

CIRCUIT OF GALWAY - BRIAN HENTON - FIAT TEST

AUTOSPORT

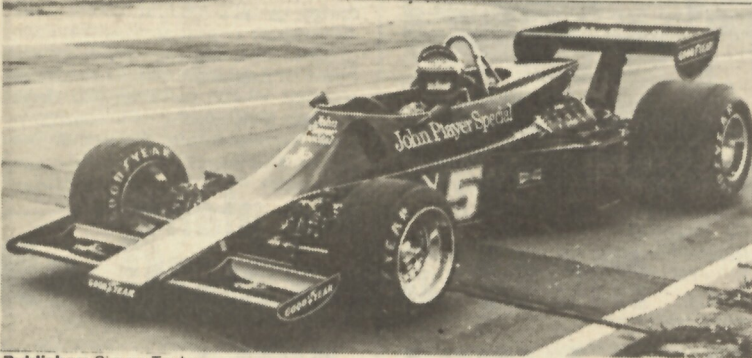
Full review of 1975 off-circuit Motor Sport



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Situations vacant at John Player-Team Lotus. With the demise of Jacky Ickx and now Ronnie Peterson who rejoins March, plus Mario Andretti returning to Vel's Parnelli, the team have no top-line drivers to race their cars.



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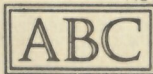
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EDITORIAL

Value for money

Following a number of letters in our *Correspondence* columns recently expressing worry at the prices for the British Grand Prix this year and general fears that the paying spectator will not get a good deal, we asked MCD's John Webb for reassurances this week.

The following statistics show that, rather than there being overall dismay at the prices, spectators as a whole are going to be at the Grand Prix in numbers like Brands Hatch has never seen before. John Webb called the number of advance bookings an avalanche and the figures certainly do make astonishing reading. On Monday of this week alone MCD received no less than £7,400 worth of cash bookings, which compares extremely favourably with £1,503 for the whole of the corresponding week two years ago. Webb estimates that this week will bring in somewhere around £20,000 in advance sales which will take the current total of bookings for the year to around £75,000 by the end of the week. With some 22 weeks to go until the actual Grand Prix the target of £140,000 should be reached with ease.

Before everyone leaps to put pen to paper and demand to know why, if there is so much money flowing in, the prices have to be so high, we must remember that £140,000 does not even cover the cost of putting on the Grand Prix itself and is not even approaching half the total cost of putting on the meeting.

Two thousand seats are being left unsold until race day while there will, of course, be unlimited enclosure and paddock tickets available all the time. We asked Webb about the main start and finish line grandstand not being on the booking form. His simple reply was that there was little point in putting this on the form as all the available seats are sold between one year and 18 months in advance. A percentage of the seats in this stand are also reserved for VIPs while sponsors of the meeting are allowed a proportion providing that they buy a certain number of seats in other stands. The good news on this front is that if a current planning application is granted there could be another 600 seats in this prime position.

Another worry appears to be the apparent lack of opportunities to see the F1 cars in their new paddock. Although we cannot give details of how this will be overcome, plans are being formulated at the moment which will give paddock ticket holders the best view they've ever had of F1 cars. If it doesn't work out don't blame Webb because in the booking form the smiling face of FICA's boss Bernie Ecclestone heads a quote saying that his Association were co-operating with the organisers to provide special viewing facilities.

The final doubt appears to be that there will only be three races in total on the day. This is at the request of FICA, who feel that other events are not good for the image of Grand Prix racing and, of course, there is the question of too much oil and rubber on the track. There will, however, be races on both days of practice so as an all-in deal nothing has changed.

It is also worth noting that the British Grand Prix is still cheaper than almost all others during the year and provides more racing than any other over a three-day period.

Nobody ever likes a price rise but, as we have said before, motor racing has always undersold itself. Although some people undoubtedly won't be able to afford to go, the general trend is one that inspires tremendous confidence in the coming season. Take it from us, it will be a good year and the Grand Prix will be worth every extra penny that is being charged.

our cover picture

Of all the off-circuit branches of motor sport, hillclimbing is the most popular and skilled. Our review of 1975 begins on page 30. Photo: Robin Rew and MSP.



Ronnie Peterson tries out his new F1 March for size at the Bicester factory last Friday.

Peterson leaves Lotus to rejoin March in F1

After three full seasons, the last 12 months of which have been full of will-he-move questions, Ronnie Peterson was officially back in the works March Formula 1 team on Monday of this week. The official statement from March Engineering read: 'Ronnie Peterson has been freed to drive for March in 1976. A contract has been finalised for Ronnie to drive for March for the rest of the season starting in South Africa. The financial arrangements have been underwritten by an anonymous Swedish business syndicate.

'March have come to the reluctant conclusion that, despite the remarkable achievements of Miss Lella Lombardi, the hoped for results will not be forthcoming and have asked her sponsor Lavazza to release them from their 1976 agreement and Lavazza have agreed.'

With regard to the move there were mixed feelings on Monday — we know that March are happy and that Ronnie Peterson is happy, on the other hand Lotus are not, Lella Lombardi has been left on the shelf while Gunnar Nilsson is confused.

Peterson will join the Robin Herd run, Bicester based March A team and will partner Vittorio Brambilla who, by all accounts, is very happy with his new team mate. Max Mosley will continue to run the B team (jokingly known as Fawty Towers Racing at the factory!) for Hans Stuck and, from Long Beach, Arturo Merzario.

Miss Lombardi and her Lavazza sponsors are currently floating around looking for a place to nest. Lella herself has expressed a wish to stay in Formula 1 — as the only vacancy that exists at the moment is at Lotus the chances of her doing another Grand Prix seem rather remote.

It would appear that Gunnar Nilsson will not be contracted to March for much longer either. Originally he was scheduled to take over Lombardi's car following her predictable slowness in Brazil but with the arrival of fellow Swede, Peterson there's no long a vacancy. Nilsson is keen to do F1 and March have said that if he drives for another F1 team there's no way he can drive their works F2 car as originally planned. His 1975 F2 teammate Alex Ribeiro looks likely to fill the slot.

We hear, although this could not be confirmed by any source, that the

initial deal between March and Lotus was they would each make their respective drivers (Nilsson and Peterson) available to each other. This indeed happened but what nobody reckoned on was Nilsson not wanting to go to Lotus and Frank Williams conveniently having a spare seat which looked more attractive to him. Lotus in the meantime heard from Mario Andretti that he didn't want to take up their offer of a permanent seat in the team either. Meanwhile March took advantage of Peterson's willingness to sign. The legality of all this apparently revolves around somebody's non-fulfilment of Ronnie's contract.

When we spoke to David Way, John Player's Special Events Manager on Monday, he said that as far as they were concerned, Peterson was still under contract to John Player-Team Lotus. However, he issued a public statement the following day which confirmed what we had suspected. It said "naturally we are disappointed that a driver of Ronnie Peterson's calibre is leaving us but we wish him every success with March. If he is beaten to the flag, let's hope it is by a black and gold car."

Way then confirmed that despite Peterson's departure, the John Player contract with Team Lotus remained unaffected and it stands for the next three years.

As to the team's driver line-up for the South African Grand Prix, this will be decided in due course.

Commenting on who the syndicate of Swedish business men were, Peterson's Swedish manager Staffan Svenby said earlier this week that he was "unable to comment as to which industries and what syndicate were involved." Svenby added that he thought they were a group of people who thought Peterson had deserved his World Championship title long ago and they intended to have Peterson in a national blue and yellow car when he did it.

Two companies who are thought to have close ties with Peterson are Saab-Scania and Sandvik, a large multi-national Swedish steel corporation.

While all this high drama between teams was going on, the man in the middle was ill in bed with flu down in the south of France, hoping to recover in time to start testing the new G5 BMW CSL at Ricard along with fellow Swede Gunnar Nilsson.

Jarier's Alfa

Alfa Romeo team manager Carlo Chiti was waxing lyrical about Jean-Pierre Jarier after the Brazilian Grand Prix, despite the Frenchman's mistake which probably cost him the race. "He's a driver capable of evaluating a car's potential," said Chiti and so it came as no surprise to learn that Jarier is one of the drivers' favoured to partner Arturo Merzario in a single works Alfa attack on the G6 sports car championship.

According to reports, it is envisaged that Merzario and Jarier will start the season off in one of the current 33 TT12s but a special 2.140cc turbocharged version of the flat 12 engine has been tested on Alfa's dynamometer, utilising two compressors (one per bank of cylinders) with encouraging results. A figure of 550 bhp has already been reached and 600 bhp is confidently expected. The car is expected to run on Pirelli P7 tyres, using a radial carcass. This will mark a return to competition for Pirelli after 20 years.

Although Jarier has already been nominated on the short-list of Alpine-Renault drivers, he will only drive the Alfa if he has no other commitments. "The pair could do well," said Chiti, "providing they finish races!"

Smith wins but Purley is the star

David Purley was the star of the second round of the Australian Rothman's sponsored Tasman series which took place at the Adelaide International Raceway in South Australia last Sunday.

Driving the Richard Oaten Racing/Lec Lola T330, Purley put in a tremendous drive from a lowly grid placing and had established a vast lead before colliding with a back marker. The ensuing accident wrote off the car and Purley was robbed of a certain victory.

Inheriting the honours was Ken Smith, winner of the New Zealand section of the "series" in his ex-Redman Lola T332. Smith brought his car home ahead of Oran Park winner Vern Schuppan in the Teddy Yip/Theodore Racing Lola T332, surely one of the most travelled F5000 Lolas in the world. Third was local man Jon Leffler in his Matich A51.

Practice has seen engine problems for Purley and with a Chevrolet that refused to pull cleanly, a replacement unit was installed. That wasn't much better, but when the race came, the rain clouds had opened and the track was wet.

Purley, in super-style, cut through to the front and opened up a lead. This he extended to an amazing 1m 20s before coming up to lap a backmarker. The slower car had seen him and waved him through. However the slower driver lost his car and spun in front of Purley. The Oaten machine was destroyed, although Purley was happily uninjured.

Delighted with Purley's driving during the past couple of races, the Australian organisers were concerned that Purley would return home to England and so a deal was reached whereby David will drive the Lola T400 used by FF champion Paul Bernasconi in the remaining two races.

Big plans for Stanley -BRM team

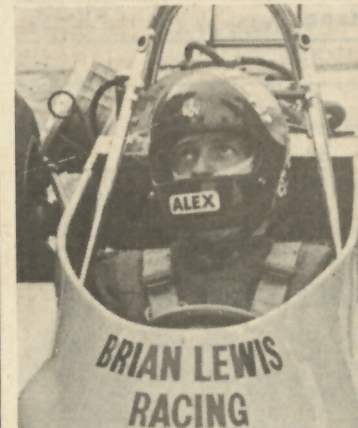
Far from being discouraged by their rather dismal showing in South America it seems that Stanley-BRM are going ahead with plans for a two car team for the year.

Ian Ashley confirmed last week that he had discussed the problems of South America with Louis Stanley and that the situation was looking good. The new engine is apparently giving good power and the belt problem that affected it at Interlagos has now been cured.

A rather surprised Bob Evans has also been contacted by Stanley with a view to rejoining the team for South Africa.

However we heard on Tuesday that the BRM entries for the South African race had been withdrawn because they cannot get in on the Constructors charter.

Alex in Boxer



After Bob Evans tried Brian Lewis' F2 Boxer-BDX last week, Alex Ribeiro has given the car a whirl at Silverstone with encouraging results.

Mario's VPJ

If John Player-Team Lotus have hopes that Mario Andretti will stay with them, then the Vel's Parnelli Grand Prix have other ideas. Alan Bodeau the Vel's Parnelli PR man, told our American correspondent on Monday of this week that Andretti would be driving for the team in the South African and Long Beach Grands Prix. The team has been continuing tests with their new revised car at Riverside and negotiations were still in hand with potential sponsors.

As to Al Unser driving a second car at Long Beach, it now looks increasingly doubtful because of the team's financial situation. Unser has, in fact, received several offers from other Grand Prix teams to race at Long Beach but the former Indy winner has declined them.

Daytona 500 drama— fastest men disqualified

There was high drama during the Daytona 500 qualifying runs which were held at the Florida track last weekend. The three fastest runners, namely the legendary AJ Foyt, Darrell Waltrip and Dave Marcis, were all disqualified by the NASCAR Competition Director Bill Gazaway for cheating.

In the case of Foyt and Waltrip the official NASCAR statement reveals that both these drivers' Chevrolet Chevelles had "fuel pressure assists." In other words they had trick attachments to the fuel systems which allowed nitros oxide to be leaked into the fuel system.

Foyt had pushed his Hoss Ellington-prepared machine around the famed superbowl at 187.477 mph which would have given him the coveted pole slot for this, the most prestigious of all the Grand National NASCAR races. Waltrip's Gatorade sponsored Chevelle clocked 186.617 mph and would have shared the front row.

The third man to be disqualified was Marcis in his K & K Insurance Dodge, for, again we quote the NASCAR statement, "a non-approved radiator stoppage." Apparently Marcis had a movable flap between the radiator and the car's nose cowl which, according to the NASCAR officials, allowed the air to channel itself through at a far more efficient rate. It also allowed the engine compartment to be heated up to a better working temperature.

However, rather than omit all three drivers from the race itself, they will be allowed to compete in the two 125 mile qualifying races today (Thursday). These races will determine the grid placings as last Sunday's practice only determined the actual front row.

Finding himself on the pole spot is, wait for it, Ramo Stott in his Smithville Farms Chevelle. Stott, a NASCAR regular but not regarded

as a pace setter, clocked 183.456 mph. It's Stott's first ever NASCAR pole.

Supporting him on the front row is NASCAR rookie Terry Ryan in his privately run Chevelle. Ryan ran a 183.109 mph lap. His previous claim to fame was winning last year's ARCA 200 at Daytona which, according to our American correspondent, "is a kinda farm league for NASCAR."

What of the big guns? Reigning NASCAR champion Richard Petty actually qualified eighth fastest (after the disqualifications) in his STP Dodge on 179.903 mph. How

A J Foyt — disqualified from pole.



ever Petty told our man on the spot that "I'm never interested in the Daytona pole. You have to build a special engine just to get it." Anyway, if Petty wins one of the 125 mile qualifying races, he'll wind up on the second row.

David Pearson was third quickest at 183.079 mph while Bobby Allison was sixth quickest in the Penske Cam2 Mercury on 180.083 mph. As for Buddy Baker, he had plug trouble throughout the runs and didn't feature.

Of the 35 cars that practiced, 25 of them were Chevrolets.

No Drugs F3 team

A consortium of Swiss, German and Liechtenstein business are backing a brand new two car Formula 3 team this season which will race under the title of No Drugs Racing. Drivers for the team will be promising British ace Dick Parsons and Swiss Fritz Stehlin. They will use two brand new Ralts.

No Drugs Racing is a highly successful organisation which was formed four years ago by this syndicate to encourage young people not to take drugs as artificial stimulants. They are not a charity nor a health organisation but people like Jackie Stewart and Jacky Ickx have lent their support to the cause so we are informed. Parsons needs little introduction to British racegoers, having shown a goodly turn of speed in Formula 3 last season driving his privately run Modus on what amounted to a shoe-string budget.

Stehlin also drove a Modus last year, being a member of the works F3 team alongside Danny Sullivan for a brief period before business commitments forced him to curtail his activities.

The two car team will be run by Paul Goy Racing, a former Rondel and JPS mechanic who ran Parsons' car for most of last season.

The two Ralts will be based at Goy's premises in Lincoln and the team intend to contest all the BP championship races as well as the European FIA blessed series. As yet no engines have been chosen although the choice must lie between the Toyota Novamotor or the Leyland Dolomite unit, Parsons having used one of these units (prepared by Neil Brown) to good effect in the final F3 race at Thruxton last year.

First race for the team will be at Thruxton on March 7 where, if one of the new Ralts isn't ready, Parsons' unsold Modus will be substituted.

Graham's G5 Camaro

Following the collapse of a proposed G2 European Touring Car deal with the German BMW tuning specialists Alpina, reigning Tarmac British Racing Champion Stuart Graham has confirmed his intentions to remain faithful to the Chevrolet Camaro for the third year running.

Stuart Graham (right) receives the Tarmac Award last week.



Having sold his RAC G1 Camaro to fellow Camaro driver John Olding, Graham also looks certain to dispose of his two other cars (including the TT winning L'Avenir machine) to former Swedish Grand Prix star Reine Wisell. All the cars are destined to take part in the Swedish Camaro series (a lesser version of the American IROC).

Graham, who has still retained backing from Faberge men's cosmetics, has purchased the ex-Frank Gardner SCA Chevrolet Camaro from Adrian Chambers. The car is

currently being lightened and painted in Faberge's Brut 33 livery. However, Graham told us that the car, with which Gardner dominated British G2 racing in two years ago and possibly contributed towards the death of the category as a national British saloon series, will be kept as near to G2 trim as possible.

Because of his sponsorship commitments, Graham will concentrate on entering and racing the car in the Tricentrol Super Saloon series as this is the only category left open for the big American cars now that they have been banned from G1 and have not been homologated for G2.

One of the reasons for leaving the car in a comparatively sane trim is so that Graham can also race it in G5 (silhouette) events. "There's a possibility of us going to Le Mans," said Graham earlier this week. "In fact, I will definitely be there." Graham also added that he would enter the car in the British round of the G5 series at Silverstone. "It may not be the quickest car there but it'll trundle round and create a lot of interest and exposure."

Apart from his Camaro commitments — Stuart also stressed that he would be making a concerted effort at taking part in other forms of racing besides saloons.

As to the future and 1977, Graham hoped that Faberge would extend their involvement even further encompassing Europe rather than just Great Britain. Between them, they intend to look at how G2 and G5 progress in Europe this year before making a final commitment as to what category they will become involved in twelve months hence.

John Surtees says F1 plans still undecided

John Surtees was incensed last week that a certain weekly racing newspaper has released details of his new sponsor. 'It's not settled yet,' he told us, 'I'm having a meeting later this week to dot the Is and cross the Ts. I hope to be able to announce our plans for a second car early next week.'

Testing of the new TS19 has been stopped for the past two weeks and immediately after the sponsorship deal has been completed both cars will be shipped to South Africa for further testing. 'I'll sign a second driver for the first couple of races and we'll continue our testing of others when we return from South Africa. That's all I can say for the moment.'

● With Willi Kauhsen running an F2 car for touring car star Klaus Ludwig this season, fellow German drivers are suddenly sitting up and taking notice of single seaters. Two drivers to have expressed a desire to race in F2 are former ETC champion Hans Heyer and BMW driver Albrecht Krebs.

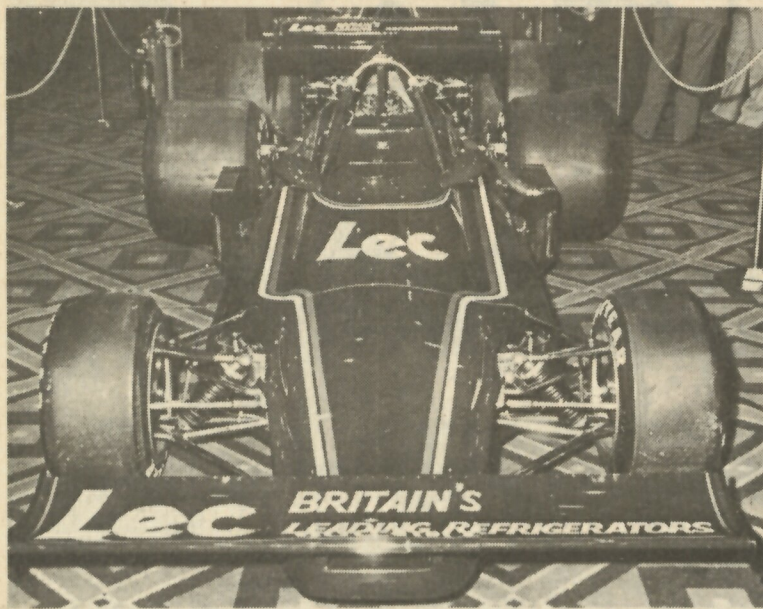
John Day back Team Ensign

Work is still progressing on the new Formula 1 Ensign which is currently under construction up at Mo Nunn's Walsall factory. However, delays have forced the team to prepare their old MN174 specification car for Chris Amon to use in the forthcoming South African Grand Prix on March 6.

Over the last couple of weeks Nunn has had an up and down time, losing the expected support of Ricard, the French *anis* drink to the Dutch HB Bewaking team, but gaining additional backing from John Day Models.

This company, which is based in Malvern, Worcestershire, make 1/43rd scale models and have already been involved with motor sport before, lending support to Alain de Cadenet's Le Mans projects for the last two years. This will be their first foray into the world of Grand Prix racing.

The company has been making models for about five years now, of which 90% are mostly exported. Naturally by backing Team Ensign, a 1/43rd scale model of the team's new car will shortly become available.



This once looked like a Chevron B30 but modifications over the winter have converted David Purley's Lec F5000 Chevron-Ford V6 into this unique looking machine.

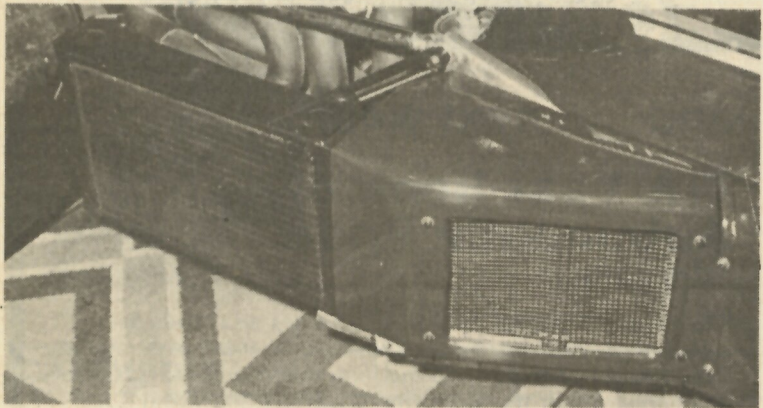
Bell to test Lec's V6

While David Purley is away in Australia making a name for himself in the Rothmans sponsored F5000 series, his Lec Refrigeration team have been carrying out testing with their substantially modified F5000 Chevron B30 Ford V6.

According to team manager Mike Earle, the car now features side radiators "and a Ferrari type front wing. We've also paired off a lot of weight."

The car still retains the Ford GA

Side radiators are just one of the many new ideas tried on the revised Lec Chevron.



Young's F3

Mike Young, the Formula Ford driver who switched to Formula Super Vee last year with a Modus and mopped up the British FSV series, has confirmed his intentions of moving into Formula 3 this season.

Young has purchased a new Modus which will be powered by a Toyota Novamotor engine and he intends to contest both the BP and Shell series.

The car hasn't an official sponsor although it will be entered under the Anglian Gilt Producers banner. They produce female replacement stock for pig farmers. Young's first race will be at Thruxton on March 7.

Groewood chit-chat

Heard at the Groewood Awards reception last week: Peter Hunt, James's brother and manager, saying they'd had their first F1 offer for 1977 that day. Max Mosley saying that he would throw a party for all F1 drivers and team managers on August 31 so that they'd save on telephone bills on September 1, the agreed date between FICA members that they may approach each others' drivers. James Hunt saying he'd at last won money at backgammon off former F3 team mate and now professional dice man Brendan McInerney. Brian Henton asking for a picture of him with James to prove to his mother that he really was

Jarier for Ligier?

Stories in the French national sporting paper *L'Equipe* last week suggested that Jean-Pierre Jarier would be leaving the AVS Shadow Grand Prix team and joining the Gitanes Ligier-Matra set-up. In fact, it's a story that has been written before and denied before. This time is no exception.

We spoke to Ligier-Matra team manager Gerard Ducarouge earlier this week about the story. Once again he denied it, explaining quite simply that there was not enough finance available to run a two-car team. How much would they require? "That's a very difficult

question. Perhaps two million francs. It's so difficult. We'd have to have extra mechanics, build at least three cars rather than two. It's impossible to calculate accurately."

The French sources said that a second car would be available at the Spanish Grand Prix. Most probably so, but only as a spare, according to Ducarouge. Stories relating to Jarier's departure from Shadow have come about because many feel the American-derived team can't last much longer than the South African Grand Prix without a commercial sponsor.

G5 Chevron for Turner

Dorset timber merchant and Formula 5000 exponent, John Turner, will be trying his hand at sportscar racing this year in Pete Smith's latest acquisition, the ex-KVG Chevron B31. This is the car crashed by Ian Grob at Ingliston last September. Turner will be concentrating on the RAC British Sportscar Championship and also co-driving with Smith in selected long distance G6 Championship races. The car will be powered by a Kelly-tuned Ford FVC engine.

Having raced the ex-Lella Lombardi F5000 Lola T330 last year, Turner doesn't intend to give up single-seaters altogether as he hopes to run a Formula 2-type chassis in the G8 series during the second half of the season.

Bailey's return

After an 18-month lay-off, Ken Bailey is returning to motor racing. Having "retired" through lack of sponsorship, Bailey is making a return to the tracks and has ordered a brand new Chevron B34 so that he can contest this season's Formula Atlantic series.

Bailey, 34, has already raced for a season in Atlantic, finishing fourth in the national championship and fifth in the international series in 1973. Prior to that, he was a successful northern Formula Ford campaigner.

● Stateside rumours indicate that Ford are considering a return to racing officially probably in NAS-CAR.

Estoril's F2 race off

The opening round of the European Formula 2 championship, scheduled for Estoril in Portugal on March 28 was postponed last week. The reason is not political, but that the circuit cannot be brought up to CSI specifications in time. The organising club have asked the CSI to give them an alternative date in August either 7/8 or, if Silverstone decide to vacate it, the August 28/29 weekend.

RAC storm

There was a very stormy meeting at the RAC last Thursday between organisers, promoters, entrants and SMMT representatives to try to resolve the problems with the RAC Touring Car Championship prize money. Nothing apparently was decided although one manufacturer's representative told us that he thought the promoters were taking the right line with their £500 races and that the trade would have to come up with the extra money. 'If we can generate the money ourselves we'll be able to afford to bring back the names in saloon car racing and really make it into something worthwhile.'

At this point we must tell the anecdote that came from the meeting. A proposal was put forward that the manufacturers and UK Concessionaires might like to sell blocks of tickets through their dealers. The Chrysler representative was heard to reply: 'We can't sell cars at the moment let alone tickets for a race meeting.'

F2 Bross

Helmut Bross, for the last few seasons a recognised front runner in European Formula Super Vee circles, is yet another driver to be moving up into the world of Formula 2 this coming season.

Bross has ordered a brand new Chevron B34 which will be fitted with a GmbH BMW engine.

Backing for Bross' F2 project comes from a German packaging company called Lang. His first race is expected to be at Hockenheim on April 11.



Studies in style on the ski-bob. Dieter Quester (top), Rolf Stommion and Derek Bell (bottom) took part in a German winter sports tournament last weekend which Quester won narrowly from F3 man Willi Siller.



United rule OK!

Thirty pence is all you have to pay to see the Cup Final. Well not *that* Cup Final but a far more important one. It's the Graham Hill Charity Match between a motor racing team and a bunch known as the Happy Wanderers. For the Wanderers there's the odd film and TV star among the ex-QPR men while for the motor racing side there are such notable footballers as Tim Schenken, Chris Craft, Derek Bell, Gerry Marshall, Peter Gethin, Barrie Williams, Tiff Needell, Mick Hill, Danny Sullivan, Ken Hensley and Rad Dougall. And rumour has it that a couple of journalists might turn up.

Organised by the BRSCC it's got to be cheap at the price and we'd like to see you all at the Bexley United Ground at Bexley Heath, South London. Kick off is at 2.15 pm.

Briefly . . .

- The British Racing Mechanics celebrated their 40th anniversary with a Dinner Dance in Coventry last weekend. Award winners were Brabham's Bob Dance (Ken Taylor Trophy), Geoff Lees (Dunlop Mac Trophy), McLaren's Dave Luff (Automotive Products Trophy) and Gulf Racing's Alan Hearn (Jaguar Climax Trophy).

- Although the full entry list for the race of Champions at Brands Hatch on March 14 is not complete as yet, John Webb did confirm on Monday that both James Hunt and Niki Lauda are definite starters and 'there are a couple of other exciting entries too but I'm not going to say what they are yet.'

- Nick May has decided to resign from the Indylantic Board. This decision was caused by personal pressures which have forced him to reduce the time that he can devote to Indylantic '76. May will, of course, maintain an active interest in the promotion of the series.

- The BARC's Sidney Offord reports that the Easter Monday DJM Formula 2 meeting will cost the club about £40,000. Nine years ago the same fixture at Silverstone with such names as Jack Brabham, Jochen Rindt, Jackie Stewart and Graham Hill entered cost just £6,000.

Donington's speed show

The Donington Park Speed Show (February 20 to 29 inclusive) promises to be a worthy exhibition for all enthusiasts. Among the main stand holders will be Dunlop, Castrol, Ferodo, Modus Cars, Broad-speed, Van Diemen, Jim Russell Racing Drivers School and so on while trade stands will be there aplenty catering for racewear, engines, tools, gearboxes, accessories, package tours to GPs, books and motor clubs.

Admission will be by programme, cost £1.00, and will include entry to the fabulous Donington Collection which contains over 70 immaculate Grand Prix cars including Jackie Stewart's 1973 Championship winning Tyrrell and no less than eight cars recorded by Graham Hill. There are also record cars, fire engines and an air sea rescue helicopter, so there's something for all the family. Opening times on all days will be 11 am-9 pm.

New F3 Chevron B34 tests

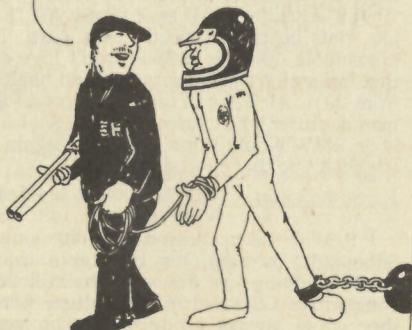
Richard Hawkins (in car) was one of several drivers who tried the new F3 Chevron at Silverstone last week. The others were Geoff Lees, Richard Morgan and Patrick Bardoin.



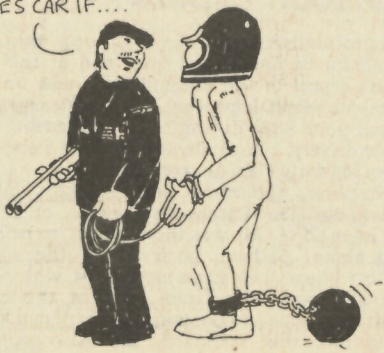
CATCHPOLE

By Barry Foley

NOW STOP ALL THIS SILLY TALK ABOUT WHITE SLAVERY, WE ONLY HAVE YOUR BEST INTERESTS...



...AT HEART. WE JUST DON'T WANT TO SEE YOU MAKE A FOOL OF YOURSELF IN SOMEONE ELSE'S CAR IF...



...IT'S NOT GOING TO BE COMPETITIVE.



Credit where it's due

With regard to Mr James Gibley's letter concerning Nick Brittan's criticism of and I quote Mr Gibley, that "Great patriot of motor racing Baron Hesketh".

If motor racing and the world championship meant as much to the noble Baron as is suggested by Mr Gibley then why wasn't a Hesketh on the grid at Interlagos when there were two Williams cars.

Oh, by the way Frank Williams has managed to survive quite a number of years running Grand Prix cars on budgets that would probably fall short of the noble Barons annual entertainments bill, but he always manages to do it and this season should be his best to date.

Mr Gibley has probably never heard of Frank Williams for unlike his noble Baron who was forever telling the world and its dog about what he wanted to do, and what he was going to do, Mr Williams just got on with his job that he, in common with Lord Hesketh, loves, motor racing and did it

Result: the starting score at Interlagos Frank Williams 2, Hesketh Racing nil.

As far as Nick Brittan is concerned not only is he a first class, extremely entertaining writer, he is also a very well informed one, and his articles are without doubt a great source of enjoyment to readers of AUTOSPORT. Long may Nick Brittan and Private Ear continue.

WALTHAMSTOW, LONDON E17. JEFFREY MATTHEWS

Standard car status

Will someone please scrape Martin Holmes off the ceiling and stick his nose in the record book to stop him writing such inaccurate rubbish as we have not come to expect from Britain's leading motoring weekly. Sandro Munari's win in this year's Monte does not make him the only person to win the event three times. Record books will clearly show that Jean Trevoux has done so four times (albeit once was equal first).

In case there should be any further claims, Lancia's win is not unique anyway; other marques have finished first as many times, other marques have also finished first, second and third and cars with smaller capacity engines have won the event before.

Further, may I again voice the quite widespread view that a win by a car such as the Stratos is pure humbug; happy though I was at the Alpine's win - for at least they have made literally thousands of cars which look at least somewhat similar to the Berlinette Tour de France model (the A 110) which brought them victory - the cars are very hard to come by and very pricey. As far as the Stratos goes, it appears to me highly unlikely that that sort of shape is ever going to be sold in any reasonably large numbers, so one might just as well race a Formula 1 projectile over the Monte course (regulations for car and rally permitting) and be done with it.

The only thing which is going to benefit me and the millions of "keen" motorists, is to have standard cars taken out of the showroom and rallied virtually as they then are; if they fall apart, then that's indicative that they're thrown together. Ingenious handicappers must be able to work out a formula which takes into account the total number of cars produced and the ex-works cost price and to divide them up into classes capacity-wise. Until that sort of sanity is allowed to percolate into rallying (and particularly into international rallying), then Stratos', Alpines, 131 Fiat Mirafiore Rallies, turbocharged Porsche, Carreras, etc., make a mockery of the whole thing and leave the entire scene wide-open to scorn.

If all that is wanted is a spectacle or whatever, then great, but the rules of misrepresentation in advertising must be much more severe (none of this "The Monte Carlo winning Bloggs uses an engine from the same factory as your Turd Chaser" rubbish) and there should also be a lucrative prize for bog-standard saloons in each class and there should be no outside assistance: no vans loaded to the gunwales which "just happen" to be at so-and-so, no changing back axles, no brake overhauls except after specified periods/mileages, etc., no cylinder-head gasket

replacements, etc., whatsoever. Then it would be we, the great buying public, who would be assured of getting cars properly screwed together. In a time of critical appraisal of the motor car's very future, anything other is just plain imbecility and guaranteed to encourage derision of a sport we all love.

BRENTFORD, MIDDX H. G. MACKENSIE-WINTLE
(Librarian, Renault Owners Club)

Very private effort

I feel I must point out the inaccuracy of Ian Titchmarsh's survey of the *Classic Car* Championship in the Club Racing Review of February 5. Did he, I wonder, go to a different series of races to the ones which I attended? If not, then surely he knows as well as I do that the 2 litre GT class was not won by John Webb's Rochas Elan, but my father, Bill Nicholson in his apparently invisible thirteen year old MGB - we even have all the trophies to prove it. He won the class by a clear 15 points after missing the Easter Monday Thruxton round.

As a matter of interest, ours is a total family affair, my father preparing and driving the car with my mother and me as pit-crew. We are not sponsored, like so many other competitors.

My father has been racing cars now for almost 15 years and does not go around looking for 'hand-outs', unlike an ever-increasing number of so-called 'Racing Drivers' who seem to think that the motoring world owes them a drive.

Would you please be kind enough to inform Mr Titchmarsh of his error and ask him to make sure of his facts before publishing them, I would be most grateful.

NORTHAMPTON. MISS LORAIN NICHOLSON

Regulation blues

I thought from the National Press that inflation was coming under control until the latest changes for the various aspects of motor racing became apparent. Firstly the RAC's incredible increase to £16 for an international licence, which they told us was a small consideration compared to the overall cost of racing. Fair comment until you take into account all the other increases coming into effect, such as the entry fee increase from £7 to £10, the increase in petrol (no fault of the motor sporting fraternity), and a further nail in the club competitors coffin, I refer to the BRDC stipulation that competitors must wear fully fire proof clothing, including gloves. A reasonable request when driving in the higher echelons of the sport and surrounded by 40 gallons of highly inflammable fuel, but a severe demand on the local club racer, who probably at the most carries only a few gallons and very few cases of burns, if any at all lately, have been reported at this level of racing.

