Homewood (above) – the Kent Messenger championship and 50 wins at Brands Hatch. Below, Ian Flux – Formula Vee champion.

Incidently, further congratulations to John Homewood who completed his 50 wins at Brands Hatch over the weekend. He now needs another eleven wins to become the driver with the most wins at the Kent circuit since motor racing began there.

BRSCC go modsports

After a two year break from promoting Modsports races (much mourned by our Northern correspondent), the BRSCC will be running a fourteen round Modsport series in 1976.

The series will race at Brands, Mallory, Oulton, Silverstone, Castle Combe, Llandow, Rufforth and Croft. All dates have been arranged so as not to clash with the BARC series, and points scoring and classes will be as for the BARC series and prize money will also be similar. It is hoped that a sponsorship agreement will be announced shortly.

Jackson's at the end

The Maidstone & Mid Kent Motor Club were the hosts for the first round of the new Pit Stop trials series. The new sponsors stepped into the breach at the last moment when Duckhams decided to pull out in these economically troubled times. Pit Stop Accessories have branches at Orpington and Beckenham and will be putting in more support than the old series had.

The Maidstone Club were brave to map out a new course above the Pilgrims Way near Detling, made possible by Chrysler rallyman Chris Daisy and his axe swinging team. This famous Bossom Trophy Trial also counted for the Semperit/, BTRDA and RAC championship series. A good entry appeared and the sun blessed the event, but recent rains had made the going on the chalk based ground more than tricky.

Having the better draw the later numbers contained the leaders — led by Colin Taylor in his Sprite-engined Cannon on 59, with Gordon jackson in his Ford whizz-bang powered Ibex just one point away. Newcomer Ray Bowern/Cannon was next on 70, followed by John Hopkins and his new Ford-Ibex, John Benson in his new ultra lightweight JAB special reputed to weigh 6cwt. Regulars Julian Fack, Chris Higwood, Colin Walker and Roy Denton were all below par, although K. B. man Barry Wright had an above average 90. Lunch was taken and as some munched, others brought their machines back from the hills to retire. Noteable was Robin Alexander's mount having been in contention for the lead — stopped only by the lack of clutch. George Fisher also pulled out as did Graham Fullalove.

The running order was changed in the afternoon with the back markers leading the way, and starting in opposite ends. The organizers had adjusted the hills and the day went smoothly, and the scores lower. Another newcomer Tony Mitcham/Cannon retired having driven well while in action. Ray Bowern also pulled out after a good drive. This left Gordon Jackson and Colin Taylor to battle out the lead, although John Benson made the best round of 28, the 32 of Jackson and the 34 of Taylor put Gordon one ahead.

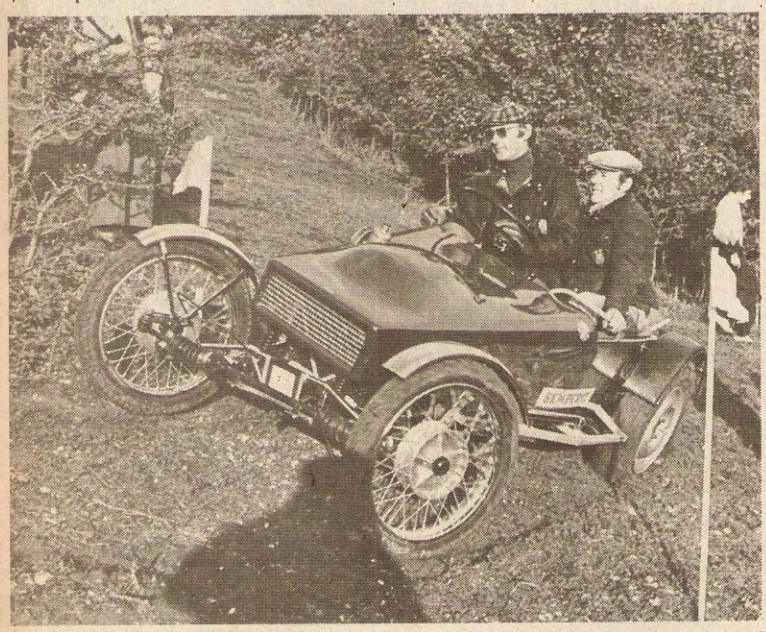
Only 5 hills were left in for the final round and with Gordon Jackson going round clear, victory was his. On the penultimate hill Colin Taylor's Cannon twisted its back axle with a loss of 5 marks, but the team spirit of the sport prevailed and after medical treatment the doctored car ground its way to the top like a pneumatic drill to the cheers of all around. Alan Gisby lead the 950 boys home with his Trialsmaster.

Next round of the new Pit Stop Southern Sporting trial championship is next Sunday, October 19, at Ferrycourt, near Brands Hatch, and down the lane opposite the Portobello.

