

F1 TECHNICAL TRENDS - XMAS QUIZ - BENTLEY TEST

AUTOSPORT

Comprehensive review of F5000 in UK and USA





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AUTOSPORT

BRITAIN'S MOTOR SPORTING WEEKLY

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One of the undoubted highlights of the year was provided by Björn Wåldegaard on the RAC.



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AUTOSPORT, DECEMBER 25, 1975

EDITORIAL

Better prospects

This time of the year is traditionally one for reflection and prediction; looking back on what we have achieved and looking forward, hopefully, to achieving greater things in the succeeding twelve months. We make no apologies for taking stock of the motor sport situation at this time.

To be frank we cannot really say that 1975 was a good year. But, perhaps, we should take heart in that traditionally every ten years, or less even, every sport hits a low — take a look at the state of motor-cycling: just a little over five years ago it was at a low ebb, 1975 saw it hit a new peak. Motor racing is at a low ebb at the moment but certainly at the top end it's looking good for the future. Political wranglings spoiled Grand Prix racing this year but, for the moment at least, these appear to have been sorted out for 1976. The Formula One Constructors Association are in charge and until a proper controlling body can be constituted this has to be the right way to go.

This time last year we called for a big effort to be made in making Grand Prix safer. There was one fatality this year and that's one too many. The unfortunate aspect of this accident was that a universally, albeit hastily, adopted safety measure was almost certainly the major contributory factor. Catch fencing has many good points but more thought must be given to improving its performance, especially with regard to spectator protection. Chicane became fashionable during the year and in one or two instances they were well thought out and built in such a way to give the spectator improved viewing. Others, though, were unmitigated disasters; like catch fencing, a great deal more thought must be put into their positioning and construction before the final go-ahead is given otherwise they merely increase the hazard.

Despite these reservations we all look forward to a very good year of Grand Prix racing in 1976 and eagerly await the Argentinian GP, which is but two weeks away.

Of the rest of the international scene though, there must be doubts. Weak direction from the top over the past few years has led to a totally confusing situation, especially in the sports car world. There are two 'world' championships for them next year and to this day we are uncertain how strong either will be. Hopefully competitors will go one way or the other, rather than producing two diluted and unsatisfactory series.

Two areas which do show promise are Formula 2 and Touring Cars. Interest seems to be running high among manufacturers and competitors alike. If they will show more co-operation with organisers both look destined to return to former glories.

The national scene this year would have been a sad one had motor sport not had the support of corporations like BBC Radio. Their involvement put real strength into the club racing scene and a vote of thanks for their co-operation is sincerely given. We are happy to say they are to continue their support next year. Rather than dragging up the past in this context we would rather look forward also to the new Group 8 single seater championship, which could add a new dimension and much needed depth to the national scene... initial reaction looks good and we genuinely hope it continues in this vein. Indyatlantic is something new for 1976 too, again interest looks high and such a brave idea must be given every opportunity to live and thrive.

All race promoters have pledged themselves to putting on brighter programmes and improving amenities for spectators in the coming season and all the plans look, at this stage, to be attractive.

Nineteen seventy five was grim in many areas other than motor sport. The light on the horizon looks to be bright and if we set forth with a positive attitude to make it good we'll have nothing to lose.

our cover picture

Setting a new standard in British F5000 racing and providing very welcome competition to the V8 brigade this year was Alan Jones in the RAM/Thursdays March-Ford V6.
 Photo: David Winter

Andretti 'shopping' —a Lotus reunion?

An air-crash fatality to an executive involved in the proposed Vel's Parnelli sponsorship deal with the American Rockwell aerospace company has, in no uncertain terms, put the entire Formula 1 team in jeopardy. In fact judging by the distinct absence of mechanics at their Norfolk base, the team's F1 future is more or less over.

It's a known fact that Mario Andretti has been 'shopping around' and has spoken to at least four leading F1 teams. Two who are *But maybe for sale?*

distinct possibilities to give him a ride are Shadow and Lotus.

Andretti's name has already been linked with the Shadow team, prior to UOP's withdrawal, and there has been talk of him running in a third Shadow. However the still unsponsored team are only taking two of their current DN5 F1 cars to South America "for our regular drivers."

More likely is Andretti driving one of the new John Player Lotus 77s alongside Ronnie Peterson, although in the latter's case, we suspect a touch of *déjà vous* involving this Swedish gentleman when the teams get to South America.

Prior to hearing of Andretti's plight, we questioned JPTL manager Peter Warr on the subject of their second driver. He explained that although they had a short list, no decision had been taken. There was also a possibility that the team might not run a second driver to start with, preferring to wait and see if a young "star" emerged as the season progressed. On the other hand, Warr did stipulate that Lotus would be entering two cars in the South American races.

Andretti would seem a logical bet, certainly for those first two races. He's driven for the team before, getting pole at the 1968 US GP in a Lotus 49B. A driver like Andretti would have to be considered to be near the top of the Lotus shortlist, especially now that he's become "available".



"I've told you Ronnie, you mustn't believe everything you hear."



Fittipaldi tests

Emerson Fittipaldi gave the new Formula 1 Copersucar its first trial run at Ingerlagos last Wednesday. However the day's happy event (certainly for Brazil) was interrupted by rain and Emerson only ran a mere nine laps which is, in fact, equivalent to around 40 miles. "There were no real problems apparently," said team manager Jo Ramirez, "and everyone was cheerful. Still they hope to get in a full day today (Thursday)."

● Aside from his 10-race NASCAR programme scheduled for next year, Britain's David Hobbs is due to drive a BMW at Daytona in February partnered by his new NASCAR team mate Benny Parsons.

Geoff's Lola

Thrice World Champion Jack Brabham has been in touch with Lola Cars recently inquiring about their latest F5000 car. No, before old fans get excited, he's not planning a comeback, it's on behalf of his son Geoffrey Brabham.

Having shown his competitors a clean pair of heels in the Australian Formula 2 series, Jack has organised a deal whereby Geoffrey will run a F5000 Lola T332 in the first four rounds of the "Tasman Cup".

The purchase of a brand new Lola depends on acquiring sponsorship however according to his father. How long before we see Geoff racing over here we wonder?

Ensign split with HB

Mo Nunn, patron of Team Ensign, has terminated his Formula 1 sponsorship agreement with Roderick and Bob Hooenboom, owners of the Dutch HB Bewaking Alarmsystems firm. However, Nunn had to go to court to nullify the deal.

Nunn explained that as far as he was concerned, "we had an agreement which I interpreted to span from November 1, 1974, until October 31 of this year." However, when Nunn failed to continue the partnership, HB insisted they carry on. Nunn, who has obtained a new sponsor for next year, found himself with an injunction served on behalf of HB for a breach of contract and claiming the design rights of the

team's current Grand Prix were theirs.

Nunn contested this and the Court ruled in London on December 17 that if HB chose to pursue the matter, they would have to take it to the civil Courts. The judge then ruled the design rights belonging to Ensign.

Nunn, happy at having overcome the injunction, told us on Thursday last week that he was looking forward to racing in South America and that his car would now be painted dark blue and without any commercial signwriting. "I can't tell you who the sponsors are," explained Nunn, "because they'll prefer to make the public announcement when they're good and ready."

Redman for Tasman

"I've just asked BMW to send over the engines and the car will be air-freighted out on Monday," said Chevron's Paul Owens last Thursday. He was of course confirming earlier reports that Brian Redman will definitely be contesting the New Zealand section of the Tasman Cup in a works F2 Chevron.

The car being used is the ex-Hans Binder works B29 chassis which Redman has in fact driven earlier this year in testing. The deal was very much a last-minute affair organised through American Chevron importer Fred Opert and the car will be run under his banner in conjunction with the works.

The New Zealand organisers desperately want Redman and, having lost the chance a week or two ago of seeing him in a V6-engined March, the thought of the reigning American F5000 champion taking on the local F5000s in a nimble F2 around their tight tracks has to be a great draw.

BMW themselves are assisting with the venture, which will only encompass the four New Zealand



Brian Redman — works Chevron-BMW.

races in January, as Redman is due to race at Daytona, by supplying three works engines.

Swindon's F2 Ford BDX

Swindon Racing Engines are going to be leading the Ford challenge in Formula 2 next year. As we have already revealed, SRE's managing director John Dunn has been carrying out extensive development work on the Cosworth Ford BDG engine over the past couple of months and recent tests by Formula Atlantic ace Ted Wentz in the prototype F2 Lola have been extremely encouraging.

What is particularly attractive about the Swindon "BDX" is its competitive, or rather, bargain price. The dour Yorkshireman reckons he will be able to offer the engine to potential customers for between £3,400 and £3,600. We're told you could buy two of these engines for just one GmbH BMW unit.

We spoke to Dunn recently and asked him a little more about the engine and what made it such an attractive proposition.

Dunn's interest in F2 this season has centred around Wentz and Ray Mallock, both of them using BDGs. They were giving around 277 bhp. The new BDX (an SRE designation)

has seen 287 bhp on the dynamometer on two occasions. The unit used in the F2 Lola will be "kept as a development engine and only used in a car occasionally," explained Dunn.

The bhp increase has also seen an improved torque curve and even better top end power. The engine is reliable to 9500 rpm whereas the BMW pulls a further 500 rpm. The next stage, according to Dunn, is to explore the power curve up to 9800 rpm and he reckons there's no reason why the engine can't get into the 290 bhp bracket.

Increased revs is a problem for the alloy-block Ford BDA variant as there seems to be a distinct cylinder block distortion over 9000 rpm. There isn't this problem with the iron-block BDX (it's still lighter and smaller than the BeeEm) and it will rev freely, peaking around 9200/9500 rpm.

Dunn will be producing a batch of BDX engines under the Swindon Racing Engines banner and intends to look at F2 in a serious vein next season.

Difficult time for Lella

Prior to the Christmas festivities a rumour was circulating which concerned an F1 March being sprayed in the blue and yellow national colours of Sweden. "It had to be for Ronnie Peterson" said some. "Yes, that mean's James Hunt will go to Lotus

Lella Lombardi - internal pressure?



and Carlos Reutemann will go to McLaren" quipped another. "Have another drink" said yet another. Who's beind it all? Not Gunnar Nilsson but Lella Lombardi.

The Italian lady racer, March Engineering's potent foil, will clamber into a blue and yellow

March in Argentina next month. How long she will stay there is another matter entirely. It may be a swelling bank balance that is keeping her broad bottom welded to the driving seat but one gets the feeling that Grand Prix racing's former

Gunnar Nilsson - pushing hard



novel attraction could be relegated to the sidelines by the time the Formula 1 boys get to Europe. The man most likely to succeed in causing a minor revolution is in fact a Swede, a certain Mr Nilsson of whom March Engineering reckon has more potential than Niki Lauda.

Schuppan on racing on home ground

The Rothmans International Series, the Australian sponsored half of the unofficial Tasman Cup, which is being traditionally held next month and through into February, has begun to gather strength.

The Australian promoters have been informed that Vern Schuppan will contest the four Australian races, starting at Oran Park (Feb 1), Adelaide (Feb 8), Sandown Park (Feb 15) and Surfer's Paradise (Feb 22).

Schuppan will drive Teddy Yip's Theodore Racing F5000 Lola T332, the same car in which the late Tony Brise spectacularly finished off the American F5000 series in this year.

The \$50,000 Rothmans International Series organisers have also received notification from New Zealanders Graeme Lawrence and Ken Smith that they will be competing in their familiar Lola T332s.

Newly crowned Australian Gold Star champion John McCormack, who has raced locally built Elfins for the last four seasons, is expected to take part although not necessarily in his regular car. McCormack is thought to have designed his own chassis into which he will fit a flat plane crank Repco V8 engine.

Lewis and B&O part

Although we have heard no official word from Bang and Olufsen, Brian Lewis has informed us that the two parties have parted company after a year's racing.

Bang and Olufsen backed a two car Formula 2 and Formula 3 March team this season which was capably run by the experienced Brian Lewis Racing set-up in Chobham, Surrey. Because the finance was forthcoming from Belgian and not B & O's Danish headquarters, the team's were naturally Belgian biased.

The results were, quite frankly, disappointing which was a cause of frustration for Lewis, the former race mechanic having run cars for Vittorio Brambilla and Gunnar Nilsson, to name but two, in F2 the season before.

As we announced recently, Lewis has built his own F2 car for next year, designed by former March and Williams F1 man John Clarke. Called the Boxer, an F3 version is currently nearing completion and it will be powered by a Toyota Novamotor engine. For evaluation purposes, the F2 car will start testing in the near future with a Swindon BDX engine replacing the loaned (and returned) BMW unit.

Lewis is still looking for a suitable arrangement whereby he can run both the F2 and F3 cars next season. "A lot of drivers have shown interest," said Lewis, "but the whole commitment hinges on sponsorship."

Dron's F3 March?

A report in *Motor* magazine a couple of months ago suggested that Tony Dron would be returning to drive Triumph Dolomites in next year's RAC G1 Championship under the Unipart banner. The cars he was going to use were this year's Leyland ST-supported Broadspeed machines.

However, we have heard stories that ex-FF racer Dron, who raced for Broadspeed in 1974, will be making the move into Formula 3 next year with a March chassis. Dron wasn't prepared to discuss the matter in any detail although he suggested we spoke to Unipart to see if our suggestion that they would back him in a Dolomite Sprint-engined F3 next year were true.