If the RAC are to be our governing body, why is it that other clubs have to start dictating their own sets of rules. I always understood "Blue Book" to be our gospel.

MAIDENHEAD, BERKS

S. WATNEY

Cartoon capers

Congratulations Pete Lyons, long may your notebook be handy and your pen at the ready. Pete's report of the Brazilian GP, was up to his usual standard. It proves, to me at least, that he hasn't gone stale during the close season, unlike some drivers. I have always admired Pete's work since his early Can-Am reports.

However, the main point of this letter is Catchpole. The Catchpole cartoon of Brazilian GP issue (29/1/76), was the funniest, most human and almost pathetic portrayal of the spoils of victory I have seen. Even my friends, who couldn't tell Emerson from Timo, thought the cartoon both humorous and poignant. If Barry can keep up even half this standard, the AUTOSPORT will continue to be well worth buying.

HARTLEPOOL, CLEVELAND.

FRANK ROGERS

.. A question of doubt existing?

The Guinness Book of Records states the fastest lap around Silverstone G.P. circuit in 1m 15.9s is by Jackie Stewart, Francois Cevert and Ronnie Peterson (May '73). After years of pestering Guinness Books they finally relented and told me it was done in a tyre testing session.

Now,

a) Their three drivers were contracted to different tyre companies at the time.

b) Three drivers did this time?

I've been an enthusiast for years and know the score on Silverstone lap times... Ronnie's 1973 Grand Prix pole in 1m 16.3s and then the excitement when Pryce bettered this during unofficial 1975 Grand Prix testing (pre-chicane). But in the 15s? No way!

Can anybody help with some information on this?

SHELDON, BIRMINGHAM

D. SHARKEY

Shifty silhouette

For years I've been a staunch supporter of long distance sportscar racing, and it was with great pleasure that I, some three years ago, received the news of the proposed Silhouette Formula becoming the class for the World Championship of Makes. The idea of highly modified Capris, BMW CSLs, Porsches etc. competing in the classic events for outright glory with top-line drivers really captured the mind. After all the ERCC had shown promise with this type of car and with the addition of sports cars like the Porsche etc. it seemed the best formula (excluding F1) one could think of: glorious events like Daytona and Le Mans, hopefully "name" drivers, fast, spectacular and, above all, recognizable cars, the kinds one can see on public roads, the modifications only making them more exciting. Man, I was waiting for it to happen!

Now, the latest piece of gossip from Germany, which has also appeared in AUTOSPORT, suggests all the excitement is in jeopardy! BMW are said to be developing a midengine prototype projectile for the series. A fake production car, if we ever heard of one! A true cheat, which, we hear, is not even intended to comply with safety or pollution laws. Not even a dreamcar, 'cause it couldn't be sold and driven on public roads. (This means, not even in basic form, indeed, it seems there wouldn't be any "basic" roadgoing form.) I can only agree with Ford's Mike Kranefuss: the thing effectively kills the whole idea of the production car series! Either it's going to be so superior that no one else wants to compete or, still worse, other manufacturers are going to come up with similar projects. In the latter case we'll end up with a new prototype series and we all know what happened to this kind of prototype before. That's just where Silhouette Formula originally came in.

I suppose BMW are doing it for publicity. But is that really the kind of PR they need? Surely, the way BMW are planning to do it is not the right way of winning as far as goodwill is concerned! Throughout Europe, at least, they seem to have a very good name for their good, sporting products and also for their racing activities especially with the 2002 and the CSL. Why spoil it? You don't have to be an enthusiast to discover the too "unfair advantage" when a prototype that looks like one beats the production cars. It's also predictable that the crowds won't love a winner that has stolen the close racing and healthy grids from them. All this can't really be good PR for the manufacturer who causes it, can it? So, I sincerely, hope BMW would think it all over again. Surely, they can't be that shortsighted!

ESPOO, FINLAND

ESA ILLONEN

P.S. With the increased publicity value of the Silhouette Formula, it's inevitable that BMW would be doing just fine with the still extremely competitive CSL and in the future, if required, they could always produce a turbo version of some "honest" model yet to come, homologate it and go on winning.

PRIVATE EAR



NICK BRITTAN

Need a new tonic for less fuddled thinking?

I come away from these Award presentations fuddled and confused. Not, as you may think, because of the gin, although goodness knows there's enough of it about, but because there are (a) too many of them and (b) they always seem to give the prizes to the wrong chaps for the wrong reasons.

The Grovewood caper is masterminded by John Webb doing his well-known impersonation of Eric Morley giving away £2000 to a selection of "the lads most likely to". The number one award, and a cheque for £1000, went to Brian Henton who makes history in becoming the only person to win the award in a season in which he failed to win a race. Second place went to young Geoff Lees who won more races than Henton took part in during the season.

One could be forgiven for thinking that with 32 race wins in the competitive world of Formula Ford Lees showed enough outstanding promise in his early career to qualify him for the major award. But no, it would seem that the judges were more impressed with Henton's short string of failures than they were by Lees' run of successes.

The blurb for the Grovewood awards makes much of the fact that of the 36 previous recipients 21 of them have moved on into rarified world of Formula One. It fails to mention the fact that this outstanding success factor has been achieved by dint of choosing men who have often been less than one step away from Formula One at the time of the presentation.

A bit like speculating with gilt edged shares.

Surely the Award would have more prestige and more kudos and credibility if the judges were allowed to select genuine young talent that was still half a dozen steps away from the big league?

Financially the £1000 first prize is more likely to be of some real help to a youngster struggling to put a season of F3 together than it is to someone who has already proved that he can survive in the multi-thousand pound world of semi-professional big league.

Webb must surely be congratulated for conceiving the Awards and for persuading his parent company to put money back into the sport. When the awards were conceived they were meaningful and unique. But surely it's time the rules were rewritten in an effort to preserve their value.

Would it not be more meaningful to select one winner from the ranks of the serious junior leagues and really do something tangible to further a promising career.

Is it not possible for Grovewood to use some of their considerable influence in the industry and trade to produce a works F3 ride for the "likely

lad". Some Grovewood money plus support from a fuel company, a tyre company and the Formula One Constructors could easily bring this to reality.

Such an award would give the media something to follow during the following season and the award itself would be something really worthwhile for the recipient, rather just a cheque that got eaten up paying the left-over expenses of the previous season.

Falling into the shadow of the Grovewood affair came the Tarmac Award. Stuart Graham copped twice as much as the Grovewood winner for amassing points on a complicated points scoring system that the public can not follow and even the sports' own journalists find difficulty keeping track of.

Maybe Tarmac, Grovewood and Shell should all get together. But that would never work for as they are prone to admit when enough of the gin has flowed, part of the game is to glorify their own company and any amalgamation would diminish the visible glory and benevolence of their individual company.

In fact one comes away with the suspicion that they are all maybe dreaming up ways in which they could continue to have their annual award frolic without involving drivers or giving money away.

Stirling's silver

What do successful racers do with their trophies? Put them on their mantelpiece. That's fine if you have a semi-successful career and small mantelpiece or a very successful career and a very big mantelpiece. What do you do if you're Stirling Moss and have over 200 silver trophies?

Stirling is never short of bright ideas. "I got fed up with paying hefty insurance premiums and keeping them all locked away so I'm going to melt them all down and make them into a hand-beaten canopy for a new fireplace I'm building."

But one trophy presents a problem. It's the one he received for his classic and much-remembered win in the Mille Miglia. It's two feet high and very shiny and for years Stirling assumed that it was very valuable. But now his silver melter tells him that it's a very inferior gilt on a crude metal which has about the same intrinsic value as plasticine.

"I'd give it away to be re-presented, or even sell it, if I could find someone who would put it to good use," says Stirling.

Any bright ideas, anyone?

Stamp of success

Racing drivers are great collectors. Some of them have collections that appear to appreciate in value while others can best be described as short term decliners.

Take for example Peter Gethin's world renowned collection of names and phone numbers of round-heeled co-operative young ladies. Not a thing you'd want to inherit in ten years time.

Le Mans racer Alain De Cadenet, on the other hand, has a collection which, while not providing the same sort of immediate amusement, is more likely to provide gratification in his declining years.

Stamps are what turns De Cadenet on. Last week at the Stanley Gibbons emporium in the Strand the management mounted a one man show which comprised just part of De Cadenet's collection. The entire collection is of George V stamps, probably the finest in the world and the part shown was valued at £30,000.

"I often take a few of my stamps with me to races," says De Cadenet. "It gives me a great deal of pleasure just looking at them."

George V would be pleased.

On the Brazilian beat

AUTOSPORT's columnist Jody Scheckter will never know how close he came to looking into the working end of four professionally wielded pistols in Brazil. James Hunt had been off playing tennis with the president of General Motors and was flattered not only to be chauffeured back to the hotel in the presidential limo but to have riding with him the president's four personal armed bodyguards.

Hunt dismounted at the door of the hotel expecting the limo to pull away. But no. Out stepped the four heavies, complete with bulging

ampits, and surrounding him they escorted him into the foyer.

"Scheckter was standing there and I thought it might be fun to throw a punch at him just to see how the guys would react. But I decided against it. It could have been one those jokes that misfired," said James.

Choicest charities

I must advise readers of this column that my practice of returning to them unsolicited gifts sent in the misguided impression that they might secure a favourable mention or stem criticism must unfortunately cease. Instead I shall pass them to a deserving charity of my choice.

The machine age takes over...

The East African Safari is billed as "The World's Toughest Event". If the advance route information sent to me by the organisers is anything to go by this year's event is going to be a real car breaker. On European rallies we are familiar with overnight halts during which the drivers manage to snatch valuable hours of rest. But read now what provisions the Safari organisers are making for the cars this year... "Leading cars will reach Nairobi in the late evening on Friday 16th April and enjoy a good night's sleep."

Will drivers found pouring Horlicks into their car's radiator be penalised?

One winner's economics

Insuring racing cars is becoming a big business. Gone are the days when insurance men would drop the phone laughing if you asked them to cover your racer on the track. Ian Bracey, a jolly porky little man with a Wodehousian sense of humour, has seen to that.

Insurance and racers run in the family. He's a second generation racer and broker at Lloyds. Father did much the same thing except that he dealt more conventional forms of insurance and raced around Brooklands. Young Bracey races his Clubmans Ibec and 2-litre sports car around Europe and brokes only motor racing insurance. One suspects that he needs all his infectious Edwardian public school bon homie and humour to convince the Lloyds underwriters that it's a good thing.

"Safer bet than tankers these days," he quips. He insists that the great thing about insurance on racing cars is that "you budget your accidents in advance."

Most of the big teams in F1 insure with him as well as the Formula Atlantic people and stacks of club persons. Last year he wrote around £250,000 worth of business.

Did it work? He forces the smile back again. "Well not really; the underwriting syndicate lost £50,000." Smiling and paying up is something you learn very early on in the insurance business.

Two incidents stand out in his recollections of his last trading year. One was the accident which happened, unbeknown to the car owner, right under the nose of his spectating loss adjuster at Brands. From out of the ruined heap stepped a man who was not insured to drive the car at that meeting.

The other was the story of how the Ferrari Formula One team emerged as uninsurable. Bracey's man was at Maranello all ready to sign up the Ferrari business. Montezemola was keen and hardly needed selling on the idea. Then came the snag.

In order to insure a car it's necessary to cost the various component parts. Uprights, wheels, monocoques — that sort of thing. You can't pay out for a rumpled corner unless you know what it's going to cost to replace the bits.

Montezemola called for the department concerned to provide costings. Long pause. Followed by an even longer pause. Eventually the word came back that nobody had any idea of what things cost. "We just make them up according to instructions. Nobody ever said we should work out what they cost."

Ferrari parts are priceless. Literally. And uninsurable.

BRIAN HENTON— home grown and about to flower

By IAN PHILLIPS

It probably came as a surprise to a number of people that Brian Henton should have been nominated for the top Grovewood Award last week. Like many of the previous winners he'd already proved his driving ability and had "made it" in the accepted sense of the word. Last year, in terms of tangible success, was probably his least successful, but on almost every occasion he raced he showed the sort of ability and determination which appears to be lacking among British drivers these days. A man that puts everything he owns in an effort to be the sole Union Jack waver in the European Formula 2 Championship and does the country proud deserves encouragement and reward. The top Grovewood Award was just reward for his efforts last year.

In receiving the award Henton also proved himself to be a thoroughly competent ambassador for motor sport. His acceptance speech and subsequent radio and TV interviews showed him as being of a rare breed among British drivers — one who can promote himself and the sport in a confident and comprehending manner to the uninitiated. For that alone he needs encouragement.

The rough edges which made Henton a fairly controversial character in his early years are being smoothed out and the uncertainty which lay beneath the brash exterior is evolving into a man of tact and reserved confidence.

We spoke to him last week about the past and also his renewed hopes for the future.

Was winning the top Grovewood Award a surprise to you and what does it mean?

It certainly came as a complete surprise — a very nice one I must admit.

One of the things that has always annoyed me is the people who knocked the Grovewood Awards, although I must admit that I have been critical of them in the past. Now, having won the award and seen just what it means, I've completely changed my mind. The reaction of the national publicity media has been really fantastic. I've done two television programmes, numerous radio programmes and the story made most of the national papers as well as our local ones. I haven't changed my mind just because they're pushing me, they're pushing motor racing as well and that's something that we've all got to work at.

Your best result in 1975 was third at the F2 Silverstone meeting, would you say it was your toughest year?

Yes it was in racing as well as in business.

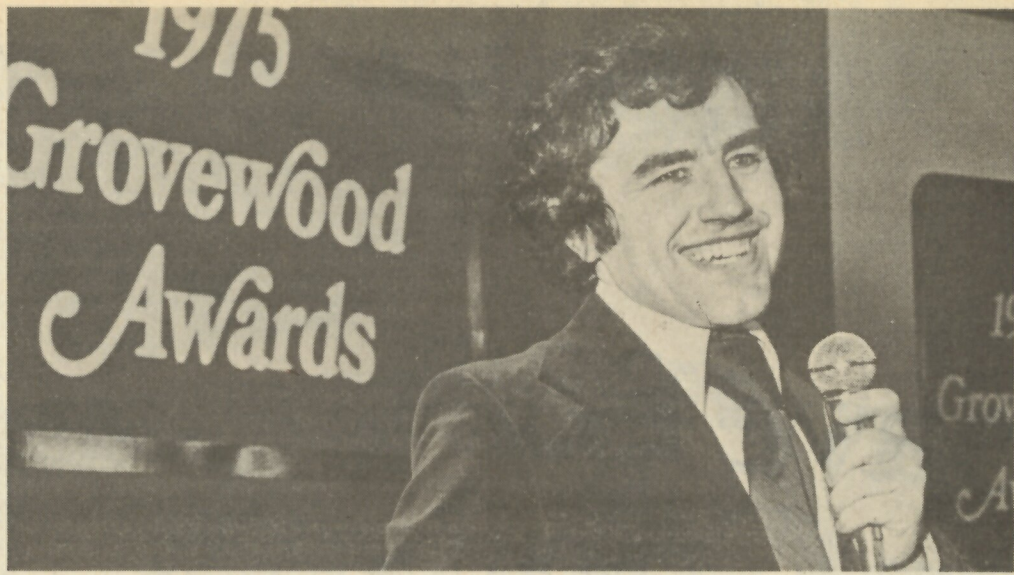
It looked good at the beginning with the possibility of a works March drive, what happened then?

There were rumours that I'd get a drive in the works March F1 and F2 teams, but gradually it transpired that the deal would only be, and I'm very grateful for what it was, the loan of the old works development F2 chassis. Sandro Angeleri arranged £6,000 sponsorship from AGV for me which was paid to March and Max Mosley personally talked Stuart Turner into letting me have a Brian Hart Ford engine, but I had to pay for the rebuilds.

I suppose the reason I wasn't in the works team was the same old story, money. Obviously motor racing is very expensive and even works drives have to be paid for by somebody. March are in the business to make money and they cannot afford to sponsor their own teams. It costs at least £40,000 to run a works car and the money just wasn't there to provide me with a drive.

To run privately as you were, roughly how much did it cost you?

I did it on the bare minimum and that cost me about £2,000 a race.



Brian Henton looking pleased after receiving his Grovewood Award last week

How difficult was it for you to keep going?

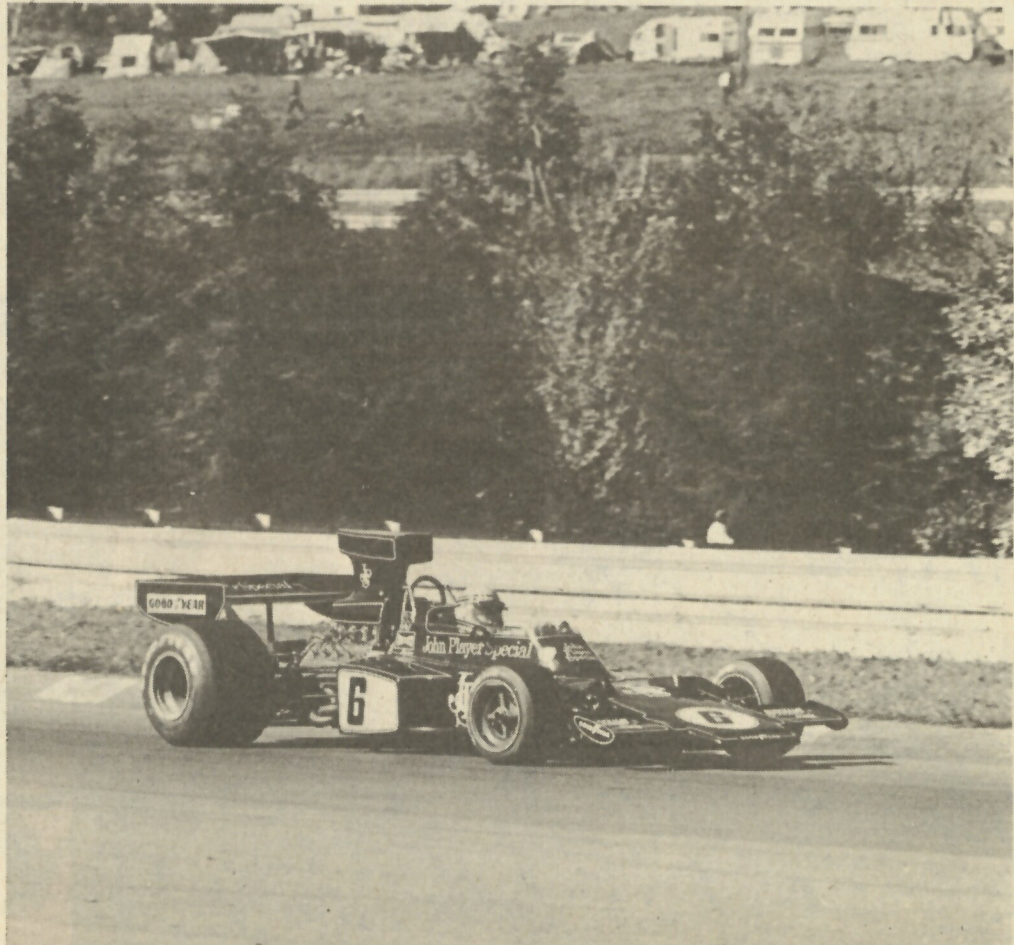
The whole thing was suicidal really. I'd had to get rid of everything I had to keep running and the pressure was really too great to go racing properly. I got into fights and arguments all over the place which just isn't me; but every time something went wrong I could tell within a few pounds just how much it was going to cost me and every pound spent was another nail in the coffin of my F2 career. If it was somebody else's fault I just lost my cool.

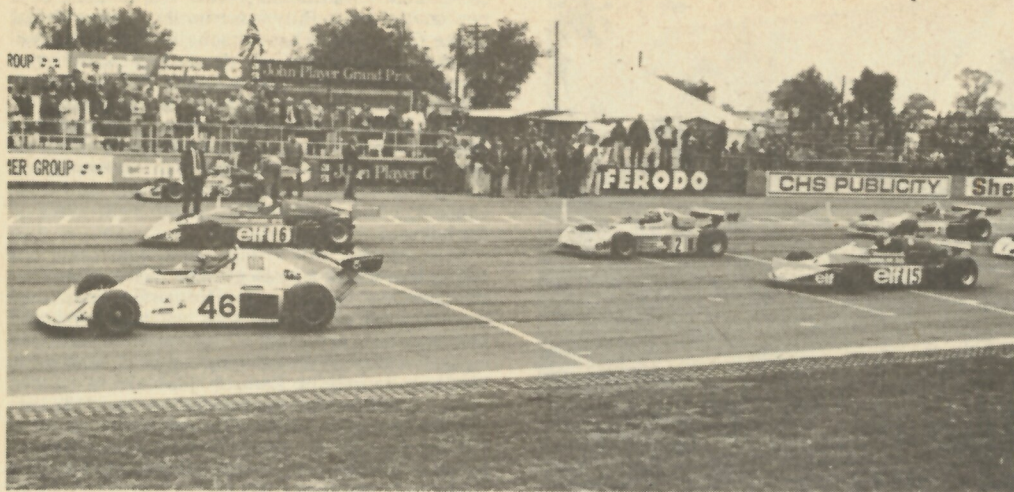
When Harald Ertl came barrelling past me at Mugello without ever looking like getting round the corner and taking me off with him, all I could see was £1,200 of damage to my car — immediately I realised my Formula 2 career was over. I jumped out of the car and smacked him one. When you're running as tight as I was it's a sort of natural reaction. It's just not the right way to go serious motor racing, and I wasn't happy about it, but I had to go racing and that was the only way I could do it.

Your career was saved by Tom Wheatcroft's intervention, how did that come about?

It was all very casual really. I was at a terribly low

Henton in the JPS at Watkins Glen — "I was the wrong person in the wrong team"





A successful start to what promises to be a successful relationship — Henton shoots into the lead at the start of his first race in the Wheatcroft

ebb, both mentally and financially — I'd put everything into racing and borrowed a whole lot more. I desperately wanted to race in Britain at the Silverstone Formula 2 race but for the lack of a few hundred pounds it looked as though I wasn't going to make it. Although Tom comes from nearby I'd never really thought about him — because he'd got Richard Morgan I didn't think he'd be interested. Then one day he popped into the garage and said 'Well lad, I've got an Atlantic chassis you can borrow if it's any good to you.'

Would you class that as the biggest turning point in your career?

Yes, without a doubt. I don't think I realised it at the time, all I wanted to do was get out and race. But seeing the way it turned out it was obviously the most important thing that ever happened to me.

In just two weeks the designer, Mike Pilbeam and mechanic Bryan Davis converted the car into a Formula 2. It was a tremendous effort and for the first time ever I had a team around me, and all working for me. It makes such a difference it's not true. Suddenly the pressure was relieved and I could concentrate on racing.

You were a front runner straight away in F2, what's the standard of competition like?

Formula 2, like almost every other formula, is not as healthy at the moment as it was when there was a bit more money around in the world. With the lack of money every formula, except Formula 1 of course, has lost a bit of its competitiveness. Instead of there being ten or fifteen really competitive people there were only about six in F2 last year. However it looks as if it will be much tougher this year.

Of all the heavily sponsored young drivers from France and Italy you drove against in F2 who do you rate as the best?

It's got to be Jean-Pierre Jabouille even though he seems to have missed out on progressing any further. I admired Jacques Laffite too but he did have a perfect set up.

You have openly said that you did not enjoy your brief experience in Formula 1 with Lotus, why was this?

You must understand that I set myself a goal back in 1971 when I said that I'd be in Formula 1 by 1975. If you say something like that people don't forget it and I certainly didn't. By wheeling and dealing in the intervening years I got myself into the position where I could achieve my dream.

Unfortunately Lotus was just not my team. I was just the wrong person in the wrong team. In retrospect I went into Formula 1 too early in my career. I just wasn't ready for it. It was a complete cock-up but it was really my fault.

When you were in a position like I was, having said I'd be in Formula 1 by 1975 and then Lotus, one of the greatest teams in motor racing history offers you a drive and fulfillment . . . well it's literally a dream come true. I didn't really rush into it though. When I went to see Lotus I already had a March contract in my pocket and I'd tested their car so I knew what was involved. But Lotus was something totally different. I arrived there at 10 am and Peter Warr showed me round the works. I was lost for words. The photos of all their Grand Prix wins and so many people working solely on Formula 1, it just bowled me over. I mean I was used to March, which is probably a smaller company producing cars for almost everything and then I find Lotus is bigger and just working on

Formula 1. I couldn't help being overawed and I signed the contract at 11.30 that night at Peter Warr's house with a neighbour in a dressing gown as witness.

It was more my fault more than Lotus' that it didn't work — I just didn't fit in.

On your way to Formula 1 you drove in all the major recognised 'proving' formulae, F3, Super Vee and Atlantic, which do you consider to be the best way to go?

There's only one formula for any driver who wants to make it and that's Formula 3. For a start the statistics prove it. No other formula can claim to have produced as many people who've gone on to bigger and better things. Fighting against all the best young people in Europe in F3 is great experience and really it cannot be found anywhere else. Nowadays the art of driving round a corner is less important than setting up the car and in Formula 3 you learn all about tyres, wings, gear ratios and so on as well as having the right sort of racing.

Do you hold any strong views on racing safety?

Obviously the last thing I want to do is get hurt, but I'll race anywhere including Spa. My style appreciates long fast corners and to me there was nothing more challenging than the old Woodcote corner at Silverstone.

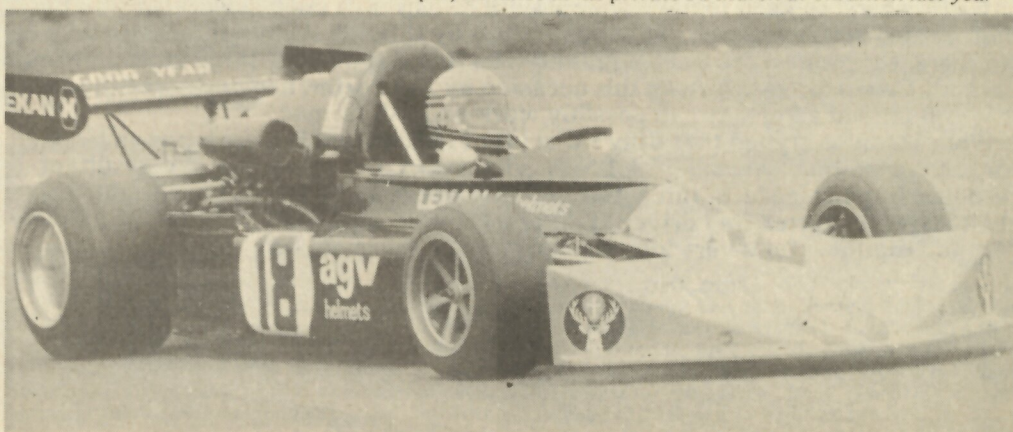
I've sampled most types of Armco and catch fencing and they all seem to work reasonably although they are all pretty hard. I think catch fencing is the best of all evils but you must remember that the best safety device known is a thirty acre field . . .

But aren't we all trying to make racing more attractive?

Yes, the only way it's going to survive is by making it more attractive to the general public and the enthusiast alike. Every driver, whether he's a novice in Formula Ford or Emerson Fittipaldi, must work at making the public more aware of motor racing. Most of them seem to think that motor racing owes them a living and they've got to realise that it should be the other way round. Certainly drivers in higher formulae must remember that the man who pays to come through the gate is the man that also pays for his house, family and food. He needs his money to keep living and if we don't provide the right entertainment he's not going to waste that money.

One of the most enlightening things to me was

Henton really shot to prominence with his performance in his private F2 March at Thruxton last year



the John Player Motor Cycle Grand Prix and seeing the actual rapport between the riders and the spectators — even people like Barry Sheene and Mick Grant were talking openly to complete strangers and were totally involved with the spectators, far more so than any driver I've ever seen at a motor racing Grand Prix.

You've been tagged the Mohammad Ali of motor racing does it worry you?

The only problem about making predictions in motor racing is that there are too many factors involved to have much chance of being right . . . boxing's answer to Brian Henton has a much easier task and better chance of being right!

Seriously though, I started it off just to gain publicity and it certainly worked although I must admit that initially it gave me a bad image with fellow competitors. Making a prediction is good psychologically though — it spurs you on even more to make sure it comes true.

How do you rate your chances of success in Formula 2 with Tom Wheatcroft this year?

I know we'll be okay because Tom's told me so — he's said that the car will be 10% better than anybody else's; the engine will be 5% better than anybody else's; and I'll be 13% worse than the other drivers so we should be 2% better off all round than anybody else!

Really though 1976 will be one of the hardest years that Formula 2 has seen with six different engine manufacturers competing and even now some 50 cars are being readied for the Formula. It's going to be hard to qualify let alone win.

The Wheatcroft Team is fantastic. Tom himself is unique and has personally put more into motor racing over the last 20 years than any man I know or have heard of. We've got a fantastic rapport with the designer Mike Pilbeam and of all the cars I have driven I can honestly say that last year's Wheatcroft was one of the nicest I've ever sat in and this year's will be even better. Also our mechanic Bryan Davis, who used to work on the cars in the Collection, is the most thorough assembler of cars I've ever seen.

The other great thing is team spirit — it's fantastic. Everything is done as a team and all suggestions and ideas are sifted through and discussed. It works perfectly as a team.

The only slight worry I've got is that with the Donington Circuit about to open and the cost of an F2 season being about £80,000 it seems rather a high burden in terms of finance for one man to carry. Tom's given me so much already that I'd like to find a sponsor for the team to spread the burden slightly.

Will you be doing Atlantic as well?

It's quite possible that we will but it depends on clashing commitments and finance.

I'm quite happy to drive in Atlantic. I've always had a thing about cars and I don't care if it's just a push chair with an engine just as long as I can get out there and drive it on the limit of its adhesion. One thing I'd like to do in the future is have a go at rallying.

How do you see your career progressing from now?

I'd personally like to be with Tom until the end of my career and I would dearly love Wheatcroft Racing to get the right financial backing for a concentrated solo, wholly British effort to win the world championship. I'm sure we can do it.

It's strange how experience changes your ideas. When I started Formula 1 was the be all and end all and I was going to get there and drive anything. After seeing the rest of the world I've become much more patriotic. I still want to beat the best in the world but I want it to be an all British effort. However, I'm delighted that to be part of Wheatcroft Racing I've got the best chance of achieving that aim if we get the right backing.



After a demoralisingly quick start Billy Coleman's and Jim Porter's win was never in doubt.

GALWAY RALLY

Coleman crushes the Carreras

By RICHARD ST-JOHN YOUNG Photos by MARTIN HOLMES

The spectators lining Galway's Eyre Square on Sunday afternoon weren't surprised when Billy Coleman's Escort drove on to the ramp at the end of the Henley Forklift Galways International Rally. You see, they all knew, even before the start, that Billy was going to win.

It would have been unthinkable for anybody but Billy to have taken the premier award. He was cheered when he left the start on Friday night, and whenever the Thomas Motors Escort 2 stopped anywhere, it was immediately besieged by scores of well wishers, all keen to have a word with Millstreet's most celebrated son. Even Billy himself seemed remarkably unperturbed by this, his second International win, but there were quite a few people around who found the whole thing quite amazing. For Billy Coleman, co-driven on this occasion by Jim Porter, had destroyed the myth that nothing but a Porsche can possibly work on Irish tarmac.

While it can be argued that Billy's Circuit of Ireland win last year was an inspired "one off," or that Warmbold's BMW victory in Donegal was the result of a particularly good pace nothing job, on this occasion, Billy Coleman, aided and abetted by Jim Porter, had driven the Porsche challenge, the strongest seen on any Irish International for a very long time, right into the ground.

Right from the start, the Escort, the car driven by Roger Clark on the Monte, had run away from all pursuers, and as the faster Porsches fell by the wayside one by one, Billy just kept on going, with a smile on his face, and the cheers of his countless fans always there.

But before the start it had looked like anybody's rally. Twelve Porsche Carreras appeared on the

entry list. Ten started, the absentees being Dan Grewer, who should have driven Piggy Thompson's car, but broke the crankshaft on the way to the start, and Phil Coulter, who had to go to America to attend to some musical business. Of those ten Carreras, only three finished, the rest departed during the course of the event, most of them dramatically.

Leader of the Porsche contingent, at number one was Dessie McCartney with the ex-Gierowski (de Stefano) "batmobile," now resplendent in a new coat of paint. Billy was running at two, ahead of the Chequered Flag Porsche of Cahal Curley/Austin Frazer. An empty slot at four marked the non-appearance of Chris Sclater's Toyota Celica, although co-driver Martin Holmes was present to keep an eye on trends. The number five spot was kept open in anticipation of an unknown star who never appeared, but at six came Brian Evans, his Carrera fresh from a Stuttgart rebuild and now churning out a good 270 bhp. John Brown was in the hot seat.

At seven came Brian Nelson, with Malcolm Neill telling him which way to go. The Nelson Carrera, the latest car to appear on the Irish scene, is an ex-racer, and, as is usual with Nelson's cars, was immaculately prepared. There was no number eight, but David Agnew weighed in at nine with his recently rebuilt Porsche just ahead of the second non-Porsche to appear at the top of the list, the Haynes of Maidstone Escort MK 2 of John Taylor, assisted by John Horton, whose knowledge of rubber compounds almost equals Dan Grewers! (continued p.94)

Two more Porsches came next, Manxman Dennis Easthope at 11, and Jan Churchill/Rupert Saunders at 14.

On paper, before the event got under way, it looked like being a close affair. Coleman was favourite of course, but there was so much rapid Stuttgart machinery about that surely, one of them must work. Things got under way in earnest at 17.00 on Friday, when the field took off to tackle eight slippery sections in darkness. Roads were, for the most part, damp, but generally conditions were good.

Right from the start of the first stage, the six miles at Peterswell, Coleman showed that he meant business, taking fastest time from Evans by 19 secs, with Nelson a further second in arrears. He did it again on the next test, 6.3 miles of Chevy Chase, this time with Churchill next man up, and Harold Morley's Carrera third.

At the first service, which followed, Curley changed his wide front tyres for something a little narrower, while Taylor made frantic efforts to find some brakes, which had vanished almost at the beginning. McCartney, too, was in trouble with a misfire. David Agnew was seen to be playing round with rear suspension settings, but seemed more concerned about a boiled onion he had eaten at lunchtime. . . . Coleman extended his lead further on S3, Thoorballylee, with Churchill again in pursuit, and Curley benefiting from the change of tyres, third fastest. It was close, but the Escort seemed to have a definite advantage, in spite of Billy's protests that he was just getting used to the car.

Already there were dramas. Evans crunched one rear corner of the Porsche on the second test, while both he and Nelson occasionally had off-song engines.

Group One Escort driver John Bridges had the doubtful distinction of being the first man to roll, falling gently over on the first section, but continuing, albeit without a windscreen, while Fred Patterson's BMW sounded rough and was laying a trail of petrol from a loose fuel union.

The third and fourth stages provided a lot more action, Agnew had a puncture on S3, while on S4, the 13-mile at Ballybuck, Churchill banged the back of the Porsche quite badly, breaking the engine mountings, but continuing with the sump guard holding everything in place, and enough damage done elsewhere to cause him serious problems later in the event. Geoff Crabtree's Carrera joined the ranks of the misfiring Porsches, and had clutch problems as well, while David Lindsay's smart Escort 2 suffered the same brake problems as Taylor's car.

