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TASMAN - VEL MILETICH PROFILE - NEW RENAULT

AUTOSPORT

Mintex Dales Rally: Coleman's Escort on top

AUTOSPORT

BRITAIN'S MOTOR SPORTING WEEKLY

February 27, Vol 58 No 9

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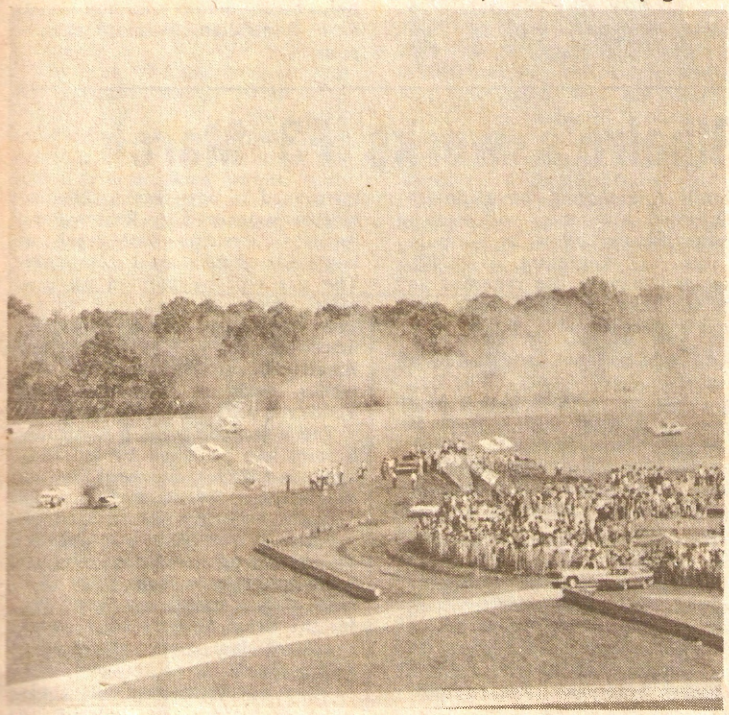

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EDITORIAL

Two weeks ago there was a meeting in London which, perhaps, held the key to the future of Britain's and, hopefully, a number of Europe's up-and-coming drivers. We are of course referring to the meeting of F5000 Europe, the main details of which we reported last week.

The Formula came out of the doldrums two years ago and since then has gone from strength to strength and now stands, without question, on its own feet. However, in gaining its current position a number of inherent problems have been thrown up. It was these that the meeting was convened to sort out. In brief the problems have generally centred around the policing of the formula which failed to make it clear whether or not it should be run on an amateur or professional basis.

The criticisms had been voiced from outside the Formula but were also keenly felt within and it was from F5000 Europe that the current changes originated. The main proposal put forward was that Motor Race Consultants should take over the administration of the Formula. This was unanimously accepted.

MRC, with their vast experience of European race organisation, are the only organisation who can put together an attractive package for the, so far, rather reluctant European organisers. With a number of the well-established European formulae heading for a hard time, mainly due to rather untimely regulation changes, F5000 makes sense, especially for British drivers. The regulation changes will mean an enormous rise in the cost of competing in, for example, F2 and sports car racing, whereas the F5000 regulations are unlikely to change for sometime—in Europe at least. Also of course the majority of the European championship rounds are in Britain, which makes life a little easier for finding sponsors and cuts costs for the privateer.

The pattern is already being set in this country—a number of promising drivers have turned to F5000 rather than F2. If a number of European drivers can be attracted into the Formula (there is an attractive offer which will be included in the package for potential organisers in Europe), then it should provide a desirable proposition for organisers.

The Championship prize money fund as it stands is halfway to being satisfactory. The major races have in the region of £9000 prize funds which, for this country, is acceptable. If a really attractive circus is put together containing perhaps as many as twelve drivers who have competed in Grand Prix racing and another eight or ten who are looking for the opportunity, European organisers who currently run, for example, F2 races without any star names for anything up to £27,000 per race, should be prepared to put on races at less than their current prices but with an increase in present F5000 money. All in all it makes sense from competitors', promoters' and organisers' points of view.

our cover picture

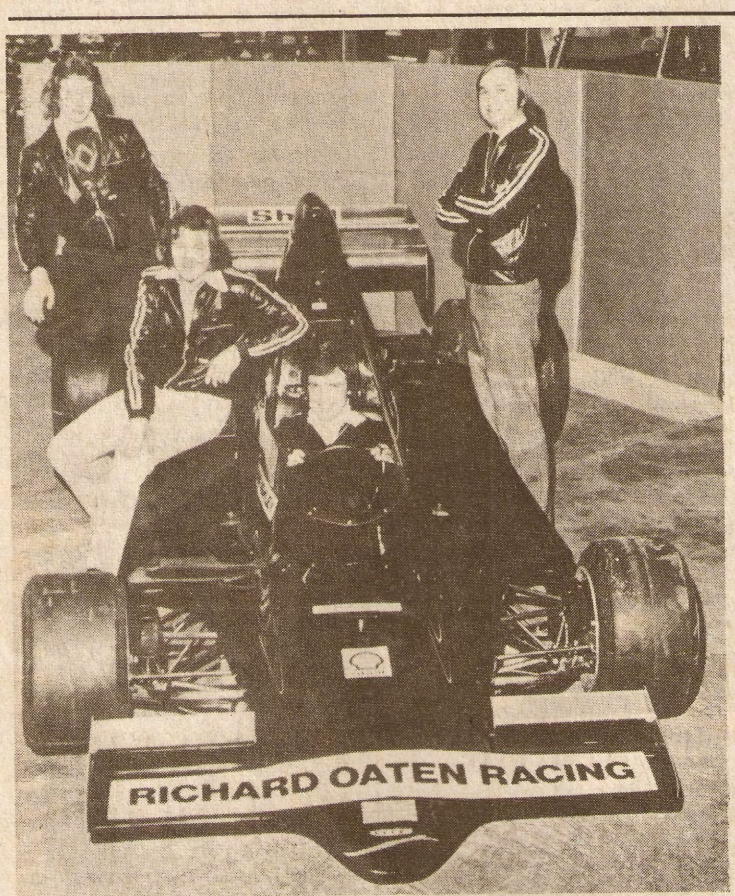
The exuberant style of Billy Coleman's earned him a fine win on the Mintex Dales Rally last weekend. Photo : Hugh Bishop

Hailwood to quit?

It looks almost certain that the long and illustrious career in motor sport of Britain's Mike Hailwood is over.

He hobbled out of a Johannesburg hospital earlier this week, after another operation on the leg he broke in the German Grand Prix last year, and said: "I don't think I'll ever race again. This is going to take at least another six months to recover and I think by then I'll be stale. I might change my mind later, but honestly I think it's unlikely."

Hailwood flew to South Africa in December to see specialist surgeons after British doctors failed to restore full articulation of his right ankle. He had an operation last week when both of the bones were rebroken and reset. The South African surgeons are now confident that he will have full use of the ankle again but it'll be a long process.



Ian Ashley sits in his new black F5000 Lola T400 surrounded by his mechanics and team manager Mike Smith (right).

Ashley's F5000 plans

Ian Ashley should have his best chance yet of taking the Shell-Sport European F5000 Championship, following the announcement last week of the Richard Oaten Racing Team.

Ashley will have a brand new Lola T400 which will be prepared by former F5000 entrant and now co-sponsor Ian Ward. Further backing for the team comes from ShellSport and Chequered Flag.

Although he seems to have been racing for a long time, Ashley is only 27. Since he switched to F5000 a couple of years ago he has shown a very mature and rapid style which has given him a number of F5000 victories. He is probably the favourite at the moment to take this year's championship.

Richard Oaten has been involved in motor sport for nearly ten years, particularly with Ashley in the past two years. An oil trader in the City he is described as, "a 32-year-old red-headed extrovert, who travels round the world on business." After their brief foray into F1 at the end of last year Oaten justifies his return to F5000 by saying, "It's impossible to justify a private F1 effort in the current economic climate. We saw what Grand Prix racing's all about in the four races we entered last year, and although we'd obviously have to consider any serious offer that came along, right now F5000 is a much more viable proposition."

The T400 will have Chevrolet engines prepared by Roy Fewkes and the team will have Ashley's successful T330 model as a back-up.

Goss wins but it's Brown's title

Although John Goss was the surprise victor of the final Tasman round at Sandown Park, Australia, last weekend, it was Warwick Brown who took the title by a mere one point.

The final race in this eight-race series saw Brown, Graeme Lawrence and Johnnie Walker all tying for the lead and whoever finished highest at Sandown would win.

John Goss—surprise win.

Brown led away from the start in his white Pat Burke Lola T332-Chevrolet and looked to have everything in the bag. The young Australian's task was made a little easier when Johnnie Walker had a huge accident in his Repco-powered Lola T332 on the first lap and eliminated himself. Then Lawrence started a succession of pit stops that dropped him right out of contention. It looked cut and dried for Brown but then, with just a few laps remaining, the Lola swooped into the pits for fuel.

Up into the lead went Goss in his Matich A53-Repco and he held on to win from John McCormack (Elfin MR6-Repco) and Max Stewart (Lola T330-Chevrolet). Fourth was Kevin Bartlett in his spare Lola T332 followed by Chris Amon in the Talon MR1-Chevrolet, complaining of a poor engine.

As for Brown, he managed to salvage sixth place and the single point that made him the very first Australian Tasman champion.

Ribeiro's works F3 March

March Engineering have finally confirmed that they will run a works two-car effort in Formula 3 this year. Therefore, as in F2, they will have to be regarded as the top team in the formula and logical pacesetters.

At the moment, the Bicester concern have only finalised arrangements with Brazilian Alex Ribeiro to drive although it is "99 per cent certain," according to March's Sandro Anglieri, that Swede Gunnar Nilsson will handle the second car.

Ribeiro, who has been back in England for a couple of weeks now, was known to be "shopping around" for a suitable chassis. His inclusion in the works March team is indeed quite a coup for the company as, despite his untidyness last year (due to inexperience), the young Brazilian has shown a tremendous amount of tenacity. As we have already mentioned in past issues, Ribeiro will be sponsored by Rastro Perfumes, Copersucar and Mangels, a large Sao Paulo steel company. The car will be painted an unusual shade of pink and white and will be powered by a Nova-motor-prepared Toyota engine. Ribeiro makes his debut for the works team at Thruxton this Sunday.

The second seat alongside Ribeiro will be filled by Nilsson, again in a Toyota-powered March, the bearded Swede who showed his prowess during two races on British soil late last season driving his private March. Unlike Ribeiro, Nilsson has three F2 races to his credit, having driven for the Brian Lewis team on two occasions last year. March designer Robin Herd reckons that Nilsson shows remarkable similarity in his way of thinking to Niki Lauda. Could March be on to another winner?

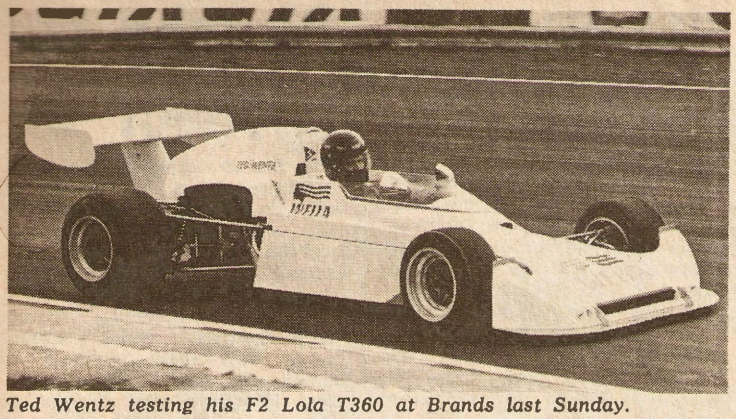
New Tyrrell for SA

In an effort to make up for their rather unspectacular races in Argentina and Brazil, Elf Team Tyrrell have taken a much modified car to Kyalami. In addition, of course, they need to give Jody Scheckter the best possible chance of winning his home GP.

The new car will be known as 007/6. Its revised features include coil-sprung rear suspension in place of the troublesome torsion bars — the whole lot set out with revised geometry.

The water radiators have been moved farther to the rear and, according to Ken Tyrrell "positioned at an angle similar to the Lotus 76, so God help us."

The roll-over hoop has been narrowed and tailored into the airbox which, itself, has been tapered at the rear to give a better airflow on to the wing.



Ted Wentz testing his F2 Lola T360 at Brands last Sunday.

Wentz's F2 Lola

Currently putting in an extensive test programme are the Wella Lola team, not, however, for the Atlantic championship. A peep under the engine cover reveals no less than an F2 Ford BDG prepared by John Dunn's Swindon concern who of course prepare the Lola's Atlantic engines. The purpose of this programme is to contest Wella's own F2 meeting at Thruxton, although if that should go well, they may try one or two more races.

The man who has been putting the Lola through its paces is of course Ted Wentz. The work involved in converting the Atlantic Lola to F2 spec has taken around three weeks, with deformable structure being built up by Maurice Gomm's Old Woking concern, and such refinements as a life support system have had to be built in. However, the tankage remains the same, which basically means that the "F2" car can only run in two part races. The idea has the official blessing of Eric Broadley.

Wentz put in three test sessions over the weekend, two at Goodwood and one at Brands Hatch. He found the power very smooth, "not peaky like an Atlantic engine," and after various small problems, finally recorded a 1 m 10.8 s at Goodwood "just as the heat was going out of the sun." It seems that for the coming weekend, the team will not bother about the Atlantic round at Brands Hatch, but hope to get an entry, as a dress rehearsal, at Thruxton in the libre race. Up to this stage, the team are very happy with the way things have gone, and are encouraged to compete in more F2 races.

Petty wins at Richmond

Having failed to win the Daytona 500 the previous week, Richard Petty was back in the NASCAR winner's circle at Richmond, Virginia, last Sunday. Driving his familiar STP-backed Dodge, the "living legend" won by 6 laps.

Petty qualified on pole accompanied by Daytona winner Benny Parsons (Chevrolet Chevelle) who led initially for the first 60 laps around the tiny 0.542 mile track. However, the first 40 laps were run under the yellow caution light as the race started on a damp track.

Once in the lead, Petty cruised away effortlessly over the next 40 laps, to score his 165th Grand National NASCAR win and his ninth victory at Richmond out of his last 10 starts at the track! Second was the Chevelle of Lennie Pond with Parsons next up followed by the Ford Torinos of Richard Brooks and Elmo Langley.

Petty's win moves him into the lead of the GN series and after three rounds he has 487 pts. Second and third are Bobby Allison (355) and David Pearson (345), both of them missing the Richmond race, while Parsons is next up on 341 pts. No longer do the larger NASCAR races carry a higher points scoring system than others. The next round is the Carolina 500 at Rockingham this weekend.

Crawford's Chevron drive

Although it was originally thought that Stephen Choularton would not be able to carry on in Formula Atlantic this year due to lack of funds, the news has broken that patron of SDC Racing will, after all, be back racing this season. So, too, for that matter will Jim Crawford, the John Player-Team Lotus contracted driver who came so close to winning the John Player Atlantic series last year in one of Choularton's Marches.

Choularton has found the necessary financial backing from a group of business associates and has bought a brand new Formula Atlantic Chevron B29. He has also negotiated the purchase of the B29 that has been testing in America recently and this car will be driven by Crawford.

The team, which will be known once again as SDC Racing, will be based at premises near the Chevron factory in Bolton but will be run "completely separately." They will concentrate on the John Player series and it is expected that at least one car will be ready for Crawford to race at the opening Player's round at Mallory Park on March 9.

New Lola F1 ready

In the time available between Brazil and South Africa, there has been much activity down at the Graham Hill Racing workshops in an effort to finish off work on a brand new Embassy Lola for team driver Rolf Stommelen.

According to team manager Ray Brimble, the new car is basically an interim model but has been designed by Eric Broadley at Lola Cars. It features an entirely new monocoque and is "really quite different." A great deal of weight has been shaved off (the cars were known to be too heavy) and a lot of ancillary equipment has been repositioned. The front and rear suspension geometry has been revised as well as many other changes.

However, the Embassy team wasn't able to produce new bodywork for the car in time so the team have modified the existing panels to fit the T371, as it will now be called. A T372 version is expected to appear in time for the Spanish GP. Meanwhile, Graham Hill's own T370 has been slightly modified, although it still retains the old tub.

Jody's quickest at Kyalami

Three Grand Prix teams took the opportunity of testing at the Kyalami circuit late last week in readiness for this weekend's Grand Prix. Motor Racing Developments sent along one of their Martini-Brabham BT44Bs for Carlos Pace, McLaren had an M23 for Emerson Fittipaldi, while Elf Tyrrell made their first appearance with the new revised Tyrrell for both Patrick Depailler and Jody Scheckter to try.

Heavy rain overnight meant that testing didn't start until 2 pm on Thursday afternoon. Depailler took out the Tyrrell and quickly got down to 1 m 17.2 s.

On Friday, the three teams continued with Emerson getting into the mid-17s, eventually ending up on an unofficial 1 m 17.41 s. Pace, on the other hand, wasn't having a terribly happy time with the Brabham and towards the end of the day, the Brazilian locked a brake going into the right-hander after the main straight and knocked off a corner. The rear suspension was slightly damaged but the car was readied by the following morning. Pace had circulated in the mid-17s until then. Meanwhile, Depailler pressed onward with the Tyrrell, breaking into the 16 s to record 1 m 16.9 s. It wasn't until late in the day that Scheckter got out in the car.

Jody Scheckter—quickest.

Due to claims of insufficient practice, both Jody and Emerson were allowed out for a further two hours on Saturday morning, Jody getting into the groove to record the quickest time so far at 1 m 16.7 s which bodes well for the weekend.

Frank's new F1 delayed

Another team making good use of the time available between Grands Prix is Frank Williams Racing. The patron himself told us last week that the two old cars he would be sending to South Africa for Arturo Merzario and Jacques Lafitte had been substantially altered since Brazil.

The radiators, which are tucked in behind the front wheels, have been repositioned at the front of the cars while a full width wing has been hung forward "like the Hesketh."

When we asked Frank about his new car, he said that it had been delayed somewhat and that there would be no way it would be ready in time for the Spanish GP, hence the latest mods to his existing cars.

● Tony Fall will be making a welcome return to the race tracks this season driving one of his DOT Opel Commodore GS/Es in the National SO/RAC series.

● Will any teams contemplating the European F5000 trail please contact Motor Race Consultants, the formula's new troubleshooters, on 01-930 9546.

F3 GRD for Taylor

As we indicated last week Ian Taylor will be driving the works GRD F3 this year. Mike Warner confirmed this on Tuesday morning saying, "It is a complete works car and will be entered by GRD Ltd. Ian has got personal backing from Ken Hensley, who is keen to help him get back to the position he held as one of the country's leading up-and-comers.

"I've been a staunch supporter of F3 over the past six years and am looking forward to getting back to the basics and enjoying racing again. I'm not in deals this year."

The new GRD 375 will run with Holbay Pinto engines and Dunlop tyres. The current plan is to take in the first four races, Thruxton, Aintree, Silverstone and Monaco. The set-up will then be reviewed before going into the BP championship in full and taking in a number of prestigious continental events.

Taylor, who had a lean year in 1974 following the collapse of a sponsorship deal, was Forward Trust F3 champion in 1973 and well placed in the John Player Championships. In 1972 he won virtually every Formula Ford Championship in his works Dulon LD9.

His backer Ken Hensley is a guitarist with the Uriah Heep group and a keen follower of racing. "He's a real enthusiast," said Warner. Hensley will in fact be racing himself this year in an FF 2000 Dulon.

Ian Taylor—back to F3.

Kuwashima back for F2

Masami Kuwashima, the amiable Japanese driver who showed so much promise in Formula 2 last year, will be contesting the European F2 Championship trail once again this year.

Kuwashima has retained backing from Graviner fire extinguisher systems and the Japanese Sanyo radio/hi-fi concern and will again be run under the guidance of Roy Kennedy.

The team will be based as usual in London and will probably race a brand new March 75S-BMW; this should be ready in time for the Thruxton meeting at Easter. Kuwashima's March from last year has been left in Japan where Masami will race it in local events that do not clash with his European commitments. Ray Jones will look after the car.

US F5000 for Adamowicz

America's first ever Formula 5000 champion Tony Adamowicz will be making a return to the formula this coming season driving an all new American-built F5000 car.

Adamowicz, who won the title back in 1969 driving an Eagle, is due to drive the Lance SR, designed and built by Lance Smith, and the car is scheduled for testing in the next month. According to Smith, the chassis bears some resemblance to the F1 McLaren and Ferrari but, "it's not exotic, just a basic car." Smith has worked for Carroll Shelby and Roger Penske in the past fabricating chassis.

There are plans to run a second car for the rapid IMSA driver Steve Behr.

● Mario Casoni and Reinhold Joest will race a Porsche 908/4 this year sponsored by Ovoro Liquore.

Tony Lanfranchi's Plymouth Hemicuda made its first public appearance at Brands last Sunday. After setting some promising times, Tony will use the car in the national SO/RAC series.

Skoda ace for F5000

West Countryman John Turner, well known for his splendid exploits last season in the fabulous Leda F5000-based Skoda super saloon, is moving up into single seaters for the coming season.

Having sampled Chevrolet V8 power in a saloon, Turner has decided to move into F5000 like his counterpart and arch-rival Mick Hill. A Lola T330 has been purchased and will be run by Turner's IAS Racing Team in the Shellsport European Championship.

F3 Modus for Clark

Formula Ford driver Pete Clark, who drove an FF Crosslé 16F last season under the Wisharts Garage banner, is moving up into Formula 3 this year.

Having sold his Crosslé to Ernie Blane, Clark has purchased the ex-Tony Brise/Ivor Goodwin Modus M3 and will run it in the BP rounds with a Neil Brown-prepared Ford t/c engine.

Although the car will run in Wishart's colours once again, Clark will be backed by Denis Thurlbeck and his Algarve Air Ltd company which is based in Hastings. Thurlbeck, who lives in Whitby, builds villas in Portugal and also runs a tour operation in conjunction with air charters.

New March 2-litre team

Alroy Racing will be a new name on the 2-litre sports car scene this year. The team has been formed by former Paulenco men Alan Stubbs and Roy Johnson. They will be continuing their association with March and will be running two new 75S models.

The two drivers for the team will include none other than former F1 driver Mike Beuttler and experienced Portuguese sports car driver Mario Cabral.

Beuttler, whose last race was at last year's British Airways 1000, and Cabral will have a car each for the short races while Alroy directors, Johnson and Stubbs will be co-driving. The cars will be based at Colin Andrews' Hardwick Garage in Banbury. The cars will use Ford BDG units prepared by March Engines.

Alroy will run one car at the Le Mans 4 and 24 hour races. With sponsorship from Techni-Management the drivers will be Richard (Martini) Knight and Christian Mons for the four hours with Mike Knight joining them for *le vingt quatre heures*.

Piranha to sponsor BL

The British Leyland/Broadspeed Dolomite Sprint Team will be sponsored by Piranha Ignitions this year. Drivers for the team will be Andy Rouse and *Motor's* Roger Bell. Ralph Broad expects the cars to give an extra 30 bhp this year, following recent homologations, which should serve well their attempts to retain the RAC Championship. The Piranha electronic ignition system will, of course, be used on the cars. Testing is due to start this week.

Briefly . . .

● According to reports, the works Toyota Celica GT which John Markey raced last year, was seen to be lapping rather quickly at Snetterton a fortnight ago with Win Percy at the wheel. Percy drove the Samuri Motor Company's Datsun 240Z last year. Also trying the Celica were John Burbidge and *Motor's* Rex Greenslade.

● Work is currently progressing on David Purley's Ford V6-powered F5000 Chevron. However, it will not be ready in time for the Race of Champions in a fortnight's time.

● Five "all-American" GT Chevrolet Monzas are currently being prepared by three teams for the IMSA series. They will be driven by Tony DeLorenzo, Mo Carter, Horst Kwech, Bill Webbe and Harry Theodoracopulos and although none will be ready for the Sebring 12 Hours race on March 22, all of them should make the Road Atlanta round.

● Both Freddy Kottulinsky and Britain's John Morrison will be competing in the next round of the American FSV series at the Sebring 12 Hour race in three weeks time. Kottulinsky will be in one of Carl Haas' new Lolas while Morrison will once again be in a Fred Opert-entered Supernova.

● Salt Walther, the USAC driver who made world headlines in that horrifying Indy shunt two years ago, has bought a Junior Johnson Chevrolet and will probably run most of the NASCAR circuit in it.

● Nigel Stovin-Bradford, who will be running a Camaro in the SO/RAC saloon series, has received additional backing from Valvoline, the American company.

● The SCCA have proudly announced that roughly 70 road racing drivers and teams have announced their intentions to compete in the forthcoming American F5000 series.

● South African driver Danny Alderton, who raced a G1 Honda Civic last year and Formula Fords previous to that, has ordered a new F3 March 753.

● Spaniards Xavier Juncadella and Emilio Zapico are hoping to form a national Formula 2 team and are currently negotiating the purchase of two March-BMW chassis.

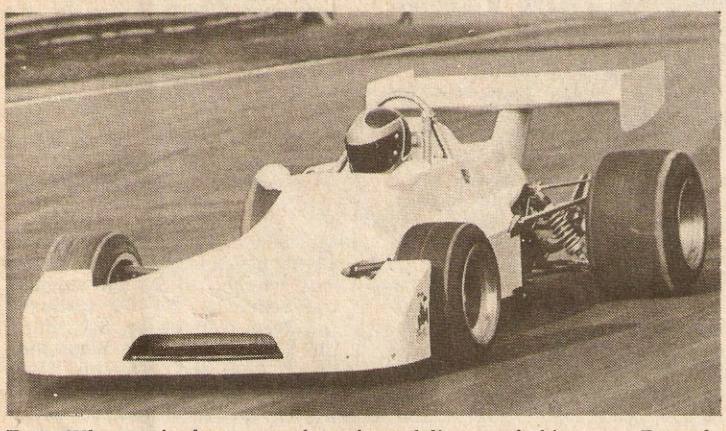
Renault and the Unsers

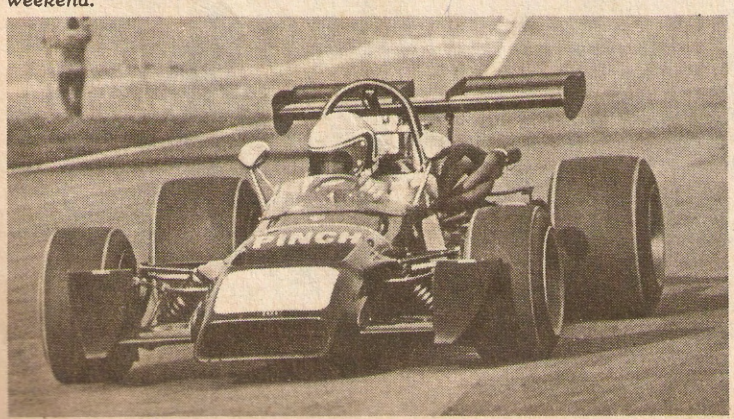
On hearing that Bobby and Al Unser had signed for Renault, one's first thought was that either the French firm was considering an attempt at Indianapolis or that sports car racing in Europe was going to see a couple of quick Americans. Neither is unfortunately true as was revealed at a press conference in Paris last week. The facts are that Renault USA has signed up these two extremely successful racing drivers to promote Renault cars in the States.

What they will be doing is taking journalists out on the Stateside tracks in Renault 5s, prior to major race meetings, to explain how they will be driving in the races themselves.

The pair of them were off the next day to Paul Ricard where they were going to have a go in Renault's 2-litre turbocharged sports car. This was not a serious test drive but just a bit of fun to let off steam before they headed for home and the start of their racing season. Al was looking forward to it and said that he would enjoy driving a car that was so forgiving and light. It was astonishing to hear him say that the American Stock Cars are grossly maligned by the Europeans as they are often far more controllable than an Indy car.

The talk later turned to what Renault were planning to do with their new V6 engines. The four valve per cylinder Gordini engine that powers the sports prototype is rather different from that of the new R30 TS that has just been announced. The Gordini engine Type CHS has its cylinders in the same 90 degree V of the 30 TS engine that has been developed by the Societe Franco-Suedoise de Moteurs PRV, which will provide such engines for Volvo and Peugeot as well as Renault, but there the similarity ends. The Gordini block is in cast iron with nitrided steel liners and swept capacity amounts to 1997 cc with a bore of 86 mm and stroke of 57.3 mm. Fitted with the turbo compressor it gives something like 490 bhp at 9,900 rpm and it is hoped to carry this over the 500 bhp mark before very long. Without the turbo, it will give 285 bhp at 9,800 rpm, which is still quite useful for other applications than sports prototypes. The Renault management would not be drawn too much on this subject but it is clear that such engines will be made available to drivers of sufficient prowess at the right price and the prize money associated with Formule Renault is correspondingly large. They have plans to use this engine in Formula Two with the co-operation of March Engineering and the final parting shot was that it would not seem unsuitable for Formula One, either in a 1500 cc version or in 2-litre form if the Formula is about to be changed.





Tom Wheatcroft has recently taken delivery of his new Formula Atlantic Chevron B29 which Richard Morgan (above) will use until their own design is completed. John Nicholson, the current Player's Atlantic champion, has handed over his Lyncar to ex-McLaren mechanic Phil Sharp and will race Alan McCall's Tui (below) instead at Brands this weekend.

USAC gets under way

The United States Auto Club's 11 round championship series gets under way with the running of the California 500 at the Ontario Motor Speedway during the next two weeks. Two 100-mile qualifying races will take place this weekend to determine grid positions for the March 9 500 despite repeated stories of cutbacks among the USAC entrants.

Ontario Motor Speedway have received at least as good an entry as they have for the past two years and many of the top teams will be sporting new cars or sponsors. USAC champion Bobby Unser heads the entry of more than 40 cars in the loan works Jorgensen Steel Eagle. Although Unser's USAC schedule includes only four championship races, there is a strong possibility that AAR may obtain enough further backing to campaign the complete series.

The California 500 will be the first race run under USAC's new fuel and turbo restrictions. The 2.4 mpg fuel formula will mean a car will have just 208 gallons to get it through the 500 miles. This represents a reductions of nearly 40 per cent from that allowed two years ago. These restrictions incidentally do not apply to the 5.25-litre stock-block class, none of which has been entered for Ontario.

Sawyer's new travel deal

In these days of rapidly increasing costs and constant currency fluctuations, many racing teams who have to travel abroad may well start to find the going getting even tougher. However, it is reassuring to know that some organisations do exist who can ease the worries and make travelling so much easier.

One man who knows an awful lot about just these problems is Rod Sawyer, a former F5000 and F1 team manager who, until last week, worked for the James Vance Travel Group. Sawyer has since left to set up his own business called the Relionus Travel Service at 87 Edgware Road, Marble Arch, London, W2. Tel: 01-723 2243.

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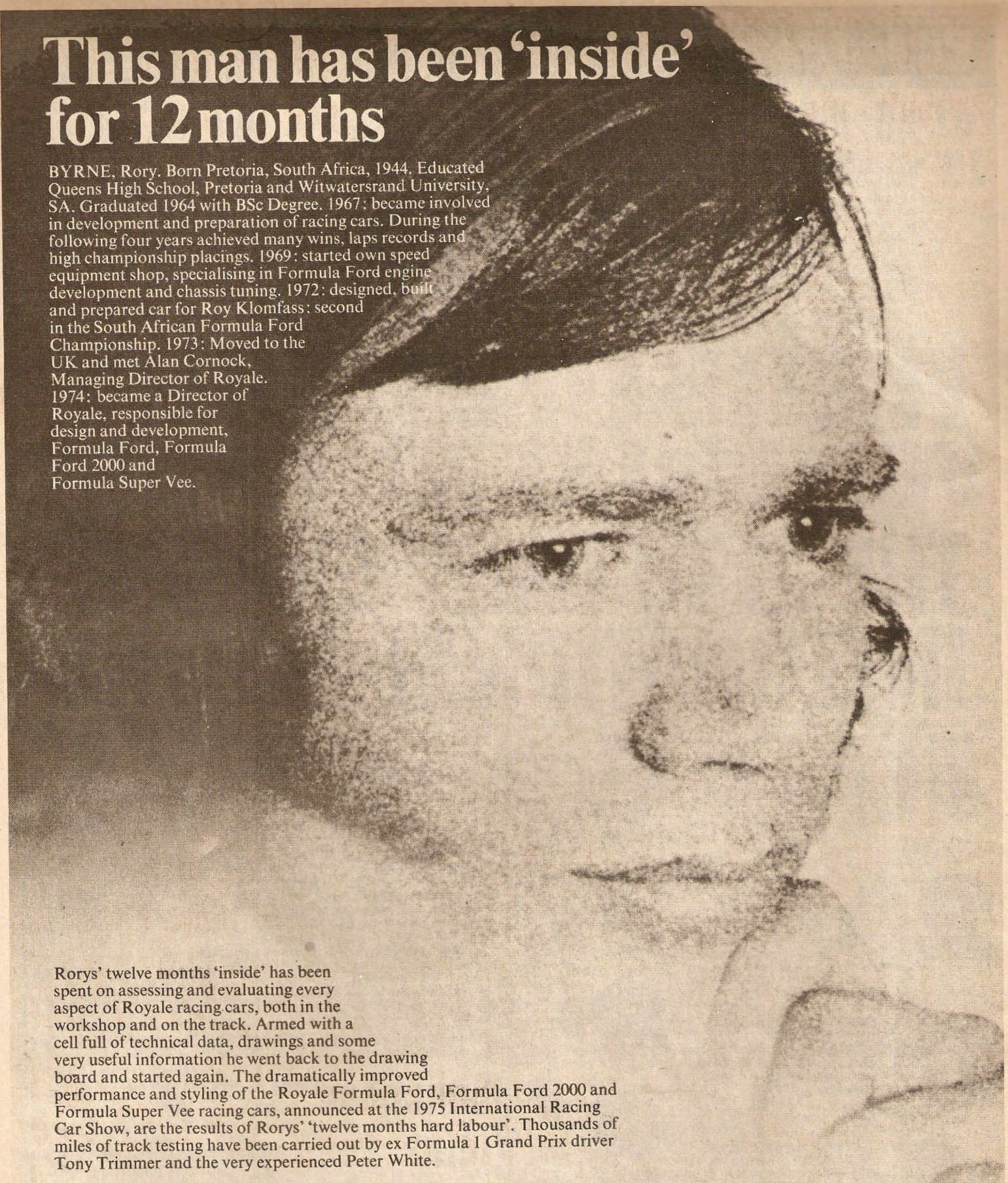
This man has been 'inside' for 12 months



BYRNE, Rory. Born Pretoria, South Africa, 1944. Educated Queens High School, Pretoria and Witwatersrand University, SA. Graduated 1964 with BSc Degree. 1967: became involved in development and preparation of racing cars. During the following four years achieved many wins, laps records and high championship placings. 1969: started own speed equipment shop, specialising in Formula Ford engine development and chassis tuning. 1972: designed, built and prepared car for Roy Klomfass: second in the South African Formula Ford Championship. 1973: Moved to the UK and met Alan Cornock, Managing Director of Royale. 1974: became a Director of Royale, responsible for design and development, Formula Ford, Formula Ford 2000 and Formula Super Vee.