Donington's Speed Show

The Donington Speed Show will take place at the venue of Tom Wheatcroft's superb 80 Grand Prix car Donington Collection between February 24-29 inclusive. There will be room to house 40 exhibitors in 2 halls attached to the current building. Already one third of the stands have been sold but any other interested parties should telephone Bob Evans at the Donington Collection on Derby 810048.

● Bruno Giacomelli, this year's Formula Italia champion, is tipped to be moving into F3 next year with a March.

More money for IMSA

The American IMSA Camel GT series, which climaxed at Daytona a couple of weeks ago, has received an additional financial boost for next season's championship. The final points standing prize fund has been increased from \$35,000 to \$60,000 with the series winner now picking up \$15,000.

This season the top money earner was Al Holbert who, driving his TAG Grolsh Beer Porsche Carrera RSR, picked up a cool \$46,025. Thrice IMSA GT title holder Peter Gregg was next up having chalked up \$44,175 in his similar Brumos-sponsored Porsche.

Gregg, who was widely tipped after the last race at Daytona to be running the German works-backed BMW effort in the IMSA series next year, has in fact landed the deal which was confirmed by the Munich firm at the beginning of last week. Gregg will continue to drive although the other team members haven't been named as yet.

However, it is strongly rumoured that Brian Redman (who drove for the team this year) will continue as he is well favoured by BMW. As for Hans-Joachim Stuck, his future looks likely to lean toward single-seaters.

The revised rulings for next year's IMSA basically remain the same except that the Porsche Carreras will have the added benefit of larger 31.7-gallon FIA spec fuel tanks as opposed to this year's smaller 22-gallon tank capacity, this new ruling catering specifically for 3-litre GT; while the "All American GTs" (ie, Chevrolet Monzas) have an added weight penalty of 100lb. No turbos of any description will be allowed either.

Next year's series is expected to comprise at least 15 qualifying races.

IMSA Camel GT Championship (final positions): 1, Peter Gregg, 149½ pts; 2, Hurley Haywood, 138½; 3, Al Holbert, 127½; 4, Hans-Joachim Stuck, 91; 5, John O'Steen, 79; 6, George Dyer, 73; 7, Charlie Kemp, 64; 8, Mike Keyser, 62½; 9, Sam Posey, 56; 10, Brian Redman and Elliott Forbes-Robinson, 50 pts. etc.

Needell's F3 offer via FF

Tiff Needell, the young British driver who has come to the fore this year as a consistent race winner in both Formula Ford and FF2000, will be running his familiar Chris Hiatt-Baker-owned FF Crosslé at Brands on Boxing Day with a sponsorship deal that he hopes will extend into Formula 3 for 1976.

Needell has been approached by Jenny Simpson, team manager of Anson Racing, to carry the colours

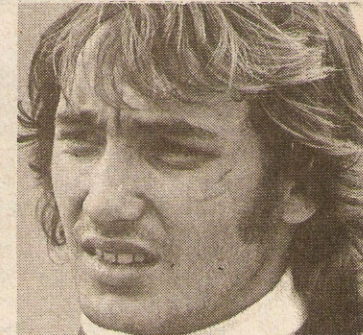
of Formica and Wey Plastics on his FF at Brands. Both these companies supported the F3 Anson this year. The car was built by Tyrrell mechanic Bob Simpson (brother of Jenny) and raced (and co-built) by Brabham mechanic Gary Anderson.

The enthusiastic Anson team are going to build a new Toyota-powered F3 car for next season and hope, with increased finances from the above companies, to tempt Needell into driving for them.

Keegan and Robertson try F3 Modus

Rupert Keegan and Jock Robertson were at Snetterton last Friday week testing an F3 Modus, Keegan at the invitation of Modus boss Teddy Savory and Robertson

Rupert Keegan - impressed



because the production saloon ace has hired an M1 for the Boxing Day meeting at Brands in lieu of his expected move into the category next season.

The weather conditions weren't terribly favourable and the track was damp. "It was a lot more comfortable than my March," said Keegan, "but it didn't seem to get the power down so well. It was a little twitchier but the brakes seemed far better."

De Chaunac's F2 deal

Hughes de Chaunac, one of the driving forces behind Jacques Lafite's Formula 2 championship successes this past season, has been continuing his role as F2's mediator with the circuit organisers and CSI officials.

De Chaunac hosted a meeting in Paris on December 10 with the CSI and Hockenheim's Emil Brezing representing the F2 organisers. Two points were pursued; the general race organisation for 1976 and a financial increase of around 20 per

cent on travel and prize monies.

The CSI were sympathetic with the organisers problems but agreed in principle to a 20 per cent rise in travel costs. This will put the burden on the race organisers. As to the increase in prize money, this has yet to be resolved. De Chaunac is awaiting this decision before calling an F2 Association meeting. Anyone interested in finding out more details can contact de Chaunac at the F2 Association, Magny-Cours 58470, France.

Good figures

If attendance figures recorded by Goodyear's Racing Division in the United States are any indication, the future is bright for the SCCA-USAC sponsored Formula 5000 series.

"There were some people who thought a joint sanction would never work because of the close cooperation required between the two sanctioning bodies," said Leo Mehl, Goodyear's racing director, in the USA.

"Now, after two years, most of the rough spots have been ironed out and the series has attracted some of the biggest names in racing and its strong spectator appeal continues."

The series was increased from seven races in 1974 to nine races in 1975. While the average attendance per race dropped slightly this year the overall figures showed a gain of 65,725 over 1974.

"There is no doubt that bad weather and scheduling difficulties early in the season hurt attendance in the first few races," Mehl explained, "but the attendance for the nine races still totalled 345,600, an average of 38,400 per race."

"The attendance for the seven race series in 1974 was 279,875, or an average of 39,982 per race."

The Formula 5000 season closed on a very strong note with the final three races on the West Coast drawing a total of 162,700 fans. This was led by the inaugural race in the city of Long Beach, California, which drew 65,000 and proved to be the highlight of the year.

Mehl feels the strong international flavour of the series is finally beginning to catch on with US racing fans.

BRIEFLY...

- Derek Bell, in his capacity as a member of the RAC Race Committee, is preparing to carry out some further tests on F3 tyres, pending a final agreement which is still to be reached apparently as to what exclusive type of tyre will be used in British F3 races next year.

- Gerry Marshall enters his tenth year with Vauxhall on January 1 and as well as his Special and Super Saloon commitments with Baby Bertha, he'll be contesting the RAC Touring Car Championship with a DTV entry, presumably a Magnum, in 1976.

- Italian F2 champion Maurizio Flammini has been testing Giorgio Francia's works F2 Osella FA2 at Vallelunga recently.

- Gordon Fowell has been commissioned by Graham Eden to design a Formula Atlantic car for Cyd Williams to race next year. Fowell was responsible for the second Formula 1 Tecno in 1973 and Chris Amon's unsuccessful Formula 1 project last year. The team, which will again be sponsored by the Birmingham based Harrisons drapery concern, have yet to decide whether they will commit themselves to racing the Fowell car or buy either a Chevron or March. The team's venerable Brabham BT40 has been sold and will be run under the Roosters night club banner for 23 year old Formula Ford driver David Winstanley.

- One of the best known figures on the Formula 1 scene, Laurie Hands of Champion spark plugs, has relinquished his racing responsibilities to take up the post of Regional Engineering Manager. Laurie has handed over his Grand Prix post to Martyn Brownhill.

Lec: "state of flux"

David Purley took the Lec Refrigeration Chevron-Ford V6 to Goodwood last week "to try out a few ideas we've thought of over the past couple of months" according to team manager Mike Earle.

With the team unable to secure an agreement with the New Zealand organisers of the Tasman Cup, plus the F5000 series taking a dive next season, the Bognor Regis-based equipe have had to change their ambitious plans somewhat.

"We're in abeyance at the moment," said Earle, referring to the projected F1/F5000 car which former BRM designer Mike Pilbeam has drawn up. Drawings were complete for both an F1 and F5000 version. "Mike had built a neat little motor around the V6" reflected Earle.

"We're in a state of flux," he added, having both the Pilbeam and Chevron designs at hand. The new G8 (nee G9) series has vaguely interested them while Earle expressed a desire to get involved in Formula 2 once again if the opportunity arose "because it looks really good for next year."

Spax go Atlantic

Jeremy Rossiter, sales director of Spax shock absorbers, is moving up into Formula Atlantic next year with a Chevron B29. Rossiter has raced this season in the Allied Polymer backed FF2000 series with his Adrian Reynard-designed Reynard where he finished well up in the championship standings.

Rossiter has purchased Derek Cook's Chevron, "I believe it was the last B29 built," and will run the car all of the Indy Atlantic races and perhaps some G8 events in the new blue colours of Spax with added support from *Cars and Car Conversions*.

The Chevron will run with Derek Cook-prepared Ford BDA engines and be prepared by Steve Lyle. Rossiter's FF2000 Reynard, holder of 4-lap records, is currently up for sale.

This weekend . . .

BRANDS HATCH

The traditional Christmas race meeting at Brands Hatch is being organised by the BARC this year and will be held on Saturday, December 27. The six-race programme contains some interesting names and promises to provide plenty of excitement to take the cold weather and hang-overs away. The latter can be replaced at the bar afterwards however.

Main race of the day is a Shellsport Escort race which has a £500 prize fund. Entries will come from Ian Ashley, Derek Bell, Tom Belso, Guy Edwards, Divina Galica, Howden Ganley, Brian Henton, Alan Jones, David Morgan, John Nicholson, David Purley, Tim Schenken, Vern Schuppan, John Surtees, Tony Trimmer, and Mike Wilds. Local racing motor cyclist Paul Smart is another entry, Smart having his first car race having been away from the tracks this year with broken legs.

Any bets on dare-devil Divi scoring a shock result?

The special saloon event promises another great battle between Gerry Marshall and Colin Hawker while the production saloon race will be a pointer to the future as there are no Camaros entered. There's a couple of BMWs including one for Derrick Brunt, five Capris (Richard Lloyd, Ivan Dutton, Mike Smith), Bob Saunders Dolomite, with Barrie Williams and Gerry Marshall among the five Vauxhall Magnum entries. Jock Robertson tops the Mazda entry and Neville Knight the bargain class.

There's a huge Formula Ford entry but Tiff Needell looks the most likely winner while Ian Taylor looks a good bet in the FF2000 event.

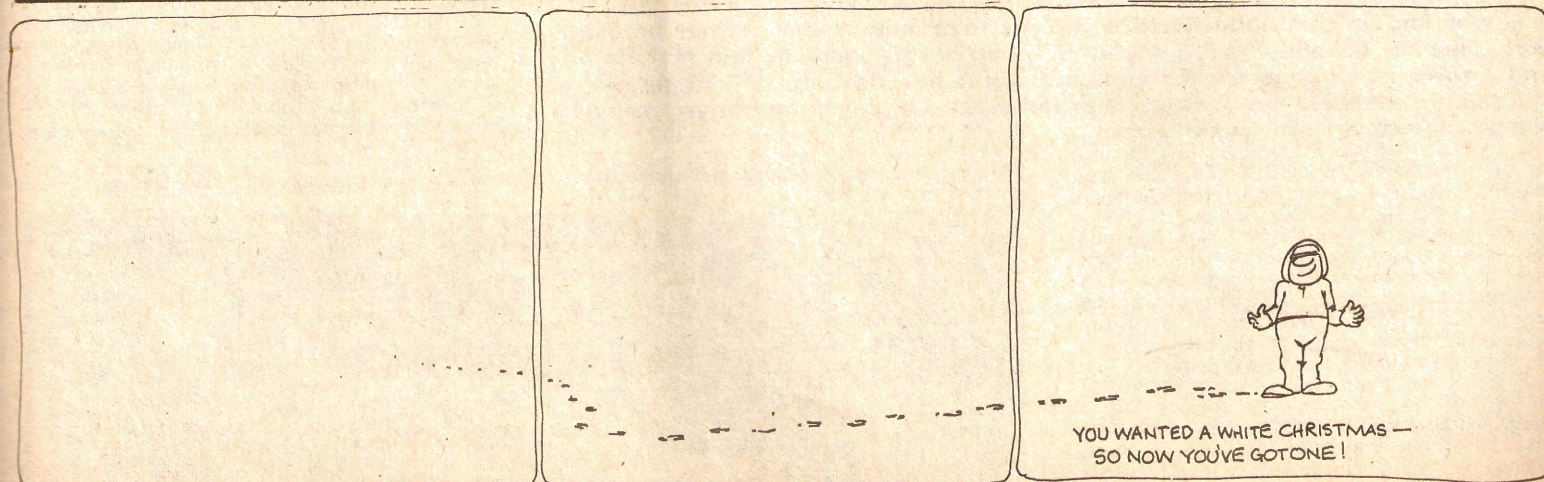
Closing the programme is the Jack Brabham Trophy *Formule Libre* race. Gerry Marshall in his Super Saloon Vauxhall will take on his business partner John Wingfield, who will have his F2 Ralt on hand while Val Musetti has an F2 BDX engine in his March and Jock Robertson makes his single-seater debut in an F3 Modus. This promises to be a real thriller.

Racing starts at 12.15pm.