Galway's Friday sections have traditionally caused a great deal of mechanical mayhem, and this year was no exception. The square in the little town of Gort, which was being used as a service park, the cars visiting the town after every couple of stages, was the scene of much frantic activity as the night progressed. Ballybuck saw Curley get into the groove with a time eight seconds faster than Coleman, with Morley third, 13 seconds in arrears. Back at Peterswell again, Billy was back in front, ahead of Curley and McCartney who had cured his misfire and changed tyres just for good measure. It was however all in vain for Dessie, when on the next section, Chevy Chase 2, the oil cooler split, and the engine pumped 2½ gallons of nice hot gooey lubricant into the spare wheel compartment. Exit Dessie and Carrera No 1 . . .

And so it went on. Curley was fastest on SS 6, with Coleman just one second in arrears, while Nelson got it all together again to emerge third

fastest. Evans, Taylor and Morley made up the top six.

Taylor was not having the happiest of nights, trying to cope with a brakeless Escort and his first taste of tarmac rallying, Irish style, all at the same time; but it was slowly coming right, and John Horton was learning to relax.

Neither was it the best of nights for Cork husband and wife crew Mick and Anne O'Connell, whose Mk 1 Escort was putting up some very rapid times, and getting into the top half dozen on occasions. Alternator failure dropped them down the field when the lights went out, and left them with a long haul back up from 24th place to attempt on Saturday.

Departures at around this time included the Escorts of Jeremiah Buckley, Billy's cousin, and Brendan Fagan, but as others fell by the wayside, Billy Coleman kept up the pressure, arriving back in Galway for the overnight halt almost three minutes clear of Nelson, whose consistency had earned him second place. Curley was third, seven seconds behind, with Evans, Morley and Taylor completing the top half dozen.

In Group One, the interest was centred on a three-cornered fight between Ronnie McCartney/Derek Smyth with their Lloyds of Stafford Escort RS2000, the similar car of Sean and Yvonne Campbell, and Phillip McCartan/Aidan Rice with their Mk 1 version, the car which won the Tour of Britain in the hands of Tony Pond. At the end of the night, Ronnie was ahead with Campbell second, and McCartan third, but it was all very close.

The word on Friday was that the Saturday stages would be rough, but few people realised just how rough. For those who had the time to look, the scenery was spectacular, but the bumpy corrugated tarmac of Connemara gave most people plenty to think about without bothering about the view.

O'Connell set off to regain some of his lost places with a vengeance, and took time off everybody on the first stage of the day, at Moycullen, beating Coleman over the 9 miles by five seconds. It was Taylor's turn to shine on the aptly named Porridgetown, while Coleman, Curley and Evans all tied for second fastest two seconds down. But it was here that the roughness began to show, and Evans came off the stage with the engine cover missing from the Porsche, the whole lot having fallen off after a particularly severe landing. A short stage at Glann saw Billy set another fastest time, and then it was on to the stage which did all the damage. Oughterard, 15 miles of humps, most of them with little kinks in the middle, strange cambers, the occasional bridge, and a strong crosswind combined to do a lot of damage.

David Lindsay's Mk 2 Escort departed here with the rear suspension torn out. Morley had an argument with a bridge parapet and did the side of the Porsche a lot of no good. He took no further part in proceedings. Hugh O'Brien's ex-Derek



Possibly somewhat surprised – Ken Shields inherited second place in this rally of attrition.

Boyd Escort said goodbye to its shell once and for all after a spectacular 80 mph cartwheel, and no sooner had he climbed out of the wreckage than Joe Greenan's Gp 1 BMW arrived to join him.

Curley was fastest here, with Coleman, Evans and Nelson in hot pursuit, Taylor, with a return to braking bothers, ran out of road and lost six minutes getting back on, which left him with a lot of catching up to do, a task he set to with a will, taking third fastest on the next stage, along with Curley and Easthope. Coleman and Evans were now in front.

Ronnie McCartney, who had done five miles of Oughterard on a flat tyre, fell off briefly on this one, losing the Group One lead to McCartan. Campbell, broke both rear shock absorbers off, and was forced to carry on with a set of standard units which did not work at all well on the very rough surfaces.

Meanwhile as one bumpy mountain-type stage followed another, more problems began to appear. Nelson lost his engine cover in the same manner as Evans, but with it went the gearbox oil cooler, and, shortly afterwards, all the gearbox oil as well. But in spite of doing two stages with a virtually

dry gearbox, the Porsche stood up to the ordeal, although following crews found themselves working very hard to stay on the island with a slippery carpet to deal with.

The run up to the lunch halt at Clifden was notable for a number of things, most notable of which was the progress of Jan Churchill, who had managed to secure the Porsche engine with the bit from a pneumatic drill, reputedly purchased from an old woman who just happened to have one handy. The yellow Porsche was having a real go, as was Manxman Ian Corkill, whose Mk 2 Escort was beginning to appear regularly in the top six. John and Robin Lyons retired their Escort RS in the bog just before lunch, while Bernard Banning went out with a bent rack on his Avenger.

But the feature of the morning was the departure of Cahal Curley. After a series of punctures, all on the near side rear corner of the car, the driveshaft cried "enough," and let go, giving "CB" a minor "off," though with little damage to the car.

So, the strongest potential Porsche challenge was ended, just as it was starting to make its presence felt.

At the lunch halt in Clifden, near the spot where

Group One honours went to Ronnie McCartney with the newly prepared Lloyds of Stafford RS2000. It was another copybook performance from Ronnie.



Alcock and Brown invented the Irish Tourist Board, much frantic work was in progress. Coleman's merrie men changed the halfshafts on the Escort, just as a precaution, while Ronnie McCartney changed to some taller tyres, partly in the interests of speed, and partly to help keep the car off the ground. The Lloyds car had suffered five punctures during the morning, and the ever-present McCartan was looking like a possible GP1 winner.

After the rigours of the morning, several new faces had appeared on the leader board... Ken Shields and Peter Lyster, whose Carrera was one of the neatest and least spectacular to watch, had climbed quietly up to fifth place behind Coleman, Nelson, Evans and Agnew. Corkill was in sixth having a very spectacular drive, while the O'Connell family had pulled back to eighth position behind Ronnie McCartney. McCartan and Campbell completed the top ten, while Taylor, in eleventh place was making a strong impression

eaten a rock, but a broken rocker was diagnosed, and the blue Carrera was led away on the end of a rope to sit in disgrace in parc ferme.

Other departures around this time included Sean Campbell, who slid off the infamous 15-miler, and got stuck, while Brian Kingsland's 3-litre Capri had planted itself in the bog a couple of stages earlier. At the end of the day, Coleman's lead over the new second man, Agnew was almost ten minutes, while Shields had quietly got to within 18 secs of the other Porsche.

Corkill, who was driving like a demon, three wheeling the Escort about the place and generally driving the crowds mad, had made it to fourth, while fellow Manxman Dennis Easthope was trying to keep a very determined Mick O'Connell at bay in fifth. Taylor had progressed to seventh ahead of the Group One battle between McCartney and McCartan, while a new arrival in the top ten was the Porsche Carrera of Geoff Crabtree, which was still suffering from clutch bothers,

although its Friday night misfire had been cured.

Sunday, although sunny, featured wet roads, and the first couple of stages, Grange and Abbert, were very slippery indeed. Grange claimed Corkill, who managed a "straight on at T" and almost parked in a river. The Escort was undamaged, but it was too well embedded in the mud to be driven out and that was that.

Coleman started the Sunday run intent on getting to the finish, and was quite happy to motor relatively gently. But Taylor and O'Connell were at it hammer and tongs, while Agnew and Shields also had a dispute going over second place. But once more, disasters stepped in to resolve things. On the third stage of the day, Hillswood, O'Connell went off in a big way, damaging the Escort badly, against a rather solid school. Anne O'Connell broke her leg in the accident, and there was a mild disruption while an ambulance was summoned to take her to hospital. A sad end to a fine drive which could well have netted the popular pair third place.

Two stages later, it was Agnew's turn, the Porsche wiping a substantial wall, and doing considerable damage to the offside rear corner. Although he tried to drive on, the car only managed to travel about a mile before expiring completely and handing second place to Shields, who, despite his unspectacular progress, was going consistently quickly.

Attention then focused on Taylor, two minutes behind Shields, and taking time off him all the way. In the closing stages, he whittled the gap down to just over a minute, but it was just too much, and while Coleman cruised home to a victory for Ford, Shields, in the best of the three surviving Carreras, made it to second place, 8m 20s behind, to salvage some honour for Porsche. Taylor galloped home third, still with uncertain brakes, 1m 6s behind.

Easthope's smooth performance in the Carrera netted him fourth place ahead of Group One winner McCartney, while Crabtree's Carrera eventually made it to sixth place...

Galway 1976 was every bit as tough as its predecessors, and must surely go down in history as the event on which the Porsches were routed.

Galway International Rally Overall Results

1. B. Coleman/J. Porter (Ford Escort RS1800) 281m 48s
2. K. Shields/P. Lyster (Porsche Carrera) 290.08
3. J. Taylor/J. Horton (Ford Escort RS1800) 291.14
4. D. Easthope/M. Castle (Porsche Carrera) 292.52
5. R. McCartney/D. Smyth (Ford Escort RS2000) 298.59
6. G. Crabtree/D. Marston (Porsche Carrera) 303.51; 7. R. Smith/G. Janger (Triumph Dolomite Sprint) 306.28; 8. C. Gunn/H. McEvoy (Ford Escort RS2000) 309.33

Group one: 1. McCartney/Smyth (Escort RS2000); 2. Smyth/Jangster (Triumph Dolomite Sprint); 3. Gunne/McEvoy (Escort 2000)



After persistent brake problems, John Taylor soldiered through to 3rd position — setting very respectable tarmac times on later stages.

on those in front.

The afternoon stages were the morning ones run in the reverse direction, and here, while Coleman maintained his three minute advantage over the pursuing hordes, Evans really began to pile on the coals, overtaking Nelson for second over the next two stages. Churchill, too, was going very well, and moving back up, getting within five seconds of Coleman over the infamous Sky Road just after lunch. Regrettably, his efforts were short-lived, however, for after three more stages, the yellow Porsche was out. Damage to the exhaust system the previous night meant that the engine was blowing flame out through the carburetors on the overrun, and eventually things got so hot that the air filter, and the carburettor intakes themselves melted, so Jan came to a reluctant halt.

Evans was the next to go, spinning the Porsche into the scenery on that infamous 15 miler, and breaking the oil tank among other things. His service crew had earlier scoured Clifden to buy half a dozen tea strainers which were then wired over the air intakes, there being a very real danger that the engine might swallow a stone or two with the engine cover missing.

As the rally headed back towards Galway, the Group One threesome began to make their presence felt, appearing in the top half dozen quite regularly on stages. The O'Connells, too, were pressing on, getting in among the Porsches on almost every stage and for almost the first time since the start, John Taylor was smiling. After a fluid change, and some hard work by ace "wrench" Ricky Bell, his brakes were more or less working and he started taking time off everybody just to prove it.

On the final stage of the day, Moycullen, the Porsche challenge for an outright win spluttered to a complete halt when Nelson's car staggered through, sounding very sick, to retire at the finish. There were theories that, as Nelson's crew had not done the Evans tea strainer trick, the engine had

- SS1 Peterswell 6.0m:** 1. Coleman/Porter 386; 2. Evans/Brown 405; 3. Nelson/Neill 406; 4. Morley/Moore 408; 5. O'Connell/O'Connell 410.
- SS2 Chevy Chase 6.3m:** 1. Coleman/Porter 234; 2. Churchill/Saunders 248; 3. Morley/Moore 255; 4. Evans/Brown 258; 5. Nelson/Neill 258.
- SS3 Theorballylee 6.4m:** 1. Coleman/Porter 376; 2. Churchill/Saunders 384; 3. Curley/Frazer 387; 4. McCartney/Harryman 390; 5. Morley/Moore 393.
- SS4 13.2m:** 1. Curley/Frazer 844; 2. Coleman/Porter 852; 3. Morley/Moore 865; 4. Nelson/Neill 1870; 5. McCartney/Harryman 881.
- SS5 Peterswell 6.0m:** 1. Coleman/Porter 390; 2. Curley/Frazer 396; 3. McCartney/Harryman 407; 4. Evans/Brown, Morley/Moore 412.
- SS6 Chevy Chase 6.3m:** 1. Coleman/Porter 358; 2. McCartney/Harryman 359; 3. Evans/Brown 369; 4. Curley/Frazer 375; 5. Taylor/Horton 378.
- SS7 Theorballylee 6.4m:** 1. McCartney/Harryman 383; 2. Evans/Brown 393; 3. Nelson/Neill 400; 4. Taylor/Horton 401; 5. Agnew/Harkness 402.
- SS8 Ballybuck 13.2m:** 1. Coleman/Porter 839; 2. Evans/Brown 863; 3. Nelson/Neill 867; 4. Curley/Frazer 881; 5. Taylor/Horton 887.
- SS9 Moycullen 9.4m:** 1. O'Connell/O'Connell 573; 2. Coleman/Porter 578; 3. Evans/Brown 579; 4. Nelson/Neill 596; 5. Agnew/Harkness 583.
- SS10 Porridgetown 5.7m:** 1. Taylor/Horton 348; =2. Coleman/Porter, Curley/Frazer, Evans/Brown 350; 5. Lindsay/Sandford 359.
- SS11 Glann 5.3m:** 1. Curley/Frazer 294; 2. Taylor/Horton 295; 3. Coleman/Porter 299; 4. Nelson/Neill 300; 5. O'Connell/O'Connell 300.
- SS12 Oughterard 15.4m:** 1. Curley/Frazer 846; 2. Coleman/Porter 858; 3. Evans/Brown 872; 4. Nelson/Neill 873; 5. Churchill/Saunders 875.
- SS13 Camus Hill 4.9m:** 1. Coleman/Porter 309; 2. Evans/Brown 313; =3. Curley/Frazer, Taylor/Horton, Easthope/Castle 319.
- SS14 Derry Rush 5.9m:** 1. Churchill/Saunders 346; 2. Coleman/Porter 350; 3. Evans/Brown 351; 4. Nelson/Neill 352; =5. Taylor/Horton, Easthope/Castle 355.
- SS15 Cashel 4.7m:** 1. Coleman/Porter 272; 2. Nelson/Neill 277; 3. Churchill/Saunders 283; 4. Taylor/Horton 286; 5. Agnew/Harkness 287.
- SS16 Toombeola 5.5m:** 1. Churchill/Saunders 311; 2. Evans/Brown 318; =3. Nelson/Neill, Taylor/Horton 320; 5. Colman/Porter 324.
- SS17 Sky Road 8.0m:** 1. Coleman/Porter 481; 2. Churchill/Saunders 486; 3. O'Connell/O'Connell 491; 4. Evans/Brown 495; 5. Nelson/Neill 496.
- SS18 Ky Road 8.0m:** 1. Coleman/Porter 476; 2. Churchill/Saunders 478; 3. Evans/Brown 479; 4. O'Connell/O'Connell 482; 5. Taylor/Horton 483.
- SS19 Toombeola 5.5m:** 1. Evans/Brown 310; 2. Taylor/Horton 315; =3. Coleman/Porter, Churchill/Saunders 318; =5. Nelson/Neill, O'Connell/O'Connell 321.

SS20 Cashel 4.7m: 1. Coleman/Porter 266; 2. Nelson/Neill 271; =3. Evans/Brown, Taylor/Horton 276; 5. O'Connell/O'Connell 280.

SS21 Derry Rush 5.9m: 1. Evans/Brown 324; 2. O'Connell/O'Connell 328; 3. Nelson/Neill 329; 4. Coleman/Porter 330; 5. Easthope/Castle 335.

SS22 Camus Hill 4.9m: 1. Coleman/Porter 314; 2. Taylor/Horton 320; =3. O'Connell/O'Connell, Campbell/Campbell 326; 5. Nelson/Neill 329.

SS23 Oughterard 15.4m: 1. Coleman/Porter 852; 2. McCarten/Rice 878; 3. O'Connell/O'Connell 882; 4. Taylor/Horton 883; 5. Nelson/Neill 886.

SS24 Glann 5.3m: 1. Coleman/Porter 284; 2. Taylor/Horton 289; 3. O'Connell/O'Connell 292; 4. McCarten/Rice 297; 5. Easthope/Castle 298.

SS25 Porridgetown 5.7m: 1. Coleman/Porter 325; 2. Taylor/Horton 326; 3. Easthope/Castle 327; =4. Agnew/Harkness, Corkill/Saville 335.

SS26 Moycullen 9.4m: 1. Taylor/Horton 542; 2. Coleman/Porter 543; 3. Easthope/Castle 548; 4. O'Connell/O'Connell 553; 5. Agnew/Harkness 559.

SS27 Grange 4.7m: 1. O'Connell/O'Connell 382; 2. Taylor/Horton 387; 3. Agnew/Harkness 388; 4. Shields/Lyster 391; 5. Easthope/Castle 395.

SS28 Abbert 4.5m: 1. Agnew/Harkness 308; 2. O'Connell/O'Connell 309; 3. Easthope/Castle 314; 4. Shields/Lyster 315; 5. Taylor/Horton 319.

SS29 Hillswood 7.8m: 1. Taylor/Horton 437; =2. Easthope/Castle, Shields/Lyster 446; 4. Agnew/Harkness 452; 5. McCartney/Smith 458.

SS30 Strawberry Hill 10.35m: 1. Taylor/Horton 647; 2. Agnew/Harkness 659; 3. Shields/Lyster 660; 4. Coleman/Porter 668; 5. Easthope/Castle 672.

SS31 Garden Field 7.5m: 1. Taylor/Horton 432; 2. Shields/Lyster 439; =3. Coleman/Porter, Easthope/Castle, McCartney/Smith 452.

SS32 Kibbenham 7.2m: 1. Taylor/Horton 443; 2. Shields/Lyster 449; 3. Easthope/Castle 451; 4. Coleman/Porter 460; 5. Crabtree/Marston 461.

SS33 Grange 4.7m: 1. Taylor/Horton 377; 2. Shields/Lyster 382; 3. Easthope/Castle 385; 4. Crabtree/Marston 389; 5. Coleman/Porter 391.

SS34 Abbert 4.5m: 1. Easthope/Castle 301; 2. Taylor/Horton 302; 3. Shields/Lyster 303; 4. Crabtree/Marston 307; 5. McCartney/Smith 315.

SS35 Hillswood 7.8m: 1. Taylor/Horton 433; 2. Easthope/Castle 444; 3. Coleman/Porter 462; 4. Crawford/Speers 473; 5. McCartney/Smith 315.

SS36 Strawberry Hill 10.35m: 1. Taylor/Horton 652; 2. Shields/Lyster 665; 3. Easthope/Castle 667; 4. Coleman/Porter 682; 5. Crawford/Speers 707.

SS37 Garden Field 7.5m: 1. Taylor/Horton 434; 2. Shields/Lyster 438; 3. Easthope/Castle 454; 4. Coleman/Porter 458; 5. Crabtree/Marston 462.

SS38 Kibbenham 7.2m: 1. Shields/Lyster 455; 2. Taylor/Horton 457; 3. Easthope/Castle 472; 4. Coleman/Porter 476; 5. Crabtree/Marston 482.



In conditions like this, Blomqvist is simply the best; with the new 220 bhp Saab 99 he was crushingly dominant.

BOUCLES de SPA

Stig's writing on the wall

Story and photographs by HUGH BISHOP

Stig Blomqvist appeared for the first time last weekend in the long awaited Saab 99 EMS fitted with Saab's own 2-litre 16-valve engine on fuel injection which already gives 220 bhp. Blomqvist absolutely trounced the opposition on the Boucles de Spa, easily holding on to a six-minute lead over the Dealer Team Opel Holland Kadett of Lars Carlsson on the ice-bound tracks in the Liege Province of Belgium.

With no less than three European championship events in the same weekend, it was perhaps surprising that the Boucles de Spa-Monopole attracted such a good and varied entry on their first year in the ECR with 50% of the 160-car entry coming from outside Belgium. Home crews were headed by the Boreham prepared Escort Mk 2 of Gilbert Stapelaere/"Vaillant"; their car having a further engine hurriedly fitted after the original unit failed while testing on the Wednesday before the start. Belgians Rene Trico/Marcel Collin appeared in the Opel Euro Handler Kadett of Rohrl, while "Didi"/Andre Pauly had their usual Fiat 124 Abarth. The Swedish attack was spearheaded, of course, by the twin-cam Saab 99 of Stig Blomqvist/Hans Sylvan, backed by a Toyota Celica in the hands of Bengt Lundstrom/Fergus Sager and Tony Hardenclou/Hans Britt in his standard Escort RS.

British liaison was handled by Henri Inurrieta who had managed to persuade the Chequered Flag concern to send out their much-improved Lancia Stratos for Tony Pond and Dave Richards to drive, while Henri and Martin "Wilber" Whale took over their hardworking group one Escort. Tony Maslen/David Booth were out again in the 1800 cc Escort RS1600 along with four other

assorted British crews.

From Holland came entries for the ex-patriot Swede Lars Carlsson and Bob de Jong in the Opel Dealer Team Holland Kadett, which was still using the cross-flow engine that they campaigned with such success in the Ascona last year, and the Leyland Benelux entered Dolomite Sprint for Wim Luybregts and Bruno Van Traa. From Austria came just the singleton entry of Franz Wittmann/Gerhard Kalnay in the Bosch Racing Team Vienna — BMW 2002; the desirable ex-Warbold 16-valve Schnitzer car. A very strong German team (especially when you consider that their own Marktrechwitz rally was on at the same time) was headed by the Deutsche Toyota entered Celica 1600 of Klaus Fritzinger/Dieter Bretz; Horst Rack/Helmut Kohler in the ex-Waldegard Safari Porsche Carrera (group four) and Peter Brink/Erhard Ricken in a Porsche Carrera RS. A lonely Alpine A110 Bis was brought from France by Maurice Nusbaumer.

The format of the rally had changed little from last year, with six tours to be tackled during the two nights of the rally, each tour consisting of five special stages and some very tight road sections, all based on the town of Spa. The snow which had fallen a week before the event was well rutted by crews receiving and even better polished, so that by the start at 8.00 pm on the Friday the roads round Spa were absolutely treacherous. Added to this was the ban on studs for this year's event, so the scene was set for a hair-raising event, with the choice of tyre being of paramount importance. Indeed, during the early stages of the event Stapelaere was seen to be changing tyres every few minutes to try to find some more adhesion

Reliability at last for the Chequered Flag Stratos; but incredibly slippery conditions, wrong tyres, two gentle offs and lack of a spare nose cone led to retirement



from his Michelins, but still he was caught twice by Stig who had soon changed over to his 'bicycle tyres'—Dunlop M & S Mk. 2 595 x 15, and when lying 10th after just three stages Stapelaere decided to save his car for another event. The English crews were caught with the wrong tyres, Tony Pond having totally undesirable Pirellis on his car and while lying third, put the Stratos into a snow bank on the last stage of the first lap, dropping 3 mins and to 15th position. Inurrieta and Whale also had the wrong tyres, a telex to their service crew to bring the narrow Dunlops having gone astray, and they were stuck with 185 x 13 Firestone Sherpas which were proving far too wide, particularly as this was Henri's first real experience of driving on snow and ice.

The first night consisted only of two laps but included some very long and very tight road sections, with quite tricky navigation with at least two secret controls being included. These led to the downfall of Fritzinger's Toyota collecting a wrong approach to a passage control and exclusion.

By the end of the first night Stig held a 3½ min. lead on Lars Carlsson, who was by now on very narrow Pirellis, with Wittmann lying third, as he had been using chains on the stages where the snow was lying deeper — as on the stage at Francorchamps where Pond had slid off the first lap. Much to the disgust of his co-driver, Peter Bring, who was up in 4th place at this time decided to retire, having had enough of the incredibly slippery conditions. Horst Rack, who drove the whole rally completely without service, was lying fourth ahead of "Didi" and Tony Pond, who was really moving with the gripless Chequered Flag Stratos, which had not missed a beat. Nusbaumer was forced to retire his Alpine with no starter motor function. Inurrieta now led the remaining British crews in 19th position just ahead of Maslen, both having had some gigantic moments, including a trip through two fences for Maslen.

The second and final night was simply four loops of the five stages though the road sections were still kept very tight indeed, and this was the eventual downfall of a flying Pond, who, coming to the very last road section which comes into Spa via an infamous ford, was caught out by a junction which had changed from wet to ice since the first lap. The tail slid into the bank spinning the nose round and gently nudging the trees. This was sufficient just to remove the lights from the nose-cone and damage the radiator, and although it would have been easy to replace the rad, they had no spare nose and hence no lights, forcing them to retire after a stirring return to third position. But even before this, Henri Inurrieta had fallen by the wayside, discovering that the rear-axle had completely cracked in two just before the second stage on the second lap. To the amazement of the locals, Henri and Wilber put the axle in splints (leaf-springs), winched the two halves of the casing together and proceeded to drive back to their hotel, so forfeiting their third place in group one.

Stig Blomqvist continued to hold off Lars Carlsson to give the Saab 99 its first ever outright victory on its first outing with the new engine; so all bodes well for when the car is likely to appear on WCR events before the end of the year. Despite the chains on his Pirellis, Franz Wittmann could never get near Carlsson, who was really trying, while the Swedes Bengt Lundstrom and Fergus Sager had worked the big Toyota from 7th after the first leg up into 4th place ahead of "Didi's" 124 Spyder (also sporting chains), and the leading group one car, the Sunbeam Avenger of Jean-Louis Goblet and Alain Lopes. Rack had dropped back to 7th ahead of the incredible little Honda Civic of Chavan-Naveau, Trico having broken a throttle cable and Plas the transmission on his R.176. Wim Luybregts got the Dolomite into 9th despite dramas with the shock-absorbers. A shattered Tony Maslen finished a very creditable 14th, despite his spins; the only other British finisher being Stuart Rowe who was 46th in his group one BMW 2002 Ti.

BOUCLES DE SPA — MONOPOLE Overall Results

1. Stig Blomqvist/Hans Sylvan (Saab 99EMS) 9922.
2. Lars Carlsson/Bob de Jong (Opel Kadett) 10282.
3. Franz Wittmann/Gerhard Kalnay (BMW 2002 Tii) 10727.
4. Bengt Lundstrom/Fergus Sager (Toyota Celica) 10828.
5. "Didi"/Andre Pauly (Fiat Abarth 124) 10873.
6. Jean-Louis Goblet/Alain Lopes (Sunbeam Avenger) 10982; 7. Horst Rack/Helmut Kohler (Porsche Carrera) 10994; 8. Chavan/Naveau (Honda Civic 1500) 11401; 9. Wim Luybregts/Bruno Van Traa (Triumph Dolomite Sprint) 11922; 10. Burk Fellbaum/Hermann Schafer (BMW 2002 Tii) 12002. **Group 1:** 1. J-L Goblet; 2. Chavan; 3. Fellbaum. **Group 2:** 1. B. Lundstrom; 2. Porto/Loyens (Datsun 1200); 3. Kohl/Wunsch (Opel Ascona). **Group 3:** 1. Gustavson/de Langhe (Porsche Carrera); 2. Stepan/Blanchy (Porsche 911S); 3. Hartung/Koldewie (Porsche Carrera). **Group 4:** 1. Blomqvist; 2. Carlsson; 3. Wittmann.



Light of day for new Alfa

This picture, taken by Alberto Russo, of the new Alfa has unmistakable bulges and flairs. The bonnet superstructure can mean only one thing; there's sure to be the long awaited V8 engine lurking under it.

Have you heard the one about...

Among the inevitable multitude of hilarious stories that perpetually return to the old country in the aftermath of Irish tarmac rallies, there are just a merest sprinkling that can actually be recounted in the press without fear of contravening the laws of libel, obscenity and personal survival. One of the more typically Irish ones concerns the fate of David Agnew's wounded Porsche. When David hit a wall and damaged the back end of the car, he also bent a wheel rendering it undriveable. There was of course an obvious remedy and his service crew lost no time in applying it. Their 'barge', in this instance a sturdy Volvo Estate, was harnessed to the offending wheel and then driven smartly off at right angles to the stationary Porsche! Perhaps it may help readers to understand this story better were they to know that Agnew's service crew contained a certain Paul Martin, whose regrettably brief activities over here last year left an indelible mark on the rally scene...

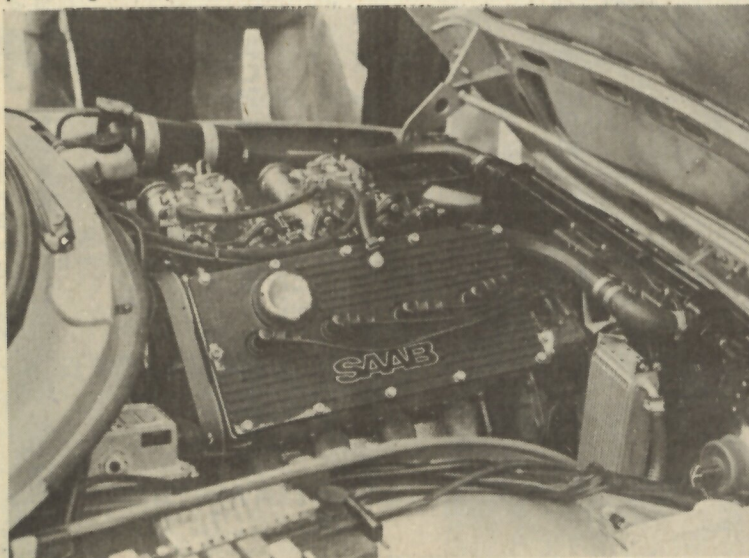
Or how about the "Keystone Cops" saga which resulted in the unfortunate exclusion of Phillip McCartan who went OTL near the end of the event while lying a

comfortable second in G1 to Ronnie McCartney's RS2000. At the last service halt before the finish, Phillip decided to have the distributor changed as the engine was misfiring. Cue for the service crew to run amok and without further ado they set to work, mixing up the plug leads with their appropriate cylinders in fine style before trying to time the car in motion pushing it along and twiddling the distributor hopefully at the same time. This met with rather less than total success and it took the lightning ministrations of Mr Ricky Bell to restore order to the camp. Regrettably this was all just too late.

... After his rally had ended, there was Harold Morley inquiring at the reception desk of the Great Southern whether there was a local hunt in the neighbourhood with which he could ride... and then of course there was the infamous story of Dan Grewer and the Irish Rubber Company, but perhaps we have gone too far already!

● Seen in the window of a Main Square pub in Galway: "traditional music every night — featuring the Rabbitte Brothers." (!)

Saab's new engine, as installed in Blomqvist's car at the weekend is already producing 220 bhp with more to come.



Western Mail/Gibbs tie-up in Jeff's sponsorship puzzle

"It's cost me £8,000 so it bloody well ought to have a Panhard rod," said Jeff Churchill last week as he surveyed his completed Mk2. Jeff had been experiencing several headaches with the building of his new Escort in common with many others who are busily involved in similar activities but he now reckons to have the job almost completed. The car, unlike Robert James' version, is up to full works specification but Jeff had been experiencing severe brake problems with chronic wheel rear locking and far too much sideways momentum. The cure, after endless experiment, turned out to be refreshingly simply. Jeff had been turning the brake bias control the wrong way (it works in the reverse direction on Mk1s) and frantic twiddling was merely aggravating the already serious brake balance situation. Handling vices have been partially erased by a new set of springs and the previous high tail

and low front have been more or less equalised to produce an even ride height and pleasant handling. Jeff is now planning to enter the Severn Valley Stages on Sunday as a shakedown event for the forthcoming Mintex International; and he will be joined in this exercise by Robert James.

At present Jeff remains unsponsored but persistent rumours continue to circulate with regard to his tie-ups with the *Western Mail*, who, following the withdrawal of Howells from Motorsport, find themselves with a rally budget. The stumbling block to present negotiations appears to be simply a matter of getting the interested parties around a table at a mutually suitable date, for Gibbs of Tredegar, the local Ford agents are apparently interested in Jeff's new and highly promotable venture. There seems to be more than a fair chance that the deal will be resolved shortly.



Jeff Churchill — works spec Mk 2.

Achim's Toyota wins Marktrechwitz

The other ECR round of the triumvirate taking place last weekend was the Marktrechwitz Rally in Germany. The event was won by Achim Warmbold's Toyota Celica from Smoej's Kadett, Schewe's Carrera and Kullang's Kadett.

Costa Brava top ten

The top ten on the Costa Brava rally, which starts on Friday are as follows: 1, Andrzej Jaroszewicz (Fiat Abarth Spyder 124); 2, Antonio Zanini (Seat 1800); 3, Jean Carlos Pradera (Alpine A110 1800); 4, Antonio Borges (Porsche Carrera); 5, Salvador Canellas (Seat 1800); 6, Jorge Bagration (Lancia Stratos); 7, Fernando Lezama (RS 1600); 8, Pedro Cortes (Datsun 120Y); 9, Carlos Trabado (Seat 1800); 10, Hans Babler (Seat 1800).

● We hear that Ricky Bell, who was Russell Brookes' chief spanner man last year, will be aiding and abetting the efforts of Robin Eyre Maunsell on future sorties. Ricky was helping with John Taylor's service arrangements in Ireland over the weekend.

Gwynedd news

Next Saturday, February 14th, is the opening round of the BTRDA's ESO sponsored special stage championship. The Gwynedd, this year sponsored by Allitts Motors, once again is based in the North Wales area and takes in many of these prime forests. In all there are 17 forest stages and one tarmac test totalling over 60 miles and the event is scheduled to start at Llandudno at 08.00. The halfway halt is at Bala and spectator facilities are available at Penmachno where the first car is expected at 09.25, and Coed-y-Brenin where action is expected from 15.10. Both areas will be extensively signposted and motorists are urged to use the car park areas provided by the organisers. The morning's spectating can be found by following the signposts from Penmachno village. The single tarmac test is at Transfwydd, a 2½ miler over a disused army camp.

The entry list is not surprisingly a very healthy one and is headed away by last year's winner, Terry Brown. Behind him however are a number of "stars" in search of match practice including Barry Lee, out for the first time in the new Glovers Datsun Violet; Tony Fall, who will be anxious to reach the start of this one in order to play himself in for the Mintex, and Andy Dawson in the club Kadett who is carrying out development on the car before handing over to its new tenant, Brian Pearson on the Mintex when it will be run under Stockhill Garages banner. The top ten are as follows: 1, Terry Brown/Ed Morgan (Escort RS); 2, Barry Lee/John Giltens (Datsun Violet); 3, Tony Fall/Mike Broad (Opel Kadett); 4, Andy Dawson/Colin Wilson (Opel Kadett); 5, Frank Pierson/Arthur Brick (Escort RS); 6, Roland Young/Barry Coathup (Escort); 7, David Stokes/Bill Andrews (Escort RS); 8, Randolph Whittall-Williams (Escort RS); 9, Graham Lepley/Malcolm Harvey (RS1800); 10, David Grainger/Dave Nicholas (Escort TC). The organising club are the Caernarvonshire and Angelsey MC.

Laurie's Century deal

Last Monday, Century Oils announced their official tie-up with Laurie Richards' 1976 rally plans. As part of a national promotion in retail forecourt sales with a new premium motor oil, Century are backing Laurie with a sizeable financial involvement, and the Shropshire monumental stonemason is also supported as previously by Good-year. Lloyds of Stafford are currently building Laurie's new G4 Mk2 which is promised for the Cheltenham Festival. Richards expects his last drive in the old car will be the Mintex International. Plans for '76 involve a full scale assault on the Castrol/AUTOSPORT rally championship.



Hartford Motors rally plans

The Hartford Motors Group have recently announced a major expansion in their rally programme for the coming year and the result of this will see the welcome return to regular competition of Charles Eveson who has had many sporadic good results on the comparatively few occasions on which he has managed to forsake work for rallying. Together with co-driver John Wilcox, Charles will be contesting his ex-works Safari shelled Escort TC 1800 in the Triple C, BTRDA Gold Star and Welsh Stage Rally championships.