Rorys' twelve months 'inside' has been spent on assessing and evaluating every aspect of Royale racing cars, both in the workshop and on the track. Armed with a cell full of technical data, drawings and some very useful information he went back to the drawing board and started again. The dramatically improved performance and styling of the Royale Formula Ford, Formula Ford 2000 and Formula Super Vee racing cars, announced at the 1975 International Racing Car Show, are the results of Rorys' 'twelve months hard labour'. Thousands of miles of track testing have been carried out by ex Formula 1 Grand Prix driver Tony Trimmer and the very experienced Peter White.

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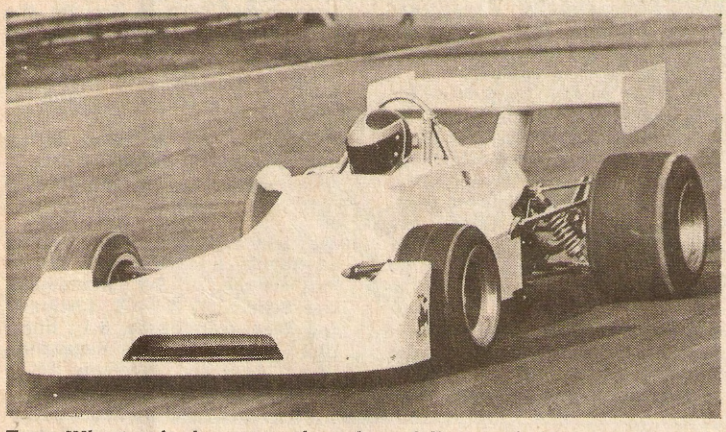
Renault and the Unsers

On hearing that Bobby and Al Unser had signed for Renault, one's first thought was that either the French firm was considering an attempt at Indianapolis or that sports car racing in Europe was going to see a couple of quick Americans. Neither is unfortunately true as was revealed at a press conference in Paris last week. The facts are that Renault USA has signed up these two extremely successful racing drivers to promote Renault cars in the States.

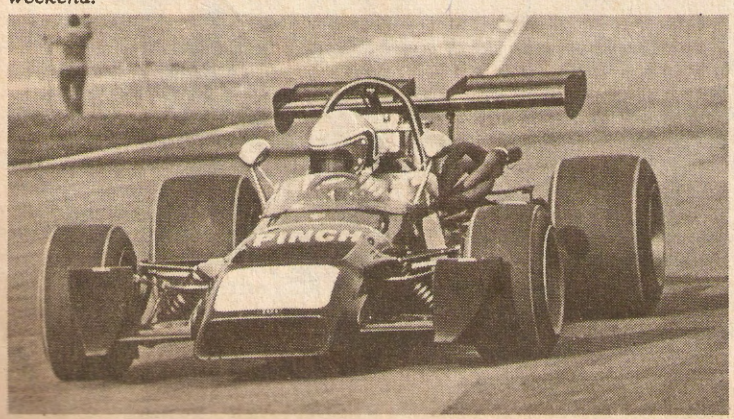
What they will be doing is taking journalists out on the Stateside tracks in Renault 5s, prior to major race meetings, to explain how they will be driving in the races themselves.

The pair of them were off the next day to Paul Ricard where they were going to have a go in Renault's 2-litre turbocharged sports car. This was not a serious test drive but just a bit of fun to let off steam before they headed for home and the start of their racing season. Al was looking forward to it and said that he would enjoy driving a car that was so forgiving and light. It was astonishing to hear him say that the American Stock Cars are grossly maligned by the Europeans as they are often far more controllable than an Indy car.

The talk later turned to what Renault were planning to do with their new V6 engines. The four valve per cylinder Gordini engine that powers the sports prototype is rather different from that of the new R30 TS that has just been announced. The Gordini engine Type CHS has its cylinders in the same 90 degree V of the 30 TS engine that has been developed by the Societe Franco-Suedoise de Moteurs PRV, which will provide such engines for Volvo and Peugeot as well as Renault, but there the similarity ends. The Gordini block is in cast iron with nitrided steel liners and swept capacity amounts to 1997 cc with a bore of 86 mm and stroke of 57.3 mm. Fitted with the turbo compressor it gives something like 490 bhp at 9,900 rpm and it is hoped to carry this over the 500 bhp mark before very long. Without the turbo, it will give 285 bhp at 9,800 rpm, which is still quite useful for other applications than sports prototypes. The Renault management would not be drawn too much on this subject but it is clear that such engines will be made available to drivers of sufficient prowess at the right price and the prize money associated with Formule Renault is correspondingly large. They have plans to use this engine in Formula Two with the co-operation of March Engineering and the final parting shot was that it would not seem unsuitable for Formula One, either in a 1500 cc version or in 2-litre form if the Formula is about to be changed.



Tom Wheatcroft has recently taken delivery of his new Formula Atlantic Chevron B29 which Richard Morgan (above) will use until their own design is completed. John Nicholson, the current Player's Atlantic champion, has handed over his Lyncar to ex-McLaren mechanic Phil Sharp and will race Alan McCall's Tui (below) instead at Brands this weekend.



USAC gets under way

The United States Auto Club's 11 round championship series gets under way with the running of the California 500 at the Ontario Motor Speedway during the next two weeks. Two 100-mile qualifying races will take place this weekend to determine grid positions for the March 9 500 despite repeated stories of cutbacks among the USAC entrants.

Ontario Motor Speedway have received at least as good an entry as they have for the past two years and many of the top teams will be sporting new cars or sponsors. USAC champion Bobby Unser heads the entry of more than 40 cars in the loan works Jorgensen Steel Eagle. Although Unser's USAC schedule includes only four championship races, there is a strong possibility that AAR may obtain enough further backing to campaign the complete series.

The California 500 will be the first race run under USAC's new fuel and turbo restrictions. The 2.4 mpg fuel formula will mean a car will have just 208 gallons to get it through the 500 miles. This represents a reductions of nearly 40 per cent from that allowed two years ago. These restrictions incidentally do not apply to the 5.25-litre stock-block class, none of which has been entered for Ontario.

Sawyer's new travel deal

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SOUTH AFRICAN GP

Scheckter or Jarier?

"It's a chassis circuit, not a driver's" said UOP Shadow team manager Alan Rees late last week when commenting on this weekend's South African Grand Prix. He is of course talking about the 2.55 mile Kyalami circuit situated in the suburbs of Johannesburg where, on Saturday afternoon, the third round of this year's World Drivers Championship takes place.

Having firmly established their superiority during the two South American races, the UOP Shadow team has found itself refreshingly regarded as the new GP pacesetters. This is thanks to Tony Southgate's excellent DN5 chassis and the growing maturity of Jean-Pierre Jarier. The bookmakers have made the Frenchman favourite and, if what Rees says is correct about the nature of the circuit, the DN5 chassis must be in line to exercise its almost effortless adaptations from circuit to circuit once more.

The UOP Shadow team made their Grand Prix debut at Kyalami two years ago and came away with a fortunate sixth place. Could Saturday see them come away as winners? Well, they will have two DN5s on hand this time, the second chassis having been completed for Tom Pryce. "I see they haven't even quoted odds for him" mused Rees. We immediately understood what he meant.

The quickest qualifying time ever recorded at Kyalami was back in 1973 by Denny Hulme when he debuted the McLaren M23 for pole at 1 m 16.28 s. Niki Lauda's pole time last year in his Ferrari (his first of eight) was 0.3 s slower. At the sports car race last November, Jarier reckoned he could have got his Matra well under 1 m 17.0s and so it would be safe to assume the predications of the Parisian could see times well into the 1 m 15 s. One thing Kyalami does produce is closeness in times. Last year, the first 23 cars were covered by a fraction over two seconds while the first 14 were less than 1 s apart!

Challenging hard for those two vacant spots on the front row will be the works Martini-Brabham BT44Bs of last year's winner Carlos Reutemann and Brazilian GP victor Carlos Pace. The Brabham is well suited to the track and both drivers have shown good turns of speed there, Pace actually getting his Surtees on to the front row last year. A year ago, Reutemann came to Kyalami having led the first four races of the season, but failing to have won any. This year sees a similar story, the Argentinian having led the first two GPs. Will history repeat itself?

Kyalami is home ground for Jody Scheckter and so the Elf Tyrrell team will be more than keen to see Jody open this season's scoring account with a fine show in front of his supporters. Although the 007 chassis has yet to race there, both Jody and Patrick Depailler are sure to be well in the hunt. It will be particularly interesting to see how Jody's elder brother, Ian, performs in the ex-works 007 which he now races in SA for Team Gunston.

Another local who will have competitive machinery is Dave Charlton with his regular ex-works McLaren M23. Charlton,

Lella Lombardi (left) makes her GP debut while Emerson Fittipaldi (right) is defending his title.

who won the opening race of the SA F1 series a few weeks ago, is the current Kyalami lap record holder at 1 m 17.05 s achieved in an SA F1 race last year. As well as Charlton's M23, there will be the two works Texaco-Marlboro M23s for current World Champion Emerson Fittipaldi and Jochen Mass. Two fine performances by Fittipaldi see him already making headward toward his third title. It seems inevitable that he will add further points in Africa. The team have been trying out a few mods in pre-race testing last week, but according to designer Gordon Coppuck, it remains to be seen whether they will be tried for the race.

Two teams who will be desperately trying to get back into the winner's circle are John Player-Team Lotus and SEFAC Ferrari. Having finally sorted out Ronnie Peterson's problem, Lotus will give the Swede a venerable 72 once more (albeit updated yet again) and told to get on with it. Peterson achieved a 1 m 16.44 s with one such model two years ago and that would still be a competitive time this weekend one assumes. Backing him up once again will be Jacky Ickx, sadly no longer regarded as a serious threat for victory.

As for Ferrari, this weekend sees them bring out their new 312T model with its tranversely mounted gearbox. For Lauda and Clay Regazzoni, will this latest chassis enable their potent flat-12 engines to put down all its power? Last year, Lauda found it difficult to stay with Reutemann. It may well be the same story.

Apart from the two works JPS Lotus 72s, there will be a further two locally driven ex-works 72s like last year, only this time for Eddie Keizan and GP debutant Guy Tunmer.

Another likely candidate for victory, and wouldn't it be fabulous if that happened, has to be James Hunt in the Hesketh 308, the team now having opted once more for their rubber front suspension lay-out. Also not to be discarded is the American Vel's Parnelli team. Okay, so they haven't started out quite the way they would have liked, but they're never to be underestimated. Mario Andretti won his first GP victory at Kyalami in 1971 driving for Ferrari. Who knows. Once again, their Stateside counterparts hailing from Pennsylvania will be present and we can expect another workmanlike performance from Mark Donohue in the Penske PC1.

For the first time this year, March will have two works cars on hand, the first being their latest F2-based car for Vittorio Brambilla while, for the time being, the older car will be handled by Lella Lombardi, destined to become the first woman to appear in a full scale GP since the late '50s. Unlike last year's British GP where she failed to qualify, there are sufficient places on the grid for this not to happen in South Africa.

The irrepressible Frank Williams will have two revamped cars for Arturo Merzario and Jacques Laffite, obviously hoping for a repeat of Art's second row time from last year. Then the Embassy Lola team will have two suitably modified cars for Rolf Stommelen and Graham Hill. There was talk of John Surtees sending two of his TS16s, one of them for regular driver John Watson while the other choice either lay between Derek Bell or Henri Pescarolo. However, it's now just a singleton TS16 which seems well suited to the circuit and hopefully Watson will go really well

Completing the entry is a single BRM P201 for GP debutant and reigning European F5000 champion Bob Evans, this being chassis 02 last used by Jean-Pierre Beltoise. Evans is standing in for the "injured" Mike Wilds. The team have gone back to identical settings from last year's race when, during its first public appearance, Beltoise brought the P201 home in an excellent second place.

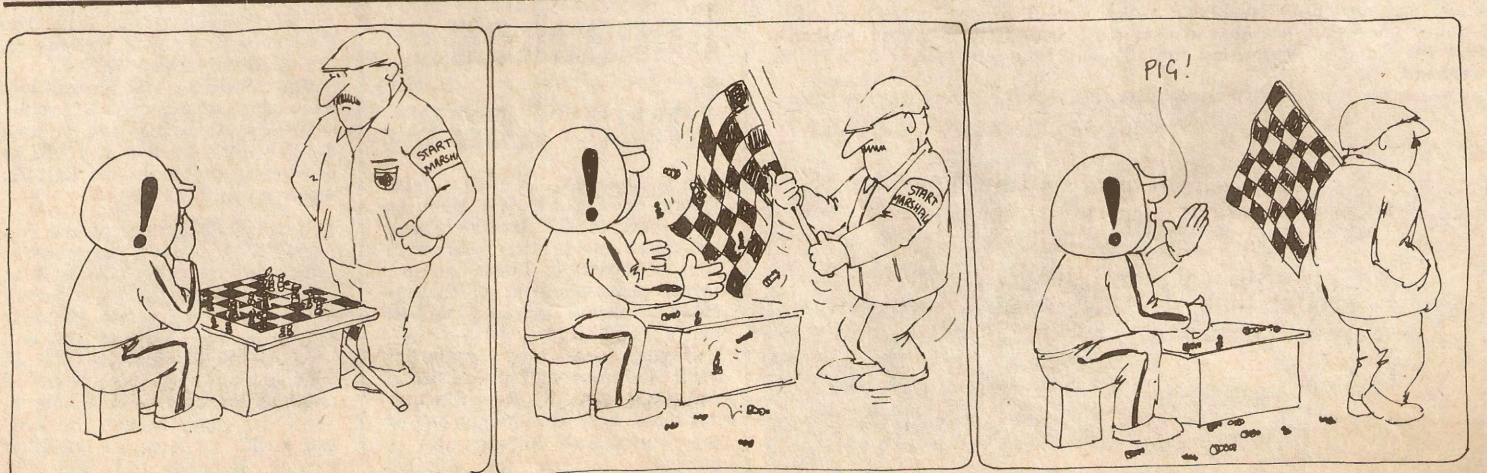
Last, but not least, is the Brazilian Copersucar-Fittipaldi for Wilson Fittipaldi.

The race can be heard during Saturday Sport on BBC Radio 2. It will be over 78 laps (198.90 miles).

● Latest Ladbrokes odds for this weekend's South African Grand Prix are: Jarier, 2-1; Reutemann and Scheckter, 4-1; E. Fittipaldi and Pace, 6-1; Lauda, 8-1; Hunt, 10-1; Depailler and Regazzoni, 14-1; Mass and Peterson, 16-1; and 25-1 bar.

CATCHPOLE

By Barry Foley



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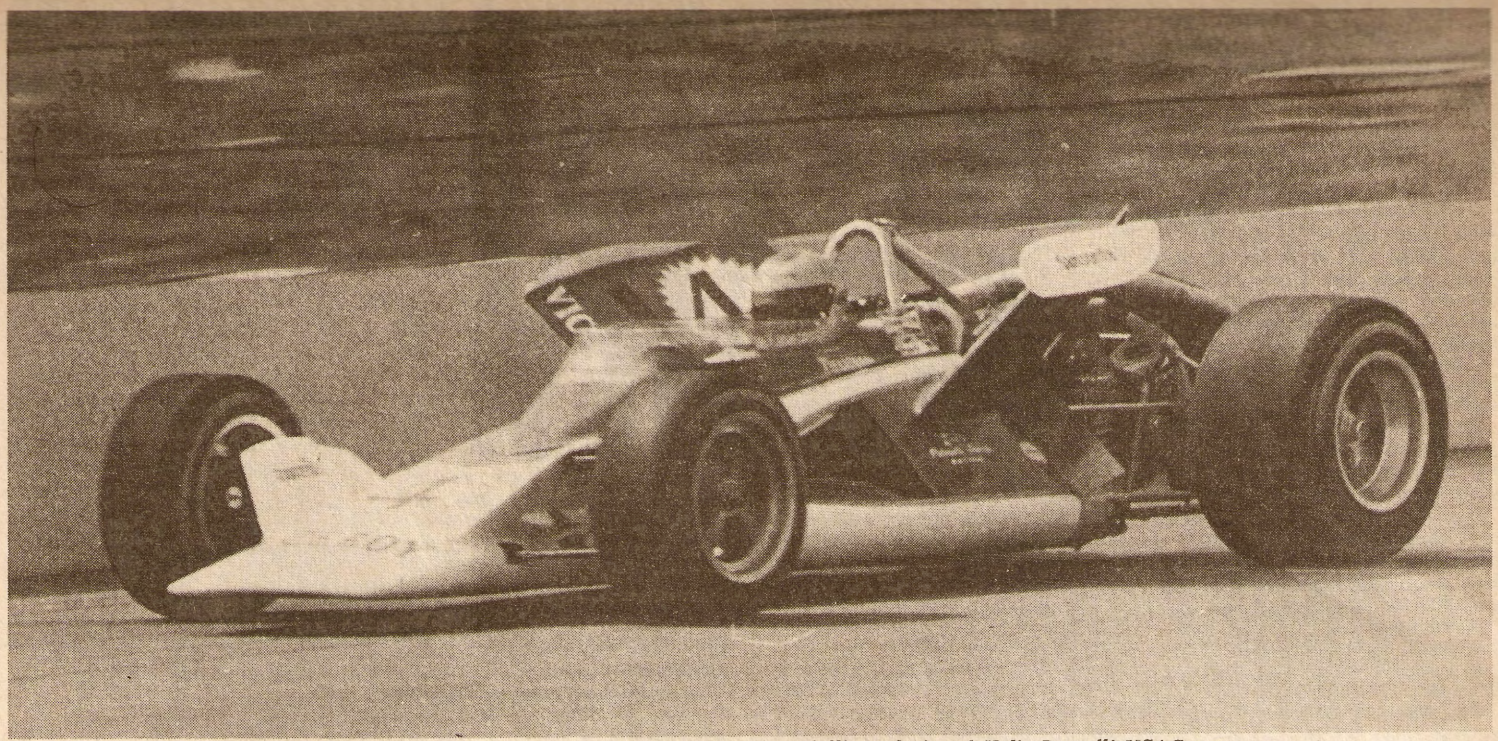


In 1972, Mario Andretti joined the team to race the new and unusual Maurice Phillippe-designed Vel's Parnelli USAC car.

Larger than life

VEL MILETICH of the Parnelli team interviewed by DOUG NYE

"Formula 1 is a new challenge. We're going in as Team USA, because our's is the real American Formula 1 car, it's the only one built there, even if we have got a lot of English people working on it for us. But we're proud to be an American team racing world-wide and of course our next goal is to win the World Championship for Mario in '75, '76 or '77, which I hope we'll achieve—all three years if we can. . . ." A deep rumble of laughter welled out of Vel Miletich's big frame as he stated his team's objectives for their newly-born Formula 1 programme. Vel's Parnelli Jones Racing had made their Grand Prix debut in Canada with a startlingly impressive Cosworth-powered car, and Mario Andretti had tigered his way home in seventh place, just outside the Championship points. Second time out, at Watkins Glen for the United States GP, Mario set fastest time in the first official practice sessions, and was then relegated to a distinctly honourable third place on the starting grid after a minor shunt. Unfortunately electrical problems afflicted the car on the start-line, and after being worked on away from the pits America's prime challenger was black-flagged and disqualified.

Vel's Parnelli have a hard-core of vastly experienced ex-Lotus personnel working on their Formula 1 project. Managing Director of the World Championship Division is Andrew Ferguson, Team Lotus racing manager in the sixties, and with him are Dick Scammel, who was formerly Lotus chief mechanic and later Andrew's successor as racing manager, and both of them are new boys to the team compared with designer Maurice Phillippe (of Lotus 72 fame) and his assistant John Baldwin.

But note the term "World Championship *Division*," for Vel's Parnelli is a giant competition organisation which builds, prepares, enters and races USAC Championship Trail track cars, Formula 5000s, dirt-track cars, off-road racers and even runs a drag-racing team in addition to its new-found Formula 1 interests. This all adds up to a multi-million dollar operation which has to be one of the biggest of its kind anywhere in the world. But if it's big in this way, it's also immensely strong on experience, for collectively its personnel have been involved in four Formula 1 World Championship victories and at least four Indianapolis "500" wins; one of them (in 1963) falling to Parnelli Jones himself as a driver.

Recently Vel Miletich was in England, working with Andrew Ferguson to arrange details of a Formula 1 home base, and putting together the transport and plant requirements for it. They have bought the ex-GRD works at Griston in Norfolk, and during a brief pause in a packed visit to gloomy England, this remarkable man talked of his team, and of motor racing as he sees it. . . .

Velko Miletich is a big man in every way. He's tall and broad, a one-time American football player, heavily built but solid with it; a powerful, impressive man. The name is Serbian, his parents having migrated to America from Yugoslavia, and Vel himself being American-born and obviously proud of it. He's a self-made millionaire and as Andretti says: "He's such an enthusiast you can't believe it. . . ."

"We have distributorship of race tyres for 11 western states, and then we have distributorships right across the United States for mag wheels."

He began working in garages when only 10 years old, and took it from there; "I worked as a mechanic," he says reflectively in his deep, gently-accented voice; "then engine rebuilder and so on through every phase there is in an automobile dealership. Then I got my own place and we've just grown from there. We got into the tyre business with Parnelli—we have

Velko Miletich — the other half.

distributorship of race tyres for 11 western states, and then we have distributorships right across the United States for mag wheels. That's a kind of fad you know; they're aluminum really, but we sell in the neighbourhood of 50,000 wheels a month. In all we have 21 different businesses you see. We own the Ontario Motor Speedway; we have building companies, tyre businesses, tyre stores, an engine rebuilding company, warehousing, of course the Ford dealership, a public relations firm and then our racing. We have our own test beds and so on for our Indy engines, and all our different teams make up a total of 47 employees just on racing in some form. We keep pretty busy. . . ."

Rufus Parnelli Jones came into Miletich's world back in the fifties; "Parnelli asked me to supply him with Ford engines from my dealership for jalopy and stock car racing. He had real ability. Jalopy racing was very competitive. They'd qualify 25 cars and then invert them so's the fastest went to the back of the field. Parnelli always went to the rear and ended up winning on the last lap or something. At that time I was running three stockers, looking for a new driver, and while we were thinkin' of calling him he was thinkin' of calling us, and we called him

before he called us because he wanted a ride in our equipment. So that led on to winning the NASCAR West Coast Championship three years in a row, and then we built sprint cars—single-seaters—for him which were backed by Fike Plumbing of Phoenix. We won the National Short Track Championship one year, and then it got to be time for Parnelli to go to Indianapolis, and he was trying to get me to sponsor him there. At that time I didn't think it was a good investment, so I made the introduction for him to J. C. Agajanian and Parnelli won the "500" for him . . . that was the year he beat Jimmy Clark's new Lotus into second place, sixty-three. . . ."

While Parnelli was with Agajanian, Miletich ran cars for Eddie Gray, who won the stock Championship, and also for Marvin Porter and, occasionally, for "Fireball" Roberts, one of NASCAR's all-time greats. He also backed a one-armed driver named Alan Heath in sprint and midget cars; "He was just fantastic—we won the Midget division and all the Sprint car races. . . . Apart from Parnelli I always had some kind of racing interest—Joe Weatherley, Chuck Stevenson, they all drove my stock cars." And did he never race himself? "Nooo—all the racing I ever had was on the streets in Torrance"—Torrance being the Californian town where Vel's Parnelli's empire is now based.

"We were selling Ford Mustangs at the time, so the Colt seemed a natural name for our own racers"

When Parnelli returned home after his Indy victory he brought the Firestone race tyre distributorship with him, and went to see Miletich; "We had been such good friends and had worked so closely that we went into partnership, I managed the tyre business right out of my Ford dealership. Later on I took him in for a percentage of my businesses and since then we have really had the most beautiful business set-up because he has the technical knowledge. We're both mechanically inclined, I'm business minded, and between us that makes a good team. He believes in goin' first class, and so do I. We believe in getting the very best people, and that's the way we are through all of our businesses. . . ."

Miletich ran a car at Indianapolis for the first time in 1967. "It was a car we'd built with the Gene White Group, copied off a Brabham Formula 1 chassis. We built two, they had one for Lloyd Ruby and ours was driven by George Snider. Parnelli and I owned it, and that year he was driving the first Turbocar for STP. He was lappin' the whole field and then he came up behind Snider and he knew if he put the Mongoose farther back he'd be costing himself money as an entrant, so he backed off, then it rained and the race was stopped overnight! We put Ruby in the car then and he took it from 24th to 11th and then Lee Roy Yarbrough lost control and took him out . . . it was kinda funny though, when Parnelli didn't want to pass his own car."

Ex-motor-cyclist Joe Leonard drove for Vel's Parnelli in 1968, when they bought his Lotus 56 turbine car after Indy, and then for 1969 the Californians hired Al Unser and his chief mechanic George Bignotti. Al broke a leg fooling around on a motor-cycle just before Indy, so Bud Tingelstad drove the team's four-wheel drive Lola T150. When Unser recovered he stormed to second place in the National Championship, and Bignotti built the team their old Colt cars, using turbocharged Ford V8 engines.

"We were selling Ford Mustangs at the time, so the Colt seemed a natural name for own racers. They were very like Lolas, but with many modifications, different metals and so on. We had real good success with them. Al won Indianapolis and the National Championship in '70 and repeated at Indianapolis in '71 when Joe Leonard took the championship for us. . . ."

For 1972 Mario Andretti joined Vel's Parnelli to form the incredibly strong "Super-Team" with Viceroy cigarettes and Samsonite luggage sponsorship. Maurice Phillippe, known to his new employers as "Mareece Phil-leepee," was hired to design new cars for the team, cars which became known as the "Parnelli by Phillippe" from the lettering on their horseshoe badge.

Late last year, the Vel's Parnelli team made their first entry into F1 with this striking Grand Prix design.

The car had its problems, and the American press evidently felt that transplanting a road-racing designer into the USAC scene barely worked. Miletich recalls: "After we looked into that car it was really excellent you know, because we were fooled by the horsepower we had. You know we were probably 70-75 horsepower down and we kept blaming the chassis.

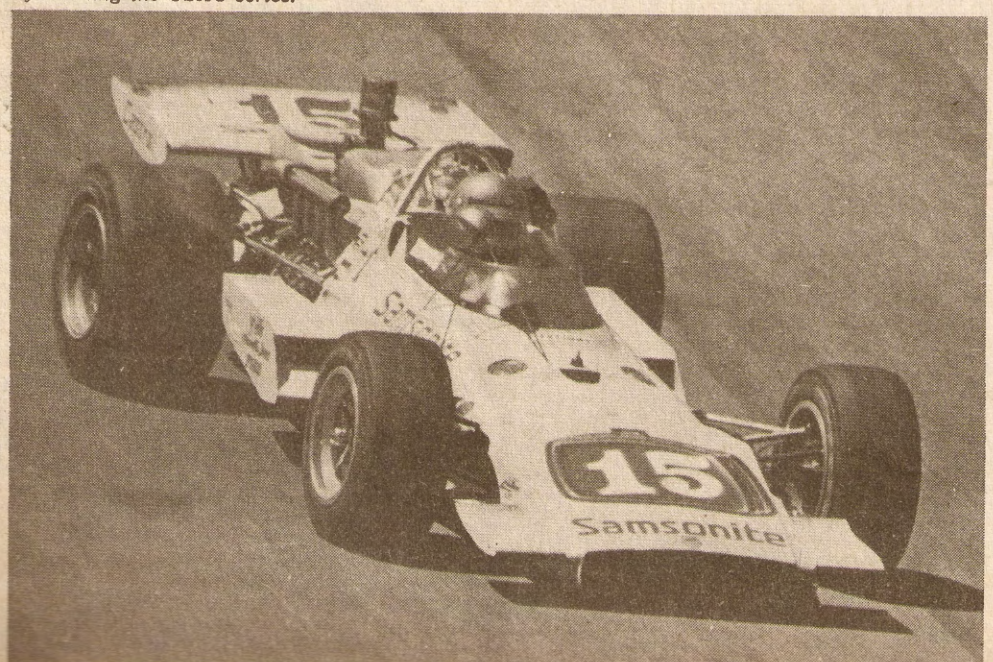
"Bobby Unser had a new turbocharger which was all kept under cover, and we finally got one only by accident. Then we found all this missing straightaway speed. We could never understand it, you know, because throughout '72 we'd be only third or fourth fastest in qualifying and then in the race we'd often be running one-two-three because they'd have to lower the boost on their super-superchargers and we ended up winning our share.

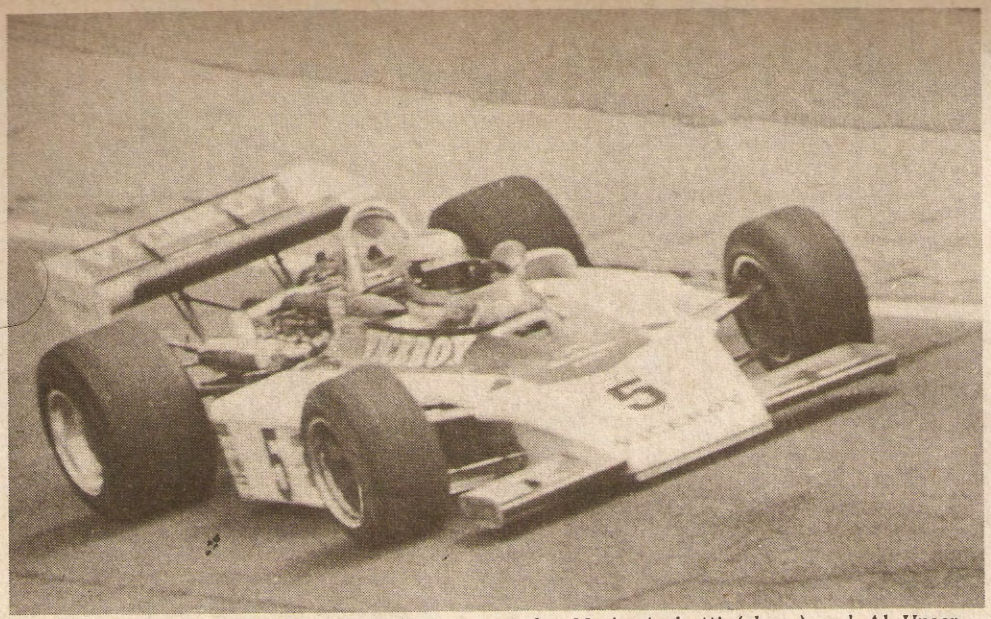
"I feel we could have done real well with that nice original angular car. It had a few problems like the roll centres were off, we took the dihedral fins off, blaming them first, but actually they seemed to work OK in keeping the car stable. Joe and Al both ran well as Pocono, but they penalised Al a lap for passing the pace car, and that put Joe first and Al third in that '500.' But it was another good championship for Joe. . . ."

For the '73 season Maurice produced a new design because, as Vel says: ". . . we felt that the fuel was in the wrong place and we wanted better aerodynamics" but apart from Mario setting a new world's closed circuit lap record in it at over 214 mph (!) it failed to impress. We had a funny little wiggle in the handling which we blamed on the chassis . . ." he laughs, and adds "again . . .", then goes on: "But when we bought Eagles that funny little wiggle was still there and it was a tyre problem. We'd built two '74 Parnellis for last year but they showed aerodynamic problems on high-speed tracks and so we bought Eagles, and we didn't fare so good with them as we had with our own cars. Joe got hurt in one of them, and at Ontario Mario ran our '73 car and out-qualified Al in a '74 Eagle which I guess proves somethin' . . . ."