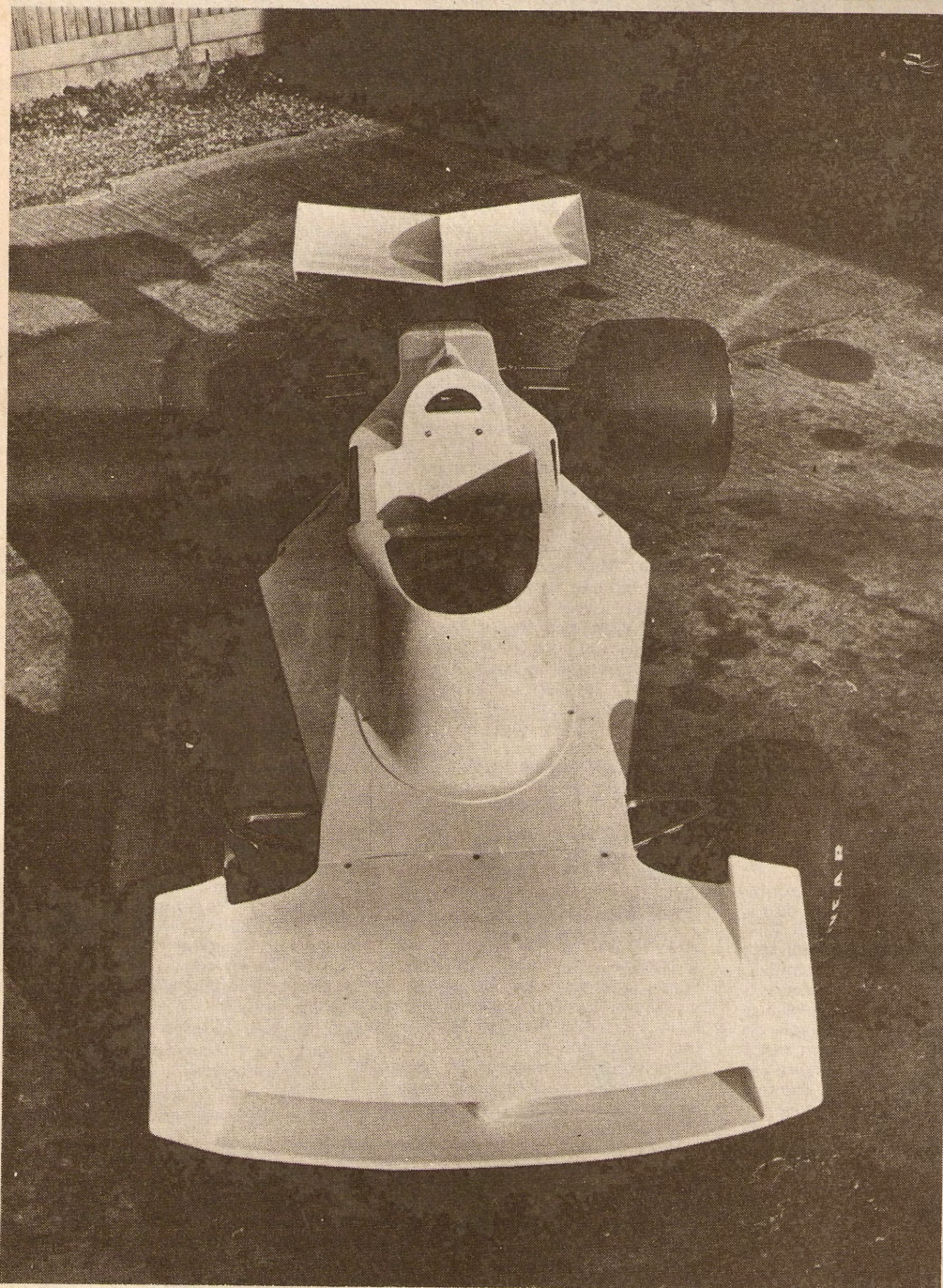
- New date for next year's Canadian Grand Prix is September 26.

CATCHPOLE

By Barry Foley



Grand Prix challengers for 1976



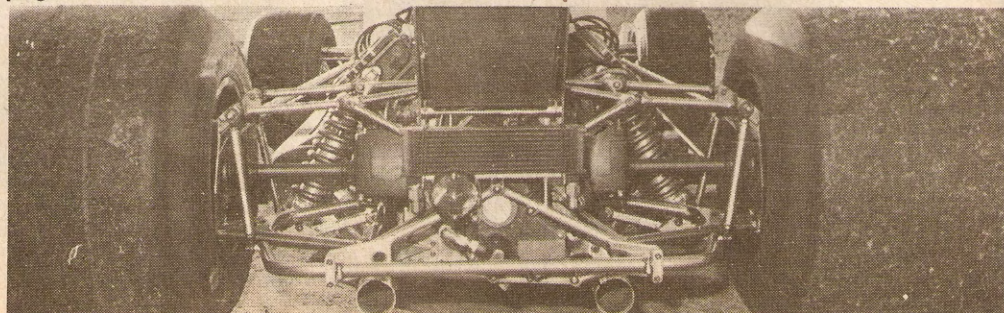
Clean, but very distinctive, lines are a striking feature of the new Surtees TS 19.

Striking Surtees TS19

It is well known that John Surtees and his team have faced serious problems during the last couple of racing seasons. Much of this has been due to the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, but John has decided to reorganise the operation completely so that the team can make a highly competitive Formula 1 comeback with an entirely new car.

At this stage no sponsor can be announced, just that the negotiations are at an interesting stage. However, if the team had waited until the sponsorship was all signed and sealed, it would have been too late to prepare a car for the first races of the season, so the courageous decision was taken to go ahead with the design and construction of two cars. By the time this effusion appears on the bookstalls, John Surtees should just about be strapping himself in for the first few exploratory laps. John will do the test driving himself and as for the team drivers, he is convinced that there is plenty of first class talent around without taking on any of the prima donnas. He would like to run a two car team because he thinks that competition is good for

The twin parallel link and bottom wishbone rear suspension produce a variable rather than progressive character.



up-and-coming drivers.

As befits this stage of the project, the factory space has been greatly condensed. The design concept is that of Surtees himself, but the actual detail design is the work of Ken Sears, who is assisted by two draughtsmen. This is a pure Formula 1 car, with no hang-ups from any other formula. As a result, it has been possible to save 105 lbs compared with the previous model. Indeed, building down to the minimum weight has been one of the major requirements.

Another basic point has been the necessity to get the very best out of the Goodyear tyres on which the team are now running, which includes the weight right down on the deck. Above all, the full potential must be extracted from the Cosworth V8, especially as regards the cooling and exhaust system.

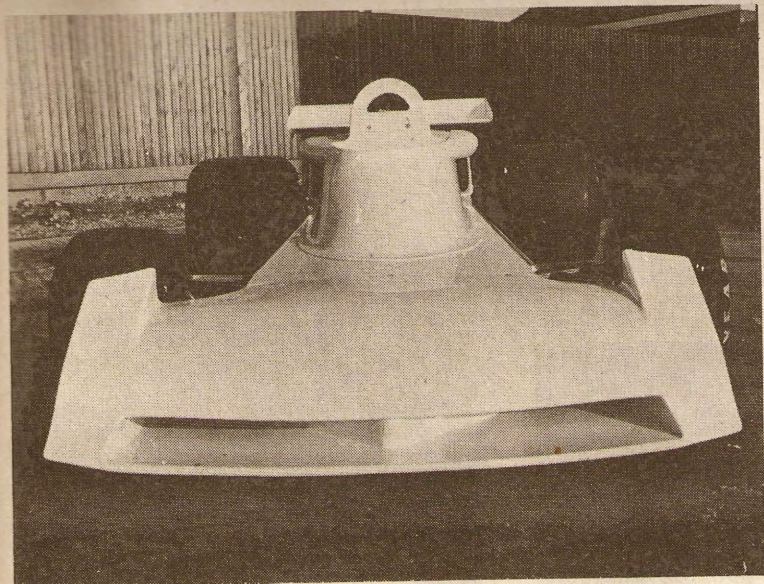
The monocoque is a beautiful piece of work, flush rivetted in L72 and NS4 light alloys in 16, 18 and 20 gauges. It's unusual and very pleasing cross section is in the interest both of torsional rigidity and to give easy escape from the hot air from the radiators. There are two engine cooling radiators, forward mounted and widely spaced with a division in the glass fibre nose to feed air to them and to break cooling ducts which are led to the theoretically advantageous position of the front discs. It is not yet known whether or not these discs will be ventilated — experimental solid ones were in place when we examined the car — but the hollow type will be employed in the rear inboard position the calipers being twin-pot Lockheeds and the disc diameter 10.5 in.

The front bulkhead is fabricated from Reynolds 531 tube and the Jack Knight steering rack, to Surtees' dimensions, is over the driver's legs. The front roll-hoop is a tough structural member with the danger of going beneath crash barrier very much in mind; the main roll hoop structure doubling as a breather for the fuel tanks, with a vent at the top. There are three fuel cells of Marston manufacture with a total capacity of 41 gallons carried along each side of the monocoque and transversely behind the driver; the latter is beneath the central filler, protected by the roll bar, with aircraft snap fittings. The shape of monocoque permits the fuel load to be carried very near the ground.

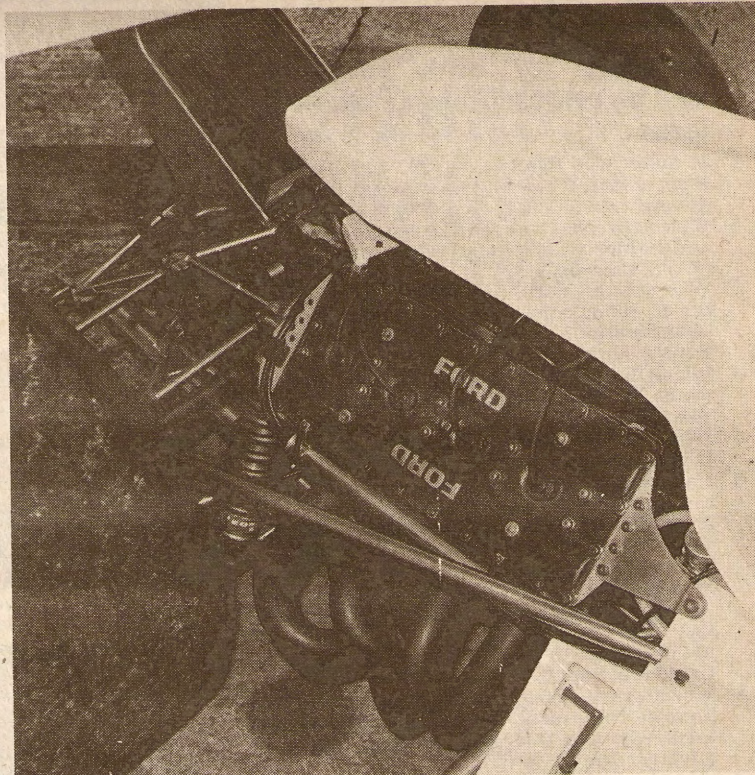
The oil tank, which is of 3 gallons capacity but usually contains two, is between the central fuel tank and the engine. The oil radiator, specially made for its inclined position, is secured by rubber bands between the light alloy plates on which the rear wing is mounted. Faired into the glassfibre screen surround, the mirror acts as an aerodynamic lead-in to the side ducts of the airbox, which are incorporated in the engine cover, but also gives a nice airflow towards the rear wing. The wing plates are bolted to the rear suspension mountings and the aluminium sandwich plate at the back of the Hewland FGA 400 gearbox.

John Surtees prefers to call the suspension variable rate, rather than progressive. The uprights, both front and rear, are of fabricated steel construction — like the other suspension parts and the monocoque, they are of Surtees manufacture. In front the top rocker arm only operates the short inboard roll bar. Low down but above the bottom wishbone, a short A/arm-member pivots on nylon bushes and compresses the coil spring and Koni damper, which is chassis mounted at its top end. The geometry is completed by a Duralumin tension rod which connects the outer end of the top suspension member with the apex of the A-member to which the spring-damper is attached also. Though the shape of the fabricated arm at the bottom of the rear spring is