Charles, who recently won the Bruern Founders Cup Stages in the newly rebuilt car (it was finished at 05.00 on the morning of the rally!)

thus has a comparatively full season of events in front of him; and his teammate will be Bill Gwynne, who with Howard Moore is to contest the *Motoring News*, BTRDA Silver Star and Welsh road rally championships in a brand new Mk 2 RS2000 prepared at Hartford Motors. The new team are being supported by Shell, Hella and Dunlop, and Charles has recently been involved in tyre testing for the latter. He was very impressed with Dunlop's new Clubmans tyre which he tried out on the Bruern MC event. These tyres proved vastly superior in both grip, progressive breakaway and wear characteristics than previous types, over a variety of differing surfaces.

Northern Ireland stage events

Last week came the official announcement of a new rally championship in Northern Ireland — the 1976 Northern Ireland Special Stage Rally Championship. The series will consist of eight rounds, spread between May and November over the forests of Northern Ireland. The eight rounds will be on the following dates: May 1, Belfast Bangor and Newtownards Motor Club; May 14/15, Enniskillen Motor Club; June 25/26, Larne Motor Club; July 30/31, North Armagh Motor Club; August 13/14, Omagh Motor Club; September 3/4, "The Ulster Rally"; September 24/25, Newry Motor Club; November 12/13, Ulster Automobile Club.

As this is the first year of the Special Stage Championship, it has been decided to make all rounds

count in the system of scoring points, and this will, of course, mean that a reliable car will be more important than an ultra fast but fragile rally car. Points will be scored in the usual rally manner, i.e. 12 points for first overall; 10 points for second overall, down to two points for tenth overall; with two internal championships, one for Group 1 and one for all others.

Competitors who are eligible to score points in this championship are the first and second drivers who are normally resident in Ireland.

It is envisaged that some of these events will be run during the night and some in daylight, thereby giving competitors scope over which to increase their experience of Special Stage Rallying.

David Sutton and friends

A rally forum coming up in the week before the Mintex has been planned by Sutton and Cheam MC. To be chaired by Keith O'Dell, the forum will be quite a monster size, with six persons behind the table to receive your questions. It is quite a David Sutton spectacular as David is backed-up by Pentti Airikkala, Eric Aaby, John Davenport and Jill Robinson. No doubt that after their successful Snowman sortie there

will be plenty of interesting answers in store. The forum is due to kick-off at 8.30 pm at the Driftbridge Hotel, Banstead (MR: 187/232601) on Wednesday 18th February. A couple of films will be included by Castrol before the forum and for those who can't wait for the films, the bar will be going from 7.00pm. Although the evening has been organised by Sutton and Cheam — all, as they say, are welcome.

Elgam Organs

Chris Lord is on the point of announcing a major sponsorship deal for the coming season. He has acquired some generous support from Elgam Organs, an Italian musical instrument manufacturers who are planning a large promotion in this country to broaden their export markets, and following Chris' split with Wallace Arnold, he has set-up a deal with MacGregor Garages of Blackpool who will look after his new car. The car in question is still a Vauxhall but this time it is to ultimate G1 specification, and is at present being prepared by Chris Coburn at Banbury, while the engine will be prepared by Blydenstein. Chris is really confident of a successful year and he is planning a major assault on the Castrol/AUTOSPORT G1 championship, an area which promises to be most interesting this year as Dolomite Sprints for Paul Appleby and Terry Kaby will also be in the running.

meanwhile...

Still on the important and pleasurable business of forums, the dates of forthcoming DTV/Castrol Roadshows are as follows: 18th February — Harold Thompson and Son Ltd., North Shields; 4th March — Skurray's Ltd., Swindon; 11th March — Canning Day Ltd., Newport I.O.W.; 23rd March — Auty and Lees Ltd., Bury; 8th April — Skilton Motors Ltd, St. Albans; 13th April — BRSCC, Surrey Tavern, Kennington Oval, London; 28th April — Hamilton Motors Ltd., London.

Each Vauxhall/Castrol evening will follow a similar pattern. A brief intro is followed up with the DTV/Castrol film "Winning ain't easy" which, in turn, is followed by some informative wittering from Chris Coburn, Roger Willis and John Horton. After all that hot air, "refreshments" come next followed by an audi-visual quiz (?) and a "teach-in". The regulars will be joined when and where possible by such celebrities as Gerry Marshall and Clive Skilton.

Coburn is busy at Banbury

Within the recently reorganised Dealer Team Vauxhall, Coburn Improvements will be increasing their activities with private entrants as well as continuing to operate the Sportpart programme. Negotiations with Vauxhall have been finalised and Coburn Improvements are embarking on a number of projects designed to help the club rally driver. The Vauxhall Bonus Scheme Award has also been increased to £50 for the winner of any restricted rally.

The Banbury based operation is currently building three rally cars

which are to be offered to up-and-coming drivers at "vastly subsidised" prices and there is to be assistance from both Dunlop and Castrol for these cars.

In an effort to provide an improved information service, Tony Bosson has been appointed to a new position to help with technical sales enquiries. Until recently, Tony was responsible for the building of customer cars and of sportpart manufacture. Tony can be contacted on Banbury (0295) 52131.

Marshal now!

The Circuit of Ireland organisers have printed a Marshals Form and, as ever, they are eager to ensure that there will be sufficient well-versed helpers on the event. In typical style, they are offering "get together" evenings in licensed hostleries; a training session in the Boyd Quarry at Mallusk; a Circuit of Ireland car badge; membership of the Killarney Rally Club if travelling (another "licensed" affair) and expenses of £10 for those who are available all through, doing three stages including the Sunday Run. Interested parties should write in the first instance to: Allen T. Loughridge, Ulster Automobile Club Ltd., 3 Botanic Avenue, Belfast BT7 1JG.

Hannu Mikkola's driving on ice at Chamonix astounded watchers who stood aghast as he overtook Stratii as though they were standing still. The inevitable off occurred on the penultimate lap but he still finished 29 seconds up!



Castrol Stage championship preview day



Cars and drivers...

Last Friday, at a very smoothly organised presentation in the Forest of Dean, Castrol held a preview day for the Castrol/Autosport rally championship. A 2.7-mile special stage was commandeered for the day in the vicinity of the Speech House Hotel and local press and media were invited to the venue to be chauffeured around by waiting drivers who included current champion, George Hill in the Martins Magnum, Russell Brookes in the Andrews Heat Escort 2, Colin Malkin and Del Lines who were taking turns in driving the latter's 2.7 litre Carrera, Rod Cooper giving the David Sutton (Cars) Avon Tyres Escort 2 an airing after its victory in Pentti Airikkala's hands on the Snowman, Paul Appleby's victorious G1 RS2000, and latterly Robert James' totally unsorted virgin white Escort 2.

The day was a most convivial affair as indeed had been the previous night at the Speech House Hotel where many stalwarts insisted that the "real preview" had already taken place; but the action on Friday after a slow start due to very slippery conditions and an unfamiliar reticence on behalf of the press, was both interesting and exciting, most drivers using the session as a

Barry Hinchcliffe (left) prepares the ill-fated bonnet-mounted camera on George's Vauxhall.



Undaunted by early disaster, filming continued, with some modifications.

welcome shakedown for forthcoming events as well as chauffeuring the press around this most interesting stage which contained typical hazards from hairpins to flat-out kinks taken in fifth gear.

Russell Brookes' car, none the worse for its minor off in Scotland, was not surprisingly most heavily in demand and he was fastest all day, setting times of 2m 26s in the morning on wide tyres and getting down to 2m 17s in the afternoon on narrower varieties. His new service crew even tried a combination of A2s on the back and M&S on the front at one stage in an attempt to broaden their knowledge of tyre choice.

Colin Malkin was sensational in the Porsche and his best times were only fractionally short of Russell's morning postings. His relaxed, almost nonchalant handling of the soft, ungainly Carrera was a real joy, and despite its patent unsuitability to rapid loose surface progress, Colin warmed to the task in a manner virtually reminiscent of the old Bjorn Waldegaard days. When Del equips the car with much stiffer suspension, something which should happen

before Colin takes it out on the Cheltenham Festival, then we may well see a result to upset the form book. The Martins Vauxhall, resplendent in its Castrol stripes, had had its centre of gravity significantly lowered and George felt this to be a great advantage, pronouncing himself very happy with the car. His new confidence showed clearly in his driving, and the Vauxhall felt very stable and reassuring compared to the bad old days.

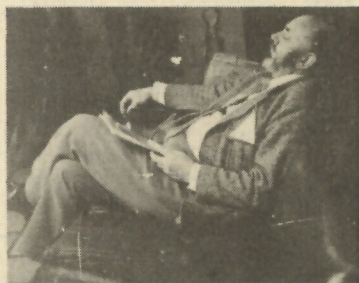
Paul Appleby is busy building up his G1 Dolomite Sprint which should be ready shortly, but in the interim he had brought along his old faithful ex-works RS2000 which has still to receive anything but absolutely routine maintenance. Such were the conditions that his morning times were competitive in overall terms at 2m 30s, and he demonstrated his consistency by posting very similar

times all day although by later afternoon with the coming of the rain, conditions had reverted in favour of the powerful machinery.

Robert James, genial as ever, made a welcome appearance in the afternoon and brought along his brand new Mk2 Escort which had only been completed that morning. The car was totally unsorted and had received neither brake balance nor engine tuning (the BDA had been sitting on the workshop floor for four months while the car was built out of the Mk1) but James appeared to be happy with the car's handling despite running out of petrol in the stage! As it stood the car did credit to its builders. Only notable absentee was Chris Field whose Coventry Evening Telegraph G1 Avenger was still having its engine rebuilt. Barry Hinchcliffe was also absent briefly — he was away phoning the insurance company about a camera! The Castrol film of the championship had an early setback when one of the cameras slipped off the bonnet of George's Vauxhall and tumbled into a nearby stream, totally destroying both camera and contents!

Altogether, despite a distinctly lukewarm press response to invitations, the day was a great success both socially and organisationally, and undoubtedly opened several new pairs of eyes to the sport.

Meanwhile, back at the hotel, press interest was running at a high level — the day must have been a tough one for some...



Severn Valley line— up needs marshals

Last month's gales played havoc with the Welsh border forests and as a result, Midland Manor MC's Severn Valley Stages Rally this Sunday has had to undergo major changes.

While the rally itself has not suffered in terms of stage miles, now fixed at around 50 miles, the changes that have been made of necessity preclude spectators anywhere.

Sponsored by GKN Fastners and Hardware Distributors Ltd, the event has attracted a high quality entry with all 120 places filled several weeks ago.

Kevin Videan and Peter Rushforth lead the field away from the Kidderminster Motors car park at 8.30 am, the Datsun 240Z being followed by Robert James/Robert Davies (Escort), with Frank Pierson and Arthur Brick at No 3, also Escort mounted. Other well fancied crews include Jeff Churchill/Roger Evans (Escort), Dennis Cardell/Roger Griffiths (Allegro), John and Sandra Vicker (RS 2000) while Vaughan Bond makes a rare appearance with Trevor Griffin in an Escort TC.

Lots of marshals are still required and those interested should contact John Downing on 021-550 1148 or Paul Maxwell at Stourbridge 74023.

Scots championship after the Snowman

Positions in *The Scotsman* Scottish Rally Championship after the Snowman Rally are as follows:

Main Championship — 1, Andrew Cowan (Colt Lancer) 15 points; 2, Drew Gallacher (Escort RS1600) 13; 3, Jim McRae (Vauxhall Magnum) 12; 4, Allan Arneil (Escort RS1600) 11; 5, Murray Grierson (Escort RS1600) 10; 6, Ian Gemmell (Hillman Avenger) 9. Leading co-driver is Johnstone Syer (Brian Culcheth not eligible for inclusion). Burmah class leaders — 1000cc, Ian Fleming (Clan Crusader); 1300cc, Scott Dalgleish (Datsun 120Y); 1700cc, Andrew Cowan (Colt Lancer); over 1700cc, Drew Gallacher (Escort RS1600). Castrol Group one leader, Jim McRae (Vauxhall Magnum).

Challengers — 1, Alistair Campbell (Ford Escort) 15; 2, David Porter (Vauxhall Magnum) 13; 3, Martin Jeffrey (Ford Escort) 12; 4, Michael Leithead (Mini-Cooper 'S') 11; 5, Andy Smith (Ford Escort) 10; 6, Jerry Burton (Ford Escort) 9. Leading co-driver, Peter Burnside. Burmah Class Leaders — 1000cc, Michael Leithead (Mini-Cooper 'S'); 1300cc, Martin Jeffrey (Ford Escort); 1700cc, Alistair Campbell (Ford Escort); over 1700cc, David Porter (Vauxhall Magnum).

"F—K!" was the sole strident blast which echoed down the wires of my cringing intercom. Composure was, however, eventually recovered after a few minutes' histrionics . . .



PETER NEWTON

..Of mice and Men

The combination just had to be right from the start — a seasoned and polished co-driver/navigator; versed in all the subtle arts of backbench rally subterfuge, a dillitane driver of genuine star quality; not only a steely, phlegmatic competitor behind the wheel, but also a natural showman whose charisma never fails to influence his peers. Then, the car . . . a bluntly single-minded machine, built with loving care by hardened, highly skilled technicians and with many decades of hard won experience behind them and it . . . a brutally unscientific rally weapon whose simplicity was only matched by its ruthless efficiency. Behind this crushing line-up was a task force of dedicated followers . . . first the GIRLS — a daring and slightly risqué duo of awesome esprit and joie de vivre. Theirs was the unenviable task of maintaining morale and peak physical finesse during the long and desperate hours ahead; their sole support, a lunch hamper . . . the crew were as aware of their immense responsibilities as they were. Second, the service mechanics bent on keeping the giant engine tuned to perfection and the car in its utmost mechanical fitness; not a nut was left unturned. Finally the secret weapon . . . A2s — a professional equipe of this status with A2s must combine to produce an irresistible challenge. £5 and one man's ego were poised under the sword of Damocles — the cast were playing for high stakes and at 06.30 that brittle and savagely cold morning, they crossed the Rubicon. . . .

Foden was wearing tights, fortunately for what was left of my tattered self-esteem they were not of the lurex variety and he had mercifully left his flippers and cardboard policeman's helmet at home, but the tights made repeated guest appearances throughout the day, often unannounced, giving innocent bystanders no chance of survival. This Bohemian attire was ably supported by a motley cast comprising high-heeled suede bootees and some controversial jewellery which cast serious doubts in the minds of all but those who followed the hamper and the girls through the Brussel sprout fields, into the paddock, behind the earth banks and under the tent

The team had spent a restless, fitful night in Chipping Norton. While playful rodents traversed the sloping floors with effortless verve and maximum irritation, co-driver and driver respectively misunderstood the regulations and fumed with feverishly repressed emotions. The fast of the long night was broken by the dulcet tones of an irascible Foden, lovingly framed in the halfflight filtering down the passage . . . "You lazy s—d, get your f—king arse into gear!" It was time to go.

Air temperature was —5°, so my carefully chosen "bouffante" summer outfit was ill-chosen to say the least. It came as something of a profound shock to discover that the trusty machine, crouching balefully at the roadside, had no heater . . . "but not to worry, when the gearbox warms up you'll be all right, you b—t—d!" Being a member of a very ex-works team certainly had its lighter moments, which was more than could be said for the sky which refused to give up its tenure of darkness despite the machinations of the driver's guilt chronometer and

his frequent impassioned appeals to the better nature of the all-powerful redeemer — "why the f—k doesn't it f—king get f—king light? G—d in heaven, where's the f—king dawn?" It came at last, though not immediately in answer to his plea, up from a bitter washed out eastern horizon, grey and mean.

The car was moving now, as were the driver's teeth, gnashing together with uncontrolled ferocity as he fought to control the giant machine moving away from the kerb. Scrutineering . . . and a patronising sneer from bleary-eyed officialdom saw us through. Foden however had found his first fans of the day, a pair of young girls from whom he was trying to borrow solder (. . . to mend the helmets you stupid cretinous f—ker!) I had no idea that prima donna rally stars were so emotionally unstable after the witching hour. Soon there was little left to do save maintain blood circulation in freezing bodies — the out-psychoing began. We had four trump cards and the effervescent Foden was of course going to play them all. First — his tights. All crews within a radius of the space required to swing a large recalcitrant cat sprang back in horror as the tights made a furtive, though telling first appearance. It was a masterstroke. Second, the start number. We were seeded at a most flattering (I thought) number three, and the idea was to complain bitterly about the low seeding within easy megaphone distance of other wide-eyed competitors. Foden had not brought a megaphone but his standard equipment deputised well enough. The latter was also useful in publicizing our third "blitzkreig" on an already punch-drunk captive audience . . . A2s, a killer weapon to be sure (even if they were three-quarters worn!) Curiously the driver then expressed a desire to take the morning air and it was here that I discovered the fourth piece in the pre-event jigsaw. We were going to walk around the stages! Fortunately just 500 yards were covered before the team captain's initial enthusiasm was dampened by the ferocity of the wind and the deepening cold, otherwise I am certain we would be out there still, in tablet form . . .

"Just call the f—king arrows, you daft w—nker, and I'll do the rest!" said my attentive, congenial host and as he let in the clutch with a juddering nerve-jarring crash. The second corner was a square left between two ploughed fields. We traversed a graceful 180° arc in the furrows . . . "F—K!" was the sole strident blast which echoed down the wires of my cringing intercom. Composure was however eventually recovered after a few minutes' histrionics and so it went on. One glorious moment in the afternoon remains for posterity. A corporate confusion in lapping the arrowed airfield resulted in the Foden chariot being passed by Charles Eveson who was

comfortably leading the rally. Foden warmed to the task of hanging onto his pace car with magnificent aplomb and the Triumph threw its not inconsiderable self at the scenery, appearing from erstwhile impenetrable walls of hedgerow wreathed in shrubbery and fallen branches, like a latterday Titanic out of the mist, as its driver wrestled with the straining beast, his glazed, red-rimmed eyes peering pig-like through the murky screen, knuckles clenched white on the wheel; a virtuoso performance which lit-up the faces of many spectators who evidently failed to control their mirth as the lumbering Triumph sat obstinately on the tail of the sprightly Escort.

It was a day to remember indeed. The Bruern Founders Cup Stages was the third experiment so far in single venue stage events. Over 50 stage miles were offered by the Bruern MC on airfields and woodland roads for a paltry entry fee, and the result was a great day's sport providing large amounts of practice with little possibility of serious damage to cars should the inevitable mistakes be made. A single paddock provided the central HQ for the event and there were no road miles whatsoever. As a cheap training ground for aspiring rally stars (and John Foden) the event was near perfection and the organisation only failed when very ambitious attempts were made in directing competing cars through a series of confusing laps in order to create an 8.7 mile stage.

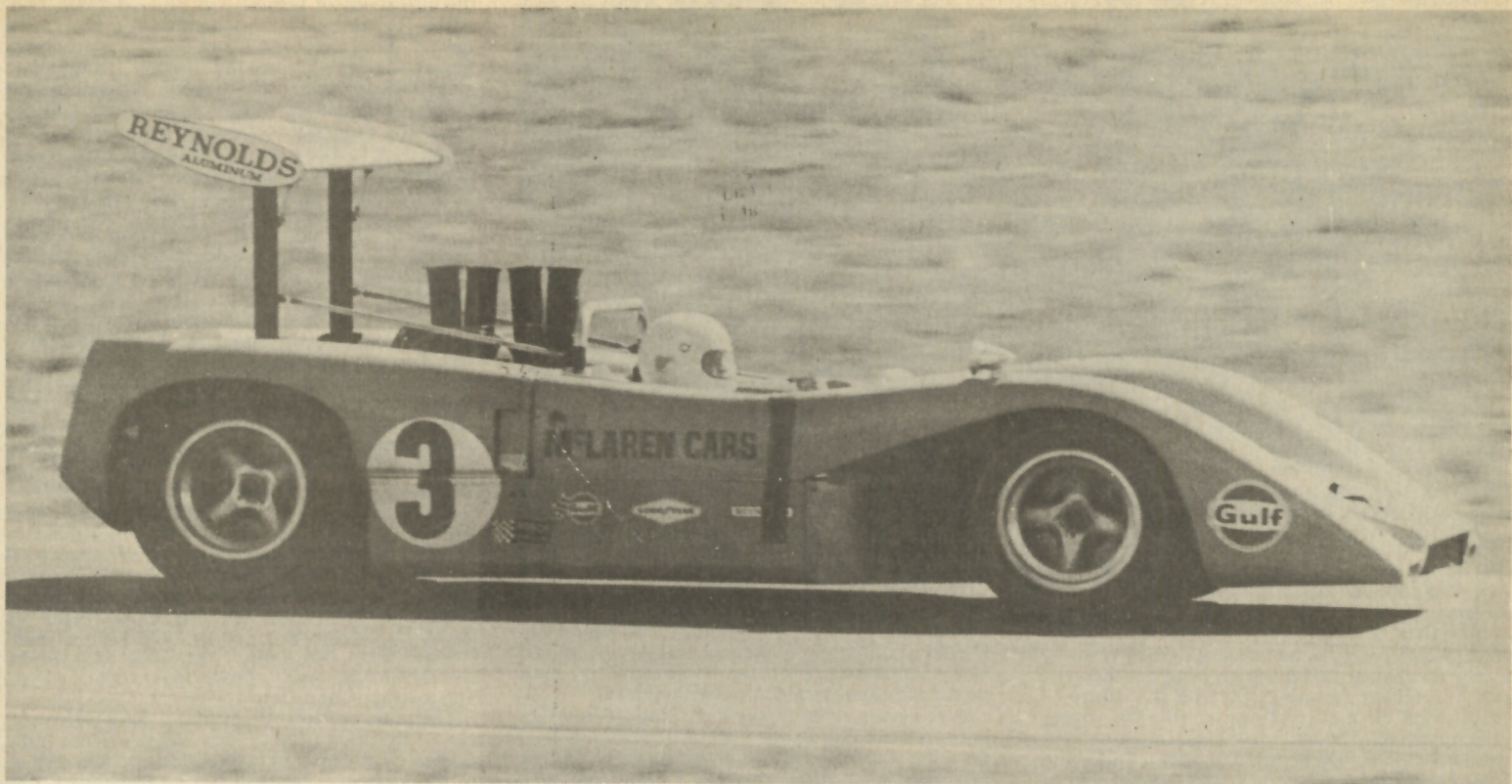
Provided that crews approach such events in the right frame of mind and use the mileage, close proximity and repetition of stages to compare times and experiment with driving techniques, these events could have a real significance in an aspiring crew's stage rally development, as well as being tremendously good fun, both socially and competitively.

After my largely unwarranted attacks on the all-pervasive Coleshill rally equipe, there probably won't be a second time, but I'm sure we would better our 10th place overall were he to take me along again — if only he wouldn't wear those tights, baubles and beads . . .



Above: Charles Eveson shows how it's done with the Hartford Motors Escort TC; while below, the Triumph has decided . . . where will it all end?





Extremely powerful cars, with a pronounced rearward weight bias to obtain traction, may present severe problems of aerodynamic pitch, as explained in the text.

Stability—aerodynamic and otherwise

By JOHN BOLSTER

This short article was originally intended to be about aerodynamics. When I came to research the project, however, I found that stability, or lack of it, is so closely bound up with both the chassis design and the airflow that the two can hardly be treated separately. Furthermore, the practical limitations of the human animal must be considered, for it's no use making a splendid car which demands greater skill than any normal man possesses.

In this connection, I should mention that I am in the lucky position of being on drinking terms with the insurance boys. From their figures, it is obvious that cars with "fail safe" characteristics have a much better record than those which demand the slightest intelligence in their handling. Though this might suggest that the average motorist reaches only an abysmal standard of competence, that is not necessarily the case. It simply means that most people relax at the wheel from time to time and that a car must not pass the point of no return before the driver has had time to collect himself and take remedial action.

If the quickness of the driver's reactions were the decisive factor, the much sharper response of the young should be a great advantage. Yet in accidents involving loss of control, youthful drivers have by far the worst record. Though they act almost instantaneously, if they lack experience they will either do the wrong thing or do the right thing to excess. A very successful racing driver boasted to me that he had extremely slow reactions. He insisted that this prevented him from doing anything bloody silly until it was too late to matter, for it's drivers who have accidents and not cars.

All of which adds up to a general requirement, in most vehicles from racing cars to delivery vans, that there shall be built-in stability. The car which goes out of control when struck by a gust of wind is as bad as the one that veers wildly across the road when running suddenly on to a change of camber. Before leaving the subject, I should mention that virtually all early racing cars reached a state of instability at high speeds and were kept on the road by their drivers in a balancing act akin to tightrope walking. Nevertheless, this merely meant that the faster straights were driven as corners are nowadays and there was nothing so heart-stopping as an apparently stable car suddenly going sideways.

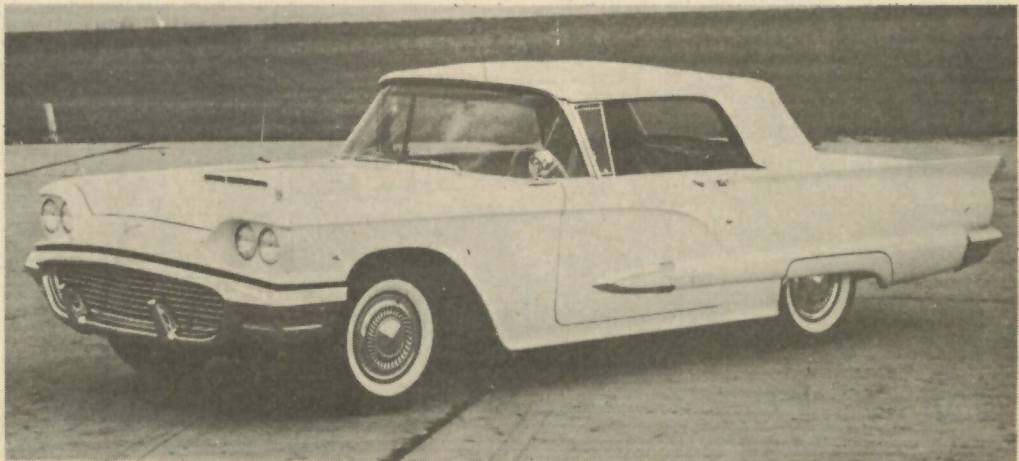
A car, advancing on its tyres, is controlled by the slip-angles of four small areas of rubber on the roads. There is no need to go into the geometry of steering, but it is accepted that an over-steering situation is one of instability, a small degree of under-steer is desirable for straight running

without constant correction, and a characteristic approaching neutrality gives fast cornering and responsive handling.

This is, of course, a gross over-simplification of something very complex. In general, luxury cars require more understeer, to match the characteristics of the sort of people who will drive them, and the steering needs to be lower-geared than that of a sports car, for the same reason. There's also the polar moment of inertia to consider, which alone could be the subject for several articles of this length. Furthermore, analysis of car behaviour is not nearly so easy as it would at first appear, unless elaborate recording instruments are available. It has been found that even experienced racing drivers can mistake under-steer for over-steer, and vice versa, let alone assessing the finer nuances.

If we are ever to get down to aerodynamic stability, we shall be obliged to over-simplify. Let us assume, therefore — and it's a bloody great assumption — that the chassis designer has got his sums right. Let us also, except where stated to

Tail fins, raised rear lamp clusters, or any other obstruction to free lateral airflow, will increase lift. High headlamps and their fairings alongside a relatively low bonnet will also increase lift.





Set for lift-off. The Sunbeam Alpine appears to have embodied both high headlamp fairings and pronounced fins in satisfying the stylist's whims.

creates as little turbulence as possible.

It is necessary to realise that a car with a low-drag shape which is, as we say, well streamlined, is in much closer contact with the airflow than one surrounded by turbulence. It is therefore more apt to be influenced directionally by the air than a car with high-drag characteristics. This means that a vehicle with the centre of gravity and the centre of pressure in the wrong relationship may be quite tolerable under certain wind conditions, but highly dangerous under the same conditions if the body shape is improved to cause less drag. It's only streamlined in one direction, and any deviation from this direction quickly increases the aerodynamic force effect.

Even to remove projecting headlamps, fog lamps, and club badges from the front of a car may give a surprising increase in speed but, at the same time, make the machine more of a handfull in side winds. To give an idea of the drag occasioned by such protruberances, I might mention that I removed the assembly of front mudguards, lamps, and their various tubes and brackets from a vintage-type sports car, timing it before and after. The difference was a staggering 20 (yes, twenty!) mph, proving that I had changed over from extreme turbulence to at least some laminar flow.

It might seem easier, at this stage, to call the whole thing off and go back to our square tin boxes with bits and pieces sticking out like Christmas trees. The answer is, of course, that the advantages of low-drag cars in speed, acceleration, and particularly fuel economy, are so great that they cannot be ignored in times like these. Furthermore, provided that all the necessary steps are taken to relate the chassis characteristics to the aerodynamic picture, the streamlined car can actually be made safer than those cars of yesterday which, if designed at all, were evidently the work of salesmen taken from the showrooms.

The safest cars that I have driven through gales

and tempests have also been those with the most efficient aerodynamic shapes, giving the lowest drag. It was not always so and brave men have died in pursuit of knowledge. This was brought home to me by an aerodynamicist who said, "We have now definitely overcome stability problems at any foreseeable speed, but we have killed a man on the Mulsanne straight in learning how."

In achieving stability, the first thing we must do is to find out where the centre of pressure lies, hereafter called the CP. For the purpose of this somewhat elementary treatise, I hope that any expert readers will allow me to take Bernoulli's theorem as read, which states that the run of the atmospheric and dynamic pressure is constant at every part of the same streamline. This means that the airflow pattern around a moving vehicle produces a specific pressure distribution over its surface, and from these pressures the resultant force on the car may be obtained, exerted by the relative motion of the air. This is known as the aerodynamic force.

The total aerodynamic force created by the relative airstream around the vehicle body, may be considered as acting at a point, which is the CP. The aerodynamic force produces no moment about this point, but for any other point there will be an aerodynamic force moment. As all the mass inertia forces acting on a car in motion are concentrated at the centre of gravity, hereafter called CG, its vital to know what the aerodynamic moments are that act about the CG. Therefore, stability is all about the relative positions of the CG and CP.

The CP can be located by scale model tests in a wind tunnel. It must be remembered, however, that the well-known scale effects (well-known, that is, to all of us who are model engineers) will be in evidence. While the model will be to scale, the characteristics of the airflow will not, and the boundary layers will be full size. This means that those cracks around bonnet, boot lid, and doors,

the surrounds of windscreen and windows, the wiper blades, door handles, and rain gutters, will have a greatly reduced effect when scaled down. In fact, the car will seem far "cleaner" than it is.

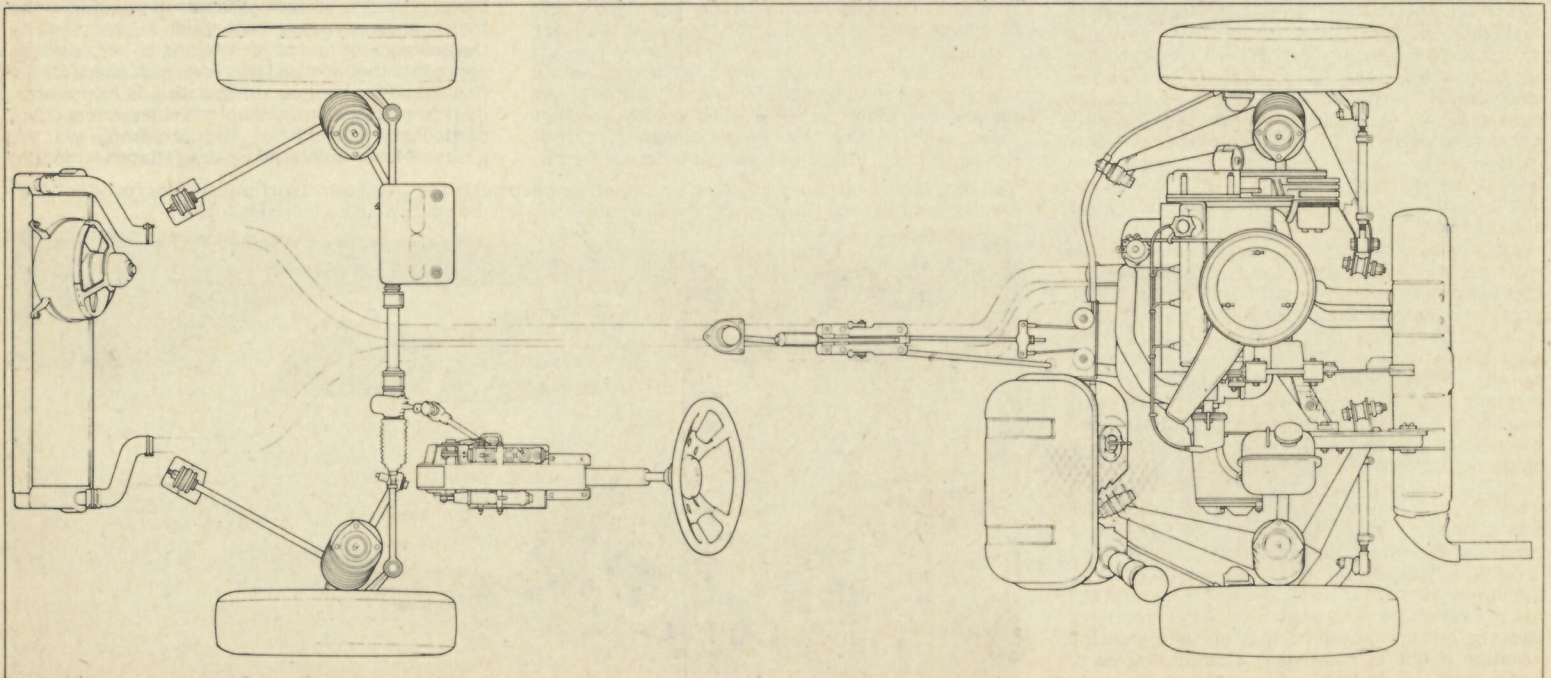
It's difficult to test these items individually at full size, because the interference effects will not be shown. Suffice it to say that experienced men know how to allow for these things, and in any case enough data is now available for the position of the CP to be arrived at, or at least a very fair approximation thereof, without any actual wind tunnel testing, unless the car is of a highly unconventional shape. No doubt the designer will merely stuff it up his computer and live happily ever after.

Having discovered the position of the CP, what are we going to do about it? There are three aerodynamic moments to consider, those of yawing, pitching, and rolling. Let us consider yawing first, as it is the moment most affecting ordinary cars, apart from drag and lift. The steady airflow due to the car's forward velocity does not produce yaw, though the change in airflow caused by the proximity of other vehicles does. Behind the car in front there is a wake which is a low-pressure area, as every racing driver knows, but its turbulent air may contain vortices, which can affect the airflow pattern of a vehicle close behind. Large commercial vehicles, whether travelling in an approaching or overtaking direction, can cause a car to yaw frighteningly towards them, like ships at sea. There is little the aerodynamicist can do about this, except to advise you to keep your distance.

The most important disturbing force affecting cars is that produced by atmospheric wind. This may be fairly constant in direction and velocity or in the form of sudden gusts. I say sudden, but although this onslaught appears instantaneous, we are assured by meteorologists that the beginning of a blast is never all that quick — indeed, the forces involved in producing the wind cannot act with such suddenness. The average man takes 1/16s to react and this is quicker than the build-up of a gust of wind. In France, sporting drivers used to fit special high-g geared steering to their rear-engined cars, with the object of battling against the wind on the many high and exposed autoroutes of that country. Such constant correction of the steering was tiring, of course, but with skill and courage high speeds could be maintained.

There is, however, no substitute for stability, for there is one condition which is beyond the rapidity of human reactions to oppose. This is the change which occurs when a car runs out of a side wind into shelter. Let us assume that a car is being driven fast along an exposed autoroute, where the windsocks are straining horizontally at their moorings. The driver may have his wheel almost still if the wind is strong and continuous, or he may be making frequent small corrections for gusts. What he may not even realise, however, is that the lateral force of the wind is causing him to travel with his tyres at a considerable slip-angle — he is motoring in a straight line with his steering turned several degrees towards the disturbing force.