These late-series Parnellis have all been Offenhauser-engined, partly because using the Ford quad-cam nowadays means buying them from A. J. Foyt who holds the manufacturing rights. But ever since Maurice Phillippe joined the team Vel and Parnelli had been thinking of eventual Formula 1. . . . "Mareece really started us thinking about Formula 1, and when Jackie Stewart retired, Goodyear approached Mario, he came to us and Firestone because he didn't really wanna make a change, and we all agreed to start our own Formula 1 project. We didn't wanna jump right into it, that's not our way. We wanted a year for development and testing, and then to run the last two races like we did to see if we were competitive. Mareece put us on to Andrew and a few others, so here we are. . . .

Joe Leonard in his Samsonite-sponsored Colt, brought the Vel's Parnelli team success in 1971 by winning the USAC series.





The team ran a pair of Eagles at Indy last year for Mario Andretti (above) and Al Unser instead of their latest USAC car.

"We started racing 5000 to get Mario, although he's a very good road-racer, back into trim and to do a lot of tyre and car development. We bought Lolas, and sent our people over here, Jim Chapman—who is excellent — and George Woodworth who was with us at that time — to prepare the cars. We were second in the championship and we should have won it, but we got some tyre problems. In the next to last race Mario was long gone but we lost a tyre. He should have won the title because he did win the last round at Riverside, but for a first year it was very successful. . . ."

At Mosport and Watkins Glen, where the torsion-bar suspended "four-inch lower Lotus 72" which is the Formula 1 Parnelli, made its first appearances, everybody was impressed by its workmanship and finish. Miletich enjoyed that immensely: "Our people did a fantastic job on that car. It's small, compact, strong and fast. I'm very proud of it. I'm not knocking anyone but I'm not that familiar with Formula 1 cars, and when we looked around at the others I thought we were the equal of anything I saw, if not better. Naturally I thrived on all the compliments I got from the other teams, even Colin Chapman came up and said how nice our car was, and I hear that's some kind of record. . . ."

" Even Colin Chapman came up and said how nice our car was, and I hear that's some kind of record . . . "

Sponsorship plans for '75 are still to be finalised, but a second VPJ4 F1 car has been completed, a third is on the way and parts for a fourth are to be made. A Formula 5000 variant is also to be produced, plus possibly a USAC car built along similar lines for the Triple Crown 500-mile races at Indianapolis, Pocono and Ontario.

With such comprehensive interests, Vel Miletich is in a uniquely justified position to comment upon the international and American racing scenes, and his views are thought-provoking. . . . "I think USAC racing in the States is going backwards, with its turbochargers and wings. Speeds at Indianapolis used to creep up by one or two miles per hour a year. If you improved that much you were really going someplace, but then the wings came in and people like McLaren were getting another 12-15 mph. When Donohue's McLaren first did that I thought he was some kind of superman, but the wings make the cars capable of handling so much horsepower it doesn't show the driver's talent. Without wings the whole ball game was a lot more difficult. It needed a lot more feel, the cars were looser and took more specialised talent to drive really fast. Now with the big doors they use for wings they're just clamped down and it's more machine than it is driver. You get 160 mph drivers doing 180 mph laps! Now wings in road racing are fine. Road racing generally requires more skill because the driver has to brake and downshift and turn different ways in different corners. On the road circuits a talented driver stands out more than he does on the tracks.

"We're gonna stay in USAC racing with Mario and Al, but we're probably only going to do the three '500s' because costs are so tremendous. Last year we ran three cars on the whole USAC circuit and spent over two-million dollars on that programme alone. This year we spent, I guess, one million seven ($1,700,000), and you certainly can't get by with a first-class two-car operation for under a million and a half. Of course it costs more building your own cars, but that way you can take every precaution for safety, and that's important. You know, USAC costs are so high that we average $10,000 bills for an Offy rebuild — that's counting routine rebuilds and majors, like when you lose a crankshaft or a block. We reckon the overall average on an F1 Cosworth is $3,000. That's why the 5000 circuit in the States is growing so fast, because a lot of drivers could afford to buy their own cars. They could buy a whole 5000 car complete with a full-race Chevrolet engine for the same money as would purchase one Offenhauser engine. . . . With costs like that you never get promising new drivers getting a chance on the USAC championship circuit, because owners won't risk their cars to a rookie. You're always going for experience, so we have all these drivers well over 30 racing on the paved ovals. On the European circuits you work up from Formula 3 to Formula 2 and then Formula 1 if you're good enough. In the States we haven't got this progression. It hurts me that in our professional USAC-type racing we are running rear-engined cars, while in the lower forms of racing, in the midgets and sprints, dirt-track racing, they keep outlawing rear-engines, so when a rookie suddenly comes into championship racing with rear-engined cars it's a whole new ball-game and he has to kinda start from scratch.

"There is no training ground for drivers in the premier league. Like in baseball, the big outfits have farm teams. Well, in USAC racing in America, there is no farm team. There's no progressive training ground at all, except," he slaps his hand down on the table emphatically, ". . . in road racing. I really think USAC will kill themselves unless they do something about restricting costs and gently changing the face of racing. . . ."

How does Miletich feel this "gentle change" should happen? "I don't see any future for our kind of racing until they run something like 3-litre racing, 5-litre stock block and blown Offenhausers restricted down to 500-horsepower. I'm not trying to get rid of the existing cars, because they're very costly to their owners, but we have put forward recommendations for restrictions on the inlet side. If you restrict the air which goes in, you restrict the power which comes out. They've tried to cut power by restricting fuel allowance, but I'd rather see intake air restricted. Running 68-inches turbocharger boost you'd have 550-600 horsepower with development. I think that's close enough to 3-litre racing and 5-litre stock blocks to encourage the entries, allowing for the engines' different characteristics. With power down like that the racing would be safer, just as interesting — because I don't think the average fan can tell whether cars are racing at 210 mph or 180 mph, it's real fast either way — there'd be lots of different types of cars, different types of engines, different

Besides Viceroy cigarettes, the Samsonite luggage concern have supported the Vel's Parnelli team through Joe Leonard in the past.

sounds. . . . What we'd be trying to do would be to make it invitational for the top Formula 1 and Formula 5000 cars, and make the USAC cars nearly equivalent so that the road-racers are competitive. It would be more interesting racing, and it would move towards a standardised world formula. It would be good to take the Formula 1 chassis rules but have the choice of three alternative engine configurations. Preferably it should make the normally aspirated engine slightly dominant, which would knock the costs way down and you could get the real sportsmen back in, owning and running cars like they do in Formula I. I feel that with the people from the FIA and the sanctioning bodies getting together, drivers from European Formula 1 would want to come to Pocono and Ontario to run the "500s" for a million dollar purse. Why not? . . ."

Miletich has been talking quietly and deeply in his carefully-reasoned way. He pauses, then adds: "Aaaah, I don't think this'll happen very quickly, but I think it should happen for the good of racing, and then maybe we'll end up with a real WORLD Championship. . . .

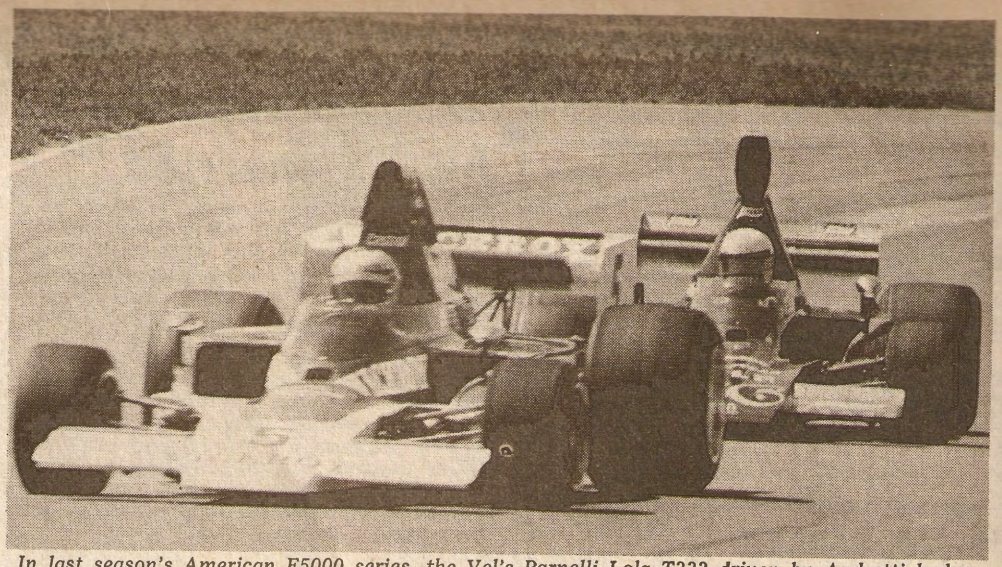
"If you limit wings more in USAC racing you'd get higher straightaway speeds and the cars would have to slow more through the turns which would add some interest for the fans, and with the Offenhausers restricted in power you could probably go three races between rebuilds, which alone would cut the costs. . . . I think it's got to come. . . ."

So USAC racing is expensive as it stands, but surely if you win Indy and some other races, the prize money is good?

"Oh, yeah — if you win Indy with endorsements and everything you're talking about a half million dollars. In 1970 our total winnings from USAC racing were $700,000, mostly from Indy, but when you figure the sponsors we've got and the drivers we've got and their endorsements, it amounts to considerably more. But on an Indy win, 50 per cent goes to the driver, the owner pays his mechanics and everything from his 50 per cent, and so the owner usually ends up with the honour and 20 per cent of the money. That's where the sponsorship comes in to support the team in a first-class operation. Of course, you've gotta be successful to get your sponsors, but that cuts both ways. When Toppertoy backed our Colts as "Johnny Lightning" cars and we won everything it was very good for them. They went from about 18th in the toy trade to second. Then they dropped racing and now they're out of business . . . toy companies have really been suffering you know. . . ."

Firestone tyres have been major backers for Vel's Parnelli. Now they are pulling out of race tyre manufacture, how is the team going to compensate, and what tyres are they going to run?

"Firestone were a large sponsor of our team — right — probably about 40 per cent. We carried quite a lot of the rest ourselves, plus our very good other major sponsors. We don't have major sponsorship for our Formula 1 programme yet, but we will run with Viceroy again in the States with Formula 5000.



In last season's American F5000 series, the Vel's Parnelli Lola T332 driven by Andretti had a tough time against Brian Redman's similar car.

"Firestone are definitely out of racing now—100 per cent. Their withdrawal certainly came as a real big shock."

"Firestone are definitely out of racing now — 100 per cent. We're thinking about making our own tyres. We have a lot of last year tyres that we've developed together, the same tyres we ran at Watkins Glen and so on." Surely they won't be competitive as the new season progresses, I remark. The big man ignores me and goes on: "We have enough tyres to last us, but we're going to have to make a deal where we make a private Parnelli brand tyre or talk to Goodyear. We will be hiring the technology to make our own. We have the specs and the moulds from Firestone in our contract settlement, which was very satisfactory. . . .

"Their withdrawal certainly came as a real big shock, but we had just started a new contract and they lived up to it and made a handsome settlement. We're going to approach the other tyre companies to see if there's any interest in them making a few racing tyres for us, on a private brand basis or under their own brand basis. We haven't made any contracts yet, but they will come in the very near future. . . ."

As owner of the Ontario Motor Speedway, Vel Miletich is in yet another unique position in that he has interests on both sides of the fence. Of his duties to the spectators he says: "I feel that motor racing sometimes forgets that the people who pay the bills are the people who come to see the racing. At Ontario we are trying to get the fans to come around and they can meet the drivers and meet the mechanics. That's what I like about Formula 1 and road racing; where the fans can get real close and associate themselves with the cars. In USAC the policy has usually been to kind of tie 'em up like a bunch of animals behind a chain link fence they have to peep through or reach through to get an autograph. We've gotta treat 'em like human beings. . . .

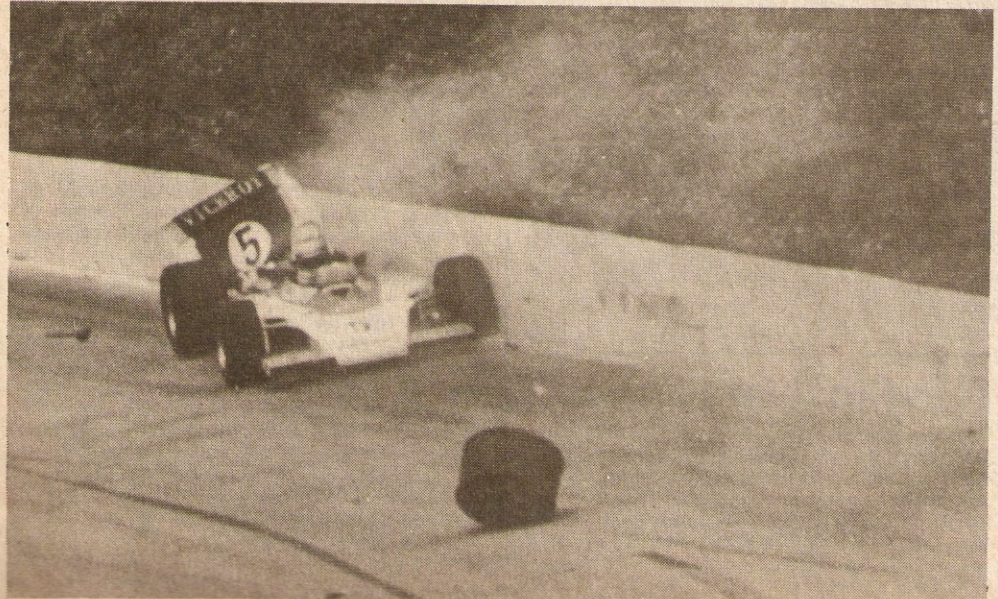
"Going back to jalopies and that kind of racing, I'd like to see the first 10 qualifiers inverted, so's the quickest goes down the field — without getting behind the bums — and has to fight his way clear. That'd make real close racing with lots of passing and overtaking — that's what the fans like to see, though, I guess, we'd have a go-slow in practising," he muses.

Naturally, Miletich has great regard for his drivers: "Mario's fantastic. He has a real desire to win. He has feel for a car, he's heady. I'd say Mario and Al are comparable, they'd turn the same times in the same car. Al is a little smoother, he's probably the coolest driver I've ever seen, and Mario's a little rougher, he likes a nervous car, he likes to throw it around. Parnelli was just like Mario. Many times he says he wishes he'd had Al's temperament. I always told Parnelli he could break an anvil with a rubber hammer. He'd always be three laps in the lead and he'd never back off. I feel fortunate that I've been associated with the greatest in Parnelli and Mario and Al. They're all legends, and that's why racing's our only advertisement. Joe too, he joined us late in his career, but he's been a fantastic motorcycle rider — that fantastic feel for a machine you know. . . ."

This man could just go on talking about motor racing all day long, if he had the time. But now this remarkably successful, remarkably — so far as Europe is concerned — under-publicised team is coming into Formula 1, and Vel Miletich's message is clear. . . .

"To me, whatever happened yesterday is history. Whenever we go to a new race this is the immediate ambition. This is the one we want to win. There can only be one winner out of the 25 or 30 cars running, and that's got to be us. The only one that's gonna leave that place happy is the winner, and we like to be happy. . . . You owe that attitude to your sponsors, and it's the one we've always had. Today the responsibilities to win are greater, but the will to win is the same, it's always been there. I mean I love it. Some people like horse racing, and some people like to relax and sit on a beach. I just enjoy automobile racing. . . ."

Sometimes even Mario gets a little outta shape!



"The Mintex Dales, with its selection of airfields, hillclimbs and stately homes to add interest to the predominantly "flat" Yorkshire forests would appear to offer no more, even including Keilder, than a segment of the RAC international."

By IAN SADLER

Less moonlighting with test tracks?

A luxury most private rally drivers can rarely, if ever, afford to indulge themselves in is "the test day." AUTOSPORT's visit to the embryonic Tarren track near Llanurig a couple of weeks ago served to demonstrate just how few and far between testing facilities are—and how expensive the operation is. Short of taking your car, suitably camouflaged, off into your nearest forest in the dead of night there just isn't much else you can do. Bagshot and Chobham offer above-board loose which is good only for wrecking your car (Ford call it destruction testing) and supplementing the MOD tracks there are just a few test tracks/moth-eaten aerodromes which offer very little scope for improving your car or your driving. No wonder so many drivers take their cars on, illegal, sneaky sorties through the woods.

However damaging that practice is for the reputation of the sport, it certainly goes on and probably on a larger scale than would be casually imagined. A colleague on a recent holiday in Scotland was (legitimately) exploring a loose road which gives access to a newly acquired dwelling when headlight beams were spotted coming from ahead. Hurriedly pulling into a firebreak and dowsing all lights, our man was just in time to see a rally Escort driving cautiously past, its driver obviously wondering where the other set of lights had vanished to.

Similarly, some time ago, before a troubled conscience curtailed this writer's irresponsibility, a situation occurred when the car broke-down in a well-known forest. After coasting to a wide junction, not just one, but two straining Ford Twin Cam engines could be heard. They were obviously rally drivers practising in another part of the forest, and quick drivers too, by the sound of things.

Hopefully, by this time next year Tarren will be operating in full swing in Wales and Knockhill similarly in Scotland, so these two desperately needed facilities should alleviate the problem to an extent. Special "club" bookings when as many as 20 or 30 cars will be accomodated during the course of a day sounds a very sensible answer. Expense would appear to be the only problem in encouraging the use of these legitimate facilities. At Tarren, Opel brought two cars, four personnel and had the use of two tyre manufacturers wares and technical advisers. Unfortunately the cross-flow car lasted about 200 yards and the group one "demonstrator" spent the day ferrying everybody, inc Old Uncle Tom Cobley, up and down the hill. A greate waste of Mr Pond's talent as it turned out. The cost?—including wages, petrol, etc—not much less than £200?

The most memorable aspect of the day for AUTOSPORT was consuming a picnic lunch, half way up the blustery Welsh hillside, out of the sort of plastic containers you are issued with when flying with a third-rate airline.

All the cherries

Rallying is, above all else, a sport full of the unexpected. This was demonstrated in no uncertain way on the Mintex Dales last weekend when the "Lazy L" came up with the kind of performance which sends bookmakers scurrying off to South America and can send rally reporters into a catatonic-like trance. Bill Price and the boys certainly didn't need to leave the area last weekend in the back of an unmarked furniture van . . . The Brian Culcheth/Johnstone Syer duo were truly dynamic on the Dales in bringing the British Leyland ST "Dolly" home, virtually unmarked, in seventh position; a full three seconds ahead of Russell Brookes' group one *Birmingham Post*/Andrews Heat Escort RS2000.

Curiously, the unexpected often happens in multiples of three, and the Dales was no exception. Pat Ryan won his class with the ST 1.3 Marina and Phil Cooper brought the 1275 Allegro to the finish after a driveshaft failure with a splendid display of fwd antics reminiscent of the Mini's heyday.

Looks like ST's public relations ace, Simon Pearson, has been blessed with just the fillip he needed. Unfortunately Simon previously had booked a holiday which happened to co-incide with this first RAC round, so he has missed the celebrations. Still, the news should certainly help the work-break go with renewed zest.

Culcheth takes the Dolomite gently over Olivers Mount towards seventh position.

Phil Cooper hurls the Allegro up the steep Kilburn hillside. Quite a stimulating sight.

New international?

Perhaps surprisingly, it appears that the De Lacy MC of Pontefract's Mintex Dales Rally is being considered for international status next year. We will know if it is after an RAC Rallies Committee meeting in April. The Dales this year boasted one of the best entries for a national ever and the operation ran very smoothly. But was the exceptional entry not due, in the main, to the exceptional circumstances rallying has been enduring during this last year or so and would the Dales be as popular as an international?

There is talk that the Keilder complex would be brought into action for the Dales but with the Jim Clark Memorial, the Armstrong Forest and the RAC Rally already using that area would the roads (already very rough and axle tramped in places) stand such onslaught? The Mintex Dales, with its selection of airfields, hillclimbs and stately homes to add interest to the predominantly "flat" Yorkshire forests would appear to to offer no more, even including Keilder, than a segment of the RAC international. The Welsh, the Scottish and the Circuit of Ireland, as the premier home internationals, all offer something "extra," in geography as well as with running style.

Far from decrying the Dales, which is a truly excellent national, perhaps it would tend to fall a little flat as a two day international especially as it would be using a well-rallied area and would be uncomfortably close to the RAC's York base..

A low rating

The Selby Fork Motor Hotel receives only one of (✠) those for hosting the Dales. Feeling slightly under the weather this reporter sprinted back to London as soon as provisional results were announced. Standing around in the cramped lobby, or squashing into the "Quarter Deck" bar was more than a depleted constitution would tolerate.

A competitor with exemplary taste in such matters, Mike Greasley, reported that the after rally party was a "dull and tedious affair, everyone seemed to drift off early." It was also reported that rather less than 100 people turned-up at the prize giving. The Selby Fork complex is unlikely to be used again for the rally. . . .

The fantasy world of sponsorship

Something is drastically wrong in the sphere of sponsorship. What a scandalous situation has arisen when Chris Sclater can't muster enough pennies to enter the Dales with a professionally prepared car of rally winning capabilities. The gravity of the problem is accentuated when one hears that a young 17-year-old Avenger driver, Glen Mitton, was interviewed on TV the night of the Dales start by none other than Roger Clark—and Roger has lost his Esso sponsor!

Perhaps Britain's top rally drivers, many of whom are struggling for sufficient support, should concern themselves less with quick stage driving (and representing the "sport" angle) and instead concentrate their efforts on developing some sort of "gimmicks" for their newly signed-up Press Agents to entice the lethargic mass-media out of their slumbers.

We have received some interesting suggestions to brighten-up the "boring" image of the special stage rally driver. Tony Drummond could do quick impersonations of Tony Drummond (while Will Sparrow would be a natural "Al Capone"). Andy Dawson should perhaps investigate the possibility of hosting his own chat show and as guests Paul Faulkner and Monty Peters could provide an amusing song and dance routine; whilst Brian Culcheth and Johnstone Syer could add more hilarity with a "No Honestly" situation comedy piece (as sneak previewed in the last IRDC yearbook). To bring a touch of culture into the proceedings Roger Clark could demonstrate the finer points of hair-care while Russell Brookes could argue the plight of British Leyland with a panel of experts comprising Tony Fall and Chris Sclater.

Thundering into the 31 degree banking at something approaching 185 mph, Petty's Dodge leads the Chevelles of Yarborough, Donnie Allison and Foyt, Pearson's Mercury, Brooks' Ford, Pond's Chevelle and Bobby Allison's Matador.

DAYTONA 500

Parsons pressures Pearson

By GORDON KIRBY. Pictures by CHARLES LORING

There were at least half a dozen Grand National cars which showed themselves to be notably faster than Benny Parsons' Chevelle at the Daytona 500 but while every conceivable type of ill-fortune lay in wait for them Parsons found that for him there was nothing but good luck in store. It started when a yellow flag came out just after the leaders had made their last scheduled fuel stops. Parsons was able to stop under the yellow and unlap himself with less than 100 miles remaining. Just about this time Cale Yarborough and Bobby Allison began experiencing engine troubles with their machines and Parsons soon found himself in second place trailing only David Pearson and the Purolator Mercury. Pearson was handily faster than Parsons and it seemed impossible to expect the Chevelle to be able to catch the Mercury. But then along came Richard Petty.

Petty and his resplendent STP Dodge had been the fastest man on the track all day but he had been forced into a series of extra pit stops since the midpoint of the race with an overheating problem and was now many laps behind. Nevertheless he was still able to lap faster than any other combination and as he caught and passed Parsons in the final laps he waved to the Chevelle driver to lock himself into place behind his Dodge. Parsons jumped at the offer and as the last ten laps ticked off he began to close on Pearson. Suddenly there was a chance of victory for Benny Parsons.

At the same time Pearson began to experience some tyre troubles and as Petty towed Parsons into range Pearson began to struggle at holding his lead. With three laps to go Pearson came upon Richie Panch and Cale Yarborough, the latter slowed by a weakening engine. Pearson tried to go inside them as they came off the east banking but he couldn't properly control the car as he dove beside them and instead of getting by he lost speed and had to drop in behind them. Down past the pits Pearson stayed inside Yarborough and tried again going through the west banking only to have another moment. With Petty and Parsons now bearing down on him Pearson pressed on, dashed inside Yarborough as they shot along the back straight and then tried to flick his way across Cale's nose and around Panch on the outside. But the Mercury clipped the Chevelle and Pearson spun down the road and off into the dirt on the inside. Suddenly Parsons was actually leading!

He paced himself easily and beamingly through the final three laps, winning by a full lap from Bobby Allison's Penske/AMC Matador. It was Parsons' first Daytona 500 victory, his first Superspeedway win and his third Grand National success. Pearson recovered to finish a frustrated and displeased fourth behind Yarborough while Petty and his stubborn team brought their Dodge into seventh place.

ENTRY and PRACTICE

The NASCAR Grand National circus, healthy and robust as ever began to arrive in Daytona Beach two weeks before the race. This was round two of the Winston Cup, the beginning of the real season after the unique Riverside road race of a few weeks earlier. Bobby Allison had won the race handily in the Penske Racing Matador, but as Banjo Matthews, former Grand National ace and now car builder extraordinaire suggested, "Penske's good at road racing but we've all been doing this all our life. It's a different story here."

Daytona of course, is *the* Winston race to win. There are other events on the busy schedule which may be tougher and more personally satisfying to win but from the point of view of sheer prestige there's nothing like a Daytona 500 victory.

This year the top NASCAR men were particularly anxious not only to win this race but more specifically to defeat Richard Petty. The current Grand National Champion had won the past two 500s and in total has won this race five times. If he were to win this time it would surely make his mantle of King Richard even more mythical and the strength of his STP-backed team yet more powerful.

There were half a dozen drivers who had the right combination of speed, experience and equipment to offer a threat to Petty. Bobby Allison had his Riverside-winning Matador, David Pearson his Woods Brothers/Purolator Mercury, Cale Yarborough his Junior Johnson Chevrolet, Bud Moore's Ford was on hand for Buddy Baker to drive and AJ Foyt was making one of his few stock car appearances of the year in Hoss Ellington's Gilmore Chevrolet. There was also the DiGard team's duo of brightly turned out Chevrolets for Donnie Allison and Johnny Rutherford. DiGard is financed by Connecticut businessmen Mike DiProspero and Bill Gardner and in this the outset of their second Grand National season they have hired Rutherford for some fifteen events and poured a large sum of money (reputed to exceed one million dollars) into preparing their Chevelles.

In fact it was Donnie Allison who took pole position. Utilising a loose, low compression engine Allison was able to nip at the 186 mph mark with his white, red and blue machine. Donnie had tested the car extensively at Daytona and suddenly it seemed that his Grand National career which has been rather thin of late was on the verge of a bright rebirth. Rutherford was considerably slower in the second DiGard Chevelle but this was to be expected as the car was brand new. Later in the week after Allison took some time with the car and Rutherford settled into his new mount, he was able to work it into the 180 mph bracket.

Second to Allison on the previous weekend's day of pole position qualifying was David Pearson. The Silver Fox was thinking more of Thursday's 125-mile qualifying races than of making an all-out effort for the pole and he was entirely satisfied with his pace. Buddy Baker was very quick throughout practice and in fact, he was fastest of all in the last practice prior to the two-lap pole position attempts. He was about one mph slower in his qualifying effort but his was a serious threat and his confidence was displayed obviously for all to see.

Richard Petty was a comfortable fourth fastest and like Pearson, he seemed far more interested in setting his car up for the qualifying race than spending his time searching for a single perfect lap. Completing the faster qualifiers was Bobby Allison, the older of the two brothers and by virtue of his Riverside win the Winston Cup leader. Yarborough and Foyt were both slowed by engine troubles and qualified down in tenth and eleventh places respectively behind a knot of "second division" drivers.

The fastest of this lot was Ramo Stott who got his Chevelle above 180 mph for sixth best ahead of 1973 Grand National Champion Benny Parsons who was the last man to get above 180 mph. Eighth and ninth fastest were Darrell Waltrip's Chevelle and Richard Brooks' Ford. George Follmer had a frustrating

time trying to sort out Bill Moyer's Chevelle and was unable to get it around any faster than 169 mph.

QUALIFYING

Other than the front row places earned by Allison and Pearson, the grid for the 500 would be decided by Thursday's two 50-lap qualifying races. The grids for these 125-milers were determined by odd-numbered qualifiers filling the first heat and even-numbered qualifiers the second heat. The main runners in the first race would be Donnie Allison, Baker, Bobby Allison, Parsons, Brooks, Foyt, Lennie Pond's Chevelle and Rutherford. The second qualifier included Pearson, Petty, Stott, Waltrip, Yarborough, Dave Marcis' K&K Insurance Dodge, 20-year-old Richie Panch's Chevrolet Monaco and a notably unconfident Follmer.

Donnie Allison paced the field for the first race towards the flag but it was his brother Bobby who drove low across the starting line and siezed the lead as they banked their way through the first and second turns. Donnie towed his way back into the lead down the back and by the time he arced his way into the east banking he, his brother, Baker and Parsons had broken free of the rest. Within a couple of laps Baker and Bobby Allison asserted their control while Donnie Allison dropped away leaving Benny Parsons to hang on to the Ford and the Matador. Donnie found his Chevelle handling a little vaguely and after half a dozen laps he decided to stop rather than risk damaging the car. Just before Allison pulled in Parsons peeled off from his chase of the two leaders when his Chevelle's differential failed. He was ultimately classified twenty-third which left him way down in 32nd place on the 500 grid.

Meanwhile Allison and Baker continued to ramble easily away from the field, pulling out more than six seconds in ten laps, both of them settling into the high groove within a foot of the wall. On the sixteenth lap the yellow light flicked on when a backrunner spun and the next time around Allison shot into the pits to make his only planned stop of the race. Baker didn't bother to come in so that when the green flag was waved three laps later he was ten cars ahead of Allison.

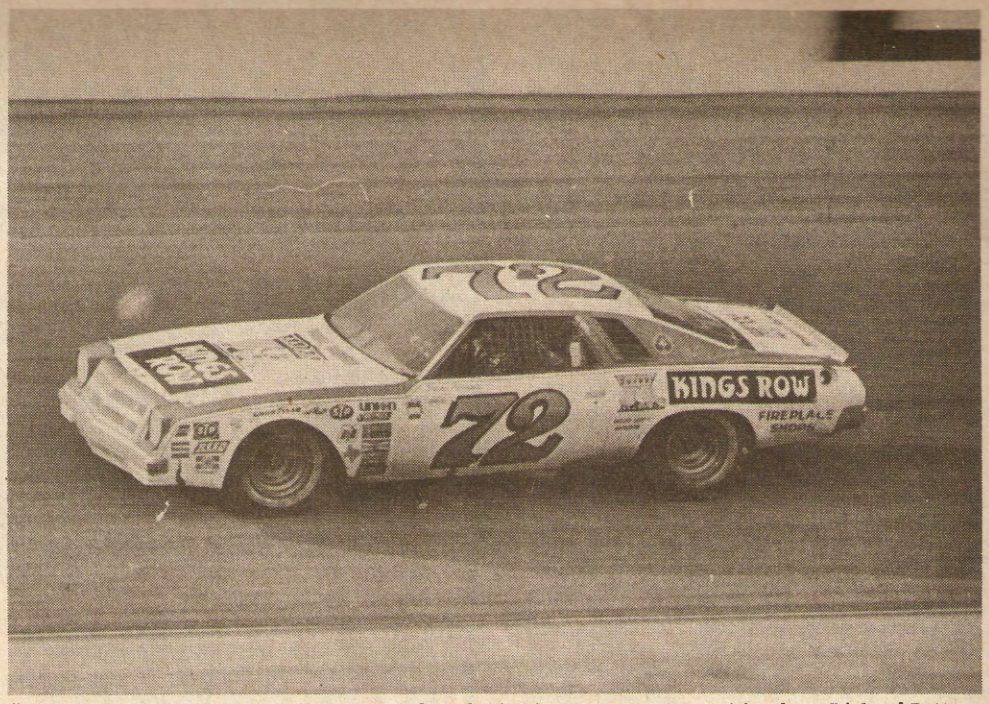
Yet it took the red, white and blue Matador only seven laps to work its way up to Baker's bumper. As he did so Allison brought Richard Brooks along with him and for some fifteen laps these three towed around together each of them practising their own manoeuvres.

But suddenly Baker's white Ford was spinning down the west banking. Just as quickly as it happened Buddy collected himself together and set off slowly towards the pits, a right rear tyre gone flat. Thanks to the yellow light Baker lost only one lap in his slow crawl to the pits.

When the green flag waved again there were just three laps left and with both Brooks and Baker back in the ruck it was an easy proposition for Allison to pull cleanly away into a neat win and a place on the second row of the grid. Brooks worked quickly by Lennie Pond and AJ Foyt into a very good second place within 2 s of the winning Matador. Pond and Foyt chased hard after Brooks, and stayed well clear of Rutherford who was unable to hang onto the tow and finished a distant fifth. Baker worked his way back to sixth place at the end.

The first few rows of the second heat swept beneath the green flag in a tight formation and for two laps they held their places, nose to tail, side by side. But Pearson and Petty soon got into their stride and began edging clear of the seven cars that clung together behind them. Petty soon established himself in the lead with Pearson sitting comfortably behind him as they worked farther and farther away from the others.