1, G. Jackson (Ibex), 92 marks lost; 2, C. Taylor (Cannon), 98; 3, J. Benson (JAB), 114; 4, J. Hopkins (Ibex), 123; 5, B. Morris (Hybrid Mk 3), 133; 6, A. Brunning (Trialsmaster), 136.

950 Class: 1, A. Gisby (Trialsmaster), 153; 2, D. Hansford (950 Spl), 157; 3, J. Brooks (Austin), 198.

In his new Ibex, John Hopkins carefully negotiates a marker on his way to fourth place.



Ginger's Mini

Having a successful outing in his new car at Brands Hatch was Ginger Marshall, who, it may be remembered was a convincing class winner of the Osram-GEC saloon car series, and overall runner-up, in his 850 Mini in 1969.

Ginger's new car is no less than a 1.0 Mini clothed in a Mini-Countryman bodyshell, with a part monocoque chassis. The engine has a 5 port iron head with single Weber carburetter. Ginger started to construct the car in 1971, when he reckoned it would have wiped up its class, but has only recently finished it. He followed up his second overall and class win at Snetterton three weeks ago with a fifth overall and second to John Homewood in class at Brands.

Camaro series near fruition

The Chevrolet Camaro series, along the lines of Sweden's Woodhead Cup, is all set to take off. It just needs the agreement of the sponsors to put the wheels turning. Prize structure, dates, circuits, programme, they've all been worked out. The British co-ordinator, Nigel Stovin-Bradford, rang us this week to say that the final decision will be taken in the first week in November and then details will be tied up with a meeting at Silverstone. The delay has come about due to the disorganisation of the projected sponsors.

Meanwhile, Stovin Bradford would like to form a register of all current and intending competitors so that they may be informed of all movements and developments. He also knows of cars priced from £500 to £2,500 for intending competitors. He may be reached at Pant Glas, Sychdyn, Mold, N. Wales, or Mold 55125.

Brown wins the BTD battle

On October 5, the last meeting of the season was organised by the South Western Centre of the BARC at Gurston Down — after an incident packed practice when there were over thirty stops for cars falling over, spinning and disappearing off into the undergrowth, the afternoon official climbs ran without any trouble. Fortunately no one was hurt in the morning although Clive Bracey probably considers himself very lucky indeed when he sailed off into some bushes with his F5000 Vebra-Chevrolet doing the car no good at all.

Fastest time of day was set by Tony Brown with his Brabham BT36X on the last climb of the day after he had had a terrific battle with the Ensign LNI of David Morris, both having recorded identical times on their first runs. David then did a fantastic 32.50s on his second run and Tony pulled out all the stops to record a brilliant 32.17s — a very fitting way in which to end the season at Gurston.

Two new class records were set during the day these going to Jeremy Lord with his Gryphon who set a time of 35.33s and David Morris when trying so hard to set BTD. The closest class of the day was for Special Saloons 851 cc to 1000 cc between the Mini of Terry Clifford, who recorded 41.47s and the incredible Rootes Imp van device of Jack Peat who recorded 41.49s. Most consistent runs of the day came from David Strange with his class winning MG Midget, stopping the watches at 40.70s on both runs.

BTD: Tony Brown (Brabham BT36X), 32.17s.

Class winners: Dale Clement (1300 Mini), 40.49s; Terry Clifford (984 Mini), 41.47s; John Meredith (1293 Cooper), 38.49s; Robin Yeomans, (1380 Mini), 39.35s; David Strange (MG Midget), 40.70s; Paul Channon (AC Cobra), 38.65; Jeremy Lord (Gryphon C4A), 35.33s; Terry Duke (CTG Mk 2D(, 38.14s; Stephen Madge (Rowcliffe U2), 34.60s; Michael MacDowell (Chevron B19 BMW), 33.63s; Tim Cameron (JP), 39.77s; Alan Richards (Chel-Cam Gryphon), 36.54s; David Morris (Ensign LNI), 32.50s; Roger Willoughby (Tech Craft Buick), 34.57s.

BRIEFLY ....

● John Morrison took another SuperVee lap record and win at Thruxton on Sunday. This, he says, speaks volumes for his Mac Daghorn engine, which hasn't been rebuilt since Silverstone, and has since taken three wins and three lap records at Castle Combe, Croft and Thruxton. Have we found our own Max Heidegger? Hopefully.

● David Stephenson, who announced his retirement from rallying a week ago, gained a class win at the RAC Sprint championship final at Wellesbourne. In a rally Imp Stephenson did 56.8s to win his class by 0.3s.

● Rob Archer and Alan Childs won last week's Quinton MC novice rally in a 1275 Mini GT. They dropped 28m 46s on a 90 mile route. Best experts were M. Read/G. Okell (Mexico) on 11m 23s. Best mixed crew were Miss Amanda Smith/J Doughty (Mini) on 26m 35s.