A mid-engined car with a transverse power unit is more akin to a rear-engined car than to a mid-engined Formula One single seater.



If he is travelling really fast and suddenly runs into the shelter of a wood, there is nothing that can save him. Unlike the onset of the wind, the cessation can be virtually instantaneous, which his responses are not. The car will suddenly follow its steering instead of travelling at a constant slip-angle and will leave the road in the direction from which the wind was formerly coming. There are factors which may modify this reaction, but it is unlikely that an accident will be avoided.

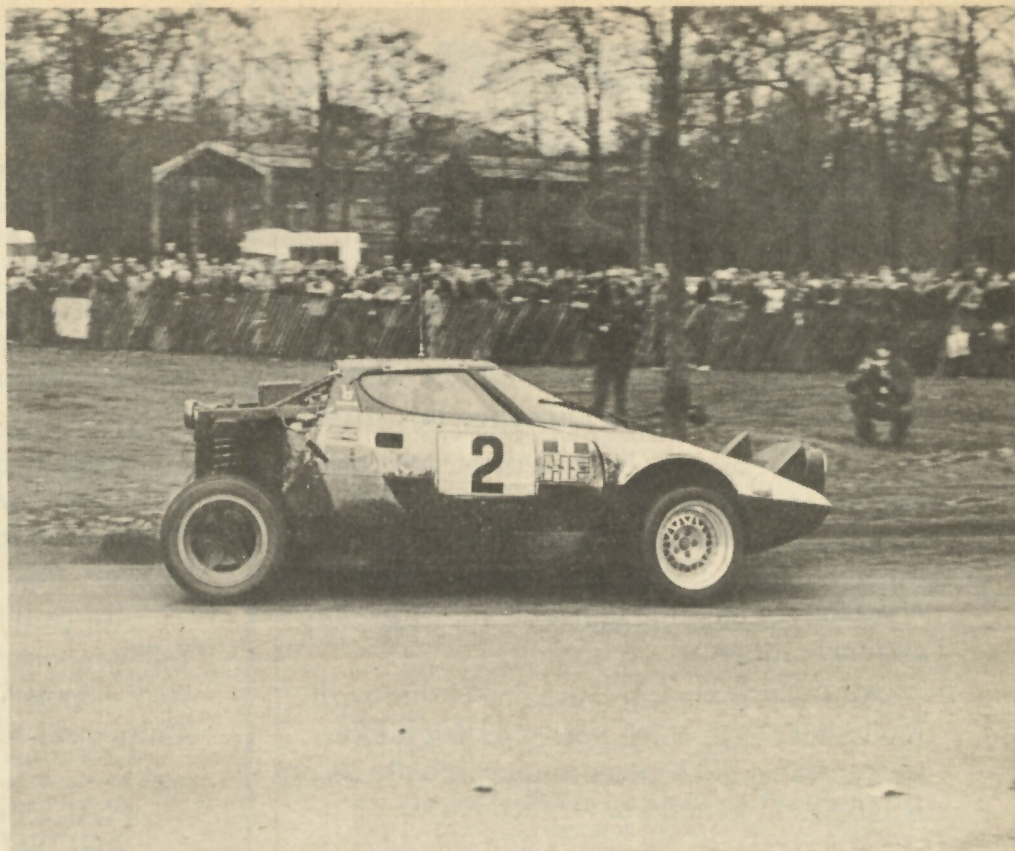
If the CP is ahead of the CG, an aerodynamic moment will be produced by a side wind, acting about the CG. If the percentage of the wheelbase is fairly large, a force pivoting at the CG will cause the front of the car to yaw — owners of certain rear-engined cars will know only too well what I mean. When the CP and the CG coincide, there is no tendency to yaw, the most that the wind can do being to move the car bodily sideways by exerting all four slip-angles of the tyre treads on the road surface, but there is no steering effect, the car continuing on a line parallel to its original trajectory.

There is a body of opinion which suggests that the CG should in fact be slightly ahead of the CP, as although a small yawing effect may be experienced, it tends to be self-cancelling and to restore the car to its former line. With a body of conventional dimensions, this may entail having the engine sufficiently far forward to give poor traction with rear-wheel drive, which is one of the reasons why most front-drive cars have excellent behaviour characteristics in side winds.

The disappointing stability of some mid-engined cars stems from two causes. One is that, unlike racing cars, many of them have transverse engines and their CG is almost as far back as that of a rear-engined car, so its difficult to get the CP far enough to the rear. The other is their low polar moment of inertia. This is ideal for a car that's to be tuned for every circuit and driven by a highly-paid acrobat, but for mum taking the kiddiewinks to school or you and me after a heavy day at work, slower response and greater stability are the requirements.

Time was, a few years ago, when tail fins were fitted with the avowed object of shifting the CP further back, and they became a fashion. In fact, tail fins are a disaster because they increase the lift of the rear part of the car, and some wing tip ends, with which we are all familiar, and high headlamps and mudguards alongside a low bonnet can also seriously increase the lift at that end.

The aerodynamic pitching moment must be considered, because it can alter the attitude of the car and drastically increase lift. Inasmuch as it is largely caused by lift and, of itself, tends to aggravate that cause, it is obviously a condition of



The Lancia Stratos— seen here with rear body section missing — requires very quick reactions to drive quickly; not suitable for mum.

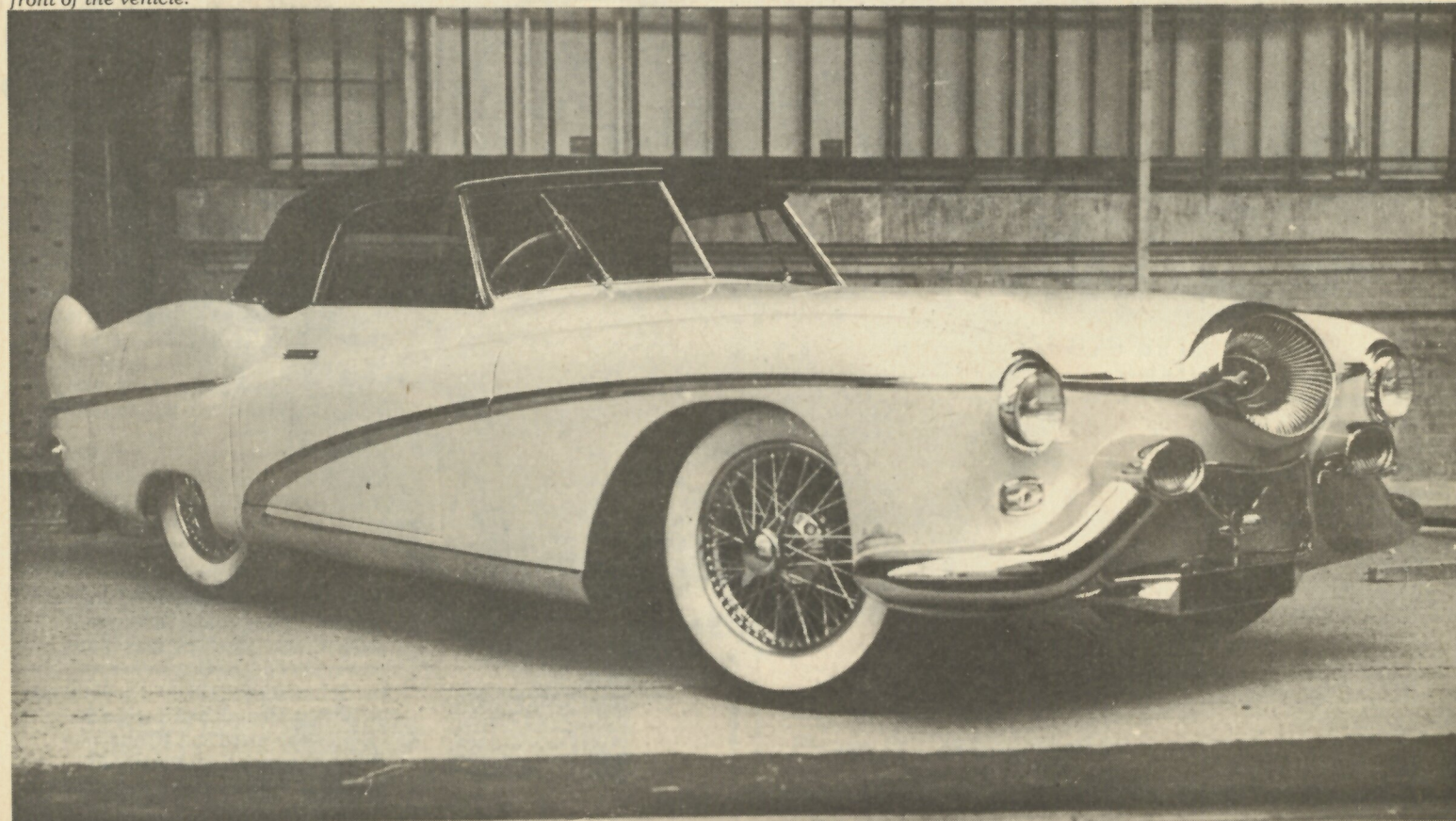
extreme instability. The aerodynamic remedies must be to reduce lift, both beneath the car and on top, by methods on which I touched in my previous article but have no space to expand here. Again, it is advantageous to move the CG forward, for cars with a rear weight bias have a tendency to pitch on the suspension, which alter the attitude and may affect the aerodynamic lift. It is the aerodynamic pitching moment which has caused certain racing cars, notably CanAm machines, and poor Donald Campbell's boat, to loop the loop.

The aerodynamic roll moment is of less concern. Usually the CP is higher than the CG, and both the disturbing force of a side wind, and the unsymmetrical airflow during fast cornering, may cause

some roll. However, the aerodynamic roll moment is often in an opposite sense from the mechanical roll, thus reducing the angle of lean. In any case, a car that is rolling on its suspension suffers no significant aerodynamic change, and as aerodynamic roll is never self-increasing, as pitching often is, we can perhaps regard it as the least dangerous of the phenomena with which we have been dealing.

It's a sobering thought that, in the early nineteen-twenties, Gabriel Voisin applied more aerodynamic know-how to the stability of his cars than most manufacturers do today. Let us hope that we shall soon be able to buy cars that are as stable as they ought to be.

A light alloy body was probably not enough for this French Salmson as the stylist appears to have given very little consideration to laminar air-flow over the front of the vehicle.





Off track events can be spectacular, or slow and safe. One of the most spectacular is rallycross, above.

1976 off track season reviewed

AUTOCROSS

Bedevelled initially by bad weather and then, in turn by the long hot summer which produced more dust than the Eighth Army ever threw up in the desert in the 1940s, the autocross scene once again proved popular in most respects for the hundreds of enthusiasts who wheeled out their devices for over 200 events around the country last year.

Despite increasing costs which had some effect on entries overall, the sport flourished but many

clubs are going to find venues a bigger problem than ever during the coming season as farmers and land owners become more and more reluctant to allow suitable tracts of their property to be cut up in the interests of motor sport.

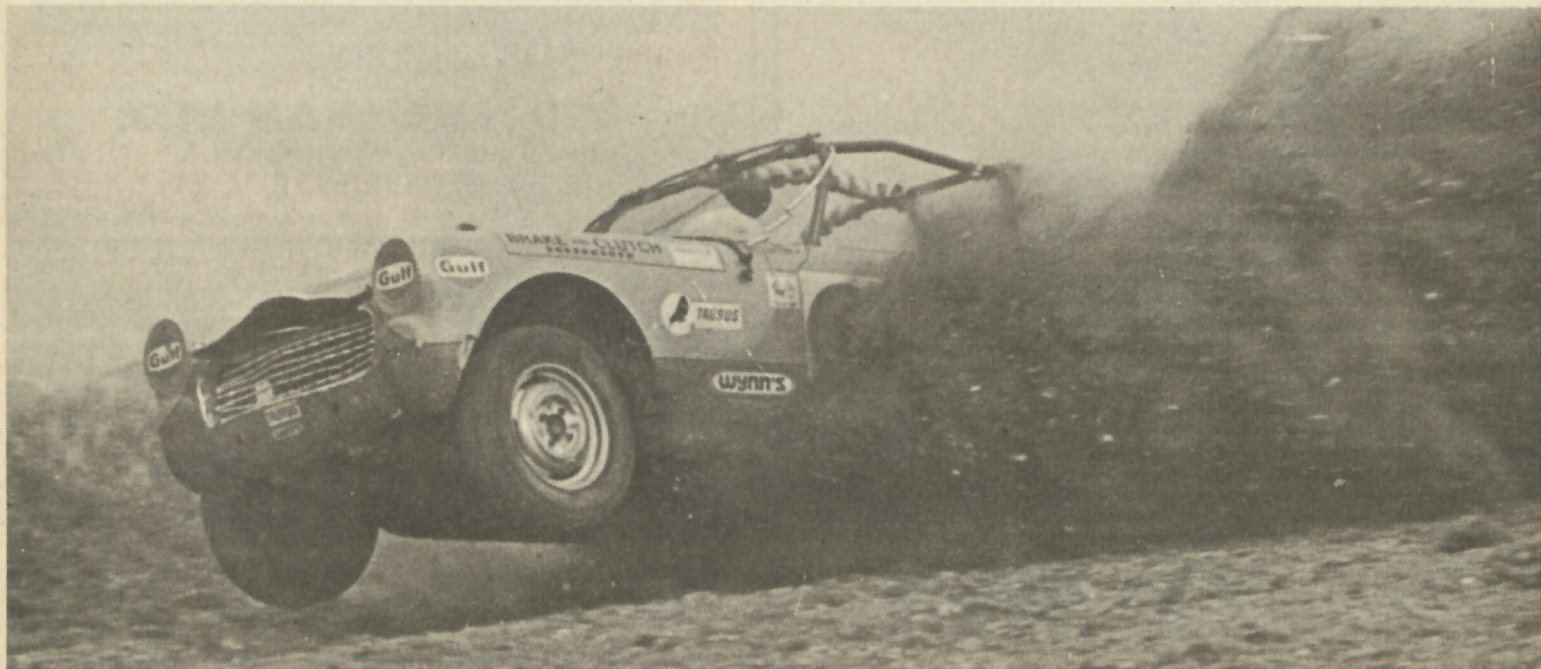
In days gone by it was reasonably easy to find a field suitable for a 500 or 600 yds course but with progression in speed and adhesion of the machinery involved, the demand is now for courses of up to 1000 yds and with it comes a reduction in the number of sites suitable.

The day is perhaps not too far distant when permanent sites will be the order of the day if high

class autocrossing is to survive. Certainly those that are known and already used have proved popular not only from the competitors viewpoint but also, equally important, with the spectators. Money is short, costs are getting ridiculous and so organisers must find sites which are viable, always allowing the weather does not turn sour on the day.

As in previous years the RAC and parallel BTRDA championships attracted the bulk of the leading competitors, the latter series being divided into a clubman's two abreast series and a four abreast championship. The latter was not a

It was a dusty year for Autocross as G Thompson's Ford engine Sprite demonstrates



success and has been dropped for this year though several clubs have indicated that they will run four abreast events within the championship.

So far as personalities are concerned 1975 belonged to one man. Martin Barnard, the opulent Midlander, collected both titles in his aging Datsun 240Z and, for at least the second year in succession, he was highest points scorer overall.

Barnard would be the first to admit his opposition all season was extremely sparse in the standard car class and for 1976 it is being limited to 1900cc.

King of the small Minis was once again Nick Garner. Recovering from an early season defeat he blew off old rivals Derek Cleaver and Derek Piggott, Roger Brunt predictably collected the 1 litre class in both series while Terry Smith and Dave Baskerville each had a class win in the over 1 litre class.

Runner-up in the two abreast series, Dick Keen had some exciting duels with the ever verbal Bob Merridale who had to be satisfied with two overall class trophies.

Among the sports cars Rob Gibson's Sprite and Roger Burn had some close finishes in their always popular Sprite v Clan battles, the season not being a particularly happy one for the GT6 campaigners Paul Northall and Roger Dowson.

VWs dominated the Imps in the rear-engined class by power as much as anything else and Brian Betteridge and Terry Westley were respective winners. The battles of the big Escorts will be remembered for George Warren, Dave Fuell,



Spectacular jumping by Stu Payne's 1.0 Mini.

Nobby Cresswell, Tony Merridale and Dimi Mavropoulos were great entertainment every time they met. Fuell took the two abreast title with Merridale squeezing home in the four abreast thanks to someone else's generosity.

Among the specials it was never more than a two horse race with Nick Seymour holding the fort initially with his Volnik until the arrival of the

BDA-powered Special of Mike Turpin. Each collected a class trophy.

Ever optimistic there will be 21 rounds plus a final this year, the series getting under way with two Easter events, and 'double' events are scheduled for other Bank Holidays.

DEREK HILL



The man to beat in autotests, Trevor Smith who claimed the title of top dog.

AUTOTEST

There was a time when a newcomer to a certain club in the Midlands was offered a course in driving test instruction whereby, without making a fool of himself in public, he could improve his handling and driving ability in the comparative obscurity of a deserted car park every week.

Regrettably the demand for such instruction was not great — the course just about survived and is unlikely to be brought to the fore again unless autotesting suddenly becomes the 'in' off-the-road event.

In much the same way autotests are run, to a great extent, by competitors for competitors, with the usual exceptions of course. They have their hard core following, events are adequately supported generally speaking throughout the country; money is not a problem from the promotional side and generally there seems no great reason why anything in particular should be changed.

Because there are no standards or measured tests in the sport, it is a matter of conjecture whether a driver improves over the years or just goes quickly enough to beat the opposition. The formula does not cause excitable argument and in consequence the national governing body does not have to concern itself with regulation changes every five minutes.

Once again the national championship run by the RAC ran concurrently, in most cases, with rounds counting towards the BTRDA Championship. In general terms the weather was reasonably kind, the venues were invariably ones the regulars had used before and men and machinery were much as in previous years.

If 1974 belonged to Ulsterman John Lyons then last year saw the return of Trevor Smith to the

title of top dog, an honour which had twice before landed lightly on his shoulders. Mounted once again in his faithful Midget the Oxfordshire pilot collected maximum points to beat nearest class rival Dick Squire (Sprite) by five marks, Squire collecting several BTDs in one of his best seasons.

It is rumoured that Smith is tiring of the sport in which he is head and shoulders above most of the competition and should he depart the scene then any one of several drivers would be eligible for his crown.

Dick Squire, as mentioned earlier, had a good year both at national and local events while Peter Cox, on his day, has had the measure of the opposition. Denis Beare and Cliff Robinson did not make enough appearances to create great impact on the sports car class but are both very capable of driving the opposition into the ground.

Runner-up in the series was Stephen Stringer who took full advantage of the fact that his Lotus 7 could compete against the likes of Mexicos, Escorts, etc, and he romped away from John Calton (Mexico) while Scotsman Gordon Aird travelled considerable distances to finish third and, more importantly, to collect the Silver Star championship in his Datsun Cherry.

John Larkin renewed his rivalry with Phil Darbyshire in Class 2 and had David Barney for company (very close at times), all three in Mini variants. This class provided the closest competition in terms of overall times and finally Larkin edged out Darbyshire by a narrow margin with Barney third while his wife Pam was never in doubt about the destiny of the ladies award.

The 1976 season began at Eastbourne early in February at one of the more pleasant sites the series visits (providing the weather is reasonable), and most of the clubs who ran championship rounds last year are included in the lists for the new series.

DEREK HILL

DRAG RACING

Like all forms of the sport, drag racing was hit by runaway costs during 1975, with perhaps the biggest jump being in the price of nitro-methane, staple diet of the crowd-pulling funny cars and Top Fuel dragsters. With bad weather at the start of the year, both promoters must have had some hard times, but even so they came through well, and we did see some very spectacular action.

Dennis Priddle debuted his new low-line Avenger, running at 6.9s at the first serious attempt, but he was generally unlucky against the two Santa Pod-owned funny cars, which though now rather old and heavy showed they still had what it takes in the form of 6.6s times at 210 mph plus. Owen Hayward has always had the lighter of the two cars (Hounddog), and when he got a new engine last year he improved dramatically to become the number one man, a situation which even the addition of a brand new aluminium Milodon motor to the Allan Herridge-driven Stardust could not change — quite. The arrival of yet another American funny, the impossibly low and potent Milodon/Vega driven by Dale Emery and Leroy Chadderton was not quite as dramatic as expected, the car having a few problems to sort out that kept it from winning at Santa Pod in July. But in September, helped by a few lucky breaks, it did win, despite blowing up at mid-distance after waiting in stage for about three minutes while the Hayward car suffered transmission failure.

Clive Skilton also switched to a funny car, but his Donovan-powered Vauxhall had a lot of niggling problems that kept him from contention for most of the year, with Dennis Priddle winning most of the NDRC events including the first-ever eight-car eliminator at Wroughton, with three Swedish cars also entered. But eventually everything fell into place, and he had his best moment at Blackbushe, where despite losing two rounds to Priddle, again through sheer bad luck, he eventually managed a badly needed win in the fastest ever side by side run in Europe, Clive winning with a 211 mph run to Priddle's 217 mph, with both cars turning identical 7.55s times on Blackbushe's indifferent surface.

Other entrants included Roland Pratt with his 392 Avenger, who with Liam Churchill with his similarly powered Capri provided very useful opposition all year without ever being able to match the other cars on horsepower, both running low sevens consistently, and Pratt winning the last event of all at Santa Pod when others fell by the wayside.

The concentration on the funny cars obviously meant less attention on the Top Fuel cars, with only three competitive cars running regularly. Dennis Priddle started the year with his front-engined Donovan by reacting to a strong threat from Pete Crane's new rear-engined American car by unleashing a staggering 6.04s time that will probably never be bettered by an 'obsolete' front-engined car — Priddle himself saying he doubted if he or the car could ever repeat it. Crane

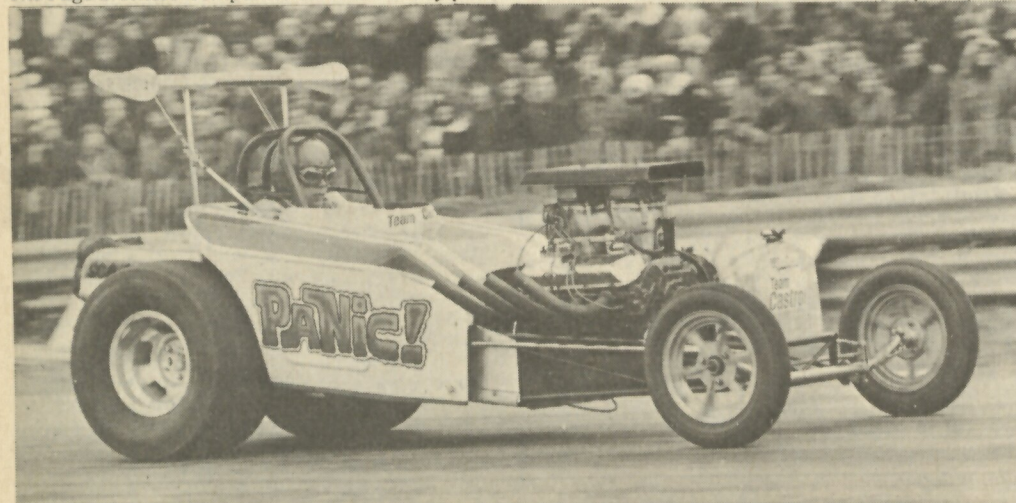


Tony Dickson's pro stock Camaro gets a little crossed up starting at Snetterton.

responded by getting a big alloy Milodon for his car and got down to 6.18s on one occasion, but despite winning pretty consistently with 6.3s/6.5s times, the much hoped for five-second run eluded him all year. Later in the season Owen Hayward, driving the Houndog team's rail as well also got down to some very respectable 6.5s times, while both Trevor Young in the Revolution Three car and Roz Prior in the Miss Revell front-engined car also joined the six-second club — Young in Sweden and Prior at Snetterton. Ron Picardo took over the driving of the venerable 'Firefly' for Santa Pod, going very well in the car and winning the last meet of the year with a perfectly judged start against Hayward's more modern car. Gerry Andrews made occasional forays into the class with his Pro Comp car, but was not really powerful enough running on methanol to have much of a chance, while Liz Burn, driving Skilton's 1974 dragster, ran out of road at Snetterton after a 200mph run and wrote the car off.

Pro Comp started off well, with hopes of eight- or even 16-car fields, but only rarely did the first figure get approached as most entrants struggled with the costs of this 'cheap' form of racing. It is certainly a lot cheaper than Top Fuel, but even so not many could afford to lose even one engine during the year. Pat Cuss, Mike Hall, Peter Barnett, the Rowatt brothers and the DB Motors team all did well, notching up extraordinarily good times in many cases, but once the Stone team arrived with Gerry Andrews driving the Hemi Hunter dragster with its American built 427 Chevy engine, they swept all before them and soon had nearly a second advantage on the rest of the class as the car clocked low sevens at near 200 mph. But even so the class still holds great promise, with great enthusiasm for the future,

The Page brothers' competition altered Chevy powered Panic at Snetterton on Good Friday

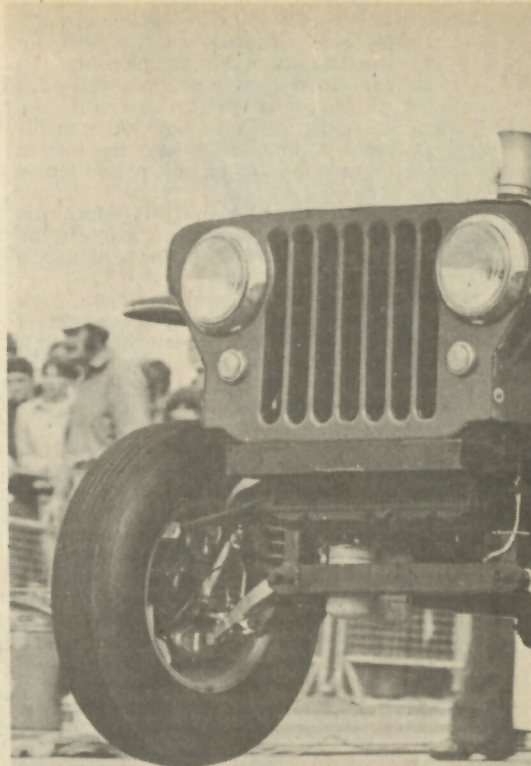


possibly replacing Top Fuel as the number two attraction in the years to come.

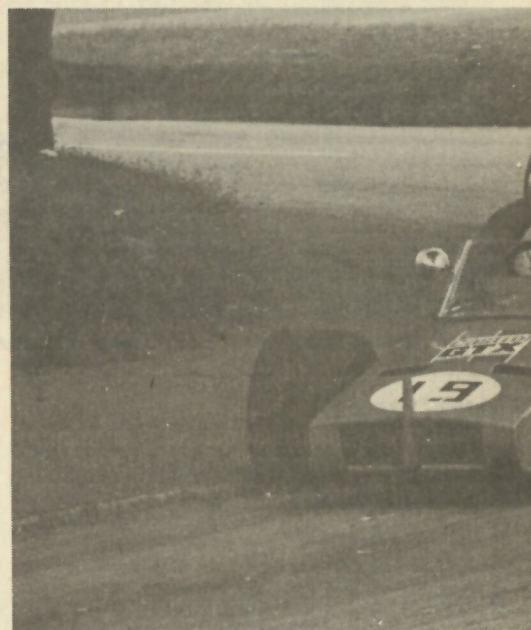
Pro Stock had a poor start to the year, with Gary Goggin the only regular runner in his Camaro, but after switching to a clutch-automatic gearbox he had a lot of trouble, so that when Tony Dickson came out with his Duckhams Camaro at mid season he had a run of wins — though Goggin won the biggest Pro Stock event at Santa Pod in August when the track put up a big prize fund. Goggin also won the last event with a 10.1s run to Dickson's best so far of 10.5s, while at other events John Ledster had gone well with his 289 Mustang dipping into the elevens but the car is overweight and down on power to the other big-block cars. Dave Rose's big HemiCuda showed potential with some 128mph runs, but his times weren't so good, and his trouble probably lies in too much weight and not enough traction — coupled with a rather troublesome engine. Mike Churchill and Steve Osment-Petrie in their Camaros and Howerd Smith in his potent but troubled Nova were others to run at various meetings, but none of these managed to get into the 10s range, while at the very last event, a 351 Ford Falcon driven by Glen Jarvis made an impact with some good low 11-second times on a very new car.

So it was a lot better year than had been expected back in the bleak winter of 1974, but the fact remains that drag racing still runs largely on gate receipts, and in this day, that is not enough to allow the 'professional' classes to grow — though at the other end of the scale the weekend racer is probably better off than in most other branches of the sport.

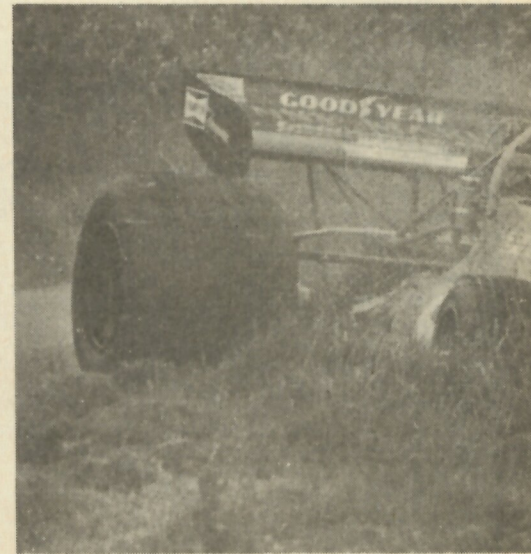
JOHN DICKSON



Part of the Swedish invasion was this "Swedish tool" c

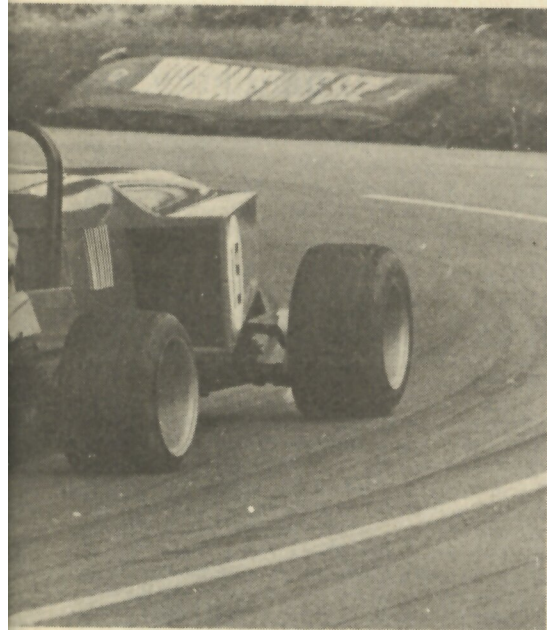


Hillclimbers come in various shapes and sizes (1): This mistake in his championship year, this one fortunately





grapher describes it.



Channel Island contingent. Below, Roy Lane makes a rare V/BARC round at Gurston.



HILLCLIMBS

During the winter of 1974 many people, including the press, regarded the forthcoming hill climbing season as a possible non-event due to the retirement of championship pacemakers Mike MacDowel, Sir Nicholas Williamson and David Good. But true to form the many protagonists who remained in the series produced a season which will long be remembered by both those who witnessed it and the historians.

The RAC hillclimb championship which was inaugurated in 1950 has in the past produced some memorable tussles for the honour of being crowned the hill climb champion but never in the history of the series had a driver secured the title with a maximum points score. However in 1975 it was a complete family which set their seal on the record books by achieving this feat. Having retained his McRae-Chevrolet GM1 with which he

had finished as runner-up to Mike MacDowel in the 1974 series, Roy Lane, aided to the full as ever by his wife Betty and their two dedicated children Julie and Anthony appeared with the car running under the banner of Fenny Marine Ltd, a marina near Leamington Spa, and really began to re-write the record books. The season did not start in exceptionally brilliant style for Lane for he was pipped at the opening round of the RAC hillclimb championship by the sensational Pilbeam of Alister Douglas-Osborn and the ever present Grunhulle Lager March of Chris Cramer but the next meeting at Lane's favourite hill, Prescott, saw him fending off a fine challenge from the 1600 cc Huntsman Ensign of David Franklin to score his first victory of the year.

However at Wiscombe Park, which was the third round of the series, Chris Cramer was in a determined mood and despite clutch problems drove the climb of his life to take victory. The next round at Barbon Manor saw another angry man coming good. Having suffered a mechanical breakage on his brand new Waring and Gillow Chevron-Chevrolet B32, John Cussins jumped into the second team car, Malcolm Dungworth's Brabham-Repco BT35X and proceeded to snatch the vital ten points with a demon top ten run.

However it was just after Barbon that Roy Lane managed to acquire some suitable tyres for his Fenny Marine GM1 having struggled with rather unsuitable rubber in the early meetings and from then on he began an almost unbelievable run for with the exception of the Northern Ireland round at Craigtlet in which he did not compete, Lane scooped the board winning no less than ten championship rounds on the trot to take a well earned championship victory with a maximum points score and such was his prowess that he even astounded everyone by winning the round in Guernsey at the tricky Les Val Des Terres venue, a hill which until last season had been dominated by small cars and had seemingly not suited the large V8 powered single seaters. For Lane his historic championship win was the culmination of nine years of dedicated hillclimbing and surely no one who knows and loves hillclimbing will begrudge Lane and his enthusiastic family their championship which has been earned by sheer guts and hard work.

Although Lane managed to dominate the latter rounds of the championship his win was by no means an easy one for the Grunhulle Lager March of Chris Cramer was always pushing the new champion to the full despite giving away nearly three litres to the Fenny Marine backed car. Over the years Cramer has proved to be a hard man to beat and certainly no one could have put more thought and effort into the championship chase but no matter how well Chris went he lost out to Lane. But there can be no doubt that virtually throughout the season he was flying.

At the start of the year it was Alister Douglas-Osborn with his NJR installations Pilbeam who shook everyone with a tremendous win at Loton Park despite losing it over the finish

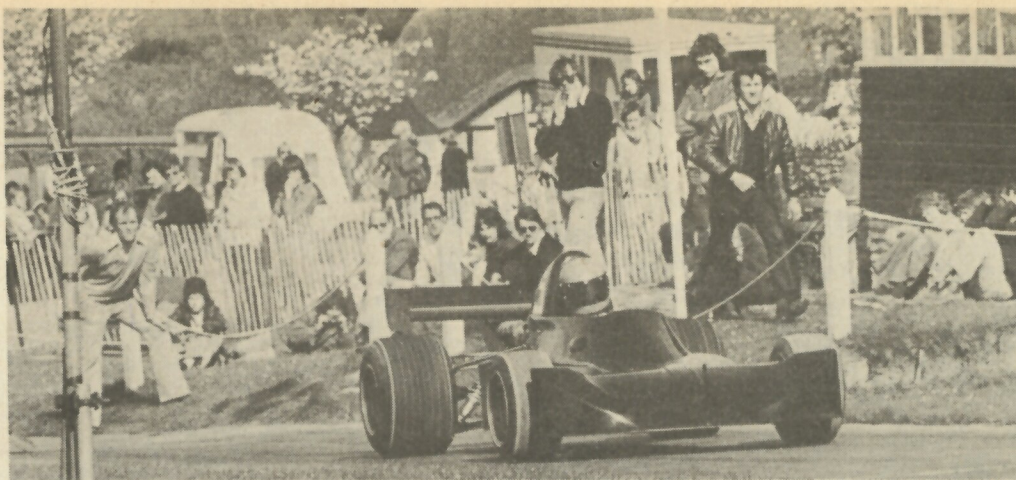
Hillclimbers come in various shapes and sizes (2): Ron Collings' model 90 Mercedes shows the variety.



line. But he failed to repeat this performance in later rounds although he was always right in the hunt and certainly proved capable of giving Lane and Cramer a real run for their money. Towards the end of the year Douglas-Osborn really came good to secure his third place in the championship and at the second Shelsley, the Gurston Down round and the last Doune he really went extremely well to take second place to Lane and must be a man to watch in 1976.