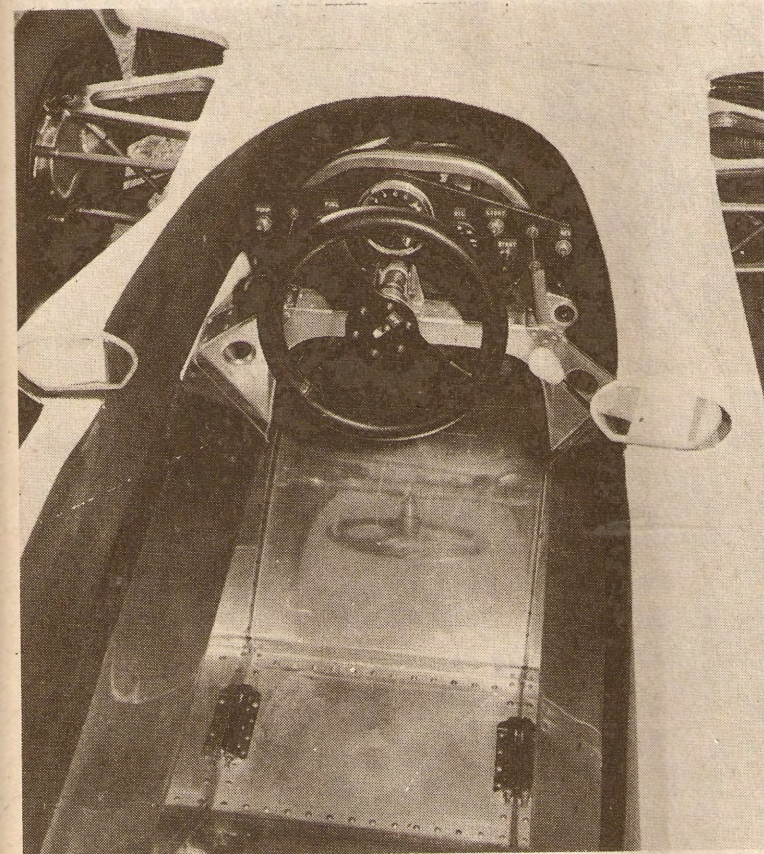
Grand Prix challengers for 1976



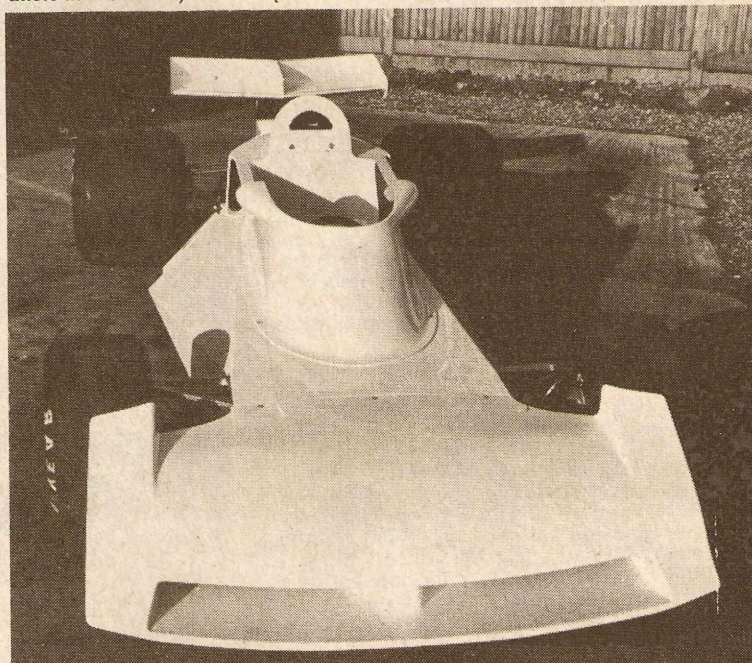
The very flat monocoque topside is traditional Surtees thinking – note the high cockpit sides, dictated by the front roll hoop.



The oil radiator is contained in the neat wing mounting (above) while the two water rads are contained in the ducted nose (below). Note also the "airbox" ducts at the rear of the cockpit.



The cockpit interior is very clean – the roll hoop is behind the dashboard while the fire extinguisher is contained beneath the monocoque skin under the driver's knees.



All the suspension and uprights (below) are of Surtees manufacture and it is designed for maximum traction.

different, the operation is somewhat similar, the tension rod going to the top of the upright.

Each rear upright has two short top lateral links and a long bottom wishbone, with a single long radius arm, pivoting on the monocoque just in front of the cylinder head. The rear roll bar is right at the back behind the gearbox, and may act as a nerf bar. Suspension loads are fed into the bell housing which again is of Surtees manufacture. All the electrical equipment is grouped together ahead of the engine, on the right hand side.

Detail work is extremely neat, which is not always the case with racing cars. A special conduit is built into the monocoque on the right side, to carry all the wires and pipes. All the fluid lines have snap-on quick-release couplings, which incorporate shut-off valves. This eliminates brake bleeding after an engine change. There is a similar self-sealing valve in the fuel pipe, which ensures that, even if the engine is torn off in a crash, fuel will not be released on to the road.

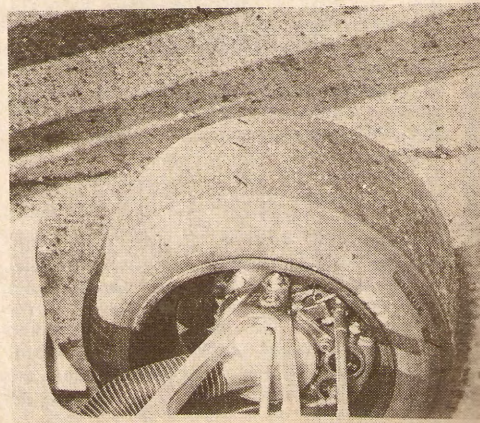
There are many safety features, such as the

positioning of the fire extinguisher bottles between the skins of the monocoque, below the driver's knees. The interior of the cockpit is very clean, without projections and there is a push button for the driver to operate the Graviner fire system. A safety lever, recessed in the side of the car turns on this and the life support bottle and shuts off the fuel.

The Cosworth Ford engine is far too well known to require any description. The TS Dymag wheels are of the peg-drive centre-locking type and carry 9.2 20x13 front Goodyear tyres and 16.2 26x13 rears. The overall width of the car is 5in less than that of its predecessor and the monocoque is both slimmer and lower. The wheelbase is 8ft 2.5in and the track 4ft 10in (front) and 4ft 11in (rear).

The standard of engineering of the Surtees TS19 is so high that sponsors should certainly be attracted. Let us hope that it will restore the fortunes of the team.

JOHN BOLSTER



A Christmas quiz... (no prizes)

Answers for both sections will be printed in next week's issue.

- Jo Siffert won this race in 1961 and Jochen Rindt in 1963. Where and what cars were they driving?
- Which driver has won the Monaco Grand Prix and the Monte Carlo Rally? What cars was he driving and when?
- Who was the first British driver in a British car to score points in the Drivers World Championship? Driver, Car, Event, Year, Position Finished.
- Which British drivers have driven for the works Ferrari Team in Grands Prix and in which years?
- Who was the first British driver to win Indianapolis? When and in what make of car?
- How many cylinders did the following racing cars have and in what configuration?
a) Porsche 917, b) Lotus 43, c) Mercedes Benz W196, d) Maserati 250F, e) Vanwall, f) Bugatti T251, g) Matra MS11.
- Who won the last race at the following circuits? In which year and what cars were they driving?
a) Goodwood, b) Crystal Palace, c) Aintree Grand Prix Circuit.
- Which was the longest circuit ever used for a Formula Three race? How long? When was it used? Who won the race? What car was he driving.
- Who won the first British National Formula Ford Championship? In which year? What car? Who prepared the engine? Who sponsored the Championship?
- The real names and nationalities of the following drivers.
a) "Williams," b) "Geki," c) "Antonio Bronco," d) "Elde," e) "Jean Pierre Aux."
- Who was the entrant of the car with which Jochen Rindt won his first Formula Two race? What was the car? Where was the race? When was the race?
- Which two post-war Grand Prix drivers were born within a fortnight of each other and made their Grand Prix debuts in the same year and in the same type of car? Drivers, Cars, Dates and places of birth, Races in which they made their debuts, Entrants.
- Which racing drivers wrote the following books?
a) Ten Years of Motors and Motor Racing
b) Full Throttle
c) In the Track of Speed
d) Touch Wood
e) The Racer
f) Motoring is my Business
g) Pursuit of Victory
- Who won the 1966 European Rally Championship? What car: What is the country of origin of car and driver?
- Who manufactured the following Formula Three cars? In which years? What do the letters signify?
a) DL15, b) BT15, c) B15.
- What is the highest placing ever achieved by a professional journalist in a Grande Epreuve? Who? When? Where? What was he driving?
- Who was the last winner of the Solitude Grand Prix? What car? Who was the entrant? When was the race? Near which city was the race run?
a) Who set fastest lap in a 1954 Grande Epreuve and won one of the classic long distance sports car races in 1970? Driver, Cars he drove, Events.
b) Who won the last open road race from point to point in 1954 and his third open road circuit race in 1968? Driver, Cars, Events.
- Excluding the Tour of Britain (and club meetings that go wrong) when was the last official night race in England. Who won it? What car?
- In which events did the following Formula One cars make their debuts and with what result (best placed car only required)
a) The Auto Union A Type
b) Lotus 49
c) Bugatti T35
d) Mercedes Benz W125
e) Maserati 250F



A, A nostalgic sight from the pre-forestry 1959 RAC Rally. Can you name the circuit, and the drivers of both Austin Healeys?



B, A 'works' MGB on the '64 RAC managed by an all-lady crew. Name the crew please.



D, Same year, same rally. Anne Hall drove Rover number 34, who is photographed here on the Carron stage in car 33?



C, Another RAC Rally picture. Bespectacled co-driver looks an easy one, but what about the driver?



E, Which rally, which year and which famous twosome?



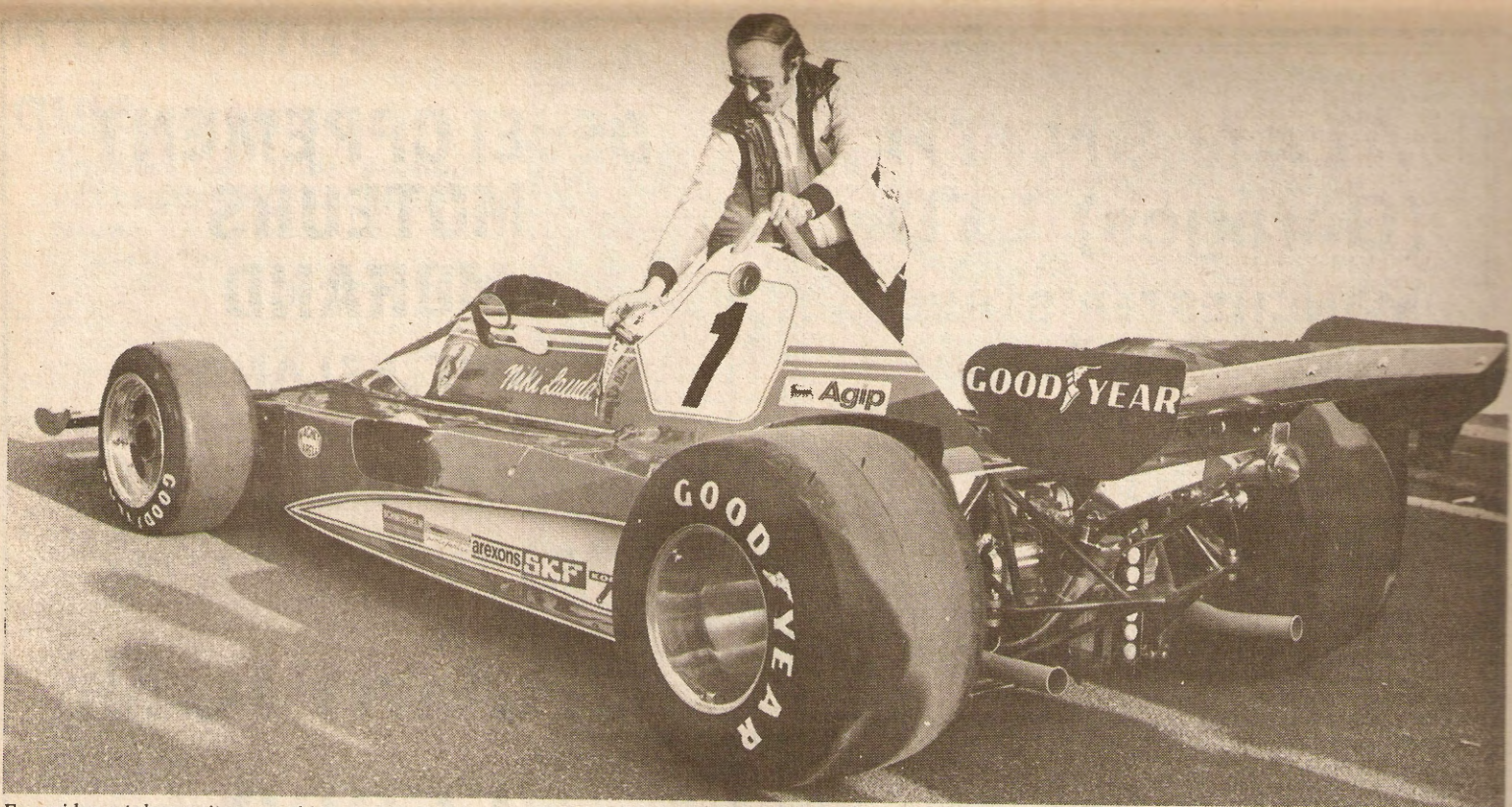
F, 1967 Circuit of Ireland. The car is a 1293 'S' - not what its registration number would have you believe. His rallying brother finished 4th, this young brother finished 8th - who?



G, Can you guess the special significance of this BMC Abingdon press picture? - Car is Makinen's '65 Monte car, Group Three.

H, You probably recognise the worried looking face of our Rallies Editor - but who is his frowning driver?





Ferrari have taken quite a gamble on producing an all-new car with a De Dion rear end to defend their championship title.

Taking a chance in 1976

DOUG NYE discusses the technical novelties incorporated in the new series of Grand Prix cars.

"The big problem with designing a Formula 1 car is that you're so restricted by the regulations; they virtually design the car for you. And then there's always the pressure from your sponsor. You've got to do well by them, and so you tend to use well-proven features rather than branch out into something new which might or might not work. You just can't afford time to put right a fundamental wrong . . ."

That's a typical Formula 1 designer quote from 1974. Earlier this year I asked some of the designers to talk about the type of cars they would like to build if they had the chance. There was little worthwhile response, and now we know why. They were building them!

Of course it all began with the six-wheeled Elf-Tyrrell and the hyper-adjustable Lotus 77 — sorry, JPS-11 — in October, followed rapidly by the albeit long-awaited Brabham-Alfa BT45 and the very surprising De Dion-axled Ferrari T2. Preceding this quartet of newcomers was the all-rubber-suspended Hesketh 308C, and this enterprising flood of innovation (or re-introduction) breathed new life into what had become a stereotyped Formula.