● Apologies to Chris Hiatt-Baker. He rang to say that his nose was quite alright thank you, and that he wasn't at Brands Hatch (as we said) ten days ago having it knocked off. It must have been someone who the BRSCC were keeping quiet about.

Championship positions

Allied Polymer Group Formula Ford 2000 championship: 1, Derek Lawrence, 92; 2, Bernard Vermilio, 70; 3, Ian Taylor, 48; 4, Jeremy Rossiter, 44; 5, Damien Magee, Tiff Needell, 26.

McKechnie Wine challenge, practice times: 1, Derek Lawrence, 61; 2, Bernard Vermilio, 47; 3, Syd Fox, 46; 4, Jeremy Rossiter, 38; 5, Tiff Needell, 37; 6, Damien Magee, Frank Hopper, 25.

National Organs Formula Ford championship: 1, Geoff Lees, 97; 2, Kenny Gray, 94; 3, Rad Dougall, 47; 4, Mike Blanchet, 35; 5, Phil Dowsett, 24; 6, Matthew Argenti, 23.

Townsend Thoresen Formula Ford championship: 1, Tiff Needell, 45*; 2, Rob Wicken, 37; 3, Kenny Gray, 34; 4, David Kemp, 32; 5, Rob Newall, 18; 6, Bernard Vermilio 16. * Champion.

Radio One saloon car championship; over £2,300: 1, John Brindley, 44; 2, Brian Rice, 36; 3, Derrick Brunt, 27. **£1,700 to £2,299:** 1, Ivan Dutton 40; 2, Gerry Marshall, 28; 3, Marc Smith, 24; **£1,300 to £1,699:** 1, Jock Robertson, 57; 2, Tony Lanfranchi, 22; 3, Jean-Pierre Aux, 20. **Up to £1,299:** 1, Simon Watson, 46; 2, Tony Stubbs, 36; 3, Simon Kirkby, 23.

British Air Ferries Formula Ford championship: 1, Geoff Lees, 67; 2, Rick Morris, 64; 3, Jim Walsh, 61; 4, Rod Bremner, 29; 5, Lou de Marco, 21; 6, David Heale, 19.

National Organs Clubmen's sport car championship; 1600cc modified: 1, Geoff Friswell, 81; 2, David Orbell, 28; 3, Noel Stanbury, Creighton Brown, 24. **1600cc Formula Ford:** 1, Nick Adams, 68; 2, Nicholas Scott, 44; 3, Andrew Houston, 34.

Miller Organs Modified Sports Car championship; over 1300cc: 1, Dave Millington, 37; 2, John Pearson, 14; 3, Guy Beddington, 11. **2001cc to 3000cc:** 1, John Cooper, 18; 2, Andy Fraser, 16; 3, Nick Faure, 15. **1151cc to 1200cc:** 1, Richard Jenvey, 43; 2, John Evans, 32; 3, Dave Bettinson, 24. **Up to 1150cc:** 1, Ian Hall, 38; 2, Simon Packford, 28; 3, Barry Wood, 21.

Forward Trust Special Saloon car championship; over 130cc: 1, Dave Millington, 37; 2, Joe Russell, 12; 3, Sugden, 11. **1001cc to 1300cc:** 1, Phil Winter, 59; 2, Tony Allies, 9; 3, Dave Thoms, Tony Pearce, Fred Smith, 5. **851cc to 1000cc:** 1, Brian Prebble, 19; 2, Jeff Ward, 12; 3, Richard Long, 10. **Up to 850cc:** 1, Roger Gill, 30; 2, Cliff Watts, 26; 3, Jack Wines, 16.

Britax Production Saloon Car championship; over £2,300: 1, John Brindley, 28; 2, Derrick Brunt, 19; 3, David Howes, Roger Payne, 4. **£1,700 to £2,299:** 1, Phil Dowsett, 39; 2, Marc Smith, 21; 3, Gerry Marshall, 20. **£1,300 to £1,699:** 1, Jock Robertson, 43; 2, Tony Lanfranchi, 16; 3, Bill Sydenham, 15. **Up to £1,299:** 1, Tony Stubbs, 35; 2, Neville Knight, 23; 3, Simon Kirkby, 22.

TEAC Mini 7: 1, Andy Devine, 25; 2 Graham Wenham, 21; 3, Robert Addison, 19; 4, Alan Corbishley, 16; Richard Hamlyn, 9; 6, Alan Seekings, 9.

Renault 5 Elf challenge, final positions: 1, Neil McGrath, 153; 2, Dave Hedges, 103; 3, Stuart McCrudden, 102; 4, Trevor Peckham, 91; 5, Mick Hill, 81; 6, Keith Collier, 76.



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