Fourth place in the RAC championship was taken by John Cussins whose Waring and Gillow Chevron B32 proved difficult to sort but Cussins pressed on and aided by his Barbon win with the Brabham, he finally emerged in a fairly secure fourth place. The two litre Modus of Ken MacMaster as always turned in smooth and consistent drives throughout the year and only failed to score in one of the championship meetings in which he entered. However if Lane provided the sensation with his maximum points score in the series so, too, did David Franklin with his relatively underpowered Huntsman Ensign for despite not competing at all the hill climb championship events, he followed up his second place to Lane at Prescott with a series of fine drives to take an excellent sixth place overall in the series. Mention must also be made of 1974 Leaders hill climb champion Martyn Griffiths for he added his name to the ranks of championship event winners by taking the boycotted Northern Ireland round with his Severn Advertising McLaren.

As in past years the RAC hillclimb championship meetings with the exception of the Channel Islands rounds also qualified for the Woking Motors Leaders championship, the support for which was even stronger than in past years. Even though the competition was tough it was the Cheltenham Cameras Gryphon 3AR, the home built supercharged 1100cc single seater of Alan Richards which dominated the proceedings with several fine class wins and Richards aided his own cause and proved a worthy champion by even taking the class win at Pontypool in Sandy Hutcheon's Ginetta G17 when his own car was sidelined. It was certainly the year of the supercharged car for into second place came the



Alister Douglas-Osborn's Pilbeam design was the most successful of the new cars to be seen on the hills.

blown Aldon Healey Sprite of one of hillclimbing's real characters, Russ Ward, who with his John Brown Motors car really turned in some great drives in the small modsports car class and on many occasions did not just beat the class record but just took it to pieces in no uncertain manner. Third in 1974, second in 1975, he could well be the man to beat in 1976. That the Leaders caters for the club driver was well and truly proved by Barry Brant with his Mercian Group Cooper-Triumph MkX for although his car is now over a quarter of a century old, the elbow waving Brant really did prove the man to beat in the up to 500cc racing car class and his demon performances which really set the crowd buzzing were rewarded with a well deserved third place overall in the Leaders series which goes to show the versatility of the series.

With the withdrawal of Castrol from their hill climb championship, the Yorkshire Centre of the BARC were fortunate to gain the support of previous championship winner Jim Thomson's Guyson company and certainly the series proved a cliff hanger. It was Ford employee Colin Rogers with his Carlow Mini who for much of the season

dominated the championship leaders board but towards the end of the season he really came under some considerable pressure from many of the championship chasers and although he battled well, he finally found himself demoted to a well earned fourth place in the series. Taking his life in his hands, David Franklin did not compete at the Harewood championship final meeting despite the fact that ace Welsh driver Stuart Watts with the Elan could rob him of the championship lead which he took at Wiscombe. It was a brave decision but one which paid off for although Watts was flying as he had been all season, he was defeated by a slippery track and was just unable to wrest the title from the Huntsman Ensign driver. However, he took the runner-up spot in the exceptionally well supported series ahead of another Elan in the hands of Guy Brooker while in the Fastest Eight BTD Awards championship, it was again Roy Lane who took the honours ahead of Chris Cramer with Franklin doing extremely well to take third place ahead of Douglas-Osborn.

ROBIN BOUCHER

PROD CAR TRIALS

Without wishing to be unkind to anyone, either competitors, club or championship, I think it is fair to say that production car trialling did not set the world on fire in 1975, either in excitement from new machinery, new faces or nail biting finishes. Rather it was a status quo type of situation. The RAC and BTRDA Championships again promised much from the initial registrations but in the end the same hard core of Midlands dominated competitors travelled the championship trail with inevitable results. Regionalised championships, with perhaps one or two exceptions, were the same as before, but overall everyone seemed to be happy with the situation.

At the start of the season the BTRDA got quite excited when more than 80 members registered for the championship but by the middle of the year it was virtually back to the regulars, the Dellow men had quietly vanished (remember 1974?) and the number of lady competitors could be counted on one hand.

I recorded a year ago that to be competitive one

Geoff Spencer collected not only the BTRDA series but the RAC championship as well – an excellent season for his Ryford sponsored Mini.



had to approach the scene in a very professional manner and it was perhaps this knowledge that has kept so many people away from the national series. One wonders whether the spirit of the sport is being affected by this approach and whether, in fact, regulations can be altered so that the lesser mortals stand a fairer chance.

I know from extremely brief personal experience that a good car can give an undistinguished driver a totally unrealistic position relative to his performance and I am sure that many of the active committee members are worried about the situation.

Perhaps, however, one should mind one's business and allow things to go on their way leaving the series severely alone and letting the true clubman stay in his own little patch enjoying local events for what they are.

Last year AUTOSPORT was able, through extended coverage of events in *Sports Extra*, to note that these club events produced entries from a wider variety of machinery than has graced a national championship event for many a long year.

Such vehicles as the Ford Pop still abound in quite considerable numbers in the south while

Morgans, MGBs, TVRs can be very much on a par against each other when not faced with the ultimate in Midgets and Sprites. Clubs which stretched the interpretation of an event to include Buggies and rally cars were rewarded handsomely.

However, back to the RAC and BTRDA Championships and here Geoff Spencer, the toolmaker from Sutton Coldfield, duly collected his deserts after a fine season by retaining the RAC title and collecting the BTRDA award as well in his Cooper S.

Geoff had to fight hard for his double success right from the start for he was hounded by his old rival from Gloucestershire Bill Moffatt with the Ginetta and also by Mike Stephens in his Mexico.

Stephens, the Solihull driver, was perhaps the man of the year for he collected overall wins on a number of occasions with some incredible driving from a class which often included Peter Higgins (Mexico), and old stalwarts Dennis Wells (Skoda) and, very occasionally, Charles Barter in his Pop.

Spencer's opposition, by contrast, was almost invariably provided by Kevin Caley in his Mini and the similar machine of one of the few leading southerners to challenge the series in the person of Gordon Francis.

Francis improved steadily through the hot, dry summer and if Spencer decides to retire from the championship in the coming months, then Francis and Caley could have a great fight for class or even overall honours this year.

When one talks about the sports car performances it is as inevitable as night follows day that Mike Harrison and Malcolm Brown dominated the scene in their Midget and Sprite machines. Few bother to enter against them, which they regret, and they both had to go right through to the end of the series to sort out their own bit of personal glory.

In the small capacity rear-engined class Colin Valentine, yes another Midlander, had a fine season while it was pleasing to see Edgar Wadsworth had lost none of his considerable skills as he campaigned his Steyr-Puch to great purpose. Class 5 died a horrible death very early on. Bill Moffatt was always a winner whenever he entered but even he became disenchanted with hollow victories and disappeared in the latter part of the season. Perhaps he will return with a new car.

DEREK HILL

RALLYCROSS

In retrospect, 1975 might well prove to have been a vital year in rallycross, with the emergence of some fresh circuits and the formation of a Drivers' Association which seem, *prima facie*, to be keen on assisting the sport rather than pressing for much more money. A considerable number of autocross competitors concentrated more on rallycross and this trend towards the venues with permanent circuits and facilities is likely to be maintained in the future.

The long-established Lydden Hill circuit hosted the major events, as befits the best track in Britain, and ATV visited Long Marston twice, while Snetterton and Knockhill were overcoming their teething troubles. Denys Dobbie's brainchild held its first meeting prematurely and, although TEAC were asked to oversee the organisation, the track itself quickly turned into a near quagmire. Dobbie then took the wise move of cancelling meetings for the next three months until the track was fully prepared. Snetterton, on the other hand, has taken a far longer time to sort out and there have been numerous damaging accidents, the exit from the Pit being particularly dangerous.

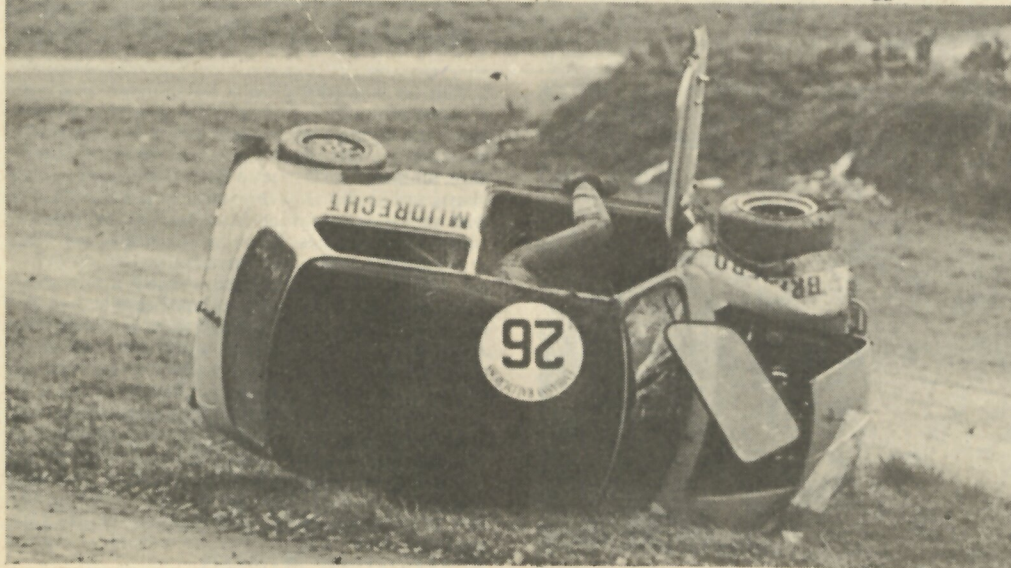
New Year's Day, 1976, saw the first rallycross at the Longridge quarry and while there was a good crowd the circuit lacked variety with just two circuit changes – tarmac to grass and back to tarmac.

The major championship of the year was that organised at Lydden by TEAC, two of the four rounds being on Bank Holidays and attracting near capacity crowds. John Taylor won this in his Haynes Escorts, while Tom Airey won the first round and claimed the runner-up spot overall. The Sporting CC of Norfolk and the West Suffolk MC combined to put on what turned out to be a popular winter series at Snetterton, featuring several classes, including one for rally cars, with John Winsor taking the honours in his I.3 Mini Clubman by a narrow margin from Bruce Rushton.

The improvement in the ability of the British club driver was markedly demonstrated in the final of the European Championship where Peter Vaughan and Bruce Bamber notched fastest times in two of the three runs, although overall Tom Airey repeated his previous year's success to beat Peter Harrold, Cees Teurlings and Taylor. VWs filled five of the top half dozen places in the European series, team-mates Cees Teurlings and Dick Riefel heading Ford interloper John Taylor, Franz Wurz, Herbert Grundsteidl and Hugh Wheldon. The Embassy Internationale early in November, with excellent BBC coverage, saw Bjorn Waldegaard put everyone in their places with masterful control of his Porsche. Trevor Hopkins, John Smith and Nick Jesty also scored admirable results.

John Taylor showed himself to be the quickest driver and with continued Ford backing, found himself in a quasi-works car in several National rallies. John Smith continued the tidy fast driving he showed in 1974 while Trevor Hopkins improved steadily throughout the year. A number of other Escorters showed themselves to be fleet on occasions. Rod Chapman was the only driver other than Taylor to be able to afford a Mk II bodyshell although his form was barely a patch on previous years, but Ron Douglas turned up on

Rallycross proved as spectacular as ever, although some would briefly not endorse the suggestion.



Competitors found the new circuit at Knockhill somewhat bumpy – above is Tom Airey. Below, Rod Chapman tangles with a Volkswagen during one of the Lydden Internationals.



Boxing Day with a brand new Mk II which proved immediately quick. Popular autocross stars George Warren and Tony Merridale, the erratic John Welch, Castrol man Dave Fuell and the irrepressible Colin Richards all made their presence felt as did Robin Kinnear and Dave Stewart at Knockhill while the late Tony Brise's

performance at the Embassy Internationale will not be easily forgotten.

Tom Airey was the most consistently quick Mini driver, while his preparation concern was also responsible for the similar cars of Mick Bird, who was very fast on occasions, David Potter and Dave Baskerville. Trevor Reeves, Keith Ripp, Peter Vaughan, Bruce Bamber and Judith Jesty all had their moments of glory, but towards the end of the year four 'unknowns' in the shapes of Richard Painton, Gordon Rogers, Derek Scarrow and John Binning burst onto the scene and proved that it is still possible for an impecunious clubman to figure highly in the results with a Mini.

Of the less common makes the most effective were Nick Jesty's 3.5 V8-engined Imp which was very swift when the conditions were suitable, and the VWs of Hugh Wheldon and Peter Harrold. Further variety was provided by Bernard Rode-mark's Carrera, Lyndon Fraser's Firenza and Will Gollop's Dolomite.

The recent club Brands rallycross somehow conjured up more media stimulation than the International meetings of the previous years despite their plethora of continental stars and one of the aims of the newly formed British Rallycross Drivers Association is to improve the promotion of the sport with both spectator entertainment and competitor welfare in mind. The Hot Rod/Rallycross drivers challenges have proved excellent publicity outlets and a return match at a rallycross circuit should reward an enterprising promoter with crowds a little nearer in size to the five-figure totals achieved on the continent.

JOHN ASQUITH

ROAD RALLIES

On the Road rallying scene, Mick Briant was totally dominant, taking victory in the *Motoring News*, BTRDA Silver Star and Welsh Association championships, a treble feat which earned him a Ford Rallyman of the month award for his achievements with a virtually standard RS2000 backed by Adlards of Brixton. The MN series was again Britain's premiere road championship with a regular circus of crews chasing points around the

Nick Briant — domination



country, opposed by the quick locals who were usually present in the final results.

The Servais in Norfolk started the year and Briant (who had already won two Association events) took victory navigated by John McKerrell from the evergreen Frank Pierson/Colin Francis (RS1600). Briant had a setback on the next round, the Border Uniflow, run on the old 117 in North Wales — a slight overshoot took him down a muddy white costing 12 minutes and a top 10 place. Bill Gwynne/Terry Thorp (RS1700) took their only MN victory of the year and Barry Hughes made his last road appearance, with Frank Pierson, before his tragic death.

The classic Nutcracker came next with both selectives and stages, the latter on Myndd Eppynt and Dai Roderick, Pat Ryan and Terry Brown were among the stage drivers present. Roderick in fact led the event for a while but fuel pump trouble cost him a lot of time and Briant was back on top. The usual mid-season break saw crews up in Teesside for the very fast Stocktonian which was, somewhat unusually, bedevilled with problems including shortcuts on some of the selectives. Briant had Dave Kirkham alongside him and they won from a very determined local Ron Beecroft/John Millington (RS2000). Phil Davies/Don Davidson became the first people ever to score MN points with a Saab 99 and good local drives came from Steve Smith and Pete Ellerby.

The superb Cilwendeg came next and Dai Roderick made no mistakes and ran out winners with Kevin Videan/Peter Valentine in the Old Woking 240Z in attendance. This event in fact won the BTRDA award for the best rally of the year. Way down south, the Bristowe saw Peter Bryant step in as navigator with the other Briant and they took easy victory. Cyril Bolton/Keith

Wood were well in contention when a wheel came off the Minisport Mini. Bolton in fact won the next two rounds, the Illuminations and the Devils Own, closely followed by Geoff Birkett/Dave Orrick whose DOT supported Opel Ascona was cleaning up the Northern championship. A series of authorisation problems led to the last two rounds of the series being held on the same night, the Martin Group trophy (formerly Cytax) and the Red Dragon in SW Wales. Briant rounded off the season by taking victory with Peter Bryant again in the left hand seat while the Dragon, held in icy conditions, went to Bernard Banning/Rob Parrot (Avenger GT) on their first road event for over a year. So Briant was clear winner from Kevin Videan with Peter Valentine taking the navigators' section with Colin Francis second.

The BTRDA Silver Star series closely followed the rounds used by MN with only minor changes. Briant was victor with Ted Cowell well in attendance while Colin Francis was a street clear of Pete Forrester and Dave Taylor in the navigators section.

Two of the best Association championships were ANECC (Association of NE and Cumbria Car Clubs) and the ANCC (Northern). The rounds often overlapped and top men were Fred

Henderson/Mrs Trudi Binks (RS1600) and Geoff Birkett/Dave Orrick (Ascona), these crews taking their respective series. Ron Beecroft/John Millington did rounds in both series and ended up as double runners-up while Ron Shipp (Thompsons of Hull Firenza) cleaned up several events at the start of the year but a large accident on the Nutcracker put him out for almost the remainder of the series.

The ANWCC series went to Jim Corner/Brian Goff who started with a Mk1 Cortina but ended the year with a Mexico. They had a year-long battle with Colin Mack/David Thomas (Avenger) who finally lost out on the Martin Group with mechanical failure. Midlands champions were Mike Hutchinson/Eric Cowcill who had their own Escort 1600 sponsored by Lloyds of Stafford but also borrowed ARE200M Lloyds development RS2000 for several events.

Several associations were in advance of RAC thinking and introduced noise, lights and give way sign regulations during the year and, with the current level of enthusiasm amongst clubmen, 1976 bodes well for Association level road rallying.

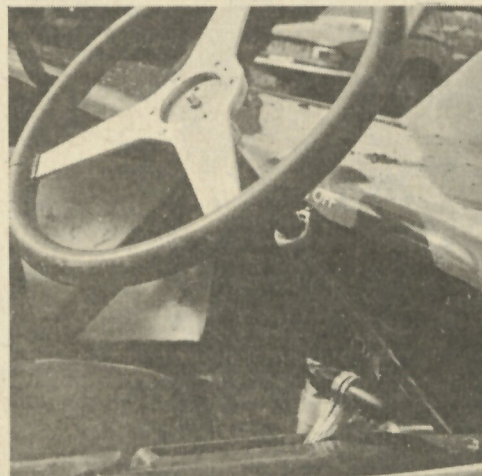
DAVE ORRICK

Geoff Birkett and author Dave Orrick who found themselves in a variety of cars, seen here on the Mini Miglia in their Ascona.



SPORTING TRIALS

The sporting world of trials has enjoyed a wealth of new cars, and as predicted by the right honourable Stuart Turner of Ford, the sport is growing. Jack Pearce, the producer of the magnificent Kincraft, continues to add a few models each year to the fray, and it is as well he does not manufacture too many for their Grand Prix style and Formula One finish are hard to beat. Jack's latest Mark 5 and personal mount has fiddle brakes that hide between the panels and work at finger tip pressures (right), which is a masterful piece of engineering—typical of the Pearce precision. The Kincraft uses the Renault 16 engine, others find the Ford Mexico lump ideal. Gordon Jackson and his IbeX are the most successful users, built by Racing Harrison another IbeX was recently born down South and John Hopkins' awards doubled over night. Mike Cannon still produces the rare car but rumour has



it that he is working on a new breed, and will produce a handful of mounts to keep the famous name still flying. Julian Fack has been successful in selling his kits made by Sabre. However, up to date, all his offspring have British Leyland power plants unlike Julian's Impunity and John Fack's well hacked steed which both have rather special 1000 cc Imp engines. Sporting trials was starving to death from lack of machines but to-day it is not a problem, and beside those already mentioned, there are individuals such as heather wizzard Lol Hurt, John Benson and his Jab special plus Robin Jager winning Nymph. In fact there are more people building than ever before so vehicle shortage should be a thing of the past.

The sport has had no great changes other than the normal progress, although some consider that the rear of the cars are getting too low, which is defeating the rule of passenger seating and axle position. The RAC Blue book only specifies the side panel must be at least 6 inches high. One wonders how long it will be before someone



Jack Pearce's earlier Kincraft lifts its wheels. He dominated the early half of the year, but was more closely challenged latterly.

introduces a tailboard and a true tipper! On the tyre front, or rears which is the critical end, Semperit M401 steel braced radials have reigned supreme with all the major titles being won on them. This is excellent news for Semperit (UK) Ltd, and deservedly so as they continued to support and sponsor the sport since the days when only a few used their successful products. The Semperit/BTRDA trials series of 24 events has been the mainstay of the sport, and the RAC championship counting on an accumulative scoring system based on the BTRDA calendar.

This was won for the fourth year in succession by Jack Pearce and his Kincraft, notching up 8 wins, Julian Fack won one and was second and brother John, without an outright credit, took third place. Gordon Jackson would have been runner-up to the title if he had paid his pound and registered for the RAC Championship. Gordon has already joined for 1976!

The Semperit/BTRDA Experts and Silver star final took place on the wind swept slopes of the High Peak District beyond Sheffield. The top 25 sporting trialists fought for the Expert's title, and

in a battle of soft foot shuffles, Robin Jager in his own BL Nymph mount and borrowed bounce Helen Pine won the day. The family of Facks were next, John taking the best Midlands award and Julian third place overall. Jack Pearce, Tony Harrison and Reg Allen were all there. Keith Butterfield was best Northerner and Colin Taylor the best Southern chap. One of the disappointments of the day was the loss of Gordon Jackson when the IbeX blew the brake pipes. The Silver award was won by Hugh Pollard with some expert driving, beating Bill Hicks and Tom Stevenson to the title.

The future looks rosy for the sport, and has attracted many sportsmen from motor cycling and other four wheeled activities. Stirling Moss has been one such convert and now regularly competes in his own Cannon, and enjoys every minute of the open air pursuit. The saddles moment was the loss of the rising Grand Prix star Tony Brise, who loved his trials and graced many an event with his wife.

In the South, the Pit Stop Southern Championship now rules the roost, the local Accessory chain taking over the sponsorship from Duckhams Gordon Jackson and his team won the last series which ended earlier in the year with Chris Highwood second and Colin Taylor third. The current Pit Stop series, after five rounds, is lead by Colin Taylor, with John Hopkins next and favourite to win Gordon Jackson third. Entries in the south, like the national meetings, have attracted between 35 and 45 cars, which is a healthy state of affairs. The 750 Motor Club have fostered their own Championships, with classes for 750,950 and NFT formulas. They have also slotted into the Pit Stop events and the smaller class winners like Cyril Gamblen, Alan Gisby and Dick Lee have shown many a National formula car the way round, and have of late been using the Semperit M401 instead of the legal knobblies for their class.

COLIN TAYLOR

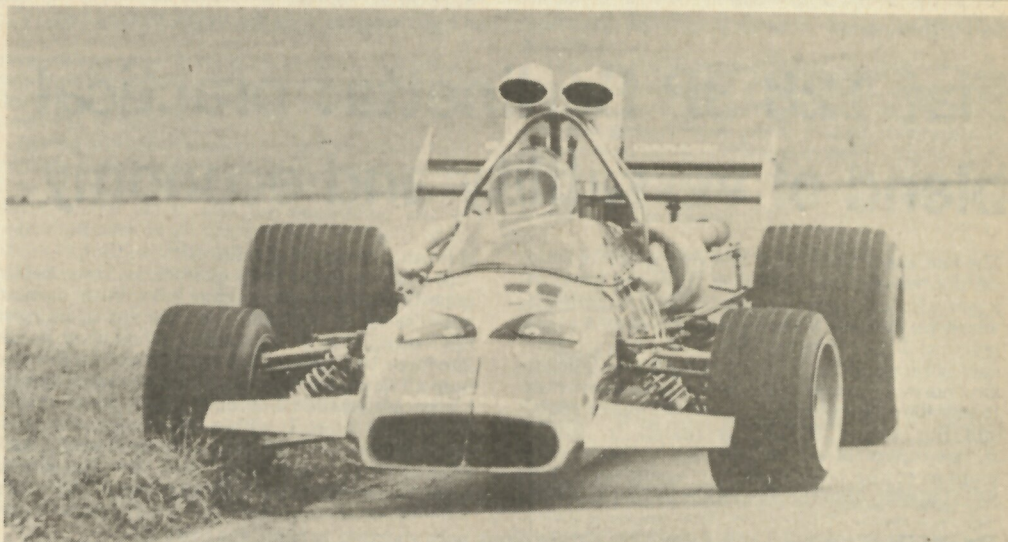
SPRINTS

The RAC sprint championship was almost totally dominated by the McLaren-Morand/Chevrolet M10B/14 of Dave Harris, the runner-up in the 1974 series, for having missed the opening round at Longridge, he then really made his challenge in a big way and was virtually unbeatable on the faster courses recording no less than five championship wins and three second places on his way to becoming the national sprint champion. The only venue on which Harris struggled during the year was the popular Curborough course and it was here that David Franklin excelled in June by taking a fine top ten win, and this coupled with a series of fine performances at Longridge and the two Yeoviltons, was just good enough to give the Ensign driver the runner-up spot in the sprint championship to add to his Guyson/BARC win and his sixth place in the RAC hill climb series.

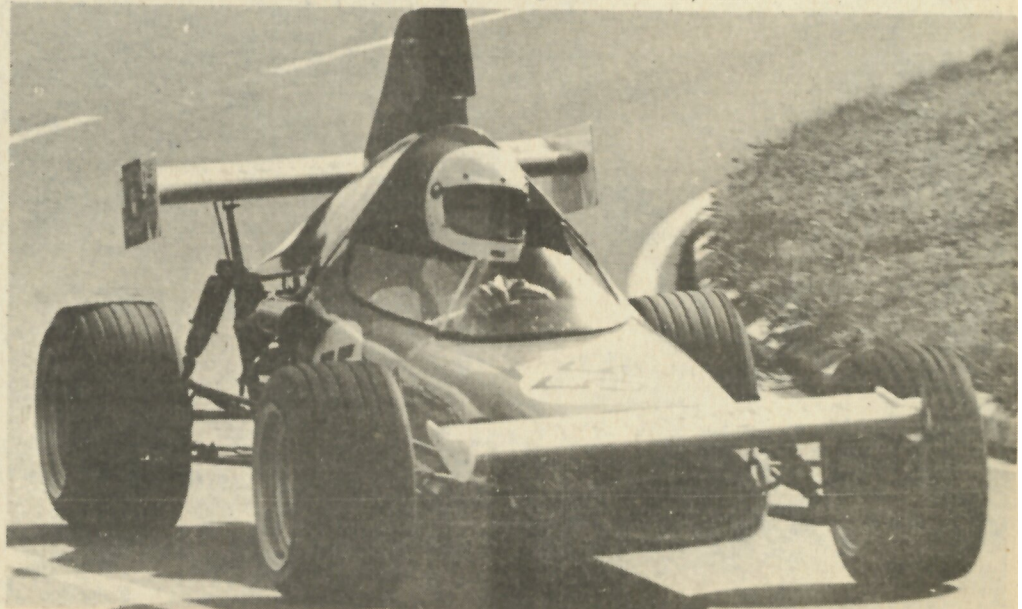
However Franklin came under severe pressure towards the end of the sprint championship from the 1974 title holder Bob Rose who despite missing four events really started motoring with his McLaren M14D and surprised everyone by defeating even Tony Griffiths for BTD at the Weston Speed Trials although he was unable to repeat the performance in the top ten. Nevertheless Rose still proved one of the leading sprint exponents and at the last meeting of the year at Wellesbourne only lost an overall second place in the championship to Franklin on the tie break rule. As always Johnty Williamson proved consistent with his Manpower Surtees to take fourth place in the series while of the smaller engined cars the Brabhams of David Render and Rob Turnbull were constantly providing a thorn in the side of the larger engined cars. At the end of the year hillclimber Alister Douglas-Osborn also appeared for three meetings and really made his mark with a fine fourth place at Weston with the Pilbeam which he then followed up with a championship win the next day at Curborough, his first ever appearance at the Midlands course. He finished his season in grand style by just pipping Dave Harris for ten points in the championship run off at Wellesbourne.

Certainly the sprint world is staging a fine comeback from the doldrums of a few seasons ago and with this aspect of the sport going from strength to strength, 1976 promises, despite the industrial gloom, to be even better than before.

ROBIN BOUCHER



Dave Harris in his McLaren using some of the grass at Wroughton. He dominated the RAC sprint series. Below, Keith Gowers in his original Bainbridge Challenger on the Isle of Man.





During the revision of the body shell, the opportunity has been taken to drop the wedge-shaped look.

Fiat 128 3P Berlinetta: practical blend of versatility and economy

The Fiat 128 Coupé 1300 was a very sporting little car that was great fun to drive. However, perhaps it was a little too frivolous for the serious times in which we live and it has been replaced by a more practical 3-door version, with virtually an estate configuration. With the same wheelbase, almost 9in. shorter than that of the saloon, it yet contrives to provide a remarkable amount of interior space and the weight is only increased by about three-quarters of a hundredweight. During the revision of the body shell, the opportunity has been taken to drop the wedge-shaped look, which

is starting to go out of fashion.

In addition to the body alterations, some detail improvements to the engine have been carried out. The latest unit will pass the stringent new EEC anti-pollution regulations when they come into force, but the maximum power output has not been affected. A new combustion chamber design has permitted the compression ratio to be raised from 8.8 to 9.2 to 1, without altering the octane requirement. This has reduced the specific fuel consumption by 8% at low and medium revolutions and 4% at high engine speeds. More

important still, the flexibility has been improved so that top gear can be used at town speeds, thus still further reducing fuel consumption.

In other respects, the 3P follows the design of its predecessor. Independent suspension of all four wheels on the MacPherson system is featured, with a transverse leaf instead of coil springs at the rear, for minimum interference with interior luggage space. Compared with the 128 saloons, the 3P has the advantages of servo-assisted brakes and a rev-counter. Almost incredibly, however, the cool air ventilation through adjustable eyeballs has been deleted and one must settle for cold feet or warm breath, which is frankly not good enough in such a costly little car.

Naturally, the transverse engine retains the belt-driven overhead-camshaft and the efficient transmission has a direct drive from the clutch to the gearbox, without any step-down gears. A re-positioned torque reaction link, and revised drive shafts to the front hubs, reduce the

The Fiat 128 3P combines many practical virtues along with sporting appearance and feel



Road test



A high rear sill necessitates the expenditure of much effort in loading luggage or assisting elderly dogs.

transmission of noise and vibration to the interior.

The 3P seems a much larger car than the previous coupé, though the external dimensions are similar. There is a large shelf behind the rear seats, that automatically lifts to give access to the capacious luggage compartment, which is normally concealed. When the seats are folded and the shelf is detached, the large rear space has a flat floor and the top-hinged door stays out of the way, though structural strength requires a sill, over which heavy luggage must be lifted and old dogs may need assistance — it's an easy leap for younger canines. I dwell on the dog aspect because many people choose 3-door bodies to keep their four-legged friends off the passengers' seats.

On the road, the new car is typically Fiat, with an engine that has a seemingly unlimited capacity for revs, the hand of the rev-counter swinging into the red with no effort at all. What is entirely new is the impressive torque — astonishing for an engine of only 1300 cc — which gives strong

acceleration from 20 mph in top gear. We are all making more use of top gear when the engine is flexible enough to do so, for nobody wants to waste petrol these days.

During normal driving, the new Fiat is definitely more economical than the old one. Over several days of miscellaneous motoring, including cold starts, traffic work, and the occasional use of maximum revs on all gears, I averaged 33.5 mpg, which is praiseworthy indeed. It probably means that at medium cruising speeds on unobstructed roads, a journey could be completed at a 40 mpg average, and even an incurable gear-screamer should keep on the right side of 30 mpg, which may help to pay his police court fines.

I found that the performance was a little below that of the earlier coupé, but though the small weight increase may partly account for this, I think it was largely because "my" car would have been better with a few more miles on the clock. The efficient engine still sounds healthy when fully extended, but I think the sound level is lower

than that of the coupé, apart from road noise, which is a bit more noticeable though wind noise has been well subdued.

In the past, I would perhaps have said that the car was under-g geared. In present conditions, I'm not so sure, though the lady who drives me after dinner was enquiring about a non-existent fifth speed. There's no doubt that the little motor is turning over swiftly at high cruising rates, but it is so over-square that the piston speed is quite moderate. Higher gearing might even spoil the fuel economy by causing more gearchanging, and five speeds would, of course, be the perfect answer.

The gearbox handles very pleasantly, except for occasional baulking when engaging first gear from rest. The brake pedal of the test car had a fairly long travel but the over-light operation of the previous model had been eliminated; the brakes were powerful and effective, though they did smell hot after hard driving.

I am delighted to say that the handling is still truly excellent and gives the utmost confidence. The pronounced understeer of some of the earlier front-drive cars is not in evidence, and the lower body has permitted the deletion of the front anti-roll bar, as used on the saloon. On sharp corners, there is still some understeer, but on the faster curves it is possible to coax the tail to hang out. In short, the cornering power is high and the handling excellent.

The car has a sporting feel about it and the ride is fairly firm, though it soaks up the bumps quite well on bad roads. The front seats are comfortable, though I prefer the infinitely variable seat back adjustment of the 128 saloon to the widely spaced notches of the 3P. Considering the short wheel-base, the rear seats are more than adequate. The four headlights give a fine beam, but the contrast when the lights are dipped can be somewhat alarming.

The Fiat 128 3P Berlinetta is a sporting car with many practical virtues. Its excellent fuel economy is highly relevant to our times, while its flexibility and low-speed torque prove that an over-square engine need not be deficient in such virtues. It is by no means an expensive toy, for it provides useful family transport for children, dogs, lawn mowers, or the kitchen sink.

SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA

Car Tested: Fiat 128 3P Berlinetta 3-door coupé, price £2,145 including car tax and VAT.

Engine: Four-cylinders 86 x 55.5mm (1290cc). Compression ratio 9.2 to 1. 73 bhp at 6000 rpm. Overhead camshaft with toothed-belt drive. Weber twin-choke carburettor.

Transmission: Single dry plate clutch, 4-speed synchromesh gearbox with central remote control, ratios: 1.04, 1.45, 2.23, and 3.58 to 1. Final drive by helical-toothed spur gears, ratio 4.007 to 1.

Chassis: Integral steel construction. Independent MacPherson suspension of all four wheels, with coil springs in front and transverse leaf spring behind. Rack and pinion steering. Servo-assisted dual-circuit disc/drum brakes. Bolt-on steel wheels, fitted 145 HR 13 tyres.

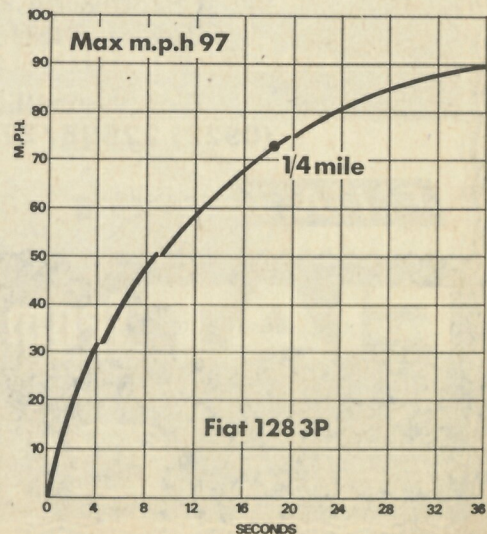
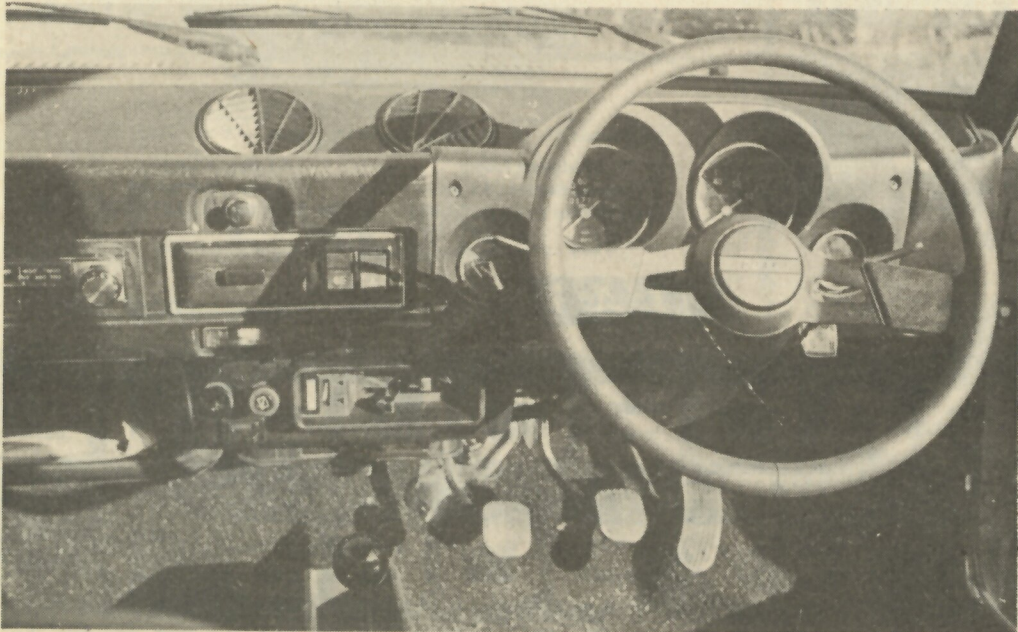
Equipment: 12-volt lighting and starting. Speedometer. Rev-counter. Water temperature and fuel gauges. Heating and demisting system with heated rear window. Windscreens wiper with intermittent operation and washer. Flashing direction indicators with hazard warning. Reversing lights.