Darrell Waltrip and Cale Yarborough controlled the fight for third, but on the eleventh lap Waltrip's engine blew up, bringing out a yellow flag and giving everybody a chance for a free pitstop. When the green flag waved seven laps later Pearson and Petty were back in midfield with the Mercury some half a dozen cars ahead of the Dodge. It took them



Benny Parson's Daytona 500 success was largely thanks to some expert tuition from Richard Petty.

10 laps to work through the other cars and when they finally got away they found that Cale Yarborough, running with an excess of understeer, had managed to latch on to them.

Cale was having to work extremely hard to hold on to the other two and he soon began to drop back into a solitary third place. So once again Pearson and Petty found themselves fighting for the lead, the STP machine holding the lead again from the Purolator Mercury.

They sailed on that way and into the last of the fifty laps, Petty still leading. Around the banking they went and as they flattened out along the back straight Pearson made his move. Slowly the Mercury towed inside the Dodge, Pearson pushing ahead into the east banking and holding his place through the turns. Petty made a final effort to dart back inside the Mercury but his way was blocked by a glut of backmarkers and there was nothing he could do but accept second place.

Yarborough came home a distant third, clear of Dave Marcis, while Richie Panch was lapped in finishing fifth. Waltrip's engine failure put him into 33rd starting place while Ramo Stott had also retired his Chevelle with engine troubles so that he would start on the row ahead of Waltrip beside Benny Parsons. Follmer pulled off after just two laps with a broken rocker arm and was lucky to fill the last place in the 40 car field for Sunday's 500.

	mph
Donnie Allison (DiGard/Chevrolet)	185.827
David Pearson (Purolator/Mercury)	184.411
Bobby Allison (Coca-Cola/AMC Matador)	182.215
Richard Petty (STP/Dodge)	183.165
Richard Brooks (Truxmore/Ford)	178.990
Cale Yarborough (Valvoline/Chevrolet)	178.805
Lennie Pond (Master/Chevrolet)	177.900
Dave Marcis (K&K Insurance/Dodge)	177.919
A. J. Foyt (Gilmore Racing/Chevrolet)	178.288
Richie Panch (Daytona Budweiser/Chevrolet)	177.081
Johnny Rutherford (DiGard/Chevrolet)	175.932
David Sisco (Reliable Plumbing/Chevrolet)	174.845
Buddy Baker (Bud Moore/Ford)	184.022
J. D. McDuffie (Glenn Landscape/Chevrolet)	174.845
Cecil Gordon (Bob Stott/Chevrolet)	175.281
Ferrel Harris (Cougar Coal/Dodge)	169.160
James Hylton (Nitro 9/Chevrolet)	173.976
Randy Tissot (Tilitco/Chevrolet)	172.100
Joe Mihalic (Lou Viglione/Chevrolet)	172.064
Bruce Hill (Hill Racing/Chevrolet)	171.444
Jim Hurtubise (Rick Newsom/Ford)	168.545
Walter Ballard (Clyde Lynn/Chevrolet)	175.219
Dan Daughtry (DM Construction/Ford)	174.574
Tom Gale (Elmo Langley Racing/Ford)	168.498
Grant Adcox (Adcox-Kirby/Chevrolet)	172.271
Dick May (Brook-Masey/Dodge)	175.602
Dick Trickle (Puro Racing/Mercury)	175.507
Marty Robbins (Robbins Racing/Dodge)	175,822
Warren Tope (Lester Tires & Wheels/Ford)	168.801
Bob Burcham (Long-Lewis/Ford)	172.933
Ramo Stott (Smithville Farms/Chevrolet)	180.487
Benny Parsons (Kings Row/Chevrolet)	180.097
Darrell Waltrip (Terminal/Chevrolet)	179.622
Jim Vandiver (Transmisson UnLdt/Dodge)	178.390
Coo Coo Marlin (Cunningham-Kelly/Chevrolet)	177.099
Richard Childress (Newton Truck/Chevrolet)	172.811
G. C. Spencer (Spencer Racing/Dodge)	172.015
Hershel McGriff (Ken Friez/Chevrolet)	169.811
Bruce Jacobi (Opal Truck Stop/Chevrolet)	169.667
George Follmer (Bill Moyer/Chevrolet)	169.612

RACE

The rather indecisive weather of the week finally pulled itself together into a hot and slightly cloudy Sunday—as perfect conditions as one could hope for a 500-mile race. Perhaps it was the fine weather which brought more than one hundred thousand people into Bill France's stadium or perhaps it was the prospects of an apparently wide open 500. By midday Daytona Speedway was packed to overflowing and the local marching bands were proudly entertaining the masses.

Since early morning the pit lane had been filled by the 40 cars—23 Chevvies, seven each of Dodge and Ford, two Mercuries and a lone Matador—which would start the race. After all the bands and prayers and speeches and balloons the 40 rumbling V8s growled into life.

Donnie Allison must have paced his start perfectly for he held to the inside groove and the lead all the way through the west banking despite a pinching attack from Pearson. David had to give way as they came off the bank and dropped along the back straight and Petty, Yarborough and then Foyt were able to shoulder by him before he could slot back into the line. On the second lap Petty pounced his way into the lead as the first nine cars began to establish themselves clear of the midfield, but before any form could take shape a multiple shunt through the east banking brought out an urgently waving yellow.

Eight cars from the tightly-strung midfield were left littered across the road and the infield after Jim Vandiver's Dodge got away from him as he clung to the inside groove. A couple of cars were badly mangled but there were no injuries (oh, one driver did cut his chin), and within ten minutes everything had been cleared up and the green flag came out. There must have been at least a few lessons in efficiency there for many a road racing course.

Away from the restart it was Foyt who came boiling through to take the lead with Petty latching on to him. These two very quickly edged away from the others and within a few laps it looked as if they had broken the tow to their pursuers. Within a few more laps they lapped Yarborough who had pitted after the first green flag lap with the first hint of what were to be racelong engine troubles. Nevertheless he was now able to latch on to Foyt and Petty and for a long while he was able to hold his place in their wake.

The group behind was being controlled by Baker and Pearson who were soon able to get away on their own in conjunction with Bobby Allison. Donnie meanwhile had been having an ever harder time in staying in their draft and he soon dropped out with what proved to be a broken fuel pump. A disappointing end to what had promised to be an auspicious event for he and the DiGard team. Fifteen laps after Allison's retirement team mate Rutherford came in with a broken rocker arm.

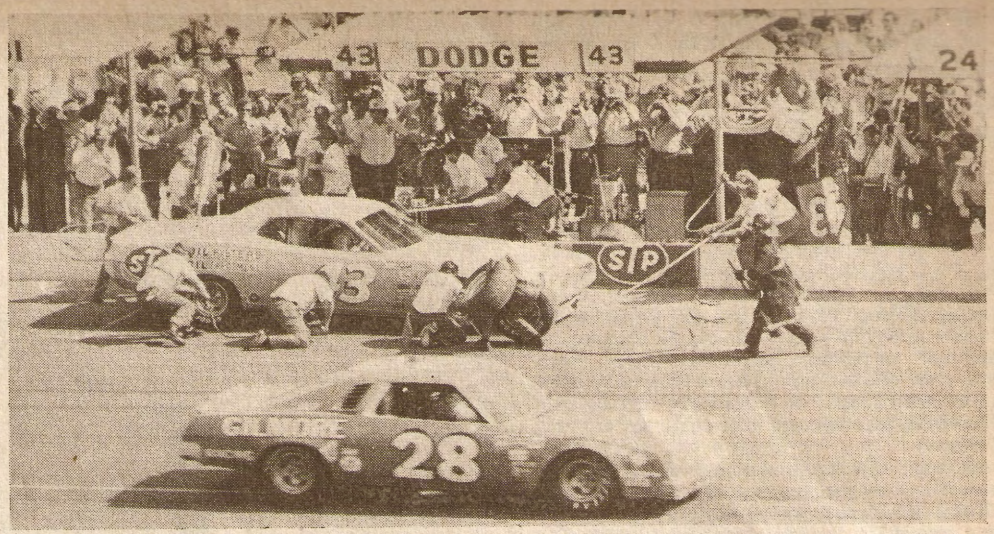
While the DiGard team's hopes went out the window Petty began to assert himself, edging away from Foyt into a solitary unchallenged lead. It was rapidly becoming obvious that King Richard could lap faster on his own than any combination of the others could manage in a towing situation. He held his lead all the way up to the first fuel stops and after a quick, nineteen second stop he established himself some eleven seconds clear of Foyt and nearly twenty seconds ahead of Baker and Yarborough. Cale's stop just after the early yellow flag period had dropped him well behind but he was lucky enough to have another yellow flag come out just as he needed to stop so that he was able to maintain his position.

Through it all it was still Petty who was controlling the race. Foyt was able to hang on to the STP Dodge and Baker began to show that he could run quickly on his own, breaking away from Pearson, Yarborough and Allison and catching Petty and Foyt around the 50 lap mark. As Baker started to pressure Foyt the Texan began to experience some overheating troubles and he was forced to throttle back and let Petty and Baker disappear together.

Baker then started to look for a way around Petty and after a couple of attempts he was able to take the lead. Richard sat back for a while watching the Ford to see what Baker could do. After half a dozen cagey laps Petty swept into the pits for a twenty-three second stop and on the next lap Baker too came in. Bud Moore got his white Ford out in just over fifteen seconds so that Baker suddenly lead by nearly seven seconds from Petty.

It was now that Petty showed his true speed for in the next fifteen laps he was able to close right up on Baker. It seemed only a matter of time before Richard would sweep into the lead and possibly even pull away on his own. But instead of pouncing at the Ford the STP Dodge began to drift back and just past the halfway mark Petty came in for a long unscheduled stop. The hood of the car was raised, a hose was brought out and by the time the Dodge got rolling again it was over a lap behind Baker. In the next dozen laps Petty stopped two more times, losing another three laps. It turned out that a small crack had developed in the car's radiator. Petty's challenge for his sixth Daytona 500 victory was gone.

Buddy Baker now took up Petty's role and, helped even more by some extremely fast pitwork, he was able to pull out very nearly a full lap on second man David Pearson. Behind Pearson, Yarborough was holding on to third place clear of Allison whose Matador was beginning to sound rough, as if it had a broken valve or two. Farther back CooCoo Marlin had come through into fifth place ahead of Benny Parsons, both Chevelle drivers having worked up well from the last few rows.



Petty, although handicapped by a holed rad, was the fastest man on the track but kept having to make lightning pit stops. Here the STP Dodge receives slick attention as A. J. Foyt's Chevelle thunders past.

At the front Baker had settled into an easy rhythm and as he approached the three-quarter mark of the race he began to close on second man Pearson. It seemed only a matter of a few short laps before Baker would have the comfort of a full lap's lead. But then suddenly, just as Petty's dominance had evaporated earlier Baker's too disappeared. On the 143rd lap the white Ford slowed and dropped to the apron. The car coasted around to the pits and came to a rest at its own pit. But even then there was nothing that Bud Moore could do, the timing chain had snapped and the crew could only slap their hands in despair and push the car into the garage.

So it was now Pearson, seemingly troubled himself with a chassis that was not working well on the dusty track who inherited the lead. His lead too was as strong as those held previously by Petty and Baker. In fact, the Mercury's position was even stronger for Pearson was slowly catching second man Yarborough and on the 160th lap both men came in together for their last planned stops. Both stops were equally fast but Pearson was able to accelerate out much faster and pass Yarborough, pushing the Chevelle a full lap behind him.

Three laps after the leaders' stops CooCoo Marlin's Chevelle blew its engine dropping him out of fourth place and bringing out a yellow flag. This gave everybody a chance to make an insurance pit stop but most importantly it gave Benny Parsons the chance to stop without losing the lap that he picked up on Pearson during the latter's last stop. When the green flag finally came out nine laps later Parsons was in second place and directly behind Pearson on the road.

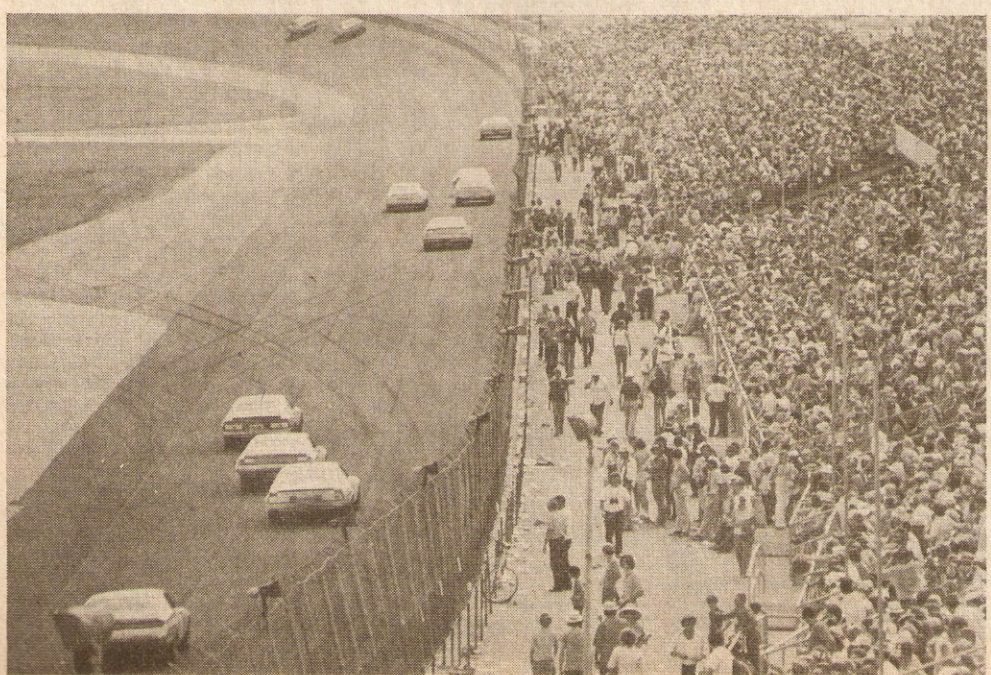
Two laps later Parsons was able to briefly pass Pearson but the Mercury was ahead again before the end of the lap. Pearson then latched on to AJ Foyt who was now pushing his overheating car as hard as it would go and with Foyt's help David was able to break away from Parsons. With a dozen laps to go Foyt's sick machine began to scream at him and he had to slacken off and drop nursingly to the apron. This left Pearson on his own and as this happened Petty, making another of his rapid sorties, came upon Parsons and urged him to nose into the Dodge's slipstream.

With Petty's help Parsons began to catch Pearson at the rate of half a second a lap. Soon the gap was down to five seconds, then four and as Pearson went down the back straight for the 197th time he could see Parsons in his mirrors barely three seconds behind. As he guided the Mercury into the east banking Pearson came upon Richie Panch and Cale Yarborough and it was then that he made his first mistake and lost time coming off the banking. He pushed on hoping to get inside Panch and Yarborough through the west banking but he had lost too much speed to manage that.

Down the back straight the little knot of cars went, Panch and Yarborough moving over from the wall to give Pearson passing room. But Pearson was already edging by on the inside of Yarborough and as he pulled even he decided to sling the Mercury across the Chevelle's nose rather than get stuck behind Panch. It was in that instant that everything went wrong and David Pearson threw away the chance of his first Daytona 500 victory. The Mercury spun off into the infield and Parsons, his nose still in Petty's boot shot through into the lead.

It was a strange end to 500 miles of motor racing which never really seemed to find any form.

Every picture tells a story. Into the final laps, Petty's Dodge comes up behind Parsons' Chevelle. Ahead of them is the Purolator Mercury of Pearson, about to make his ill-fated attempt at passing Yarborough and Panch.

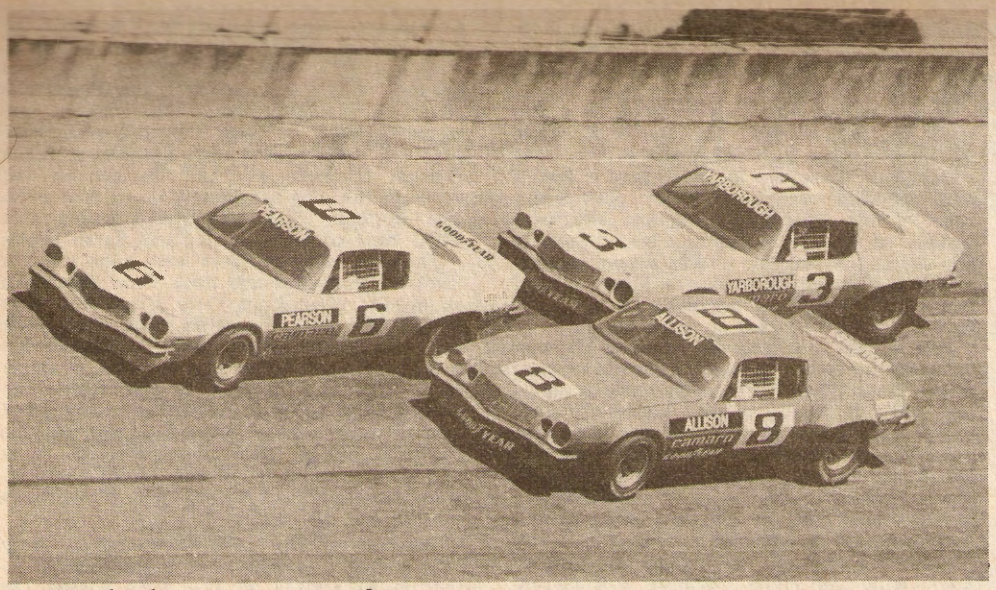


17th Daytona 500 — February 16
NASCAR Winston Grand National — round 2
200 laps — 500 miles

1, Benny Parsons (Chevrolet Chevelle), 3 hrs 15 m 15 s, 153.649 mph ; 2, Bobby Allison (AMC Matador), 199 laps ; 3, Cale Yarborough (Chevrolet Chevelle), 198 laps ; 4, David Pearson (Mercury), 198 laps ; 5, Ramo Stott (Chevrolet Chevelle), 197 laps ; 6, Dave Marcis (Dodge), 197 laps ; 7, Richard Petty (Dodge), 192 laps ; 8, Richie Panch (Chevrolet Monaco), 191 laps ; 9, G. C. Spencer (Chevrolet Chevelle), 191 laps ; 10, James Hylton (Chevrolet Chevelle), 189 laps.

125-mile Daytona 500 (1st qualifying heat — February 13 ; 1, B. Allison, 47 m 52.0 s, 156.685 mph ; 2, Richard Brooks (Ford) ; 3, Lennie Pond (Chevrolet) ; 4, AJ Foyt (Chevrolet) ; 5, Johnny Rutherford (Chevrolet) ; 6, Buddy Baker (Ford), 49 laps ; 7, Cecil Gordon (Chevrolet ; 8, J. Hylton ; 9, Joe Mihalic (Chevrolet) ; 10, Jim Hurtubise (Ford).

125-mile Daytona 500 (2nd qualifying heat — February 13) : 1, Pearson, 47 m 47.0 s, 156.958 mph ; 2, Petty ; 3, Yarborough ; 4, Marcis ; 5, Panch, 49 laps ; 6, David Sisco (Chevrolet) ; 7, J. D. McDuffie (Chevrolet) ; 8, Randy Tissot (Chevrolet) ; 9, Bruce Hill (Chevrolet) ; 10, Walter Ballard Chevrolet).



At 170 mph, what more can one say?

DAYTONA IROC

Unser wins the showdown

By GORDON KIRBY Pictures by CHARLES LORING

All week long the paddock cronies kept saying that this second International Race of Champions final was going to be a mad, throw of the dice scramble to the flag. The story went that every one of the nine finalists would come slinging off Daytona's fourth turn in a single, seething knot. The winner would be the one who happened to find the right hole; the luckiest, or the bravest, of the nine.

It didn't quite work out that way for the heat of battle was such that three of the Camaros were badly shunted in dramatic, long spins along the back straight. Two more machines had been crippled in these incidents so that there were just four cars left in the last lap hunt. But otherwise the scenario was developing just as the cronies had predicted.

The fortunes of the race had forged it finally into one of USAC versus NASCAR. Leading, as he had for most of the race and as he had back in September at the opening IROC round at Michigan, was USAC Champion Bobby Unser. Pushing him, not only literally but actually, metal against metal, was his old sparring mate A. J. Foyt. Their mirrors were filled squarely and overflowingly by Bobby Allison and Cale Yarborough. "I hated to be in first place as we started that last lap," said Unser later, his thin, angular features granite cool as ever. "I looked in my mirror and all I saw was this snake. I figured the best I could do out of this thing was a second. I said to myself I had a possible first and a guaranteed second and I gambled on that."

They swept down the back straight and into the east banking, Unser still leading, the others waiting, waiting. . . . Then Foyt picked his moment, lightly feathered his throttle, letting himself drop back a few feet from Bobby's bumper, preparing for a last moment slipstreaming dive. Instantly Unser began to swing down the banking, narrowing the gap which Foyt wanted to fill. A.J. kept at his plan though, darting lower, slowly closing the space, inching up beside the leader. Yarborough and Allison were making their moves, too, Cale sweeping high around Foyt hoping the tow from the first two might pull him beside A.J. and perhaps even alongside Bobby, too. The snake of 50 s earlier coiled itself tighter and tighter but as it thundered under the flag Unser was still at its head and Allison, although barely a car length behind, was still at its tail.

So Bobby Unser won the race and the Championship while Foyt, Yarborough and Allison also took the same Championship positions as their second, third and fourth places in the race. David Pearson and Emerson Fittipaldi were unable to keep their damaged cars in the tow and slipped back on their own into fifth and sixth places. Both had been well in the hunt, the World Champion even managing to lead a handful of laps as had Ronnie Peterson.

But like George Follmer and Johnny Rutherford before him, Peterson fell victim to the vagaries of the multi-car tow, his Camaro throwing itself into a barely controllable spin when it was caught high on the banking in thin, almost vacant air. Peterson, Follmer and Rutherford all climbed undamaged from their ruined Camaros. It was a wild and woolly, yet calculated and fascinating motor race. The best yet of any IROC round.

There had been many complaints after last year's IROC final that it was unfair for the USAC and NASCAR drivers to run the event on the road course. So it was decided well before the details of this year's series were announced that the Daytona final would be staged on the 2.5-mile tri-oval. The race was shortened from its original 50-lap distance to a 40-lap event (in consideration of the Camaro's 30-gallon fuel capacity) and, as in the previous three rounds, any laps run under the yellow flag would not count. It was also decided that it would be a happier situation for everybody if the black Camaro which had won all three qualifying races would not be brought along to Daytona. That put paid to everybody's dreams of instant victory.

Jay Signori, shop manager for Penske Racing, found himself blessed with the comparative luxury of three full months to repair, rebuild and develop the IROC Camaros for the Daytona final—a considerable change in the hectic schedule which he and his team of mechanics had struggled with throughout the summer and up to Riverside.

Since returning from the California races the roll cages of the cars had been stiffened and the "overkill" braking system which had been invented to stop the heavy cars on the road course, although not needed for the flat-out blind at Daytona, had been retained just in case of emergencies. The Camaros would also use radial tyres as they had at Riverside but hadn't at Michigan. The radials enabled Signori to utilise one inch narrower Minilites at Daytona.

Most of the time since Riverside, however, had been spent in carefully massaging the Camaros so that when they arrived at Daytona they were ready to further dampen the cynicism of the sceptics who maintain that it is impossible to build a dozen, equal cars. Mark Donohue, pragmatic as ever in assessing any of his engineering projects, described the process of achieving equality of both performance and drivability as "Just a matter of time. I know what the guys wanted of the cars but we just didn't have enough time before Michigan. Since then we've been able to listen to everybody."

As soon as the cars took to the Daytona super speedway it became quickly obvious that Mark was entirely correct. He had already lapped the 2.5-mile oval in every one of the Camaros and had got them all to within half a second of each other in a 54 s lap. When the nine IROC finalists started to practice in the three practice cars they confirmed Donohue's opinions convincingly.

George Follmer climbed out with a rare smile filling his face. "You can do anything with them," said Fumbler. Johnny Rutherford came in yelping ecstatically. "Talk about fun!" beamed the Texan. Bobby Allison reported that it was entirely possible to pass if it were timed just right (at Michigan it had proven all but impossible to tow by the car ahead) and the stock-car man told Ronnie Peterson who had just arrived, "Remember how everything was tight at Michigan? Well, here it's totally relaxed." Donohue suggested that the prime reason for the ease of driving the Camaros was because their chassis were entirely capable of going through the banked turns at more than 175 mph but that the cars had only enough horsepower to do just over 160 mph through the banking. "Subsequently you can put the car anywhere you like on the banking."

The cars then seemed more than ready to do their job, but there was some understandable dissatisfaction with the format. Whereas points for the three previous races had been awarded on a basis of 18 for first, 16 for second and so on down to three for 12th place, a win at Daytona was worth a whopping 100 points. Second at Daytona would bring 60 points, third was valued at 45 points, while ninth (and last) would bring 15 points. What this meant was that the Daytona winner would win the series regardless of how many points he may have gathered earlier. Emerson Fittipaldi, who came to Daytona with 41 points and a three-point lead over second man Bobby Unser, was most vocal in his complaints about the system. "I think the points should be the same," he suggested. "The road courses don't mean anything now." Most of the other drivers including Unser agreed and it would appear that next year the points system will be changed.

Fittipaldi and Ronnie Peterson were also at an obvious disadvantage in not having raced on any oval before other than at the Michigan IROC round. They spent some time in practice running around with Unser, Pearson and Allison but they only discovered that there was much more to learn than was possible in the time available. As Ronnie said after the last practice "There are lots of tricks to this. I don't know. . . ." Perhaps the biggest trick of all was played by a certain A. J. Foyt, a particularly cagey racing driver who didn't even bother to practise. Hmmm. . . .

The grid for this second annual IROC final was decided not by practice times but by current championship points. The drivers would draw for cars just an hour before the race, have their seats bolted in and take up their respective places. Fittipaldi and Unser formed the front row, Follmer and Allison the second, Foyt and Pearson the third row, Yarborough and Peterson the fourth and alone at the back came Johnny Rutherford.

RACE

The select nine found themselves well occupied in the 60 minutes between drawing for cars and starting the race. They duly paraded through their ABC television interviews and followed that with their official introductions to the crowd. There were swells of cheers from portions of the grandstands for their particular favourite, Fittipaldi smiling sheepishly as the Brazilian contingent loudly waved their flag. Then finally the drivers climbed into their mounts and rolled out on to the broad oval behind a pace car and a second

car carrying selected photographers.

The photographers' car pulled off after one lap and the next time around the pace car came pounding into the pit lane. The nine Camaros bunched up, knotting themselves across the pavement, some accelerating better than others as the green flag waved from the starter's stand.

Almost immediately the field broke into two streaming groups, Unser and Follmer forcing their way to the front and Allison lagging alone at the back. The cars jockeyed and swirled through the first few laps, spaces opening and closing as one car would slipstream another only to be engulfed by another who might then fall suddenly back and find others towing by him.

During the third lap the two groups closed together into one, even Allison, who had dropped 5 s behind a lap earlier, managing to tack on to the others so that his red car was drawn right into the fray. They swept into the fourth lap piling up three abreast into the banking, everyone now within range of the leader. As they began to flatten out on to the back straight Rutherford, who was in the high groove, tight against the wall, suddenly found his car losing downforce in the wake of the thick clot of cars ahead. His Camaro came down and walloped Follmer's, sending both of them into large, crunching spins. Pieces flew about from the two cars and those behind were pelted with shrapnel.

The yellow flag came out as Rutherford and Follmer jumped out of their broken cars. The others cruised around and a yellow car and a silver version peeled off and into the pit lane. The yellow car was Peterson's, its windshield badly shattered and its grille chipped and dented. Ronnie climbed out apparently unperturbed, while the Penske mechanics fell upon the car. The silver car which followed Peterson in was, incredibly enough, Fittipaldi's, its bodywork suffering similar damage and its windshield broken along the top edge. After a couple of slow yellow light laps the rest of the field was brought in while the Grand Prix men climbed from their cars and waited for new windshields to be installed, bodywork to be taped extensively and radiators and engines checked for further shrapnel damage. While all this went on Fittipaldi crouched beside Unser's car and Peterson bent across Pearson's doorsill, each of them discussing the lessons of the shunt.

It was perhaps half an hour or more before the Chevvies were again fired up and the seven remaining cars rolled off in a two by two formation. Peterson was delayed in getting away by the last minute replacement of his front spoiler and as the field accelerated away again he trailed them by enough of a margin so that it appeared that he had lost the tow. But as Superswede chased them on to the back straight he caught on to the back of a six-car vacuum and was sucked right back into the knot as they bent their way on to the east banking.

Fittipaldi had already recovered from the shunt for he swept by into the lead! Unser was still holding a strong place at the front and he now gave the McLaren man a lesson in oval racing technique. Bobby pushed the nose of his Camaro up against the rear bumper of Fittipaldi's car and began pushing him along the road! If it was meant as intimidation it failed to work, for Emerson held fast to his place and began to settle into a rhythm in the first two or three places.

Just a few laps later Foyt towed his way up from the back and made a couple of runs to the front. Then Yarborough made a parry, too, while Fittipaldi allowed himself to drift to the back all of 1 s behind the front car! This was becoming a quite incredible event and Roger Penske, spectating from an infield photographer's tower, began to mutter almost disbelievingly and to no one in particular, "What a great show! What a great show...."

The race worked itself past its halfway mark with the seven Camaros still clotted together. Bobby Unser was holding the strongest consistent leading position but any of the cars seemed able to push their way to the front if they so wished. Peterson had been travelling rather languidly at the back since the early shunt but just about this time he, too, came dashing to the front and began tussling with Unser for the lead. During all of this parrying David Pearson, the man who many reckon to be the master of super speedway stock-car racing, sat unspectacularly in third or fourth place.

But it was Pearson who brought out the second yellow flag when his right front tyre failed on the 29th lap. The Grand National star brought his yellow Camaro slowly into the pits, smoke and sparks issuing out from beneath the wheel well. He was quickly on his way with a new tyre in place and as the field lazed by again under the yellow light Allison dashed briefly into the pits to give Mark Donohue his broken interior mirror.

The next time around the green light flicked on and the field bellowed off into the west banking, once again jockeying for position and looking now to find their individual rhythms for the final 10 laps. Down the back straight they poured, around the east banking and down between the pits and grandstands. Foyt and Unser led them into the west banking again but as they dashed on to the flat back straight again one car slewed sideways and spun for long seconds down the road, losing itself in a pall of tyre smoke. Another car spun to avoid the first and others darted about in dramatic manoeuvres.

The yellow flag again came out, the field slowed and came trundling back towards the pits. It was quickly obvious that Peterson, who had again been leading the race, was missing, and Fittipaldi, too. The Brazilian's silver car came crawling into view a few moments later, its nose damaged even more now and its right front wheel chewing at the ground. Emerson was able to get his car down to the pits but Ronnie's race was over. The Formula One men were finding this IROC final to be a particularly harsh event.

The remaining five cars were soon brought into the pits while the mess from Peterson's shunt was cleared up. Only Unser and Foyt had been able to avoid damaging their machines in the flying metal. Allison needed a pair of front tyres, Yarborough a single front tyre and Pearson a rear boot. The Camaros of Fittipaldi and Pearson seemed also to have suffered some front-end damage but there was no time to effect proper cures and after a long delay they were sent out with Unser, Foyt, Allison and Yarborough for the last 10 laps.

Well before the pace car began to drop off the banking Unser and Foyt began picking up their pace so that they passed the civilian machine over a quarter of a mile before the green flag. By the time they accelerated over the starting line they were in full flight with Bobby laying his nose on A.J.'s rear bumper as the USAC men tried to break clear of the NASCAR men. But Yarborough, with a fender badly rippled from Peterson's shunt, and Allison, apparently lacking something in the horsepower department, were able to stay in the tow. Fittipaldi immediately dropped back on his own and a few laps later Pearson, too, drifted back into a nursing drive to the end.