Most sensational of all these newcomers was of course the Tyrrell Project 34, a research vehicle built to test Derek Gardner's triple-axle six-wheeler theories. The best headline must have been "Tyrrell Goes Loco," although that undersold the project in a pretty thoughtless manner.

In fact Gardner first conceived the idea during development of the 1969 Ferguson four-wheel drive systems for Indy. At the Speedway front-wheel adhesion was being lost in proportion to the amount of power applied. This was the problem which crippled Formula 1 4WDs on road circuits, and although the effect was not so acute on the USAC tracks, it was costing time. Gardner therefore conceived an outrigger leading axle, with non-driven steering wheels, mounted ahead of the first driven axle. The idea was that this added front-end traction would compensate for the standard four-wheeler's power-on understeer. Unfortunately USAC banned four-wheel drive, and so the idea was all dressed up, but had nowhere to go . . .

When Gardner joined Tyrrell in 1970 to design their first GP car, there was no way the down-to-earth Ken was going to dabble in complex and possibly unworkable triple-axle theories. Tyrrell 001 was Derek's first-ever complete car design, and on his part there was no way he was going to stick his neck out.

So the triple-axle idea lay fallow until this past year, when it developed into a plan which offered all the high-speed advantages of a narrow front track with none of its disadvantages in cornering

power. Conversely it offered a front-end capable of supporting the same cornering loads as a wide front track, without the disadvantages of such a system in straight-line speed.

These attributes have been well publicised. Not so well publicised are Gardner's facts and figures concerning the braking system. For a start the four front wheels offer a 40% footprint area increase over a two-wheel system. The four tiny outboard brakes, using 3/8-inch thick solid discs (in original form), offer a 25% increase in swept area, an 18.4% increase in pad volume and a 34% plus in swept area. A 9% reduction in pedal effort was claimed, and a simple balance system allows the effect to be proportioned between the first and second axles, while the sum of that effect is then balanced out against the third axle — which is Tyrrellese for the ordinary one at the back.

During initial testing at Silverstone, Patrick Depailler found the four-wheel steering amazingly light, despite gloomy predictions to the contrary. It was considered rash to fire the new projectile down the Club Straight into Woodcote Corner at 160 mph before triple-axle braking effects were properly understood. So cone chicanes were introduced on the Runway Straight which served to slow the car and add extra brake applications each lap.

I hear that the second axle tended to lock its wheels in this shake-down test, and the normal 007-like cockpit surround was replaced by one into which windows had been cut so that Depailler could study the wheels. Eventually he did some

laps sans bodywork for an even better view, and at the end of the day everyone seemed well satisfied. The exuberant way in which Patrick had been throwing the car around mirrored a growing confidence.

It was intended to continue private testing, after more Silverstone sessions, at Dijon but the team found that venue fogged-off and began running at Ricard perhaps rather earlier than had been intended. There the P34 has proved extremely fast on the straights and as good "as the average 007" through the turns. Rumour has it that Depailler likes the car, while Scheckter finds it fast but not particularly easy to drive because he can't see the wheels. According to Depailler, the front wheels of a 007 are out of sight anyway, and we understand that a decision on whether or not to build triple-axle 008s for the '76 European season is being made with Elf at the moment.

In passing it is worth recording Elf-Tyrrell's intelligently low-profile with their exciting car. After the initial burst of hysteria in the media, and a brief pulse when Stewart turned in a few respectably quick laps, they have simply got on with the job of studying their experiment without making wild claims about its potential. We all remember so many others who proved to be just money and mouth . . .

Even so, Bernie Ecclestone was probably right when he reckoned that the car's free publicity had more than compensated for Elf-Tyrrell's investment!

John Bolster has already written eruditely on George Eyston's *Thunderbolt* record car which featured crab-tracked triple axles, with twins at the front, but in racing Gardner's P34 has no precedent. This makes the car something very special, for almost everything else had been done before in competition. There was a monocoque car with all-independent suspension running at Indy as early as 1915, and a monocoque in Grand Prix racing in 1923. Gas turbine engines had appeared long before Lotus brought one to Formula 1 in 1971, and wings have been growing on various racing cars since at least 1928. The famous *Pat Clancy Special* of 1948 brought triple-axles to Indianapolis but the coupled pair were at the rear. In 1911 Milton O. Reeves based a four-axle eight-wheeler named the *Octoauto* on a standard Overland model, but I can't believe he ever raced or rallied it. With their four-wheel steering Derek Gardner and Tyrrell have out-Chapmanned Lotus for originality!

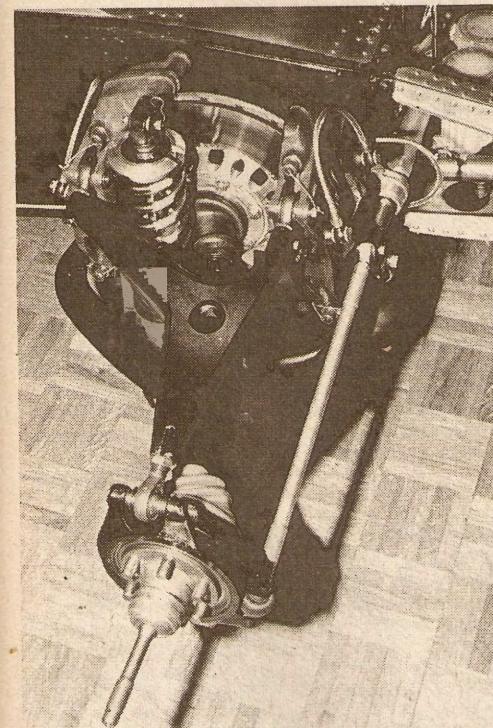
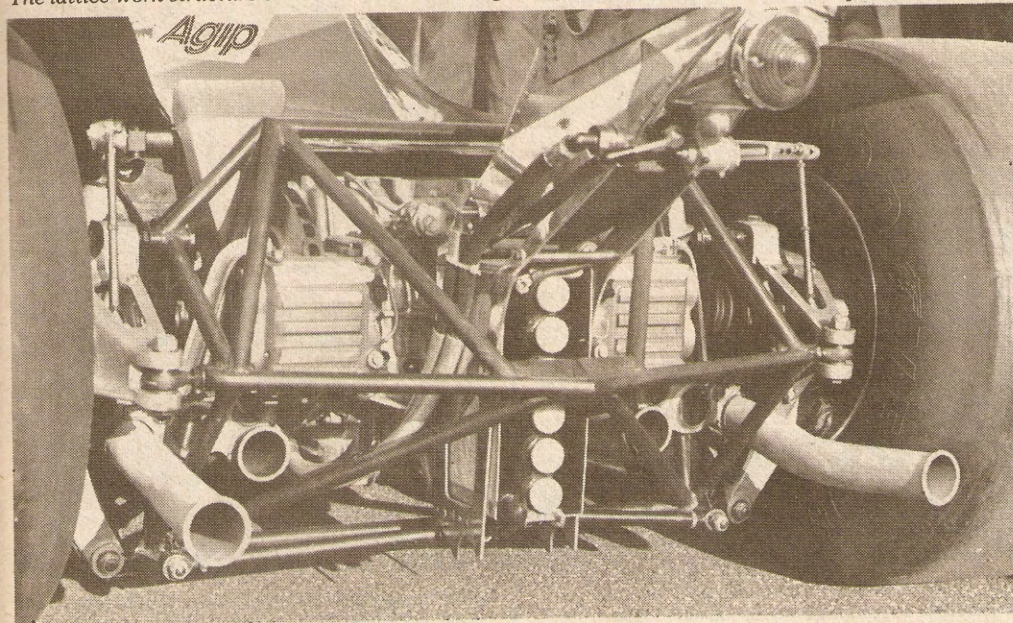
On the other hand, Ferrari's 312T2 reflects The Great Leap Backwards. The last De Dion rear suspension seems to have left Grand Prix racing when Bob Drake's 250F Maserati finished the 1960 US GP at Riverside. Wishbone suspension systems had long since outmoded the classical De Dion "tube" designed by either Trepardoux or Bouton

for the Count de Dion's steam wagons was back when.

Contrary to the descriptions given in some other magazines, the De Dion arrangement doesn't give vertical movement to the wheels. It gives parallel movement, and that's something different. A Watts linkage beneath the new Ferrari's transverse gearbox locates this rear suspension laterally, while single radius rods either side keep things in the appointed place fore-and-aft.

Even with a lattice-work structure such as Ferrari have used in place of the traditional, around 4-inch diameter, De Dion tube, this is a hefty arrangement and it adds unsprung weight. This means a large mass has to be accelerated, stopped, and reversed every time a wheel hits a

The lattice work structure on the Ferrari rear end goes against recent trends and adds unsprung weight.



Lotus have adopted an ingenious front brake twin-caliper set-up on which to mount the suspension.

bump. Five years ago everybody was telling us how vital a factor unsprung weight was, with inboard brakes and tiny wheels, links and uprights which would skip neatly over bumps and faithfully follow the road surface. The Lotus 72 led the way in proving this theory but in recent years outboard brakes and springs have become increasingly fashionable, and Lotus' 72-ism has largely been discredited . . . in practical terms.

Reports from Italy indicate that the T2 with its De Dion rear end has worked well at Ferrari's Fiorano test track, and Forghieri has said that the system has been re-adopted because of the advantage it should show on smooth circuits out of medium-speed corners, in wet or dusty

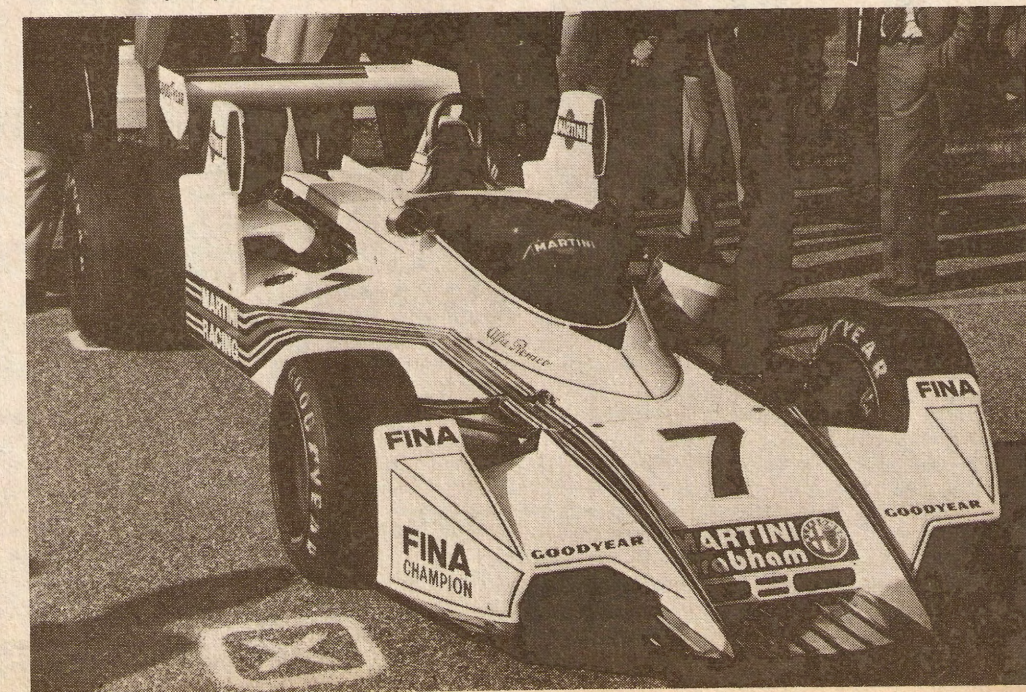
conditions. Obviously the bumps of a Brands Hatch or Nurburgring might be expected to upset it, for deflections of one wheel will inevitably cause a sympathetic reaction in its twin and perhaps the most significant part of the T2 spec is its rapid interchangeability with the victorious 312T suspension set-up. Ferrari have been working closely with Goodyear in development, and Michelin are known to be close to them. There also seems a possibility of another major tyre company returning to racing . . . there is more to the De Dion story than we know . . .

Adaptability to varying circuits made or marred most teams' performances in '75. The JPS-11 has been designed as the ultimate adjust-a-car (some would say confusacar) with its myriad track/-wheelbase combinations, and after a discouraging

series of early tests in which the prototype didn't fit Ronnie Peterson properly, Team Lotus have made progress. So much so that Ronnie's latest Ricard times were the fastest set on his particular suit of tyres.

The JPS-11 design impresses in many ways, the multiple functions being performed by so many parts reflecting a Colin Chapman influence on Geoff Aldridge and Martin Ogilvie who worked out the thing in detail. Someone remarked, "It's nice to see aerodynamics have gone out the window" when the car was unveiled with its enormous exposed front brakes. But their mounting allows a slimmer, shallower and lighter tub, and those ingenious Lockheed-Lotus calipers which double up as suspension mounts look more elegant the more one thinks of them. The first car has now been modified to incorporate a 1976-regulation roll-over hoop in the dash-panel

Brabham have plumped for the Alfa Romeo flat 12 engine in Gordon Murray's beautifully sleek BT45.



structure, and the moulded cockpit surround has had to be modified accordingly. Nevertheless, the latest John Player Special certainly looks right, which is more than could be said for the unlamented JPS-9 and 10 — oh hell, Lotus 76 — and we shall soon know if it goes right.