Dimensions: Wheelbase 7ft 3.5in. Track 4ft 4.4in/4ft 4.5in. Width 5ft 2in. Overall length 12ft 6.6in. Weight 16cwt 78lbs.

Performance: Maximum speed 97 mph. Speeds in gears: Third 75 mph, second 50 mph, first 32 mph. Standing quarter-mile 18.5s. Acceleration: 0-30 mph 3.8s, 0-50 mph 8.7s, 0-60 mph 12.8s, 0-80 mph 23.6s.

Fuel Consumption: 32 to 38 mpg

Ventilation is only available through fascia-top swivelling vanes—adjustable eyeballs have been deleted.



Tiff Needell: 91.66% finisher

There are few people who come into racing born with a silver spoon in their mouths. But of those that are, 99 per cent of them have been endowed with a healthy bank balance. Tiff Needell was one of the one per centers, pretty well unique. He wanted to be a racing driver so he entered a competition in *AUTOSPORT* to win a Formula Ford Lotus and a full course at Jim Russell's Racing Drivers' School and won it. It didn't matter how much he knew about cars, it didn't matter whether he had the time or the money to race — he had a car. For three years he raced it and its FF successors as best as he knew how, wasting time early on through sheer ignorance and often being driven near bankruptcy through lack of resources. In 1974, he came second in the Wella FF championship, and in 1975, after a very disheartening start, obviously due to his Elden's inadequacies, he not only won the Townsend Thoresen championship, but moved up to FF 2000 and duly won three races out of the five he started and finished. In fact Tiff's finishing record is fantastic. In Formula Ford and FF 2000, he's started 204 races and finished 187, a percentage of 91.66. For his achievements, Tiff was awarded a Grovewood commendation last week, almost exactly five years after our then editor, Simon Taylor, telephoned Tiff to say that he'd won that competition.

When I first met Tiff, I wondered how anyone could christen their child Tiffany, which would explain his current first name. Then, when I met his father scrutineering a power boat race in which I competed I was even more puzzled, because I was sure that he wouldn't have done such a thing. The real story is that Tiff has an older (as well as a younger) brother called Michael, and when he was young, he couldn't say Tiff's real name. Timothy, it just came out as something akin to Tiff, hence the name.

Tiff's motor racing goes back a lot further than five years. For a start, he was born shortly after his father took part in his last sprint at Goodwood after a career that spanned Brooklands, Donington and Goodwood. Father Needell was principally involved in marine matters being a marine engineer, but while Tiff started power boat races in which John (MCD) Webb was competing, and was runabout champion at 16, the motor racing started a lot earlier with visits to Goodwood almost immediately he could walk. "I remember the Thinwall Special," said Tiff proudly, "but my real idol was Jim Clark. He was brilliant." "He still has pictures of him on his bedroom wall," interjects Tiff's constant companion for the last two years, Miss Christine Goodhand, a much admired lady.

Back to motor racing. The next racing, apart from boats, that entered into Tiff's life "was in Weybridge High Street." After a brief flirtation with a motor bike, which ended with Tiff inspecting a lorry's sump, Tiff took over the family Morris 1000 for a few years. "I didn't have any shunts . . . really, although there was the handbrake turn after which two wheels fell off, and I ended up in someone's garden another time." One gets the impression that young Needell was responsible for a number of unexplained happenings around the Weybridge area.

By this time Tiff had left nearby Ottershaw boarding school with four A-levels and seven Os, which was good enough to get him into City

University. He'd already tried to win a Formula Ford once in an *AUTOSPORT* competition, but now it was time to try the real thing at a racing school. While Tiff registered at Motor Racing Stables, it was not a simple thing turning up there. He was working on a sandwich course at the University for an honours degree in civil engineering, sponsored by Wimpey. This meant that sometimes he was living in London, sometimes in Chelmsford, so that earning £50 a month was reduced by £30 for the school fees immediately, and Tiff had £20 to live on for the month. However, he finished the course in 1969, and in 1970, did the school Star of Tomorrow races in which he finished fourth.

At the end of the year, Tiff entered the second *AUTOSPORT* competition for a Lotus 69F, Jim Russell Course and all the trappings. He filled out two of the coupons with help from relatives, and it cost him £2 to enter.

Some weeks later, a mysterious phone call interrupted Tiff watching Olivia Newton-John singing, It's Not For You on Top of the Pops. It was the then editor, Simon Taylor, telling Tiff that he'd won the competition. Reaction varied from Tiff's grandmother suggesting that the money if he sold it would be useful, to Tiff totally forgetting all the details of the actual presentation in his excitement. What Tiff's father won't know until he reads this, is that it wasn't Tiff who won the competition with his line, it was him.

Fortunately Tiff had just bought his first car, a Morris traveller — "no brakes, just airhorns" — and fortunately, Tiff had just had a cartilage operation and was off work, so that between the three of them, they managed to get car and Tiff to Snetterton for his Jim Russell courses which were part of the prize. Tiff did the course in a week, so that at the beginning of May, with willing, but hardly knowledgeable helpers, Tiff started racing his own car. His first race was at Snetterton on May 2, 1971. "I came fifth in my heat and tenth in the final. It was terrifying, but I had a good dice with Patrick Neve and Pato Nunez," recalls Tiff. He did 25 races in that first year, mainly clubbies, but his ninth race was a disaster. Coming into Russell at Snetterton, he found a spun car in front of him and the Lotus went end over end. He lost months in time, although longtime helper Robert Trebble aided rebuilding the car.

"In 1972, I thought I was going to set the world on fire, do really well. But at the second BOC round at Mallory, Buzz Buzaglo spun in front of everyone going into Druids. It was quite a select accident really. There was Buzz, Ian Taylor, Derek Lawrence and Graham Cuthbert." The chassis was twisted and that lost Tiff a lot of time, something which he only discovered when he had another accident later in the season with Frank Sytner at Cadwell Park. This necessitated a new chassis which instantly saw the car go better, not surprisingly. It was also the year that Tiff concentrated on the *Daily Express* series at Silverstone, a move which put him off racing on Silverstone's club circuit for life.

So still with the Lotus, which was getting rather tatty by this stage, Tiff entered 1973 aiming at the BOC series. "I was still struggling, never doing enough testing, working away from the car during the week. Then Brian Hampshire came along and offered me a cost price Elden Mk 10C. I sold the Lotus to Austrian Hans Meier, collecting the money in a lay-by in Austria in exchange for



Tiff Needell — self-made finisher.

thousands of Austrian schillings. The *AUTOSPORT* Lotus ended its days off the side of some Austrian mountain during a hillclimb." It was a car which Tiff raced 90 times in just 26 months, finished 82 times, won in three times and finished in the first six 44 times. But the results weren't much more forthcoming that year, and although Tiff finished seventh in the FF festival the previous year, he was pushed off in the final. He had 45 races in the year.

So still with his faithful Elden, and a growing band of friends, including Richard Burgoyne helping with the car, Tiff, with works help from Scholar went into 1974. "It was a damn good year," he recalls. It certainly started well for he met Chris Goodhand at a New Year's Eve party, and then he got his degree in February. "I was really only beaten by the Crossles. I concentrated on the Wella series and did a total of 43 races. I really thought I was going to be a star." It was his best season, coming second in the Wella series.

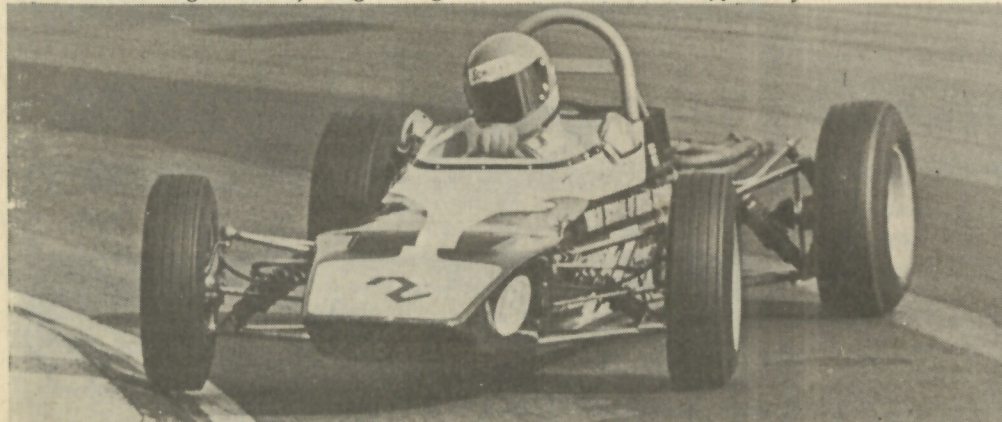
The 1975 season looked good. He was offered a Mk 17 Elden, and duly sold the Mk 10C in which he'd finished a staggering 62 out of 65 races. He had another five wins, and finished in the first six 40 times. "But the Mk 17 was a disaster. First of all we had engine installation problems, and it wasn't very quick through the corners. I was on 11/10ths all the time. We did five nose cones in 14 races that I finished. So I phoned Chris Hiatt-Baker of the High School of Hang Gliding who I knew had this Crossle sitting at the back of the garage. I offered to buy it, but I couldn't pay him for it until I'd sold it again. Chris agreed and I went down to Bristol to pick up the car. I fitted my gearbox and the Scholar — all I owned then was a gearbox and a helmet. And after 4½ years, I finally won at Brands Hatch. And then I won seven on the trot. After I won that first race, David Lazenby (of Hawke) rang me, or rather Chris first, and said that he'd always thought me quite good and said that Syd wasn't driving for him any longer in the Hawke FF2000, would I like to drive for Mac McKinstry? I was on pole for the first race, but got beaten by Syd. But we won 36 bottles of McKechnie wine in three months." The record shows that Tiff had 27 outings in the Crossle from July '75 to December '75, he finished 24 times, won 12 times and finished in the first six 22 times. In the Hawke, he started and finished five times, won three times, and finished in the first six each time. In the championships, he narrowly snatched the Townsend Thoresen series at the last round, was fourth in the MCD Organs series, fifth in the Brush Fusegear, seventh in the BAF, and fourth in the APG FF2000 championship — an excellent record considering he's scarcely scored a point up to July.

The situation now for Tiff is that he desperately wants to go F3. His work at Wimpey is fairly sympathetic to his racing, and Tiff is now in charge of a new block of flats in Hull. Most of the manufacturers have offered him buying deals, but he doesn't have the money. He can stay in FF2000 with Mac McKinstry, but typically, Mac would like to see him realise his ambitions. It needs that ever important sponsorship to get him moving up. For a sponsor, he couldn't be better value. As a person, he's intelligent, articulate, and, as one respected and well known driver said, "he's approachable and pleasant, that's very important." If one resents the silver spoon of a free car, then it's worth studying some of the statistics of what Tiff has done with his cars, and how his fellow competitors view him. As so often happens, it's now just a question of getting on with the help of money.

BOB CONSTANDUROS

AUTOSPORT, FEBRUARY 12, 1976

Needell hurls his High School of Hang Gliding Crossle around Druids in typical style.



Jock Robertson—saloon star

"We like him as a bloke, he's no trouble, he doesn't get drunk, downs his 15 pints, he's no problem" — Gerry Marshall was talking about his man Jock Robertson. We were in the Marshall-Wingfield emporium of used cars in Finchley Road, and Jock was getting ready to collect his Grovewood award that night. Meanwhile Marshall was mustering his mates to make sure that the young Scot celebrated in the right fashion. For Robertson, it's been quite a brief but successful career. He's driven in nearly 58 races in two seasons, and finished first in 34 of them. With that sort of record, it's not surprising he collected that Grovewood award. After running the Marshall Wingfield Mazda RX3 last year, carrying off both Britax and Radio One championships outright, Robertson is set for a season's FF2000 in 1976, even if Gerry's not particularly keen on single seaters: "We don't sell them at the showrooms, and I can't do the lap of honour."

Robertson's not exactly the experienced campaigner that Marshall is, although he's packed quite a lot of racing into a short time. But he fits in the Marshall "family". "He drinks pints and enjoys life like the rest of us," said Marshall, while Jock scotched the rumour that he'd never drunk a pint of bitter before he met Marshall by saying "Yes, I did drink beer, but I probably hadn't drunk the same sort of quantity." His association with Marshall came about through Dealer Team Vauxhall, but that's jumping ahead a little.

"I was born 23 years ago in Edinburgh at five in the afternoon, just in time for tea," there was not much significance in the fact, but there it is. Jock lived in Edinburgh for seven or eight years before the parents moved to a farm near Royston in Hertfordshire where they still live. The young Robertson's first experiences of vehicles came about on the farm, thrashing superfast tractors round the fields, and later, doing his own version of banger racing with old cars. As they broke, so Jock used to put them right, and that was his first mechanical experience.

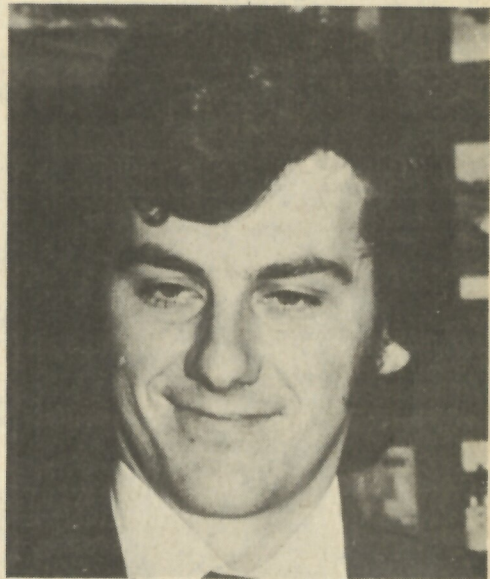
It was logical then that after leaving school, Jock should go to college to do a mechanical course which included all the basics of mechanic-ing and general motor technicalities. "Point out that I passed with distinction," said Jock, which is duly done. At this stage, about the only connection that the Robertson family had with

motor racing was that father Robertson knew Jim Clark's father in Scotland, but that was all. Then the Robertsons gave up the farm in Royston to move into a house nearby, and Jock met Don Haggar, who started up Bill Blydenstein's tuning business with Bill. Haggar got Jock a job at Blydenstein's in nearby Shepreth, initially as an apprentice, until Jock began to prove his qualifications and Bill gave him better jobs.

Obviously this was a very good background to race preparation, for Gerry Marshall was driving the DTV Firenza as it was then, prepared by Blydenstein and his lads. Jock got quite keen on the racing idea and went up to the Jim Russell School at Snetterton in 1973 while working at Shepreth. But after doing a few school races, the finance ran out, and that was that. However, towards the end of the year, he decided that for 1974, he'd do Group One and with most of his money, he logically bought and built up a Vauxhall Magnum to race in the two club Group One series.

"I first raced it at Thruxton one cold, wet and miserable March day, the 24th in fact. I came third in class behind Derrick Brunt and Barrie Williams. The next week, at Silverstone, I came third again after a terrific dice with Barrie, passing him in all the wrong places, but Gerry saw the race and came up to me afterwards to see if he could help." At this point, the larger of the two Marshall Wingfield partners puts in his comments. "The DTV team were all a friendly bunch of blokes and Jock was one of the lads. One of the mechanics said that he'd been trying hard with this car, bought it and built it up on his own and I asked if I could help him. He'd been dicing with Barrie and it seemed a good outing for first time out." Marshall's help was gratefully accepted, but it also led to a problem. The next meeting that Jock had entered was an International at Silverstone, but Jock didn't have an International licence. So he asked Gerry to drive, and that was the day that everyone got caught up in Zekia Redjep's accident at Russell. Barrie Williams broke his ankle, and Jock's Magnum was severely damaged. It was a case of "everything I'd got in the world was gone, that was it" for Jock, except that the car was insured.

It took Jock about six weeks to rebuild the car, but the one bit of good that did come out of it was



that Williams' entrants, GN of Croydon, gave up racing and Jock bought their van and trailer. Five races later, Jock took his first win — after a total of seven races — and went on to another three before the season was out. It was a year dominated by Derrick Brunt — "and complicated by politics" which is the way Jock explains why no one could beat Brunt. "Towards the end I was second all the time. I got umpteen seconds and eight or nine thirds." At the end of the season, the car was sold to Colin Folwell of Corbeau Equipe.

It wasn't until the end of January of 1975 that Robertson decided what he wanted to do. "I wanted to do FF2000 after doing Formula Ford, but I couldn't get the finance, so it was down to dear old Gerry again." The 1975 season is all too recent to record. It culminated in 30 class wins from 35 starts, one race retirement when the gear selector became deranged, and Jock never had a 360 degree spin all season. He has class lap records at Snetterton, two at Silverstone, Mallory Park, Croft and Thruxton. To add to his Peter Collins Trophy for the most successfully BARC member in his first season in 1974, he was runner-up in the President's Cup run by the BARC, and won both the Britax and Radio One production saloon car series.

The Mazda — "supplied by Marshall Wingfield," interjects Gerry — was mainly set up by Mathwall who did the engine, and did what they said they were going to do. The first engine won ten races, and then went in to Mick Leary's Mazda. Grand Prix Models helped throughout and the whole season was stage managed by Marshall. The engine was built with the RAC checking every move and lubricated by Castrol, while Klebers also helped out. The second engine was supplied by Racing Services and it proved to be fast, if brittle.

For the second time in his racing career, Robertson was caught up in the problems with other competitors, in that his car was scrutineered and found to be illegal. The front struts had a Bilstein insert which was Mathwall's interpretation of the rules. John Markey, apparently, had had the same, but Jock's were protested and that was that.

Jock's last race was in the F3 Modus that Gerry hired for him for the Christmas Brands: "We were the fastest orange Modus at the Christmas Brands meeting. I really enjoyed it in relation to what I have done up until now," but then he's about to have his first season of single-seater racing in an FF2000 Elden.

Jock no longer works for Bill Blydenstein, now he's a full-time racing driver. Preparation of the Mazda obviously took up a lot of time, but the slightly shy Scot obviously did things right. He pays much tribute to Gerry who has helped him over the past couple of years, and reckons that he might not be racing at all but for the amiable DTV driver. It now remains to be seen whether Jock can survive the change from four seaters to one. With the Blydenstein mould, the racing-for-fun but professional attitude of Marshall Wingfield, and his own attention to preparation, there is no way he should be out of the ball park this season.

BOB CONSTANDUROS

Jock Robertson (left) fractionally leads Tony Lanfranchi at Brands Hatch during one of their battles.



Cyril Bolton—Mini magician

WHEN he is not rushing around the *Motoring News* rally circus with his MiniSport Mini, Cyril Bolton is a self-employed electrical engineer in and around his home town of Langho, near Blackburn in Lancashire. Bolton is 32, recently married and DAVE ORRICK managed to catch up with him in the throes of finishing off his new house, which he has renovated himself over the past 12 months. The conversation centred around MN rallying in general, and the new MiniSports Mini in particular.

You have come to National attention over the past two seasons for your participation in MN events. How long have you been involved in rallying?

I started in 1963 as a navigator with David Bell in various types of Mini—850s through 998 and 1071 Coopers. I stuck that until 1968 — I would have stayed but I suffered from car-sickness and I just couldn't cure it. I first drove my own Mini in late '68 — it cost me £60 to buy!

Have you always driven Minis?

I've always driven Minis as my own car, but I've done various things in other peoples' cars—Jeff Smith who used to navigate for me has lent me various cars. A Volvo 122 and an Escort Sport 1300. I've driven an RS1600 twice in Autocross and I did a couple of Mexico events for a dealer.

MiniSport have announced that you are to contest the '76 MN series in the new car which you brought out at the end of last year. Can you tell me something about that?

The engine is 1380cc which is down a bit on my other car which was 1450cc — the reason for that is to increase block life — if we had to bore the 1450 it would mean scrapping the block. We have the 8½in discs and we made up a coil spring hydraulic damper rear suspension set up — it's basically a turret set up and we have cut away a lot of the rear subframe to save weight. Front suspension is normal 'S' set up and the engine components are all just Special Tuning bits properly put together. The whole front end of the car's bodywork is 'Dott-on' — the wings and front panel come off in one piece. We use 12in wheels on the front with grips and 10in on the rear with German Ultragrips — we could run 12in all round but I don't see any advantages in that. The whole thing took 600 hours to design and build and would cost maybe £4,000-£4,500 to make a replica for a buyer.

Why not a Clubman-type front end?

We could bolt on a Clubman front — but I heard it takes 8bhp to push the Clubman front end along — and it does restrict low down vision a little. It would be no problem though.

Do you continue to rally the Mini because of personal preference or because of your affiliation with MiniSport?

Well, let's say first that I couldn't go rallying without MiniSport — purely on a financial basis. Then, I prefer to do well in a Mini that maybe having something like an Escort and maybe not doing as well. You have to progress — all the time. The Mini is different — it's strange that you can

say that now — and I enjoy driving it. MiniSport is a very happy team — all of us and that's important, too. I've no pressure — I can get on and drive.

Road events are subject to great pressures at the present time — how do you see road events and would you like to see any changes?

I don't really see, from a driver's point of view, how we can change rallying and still keep the interest. Drivers don't want to go swanning around doing regularity events or mickey mouse type navigation events — I wouldn't do that — not ever! If it's not a driving test of car and driver I wouldn't want to know. Stopping at give way signs is sense, and so are noise and lights regs but I don't think we can do much beyond that.

What about the vexed subject of closed roads?

That would be the ideal wouldn't it — we could have public acceptance for rallying as a whole — only people wouldn't always have to trail into forests to watch. I mean, there are a lot of roads which it would be possible to close — uninhabited roads like the Trough of Bowland or something like that. I wouldn't know how possible road closures are but somebody should be investigating it as a matter of urgency.

It would, of course, be more expensive. Do you think that that would kill off the clubman?

The clubman's under pressure now, with insurance, petrol and so on — we would have to have less miles to bring it back within reasonable levels — but it would be seen to be legal and obviously PR promotion would bring more money into the sport.

I believe that you recently did an economy drive event. Do you enjoy that sort of thing and do you think it could be a useful PR exercise for rallying generally?

Yes, I did the Total Economy Run in a VW Golf — the Flying Wheel, who used to run a rally of the name and who originally sponsored me—just rang up and asked if I fancied the event, so I went along. It was different, but I quite enjoyed it — it was a challenge and so, why not? As far as PR is, concerned it's a case of needing to be handled correctly but if a rally driver was seen to be able to lift the right foot as well as put it down it might at least prove we are responsible people.

What is your favourite type of event, and what do you hope to progress into?

The classic Welsh road event — tight and twisty — good for Minis. I didn't always like selective events—I got wound down on a relaxed section and lost time in winding up again. That's OK now



Cyril Bolton — road rally exponent.

though — it was just a lack of experience. I'd like to go into stages sometime — with a proper car. We did think about stages with this car and we looked at the championships that were going but obviously the advertising and PR benefit from a good result on the MN series would be of direct benefit to MiniSport. But sometime, I would like to evaluate my performance on a stage event in a car designed and built for that kind of event.

MiniSport are known nationally through your activities but are well known for their club events in the North. There seems to be a great team spirit whenever you appear either singly or together.

Oh yes — that's one of the best things. We all — myself, Brian Harper and Trevor Roberts and respective wives, girlfriends and navigators — get on so well together, both on events and off. Brian has plans for an Allegro which he is going to develop on some MN events and Trevor has the other Cooper S for the local championship events. Basically the MN thing is the main aim — but anyone who is in a MiniSport car (locally or nationally) is made a part of the team as a whole and you get a level of security knowing that you can get on with the job in hand. Brian goes rallying for relaxation (so he says) and we go because we enjoy it.

Between yourself and Mick Briant you set a new fashion in that you used navigators on an almost 'per event' basis. How did that come about and what are your navigator plans for this season?

I'm using Nigel Raeburn all year — apart from two events and I will have Paul White for the Nutcracker. The co-driver thing was going a long time ago — since the first Mexico championship year. I had Jeff Smith for a lot of events and then he went to do the sport championship. It became difficult to tie people down for events in a Mini even though I had some good results. I've had 22 navigators in my career — and never fallen out with any of them! The longest partnership I've had on MN events was with Dave Stephenson but when he retired I got back to the one-off situation.

Is it hard to form a relationship on a one-off basis?

It was — but I've had lots of practice now! Anyway — all the people I've had have done a fair bit of partner changing — it's easier for a navigator to do that.

Having Nigel is obviously going to bring more comparisons with Will Sparrow's performance in a Mini, isn't it?

Yes, although Nigel won't be drawn on that — so far anyway. I hope I can progress as well as Will has done — he's a good example of what you can do.

Briant has said that he recced each MN event's maps before the rally — what's your feeling on that?

I leave that to navigators — if they are not sure of a particular road or junction they might want to have a quick look but reccing on a regular basis — no. I went for a quick look at one road before an event and terrified myself in ½ mile — I don't bother now.

What about a prediction for the MN series?

Predictions are like reccing — they frighten me. But we'll be there, trying as hard as we can and you can't ask more than that.

Bolton's Mini-Sport car in action — a sight rarely witnessed in daylight





The aggregate winning car of J. P. Nicholas and J. L. Therier scrabbles for grip on the deteriorating track.

24 HOURS OF CHAMONIX

Toyota beat the supercars

Report and photographs by JEFF HUTCHINSON

Thanks to the efforts of the AC de Chamonix, French and Italian "locals", plus hundreds of visiting holiday crowds taking a couple of days off from ski-ing, were treated to a thrilling weekend of motor sport at the annual "24 Hours of Chamonix" on Jan 31/Feb 1.

Before you start thinking what can be thrilling about standing 24 hours in freezing conditions, don't let the title fool you. The event consisted of three 100-lap races around the attractive little Chamonix closed circuit skid-school track. It was a half fun, half serious event which, after a series of short elimination events, saw 12 cars out of the original 36 entry qualify for the three races, the eventual winners being Jean-Pierre Nicolas/Jeah-Luc Therier in a Toyota Switzerland entered works 16-valve Corolla.

Among the non-qualifiers were Jean-Pierre Jarier (Opel Kadett GTE) and Jean-Louis Lafosse (Autobianchi A112) who like a lot of the runners in the qualifying heats were having a big problem getting the power down on the tricky packed snow conditions, which soon deteriorated into deep cut ridges providing an exciting switch-back effect on most of the corners.

The real battle for the honours was between the two works Toyotas of Nicolas/Therier-Ove Andersson/Hannu Mikkola and two Lancia Stratos of Bernard Darniche/Jean-Louis Trintignant-Verini/Amboggetti. Local drivers Jullien/Saby had also proved very fast in their private Alpine A110 and took fastest lap of the weekend with a best of 58.8s, almost one second quicker than Darniche's best. Average lap times among the faster cars were around 80 kph — which was quick enough to provide some very exciting spectator value.

A strange results system, based on the accumulated times of each of the three races, with an average lap time being added to the total time of each car that failed to complete the full 100 laps left most people pretty much in the dark as to who the overall winner might be until after it was all over, but nevertheless did not detract from the fun.

Julien/Saby had won the first race, while Nicolas/Therier took the second, there being just three seconds between these two cars as they lined up for the big *finale* on Sunday afternoon, for each of them had finished three laps down on the other in the heats.

A drama which delayed the Mikkola/Andersson car by some half an hour the previous day meant that they were out of the running for the overall honours but it seemed to make little difference as the cars weaved around searching for grip under the hard right foot of their drivers at the start. This race, unlike the previous two, allowed unlimited studding of tyres, so various advantages and disadvantages of some cars over others on the first day were cancelled out.

During the opening laps there was a thrilling battle between the Stratos of Darniche and Jullien in the Alpine, but as the race approached half distance, with Darniche a lap ahead, the Stratos went sick and lost its advantage after a lengthy mandatory pit stop where Darniche handed over to French film-star Jean Louis Trintignant — France's answer to Steve McQueen.

Skinny tyres and optimum weight distribution gives the Darniche Stratos an impressive lead.





"Just keeping going that way" says Darniche as he hands-over to Trintignant.



Mikkola closes on Beltoise during the Finn's incredible driving finale.

The Alpine also ran into trouble with a sick engine and after a long stop it was out for good when it stopped half way around the track. Verini took the lead for a while until his stop to hand over, then it was the two Toyotas that dominated the rest of the race, in particular the car of Mikkola who easily outpaced everybody else on the track, including team-mate Therier.

Despite the confines of the narrow track, made worse by a deeply grooved line on most of the corners, Mikkola was managing to lap every other car in the race at least once during his final 50 laps at the wheel.

The spectators were standing in their seats as the red and white Toyota dived ahead of cars in what seemed impossible places, its driver using snow banks and ruts to knock the back of the car into line when a spin seemed a certainty. With two laps to go, having moved ahead of his team-mate a couple of laps before, the enthusiastic Mikkola finally did "loose it" on the turn before the pits, but with a wide grin all over his face he

was pointing the right way again and weaving off down the straight, still half a lap clear of the second car, which he finally beat home by 29 seconds.

Verini/Ambroghetti brought their Lancia in third — three laps behind the victorious Toyotas, while fourth was the steadily driven little Renault R12G of locals Charpentier/Chardot, whose car was ideally suited to the rough conditions, unlike the low-slung Alpines which by the end of the race were almost standing on their noses around the worst of the bumps.

Another lap down saw the second Stratos of Darniche/Trintignant in fifth place, Trintignant having lost a lap shortly before the end when he spun, stalled the engine, and then had to wait for one of his pit crew to come rushing out and show him how to start it! It was the first time he had been confronted with the likes of a Stratos dash panel.

Another two laps down Beltoise/Hummel brought their Alpine in sixth, Beltoise getting a

real rough ride over the bumps when he took over for the final 50 laps.

By virtue of a steady drive in all three events, it was Nicolas/Therier who ended up the overall winners, 12 minutes clear of the two Stratos, Darniche/Trintignant just pipping the Renault R12 into fourth place.

Five-mile traffic jams away from the circuit indicated the popularity of the event which was also televised on French TV. "Star-races" for French entertainment personalities also helped draw the crowds, the event bringing motor sport to thousands more "uninitiated" spectators like the celebrity races in England and helping to add to motor sport's increasing popularity.

**24 Hours of Chamonix
Chamonix, France, January 31st/February 1st
3 x 100 laps**

1. Nicolas/Therier, Toyota Corolla, 5h 37m 15.9s;
2. Verini/Ambroghetti, Lancia Stratos, 5h 52m 28.4s;
3. Darniche/Trintignant, Lancia Stratos, 5h 55m 15.6s;
4. Charpentier/Chardot, Renault R12G, 5h 55m 46.4s;
5. Mikkola/Andersson, Toyota Celica, 6h 04m 38.4s;
6. Beltoise/Hummel, Renault Alpine A110, 6h 6m 39.3s.

Two plastic cars together — Beltoise holds-off French film actor Jean-Louis Trintignant.



Lawrence pulls out

Derek Lawrence, who last year became the first winner of the Formula Ford 2000 Championship, is going into semi-retirement. He has declined a similar offer to last year when he ran the works Crossle and plans instead to make infrequent appearances in Group I saloons in an Alfa-Sud.

Announcing his decision Lawrence said he had been offered the works Crossle for 1976 but had declined because he would not have the time to test and prepare the car as in the past.

"Increasing business commitments at the family garage in Wednesbury mean that I just won't be able to devote the necessary attention to racing and so I have declined the offer," he said.

On the Group I drive Lawrence said he will drive the car in about half a dozen races. "The owner has engaged John Lepp to drive but as Lepp also has commitments in sports car racing I shall take over when clashes occur."

Lawrence has very limited experience in saloon racing — he drove a Moskvich once at Silverstone — but he had plenty of



Derek Lawrence — semi-retirement

experience of tin tops when he used to rally in his formative motor sport years with brother Robert. Lawrence had ideas of returning to rallying but these had to be shelved for the time being.

The Midland driver will not sever his racing connections immediately for he has agreed to test the new Titan, scheduled for completion in the next six weeks.

Esso's competition bonuses

Esso Uniflo are offering attractive bonuses to competitors using their products in 24 major racing and rallying championships this year. A striking new livery has been designed for cars partaking in the scheme and will be issued upon registration.

Full details and application forms are available from: Uniflo Bonus Award Scheme, Room W/8/20, Esso Petroleum Co Ltd, Victoria Street, London SW1 and must be received by April 1.

● It was an expensive weekend for course cars in Norfolk last weekend. Three cars broke down before the event with a variety of maladies and then on the event the organisers got through another three. One landed in a ditch, another lost its sump and a third collided with a tree. Emergency arrangements, however, worked well and the Conran Rally did not suffer delay of any sort.

Ivan's Capri II

After a successful year in 1975 when he celebrated Century Oils' 101st year by taking a class win in the Radio One production saloon car series, Ivan Dutton will again be sponsored by Britain's largest independent oil company for 1976. Once again he'll be driving a Capri, this time the later II model, in the Radio One series.

Ivan Dutton — Century support



Last year, the company's first year in motor racing, Dutton raced a GT complete with recycled oil but with the introduction of their economical Supreme 20/50, he'll be running with that oil in 1976.

As well as Dutton and a rallying programme (see *Special Stage*), Century Oils will also be sponsoring a Mazda RX3 in the Scottish production saloon car championship. It will be driven by the car's owner Ian Stirling whose experience ranges through Formula Junior, Formula Ford, modsports etc.

Dudley Coram

We very much regret to announce the death of Aston Martin Owners Club executive president Dudley Coram last Saturday at his home in Burgess Hill. He was 72.

Dudley Coram, a journalist attached to Fleetway Publications by profession, was one of the founders of AMOC with the late Richard Stallebrass and Mortimer Morris-Goodall. He instituted the St John Horsfall Trophy race in honour of St John Horsfall who was killed at Silverstone in 1949.

In many ways, he was a pioneer, not the least at Snetterton where the long curve after the Esses will always carry his name. He introduced historic racing both to Crystal Palace and Castle Combe and was a prime mover in that form of racing.

For the Aston Martin Owners Club, one of his greatest contributions was to bring their standard of race organisation up to International standard with the organisation of the Martini International, a race, incidentally which enjoys one of the longest sponsorship arrangements ever, starting at Brands in 1956.

In 1975, Coram became an executive president when he retired officially from his post as chairman to become a mainspring to the club. He is survived by his widow Jean, and his son Breck, to whom AUTOSPORT extends its sincerest sympathies.

● The funeral of Dudley Coram takes place this Thursday, the 12th, at Ditchling church, Sussex at 12 noon.

Stephens and Hodgson again

Mike Stephens took his Mexico to victory for the second weekend in succession when he just pipped John Hodgson for overall honours on the Castle Bromwich MC production car trial at Weeford, near Lichfield, last Sunday.

Hodgson, in his Mini, was well in the lead for overall honours until the last of the four rounds of 10 sections when he completely lost his touch and dropped a lot of marks allowing Stephens to come through and head him by two per cent on index.