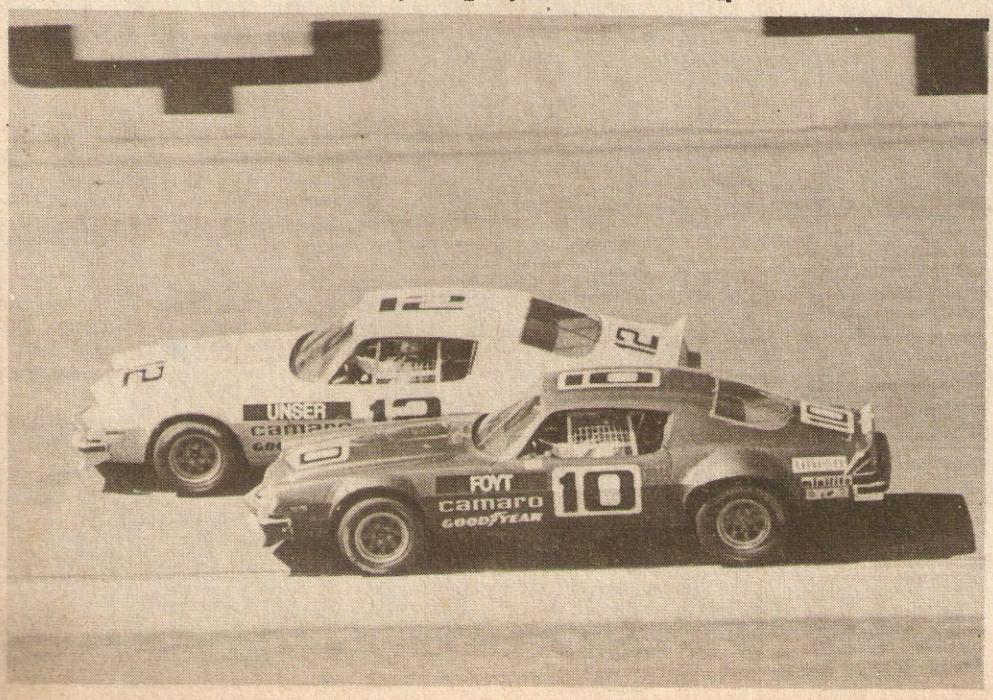
So now, with just half a dozen laps left, the IROC had become a four-car battle. Unser was again controlling the leading place, while the others seemed equally at home behind him in the order Foyt, Allison, Yarborough. They maintained the same order steadily now through laps 35, 36 and 37. On the 38th lap Allison, who had begun to look unhappy with his lot, dove to the inside and for a brief moment nosed ahead of Foyt. But then they were arcing into the west banking again and as the others paced through the high groove Allison found himself alone in the low groove and his Camaro dropped back into fourth place behind Yarborough.

So now, as they rushed past the grandstands and into their final lap it was still Unser leading from Foyt, Yarborough and Allison. Through the west banking they stayed in the same tight line. Down the back straight nobody dared make a move on the others and the line stayed as it was. Into the east banking they held their places. But then as they began to sweep up towards the wall and over the bump which would bring them down to the finish Foyt began his move. It was the signal for the other three to respond.

Unser pinched his way tighter towards the apron. Yarborough let his car go high and pick up speed alongside the wall, while Allison stayed in Cale's slipstream ready to dart below him and into the slot left by Foyt. It seemed almost as if everybody's plan worked to perfection but each man gained only half a car length instead of the hoped-for full car length. Unser hung on for half a car length victory over Foyt beneath him, while Yarborough nosed up behind Unser on the outside and Allison drew alongside his Grand National compatriot just below him. Then came Pearson and finally Fittipaldi.

A motor race of rare dexterity.

This is how they finished with Unser pushing Foyt almost on to the apron.



International Race of Champions — round 4
Daytona, February 14
40 laps — 100 miles

1, Bobby Unser (Chevrolet Camaro), 85 m 49.0 s, 167.516 mph;
2, AJ Foyt (Chevrolet Camaro), 40 laps;
3, Cale Yarborough (Chevrolet Camaro), 40 laps;
4, Bobby Allison (Chevrolet Camaro), 40 laps;
5, David Pearson (Chevrolet Camaro), 40 laps;
6, Emerson Fittipaldi (Chevrolet Camaro), 40 laps;
7, Ronnie Peterson (Chevrolet Camaro), 30 laps*; 8, George Follmer (Chevrolet Camaro), 3 laps*; 9, Johnny Rutherford (Chevrolet Camaro), 3 laps*.

* Not running at finish.

IROC final standings: 1, Unser, 138 pts ($41,400); 2, Foyt, 92 pts ($27,600); 3, Yarborough, 74 pts ($22,200); 4, Allison, 68 pts ($19,900); 5, Fittipaldi, 61 pts ($18,300); 6, Pearson, 55 pts ($16,500); 7, Follmer, 51 pts ($15,300); 8, Peterson, 41 pts ($12,300); 9, Rutherford, 33 pts ($9,900); 10, Richard Petty, 20 pts ($6,000); 11, Graham Hill, 18 pts ($5,400); 12, Jody Scheckter, 15 pts ($4,500).

Tough new sections for Safari

SAFARI RALLY

1975

The start for the 23rd Safari Rally will be at 1600 hours on March 27, from Nairobi's ultra-modern Kenyatta Conference Centre. Split into two sections, the first leg takes competitors southwards along familiar hot and dusty roads to Malindi and Mombasa and back to Nairobi the following evening. The second leg starts as last year via classical routes through Kericho and Tinderet to the Lake Victoria port of Kisumu. Competitors then make a huge "S" through western Kenya and along the Cherengani Highway where they climb to 10,215 feet before descending to Kitale on the Saturday (March 29) evening. After a short break the route takes them along the floor of the Kerio Valley—and this time up the Tambach Escarpment to Iten. Competitors then head for the Rift Valley town of Nakuru via Eldama Ravine and Kabarnet. After an early morning start from Nakuru on Easter Sunday the road climbs to Thomson's Falls and the South Kinangop, and drivers face a very demanding new section through the foothills of the Aberdare Mountains. Also new this year is a stop at the Mount Kenya Safari Club at Nanyuki followed by a last run in to Nairobi which includes the notoriously wet Meru/Embu section and the Aberdares for a second time. The route this year is 5,900 kms in length.

Texaco plans a unique style

Larne MC's old Texaco Trophy Rally, of recent years run as an RAC round at the time of the Jim Clark Memorial will be rejuvenated this year in an entirely new concept. Run along the lines of certain French sprint rally events, the Texaco—with £1500 prize fund backing from the oil company—will take place on the last Saturday in June, the 28th, completely outside the RAC, due to the road closure difficulties previously reported in these columns.

The Texaco will be run, in its entirety, over one single stage of about three miles. A stage which contains a great variety of surface and corner changes. On the Friday evening the Larne club have organised an event on the stage for local drivers. Larne have already run a couple of similar events on the private stage (a road around one of Adrian Boyd's quarries) and for the Texaco, the club plan to cater for spectators.

The "real" event takes place in daylight on the Saturday morning when 25 invited drivers will be competing for a £500 first prize for the quickest collection of times over the stage (each driver will have five or six throws). It sounds like Irish fun in the best traditions and, in keeping, the rally headquarters will be at the Kings Arms, Larne. We will print more details as it comes together.

Lancia v Fiat same old story

After two rounds of the World Championship of Rallies, Lancia have the firmest possible grip on proceedings, with overall victory in the Monte and the Swedish. They have a 17 point commanding lead over Fiat with 23 points and Saab with 15 points. Trailing somewhat are Renault with eight, Porsche with four and Alfa Romeo with three. Next round is the Safari over Easter; then the circus moves to Portugal, before the remaining rounds which are the Acropolis, Maroc, 1000 Lakes, San Remo, Rideau Lakes, Tour de Corse, and the Lombard RAC in November.

Appleby's strip

Paul Appleby/Keith O'Dell who finished second in Group 1 on the Dales with an RS2000 were to have had the engine stripped but as they had done the whole rally without a service crew they had no one to do the work and the engine is now sealed awaiting dissection.

● Scott Dalgleish/Roger MacFarlane are planning to compete in the Scottish rally championship this year in the Datsun 1200 Sunny coupe that they have campaigned over the previous two seasons. It is hoped to have a new car ready in time for the Scottish. Last season Scott was sixth overall in the Challengers section of the then Shell/*Scotsman* series. Backing for the season comes not surprisingly from D. S. Dalgleish and Son, the Galashiels Datsun dealers. First event this season is to be the Valentine this weekend.

Arkell brew

The popular Arkell Rally which was won so effortlessly by Donald Heggie last year is to be staged on July 27. It will be very similar in format, using the Cirencester Park facilities as a centre for 50 stage miles which include some new venues. The event is a qualifying round of the BTRDA and the Triple C championships and regulations will be available at the beginning of June from Jonathan Williams, The Old Barn, Stratton, Cirencester, Glos. The organisers are keen to increase the "carnival atmosphere" of the occasion aided and abetted no doubt by the events enthusiastic sponsors, Arkells of Swindon . . . a local brewing firm. Car parking facilities for future events in Circencester Park have been completely re-organised following the problems encountered in November on the RAC.

Organisation of the 1975 Bass Charrington Tour of Lincs is now under way. The rally will once again start at the giant Hartford Motors complex in Grimsby, and finish at the Humber Royal Hotel, also in Grimsby. After being voted the top stage event in the BTRDA Gold Star series for two years running, the Tour of Lincs will take the same format as in previous years, although the Clerks of the Course are negotiating for more stages and it is hoped that some new unrallied miles will be included in this years route. There will be approximately 30 stages totalling 50/60 miles. The rally is a qualifying round of the Castrol/AUTOSPORT, BTRDA and Triple C rally championships. Regulations will be available the second week in March, and applications for these should be sent to Dick Newsum, The Old Vicarage, Scamblesby, Louth, Lincs, and a stamped, addressed, envelope must be enclosed.

● Hull CC are holding a restricted autotest at the Civic Centre Car Park, Harrow on March 23 and need marshals for the day. The event starts at 11 am, there are free meals for marshals and officials after the meeting, and Barrie Williams will be keeping everyone entertained with a commentary. A disco evening precedes the day. Marshals should contact John Leslie at 0-455 6059.

● Tony Fall has just appointed Alan Clegg to the position of workshop manager. Alan has been with DOT since the team started just under a year ago. He formerly worked as Jackie Stewart's mechanic at Elf Team Tyrrell and for British Vita.

● Alan Atkinson's Escort is to be sponsored by Discount Auto Spares, a spares and accessories business on the Fylde coast, the first time this Blackpool based firm has been involved in motor sport. Plans are to contest the ShellSport SD (34) Club Championship starting with the Ribble Rally in April.

Now that Bernard Darniche and Alain Mahe are driving for Fiat, Renault Alpine decided to give them a little farewell lunch outside Paris to thank them for all the time that they have spent driving Alpines. To their surprise there were also a couple of going-away presents; a Darniche-powered "velo" in case he gets too fat eating spaghetti and a Kikkormat for Mahe with which to record their successes. In the photograph, from left to right, are: Vincent Laverne (co-driver to Nicolas), Jean-Luc Therier, Jean-Francois Piot (sitting on the mudguard), Jean-Pierre Nicolas, Alain Mahe, Bernard Darniche (the one with all the hair) and Jacques Jaubert (co-driver and journalist). The Alpine 310 belongs to Jacques Cheinisse, competition manager of Renault Alpine, who made the presentation.

Special stage

Ronde de Serre Chevalier—Darniche in X1/9 holds off Nicholas.

Henri scores another win

Privateer Jacques Henri won the seven laps of the Criterium Niege et Glace driving his ex-works Alpine A110 bis (A310 rear suspension) with a time of 3 m 7 m 6.8 s. Second was Bernard Darniche in his Fiat X1/9, (fresh from victory in the Ronde de Serre Chevalier) with a time of 3 h 8 m 51.3 s. Third was Jean-Pierre Nicholas in an R17 in 3 h 16 m 22 s, the first of the 16-valve powered Renaults to make it. Andruet won the G2 award in his Alfetta, a result which was all the more creditable considering that he had to use his recce car for the event itself as there was nothing else available. Jean Luc Therier had a miserable rally, for before the condenser broke he was way down on power owing to a severe leak in the exhaust system. The G1 section was won by Talenti in a BMW 2002 who came home 30 s ahead of Frequelin's Alfa Romeo GTV. There was very little snow for the event and only isolated patches of ice.

Broad's probs

Oops—the IDEM Escort's demise from the Mintex Dales made it three non-finishes in a row for the Broadspeed-prepared car. Clutch and steering problems stopped the car on the Tour of Dean; a ring in the triple plate clutch shattered on the Snowman, fragments of which caused ruination of the timing, while on last week's Mintex Dales another component failure was to blame. This time an elbow joint to the oil pump cracked and began to suck-in air, which left some big gaps in the oil lubrication. The offending part was a bought-in component which should have been a cold-drawn tube, but in fact was a welded piece. Coil springs were back at the rear of the IDEM car, but again the shock absorbers failed repeatedly. Broadspeed have now stripped their supply of Bilsteins, specially made for the car, and have discovered that all were supplied with the wrong piston length. The components, which cannot be reassembled without special equipment (which Bilstein are apparently loathe to supply to Broadspeed) have been crated back to Germany. . . .

For the Valentine this weekend the car will be back on leaf springs, entirely as a result of the shock absorber problems. It has been reported that while the faulty specification Bilsteins are fresh, the IDEM car's handling has been very satisfactory.

● Ace co-driver, Jimmy Ogg is offering his services as co-driver for the Circuit of Ireland rally. Jimmy is no mean driver himself and also something of a mechanical wizard to boot. If you are short of a good experienced co-driver for the Circuit contact Jimmy at 13 Hawthornden Road, Belfast BT4 3QT. Telephone Work: Lurgan 5354. Home: Belfast 655814.

Ari Vatanen "impressed"

Ari Vatanen, DOT's secret weapon from the frozen north, who it is hoped will drive a DOT Ascona this year on Castrol/AUTOSPORT rounds, was reportedly taking pictures "like they were going out of fashion" on the Mintex Dales last weekend. He had been flown over as a guest of General Motors, and was escorted around the event by GM's PR people. Ari was apparently very impressed with the high standard of competition, but less so with the stages. He was taken first to a farm track stage near the start which did not impress, and then his hosts took him to Wykeham Forest where the precipitous drops came as something of a revelation to him. No sooner had the event finished than he rushed off to London in order to try to sort out some sponsorship deals that GM are setting up for him.

● The regulations are now available for this year's Tavern National Stage Rally, which is a round of the Castrol/AUTOSPORT Championship, on Sunday, April 20. The first car will start at 08.30 hours and finish at 16.30 hours, the start and finish will be in the Minehead area. Road mileage will be approximately 135, plus 60 miles of special stage, all on Forestry Commission land and all of good hard surfaces. Despite it being a daylight rally, the organisers are only allowed to start 120 cars and with the prize fund at £500, they anticipate a quick full entry. Regulations are available from J. Dando, 8 Fairlyn Drive, Mangotsfield, Bristol.

Valentine promises top action

The second round of the Gaelic Oil/*The Scotsman* Scottish Rally Championship swings into action this weekend with the Dunfermline CC's popular Valentine Rally. The event, all daylight on Saturday, will be based at the Forth Bridges Motel, South Queensferry. First car is scheduled for the off at 08.31 hrs for a day of rallying in the top central forests. The lunch halt (11.10) will be at the Rob Roy Motel, Aberfoyle, and the cars are expected back to South Queensferry from 16.00 onwards. As previously reported, it is hoped that there will be video film of the stage action on hand at the after rally party, courtesy of Akai and, just released, Radio Forth hope to run a live commentary of the exploits over the afternoon run of Tulliallan (Devilla).

Top entries start with the Royal Bank car of Bill Taylor followed by Arther Jasper, Andy Dawson, Donald Heggie, Andrew Cowan, Alasdair Findlay, Ian Wilson, the Samsons, Alisdair Kesson and Jim McRae. A panel of suitable spectating stages are listed below.

SPECIAL STAGE	REFERENCE	TIME
1 Knockhill	55/069941	09.04
2 Tulliallan	55/944911	09.30
3 Carron	61/722839	10.16
4 Kirk O'Muir	61/700840	10.32
9 Loch Achray	54/543006	13.24
14 Tulliallan II	55/944911	15.36

Dark horse

Scottish "tarmac" rally ace, Willie Crawford, is heavily involved with the preparation of his Escort for the Circuit of Ireland—a rally which lends itself to Mr Crawford's style admirably. Due to some parts supply problems, the car is not likely to be fully sorted until the Easter event and Willie has had to miss both the Snowman and this weekend's Valentine. The Hackle will probably be missed too. Special connecting rods for the full 2-litre alloy Broadspeed-based Hugh Shannon-built BDA have caused the delay. Four pot calipers will be in evidence on the finished product with alloy front hubs and many other tweaks. Willie commented recently: "If my car is not ready until the Circuit—then I'll be quite happy with that." Sounds like he should be.

Willie Crawford — "Circuit."

DOT's Opel cup

Some 40 competitors have now registered for the Opel Dealers Cup, the season-long competition devised by DOT to provide extra incentive to privately entered Opel competitors. The top prizes and details appeared in these columns in November of last year, and now, after six weeks of the competition's existence, the leader is Irishman, David Yeates of Dunboyne Co Meath. His Dublin Garages backed '71 Kadett has already won two navigational events, and the car has had two other top five finishes this season. Geoff Birkett is currently lying second after a win on the Riponian Rally last month. Entries in the Opel Dealers Cup are still open, and anyone interested should write without delay to the Secretariat, Dealer Opel Cup, 33 Harmont House, 20 Harley Street, London W1. The scoring on some events has now been slightly altered after consultation with competitors, and it has been decided that on events that do not have specific capacity classes, points for the top five overall placings will be awarded on a different basis to those events which do. The former will now be scored on the basis of 1st overall—10 pts; 2nd—6 pts; 3rd—4 pts; 4th—3 pts; 5th—1 pt. The scoring for events with classes remains as per the original regulations.

Brown dominates Gwynedd

The first round of the BTRDA Gold Star series got off to a really fine start last weekend with the Caernarvonshire and Angelsey MC's Uniflo Gwynedd rally. Hero of the day was Terry Brown who drove his Central Tyre Services BDA-engined RS to a convincing victory. With co-driver Ed Morgan, he dominated the event, being beaten only twice over the twelve stages. Second were Frank Pierson/David Stephenson who had a steady run throughout the day, while bad luck robbed Bob Bennett of a certain third place after he had lost three minutes in a stage thanks to mechanical bothers. The rally was held in brilliant sunshine and the organising club put on a superb first-time event, selecting the top forest stages in North Wales for the participants. There were just two tarmac stages and these were the only two on which Brown did not set fastest time. Coed-y-Brenin was divided into three different stages and the forest was used five times in all. Familiar names such as Dyfnant and Penmachno were also visited. Although many of the stages had been used in part on previous RACs and the Welsh, the only directly comparable stage used, was flown over by Terry Brown 13 seconds quicker than anyone managed on the Welsh last year, which gives some idea of his pace. No doubt his brand new 1800 cc BDA is turning out the goods to his liking. The only car to break into the Escort-dominated top ten was predictably the Mini of Terry Kaby, who did very well to finish ninth. Another notable performance was put up by Tony Morris from Colchester in the Piranha Ignition RS, who finished third just four seconds behind Pierson. Marshalling and arrowing were very good by all accounts, and apart from poor paperwork and signing-on facilities, the event certainly lived up to championship status. Frank Pierson commented after the event that it was "one of the most enjoyable I've done for a long time."

Terry Brown — fine drive.

Results: 1, Brown/Morgan (Escort RS), 3475; 2, Pierson/Stephenson (Escort RS), 3567; 3, Morris/Lewis (Escort RS), 3771; 4, Brown/Mullard (Escort RS), 3635; 5, Stokes/Andrews (Escort TC), 3640.

BRIEFLY . . .

● Charles Reynolds, Ford Rallye Sport Club's secretary, has just sent off details of Ford's Motormind quiz to motor clubs all over the country. There is an informal air to the proceedings and there will be two preliminary rounds and a "phone-in" final. The winner of the final will receive the Motormind trophy, and along with the next nine highest scorers, will be invited to attend the new Ford Rally School for a day's practical driving tuition free of charge.

● Sorry, Mr Welsh. Budget Rent-a-Car's (Silsden) on-the-ball Press man has pointed out that our suggestion that John Midgely's Toyota Publica would be ineligible for group one (Special stage Feb 13) was a very silly one. Apparently several of these tiddlers have a more powerful 1200 cc twin carburettor engine, option which Japanese customers can choose. Is the name "Publica" homologated however?

● Confirming reports that appeared in these columns some weeks back, DTV have now officially confirmed that Pentti Airikkala will be joining the team for the Welsh, the Scottish and the RAC this year. He will be driving the second G2 Magnum.

● On March 21 Larne MC will be running their "March Hare" rally. A short Friday night event, the March Hare will feature five special stages, four on forestry and one over private land. The rally is specifically for "non-experts" and anybody with a good finishing record, including established "names" will be thrown out from the fun.

● Latest star entries for the Circuit of Ireland besides those for Colin Malkin and Tony Pond include Nigel Rockey who is being shown the countryside by Peter Scott, and Willie Crawford over from Scotland. Russell Brookes will of course be over with the RS2000 to contest Group 1.

● Ralph Broad is returning to competitions: courtesy of Dealer Opel Team. Broad, the boss of Broadspeed, is to co-drive for Tony Fall on the forthcoming Total Economy Run which starts on March 23. The pair will be driving the Turbo Manta.

● The Allegro boom continues to gain momentum. A 1750 G5 "alligator" is being prepared for *MN* rounds by the Patrick Motors Group for Don Kettleborough/Mike Sones. Between 125 and 130 bhp is expected, the body-shell will be substantially strengthened and lightened, and "special" brakes have also been fitted.

Down under

The 1975 Radio New Zealand's Heatway International Rally will be taking place from July 6 to July 12, 1975, starting in Auckland and finishing in Wellington, after covering some 4,000 kilometres of the North Island of New Zealand.

As in past years, it is planned to have several internationally famous drivers competing in the event and already several have shown considerable interest, with possible Manufacturer's works rally cars for them to drive.

Apart from this, considerable interest is being shown by many Australian and New Caledonian Rally Drivers, since the Heatway Rally will be the first round in the newly instituted South Pacific Rally Trophy; the other two rounds being held in Australia and New Caledonia later in the year.

Entries for the rally will open on March 1, 1975, closing on May 15, with 150 being accepted. This year's rally will run to full international standards, which usually means that many drivers are quickly eliminated from the event, due to the tight time schedule. To enable local drivers to gain maximum exposure for their sponsors and their large financial outlay, as well as to gain rallying experience, the rally organisers who meet every week, have set up a "consolation section" to be run within the main rally for those eliminated by the time schedules or serious mechanical misfortune.

The event will start in Auckland at noon on Sunday, July 6, and spend the night covering nine special stages on the way to Whangarei and back, to finish the first division in Auckland early Monday morning. The second division leaves Auckland on Monday evening and finishes in Rotorua after travelling through eight special stages via Thames and Tauranga. The next two divisions are based around Rotorua where rally HQ will be established. Division three will be centred around the Rotoehu Forest area, while division four will head out into Tokoroa and Kawerau Forest areas, finishing at Rotorua at midnight. Division five takes the cars to Napier via Murupara, Opotiki and Wairoa, and the final division will start early Friday evening, finishing in Wellington at 2 pm on Saturday afternoon, July 12.

● Traffic, the latest recruit to the Dealer Opel Team network, are to hold a DOT forum in association with the Mid-Surrey AC on March 11, at 7.30 pm. Traffic's Opel showrooms are at Walton Street, Walton-on-Thames, Tadworth, Surrey, but the actual forum will be held at the Pickard Motor Hotel, Brighton Road, Burgh Heath, Surrey. Tony Pond will head the DOT panel, the new DOT film will be premiered and a Group 1 Opel Ascona and a Turbo Manta will be on display.

Birmingham Post for Russell Brookes

It is always encouraging to see the daily press directly involved in the fortunes of rallying, thus it is good to see that the *Birmingham Post* are to become the joint sponsors of the Russell Brookes/John Brown RS2000 (and later their new G2 Escort Mk 2). Brookes has made no secret of the fact that he is out for overall honours this season, but due to circumstances unforeseen at the time that the details of the deal were finalised, Brookes will have to make do with his G1 car until at least April, when the new Escort will be in the dealers' showrooms, thus enabling the rally cars to go out into the forests. Andrews Heat, who supported Russell throughout most of last season, will be continuing to do so in conjunction with the Thompson-owned newspaper; itself with a history of rallying involvement encompassing Nigel Hollier's Alpine, then John Bloxham's Saab and latterly his Dolomite Sprint.

After the event . . .

After the first round of the championship, the Castrol/AUTOSPORT series now looks like this: overall points: (drivers) Bob Bean 18, Tony Fowkes 17, George Hill 15, Russell Brookes 13, Tony Drummond 12, Richard Iliffe 11, Laurie Richards 10, Pip Dale 8, Andrew Dawson 7, Paul Appleby 5, Neil Metcalfe 3, Chris Lord 2, Russell Close 1. Co-drivers: Alan Greenwood 18, Bryan Harris 17, Phil Short 15, John Brown 13, Tony McMahon 11, John Tew 10, Dave Richards 7, Keith O'Dell 5, Steven Slater 3, Phil Boland 2, Colin Wilson 1. In the Group 1 section, the contenders are placed as follows: Brookes/Brown 15 points each, Appleby/O'Dell 14, Close/Wilson 13, Baines/Walker 11, Inurrietta/Whale 10, Oliver/Douce 6, Lawless/Coleman 4, Walton/Carter 3. This year it is intended to police Group 1 cars more thoroughly than in the past, so it was rather unfortunate that Paul Appleby, whom chief scrutineer, Geoff Ward, descended upon with a view to having the engine stripped (this merely involves having the cylinder head temporarily removed) could not comply with the request at the time for a number of reasons. The engine has now been sealed prior to an inspection at a later date. A statement in the regulations provides for immediate compliance with the requests of the scrutineers. However, the regs were unavoidably delayed owing to the temporary uncertainty over Castrol's motorsport participation some weeks back. Registration for the championship officially closes on March 1.

Renault's all new V6 30 TS

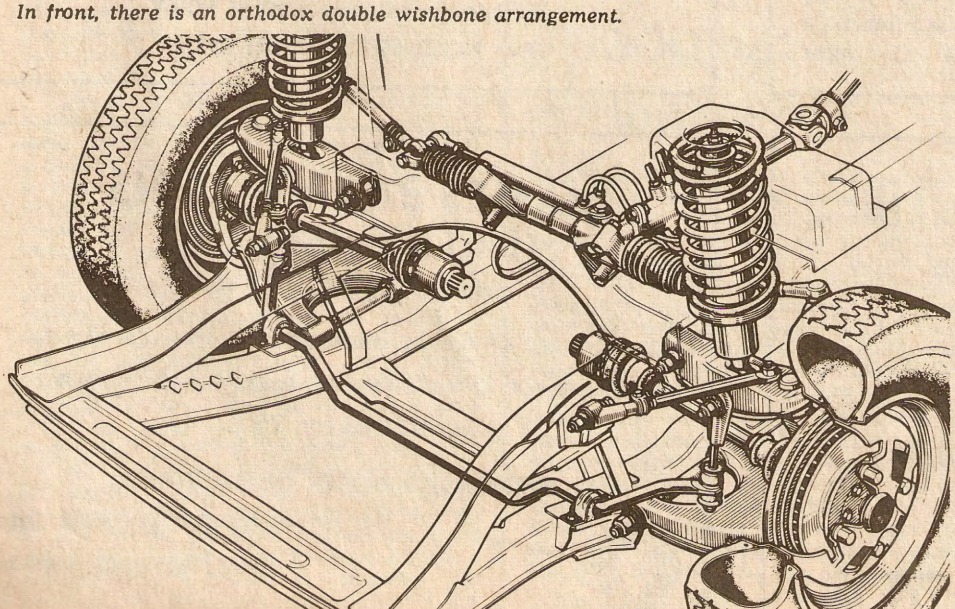
Since the earliest days of motoring, Renault have made little cars for economical travel and large machines for prestige purposes. When the *deux pattes* (two-cylinder) Renault was the most popular taxicab in Paris, not to mention London and other capitals, the President of the Republic rode in his 40 CV six-cylinder of over 9-litres capacity.

After the last war, the Regie turned away from large cars, though it evidently did no harm to concentrate on relatively small four-cylinder models. Having developed a very successful range of front-wheel-drive cars, the leading manufacturer of France has at last decided to return to a luxury six cylinder, though the new model owes virtually nothing to tradition and is completely modern in conception.

Unlike recent front-drive models by other manufacturers, the Renault 30 TS does not have a transverse engine location. As the power unit is a V6, however, there would be no advantage in such an arrangement, the engine being virtually square in shape. Indeed, the design adopted, with the short engine ahead of the differential and the gearbox behind it, gives a direct linkage to the gear-lever when a manual change is chosen.

The engine is the light-alloy V6 of 2664 cc, developed by Renault-Peugeot-Volvo collaboration. In the case of the Renault application, a twin-choke and a single-choke carburetter are fitted, giving a 131 bhp output. There is a single chain-driven overhead-camshaft per bank, operating inclined valves in hemispherical combustion chambers by rockers.

In front, there is an orthodox double wishbone arrangement.



A four-speed synchromesh gearbox, or an entirely new three-speed automatic transmission with a floor selector, may be specified, with a spiral bevel final drive of 3.89 to 1. All four wheels have independent suspension by coil springs, with anti-roll bars at both ends. In front, there is an orthodox double-wishbone arrangement, but the rear suspension breaks new ground for Renault with struts incorporating the dampers, in conjunction with long lower links and trailing arms.

The rack and pinion steering has power assistance and the servo-assisted disc brakes are ventilated in front, with dual circuits and a height control at the rear. Though the four-door saloon is very roomy and has a large luggage boot, the overall length is only 14 ft 10 in. The clean shape ensures low fuel consumption and the maximum speed is 115 mph (112 mph automatic). Hydraulic headlight levelling is featured, with electrically-raised windows and central door locking.

This very important new car will make its bow at the Geneva Show and will be available in England from about the time of the Earls Court Show. Driving impressions will appear in AUTOSPORT shortly.

SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA

Car described : Renault 30 TS four/five-door saloon.
Engine : Six cylinders 88 x 73 mm (2664 cc) ; compression ratio 8.65 to 1 ; 131 bhp DIN at 5500 rpm.
Transmission : Single dry plate clutch ; four-speed synchromesh gearbox with central remote control, ratios : 0.93, 1.32, 2.06, and 3.36 to 1 ; spiral bevel final drive, ratio 3.89 to 1 ; driveshafts to front hubs with constant-velocity joints, sliding type at gearbox end. Optional : Hydraulic torque converter and three-speed automatic transmission with electronic selection.
Chassis : Combined steel body and chassis ; independent front suspension by wishbones, coil spring, and anti-roll bar ; power-assisted rack and pinion steering ; independent rear suspension by coil springs, damper-struts, and lower links with trailing arms, plus anti-roll bar ; servo-assisted dual-circuit disc brakes with ventilated front discs having two cylinders per caliper and height control for rear brakes ; bolt-on disc wheels fitted 175 HR 14 tyres.
Dimensions : Wheelbase, 8 ft 9 in. Track, 4 ft 9 in/4 ft 8½ in. Overall length, 14 ft 10 in. Width, 5ft 8in. Weight, 2,910 lb.
Performance : Maximum speed, 115 mph (automatic 112 mph).

JOHN BOLSTER

Correspondence

The editor is not bound to agree with readers' opinions

Tennis anyone?

Mr Myers (Correspondence, February 20) seems to have missed something in his proposed economy measures—by cutting down the number of championships, you save precisely nothing.

Consider, if you have N championships with (say) M drivers contesting each, and you reduce this to N/2 championships, then you will have 2 x M drivers contesting each championship. Now, say each driver does X laps in course of a championship. The total number of laps completed in the season before the changes = N x M x X; and after the changes = N/2 x M x 2 x X = N x M x X.

The only effect these proposals would have would be to give race meetings less variety. We would have an FF Festival every weekend because the competitors would have nowhere else to race. Somewhere else, there would be a saloon car festival.

No Mr Myers, to economise you can't cut down on championships—you must reduce the other variables, ie:

1. Drivers (get de General wid de Webberley .45, or just reduce the number of competition licences).
2. Rounds per championship. Or,
3. Laps per round—so reducing the total number of laps done per season.

Or, of course, you could just prohibit all cars with an engine capacity greater than 1500 cc.

Anyone for tennis?

ROMFORD, ESSEX. K. J. ORFORD.

Economy races to boost image

Having just read John Bolster's article advocating the adoption of a formula based on economy in F1, I could imagine a lot of short-sighted readers getting out their slide rules to work out just how many gallons of fuel would be saved. It is this very attitude of not adjusting to world conditions, the carry on "even if it costs £5 a gallon" brigade, which will eventually alienate our sport from Mr Average, to such an extent that we could end up with a complete ban on all forms of motor sport. (Don't laugh, it nearly happend in the fuel crisis of 1973/74.) The actual physical amounts saved are unimportant, what is important now is image and John Bolster's argument is right for the very reason outlined in the Editorial of the same issue. The sport has got to sell itself to the paying public if it is to survive and continue as a form of entertainment, and to contribute to our hard pressed balance of payments.

Take the problem facing one section of industry, which used to be large sponsors of motor sport—the oil companies. They are in a quandry, because it is morally irresponsible to promote the sale of a product, the use of which adversely affects our balance of payments and thus our pockets, particularly through a medium which to Mr Average is an apparent sheer waste of that self-same precious product. On the other hand, due to government intervention and the increasing responsibility of consumers, demand is falling and the only way companies can discharge their duties to shareholders is to increase their share of this diminishing market. Motor sport makes an ideal medium to expose brand names to a sector of the public who must use one brand or another. But, sooner or later, the companies will think "are we losing custom because of our apparent irresponsibility or are we gaining because of the brand exposure?" I would suggest that one cancels out the other, and that the companies will arrive at the same conclusion. They would then withdraw all form of support from motor sport and redirect the cash to promoting the economy aspects of their products through more conventional methods which would reach a larger audience.