Brabham have had an indifferent experience so far with their flat-12 Alfa Romeo-engined car, but just like the V8-powered McLarens and Marches of yore those Italian horses seem to charge along the straights and settle back to a comfortable trot round the corners. The BT45 prototype has now been painted Italian red, and I understand that a second car is nearly complete at Byfleet. Engine shortage will probably mean two Alfa-engined race cars in South America, with a Cosworth BT44B in a box as spare.

Certainly the taciturn, thoughtful Gordon Murray had to scratch his head to design a compact, narrow-track, lightweight car around the shallow but broad flat-12, and still accommodate 43-gallons of fuel. Rather than do a Shadow-Matra, with extra tankage outriggered around the cockpit, Gordon placed extra cells in a forked extension of the monocoque tub along both sides of the engine. The Alfa unit was not designed to be used fully-stressed like Cosworth's DFV, and the BT45's tubing-fork configuration doubles-up to provide a rigid engine mounting without recourse to a wastefully heavy tubular sub-frame system, with extra tankage housed elsewhere. What's more, the extra fuel tankage is well back around the car's major mechanical mass.

Another car which really impresses is of course the late-Hesketh 308C with its all-rubber sprung suspension. This unusual Teddy Bear's spring bit originated late in 1973, when Harvey Postlethwaite was pondering an all-new Hesketh car. He wanted a better form of rising-rate suspension than the orthodox methods of trick suspension linkages or variable-rate metal springs. Both tended to be complex and heavy, and Harvey knew an engineer working for what was then known as the Natural Rubber Producers' Research Association, who were based in Hertford. D. J. 'Tes' Derham was working on a new low-hysteresis natural rubber compound with David Elliott. Derham's main concern was with shock isolation of buildings in earthquake zones or areas affected by heavy traffic movement, but he suggested the use of a rubber spring tailor-made to Harvey's requirements.

The main problem was to find an economic way of producing the springs required. What was needed was a company which was a) willing to help and b) which had the plant and the skill to mould springs of a given characteristics. This breakthrough was made late in '74, when Duncan Heins of Aeon Products made an independent approach to Harvey and offered a set of rubber springs for testing. They were mounted on a Hesketh 308 front end, and James Hunt did some testing. Unfortunately these rubbers 'crept' and, after a few laps, had taken on a permanent set which allowed the car's nose to ground.

Despite this problem, in which the rubber spring

actually slipped at its load-bearing surfaces, spread and so shortened its effective length, those few laps had shown promise. Now the Malaysian Rubber Producers' Research Association (as the NRRA had been catchingly renamed) resumed the stage. If Aeon could form the springs, MRPRA could provide the natural rubber compound to do the job. Derham and Elliott had formulated a virtually creep-proof rubber which would fit the bill.

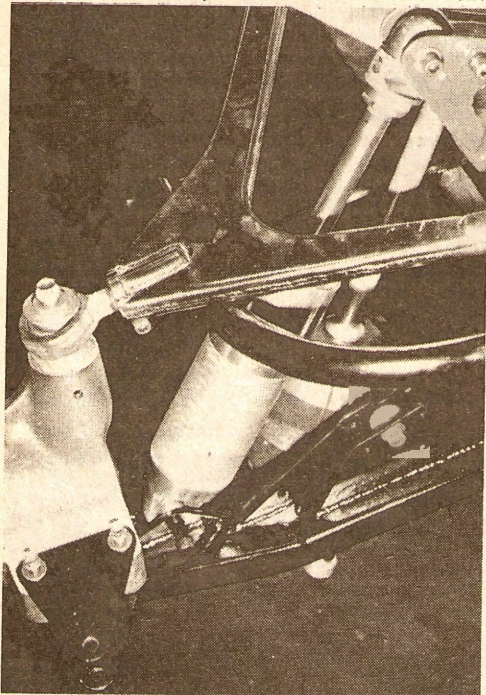
Within a matter of weeks Aeon formed the new springs, Hesketh adapted a car to carry them, and Ricard tests proved very promising. Harvey's new suspension system could adapt to rubber or metal springs as required, with the rubber spring mounted in similar manner to the conventional coil but in parallel to the damper rather than co-axial with it. As the new spring had a shorter working length than the old its lower mounting was closer to the inboard bottom wishbone pivot. Leverage could be altered to any of three positions on this bottom bracket, to obtain different rate curves from the same rubber spring. The shape of the curve could also be altered by modifying the shape of the end-plates holding the spring, so the scope for suspension tuning was greater than with conventional coils.

In Argentina Hunt tried both 308/1 on coils and 308/3 on rubber and chose the latter to finish a strong second in the GP. It was the start of a successful season with rubber supporting the front-end of the Hesketh 308B, but why natural rubber . . . and how 'natural' is it?

Des Derham explains: "Natural rubber is strong. Creep is lower at all times than in synthetics, and in the new compound we use for Hesketh springs it's lower still. Synthetics are much more affected by frequency and temperature than natural rubbers. They tend to stiffen more when worked hard, and when cold. Our new compound also has a very low hysteresis — internal friction — which allows it to run cool in this kind of dynamic application.

"Damping is associated with hysteresis, and some degree of inherent damping is a valuable characteristic to retain within the spring. Natural

The front rubber suspension on the Hesketh 308B.



rubber is the nearest we can get to a steel spring in terms of low-hysteresis, with a small amount of self-damping which is helpful. . . ."

Derham and Elliott's 'de-proteinised' natural rubber is far from what nature intended. Measures are taken to eliminate its particular content, and the result is a more or less homogeneous mass with predictable qualities.

Just to blind everyone with science, I understand that sulphur — which is normally used in rubber compounding to make a nicely elastic end product — is used in minimal amounts because it can cause surface blooms and crystalline elements within the rubber. Normal natural rubbers also have some hygroscopic material present, and both factors cause a decline in properties and an energy absorption which would be unacceptable in a spring. In MRPRA's new spring rubber, an enzyme removes the hygroscopic material, and anti-oxidants are included which are soluble at

room temperature. The Association has also developed a bonding method which attaches the rubber firmly to its support plates to prevent the spreading problem encountered in these pilot tests.

The secret of the spring's behaviour lies in its compounding, and initially the team carried a number of different mixes. Experience narrowed their choice down to just two for the front of the 309B, but I understand that the rear spring requirement of the 308C has now introduced a third.

While the 308B used parallel springs and dampers, the 308C introduced in-series units, with the spring on top of a Koni damper sharing a common mounting. Twin springs are used, the same mouldings front and rear, but subtly different in detail.

Harvey explains the delay in adopting rubber rear springs as follows: "forces acting on the rear of the F1 car are very much larger than those on the front. The rear tyres do the cornering, while the front provide balance. Front springs tend to be strong, with large leverage working on them,

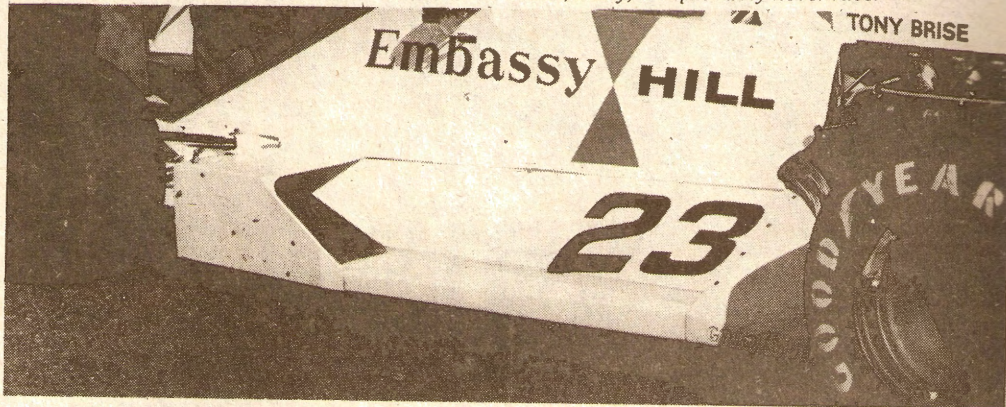
how they progress.

Finally in this look at some of the more interesting cars in a fascinating crop for '76, it is worthwhile recording the late Andy Smallman's thoughts on the Embassy Hill GH2. This car, which will probably never be raced now, owes something to Gordon Murray's Brabham practice in its triangular hull section, but young 'Pencil' achieved a much lower and more compact tub in an interesting way.

He reasoned that the driver's knees were the narrowest part of his body, and that the space wasted around them in normal monocoque chassis — with straight inner panels — would be better employed housing fuel. So the GH2 tub had an hourglass cockpit platform, with tank space pinching-in either side of the driver's knees. This shape meant that an unusually complex tankage system with five cells had to be used, but Smallman had achieved his object of building low and compact. The Arkley Disaster was such a tragic waste

What else is happening on the Formula 1 front? We've all heard the Ligier test times. Shadow are

Andy Smallman's original thinking on the Hill GH2 which, sadly, will probably never race.



something like 2:1, and to do that on the rear where very much larger forces are at work would be unwise. I'd guess you get a maximum wheel loading of 4-5000 lbs on landing at Nurburgring, so just imagine that — multiplied by two — being fed into the back of our delicate little car! You need a much less severe rising rate on the rear . . . in fact it needs to be almost linear to start with . . . and we've found a way of doing this on the new car . . ."

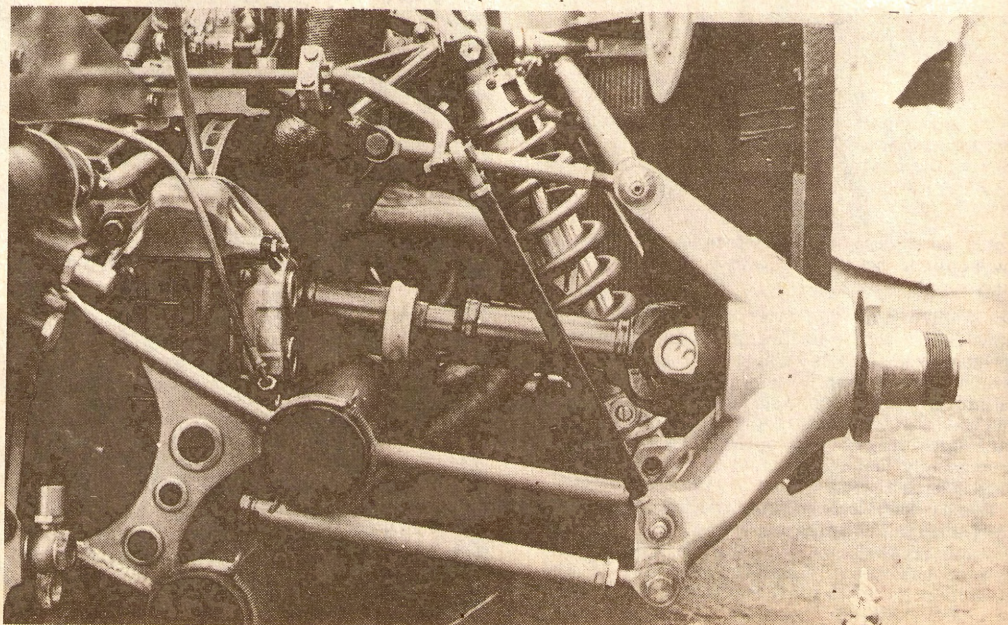
His Lordship's late, and over-lamented, team ended up with a practical spring assembly weighing around 50% less than its rivals' in-parallel damper form, and even less in-series. It also offered new realms of adjustability to tailor car and driver to differing circuits — and moods — and although Alta, Emeryson and even Bond (Bond!) have raced on rubber before, this time someone capable of winning is getting it right.

For the first few races of 1976 the now dark blue and gold Williams-Wolf 308Cs will probably appear with steel rear springs while Postlethwaite's associates in the rubber industry produce new components — and then we shall see

building two new DN5s for the South American races and a new DN8, will follow in mid-season if necessary and the money is available. March build cars so quickly that Robin Herd can be depended upon to spring a surprise: McLaren are developing a USAC version of their M23 to carry the Cosworth DFX turbocharged engine, while for Formula 1 Gordon Coppuck will be completing a new M26 in March. Penske's PC4 may be ready for the European races if PC3 development makes a new car seem sensible, while the brothers Fittipaldi might surprise us all with a competitive Copersucar . . . on the other hand, they might not.

Whatever happens in South America, the close-season of 1974 — will long be remembered as the one which started with a six-wheels-sensation, seemed set to be straightforward with no major changes, then erupted into a spate of big-money musical chairs which put motor racing well and truly into the national newspaper headlines. The numbing incident at Arkley overshadowed the fun and games . . . there's a lot we mustn't forget, but a lot to look forward to.

The Ligier-Matra rear suspension — will it be as quick as predicted?



Will the Ligier smoke us off?

By ANDREW MARRIOTT

Has the Ligier-Matra really lapped Paul Ricard circuit under the lap record? What of Jean-Pierre Beltoise's future with the team? Is Jacques Laffite definitely joining the team? Last week at the FIA annual press conference and prize giving AUTOSPORT was able to pose these and other questions to Laffite and the team's engineer Gerard Ducarouge.

JACQUES LAFFITE



Jacques Laffite — claims he's in

Are you definitely joining Ligier-Matra and have you signed for the team yet?

Yes, I think I will definitely drive for the Ligier-Matra in 1976. I have not signed a contract yet but will do so between December 22 and December 25. I will race the Ligier-Matra in Argentine and Brazil.

Do the team intend to run two cars later in the season with a second for Jean-Pierre Beltoise?

At the moment I don't know. There will be only the car for me in South America. Maybe after this we will find a solution for Beltoise. At the moment a second car is being built but this will be a spare for me and should be ready for Long Beach.