Stephens dropped 91 marks and had as passenger and co-driver Geoff Spencer who finished third in class behind Dennis Wells who took the class in his Skoda (after a poor start with Stephen Courts (Skoda Combi) second only a mark behind Wells' class winning total of 99 marks.

Hodgson, despite his lapse, hung on to take the Mini class on 86 marks, seven better than Alf Williams, and in the sports car class Malcolm Brown was a clear winner in his Sprite from the father and son duo of Reg and Steve Bradbury. Brown, who dropped 114 marks, was third overall on the day from 48 starters.

Bob Main headed the small capacity Imps in Class IV by 12 marks from Vince Pashley, two better than Colin Valentine's Stiletto and Mac Hazlewood brought out his Dellow to win Class V but by not as big a margin as he would have expected.

Overall: M. Stephens (Mexico), 91 marks lost. Class winners: J. Hodgson (Mini), 86 marks. D. Wells (Skoda), 99 marks. M. Brown (Sprite), 114 marks. R. Main (Imp), 154 marks. M. Hazlewood (Dellow), 129 marks. Best Castle Bromwich member: I. Spencer (Mini), 193 marks.

MW's Opel and Elden

Following his successes of last year, and being unable to fix up a suitable Formula 3 drive, Jock Robertson has gratefully accepted the help of Marshall Wingfield and Corbeau Equipe for help in running a FF2000 Elden in the APG series this year. The car has already been ordered, as has a Scholer engine which will be lubricated by Castrol. It will be only the second single seater that the 23-year-old has raced in his career, and he, indeed, will be looking after it.

The other news from Marshall Wingfield this week involves an Opel Commodore which the purveyors of quality cars have bought from Belgium. It will be raced in both the

Britax and Radio One production saloon car series. It is to be sponsored by a record company, although which one has still not yet been decided, although the sponsorship is definitely on.

The driver of the car will be Tony Lanfranchi, although another commitment means that he may have to drop out for the occasional race, when Jock Robertson will probably take over.

Preparation of the car is currently in the hands of Broadspeed, with technical assistance from Tony Fall's Dealer Opel Team concern. More news is expected from the Finchley Road palace in the next few days, regarding other ventures.

Brands sprint

A capacity field of 120 cars, ranging from a Fiat Abarth to a Pontiac TransAm may be seen at Brands Hatch on Sunday for the Circle and Harrow Car Club's sprint meeting starting at 12.30 pm. Prior to that there is practice from 9 am. The entries are as varied as they ever could be with cars rising through many Minis, to Dolomites, Lancia Betas, Fiat 124ST, Audi 80GT, Toyota Celica, Gilbern, Popular, Ginetta G15, Matra Bagheera, Lancia Fulvia, TR5, Datsun 240Z, TVR 3000M, Porsche 911S, Davrian, Lotus Elan, Porsche Carrera, Mallock and Diva. And you don't get much more varied than that.

● The BTRDA Autotest Championship failed to get under way as planned last Sunday when Eastbourne MC postponed the opening round after getting a poor entry. The club hope to run the event much later in the year.

No works Crossle plans

With the withdrawal from FF2000 of their works driver, Derek Lawrence (see elsewhere in *Sports Extra*) Crossle's participation in FF2000 is now limited to just one secondhand car for an inexperienced driver, which is a pretty strange situation for a championship winning chassis. Furthermore, Crossle don't seem to be interested in loaning out a works chassis to a driver to contest the series.

The same, at this stage, is true in Formula Ford. "We have a fairly full order book, and we're not going to make any arrangements at this stage" said Colin Scott on Monday. "Furthermore, it doesn't seem necessary, although we always look kindly on those who are doing well." So now it's up to the customers. Crossle have shown their form, presumably the sales promotion is done.

Jackson's confrontation

The 750 Motor Club ran their round of the Semperit/BTRDA series in the shape of their long standing Walsingham Trial last Sunday. The venue was at Normandy Hill, Ash, on WD waste land. The entry of 44 included competitors eager for points towards the RAC and Pit Stop Championships, so in all a keen day's sport was certain. The first round of nine hills was more than tight and with two wheel trials enthusiasts in the area some wondered if they were at the wrong event. The site is ideal but has a tendency of digging out on some sections and late numbers can find themselves jacked up with wheels only cooling the air. The forty plus entry had to fight hard for the four awards. Jack Pearce was leading the hunt with a well driven 44, four points ahead of Gordon Jackson, with John Benson and John Fack next, both on 59, Chris Highwood and Colin Taylor following the same thing on 62, with John Hopkins, 63, and Julian Fack, 64. The second round had marker posts in more helpful positions. Gordon Jackson took the most advantage and moved into the lead with a 30 round. John Benson made 34 and pulled into second spot, with Jack Pearce, 43, holding third. John Hopkins, 33, Ted Minter, 35, and

Colin Taylor, 39, improved their chances. Chris Highwood, 45, dropped a little and the Facks faded in the fifties.

There was only one round in the afternoon instead of the anticipated two. The day had turned from rain into sunshine and even the sections became more fitting for trials cars. Jack Pearce was best on the final nine with 14 and slipped into second place, and with a consistent 20, Gordon Jackson and his passenger Tony won the day by three marks. John Benson's 20 secured third, Colin Taylor's 26 pulled him up to fifth one point behind John Hopkins who managed a 30 round. Ted Minter, 34, did well to finish sixth, level with John Fack. Julian Fack was next, fifty points behind the winner such was the difference of the day. The 750 MC only gave one award for the 950 and 750 boys, and with less than five entries for the smallest class, no award was given, and Alan Gisby walked away with the 950 pot, which could mean that the major award, the Walsingham Cup, will not be given — a pity.

1. G. Jackson (Ibex), 98 marks lost. 2. J. Pearce (Kincraft), 101; 3. J. Benson (Jab), 113; 4. J. Hopkins (Ibex), 126; 5. C. Taylor (Cannon), 127; 6. T. Minter (Mintersport), J. R. Fack (Impunity), 139.
950 class: A. Gisby (Trialmaster), 202 marks lost.

John Benson put up a good performance in the Walsingham, finishing third



Welsh's Cotswold clouds

Duncan Welsh from Tunbridge Wells took outright victory and the Silver Jubilee Trials Cup on the annual Cotswold Clouds Classic Trial, run by Stroud and District MC last Sunday. On an event which takes about eight months to plan and which uses a 70-mile road route with 11 tests at different sites, he dropped only three marks in his Sprite Mk 1, these all being on one section known as Merv Swerve.

Always a popular event, the entry of 60 was full well in advance of the date and scoring, among the leaders, was very tight. Richard Uren in an Imp travelled from Truro to win the F. A. Wall Trophy for best performance on standard tyres and Geoff Jackson from Cambridge brought his Dellow home on 7 marks to collect the Cotswold Cloudsman Cup for best standard tyres performance.

Steven Smith collected the Motor

House Trophy by winning another class in an Imp, again dropping six marks while Mike Hinde turned out in his Peugeot from North Wales to collect the award for best outing by a car from the EEC. He dropped 11 marks and ran with a wheel bearing which grew steadily worse.

The award for the best modern Leyland car was won by William Hutchinson in a Spitfire on 31 marks and Barry Smith's MG PB took the award for best performance by a car more than 25 years old. He dropped 8 marks.

First class awards were won by: Peter Turner (Honda S 600), John Groves (Popular), John Buncombe (Imp), Eric Wall (Imp), Dudley Sterry and Roy Newton, both in MG J2's, and Darrell Smith (Imp).

Team award went to Anglo-French Rockhoppers (N. Brown (Dellow), Dick Andrews (Dellow) and M. Hinde).

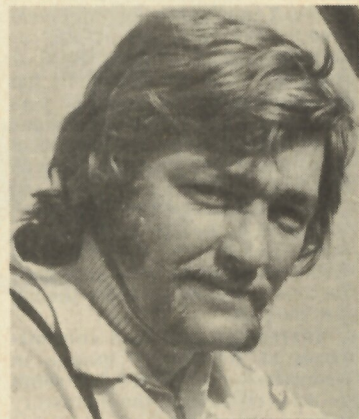
Royale's 25 RP21s

There's a small cluster of South Africans gathering in the vicinity of the Royale factory. Apart from Geoff Smailes and Rad Dougall having their Royale RP21s updated to the new '76 spec, the man who came second to Bobby Scott in the Driver to Europe series, Trevor Van Rooyen is also having one of the new Royales. Dougall, incidentally is having a works Scholar engine this year.

Among others going Royale this year are Jim Walsh and John Kent. Walsh was hoping to go FF2000 or F3, but his sponsorship deal has collapsed, so it looks to be another year in FF for the talented Irishman. John Kent is a young man who's been contesting the northern circuits, and he's bought the ex-Geoff Lees white car, while the other one has gone to 750 man John Village.

Royales have also appointed John Bright as their agent. To celebrate the fact, he's also having a new car with a Minster engine. Bright is now a full time driver and he'll be carrying spares around to various meetings as well as having a stock at his home in Leicester. Royale are also on the look out for agents in the States and also are negotiating for agencies in Ireland.

Among other new cars are those going to former RP16 driver Stuart Veitch, Crossle man Paul Smith and Irishman Michael Roe. Scorpion race hire have also ordered two new cars while ex-Alexis man David Lewellyn is another customer. The list of total



Rad Dougall — FF again

orders currently totals 25 cars, including two to Americans who will race them in this country.

Very much in Alan Cornock's mind at the moment is the plight of two of his former drivers, Geoff Lees and Peter White. Lees, the Grovewood award winner currently has no drive, and if that is the situation at the opening of the season, then Cornock may well offer him the new works Royale FF2000 car. Equally, Royale's F3 car is coming along slowly, so it could lead towards F3 anyway.

White, on the other hand, is currently involved in delicate negotiation and is uncertain at this stage of his future, although it may be towards SuperVee again.

Lobb robbed

A broken throttle cable near the end robbed Geoff Lobb and Ray Crowther of a probable win last weekend on the Conran Rally run by Cambridge CC and West Suffolk MC. As a result the Ascona crew fell back to fourth just over two minutes off the pace.

Nine selectives were included in the 195-mile route around Norfolk, three in the first third of the route and the rest in the second section. Eighty-five crews started the event sponsored by Consolidated Transport Services of Norwich and very nearly half completed the course.

The London crew of Charles Golding and Preston Ayres gave their Dolomite Sprint a notable success for they came home on 24m 27s, just half a minute quicker than John Parsons and Barry Cooper in an Avenger Tiger. Ian Pettie and John Jones put their Mexico into third on 26m 1s, with Lobb/Crowther finishing on 26m 48s. Fifth and sixth were John Case/Bob Shutler (RS 2000) on 30m 23s and Roy Johnson/Keith Pettit (RS 1600) on 31m 7s.

The experts class went to Terry Arnold and Victor Clarke in a Mexico on 36m 36s, some 15m up on their nearest rivals while the novice class winners, Howard Fisher and Tim Harver (Mexico) on 59m 2s were over half an hour quicker than anyone else.

Mini meeting

There is to be a meeting of all interested parties concerning the Leyland Cars National Mini challenge in the Silverstone Clubhouse on Sunday, February 22. The bar will be open and food will be available from 1 pm with the meeting itself starting at 2 pm.

Representatives of the Mini Seven Racing Club and Leyland Cars will be available to answer questions on any of the three formulae, while the scrutineer Mike Garton, attached to the series, will also be present. The meeting is open to all.

TV FFs at RoC

A non-championship Formula Ford race has been arranged for the Saturday of the Race of Champions, March 13, almost certainly for televising. It will be around the short circuit and prize money will be approximately along the lines of championship races, ie: £54, £36, £24, etc. Entries will cost £15 and international licences are necessary. Entries to the BRSCC on a first come, first served basis.

First blood to Minis

A sensational start to the *Motoring News* road rally championship down in central southern Wales last weekend saw Mini Coopers taking first and second ahead of the usual horde of Escorts. An even bigger surprise was that the winner was not the current king of the Minis, Cyril Bolton, but the unheralded Welshman Brian Dennis in his 1963 or thereabouts machine which has seen many rebuilds after many events.

With a field of 90 crews, the Brecon MC laid on a route using classic traditional territory on the old 141 map and combined with the tight navigation there were six selectives, three of which were on Epynt which was used twice.

Dennis, proprietor of the Old Forge Garage, Llanigon, had with him on his memorable drive one Gus Jones, also a local, for whom the success was appropriate as he was married but a week before. Starting at No 30 - he did not want a high number for he was well and truly out of practice - Dennis, who won the Welsh Association Championship in 1970 - had the event won within the first 25 miles.

On some tight sections, he and Jones dropped eight minutes to establish a slight lead which was to stand them in good stead for the rest of the night. They continued to lead

thereafter with Bolton and Nigel Raeburn snapping at their heels and at the same time holding off the determined Ted Cowell who took along Colin Francis.

Dennis and Jones finally won the event and the £25 which Dennis had donated for the winning crew with the loss of 47m 19s. Bolton/Raeburn weighed in on 48m 23s while Cowell and Francis in an RS 2000 were on 48m 46s. There was a close finish for fourth and fifth with Steve Courtney and Peter Watts beating Howard Davies and Phil Jones by 12s.

News of other championship aspirants was scarce but Mick Briant, in a Thomas Motors RS, suffered from soft suspension throughout while Skip Brown left the road on the third selective with his fuel injected Imp.

With fairly large crowds in places, the marshals were praised by organisers and competitors alike and as a result there were no protests at the conclusion of a hard night's rallying in which 57 crews were classified.

1. B. Dennis/G. Jones (Cooper S), 47m 19s; 2. C. Bolton/N. Raeburn (Cooper S), 48m 23s; 3. T. Cowell/C. Francis (RS 2000), 48m 46s; 4. S. Courtney/P. Watts (RS 1800), 50m 4s; 5. H. Davis/P. Jones (RS 2000), 50m 16s; 6. M. Pattison/D. Taylor (Escort), 51m 47s. **Semi-experts:** D. Meadows/C. Jones (Escort TC), 58m 39s; **Novices:** P. Littlewood/S. Grounds (Mexico), 108m 18s.

Six FF2000s from Elden

With the acquisition of a FF2000 by his sponsors, Marshall Wingfield, Jock Robertson becomes the sixth man to be running an Elden in APG's championship. Furthermore, there are others planned. The list currently reads Jock Robertson, Roger Ordey, Richard Dutton, Frank Bradley (naturally) and test driver Syd Fox. The sixth name is obviously awaiting sponsorship negotiations, but is thought to be a well known horseperson.

There are two further orders in the offing, but not confirmed. Mike Collier, the man currently in charge, is optimistic of all cars being delivered by the first round.

On the Formula Ford front, Syd Fox rang us last week to say that he's not entirely happy with the way things are going with the car, and he is persevering to get it sorted out. However, one car has been sold to an MRS pupil.

● We omitted to mention last week in our Alan Minshaw/Demon Tweaks story that the team will continue to be supported by Manchester Liners in 1976. This means that not only the Daf Super Saloon will carry the colours but also the Mexico to be driven by Neil McGrath.

● The Mid Surrey AC's Esso Uniflo Barnstable Cup Autotest is due to be held on February 29 at Hook Road Car Park, Epsom at 10.30 am. Regulations are available from Ron Easter, 5 Deans Way, Edware, Middx HA8 9NG. It is a round of the London Counties Association of Motor Clubs Autotest championship 1976.

Tiff's novices

Two would-be drivers connected with Tiff Needell's racing will be seen in the BRSCC's Dunlop Novice FF series. The first is Tiff's brother Michael, who has bought the High School of Hang Gliding Crossle which Tiff raced last year and intends to race it in a few rounds before shipping it back to South Africa. He has previously raced a G1 Alfa in that country.

Tiff's helper, Richard Burgoyne is also doing the series in a shared Lotus 69, which is no relation to the first car that Tiff ever raced publicly.

Allan Baillie (right) recently received his Monoposto winning trophy from Vic Burley, managing director of Ever Ready Batteries special battery division. Trevor Scarratt (left) was third in the series. At the function, it was announced by Burley that Varley would again sponsor the Monoposto series.



Welsh series details

The 1976 Welsh speed championship is again to be sponsored by Esso Uniflo for the third year running. The championship is run by the Welsh Association of Motor Clubs but the 14 qualifying events are spread far and wide with hillclimbs at Valence and Pontypool and sprints at Llandow, Longridge, Curborough, Talbenny, Wroughton and a grand finale at Silverstone in October. Prospective entrants should contact Paul Quinn at West View, Merlin's Bridge, Haverfordwest, tel: Haverfordwest 3843.

The Association are also running a production car trials series for the first time but it is currently desperately short of entries. Would-be competitors for the Association's Chequered Flag rally centre stage rally series, road rally championship, Auto Palace autotest championship, autocross series may find all the details of these series and those above in the Association's excellent and comprehensive booklet obtainable from Mrs M. Lewis, Rhydonnen, Pentrecourt, Llandysul, Dyfed SA44 5DG.

Hudson goes FF2000

Tom Hudson, an F1300 veteran of four years standing culminating with a second in the series in 1974, is going FF2000. He's bought the ex-Jeremy Rossiter Reynard, complete with a ballast and suitably updated Piper engine and will be contesting all the 1976 APG FF2000 rounds. Hudson, 27, who works for Ford, spent last year saving for his move up the racing ranks having raced in F1300 for four years. He's currently looking for an enthusiastic, but not necessarily qualified helper to go around the tracks. Hudson may be contacted on Romford 40600.

Vermilio in Merlyn again

Bernard Vermilio will once again be contesting the APG FF2000 championship in a works supported Merlyn. The car is basically the same as last year's model, but in fact will be a new car for the former JPS driver as his 1975 car has been sold to Italy. A number of new cars have also been ordered by Italians who have adopted the Formula this year.

On the FF front, Merlyn have had a certain amount of interest in their Mk 29. Among cars sold are those to an American and a South African, both of whom will base themselves in Colchester, home of Merlyn. The South African, Bobby Scott, is the Driver to Europe winner and he arrives next week, while the American is young Whitfield Haydon who is already working at the factory.

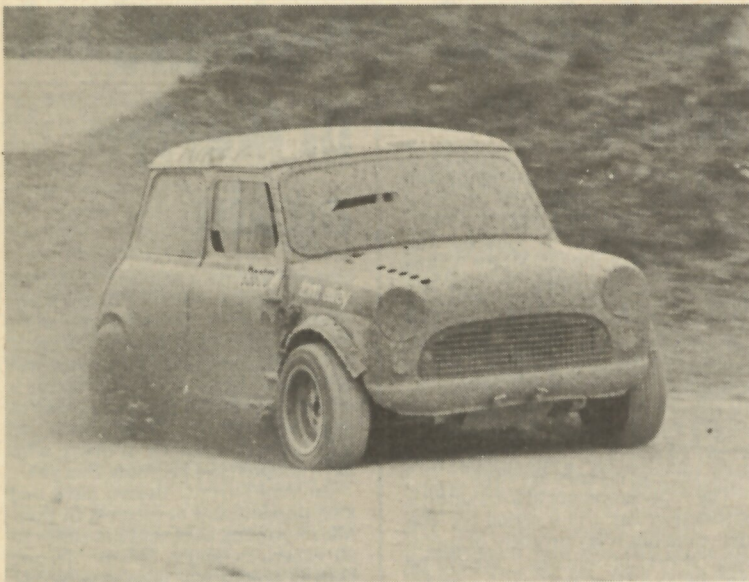
Exeter start for ASWMC

The first round of the 1976 ASWMC road rally championship kicks off this year with the Exeter MC's Exeter rally on April 10/11, three weeks after Exeter's South West Stages. The route comprises 110 miles of mostly 4, 5 and 6 mile sections on maps 181 and 192. The rally starts at the spacious undercover premises of Wadhams Stringer, in Exeter and finishes at the Green Headlands Hotel, Sampford Peverell. Entries are limited to 90 (30 per class) at £5 each including two breakfasts. Regs are available from Ken Snell, 35 Westfield, Bradnick, Exeter, Devon, tel: Hele 415 afternoons and evenings only. SAE please.

Murray's three minute win

Ken Murray and John Millington had over three minutes lead when they clocked in as winners of last weekend's Manor Brown Rally, run by Cumberland SCC over a 140 mile route in the Carlisle-Penrith area. Fifty-five crews started a fairly tight event which encountered slippery roads and only 28 crews made it to the finish. Strict marshalling on Give Way junctions meant penalties for a fair proportion of the entry, many of whom thought they should have been cautioned only.

Murray and Millington (Ascona) dropped 26m 57s to beat local crew Tony Brunskill and Alan Barton in their Avenger on 30m 2s with John Walker and Cyril Middleham third in a Fiat 128 on 32m 14s. Ford variants filled the next seven places with the RS 1600 of Gordon Jennings/Gordon Brodie fourth on 33m 8s from Dennis Raper/Ian Irvine (Escort) on 35m 37s and Eddie and Trudi Binks (Mexico) who were sixth on 37m 45s.



Mud, mud, glorious mud . . . Tom Airey peeps through his slitted, muddy windscreen on his way to win TEAC's first Lydden rallycross of 1976.

Airey excels in mud

If it's rallycross, it's Lydden and it's slippery, then Tom Airey has few equals. Such were the conditions at the first round of the TEAC-Lydden championship, but this time Tom's win was a little fortunate for Trevor Reeves was at the peak of his form being quicker in the qualifying runs and it was only a spin in one of the final runs and a close inspection of the bank in another that put him out of contention.

While the dank mist tried to draw an early veil over the day (ultimately unsuccessfully) and the commentator did his utmost to ignore the multitude of incidents, the many spectators who ventured out into the persistent drizzle were well rewarded for their money with much close racing and plenty of happenings to watch at every corner, be it Bruce Male doing his utmost to drive sideways the whole way round the circuit, Alan Jones perching his Escort on the very top of Mabbs Bank or Peter Kearney using a garden spade to try and cure his troubles on the grid.

The series is being run to the same format as last year with the 18 fastest in qualifying going forward to points scoring final runs. Non-qualifiers included Mick Bird, whose windscreen wiper packed up and he had to remove his driver's window to enable him to see his route, Bruce Bamber and John Smith and it was no surprise to see Mick walk away with the non-qualifiers final with Graham Strugnall spluttering round in a distant second. The remaining four drove into each other first time round on the chalk and it was John Smith who eventually emerged third despite being dangerously carved up by Richard Painton as the Mini driver returned to the track after a later excursion.

The first of the nine championship rounds saw Trevor Reeves storm away in the fashion which took him to the fastest qualifying run of 3m 38.5s, but he spun at the Elbow on lap three and sportingly allowed the rest of the field to pass before rejoining, so David Baskerville's Mini took maximum points. Aided by a couple of spins from Peter Harrold's 2235cc VW, Tom Airey

was the next victor and Brian Pearce fended off close advances from Gordon Rogers' similar 1.4 Mini in the third race. Reeves kept it all together in the first of the second set of runs to beat a hard-trying George Warren (easily the best Escorteer), David Potter and Baskerville who staged a fine battle. Airey and Rogers were equally close at the head of the following run, with one of the surprise qualifiers, Peter Daniels (1.3 Mini) holding on well in third. John Button also showed excellent form in running, or rather slithering, away with the last of the second runs.

Once Reeves had hit the bank in the following run Rogers had an unchallenged win from Daniels and Edward Punt who, having forsaken his slow Mini, also did well to reach the last eighteen. Harrold was next to take the chequered flag but his mirrors were full of Warren and Airey (and probably mud), Tom just scratching past George at the last moment. Another tremendous race ended these groups with David Potter keeping Dave Fuell's Escort at bay and Button virtually dead-heating with Derek Scarrow's Mini a couple of seconds behind.

John Button and George Warren came to the grid for the final with four brown Minis, which, when the mud was scraped away, were seen to be driven by Tom Airey, Gordon Rogers, David Potter and Jack Payne. Button had this wrapped up all the way, although David closed up on the final tour, while Tom Airey was forced to follow Jack Payne home in fourth, although gaining a bonus two points for starting at the rear of the grid. It was believed that Rogers spun twice in the gloom, TEAC in fact doing well to squeeze in all the runs before darkness finally descended, as much time was lost in recovering expired vehicles from the mud.

Final: 1, John Button (2.2 VW); 2, David Potter (1.3 Mini); 3, Jack Payne (1.3 Mini); 4, Tom Airey (1.5 Mini).

Overall: 1, Airey, 11 points; 2, = Button and Potter, 10 pts; 4, Payne, 8; 5, Gordon Rogers (1.4 Mini), 7; 6, George Warren (2.1 Escort), 6; 7, = Trevor Reeves (1.3 Mini) and Peter Harrold (2.2 VW), Peter Daniels (1.3 Mini) and David Baskerville (1.4 Mini), 5.

A Gordini in the Mists

The Kidderminster crew of Mike Hayton and Terry Wilson took outright victory on the Rally of the Mists run by Coltec MC on a 190 mile route in Welsh border country last weekend. In a Gordini they dropped 4 m on a straightforward route without selectives. Of the 56 crews which started 29 made it to the finish, but Nigel Hughes and Martin Benjamin got really wet when their 1300 Capri landed in a stream during the first half and had to stay there for the rest of the night.

Ludlow Castle members were second and third with M. Perrott/C. Mainwaring second in their Escort and Richard Gough/Nigel Hollis (RS 2000), third. Both dropped seven minutes. The Midland Manor crew of Mike Hart and Robert Fox were fourth in a Mini.

The semi-experts class went to D. Jones/T. Kent-Phillips in a Mexico who finished seventh overall while the leading novices M. Davis/C. Wells were eighth in a Cortina.

Telefunken Minis

The communications and electronics firm of AEG Telefunken will be seen in motor racing this year. In the past, the company have sponsored a powerboat for Neville Hutchinson, but their first motoring sponsorship comes in the quiet world of Minis.

Both Colin Beckwith and Peter Dugdale will be driving Minis in the 1000 cc Leyland Challenge class in 1976, with sponsorship from AEG Telefunken. Beckwith competed in Monoposto racing in 1972 but gave up due to lack of funds.

Harrison mods

Peter Cooke's successful Harrison Clubman's car is currently undergoing some redesign and lightening. The idea is to give it a wider track and side radiators and to lighten the whole car by about 45 lb. Cooke also has ideas on a fifth spring in the middle of the back axle. Once again Cooke's car will be looked after by Penfold Race Preparation at Camberwell Station Road.

Meanwhile, Ken Harrison's other interest, trials, keeps him busy and he's building another IbeX. The first of these cars is being taken to many successes by neighbour Gordon Jackson, and Harrison's second model is destined for either Robin Alexander or Ivor Portlock although Harrison didn't know which when we contacted him recently.

Mid Chesh's autocross

The Mid Cheshire MRC are again running a six round autocross championship of which the best five will count towards championship positions. At the end of the series, the overall winner will be £100 better off plus a trophy and replica. Prizes decrease from £100 down to £10 for fifth. At each round, with a minimum of 10 starters per class, each winner will receive £12 with prizes going down to fourth. Intending competitors are asked to contact Peter Harrop at 52 Brookfield Avenue, Poynton, Cheshire SK12 1JE, tel: Poynton 6110.

Tingling's aim

Charlton Jerome Tingling, otherwise known as Carl, hopes to become the first Jamaican professional racing driver. This butcher's son from Old Trafford, near Manchester, has bought a Dulon MP15 and will start his career at Oulton Park in March.

Tingling is 23 and came to Britain in 1966. He studied to be a motor engineer and then took a course with Motor Racing Stables. He spent 1975 recovering from a car crash (he was a passenger), and says he is prepared to work night and day to achieve his ambition.

Adams' mill

Nick Adams will be changing engines this season in his move up to the modified 1600 class of Super-sports. His new U2 Mk 18, which is four inches longer than the 1975 model in an effort to distribute weight, will be powered by an engine built up by David Morgan, the former partner of Ron Washer's at Davron. Morgan built up an engine last year for former F1300 driver Tim Gath.

Sponsorship for Adams, who last year did so well in B sports Clubmans is still being negotiated but he'll definitely be running in the Ardmore Racing Equipe.

Rooster tales

Both the Picadilly Radio/Roosters club team cars have been sold following their advertisement in this magazine recently. Dave Allen's Lotus Europa has been sold to Terry Hatherway of Oxford who plans an exciting future for the prod sports car in modsports, with the possibility of turbocharging and definitely following the BRSCC and BARC championships.

The *libre* single seater driven by David Winstanley has been sold to Dave Williams of Swansea who will be running the car at Llandow and Castle Combe.

● The Rallies Committee of the RAC is considering another safety regulation starting next January. It proposes the carrying of an emergency red warning triangle on all events. Besides giving approaching traffic warning of an accident, the regs may well be designed so as to tell oncoming competitors that the accident has not caused personal injury or that assistance is required.

2 CV 'Cross' fine rewards

With typical French thoroughness, the 2CV 'Cross' organisation have produced their excellent little booklet which has full regulations and vehicle specification systems, plus organisation race programme all included.

Also recently released is the full international 2CV 'Cross' calendar plus the prize fund. The list of prizes makes some of the racing in this country pale into insignificance, and if you really want to get rich and have talent, go abroad.

But firstly, the British prize structure shows that for each of the five 2CV 'Cross' to be held in this country, the prize fund for the top ten will be: £150, £80, £50, £40, £30, £20, £10, £10, etc. The best three in the 435 cc category in the Superfinal get £50, £30 and £10, all prizes offered by

Gauloises, while there will be further prizes offered to the 435 cc winner and best lady.

In the Camberly international event, the list reads, for overall: £200, £100, £75, £50, £40 etc down to £10 for tenth. Best 435 cc man gets £60 with the first three scoring and there are further prizes for first foreigner, best lady driver and also in 435 cc categories.

However, the real prizes are in France where first prize is worth 30,000 francs and 750 francs for the first 435 cc. Best foreign driver in the Superfinal gets 1,000 francs which is pretty healthy.

All information can be obtained from Bernardette Piot, 2CV Cross, Citroen, Mill Street, Slough, Berks, tel: Slough 23808 ext 318 or 319.



Derek Daly - promising

Hawke's FF going well

Among those constructors reporting a healthy last minute rush of orders is Hawke, who've had sufficient interest to add 10 new Formula Ford DL15s to their production line in the last week. "Once they see our new car, it makes them just reach for their wallets," reported David Lazenby last week. "And what's more we're not doing any wheeling and dealing."

But Lazenby reported that FF2000 orders were very slow. "There's quite a lot of interest, but a great reluctance to come out with the hard cash." At this stage, it looks as though there'll just be the works for Tiff Needell run by Mac McKinstry, and no others. This is leading Hawke directors to consider dropping production of the car altogether, even though there's obviously a considerable market judging from the number sold in total.

Among the Hawke Formula Ford customers expected are Stu Lawson, George Franchitti, Rick Morris and Duncan Hall.

Mick Bird's problem at Lydden was that his wipers broke. His revised driving position was not conducive to fast times.



Cox' single seater

Hillclimbing Mini exponent Alan Cox is to sell his 1.0 and 1.3 engined Mini to go single seaters on the hills this year. He has bought the ex-Barry Dutnall F4 Harrison-Chrysler KH4. Once again both he and Russ Ward, who continues with his Allard supercharged 1.3 Sprite, receive backing from John Brown Motors of Upton-on-Severn, Worcester. Between the two drivers, they hold 14 hillclimb class records and have nearly 200 wins to their credit.

RAC's prod saloon idea

The RAC are hoping to overcome problems with scrutineering of production saloon cars with the introduction of a new vehicle specification sheet which is being circulated to all manufacturers with a request for their co-operation and completion.

The form seeks full details of engine specification that are not currently shown in detail on FIA homologation books, and in addition clarification of the type of problems that arose in 1975. With the full support of manufacturers, they feel that there will be less controversy in the scrutineering bay after races.

Snett sprint

Regulations are now available for the Cambridge University AC's spring sprint at Snetterton on February 29. Prospective entrants are asked to contact Nick Garrett, 35 St Regis, Chesterton Road, Cambridge CB4 1BY. A stamped addressed envelope would be appreciated. The event is a round of the LCAMC sprint championship, and the basis is the start as normal with modifications on the straight and finishing at Russell.

Briefly....

- Spike Anderson, the former Broadspeed head man and a former member of the Samuri Racing Team which successfully campaigned Toyota Celicas in the RAC G1 series last year, is in the process of building a hot super saloon. Now under the banner of Samuri Conversions, he's currently shoe-horning a Datsun 260Z engine into a Datsun Sunny which he hoped to run on the road as well as tracks as John Pope has done with his Aston Martin engined Vauxhall Magnum.

- Following his championship win in the Clubman's Magnum-Holbay, Tim Wood has moved on to libre racing in the Brabham-FVC BT35 used in 1975 by John Wingfield to win the Jaybrand Libre championship. The car is now owned by John Thistlethwaite who formerly sponsored Richard Simms' F5000 Chevron. It is to be sponsored by National Breakdown Recovery for a season's racing in the north of England, starting at Croft on March 7.

- Peter Clark, who's planning to run his Centaur in Clubmans this year with backing from Wolferace Wheels, is looking for a co-sponsor. He will be delighted to talk to anyone at the Donington speed show.

- New regulations concerning selective sections starts and penalties for early arrival at the end of neutral sections will be finalised soon. But in principle it will not be acceptable after July 1 to start a selective section on any A road. Additionally, the penalty for early arrival at the end of a neutral or quiet zone must be increased to one fail or 300 marks for each minute gained.

- Sandy Hutcheons will be campaigning his Imp-powered Ginetta G17 in new colours this year. He's obtained sponsorship from Barber Watts and Co Ltd, Cheltenham's newest firm of motor insurance brokers, and also of industrial construction risks. He'll be participating in most RAC and Guyson/BARC rounds.

- Adrian Reynard appears to have sold one of his new FF2000 cars to Hampshire sailmaker Nick Foy. Foy has remained faithful to the Reynard Marke in Formula Ford, and now moves up to the new Formula with another model.

- Greenham Forklifts will continue to be sponsoring Barry Reece, the 850 Mini racer, in the Welsh special saloon car championship and the Forward Trust series.

- Regs are now available for the Scottish Sporting Car Club Ltd's Starlight rally to be held on March 6/7, to be sponsored by Esso Uniflo and Scott Finance. It is a round in both the Uniflo Rally championship (Scotland) and the West of Scotland Rally championship. Mileage will be around 175 miles. Entries should be sent to David Robertson, 99 Southwold Road, Ralston.

- March 7 sees an interesting invasion of mainlanders travelling across the Irish Sea to do autotest battle at the Trial Drivers Club International autotest meeting in Dublin. Among those going are John Larkin, Trevor Smith, Peter Cox, Richard Yapp and John Calton.

Team Eire invade

Two of Eire's top Formula Ford drivers will be making consistent invasions across the Irish Sea this season. They are Derek Daly and Bernard Devaney, team members of Team Eire, managed by Mike Walker.

The idea is that Daly and Devaney will contest both the DJM and RAC Formula Ford championships, plus any others that they can fit in. Daly will be driving a familiar Crossle 30F, while Devaney will have a Hawke DL15. Both have impressed in their homeland, and Daly impressed especially over here last season when he made the occasional trip in his Zhivago sponsored Crossle.

TEAC prizes

TEAC are continuing their marshals' draw this season whereby at each of their three meetings, a leading driver draws three marshals' names out of a hat and these marshals then have a choice of a number of prizes including radios, fire extinguishers, etc. In addition, the 20 TEAC member marshals who have attended most meetings will be eligible for a draw for a free trip to a European GP.

The secret of Roger Clark's winning ways A single overhead can.

Does Roger Clark use unfair assistance?

What is this strange device?

Does it even come under the rules of the RAC?

No. But it does overcome the problem of unruly hair.

The mystery cylinder is, in fact, Cossack hairspray, which helped him to

his Rally Championship win by sponsoring the Cossack Escort.

It's only a 500 cc unit, but it has plenty of power.

For good, fast, natural control. Especially in wet and windy conditions.

Use Cossack and get real Rally Champion style. **COSSACK**