Now, if a formula or formulae based on Keith Duckworth's suggestion were to be adopted, can you imagine the gains to be made which would be laid, for the taking, at the feet of industry? The oil company research centres would work hand in hand with the motor manufacturers' research people, combining the two functions of research and promotion at the same time. The interest in motor sport would virtually double overnight, Mr Average would see "the point of it all" and charged with a new sense of national pride coupled with need for thrift would want to see how a certain type of engine, petrol or tyre, performed in this most testing of all arenas. The sport would thrive, the industry would thrive, and the balance of payments would benefit from all directions (as long as we didn't hang around as usual and let the Japs and Yanks take over our initial inventions). The possibilities are limitless and the sooner it happens the better, after all what would we lose by trying it?

MOBBERLEY, CHESHIRE. G. BERNARD AMOS.

Daytona 500 sensationalism

While I was listening to the television last Monday night, I heard the words "Daytona 500" mentioned. Now being an ardent motor race fan my eyes were eagerly focused on the screen, but they were sadly greeted by the sight of about half a dozen cars all smashing themselves to bits. When the piece of film was over we were told that all the drivers escaped unhurt, which was good to hear, but we weren't told who won the race or anything. I think it's a great pity that it takes a mass pile up to get the Daytona race mentioned on the television.

Of course this isn't the first time this has happened, one will remember that the same thing occurred with the 1973 British GP shunt. We all know that motor racing deserves much more publicity than it gets, but when it takes the lives of drivers just to get on the box for 30 s, which would you rather have, a full grid or 30 s worth of very, very expensive stock car racing.

COUNDON, COVENTRY. DAVID WISDOM.

F5000 not a springboard?

The way AUTOSPORT supports the campaign of Formula 5000 as the spring-board (?) to Formula 1 is painful to me as a German reader of your journal. It's unfair towards the up-and-coming men of British motor sport. The spring-board was, and should be, Formula 2. A season in Formula 5000 means, to the up-and-coming man, that he particularly avoids the superior French drivers in Formula 2. Also the British seldom come abroad to learn foreign circuits.

What has happened to the British who have already come from Formula 2 like Hunt, Watson, Pryce? And what happened to those who came from Formula 5000 like van Lennep, Belso, Edwards? Their way is so short. From Formula 5000 into Formula 1, and back into Formula 5000 as a has-been. Therefore will you now stop the delusion.

BIELEFIELD, W. GERMANY. ROLF MILZER.

The women . . .

Portray with less than justice—that is one of the definitions of a libellous statement in the Pocket Oxford Dictionary, and it certainly applies to Nick Brittan's unwarranted condemnation of women at present in motor racing.

I was incensed when I read that totally unnecessary sentence in his column last week in AUTOSPORT, the rest of his remarks about Divina's intended rise to motor racing fame were interesting to read, but why, Mr Brittan, did you find it necessary to castigate the rest of us? As a committee member of the British Women Racing Driver's Club I felt compelled to put pen to paper in our defence.

No-one could surely accuse Lorina Boughton of driving, looking or even being a suburban housewife! Given the time, practice and opportunity I am sure she would be a force for Divina to reckon with, as would Susan Tucker-Peake given the right car, and many others too numerous to mention. Surely Georgie Shaw's showing against Lella at Brands last year must mean something, her only failing was lack of practice. Incidentally, Divina isn't the only woman racing driver who has had "a traditional British public school and Swiss finishing school background"—but I must admit to being a suburban housewife now, and proud of it. I tend to drive like one too, but then I am not writing this letter for my own benefit, but, hopefully, for the benefit of the younger up-and-coming members of our Club.

John Webb obviously doesn't share your misgivings Mr Brittan, he has made us a very generous offer and we shall do our best to uphold his faith in us. As he puts it, one woman racing driver is worth far more publicity than Emerson Fittipaldi. If Divina is the one to do it then I wish her well, she should be a great ambassadress for women in motor sport, but not, one hopes, at the expense of the others. I am sure she is the last person to want this, and I hope she will enjoy great success and join our Club, so that we can all bask in some of her glory, and back her to the hilt if she ever needs it.

Why don't you join in one of the proposed Ladies' Mexico races this year, Mr Brittan? Just put a helmet and face mask on and I'm sure no-one will notice the difference, unless your over-inflated male chauvinism is showing!

An apology, please, or it will be wooden spoons at dawn on my suburban lawn!

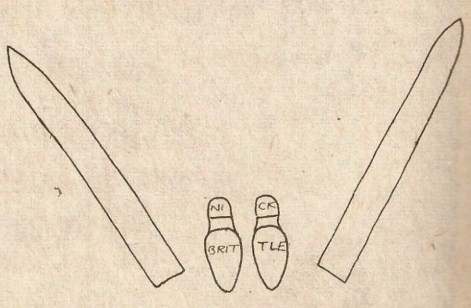
SOUTHAMPTON, HANTS. JUDY ANDREASON.

. . . hit back

Dear Signors, After reading about Divine Garlicky in Nick Brittle's column this week, I have only one comment to make. (See below).

LIMP ENGINEERING, BICESTER.

LELLA WOMBLEDI.



First blood to Coleman in tense Dales opener

By JOHN DAVENPORT **Photographs by KEVIN BLICK**

A COLD misty night provided some of the most slippery motoring that the Yorkshire forests have seen since the RAC Rally and it was this that made the Mintex Dales a very closely fought and interesting rally. The early demise of Roger Clark/Jim Porter with the works Escort left the field open for their challengers to fight it out among themselves. Colin Malkin/Paul White led initially in the 2-litre Chrysler Avenger but then Billy Coleman/John Davenport asserted their right to the lead with the Thomas Motors Escort, and by the first halt in Scarborough had established a lead over Nigel Rockey/Ron Channon in their ex-works Escort with Bob Bean/Alan Greenwood in the second Thomas Motors Escort in close attendance with Malkin fourth. The stages were more slippery second time over but Coleman just extended his lead enough so that he could take things relatively carefully to come home just 24 seconds ahead of Rockey, with Bean three minutes away. For Thomas Motors of Blackpool it was a total success as they also won the team prize, since the third member of their team was none other than Nigel Rockey.

Colin Malkin had an excellent run in the big engined Avenger but a broken oil seal and consequent loss of rear brakes slowed him in the closing stages of the rally and he was passed by Britain's most press-on driver, Tony Fowkes, with Bryan Harris in the Cables and Components Escort. DTV had a 100% retirement rate, losing both their Group 1 and 2 Magnum Coupés but the Vauxhall flag was kept honourably flying by the fine performance of George Hill/Phil Short in the Martin Group Magnum who drove an excellent rally to finish sixth overall, just one minute behind Malkin. Pip Dale/Dave Whitelay also had a steady run in the Leedham's of York Firenza to finish just out of the top ten. Most encouraging was the performance of Brian Culcheth/Johnstone Syer in the British Leyland Group 2 Dolomite Sprint, who after a cautious start and some uncertainty about which tyres to use on the ice, came through to finish seventh overall. British Leyland could also be very pleased with Pat Ryan/Jon Gittins who took the Team Unipart 1300cc Marina through to 22nd place and a class win.

Perhaps the drive of the rally was that of Russell Brookes/John Brown who used the less fierce power of their Group 1 Escort RS 2000 to stay right with the more powerful cars in the tricky driving conditions. They finished eighth overall just three seconds behind Culcheth, and at one time were lying sixth. As there was no separate category in the rally for Group 1 cars, their exploit went virtually unrewarded—they were eighth in class—but they once again lead the Castrol/AUTOSPORT Group 1 championship, and that of the RAC Rally championship, although there was no scrutineer there to check for eligibility on behalf of the RAC. The White Horse Avenger of Gavin Waugh/Peter Handy was the next best classified Group 1 car and also won its class ahead of the similar car entered by Maconochies of Kilmarnock for Ian Gemmell/John Ayres.

George Hill drove consistently quickly to finish well up with the Martins Magnum.

PRELUDE

As with any major event, there were the unhappy stories. Not only did many crews have problems before the start, but as with DOT, they just carried through into the rally as well. Tony Fall/Mike Wood were late to scrutineering, learnt on the start line that one of the mechanics had written off Tony's private Opel Commodore, had problems with their Kadett right through the rally to eventually finish 17th and to cap it all, lost Tony Pond/Mike Broad whose crossflow Ascona swallowed one fan belt too many. Despite the treacherous conditions, not so many cars were involved in accidents as one would have expected on such a fast forestry event. Nigel Rockey had a small excursion and DTV new boys, Paul Faulkner/Monty Peters, inverted their Group 1 Magnum while Dan Grewer/Don Griffiths bent the front of their Opel Ascona, and one very sad wreck stood at the end of Pickering, but that was about it as far as battle scars went.

The rally featured a number of airfield tests including Rufforth and Mintex's own test track, but the real part of the rally was the superb stages of the Yorkshire Forests, provided by the excellent co-operation between the De Lacey club and the local mandarins of the Forestry Commission. Some roads were used that have not formed part of RAC Rally stages and there was even a stage in Dalby North which did not involve Mikkola's bend. The marshalling and timing was of an equally high standard and the CSMA results team with their Clark Instant Results got everything together so that both times at Scarborough, totalled results were posted

Donald Heggie/George Dean were out of luck again. An oil union broke, sidelining them.

within minutes of the cars arriving, while at the finish, the prizes were presented on time, or rather could have been had it proved possible to wake the victors who had fallen into a deep slumber on their shields and needed a few spears to get them awake.

Once again, and perhaps for the last time, the rally was based on the Selby Fork Motel which has proved something of a mixed blessing to the rally. It provides a compact, modern setting for the start and finish and no one could dispute its convenience just off the A1, but with the numbers of people involved from competitors to sponsors, mechanics and officials, a larger facility is going to be needed if the rally is to grow and there was much talk at the finish that Scarborough might be hosts to the rally in 1976. As it was, Selby Fork saw the rally cars start to arrive on Friday morning and scrutineering started promptly at 2 pm. There were a few delays and among the waiting crowd was Mike Wood as Tony Fall had a carburetter blockage in the Opel Kadett and was feverishly trying to unblock it in Bradford, while the Thomas Motors mechanics got behind schedule loading up Billy Coleman's goodies in Blackpool and arrived one hour after Roger Clark's ex-RAC Rally Escort had passed into the parc fermé. DTV had already had a few problems on the way up from Banbury, as Will Sparrow's car had been running in and blown a cam cover gasket which necessitated the removal from the DTV trailer of the Group 1 car and the substitution of Sparrow's. The offending gasket was changed before the car was scrutineered. Poor Reg Mullenger heard that his service crew had broken a half-shaft on the way up so he went to rescue them and by the time they were mobile, he was too late to start the rally.

Despite all these trials and tribulations, the line-up for the start was very impressive. In addition to the regular circus, Chrysler had a two litre BRM engined Avenger for Colin Malkin/Paul White. The engine was actually quite venerable and had seen service in a road car as well as doing many hours of bench testing before working its way into a rally car under Mr Malkin's right boot. The gearbox is still standard Chrysler, as is the rear axle which sports the rather high ratio of 4.4 compared with Escorts which run 5.1 s. Tony Pond/Mike Broad were heading the DOT effort with the cross-flow Ascona as Fall had decided to keep his pet project to himself while it was in the experimental stage, though once the feasibility of the Kadett is proved, Pond will take over. As it was, the Ascona was going really well and it was only Pond who was suffering from 'flu and in consequence running on three cylinders. "Piggy" Thompson was out again in his Escort and now has Mike Greasley permanently in his hot seat, (except during the week when Mike's allegiance is still to Datsun). Chris Sclater was unable to start, which left Martin Holmes free to pursue his photography, and indeed this event had attracted a bevy of journalists including a very large (in numbers) equipe from the *Motor* including racing scribe, Mike Doodson, and ex-AUTOSPORT "snapper," Peter Burn.

Back with the runners, Will Sparrow/Ron Crellin were reputed to have 235 bhp at their disposal in the Magnum coupé which would probably have given them top horsepower award if it had not been for the presence of Jack Tordoff/Brian Marchant in the familiar red Carrera. British Leyland had Brian Culcheth/Johnstone Syer in the 200 bhp plus Dolomite last seen on the Dean, while Pat Ryan/Jon Gittins drove the 1300cc Marina that started life as Culcheth's class winner on the 1000 Lakes. Donald Heggie/George Dean were there again with the Broadspeed Escort re-fitted with its demon coil spring rear end and a new engine courtesy of Wiggins Teape, while the Peter Clarke ex-works Escort was now in the hands of Philip Shaw, who kept entry and Phil Bolland as co-driver. Gordon the Batchelor non-started as he still doesn't have a really suitable car, and his place was taken by Richard Iliffe/Tony McMahon in their 1800cc RS 1600. Roy Fidler was out in a Group 1 Colt Lancer 1600 while Harold Morley was teamed up with Keith Wood in the Lloyds of Stafford RS 2000, this firm's main interest lying with Tony Drummond/Mike Nicolson in the ex-Chevin Escort RS 1600. Eric Jackson/Tony Viles were out in the suitably powered ex-World Cup Escort while Bob Bean was using the ex-Eric Jackson, crashed-on-the-Chieftain, Escort now rebuilt and running in Thomas Motors colours. Rodney Badham non-started as did Bernard Banning who has flu, which made two Avengers less in the line-up but it was an excellent entry with plenty of variety.

RALLY

Promptly at 6.30 pm—it should have been 6 pm but as Throlam had to be cancelled because of a bomb scare the start was put back half an hour—Clark rolled off the line and set out for the first special stage at the Mintex test ground a short distance away. Unfortunately it was to be the last for Britain's greatest driver, for though he finished the two mile test, the engine had dropped a valve or something similar and he was soon to be back in the hotel. Equal fastest with Tony Drummond, Clark prognosticated that Coleman, one second slower, would forge ahead once the forests were reached. Before that, there were to be stages on other tarmac sections plus a few farm tracks for good measure. That first stage had seen Will Sparrow having a slow run when a water hose blew off his Magnum, but no permanent damage was done. The same could not be said for Don Nelson/Tony Kershaw who broke the differential in their Porsche Carrera. Andy Dawson/Dave Richards, running their Datsun under Birmingham Post sponsorship for the first time, lost their rear brakes and though the situation improved as the rally went on, they were never completely correct and when, two stages later, the differential locked up and refused to slip, the car became a trifle hard to steer. The man making all the running in these early stages was Colin Malkin, who by the time the rally had reached Sutton Bank

Richard Iliffe negotiates Oliver's Mount.

and done the short forest stages of Kilburn and Boltby had forced his Avenger into the lead with 22 m 53 s compared with Nigel Rockey's 23 m 05 s and Tony Drummond's 23 m 18 s. Billy Coleman was fourth with 23 m 30 s after a spectacular near-roll on Kilburn (which features on our cover this week). He had found the previous two hairpins so slippery that he expected the car to slide past the apex of the hairpin on the power, but instead the tyres gripped and up the car went. It mildly attacked the opposite bank and bent the spot lamp brackets and he lost ten seconds or so backing it out. Brian Culcheth was an excellent fifth (23 m 34 s) and Bob Bean was already laying claim to a high placing with 23 m 36 s.

John Cleary/Phil Stern had to retire in their RS 2000 after stage five where they had a broken half shaft with no attendant service to help them, while Henry Inurrieta/Martin Whale were already without a starter in their RS 2000, and were shortly to lose the clutch as well, making soldiering on their only possibility. There had already been

drama for Nigel Rockey who had arrived at the flying finish on stage seven (A) and carried on down the very short stopping distance to assault the marshal's VW K70, bending both cars and one of his front struts in the process. With no spare in his service car he was to have to carry on for the rest of the rally with a bit too much camber on the right front.

From Sutton Bank, the rally headed straight into Cropton and Pickering for three stages, and it was here that the first black ice and hoar frost made its appearance. The going was decidedly tricky for one could never tell just where it was going to be slippery and where the grip was reasonable. There was immediately a rash of tyre changes, with some people opting to go for narrow tyres all round, while others like Malkin and Culcheth found that they had no choice but to stay on the size that they started with. Coleman profited from the demise of Clark to the extent that he could help himself a bit more liberally from the Dunlop truck, but in fact he stayed on his original choice—wide rears and narrow fronts—for the whole rally with the exception of the Stately Home stages at the end. Poor Malkin was also to have a misunderstanding with his service crew and he had to do the last few stages into Scarborough on practically bald tyres which cost him a couple of places.

Despite the conditions, dramas were few. Robin Eyre-Maunsell/Neil Wilson in the Chrysler Dealer Team's Group 1 Avenger had the misfortune to take a dip badly on Cropton 2 and the impact caught their sump guard on the end and ripped it and parts of the front suspension off the car which put them out. Russell Brookes hit a bank and somehow damaged the back of his Escort, the surprising thing being that there was little to be seen but the bent chassis rail. Tony Baines/Alex Walker rolled their Escort RS 2000 on Pickering and made a pretty fair mess of it, and the ex-Peter Clarke Escort executed a similar maneouvre to put them out. At the head of the field, it was Pond, Fowkes, Malkin and Rockey who got the fastest times, but when the rally moved over to the traditional stages of Dalby, Bickley and Langdale, it was Billy Coleman that stepped up the pace and set five fastest times in a row. On most of these very slippery stages he was at least 15 seconds clear of the next fastest car, and it was his performance here that shot him into a lead he was never to lose.

Tony Fall was running a do-it-yourself department to keep his Kadett going, as at the end of the first Dalby the rear axle was coming loose and DOT were running with one service crew less as a result of the incident with his private car. Tony Pond was in trouble with his cam cover leaking oil down through the inspection cover into the clutch, but he did get the Ascona going well and recorded fastest time on the last stage before Scarborough, Harewood Dale. Piggy Thompson was in trouble having assaulted a pile of logs and bent his rear axle. The damage finally caused the tortured differential to break and put him out. At Scarborough, the weather was bleak and cold, but a warm welcome waited in the Spa restaurant as did the results showing that Coleman now led with 76 m 10 s from Rockey with 76 m 47 s, Bean with 77 m 13 s and Malkin with 77 m 37 s. Pond, despite his troubles, was well up with 77 m 53 s.

The rally left Scarborough again at about 3.30 in the morning to do the two Wykeham stages, and then the whole Dalby complex once more. Dan Grewer got crossed up at the difficult right-hand junction in Wykeham 2 and left the road with his Ascona, striking a tree which did the front end no good at all, and forcing him to retire. The stages which had already been used were now nicely polished by the back numbers and times slowed considerably. Coleman nearly spun and stalled on Dalby 1 having previously visited a firebreak in Wykeham, but his was the steadiest run, and he wound up back at Scarborough with another 10 seconds wrung from Rockey.

Andrew Dawson's drive in the Kleber Datsun was fraught with problems.

Russell Brookes was astoundingly fastest overall on the very quick Langdale stage which was now the most slippery of all, while Bob Bean was fastest on Harewood Dale. It was here that Paul Faulkner/Monty Peters got their Magnum out of sequence on the bumps before the finish line and inverted it. Laurie Richards/John Tew in the Sky Petroleum Escort finished the stage and then went back to help them out and get the car and card over the finish line. Despite the damage, the pair were ready to continue, but in Scarborough it was discovered that the carburetter diaphragms were damaged and they could not get it to start. Tony Pond's Ascona gobbled its first fan belt on Dalby, and then two more on Bickley, at which they ran out of fan belts and time. Colin Malkin, determined to hang on to his fourth place despite the fact that Tony Fowkes was closing on him, suffered a further setback when his rear axle developed an oil leak, and the subsequent discharge of oil into the rear brakes cut back his performance.

The situation was now Coleman 122 m 14 s with Rockey on 122 m 50 s and then there was a gap to Bean on 124 m 12 s and Malkin on 124 m 44 s, with Fowkes on 124 m 52 s. John Taylor/John Jensen in the Haynes of Maidstone Escort were challenging Culcheth to stay in the top ten and both of them had now been passed by Vauxhall exponents, George Hill and Will Sparrow. Taylor had suffered an off in Dalby, but was otherwise finding his rally feet and steadily improving, which makes it a great shame that he had to retire almost at once after breakfast when the head gasket blew on his Escort. Will Sparrow too was destined to rest in Scarborough as his Magnum blew an oil pipe in the Oliver's Mount stage, and the engine died of thirst. Some consolation for Vauxhall should have been that Hill showed the other cars the way round the very icy track and recorded fastest time for the two laps. Troubles now seemed to come thick and fast for just about everyone. Tony Fall had a throttle cable break on Pickering the second time, while Rockey savaged a tree and bent the other front wing of his Escort. Harold Morley broke the gearbox almost within sight of the finish line on Kilburn, while poor Donald Heggie lost all his oil pressure on the way from the final forests to Rufforth and switched off in time to save the engine. A ruptured oil pump is the suspected cause. Phil Cooper/Phil Lilley in the Abingdon-prepared Allegro 1300 broke a driveshaft coupling on one of the Cropton stages but got off the stage and changed it to finish the rally 52nd overall but second in class. Jack Tordoff/Brian Marchant had looked at the results in Scarborough and seen that 13th overall was not likely to earn them any RAC Championship points so had gone home to conserve their Carrera and also to watch Bradford lose 3-1.

At Rufforth, finally away from the ice and the chill of the forests, the cars did a couple of laps before going via Bramham, Harewood and Esholt, all run as on the RAC Rally, to the final stage at the Mintex testground once more. The main interest over these closing stages was the fluctuating gap between Rockey and Coleman, but despite the Bristol driver getting into the select category of drivers who have completed Esholt in under three minutes, he could only pull sufficient seconds back off the Irishman to finish 24 seconds behind after an epic chase.

So finished the 1975 Mintex Dales with victory going to last year's National champion. The prizegiving was smart and slick and it was very pleasing to see the Managing Director of Mintex, Mr Desmond Pillinger, there in person to present the prizes and endorse his firm's support for the De Lacey Motor Club's rally.

1, Billy Coleman/John Davenport (Escort RS), 172.12; 2, Nigel Rockey/Ron Channon (Escort RS), 172.48; 3, Bob Bean/Alan Greenwood (Escort RS), 175.50; 4, Tony Fowkes/Bryan Harris (Escort RS), 176.21; 5, Colin Malkin/Paul White (Chrysler Avenger), 176.31; 6, George Hill/Phil Short (Vauxhall Magnum), 177.31; 7, Brian Culcheth/Johnstone Syer, 178.14; 8, Russell Brookes/John Brown (RS2000), 178.17; 9, Tony Drummond/Mike Nicholson (Escort RS), 179.22; Richard Iliffe/Tony McMahon (Escort RS), 179.41.

Colin Malkin/Paul White in spectacular action on Bramham Park.

by John Bolster

Racy sign-writing is now daubed on the familiar bespoilered nose. Old faces die hard.

BL's smooth Spitfire

I sometimes forget just how delightful open-car motoring can be. Time was when no young man would be seen dead in a "jug-box," but of recent years the performance advantage of cars with open coachwork has been wiped out. Indeed, the body with a roof can be lighter and more rigid, as well as offering less resistance to the wind.

Yet, motoring is not just performance figures and rushing round corners. In a closed car, you may pass through the countryside and obtain a superficial view of it, outside the glass, but you miss most of its charm. In a proper open car — and I don't mean a saloon with a hole in the roof — you can smell the scent of new-mown hay or of apple wood burning in the grate, you can hear the birds singing in the trees or catch the odd snatch of conversation. In a word, you share the rural scene instead of rushing heedlessly past.

These reflections have been prompted by the Triumph Spitfire, which I have recently enjoyed. February might not seem the ideal month for such driving, but even with frost on the grass I was comfortably warm with the heater toasting my toes. Open cars can be horribly draughty, but whoever designed this one certainly got it right. There's no wind down the back of your neck and you can talk to your passenger without raising your voice, while the radio can be heard better than in many saloons.

With the hood up, the engine becomes much more audible. It is not at all noisy in the normal cruising range but is obviously hard at work towards 6000 rpm. The gearbox and the chassis-mounted hypoid unit are completely silent, which is an astonishing achievement. The hood can be raised and lowered quite quickly with practice, but it falls short of those two-seater hoods of olden times, which one could raise or lower with the left hand while driving.

Quite a few people remarked on the little Triumph's good looks, which remain attractive whether the car is open or closed. With the top up, the interior is very cosy and the winding windows admit no daughts, but eye-ball ventilators would be a welcome addition. The car is actually very well equipped, with a map-reading light for the passenger and a courtesy light in the boot, two-speed wipers, reversing lights, and so on.

The angle of the seat squabs is adjustable but the cushions might be enlarged a little for comfortable long-distance driving. Perhaps a very large man might be short of space, but I was quite at ease. The ride is far better than

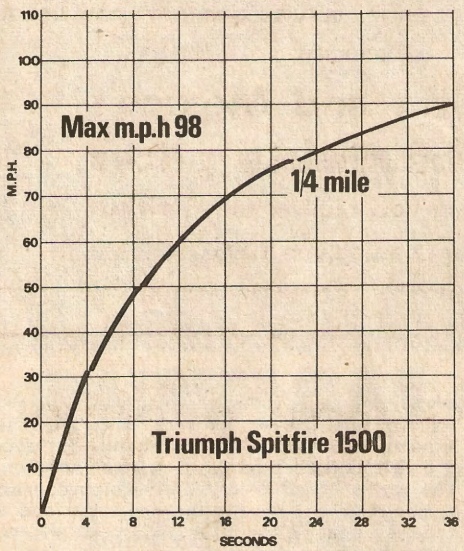
The hood is quite easy to raise or lower.

that of earlier Spitfires; the little machine rides the bumps of country lanes astonishingly well but the suspension does not bottom, even at fairly high speeds.

Though swing-axle geometry is retained at the rear, a pivoted transverse spring reduces the roll resistance and overcomes the previous tendency to over-steer. The car is now very stable at maximum speed and the handling has nothing unusual about it. Perhaps one does not throw it around with quite the gay abandon that a Midget encourages, but the harsh ride of the MG cannot be compared with the smooth progression of the Spitfire.

The new and larger engine has noticeably improved the acceleration, but fuel-consumption tests at steady speeds prove that the bigger unit is also appreciably more economical. The car is now claimed to be capable of 100 mph, but I was not quite able to attain this velocity on even the longest straights. It cruises very easily at 80 to 90 mph, which is its most pleasant speed, the high gearing keeping the revs down so that the red part of the rev counter dial is never approached in top gear.

The test car was fitted with the optional overdrive, on which it is hilariously over-

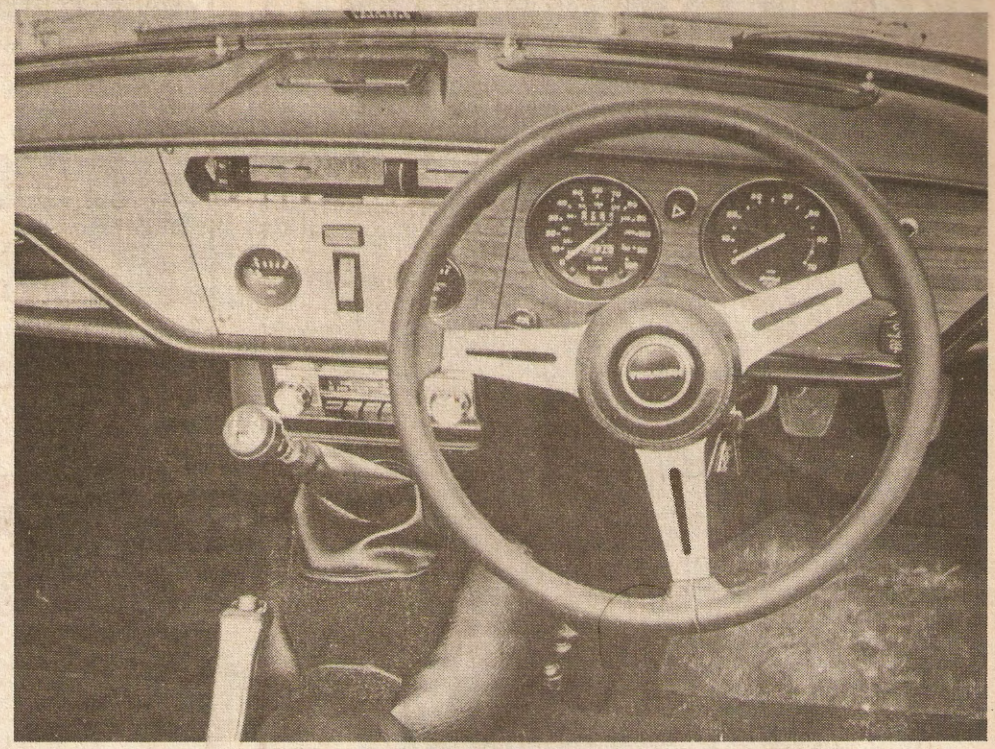


geared. However, this probably makes sense now that petrol is so expensive and in short supply. On overdrive, the car is faster in third than top, but 90 mph cruising at 4,000 rpm is not to be sneezed at. I did not have occasion to make any long runs on motorways, but I'm sure that some most remarkable fuel economy figures could be achieved. Under the present circumstances, I suppose that the overdrive might justify its high cost, and certainly the little switch on the gear lever knob could not be easier to use.

As for the gearchange, this is truly excellent, adding to the pleasure of driving the car. I shall, therefore, forget those occasions on which it gave me third when I was after reverse. The brakes really grab hold of the little thing and pin it to the ground in a most reassuring manner.

Perhaps the Spitfire is at its best when regarded as a very refined open touring car, rather than as a hot sports model. It's a pity that stupid driving in the past has forced the insurance companies to discriminate against such cars. However, now that the boy racers seem to have switched to saloons, maybe we can restore the reputation of fresh-air two-seaters. Not so long ago insurance companies liked sports cars, because they had better roadholding and, usually, more skilful drivers. Let us hope that such days may return.

In any case, I do most seriously urge my readers to have a test-drive in a proper open car. Some people don't know what they're missing and it's surely worth a try.



Attractive facia still persists with timber veneer.

SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA

Car tested: Triumph Spitfire 1500 open two-seater, price £1,509.30; overdrive, £113.14; including car tax and VAT.

Engine: Four cylinders 73.7 x 87.5 mm (1493 cc); compression ratio 9 to 1; 71 bhp DIN at 5500 rpm; pushrod-operated overhead valves; twin SU carburetters.

Transmission: Single dry plate clutch; four-speed all-synchromesh gearbox with central remote control, ratios 1.0, 1.39, 2.46 and 3.50 to 1 plus Laycock overdrive, ratio 0.791 to 1; hypoid final drive, ratio 3.63 to 1.

Chassis: Pressed steel body mounted on separate steel chassis frame; independent front suspension with wishbones, coil springs, and anti-roll bar; rack and pinion steering; independent rear suspension with swing-axles, trailing arms, and transverse leaf spring with auxiliary centre-pivoted spring; telescopic dampers all round; disc/drum brakes; bolt-on steel wheels fitted 155 SR 13 tyres.

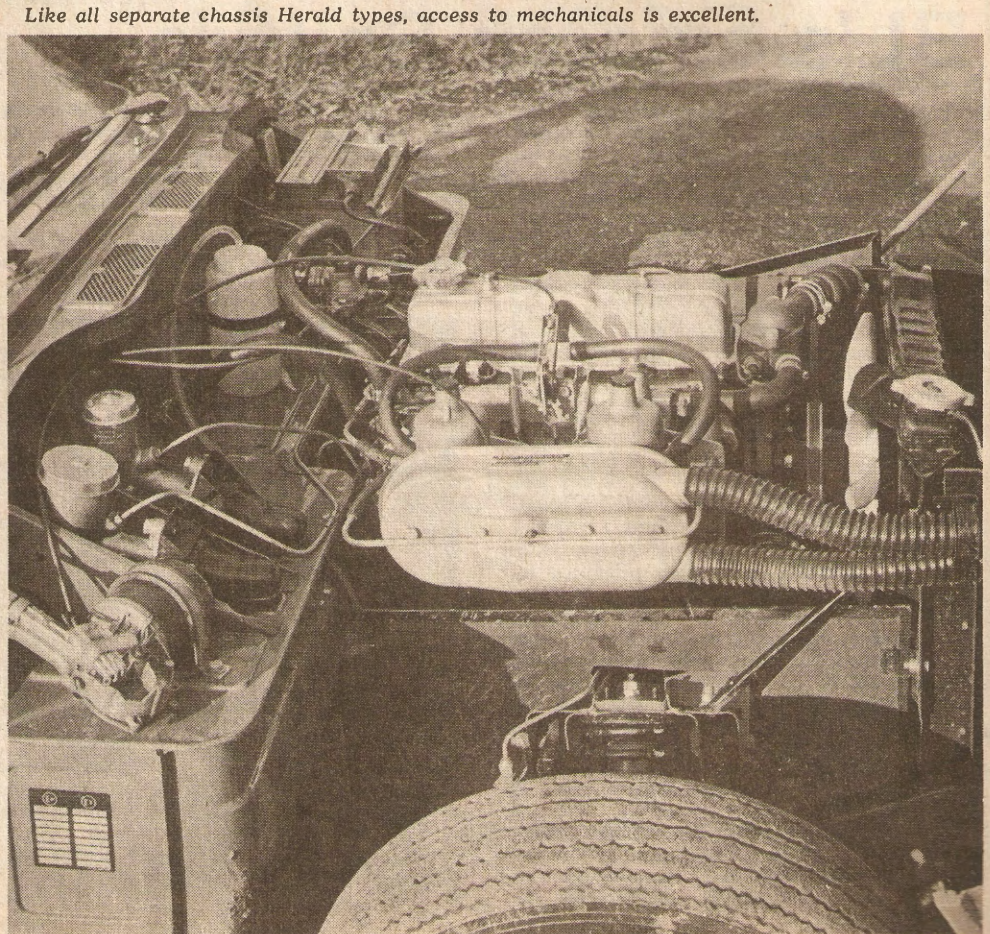
Equipment: 12 volt lighting and starting; speedometer; rev counter; fuel and temperature gauges; heating and demisting; two-speed windscreen wipers and washers; flashing direction indicators with hazard warning; reversing lights.