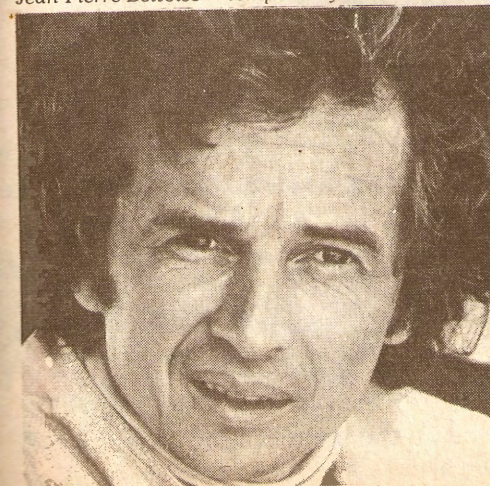
We have heard some excellent times during testing. Are they really correct?

Absolutely. I am sure they are right even if AUTOSPORT doesn't believe them! When we arrive in Argentina you will see for yourself. The car is already very competitive. Yes, the times are correct. At the last tests on the full circuit Porsche were there with Ickx and Mass and they also clocked me at the same times as the Ligier team.

What are the strong features of the car?

For me a good car is one with good balance. I have good brakes — everything seems to work very well. It is like my Formula 2, that is the best compliment I can pay. But certainly we must not stop working now.

Jean-Pierre Beltoise — temporarily out



How does the Matra engine compare with the Cosworth engine you had in the Williams?

It is difficult to assess the difference. It doesn't have the same power band as the Cosworth, and I think perhaps the low down torque of the Matra is better. But it is a very different sort of engine to drive.

Do you have any regrets on leaving the Frank Williams Racing Team?

Yes, I have some regrets. Frank unfortunately came with an offer to me too late. I had to choose if I would drive for Ligier before the Hesketh-/Postlethwaite news. So, of course, I have regrets because Frank is a very good friend. He is also a very good manager. I think we will see this now he has a proper budget. I am sure his will be a very good and competitive team in 1976.

What are your personal hopes for 1976?

My big wish for 1976 is to win a Grand Prix. I am not sure if I can do it but the Ligier-Matra is very good, so I have high hopes that I can win at least one race.

You had an excellent year in sports car racing with the Kauhsen Alfa Romeo team. Will you continue in this category?

I think I will drive for Renault, but I have not signed a contract yet. Their plans are not firm yet because of all the recent management changes.

Have you any plans to continue in F2 following your Championship-winning year?

If I have the time I will do three Formula 2 races, Pau, Nogaro and Rouen, with a new Martini with a Renault V6 engine. Martini will, of course, run two similar cars throughout the year for Patrick Tambay and Rene Arnoux.

Will Martini chassis designer, Tico Martini, help with the Ligier project?

No, but I think he will build his own Formula One car in 1977. I hope he will.

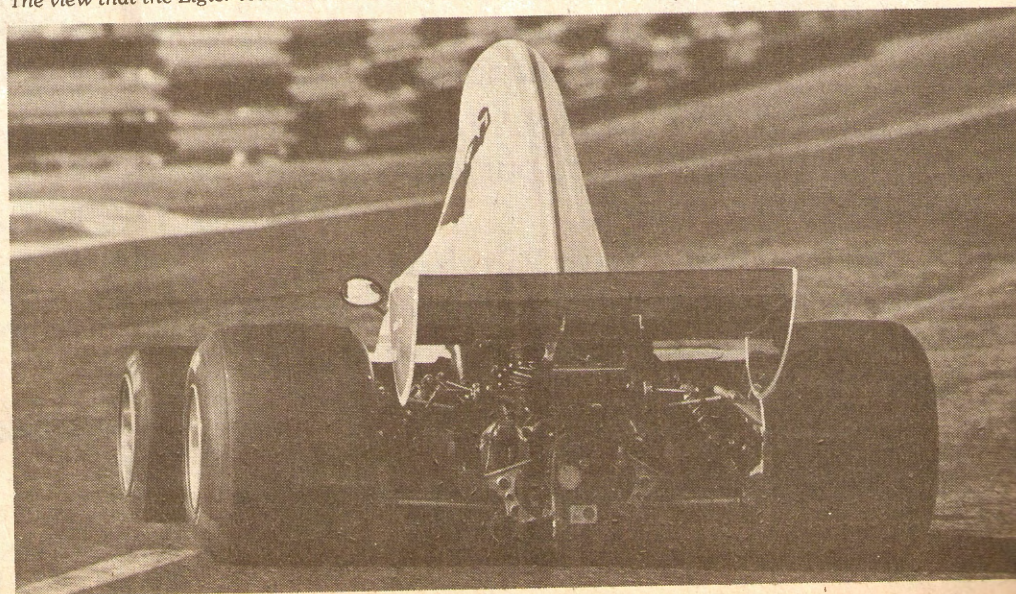
Does the Ligier crew include members of your successful F2 team?

No, but the team has very good mechanics and Gerard Ducarouge from Matra is the technical manager.

Last week you tested on the full Paul Ricard circuit. How did it go?

Very well. We were able to lap one second under the pole position time set by Niki Lauda for the '75 French Grand Prix. We thought we had lapped in

The view that the Ligier team believe that most other teams will have of their car.



LIGIER GITANES

1m 47.0 sec on our watches, but Porsche, who were there testing with Ickx and Mass, told us they clocked 1m 46.8s. Then the next day I was able to do six laps under 1m 47.0s, with a fastest of 1m 46.7s.

So you are hoping for good results in 1976?

Yes, you tell AUTOSPORT readers I will win for sure!

GERARD DUCAROUGE

Do you think you will have any problems as a new team in GP racing?

No. The car looks very easy to drive and after 2000 kms we have had no mechanical trouble so we hope it will be the same in the races. Some circuits will be more difficult to tune the car to, but we have a good team with plenty of experience.

How many engines do you have available?

Lots! Because we have a liaison with Matra, we can have the maximum number of engines we require. If we do a lot of testing we can have two engines a week if we like. It is no problem with the supply of engines.

What is the situation with Beltoise?

It is very difficult to say at the moment. I am an engineer — my job is to develop the car and I haven't spoken about the driver situation for a month. This is a problem for Beltoise, Gitanes and Guy Ligier, not for me. I don't know if there will be a second car for Beltoise.

What about the big airbox. How will you change it as this will be illegal for the European season?

I will begin tests in the wind tunnel this week. The design for the new engine cover is complete and we hope wind tunnel tests will confirm its efficiency.

Have you changed many things during testing?

It is exactly as designed, same springs, same roll bars, everything is the same. We have adjusted spoilers and fins that is all.

Is the engine proving satisfactory?

It is a very good engine. I have worked with it for five years and know it well. It has 500 bhp and I believe it can win Grand Prix races. The weight is the same as the Cosworth so it must be good. The fuel consumption is only a little higher than the Cosworth.

Will you do the non-championship races at Brands Hatch and Silverstone?

No, I don't think so. We only have a small budget, so we will only do the World Championship races.

PETER RUSSEK TOUR OF EPPYNT

Thin entry list as stars stay at home

The final round of the 1975 Castrol/AUTOSPORT championship takes place at the end of the month, Sunday, 28th December. The tour of Epynt, run as usual by the Port Talbot MC, is this year sponsored by Peter Russek Publications. The Epynt ranges are of course still the prominent feature of the event; however there is an increased forestry mileage so that about 40 per cent of the total 120 stage miles will be in the forests. The RAC is this year observing the event for upgrading to national status.

Spectator information has been given out in detailed form by the organisers who are most anxious that spectators take heed of it and adhere to the instructions given. There are two spectator stages, Halfway forest, which will be used three times in all, and Esgair Dafydd. Spectators wishing to see the cars in Halfway forest should approach from the A40 and enter the specially provided car park at 160/835327. Spectators must use this specifically provided park and are apparently likely to be prosecuted should they park on the yellow road west of the forest from MR 822335 to 855365. The threats of prosecution are not idle ones it seems, because recently there has been a storm of protest from local inhabitants over obstructions to the road during rallies, and we hear that recently a local vet was irretrievably held up here with the result that a farmer's calf died - a feature which endeared no one in the area to rallying - there is thus the

serious possibility of losing Halfway to rallying for the foreseeable future.

Cars are due in Halfway at 09.00 and again at 11.15. The latter two runs will be at 30-second intervals and the stage is being run in the same direction on all three occasions. Esgair Dafydd should be approached from the A483 and entered at MR 846441. Cars can be expected on the stage from 14.00 and no spectators will be admitted here after 13.45 due to the possibility of congestion. No spectators will be allowed on the Epynt ranges themselves (we seem to have heard that one before!) but the way round this one is of course to enroll as a marshal. The man to get in touch with is Ken Phillips at 33, Pen-y-Wern Road, Ystalyfera, Swansea. For those who would like to see the rally but have not fully recovered from the post-Christmas heavy-duty festivities, all is not lost because a BBC Wales outside broadcast team are televising the event for a sports programme to be screened later on in the Christmas/New Year period.

Top ten crews will be as follows: 1, Tony Fowkes/Sue Baker (yes!), Escort RS; 2, Willie Crawford/R. Moses (RS2000); this car is a friend's road-going (very) G1 car; 3, Laurie Richards/Nigel Raeburn (Escort RS); 4, Tom Pryce/Dave Richards (Lancia Stratos); 5, Frank Pierson/Colin Francis (Escort RS); 6, Paul Appleby/Martin Holmes (RS2000); 7, Ian Lawless/- (RS2000); 8, Chris Field/Keith Read (Chrysler Avenger GT); 9, Tim Walton/Ken Carter

(Chrysler Avenger GT); 10, Henry Inurrieta/Martin Whale (RS2000).

Most of the major awards in the Castrol championship have been decided; however the most important outstanding battle is in G1 where Paul Appleby and Ian Lawless



Laurie Richards - the 'other' favourite.

will undoubtedly embroil themselves in a hard duel. It is also possible for Chris Field to steal the title from both of them. There are 17 stages in all and rally HQ will be the Abernant Lake Hotel. There are at present around 100 entries but it seems there are still a few vacancies.

Dean question marks

A provisional top ten for the Dean gives an indication of the quality of the entry: 1, Airikkala; 2, Clark; 3, Coleman; 4, Fowkes; 5, Brookes; 6, Dawson; 7, Rocky; 8, Sclater; 9, Pond; 10, Sparrow. There are of course several question marks which hang over these entries. Peter Ashcroft assured us last Monday that Ford would be taking up their entry for the Dean despite the proximity of the Monte Carlo rally, and the organisers have a cheque to prove it, so it seems that we shall definitely see Roger there. Pentti Airikkala, who will be driving the new David Sutton/Avon Tyres Mk2 Escort, is down to compete on the rally with Henry Liddon, but it seems as though John Davenport may be seated with him. We also hear that Dan O'Sullivan has gone off to Australia for three weeks so Billy Coleman will probably appear with another co-driver. Fowkes will be back with Bryan Harris after Epynt with Sue Baker; and Andy Dawson will be driving the Chequered Flag Stratos as we said some time ago. Big question marks still hang over Nigel Rocky and Chris Sclater, neither of whom had a car to drive when we went to press, and Tony Pond is back in G1 for his first drive with the new Leyland team.

Down the list all the top names are present, Andrew Cowan (Colt Lancer); John Taylor; Tony Drummond; Colin Malkin; Robin Eyre Maunsell; Paul Faulkner; Barry Lee; Pat Ryan; Graham Elsmore; Gordon

Batchelor, Jeff Churchill, Robert James; Jan Churchill - to name just a few.

Following the news that Mercedes Benz (UK) had sent a telegram to the organisers of the Shellsport Dean rally 10 days ago, it seems that the importers, who are now a Stuttgart subsidiary, are planning to enter a car on behalf of Jonathan Ashman who impressed them on the Tour of Britain with his 280E, automatic transmission and all. Apparently they have been discussing the idea of entering a car in RAC rounds this year, but the plan has to be approved by Stuttgart before they can go further. Exactly what car they are to

use has also to be decided, but homologation paperwork is being studied at present. The company stress that should an entry be forthcoming on the Dean, it will be a private entry with minimal support from the importers/concessionaires.

● The first round of the Castrol Canadian rally championship '76 was recently won by John Buffum/Vicky Dykema in their Porsche Carrera from '75 champions Jean Paul Perusse/John Bellefleur in their works-supported Fiat 124 Abarth who finished 49 seconds in arrears. These two crews were effectively in a class of their own as the third car home - the Toyota Corolla of Victor Wejer/Randy Black - were 11m 21s in arrears. The event was run in southern Ontario.

Pentti Airikkala is no stranger to Sutton cars. Below: on his way to victory in the '74 York MC (formerly Armstrong) Forest Rally



Sutton/Avon Pentti deal

We have been asked to sit on this one for so long that we almost forgot it was there, but it slipped out this week just the same. At last the long awaited and widely known tie-up between David Sutton and Avon Tyres seems to be on the point of being officially signed. Following "contractual difficulties" with Chris Sclater, who was to have driven Sutton's number one car, Sutton has recruited another former driver in the old Clarke and Simpson days, none other than ebullient Finn, Pentti Airikkala, who will be contesting the RAC championship in the Mk2 which Jill Robinson debuted on the RAC.