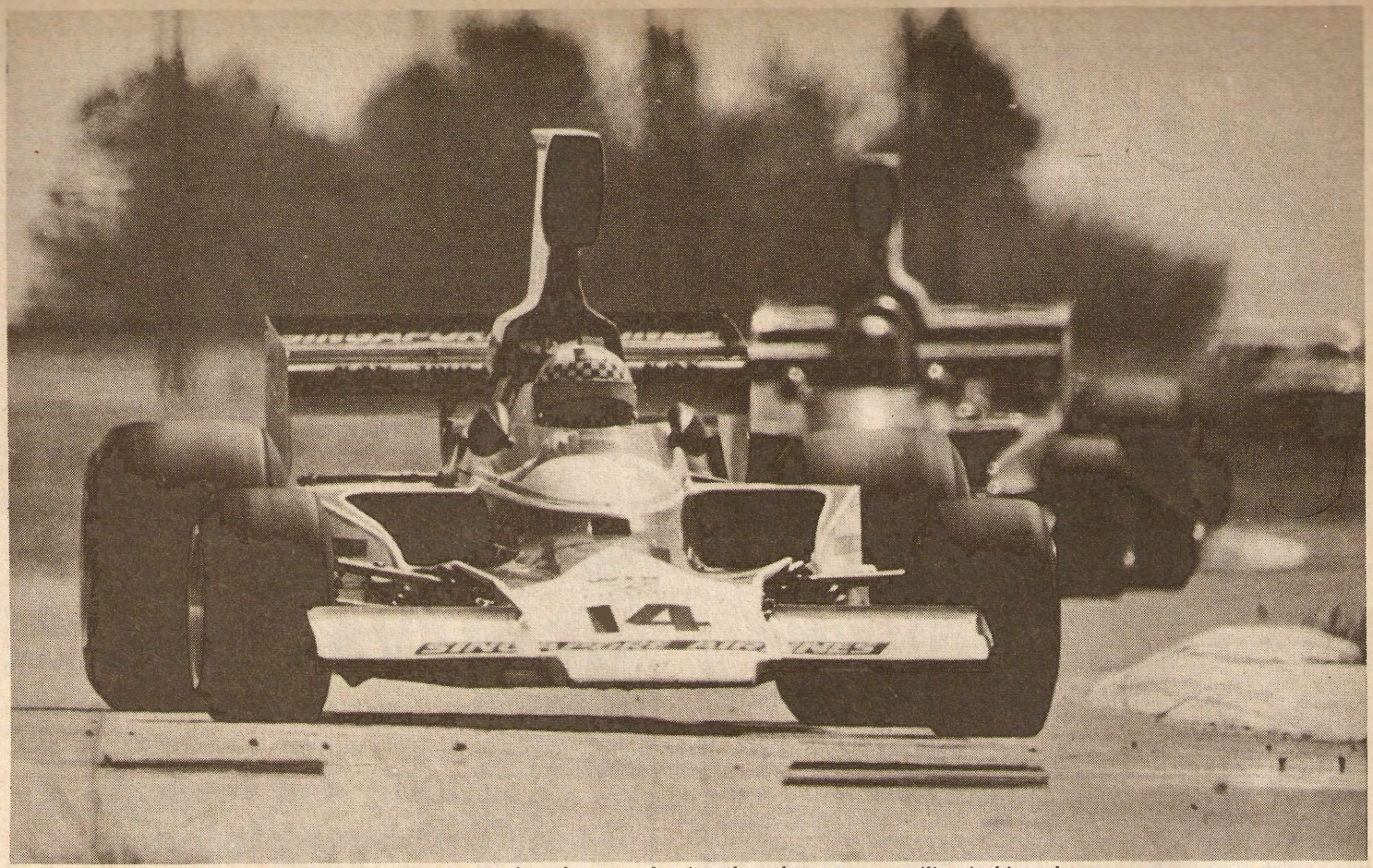
Dimensions: Wheelbase, 6 ft 11 in. Track, 4 ft 1 in/4 ft 2 in. Overall length, 12 ft 5in. Width, 4ft 10½in. Weight, 16 cwt.

Performance: Maximum speed, 98 mph. Speeds in gears: O/d top, 90 mph; o/d third, 95 mph; third, 77 mph; second, 50 mph; first, 31 mph. Standing quarter-mile, 17.6 s. Acceleration: 0-30 mph, 3.8 s; 0-50 mph, 8.0 s; 0-60mph, 11.2 s; 0-80 mph, 22.4 s.

Fuel consumption: 28 to 38 mpg.

Like all separate chassis Herald types, access to mechanicals is excellent.





Graeme Lawrence cuts loose in his Lola T332 soon after the start, leaving the other runners trailing in his wake.

ADELAIDE

Lawrence bounces back

By PETER GREENSLADE Photos by AUTOMOTIVE PHOTOGRAPHIC

Thanks to New Zealander Graeme Lawrence, the Australasian Peter Stuyvesant series for Formula 5000 cars remains wide open until the final round is decided at Sandown Park, Melbourne. At the Adelaide International Raceway on February 16, Lawrence, driving his Singapore Airlines-Marlboro-Wix sponsored Lola T332, averaged 172 kph to win the seventh round from start to finish, beating the similarly-mounted Sydney driver Warwick Brown by 8.6 s. Third, 14.6 s behind Brown, was Adelaide's Johnnie Walker, who brought his Repco-Holden-powered T332 home just 0.3 s ahead of Chris Amon (Talon MR1).

Before Adelaide, Walker led the series with 26 points to Brown's 24 and Lawrence's 21. Now the three each have 30 points. One of them must win the series, for neither John McCormack (Elfin MR6) nor Amon, who are fourth and fifth on the ladder, can score enough points to be better than fourth.

Lawrence started from pole position by virtue of a 49.1 s qualifying lap. Outside him on the front row were Amon (49.2 s) and Brown (49.5 s). In the race, Lawrence set a new lap record of 49.6 s — 175 kph — thereby removing yet another figure established by the retired Sydney driver Frank Matich from the book. Matich's long-standing Adelaide record, set with a Matich A51, was 50 s dead. Brown, Amon and Stewart also went inside that figure with 49.8 s each in the race.

Brown and Walker held their places behind Lawrence for the entire race. With less than 10 laps to go, the margin between Lawrence and Brown was never more than 3 s. Then, in the final stages, Lawrence picked up the best part of a second a lap. Brown claimed that his Goodyear tyres overheated and lost their effectiveness in the concluding stages of the race which was run in heatwave conditions. That might well have been the case but, in Adelaide, Lawrence looked unbeatable.

ENTRY and PRACTICE

The Stuyvesant circus accomplished the long trek from Surfers' Paradise on Australia's north-east coast to Adelaide in South Australia, a distance of about 1,400 miles, and arrived in reasonable shape, despite the heat. Dissatisfied with their new Lola T400s, Stewart and Kevin Bartlett came up with their older T330 and T332 models. For Stewart this was no problem as he still owns his car. Bartlett had to borrow the T332 from its new owner. Graham McRae was at the meeting without a drive as the tub of the GM2 cannot be repaired. His only chance of a drive at Sandown Park rests with either Stewart or Bartlett. If they elect to revert to the T400s, which Lola man Eric Broadley was expected to sort out in Sydney immediately after the Adelaide meeting, McRae might just be lucky.

Jim Murdoch, who had given Surfers a miss in order to get the Begg and himself sorted out for Adelaide, was joined by designer-constructor George Begg and they were on hand to greet the weary travellers when they reached the circuit. Lawrence reported that the clutch trouble which had afflicted his car on the start line at Surfers had been easily fixed and Jack McCormack, Amon's sponsor and entrant, had managed to get his hands on the very necessary Talon bits and pieces which had been held up in Sydney, awaiting Customs clearance. Brown also appeared to be quite happy. Whereas Stewart's old T330 was all set up and ready to go, Bartlett's T332 needed a lot doing to it and it was not until the third and final qualifying session on the evening prior to race day that Kevin had the car in reasonable shape.

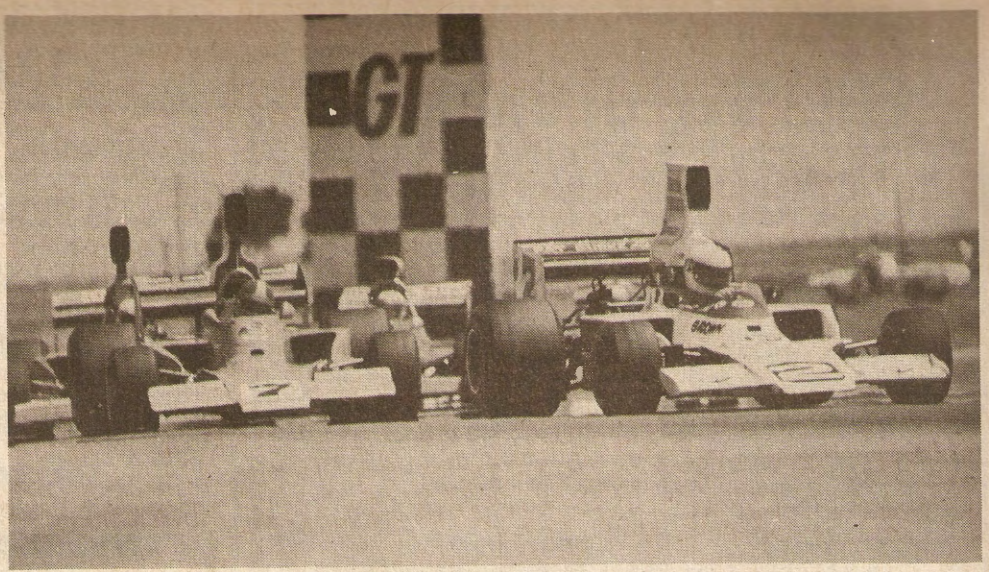
There was no prospect of any let-up, as far as heat was concerned, when the first qualifying session was run on the Saturday morning. Brown, as has been his custom since McRae departed the scene, was among the first out and, in the 17th of the 19 laps he completed, he posted a time of 49.5 s, to be well clear of Lawrence and Stewart, both of whom returned 50.4 s. Walker was best of the rest with 52.6 s and no one else did anything worth writing home about. It looked as though Brown was going to dominate qualifying again.

However, Brown failed to improve in the second session, although his first session time was good enough to keep him in front. Stewart did not bother about this session. Lawrence went out and did eight laps and then another eight and was rewarded with 50.5 s —a tenth slower than in the first session. Amon improved from a lowly 60.6 s in the first session to 54.2 s in the second, obviously benefiting from the experience he was gaining on a circuit he had not even seen previously. Walker recorded 50.4 s, an improvement of 0.2 s. Bartlett docked 50.4 s to be on even terms with Lawrence and Stewart. Ken Smith, looking dangerously unsteady in his T332 in the right-hand banked sweeper that leads to the main straight, could not do better than 51.6 s. That was not one of Smith's better efforts, for John Leffler's Chevrolet-powered Bowin P8 was able to make 51.4 s. However, it was better than Murdoch's 51.9 s. Best of the rest was Cooper in the elderly Elfin MR5. He achieved 52 s dead. Brown still looked the best of good things for pole position on the grid on which the cars would line up in rows of three.

However, the short final session in the early evening changed the picture. Lawrence and Amon came right and got in the groove. Lawrence turned up with a 49.1 s lap and Amon did 49.2 s. Both were smooth and deceptively quick. Brown did not get going properly and his effort was hampered by a deflating tyre which was not replaced because of lack of time. He had to be content with

third place on the front row. Bartlett and Stewart improved to 49.6 s, Stewart getting the figure first. Walker was next with 49.7 s which made him sixth on the list. Young John Goss (Matich A53), who had failed to break 60 s earlier in the day, made 50.9 s, and Murdoch managed 51.1 s. Cooper improved to 51.2 s and Leffler to 51.3 s. McCormack, who had made 51.4 s in the second session, did not get another chance for his engine blew and as he lacked a replacement he was a non-starter. So was Jon Davison, whose Matich A51 broke a hub spline for which there was no replacement. Steve Fraser, with the locally-built Cicada-Chevrolet, made 56.1 s, Ian Douglas with the other Matich A51 being the last qualifier with 59.6 s. Milton with the elderly McLaren had made 55.7 s to make the last row but one.

So two New Zealanders were in the box seats and that probably made some of the locals wonder whether the Tasman Cup was going to come Australia's way after all. Lawrence's early lead in the series degenerated to first equal with Brown after the New Zealand four-race section. Brown was in front after Oran Park and then Walker was in front after Surfers' Paradise. At that stage the Australians were cock-a-hoop. It looked now that the scales might well be swinging back the other way.



With the leader already out of sight, Warwick Brown's Lola leads the similar car of Johnnie Walker and Kevin Bartlett, plus Chris Amon's Talon, in vain pursuit.

RACE

Race day, if anything, was hotter than qualifying day. There was not a cloud in the sky in South Australia as the field lined up. There were three vacant places in the five rows and starter Glen Dix and his assistants did not close up the field. Dix, incidentally, is worth the admission money at Adelaide, even if the racing happens to be podr. An RSM in the Guards could not marshal his ranks with more efficiency and colour.

It was Lawrence who emerged ahead from the tyre smoke when the flag dropped. Amon, Walker, who had made an excellent start, and Brown were right in close. Goss was also prominent. When they came round the first time, it was Lawrence by a car's length from Brown, Walker, a similar distance back, then Goss, Amon, Bartlett, Stewart and Cooper, followed by Murdoch, Leffler, Milton, Fraser and Douglas, the last three already being well out of the picture. Goss failed to complete the second lap. He made straight for the pits with a broken water hose and 25 laps elapsed before he made a brief appearance once more. Bartlett, who was really trying, moved into his fourth place, with Amon, Stewart, Cooper, Leffler, Milton and Smith next.

In the next five laps, Lawrence and Brown, nose to tail, made a 4 s break on Walker, Bartlett and Amon, who were just about on top of each other. Stewart was on his own, clear of Cooper, Leffler and Smith. Murdoch headed the rest. After nine laps, Lawrence and Brown lapped the three tail-enders. They were turning in 51 s laps consistently. Brown seemed unable to drag in Lawrence, but the New Zealander could not get clear of the Australian. Walker, Bartlett and Amon were still running in close company, but losing some ground.

Bartlett retired just prior to completing his 16th lap. The retaining ring for one of the rear disc brakes on the T332 had broken and that put paid to his chances. That let Amon into Walker's slipstream to usher in a wheel-to-wheel struggle that was to be a feature through to the finish of the race. Stewart was next, accompanied by Leffler, who had taken Cooper but was to retire in the following lap.

Although Lawrence and Brown were the race leaders, there was really not much in it after 21 laps when 3 s bridged the first four cars. Stewart, now comfortably clear of Cooper, was 4 s farther back. The front runners completed 25 laps as Goss in the Matich A53 rejoined the race momentarily. Milton, who was well out of contention, now visited his pit briefly. In the meantime, the first four had lapped Murdoch, who was lying eighth. Lawrence now began to increase his lead over Brown, but it was only by a matter of yards. The margin was so tight that the slightest error on the part of the New Zealander would have been sufficient to alter the order, because Walker and Amon were still well within striking distance, only 7 s behind Brown. In the course of lap 33, Lawrence and Brown lapped Cooper and Smith, who were well clear of Murdoch and running in the sixth and seventh places.

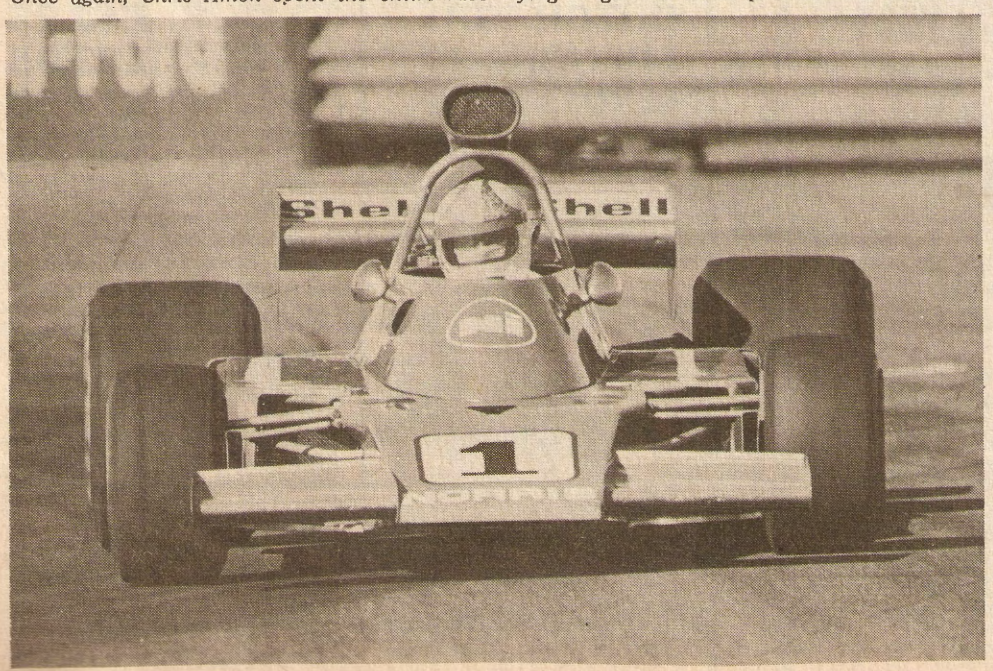
Amon, in fourth place, was driving a superb race. Lap after lap he tried to get inside Walker's orange T332 coming through the Sweeper leading to the main straight, starting high on the slightly banked approach and diving in to get the front wheels of his Talon inside Walker's rear wheels. But Walker would have none of that and held his line. Amon would have to back off and slot back in behind, just ahead of Stewart who had now moved up to be in the action also. There was no way in which Amon could get by Walker on the long straight even when he attempted the slipstream, sling-shot ploy. Walker's Repco engine had a decided edge over the Chevrolet.

With 43 laps completed, Lawrence was still shadowed by Brown, but by then this pair had a 13 s lead over Walker and Amon. Stewart was still handy enough to be contentious. Then came Cooper and Smith. However, in the next lap the engine in Smith's T332 died and he coasted into the pits, his race finished. Then, with 10 laps to go, Lawrence began to move away from Brown at the rate of about a second a lap. Walker and Amon were still at it hammer and tongs and almost tangling wheels. Stewart was well clear of Cooper, but losing ground all the way.

So Lawrence came home to a race victory after a 67-lap duel with Brown. As the front runners were flagged off, Murdoch, well established in seventh place, drove into the pit lane, stopped briefly and then went out again to complete a final lap and be classified an official finisher.

Although Adelaide could never be described as a race of changing fortunes, it produced superb and close driving by the first four finishers, all of whom deserved to win. The points position is such that Ian McKnight, who has the task of running the final round at Melbourne for the Light Car Club of Australia, must be rubbing his hands with glee. The only other point that can be made at this juncture is that the odds are two to one in favour of an Australian winning the Tasman Cup for the first time in the history of the series.

Once again, Chris Amon spent the entire race trying to get his Talon past Johnnie Walker.



Peter Stuyvesant International Series
Adelaide International Raceway — round 7
67 laps

1, Graeme Lawrence (Lola T332-Chevrolet), 56 m 24.1 s, 172 kph;
2, Warwick Brown (Lola T332-Chevrolet), 56 m 32.7 s;
3, Johnnie Walker (Lola T332-Repco Holden), 56 m 47.3 s;
4, Chris Amon (Talon MR1-Chevrolet), 56 m 47.6 s;
5, Max Stewart (Lola T330-Chevrolet), 56 m 03.0 s;
6, Garrie Cooper (Elfin MR5-Repco Holden), 65 laps;
7, Jim Murdoch (Begg 018-Chevrolet), 62 laps; 8, Ian Douglas (Matich A51-Repco Holden), 59 laps; 9, Chris Milton (McLaren M22-Chevrolet), 57 laps. No other finishers.

Fastest lap: Lawrence, 49.6 s, 175 kph **(record).**

Tasman points: Lawrence, Brown and Walker, 30 each; John McCormack, 17; Amon, 15; Graham McRae, 12; Ken Smith, 11; Kevin Bartlett, 9; Stewart and Murdoch, 7 each; John Goss, 4; David Oxton, Baron Robertson and Cooper 1 each.

All your weekend sport

The waiting is over, racing starts again this weekend. The emptiness of the past three months will be shattered on Sunday at Brands Hatch, Thruxton and Croft. The winter's lay-off, coupled with the hectic wheeling and dealing activity of the Racing Car Show, has thrown up some interesting new combinations of cars and drivers to contest the even greater number of championships which dominate the calendar. Predicting winners and losers at this time of the year is a tricky job — the best thing to do is get out to the early season meetings and study form for yourselves.

BRANDS HATCH

The Brands club circuit has been resurfaced over the winter and judging by last Sunday's general practice day, a number of competitors are going to find the track has different characteristics.

Anyway the main race of the BRSCC organised day is the opening round of the Southern Organs (we'll be seeing that name quite a lot in this column over the next few months) Formula Atlantic Championship. There's only one totally new combination entered at Brands, but it will probably create most of the interest. That is the Donington Park Collection - Wheatcroft Racing entry for Richard Morgan. He will be driving a brand new Chevron B29, which has yet to be seen in action in this country. Morgan was, of course, winner of a multitude of races in Formula Ford last year, now he is under the enthusiastic and ambitious wing of Tom Wheatcroft further successes look to be coming his way in this bigger league.

Morgan's main opposition will come from the established Atlantic names such as Tony Brise and John Nicholson. Brise is a Brands expert and is bound to go well at the wheel of his new works Modus, while Nicholson, double Atlantic championship winner, will be driving a Tui in the place of his more familiar Lyncar. Peter Wardle will be trundling his old Surtees round again this year while other names entered are Val Musetti, Derek Cook, Nick May, Alo Fawler, Peter Williams and ex-FSV driver Peter Munro.

The race which will probably attract most attention will be the opening round of the Radio One production saloon championship. Unfortunately the Beeb's own star Noel Edmonds will not be able to make the race as his Capri is not yet ready, however, recording star Cosy Powell will be there in his Mazda. In fact the line-up for the whole event, which will be run in two halves, is superb. In the big class there are five Chevrolet Camaros for, among others, Tony Lanfranchi, Derrick Brunt, John Brindley and Brian Rice, while Capris will be handled by Holman Blackburn, Rod Birley, Ivan Dutton, Mike Smith, Phil Dowsett and others, making a total of seven.

In the smaller classes there are no less than seven Mazda RX3s for Cosy Powell, Pete King, Wendy Markey, Jock Robertson and a mysterious Jean-Pierre Aux entered by Marshall Wingfield. The bargain basement will feature Moskvichs, Simcas, Imps, etc, again, with superstar Peter Jopp heading the list which includes Simon Kirkby, Tony Stubbs and Simon Watson.

The National Organs FF entry is, of course, over full. Among the many names entered are Rob Wicken, Matthew Argenti, Tiff Needel, Mike Taylor, Jim Walsh and Mike Blanchet.

Other events are for Special Saloons and *Penthouse* Mexicos. Star names here include Gerry Marshall, Tony Dron (who still owes Gerry a fiver), Divina Galica, Nick Whiting, Mike Freeman and Nick Weir.

All in all it adds up to a very attractive season opener. Practice starts at 8.45 am and racing proper at 2 pm.

THRUXTON

The BARC HQ have got a seven-race programme lined up for the season opener at Thruxton with a non-championship F3 race attracting most of the interest. After a year in the doldrums the Formula shows every sign of getting back its former glory this year. Although there are no points on offer, a few of the leading contenders will be taking this opportunity of having an early season race. Among these should be Alex Ribeiro in a new works March, Tony Rouff (Erhlich), Danny Sullivan (Modus), Mike Tyrrell (March) and Patrick Neve (Lola). Interesting newcomers to the category are Chris Barnett, Graham Hamilton, Doug Bassett, Mike Wrigley, Robert Joubert, Stephen South and Ken Silverstone.

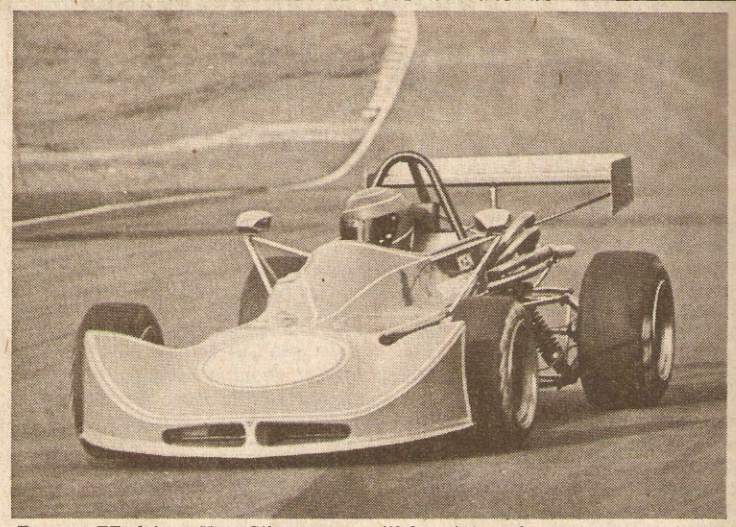
The opening round of the National Organs Clubmen's Supersports championship round looks as though it will be the best race of the day. No less than 33 cars are entered and these include names like Noel Stanbury. Barry Foley, Ray Mallock, Creighton Brown, Geoff Fiswell and Vernon Davies. Also a Peter Evans but no one is quite sure of his true identity.

The BAF FF championship also gets underway with a healthy looking entry from which Peter White should emerge victorious. The BARC's faith in Modsports has proved well founded, the Miller Organs championship having attracted a full entry. A host of E-types top the list opposed by Morgans, although we'd expect Nick Faure's fabulous Porsche to make the pace. However, there are a number of Elans, Midgets and Davrians to make life extremely difficult for him.

Special saloons are always a good attraction at Thruxton and the Forward Trust round has a very representative entry. Name drivers here include Joe Russell (Camaro), Tony Sugden, Dave Millington, Phil Winter, Neil Dineen, Rob Mason and Jeff Ward.

Completing the programme is a *Formule Libre* event which should see a repeat battle between the leading Clubmen's boys chasing Ted Wentz' F2 Lola.

Racing starts at 2 pm.



Former FF driver Ken Silverstone will be giving the new F3 Hawke its race debut at Thruxton.

CROFT

The BRSCC (Northern) are in charge at Croft for a day of six or seven races. Ninety entries had been received by Monday, although as the regs were late out more are expected by the time Sunday comes around. The opening round of the Renault 5 challenge heads the programme with Neil McGrath, Keith Collier, Gethin Jones and Peter Truscotte likely to be the leading door handling merchants.

The Tate FF round has the regular northern aces Kelvin Hesketh, Mick Starkey, Ken Pickering and John Simpson entered, while the DC Cook Prod sports race has firm favourites Colin Blower, Rod Gretton and Doc Griffith.

Jon Fletcher will be giving his G1 Camaro an outing in the Special Saloon race while the *libre* event has, as usual, attracted a number of interesting cars which includes Iain McLaren's newly acquired ex-works Chevron B26/31. The programme is completed by a combined Clubmen's and Modsports event.

Racing starts at 2.30 pm.

Bill Sydenham, one of last year's G1 championship winners, will be hoping for more success in the Radio 1 series this year in his suitably-sponsored Avenger.

DIARY

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

Mar 1: South African Grand Prix, Kyalami, South Africa (F1 World Championship, round 3).
Mar 2: Carolina 500, USA (NASCAR).
Mar 9: Estoril, Portugal (F2 Championship, round 1).
Mar 9: California 500, Ontario MS, USA (USAC).
Mar 15/16: British Airways Race of Champions, Brands Hatch, England (F1, F5000).
Mar 22/23: Le Mans test day and 4-hour race, France (G5).
Mar 23: Mugello, Italy (G5, World Manufacturers' Championship, round 1).
Mar 23: Monza, Italy (G2, European Touring Car Championship, round 1).
Mar 23: Fuji 300 kms, Japan.
Mar 23: Atlanta 500, USA (NASCAR).

NATIONAL RACE MEETINGS

Mar 8: Oulton Park, near Tarporley, Cheshire, MCMRC, championship meeting.
Silverstone MAC.
Mar 9: Mallory Park, Kirkby Mallory, Leics. BARC, championship meeting.
Mar 15/16: Brands Hatch, Fawkham, Kent. BRSCC, championship meeting.
Mar 16: Silverstone, near Towcester, Northants. BRDC, championship meeting.
Croft, near Darlington, Co Durham. BARC (Y), championship meeting.
Mar 17: Mondello Park, Ireland.

Winsor takes the crown

In an almost fairytale finish to the Snetterton Winter Rallycross series, Clubman John Winsor triumphed over more fashionable opposition to cap a remarkably consistent series with another 21 points to take the overall Championship by two points from Bruce Rushton. Winsor, from Wellingborough, does all his own preparation on his quick 1300 Clubman with no "works" backing, just the type of competitor the organisers were trying to attract. Once again Sporting CC of Norfolk and West Suffolk MC had the backing of Castle Street Garage (Thetford) Ltd, for the Series final and once again a very large crowd was blessed with the sort of weather one prays for at Snetterton in June, let alone February. A rash of non-starters thinned out another good entry list and the racing was punctuated in the first half by many red flags following a large number of inversions and other incidents. Not that the course was to blame for all these despite its bumps, the infamous pit had been straightened and was much quicker and a new chicane broke up the long Norwich Straight and called for braking on tarmac and not loose sand as before.

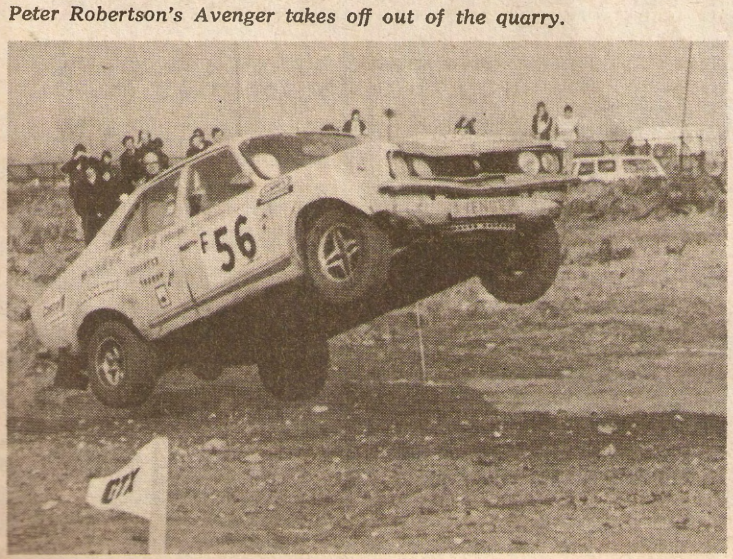
The entry was very much as earlier rounds, with one very notable exception; that being Tom Airey who brought along his new 1610 cc Mini for a shake-down session. Some trial! He set the fastest time in each of his three runs, was over 4 seconds faster than the next man George Warren (Escort BDA) and snatched the overall 1600 cc class title from Hugh Wheldon by 1 point. Barry Crump (Mini) returned to form and had little trouble in clinching the 1 litre class after Nick Garner ran into trouble on his second run. Ian Hughes set a very quick target on his first run in his Cooper "S" and led home the 1300 class, the rapidly improving King's Lynn driver finishing second to the champion Winsor in his other races but with Winsor getting the overall award, Hughes took the class champion pot. While Tom Airey was setting the pace in the biggest class, the story for the other Airey entries was much less fortunate. Nick Brice was first to go, the oil pressure vanishing on his 1340 car on the opening run. Mick Bird, having led the championship since the first event was still there with one race to go but his 1400 car had not been right all day and on run 3 the diff gave in. Thus Bruce Rushton topped a fine day by taking class honours with his 1470 "S."

Airey's domination of the 1600 class has already been mentioned, but what of the Escorts, VWs, etc? George Warren headed the Fords despite a trip over the top of the banking aided by Peter Robertson's Avenger, and was second fastest in two heats and had a thriller of a third with Hugh Wheldon's VW when the Suffolk driver beat him by a couple of seconds and pushed him into 3rd in class by 1 point. Wheldon, gradually learning the VW, headed home the rest from Peter Harrold's Beetle, the Fords having a miserable day on the whole. In the Rally Car class all one can say is that if Stan Rolfe had produced his Sunday form in the earlier rounds then it would be he and not Dave Wallis who would have taken the class championship. With the new Clubman of Peter Banham and John Harmer sidelined by overheating and fuel problems, Rolfe's Cooper "S" was unbeatable but Wallis took the necessary second

BTD: Tom Airey (1.6 Airey Mini), 4 m 09.6 s.
Class winners: Barry Crump (1.0 Mini Cooper), 4 m 27.2 s; Ian Hughes (1.3 Cooper "S"), 4 m 26.0 s; Bruce Rushton (1.5 Cooper "S"), 4 m 26.0 s; Airey Stan Rolfe (1.3 Cooper "S"), 4 m 40.0 s.

Overall championship: John Winsor (1.3 Mini Clubman), 42 points.
Class champions: Barry Crump (1.0 Mini Cooper), 39 points; Ian Hughes (1.3 Cooper "S"), 30 points; Bruce Rushton (1.5 Cooper "S"), 40 points; Tom Airey (1.6 Airey Mini), 27 points; and Dave Wallis (1.6 Ford Escort TC), 35 points.

Peter Robertson's Avenger takes off out of the quarry.



No best times for Briant

Although they did not put up fastest times on the three selectives, Mick Briant and John McKerrell journeyed from Bucks to South Wales last Saturday night to walk off with the University College of Swansea MC Dougal Doodle Rally in their RS2000. On a very tight event of 170 miles, in which only 22 crews got to the finish in time from a starting list of 70, they came home on 47 m 19 s penalties to beat the runners-up, Des Douch and Alan John (RS1600), by nearly 4 m.

In third place, just over a minute behind, came Howard Davies in his RS2000, being partnered for the night by Phil Jones as his regular navigator, Mervyn Thomas, was clerk of works.

Quickest on the three selectives, totalling just over 12 miles, were David Jones and Mick Spencer-Jones in their RS1600 on 3 m over bogey. However, they went off before second petrol when in the top three and the award for quickest on the selectives went to fourth overall John Griffiths and Colin Francis in their Avenger Tiger who were 3 m 5 s over time.

1, M. Briant/J. McKerrell (RS2000), 47 m 19 s; 2, D. Douch/A. John (RS1600), 51 m 35 s; 3, H. Davies/P. Jones (RS2000), 52 m 59 s; 4, J. Griffiths/C. Francis (Avenger Tiger), 57 m 05 s; 5, G. James/Lyn Andrews (Escort TC), 59 m 23 s; 6, J. Lindsay/A. Bryer (Mazda), 61 m 07 s. **Semi-experts:** T. Small/G. Morgan (Clubman), 69 m 48 s. **Novices:** W. Duncan/H. Thomas (Mexico), 1F 94 m 36 s.

Fog plays havoc

Fog in Hampshire and West Sussex caused more than half the entry on last Saturday's Southsea MC Hunt Rally to run out of time when the event was run after a two-year break. From a field of 79 crews only 31 finished inside maximum lateness and the rally provided a fine win for Ian Pettie and John Jones in a Mexico who finished 46 m ahead of the runners-up!

However, Derek Skinner and Peter Rushforth, in the famous MGB, who was second, were not all that far behind on the road—they, like many others, had missed a secret check which cost them 30 m.

Third, almost exactly a minute behind Skinner/Rushforth, were Chris Phillips who had with him Alan Woodbridge, last year's ACSMC top navigator contesting the rally in an RS1600.

The 165-mile route included four selectives originally but one was cancelled when a competitor got stuck and of 31 expert crews only 15 finished while from 48 novices Roger Bunce and Jim Phillips (Mexico) were easy winners being the only crew in the category to get round without a fail.

1, I. Pettie/J. Jones (Mexico), 20 m 32 s; 2, D. Skinner/P. Rushforth (MGB), 66 m 59 s; 3, C. Phillips/A. Woodbridge (RS1600), 67 m 58 s. **Novices:** R. Bunce/J. Phillips (Mexico), 216 m 22 s.

● Taking a particular interest in the Snetterton rallycross series just ended was the local BBC Radio. All of which perhaps helped the size of the crowd.

● With the Continental Rallycross European series still looking somewhat confused after the withdrawal of the Embassy sponsorship, none of the usual European pilots at Snetterton on Sunday had any clear plans for the summer. Hugh Wheldon, now with a 2.4 engine back in his VW is hoping to fit in as many of the nearer rounds as possible as is Escort driver Tony Merridale, in between his BTRDA autocross commitments.

Blanchet's Crossle

Mike Blanchet, the diminutive Jerseyman who last year so impressed with an elderly Lotus 61, was at Brands on Sunday testing the Lotus with David Minister watching over one of

Mike Blanchet (above) and David Minister — FF.

his engines installed in the car. Does this mean that Blanchet's continuing with the Lotus again?

Having tested a number of chassis during the winter months, and being asked to drive for the season in one or two of them, Blanchet has finally settled for a works loaned Crossle. However, the car is not as yet ready, hence the testing of the Lotus for use until the Crossle arrives. This, then, is the same set-up as used by Richard Morgan last year with so much success. Except that Blanchet is about two stone lighter than Morgan. . . .

RAC's autocross regs

The RAC has now issued a bulletin giving details of requirements for setting out courses for four at a time speed events on grass this year.

Basically, minor alterations are brought into effect as compared with last year but two entirely new requirements are listed. First of these is that all corners must be radiused to a minimum of 100 ft. Secondly, the first corner after a start line shall have straw bale protection irrespective of the safety distance for spectators.

The other points which clerks of course must adhere to include maximum length of any straight is now 150 yds (up from 100 yds); the course shall not be less than 50 ft or more than 70 ft wide, except where a course is changed for safety reasons (brought in part way through last year); at the end of a 120 yd long straight a corner turning through a minimum of 60 degrees is now required (was 90 degrees initially); all spectators to be at least 175 ft away from course where there is no protection, except along straights where 150 ft is acceptable and 125 ft is acceptable where protection is provided (up 25 ft on last year); any natural hazards shall not be less than 100 ft from course, but barbed wire fences must be not less than 125 ft from course unless they are on inside of track where a 50 ft clearance is permitted, providing straw bale protection is provided for (raised 25 ft).

Clubs are reminded that RAC Stewards will be required to inspect courses 24 hrs before an event to ensure compliance.

Greenslade tops the 34 starters for honours

Borough 19 MC had 34 starters at their production car trial at New Addington, near Croydon, last Sunday and 20 sections were arranged in summerlike weather. With no overall winner the first class, for front engined fwd cars, went to Jim McDougall in his Mini who dropped 60 marks. McDougall was challenged initially by his sister Anne in another Mini and she stayed within a mark of him till the break. Thereafter he pulled away to beat her by 20 marks.

Mark Kemp led Class 2 all day for a total of 78 marks in his Fairthorpe Electron Minor while brothers Tony and Peter Cook shared an Escort for the places. After establishing a four mark lead at the interval, Gerald Charge (Imp) really lived up to his name later on in the rear engined class where he finished 31 marks ahead of Mrs Mary Benfield (Imp) with John Hopkins third in his Californian.

Colin Ling (Midget) led the specials at halfway but a failure at an eight marker near the end cost him the class as Dennis Greenslade (VW), nipped through to beat him by seven marks.

Class winners: J. McDougall (Mini), 60 marks lost; M. Kemp (Fairthorpe), 78 marks; G. Charge (Imp), 115 marks; D. Greenslade (VW), 49 marks.

Brands G1 interest

There is quite an interesting variety of cars and drivers for the opening Radio One race at Brands on Sunday. As well as the already announced drivers in Capris is Formula Fordster Phil Dowsett entered by Industrial Control Services. He also has a new Crossle-Minister 25F for the FF race.

Special saloon Vauxhall driver Jeff Allam, a contender for the under 21 award, has a Magnum, and one G. Marshall drives another model for Hamilton Motors (London) Ltd. Still being backed by Southern Organs is Barry Andrews—former Lotus 61 FF driver—in a Mazda RX3 Coupe, and Robin Brookes, renowned Mini racer, has an Escort Sport in the same class.

At the bottom end of the price scale—surely not the bargain basement any longer at the prices charged—are Simon Kirkby, Rodney Posner and Jo Bailey in Simca Rallye Ones.

Rallycross at Lydden

TEAC's rallycross championship continues this weekend down at Lydden on Sunday incorporating their new scoring system. Drivers in the leading positions at this time are Tom Airey, Trevor Reeves (Minis), and George Warren (Escort), Mick Bird is in fourth, with Hugh Wheldon and John Taylor down in ninth and tenth spots respectively. Practising begins at 12.30, the first qualifying runs are at 1.30 and the championship runs begin at 2.30.

● One Mr R. Delahaye, whose previous experience is mainly on the sands of Jersey in the island's sand racing contests, is entered in a Lola T142 at the Thruxton *Libre* race this weekend.

Weekend testing

Testing took place at both Mallory Park and Brands Hatch over the weekend, the first time the latter's resurfaced track had been used. In both cases, the club circuits were being used, and the sessions were open to anyone who could show a licence and a competition car of some sort.

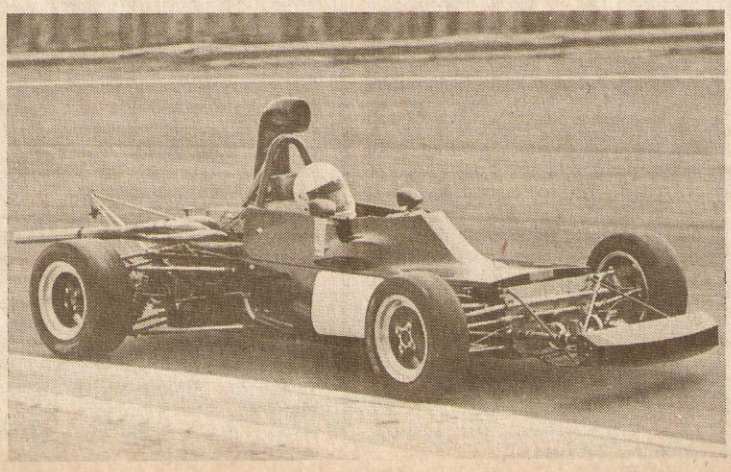
Mallory's day turned out to be somewhat of a farce, with the track slippery due to its non-use over the winter, and something like 200 bikes, sidecars and cars crammed into the paddock. The racing car sessions were for 15 minutes every hour, approximately, and comprised so many cars of varying speeds, that few of the quicker cars had a chance of doing any serious work at all.

Don MacLeod and Roger Orgee were at the Mallory session trying out their FF2000s for the first meeting, and Alan Minshaw was having another run in his newly acquired 5.0 Daf.

In general, motor racing men found things better at the BRSCC organised Brands session, held exclusively for racing cars during the afternoon, after the bike men had had their turn during the morning.

With three different grades of cars, from production saloon cars up to FAt/F5000, drivers had a chance to do some useful sorting. That was with one exception, the track. The new surface proved very dusty, and any car on slicks had a really difficult time, so that even Ian Ashley's F5000 Lola was overtaken by a Formula Ford. During the last session, one observer noted 28 gyrations, including that of Michael Eastick, whose Scorpion FF Royale had to be towed back to the paddock with damage to one corner. However, while criticising the slipperyness of the track, drivers were very impressed by the smoothness. But, beware this Sunday.

Syd Fox tested the FF2000 Hawke at Brands on Sunday in somewhat denuded state. Syd found that the car ran better without wings than with: "But this is a wing circuit," he said despairingly. It was recording times 3 s quicker without wing than with. The car was powered by a Holbay mill.



Smith goes with Anchor

Mike Smith, the 19-year-old former Mexico and rallycross driver, who many believe to be a good bet for the Radio One under-21 championship, has received further sponsorship for his G1 season. Smith already had support from ShellSport, but with the help of Chris Steyne, of Formula One in Ganton Street, the car will now run in the colours of Anchor Records.

Anchor are a very big company and have more than just a passing interest in Paramount Films. Among the groups contracted to them are Rufus (currently touring in this country), Steppenwolf, Alice Cooper, and Philip and Vanessa.

Smith continues to be sponsored by ShellSport as a driver, and is receiving considerable help in his G1 quest with the 3.0 Capri Mk II, from Avon, with whom he'll be testing.

Satra debut the Lada

Satra Motors will be continuing in the fray of production saloon car racing this year with a two car team consisting of a Moskvich for Peter Jopp and a Lada 1200 for Tony Stubbs. Stubbs' 1974 car has gone to journalist John Griffiths, who will also be running the car in production saloon car races, and the same applies to Tony Hepworth who has bought the ex-Jopp car.

● One casualty of the Brands test session was Derrick Brunt. His Camaro, bought as a road car from Group One ace Stuart Graham, blew up, and he may be a doubtful starter for the opening Radio One round at Brands on Sunday.

Tom Airey's Mini was on its own at Snetterton over the weekend, his 1610 cc Mini mill beating off even the Escorts.

Airey's sensational mill

Tom Airey's performances in his new 1610 cc Mini were the talking point of Sunday's rallycross meeting. Its straight line acceleration was nothing short of sensational. In his first race he led George Warren's Escort-BDA and even on the long Snetterton tarmac stretches the 2 litre Escort was not making anything on the Mini. From a standing start it was only Bernard Rodemark's Porsche that led him off the line but had Airey been using racing rubber, he reckons he could have outdragged the Porsche. Along with Bird and Brice, Airey is hoping to do a spell of Continental rallycross this summer starting with a series of events in Holland, for which they have sponsorship. The new 1610 cc engine is a longer-stroked version of his earlier, and equally successful 1500 mill, and as before has a head by Downton.

Croft and Rudge bungle

Fog, allied to slippery conditions, made the going tough last Saturday night down in Berkshire, Hampshire and parts of Oxon when Windsor MC ran their Safari Rally over a 130 mile route. Fortunately there were no serious accidents or hold ups but two crews were kicking themselves at the finish having failed to pass through a secret check and thus demote themselves from first and second to fifth and sixth.

Winners were Bob Head and Lawrence Castledine in a Cortina on 51 m who finished six minutes up on J. Dudman and M. Burrows, late entrants in a Mini. The crews with blushes were P. Croft/G. Richardson (Datsun 240Z) and Sid Rudge/Dave Finch in a Mexico.

1, B. Head/L. Castledine (Cortina), 51 m; 2, J. Dudman/M. Burrows (Mini), 57 m; 3, G. Clark/L. Davis (Mini Traveller), 58 m; 4, K. Farrar/R. Hill (Avenger), 63 m; 5, P. Croft/G. Richardson (Datsun 240Z), 1F 38m; 6, S. Rudge/D. Finch (Mexico), 1F 42 m. **Novice:** M. Steptoe/A. Crow (Escort) 3F 67 m.

'Classic Car's' support

With the addition of Speed Merchants as sponsors to their championship, the *Classic Car* series for post historic cars now has an increased prize fund, allowing every finisher in a race to receive partial refund of his entry fee. One further round of the championship is to be run at Silverstone on July 12. Persons wishing to compete in this round should write to P. Martin Ryan, at Harsnips Farm, Elmers Green, Dalton, near Skelmersdale, Lancs.

Meanwhile, things look good for the championship, and intending competitors include Mike Salmon in both projects 212 and 214 Aston Martins, Brian Classic in a Bizzarini, John Harper in Jaguar or Ferrari, Willie Green in the JCB lightweight E, Roddy Harvey-Bailey and Richard Thwaites (Elva-BMW), and Colin Crabbe who appears to have transferred allegiance to run his Testa Rossa Ferrari in the series.

Parker causes blushes

Barry Parker from Widnes, Cheshire, a novice, was the star of the Longton & District MC autotest meeting at Bamberidge, near Preston last Sunday, when he beat a field of 35 to take BTD by five seconds. Parker, in a Cooper S, totalled 254.6 s for the 12 tests to beat the more experienced Cyril Bolton's Clubman.

The small Mini class went to Bill Rhodes in 280.2 s, seven seconds up on John Weatherall with T. Garstang third. Brothers John and David Gornall had a good scrap among the sports cars, John (Midget), beating his brother in the same car by 1.2 s.

Renaults in the hands of Howard Sturrock and Neil Finch were first and second in Class 3 and the conventional saloon class went to Paul Cassidy's Mexico on 269.2 s, beating the best Longton member, M. Moore (Fairthorpe), by six seconds.

BTD: B. Parker (Cooper S), 254.6 secs.

Class winners: W. Rhodes (Mini), 280.2 s; C. Bolton (Clubman GT), 259.4 s; H. Sturrock (Renault), 362.8 s; J. Gornall (Midget), 275.6 s; P. Cassidy (Mexico), 269.2 s; G. Malcolm (Imp), 340.0 s.

Tale of two FF Crosslés

Those two superquick FF Crosslés, of Richard Morgan and Frank Hopper, have both been sold to experienced drivers. Morgan, who now drives in Atlantic for Tom Wheatcroft, has sold his to one of the Donington Museum mechanics, Graham Tilley, who formerly raced a Mini. At the moment Tilley has no engine, but is expected to be out as soon as one can be found and fitted.

Hopper, meanwhile, has sold his car to John Poxon, who has been in Formula Ford for a while Hopper did a few laps in the car on Sunday at Brands which caused one onlooker, who should have known better, to proclaim that Poxon was going quicker than usual. The clover leaf on Hopper's helmet obviously failed to register.

Meanwhile, Hopper's FF2000 plans are reaching fruition, and he should have placed an order for two cars (one for his sponsor), by the end of this week. The order is expected to go across the Irish sea although Hopper believes that the Starfire has considerable potential.

Robertson and Aux in MW RX3 Coupes

That emporium of quality cars, Marshall Wingfield, will be entering two Mazda RX3s in both the Britax and Radio One championships this year, starting on Sunday at Brands. The cars are being supported by Brian Harvey's Grand Prix Models business of Radlett, Herts, and have been prepared by Mathwall.

Number one driver is Jock Robertson, the ex-DTV mechanic who drove Marshall Wingfield's Magnum last year and kept up an everlasting pursuit of Derrick Brunt's Magnum, heading the Hendon man on occasions.

Second driver is somewhat a coup for Marshall, for it is none other than a French count, Viscount Jean-Pierre Aux who last year raced in this country under a pseudonym. Aux (who prefers not to use his title), was discovered go-kart racing in Spain, and masters the English language well. Gerry Marshall was trying one of the Castrol lubricated cars over the weekend, and encountered no problems.

Vauxhall for Clarke again

Snetterton regular Phil Clarke will again be campaigning his Vauxhall Special Saloon this season. *Sans* Super Coupe front the car will be entered as a Magnum and will again be fitted with the reliable 2.3 engine used last year. DTV at Shepreth have further breathed on the engine over the winter and fuel injection is now fitted, and a recent shakedown session at Snetterton proved very successful.

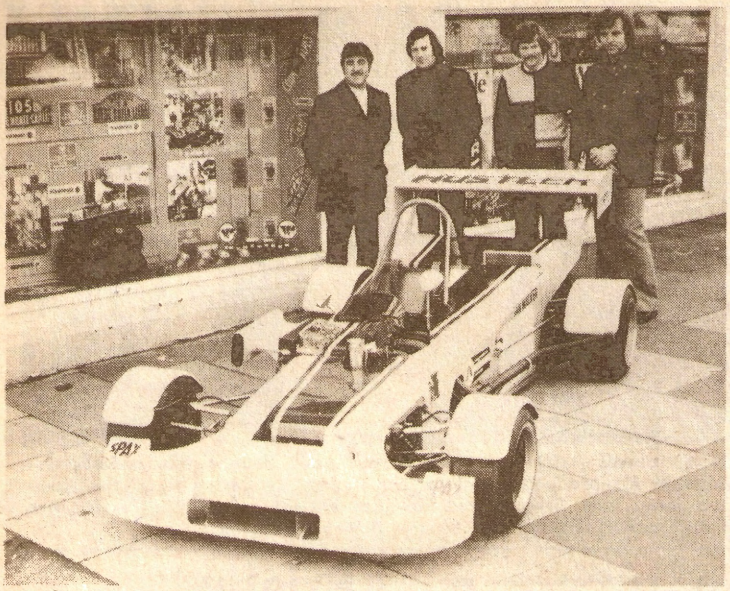
The team will again be running under the Team Iceni banner and as well as a continuation of their support from a Norwich local, The Kingsway Inn, another local firm—Continental Wine Experts—will be adding their support. The team intend to follow the Tricentrol Super Saloon Championship and Simoniz Special Saloon series. First race of the season is at Brands this weekend.

Dalton out on his own

Only one crew from a field of 37 failed to finish last Saturday's Noctural Noggin Rally run by Peterborough MC over a 100 mile route in Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire. A selective of about two miles was found to be very useful for it sorted out the first two places and similarly among the novices.

Dropping 7 m 41 s in their Escort, the winners were John Dalton and Dave Chennells. Thirteen seconds behind them came Vincent Brierley and Jake Dowding. Novice winners Barry Lee/John Gaddes dropped 27 m 30 s to beat the second crew by 24 s.

1, J. Dalton/D. Chennells (Escort), 7 m 41 s; 2, V. Brierley/J. Dowding (Escort), 7 m 54 s; 3, J. Letts/T. Schraider (Escort), 10 m 40 s; 4, M. l'Anson/R. Lailey (Vitesse), 17 m 16 s; 5, M. Tywell/B. Stapleton (Escort), 18 m 52 s; 6, M. Swingler/N. Meadows (Sprite), 20 m 12 s. **Novice:** B. Lee/J. Gaddes (Escort), 27 m 30 s.



Vernon Davies will be driving this, the latest Hustler, in the Lec Clubmen's championship this year, with Richard Groombridge contesting the Tricentrol series. The car sees the welcome re-entry to motor racing of Ian Walker, who has prepared the engine at his Finchley woks. Left to right in the picture are Ian Walker, Richard Groombridge, Walker's engine man and former driver John Sabourin and mechanic John Pledger. Davies will debut the new car, type No SS4, this weekend at Thruxton.

Impunities available

The age old cry of "no readily available chassis" which has long been the reason put forward by the sporting trials fraternity for the slow growth of the sport may soon be a thing of the past.

A determined investigation mounted by Julian Fack has brought early results, no less a person than ex-Formula Ford driver and March engineer, Bill Stone showing interest in the possibility of producing a jig and series of chassis to satiate the present famine. With his company, Sabre Automotive Ltd already well to the forefront in the production of Formula Ford and Dragster frames Bill Stone is well equipped to handle a substantial order of this type.

Interested potential customers should contact Julian Fack of Hawkins Tiles (Cannock) Ltd, Longhouse Works, Cannock, Staffs who is co-ordinating the design and ordering for a first run in (hopefully) June of this year.

Bruce's Sport

Debuting a new Ford 1600 Sport at Brands on Sunday will be *Motor's* Gordon Bruce in a Toric entered car. Bruce will be contesting the *Penthouse* sponsored Escort challenge series, with Toric sponsoring him again. Toric manufacture seat belts for some of the world's most expensive cars, and the Escort will feature their latest four-point harness. The engine is being prepared by Ian Walker Racing.

Short circuit

For the first time since 1972, a motor race meeting is to be held on the short 1.5 mile club circuit at Cadwell Park with its ultra-acute Hairpin. Lincoln MC&CC will be running a five-event meeting on the evening of Saturday, May 24. No you didn't misread, evening is correct for the car event takes place after a motorcycle meeting run by the same club with the practice starting around 3 pm and the first race about 6 pm.

Another novel feature planned for the event is a race for rally cars. The Lincoln club also open the Cadwell motor race season with their meeting on April 20, regs for which should be out within a week, and which features rounds of the F750, Monoposto and Formula SuperVee Championships.

McGrath's heroics

Renault 5 champion Neil McGrath pulled a woman from her wrecked car seconds before it exploded. It happened last week (February 20) when 29-year-old Neil was driving towards Manchester on the M62 and 12 vehicles crashed in fog in front of him. As he stopped his car he saw three more vehicles crash into the wreckage. One woman driver lay stunned in her car, and Neil ran to the car and pulled her clear just as the petrol tank blew up and the car burned out. The woman was unhurt, thanks to the reactions of the bachelor champion who was on his way to work as a warehouse manager.

Janet's FF Novice bid

A 19-year-old girl is making a determined effort to win the Vandervell Novice Driver Award at Silverstone this year. She is ex-kart racer Janet Dawn McPherson, from Prestwich, Lancashire. Janet, a punch-card operator who spends all her pay on racing, competed in karts for two-and-a-half years (brother Stuart, aged 16, is a kart racer) and she won 18 trophies and was first reserve for the British team last year.

Towards the end of 1974 she bought the ex-Mike Dinsdale 1970 Lotus-Holbay and had three trial outings at Aintree, Croft and Oulton. Her first meeting is at Oulton on March 8.

Ferrada's new FF Mallock

Alex Ferrada, winner of the 1974 Marler-Haley championship for Supersports cars, will be continuing in the Formula Ford engined class this year with a Mallock Mk 16 to replace his Mk 14. This latter car has gone to Abingdon motorcycle racer Keith Money, who will campaign the FF engined car in the BARC and Tricentrol championships.

Ferrada has retained his sponsors, ACE Plant Hire of Stony Stratford, for another year. The new car will be all white, and use a Davron engine. Brian Mitcham, himself a clubmans driver, has enabled Ferrada to buy the car with initial finance, Mitcham himself retiring for this year's series. The ACE Mallock will be driven in the Southern Organs and Tricentrol championships.

Lec take on Clubman's

The MCD Clubman's championship has found sponsorship in the form of the Lec refrigeration company of Bognor Regis. Lec of course, have sponsored David Purley in the past, but this is the first time their motor racing ventures have not been connected with the Bognor Regis driver, whose father is managing director of Lec.

Lec have taken over the championship lock, stock and barrel from MCD offering the same prize money and incorporating the same dates except for the cancelled July Thruxton date.

● Group I and standard cars only are eligible for Knowldale CC's Mini Miglia Rally which is being revived on March 8/9. The route will be 250 miles on maps 89 and 90 and metric 102 and 103. Entries at £6 from Eric Newby, Lees Road Post Office, 122a Lees Road, Oldham, Lancs.

Briefly . . .

● Kevin Bowditch enters a strangely titled car at Brands this Sunday, based on his old Lotus 61. It is named after the Marnic Dymo tape people, but has been modified by Bill Longley, who builds Vikings. Alan Baillie's Monoposto car derives from this stable. Bowditch's special will reappear at the International Trophy at Silverstone, and these are the only two races which will be contested under its strange name. Marnic Dymo, may however, stay with him for the season if they find the venture successful.

● Dave Simmonite and Brian Hartley came down from the Pennine club to Norwood near Mansfield last Sunday to take first and second on the Peak & Dukiers CC all wheel drive trial.

Simmonite, usually in a Series II Land-Rover, turned up with a Series 1 machine and, despite running into petrol pump trouble in the morning, he survived to beat Hartley's Series II by five seconds. Martin Skidmore (Series I), was third on 709 s in a field of 18 starters who attempted some nine sections.

● Just under 200 marshals attended the British Motor Racing Marshals club's national training day at Silverstone on February 15. The marshals, from 14 motor clubs, were given various lectures by 65 instructors, trainers and helpers, all of whom are thanked by the BMRMC, as well as the drivers who simulated incidents, and Silverstone circuits, for the use of the track.

● Lol Hurt has joined the ranks of the "big-engine" brigade . . . and how! Into the chassis of his lightweight special he has shoe-horned a 1.8 twin-cam Lotus Ford unit. Clearly the characteristics of this engine in a trials car have yet to be explored. The Maestro was somewhat below his usual form at this week's Wiltshire Trial, finishing in seventh place.

● John Stevens, the current Formula Ford lap record holder at Thruxton since 1972, is going out to protect his interests at the March 2 meeting at the circuit. With the new Dunlop tyres fitted, Stevens will be out to claim a new record in a Ronnie Scott backed Dulon MP17. Last year, the MRS instructor had a couple of outings in a F5000 and occasional G1 drives.

● The Lothian Car Club have emerged winners over seven other motor clubs in the *Scotsman* motor clubs quiz. Their team of Christopher John, Radio Forth's hairy DJ, Peter McNaughton and Douglas Thomson, beat Napier College in the final. Graham Birrell officiated.

● Geoff Evans, who is not unknown with the Brands regulars for his Mexico dings, had another one on Sunday, damaging a front corner of the car quite badly.

Fack ends the run

With a mist and occasional rain continually dampening an already moist surface, conditions at the Mid-Cheshire Motor Racing Club's annual Wilshire Trophy Sporting Trial soon deteriorated into a series of slimy hills. The 10 sections began to sort the drivers from the herd very early on, the power of the bigger cars proving to be less of an advantage than on drier days.

For two of the three rounds, George Fisher handled his Iris in a masterly fashion to build up a nine point lead over Julian Fack who, for the first time, was demonstrating the full potency of his Impunity. Pearce produced a brilliant second round to keep the pressure on the leaders whilst John Fack in the original Impunity was 20 points adrift, but with many high-scoring mistakes, by no means out of the hunt.

The abbreviated third round of seven hills turned out to be the make and break point for the leaders. Cruel luck saw Fisher wallowing amongst the high markers and slump to third place whilst John Fack was even more unlucky, his transistorised ignition failing and bringing his promising drive to a premature close. Julian saved the family honour and was delighted to bring his car home to its first outright win by a comfortable 10 points over the Kincraft of Jack Pearce.

1, Julian Fack (1.0 Impunity/Chrysler), 84 pts; 2, J. Pearce (1.6 Kincraft/Renault), 94 pts; 3, G. Fisher (1.3 Iris/BMC), 96 pts; 4, I. Portlock (1.3 Dryad/BMC), 121 pts; 5, R. Alexander (1.3 Cannon/BMC), 141 pts; 6, R. Needham (1.3 Cannon/BMC), 143 pts.

George Fisher was well in the lead until the final run.

Colin Folwell (left) and John Brown have bought the ex-Robertson Magnum for production saloon car racing. Folwell will do the Radio One series, and Brown, who has also bought a Delta F4 for his first motor racing season, will do the Britax championship.

Champers for Clubmen

The Northern Clubman's Champagne championship has progressed from 12 rounds at four circuits last year to 14 rounds at eight circuits this year, and although sponsorship is still to be tied up, there is a possibility of it happening.

Points for the championship, which is mainly for the northern and Scottish drivers, are 9, 6, 4, 3, 2, 1 with one point for fastest lap. Competitors should register with Chris Hart, 3 Hayfield Close, Dronfield Woodhouse, Sheffield S18 5RP.

Qualifying rounds are: March 29, Rufforth; April 13, Ingliston; April 27, Croft; May 11, Longridge; May 24, Rufforth; June 8, Croft; June 21, Aintree; June 29, Mallory Park; July 27, Cadwell Park; August 3, Croft; August 23, Aintree; September 7, Cadwell Park; September 28, Donington; October 12, Ingliston.

Briefly . . .

● Australian Peter Truscott will be running a Renault 5 in this year's series entered by Pinewood Kentinental. Pinewood are Renault dealers in Sevenoaks, where Truscott is sales director for Kentinental, who make office furniture. Truscott has previously raced down under.

John Nicol (in the driving seat) and Martin Thomas, aged 19 and 21 respectively, have impressed APG sufficiently for the company to buy them the ex-Matthew Argenti FF Van Diemen. Nicol will do the BAF championship, and Thomas the Brush Fusegear series. The Lymington lads have been campaigning an 11-year-old Lola Mk 5A in FF.

● The casual observer may have been forgiven for thinking that Richard Allen was a competitor on the Wilshire. His road car, trailer and trials car were all in evidence. On this occasion Bill Evans's ex-passenger, Geoff Herrington had been loaned the entire equipe while Richard was abroad. His performance at the wheel would suggest that he would be better off restricting his trialling to the passenger seat!

● Russ Ward is to have further sponsorship for his hillclimbing Sprite from Allan Allard engineering. This is because his Aldon Sprite is to have its 1300 cc engine fitted with a 2-litre Wade blower and 48 IDA carbs. Last year, car and driver had eight hill records and 23 wins to their credit.

Arif's Organ contract problem

One man not so pleased with Southern Organs is Tunbridge Wells Formula Ford driver Wil Arif. Having raced for the company all last year, he is now considering breaking his contract due to a disagreement over expenses.

Arif was all set to go into FF2000 with a Crossle and Southern Organs as sponsors, until the present disagreement reared its head. Now Arif is after another sponsor and still hopes to go FF2000 with a Palliser being foremost in his mind.

● The Chichester MC's round in the BTRDA Autotest Championship, scheduled for April 20, has been cancelled. No replacement has been notified. The championship is now down to 18 events.

Calcutt continues

Ray Calcutt, who last year was teamed up with John Homewood in the *Kent Messenger* Hillman Imp team, is to be supported this year by Alastair Crawford. Crawford entered such worthies as Jackie Oliver in the sixties.

Calcutt intends to contest not only the *Kent Messenger* up to 1000 cc special saloon car series at Brands, but also races farther afield. The Imp will be powered by a modified version of George Bevan's successful mill.

● Malcolm Clube, the motor cycling classic car enthusiast, will be entering some of the BARC Sports car challenge rounds this year, and also some *Classic Car* G4 races, with the help of an undisclosed sponsor. His Lister, in which he contested the JCB series, is currently up for sale.

Snetterton alterations

Snetterton has been smartened up considerably in readiness for the forthcoming season with the new spectator area ploughed and rolled to provide less hazard to suspensions when driving up to the new straight. The controversial right-hand lane of the drag strip has been resurfaced as has the "new" Esses Hairpin (for the fourth time if you count all the patching!). Spectators in the Esses Grandstand need no longer fear a Camaro in their laps for Armco now extends all the way around the corner. Taking shape on the infield behind the Paddock is what is rumoured to be a skid-pan of quite large proportions.

● Former driver of the Mickey Mouse and Gryphon clubmen's cars, Dave Bettinson, is the first to take advantage of using a Lotus 7 in modsports, entering a Holbay engine car in the first round of the Miller Modsports series. However, when he spoke to the RAC last week, there was some doubt as to its eligibility.

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