Testing with Pentti was being carried out last week in a Midlands forest, although the Finn was fog-bound in Amsterdam for an entire day en route. An entry has been made for the Shellsport Dean. Airikkala, who is expected to be partnered by John Davenport, will be supported in the Sutton team on five home internationals by the talented Norwegian Eric Aaby who is having a new car built for him by Ford (Norway) in recognition of his fine efforts around Europe (rallying is of course banned in Norway) and particularly on the RAC recently. Aaby will be seen in this car on the Mintex, the Welsh (another roll?) the Scottish, the Circuit of Ireland and the Lombard RAC.

In the meantime Sutton is planning to have a new car built in LHD form to be ready for the latter part of the season. In addition he is planning to build a new droop snoot G2 RS 2000 for Jill Robinson to pick up the generous ladies awards being presented in the various championships. Airikkala will also be entered on the 1000 Lakes in the Sutton Mk2. Since the RAC, business has been brisk at David Sutton (Cars), and he reports that work will soon be in progress on a new car for the Samsons, George Beever and a Spaniard called Arroita. There is also an RS2000 for David Palmby in the pipeline.

The team spent two hard days testing in the Midlands last week and the results pleased everyone. "Very satisfactory" was how Alan Blake described it on Thursday. He was very enthusiastic about the prospects of the car, driver and tyre combination. The team took a rival manufacturer's tyres along to the session with them, and found that besides giving a far superior wear rate, the Avons were apparently as good or better in every department "save under braking."

"Pentti was very happy with the tyres," said David Sutton after the testing, and a very pleased Alan Blake added "we really did have the proof that our tyres could stand up outstandingly to a powerful Escort and a very quick driver." During the test over 150 stage miles were covered and some experimentation with hand-cutting was carried out. David Sutton also learnt much about his new car. Final details of the Avon/Sutton tie-up had yet to be settled as we went to press on Thursday, but it was expected that the deal would shortly be signed.

Plain stages Birmingham

bonanza

Another rally has emigrated to Welsh forests — it's the Plains Rally — organised by Cheshire-based Knutsford and District Motor Club — and was last run in October 1974 as a road event but will be held on April 3 next year in the forests of mid-Wales.

It will be the fourth round of the Esso Uniflo BTRDA Gold Star special stage rally championship, and will also count towards the Welsh Association of Motor Clubs championship.

The decision to turn to special stages was taken by the organising committee soon after the announcement of the fuel-saving 50 mph speed limit on most of Britain's roads.

The club believed that under the new conditions they could not run a Plains Rally in its successful tight and competitive old style: "We were not prepared to water down the reputation the Plains had built up," said clerk of the course, Tony Goulding.

Winners in 1971 of the Ecurie Cod Fillet Rally of the Year Award, the Plains had been regarded as one of the best-run events in the road rally calendar for a number of years.

And it's this reputation, says Tony Goulding, that has earned next year's Plains a place in two leading championships, despite its being an unknown quantity in stage rallying.

Start and finish of the 200-mile event will be in the Welsh seaside resort of Barmouth, where full spectator facilities — including programmes, commentary and details of spectator points — are to be arranged. "We want the whole rally weekend to be very much a social occasion," explained Tony.

The event will contain about 50 miles of stages, including some in the classic Welsh forests such as Coed y Brenin and Dyfnant.

Organisers will be inviting 120 entries and they hope regulations will be ready by early February. They will be available from Gordon McLaren at 120 Chester Road, Grappenhall, near Warrington. Chief marshal for the event will be Trevor Addey.

Belgium on the cheap

Any rallymen who like the idea of inexpensive foreign events may like the sound of the Boucles de Spa which is being held in Belgium between the 6th/8th February. The entry fee for British crews is 1000 Belgian Francs (about £7) providing that they accept the organisers' publicity and this fee includes bed and breakfast for four nights for two people. The prize fund totals approximately £3,200. The event consists of a loop which is repeated six times and totals 1200 kms. There are many tarmac stages scheduled and two loose forests, one of which is ten miles in length. A roadbook will be available from 2nd January and entries close on the 15th. Further enquiries to Henry Inurrieta, Flat 5, 38 Stokenchurch Street, Fulham, SW6. Telephone (evenings) 01-736 7502.

Last Monday's *Birmingham Post/Andrews Heat for Hire/Bristol Street Motors* forum, held at the latter's premises in Birmingham turned out to be an enormous success, but there was drama behind the scenes as well, for Roger Clark, who was jetting back from Monte Carlo practise to appear with other members of the panel (Stuart Turner, Ken Tyrrell, Russell Brookes and John Brown) was delayed by thick fog, and eventually the plane landed at Luton, this being the sole airport in the area with sufficient visibility. Clark then had to drive to Birmingham where he arrived a little late.

Approximately 1600 people turned out to see the show, and while over 500 crammed into the upstairs theatre to watch a film, a further 800 were downstairs in Bristol Street's giant showrooms while the forum panel sat on the palatial staircase before going upstairs for round two. Stuart Turner informed the assembled company that Roger Clark would be given a short drive in Project 34, the six-wheeled Tyrrell F1 car, and at 12.45 just before he left for the return journey to Monte Carlo, Roger squeezed himself into the car, finding that the posteriors of F1 drivers did not exactly correspond with his own. Quite when and where this test is to be conducted has yet to be decided. As far as driver signings for next year are concerned, Stuart Turner would only say that he has made his offers and it is up to the drivers to make up their minds, but it is expected, as we stated two weeks ago, that the team will remain very much as it is at present for their expanded World Championship rally programme.

Fall on Dean?

It now seems almost certain that Tony Fall will be driving the DOT Kadett on the Shellsport Dean. This comes about under the guise of "development" for we are led to believe that Fall's contract specifically excludes him from active rallying except under this heading. How long this will go on for is difficult to say. Co-driver, we hear, is to be Mike Broad.

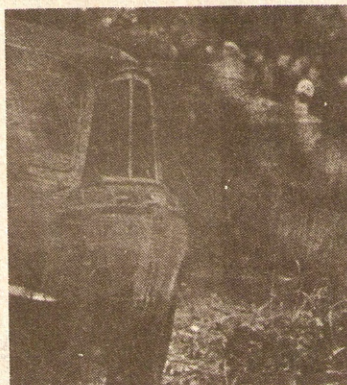
Winter's amazing wild life portrait.



Photographic Awards 1975

It is quite a pleasure for us to be able to bring you this short selection of our best action pictures. Our judging criteria has been limited to creative "art" effects and technical merit. This short selection is something we feel sure will brighten your Christmas gloom, or at least drive all good men to drink or, perhaps, Eppynt.

Although the small format



The winning action study.

demanding by these news-packed pages does not do us full justice (we originally planned to produce an action calendar of 12 of these "best efforts" but our short-sighted publisher was worried that we might be chasing-away up and coming freelance talent by setting such a high standard); we are sure you will want to put these two examples up on the walls of your den. For the technically minded, details are given below. It is of some interest to note that both of these specially selected pictures are "staff" shots; the best efforts of our major sources (Hugh Bishop and Colin Taylor) falling dismally short in our judging criteria test. In fact, we only ever publish their pathetic efforts with Instamatics, in sympathy as both live in dismal poverty and squalor often claiming to find difficulty in scraping up enough money for a cheap "Awayday to Ostend" ticket in their attempts at continental coverage.

However, without further digression; the techniques used: Peter Newton modestly owns-up to that startling study of the Leyland ST Dolomite Sprint of Brian Culcheth. Peter was experimenting with an entirely new approach on the RAC Rally and his photograph took much time and patience in constructing. Using a much modified Canon (de-armed) fitted with twin barrel "atmosphere sniffers" (he patented it, we believe) Peter crept waist-deep through a bog to this startling un-marked corner.

Arriving many hours before first car, our intrepid photo-journalist first of all erected a series of contradictory arrows, used in conjunction with a painted back-drop of a 'T' junction with a *Saladin* overturned in the roadway. Nipping smartly down the track, Peter then erected cardboard life-size cutouts of Richard Seth-Smith and Simon Pearson giving "thumbs-up" to Brian. The ploy worked brilliantly — reports Peter: "Brian must have been doing about 175 mph by the time he reached me — I had to adjust the shutter speed very quickly." This shot shows just what the much-maligned "Dolly" will do in these specially psychologically adjusted circumstances! Peter

reports that he received tempting bribes in the form of free-meal offers from *Supremo Pearson* "not to publish"; but in true *AUTOSPORT* traditions we have published and "be damned" ...

Our other study was reputedly taken by Ian Sadler, but he was tight-lipped on the subject. Possibly he's been "bought." The picture however cannot lie, and Ian was supposed to have been on location to take cover shots for his forthcoming "My Fifty Favourite Beverages" (Haymarket Publications — 5p, plain wrapper dispatch). His Bagshot choice of location we believe was chosen as he was deliberately trying to re-create an incident when he was nearly (regretably not quite) run over by Roger Clark on the '74 RAC after a long night's work in the Royal Station had brought about an unexpected bout of fatigue in the centre of the track. It failed. The resulting pic is, we are assured, "nearly perfect — but I fell over too soon, anyway Donald Heggie took a



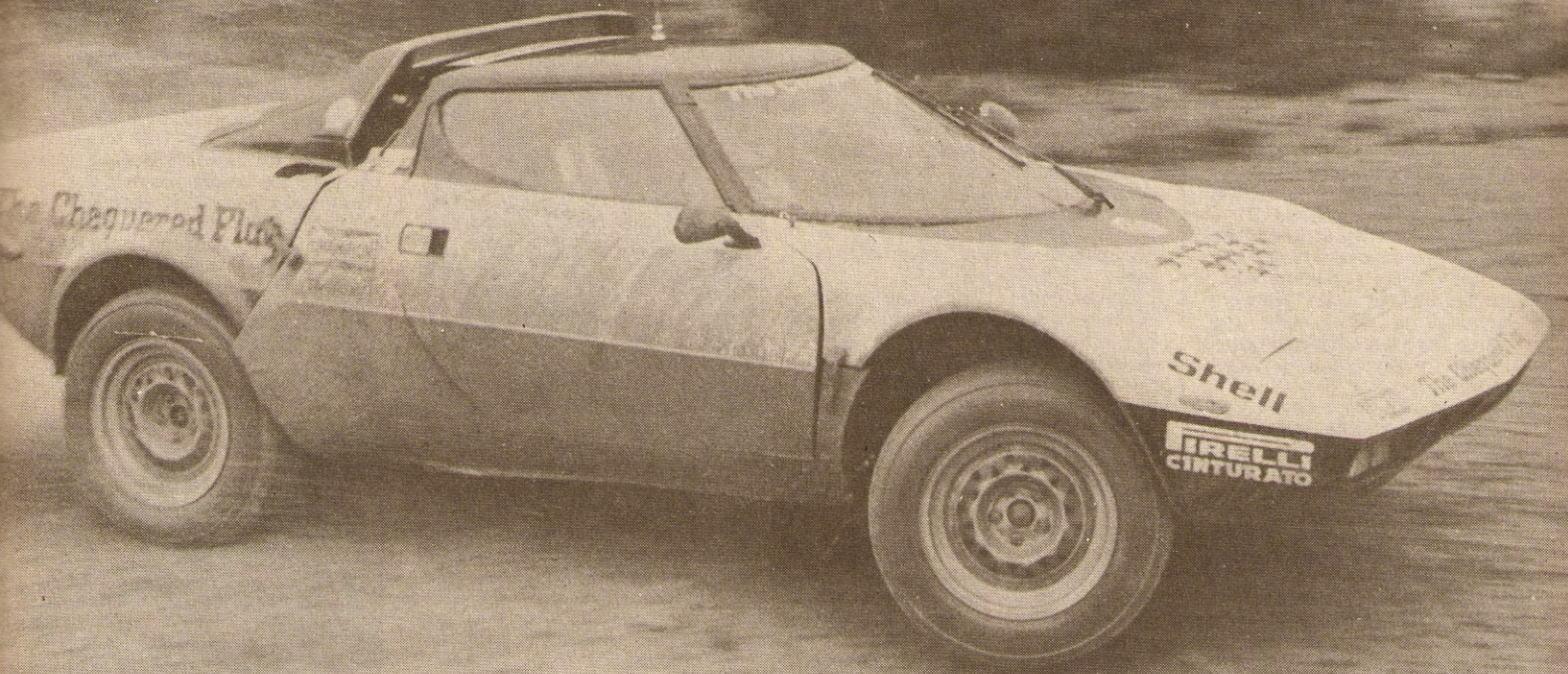
Heggie at Bagshot — runner-up.

different line." Still, it runs a commendable second to our "Gold Canon" award — obviously Peter's highly original shot.

Rare shot

But the judges were moved to comment on an entry from *AUTOSPORT's* very own camera man, David "Don't call me Mugsy!" Winter. Here he has trapped four 'beer hogs' before they were able to scurry back to their day-time lairs. Winter receives a special commendation, firstly, for the original composition — these 'hogs' have never before been subject to public scrutiny in daylight — a factor which itself shows up an alarming danger to public health services; and secondly, for the execution of the work — 'hogs' are unpredictable, often armed with bottles, and can be highly excitable, sometimes dangerous.

David takes up the story: "I gasped when I suddenly caught sight of a little herd of them, they were grunting, sort of like pigs, and rummaging through the car park litter bins, obviously after beer. I sank to my knees and loaded my Hasselblad and Nikon 'F'. Crawling through ankle-deep mud and thick gorse bushes, I used the cars in the park to shield my approach. When I came up on them they seemed to have found what they were looking for, and were gathered together in a huddle picking and gnawing at the cans. I shouted a warning, and caught them in the split second before they bounded off into the forest. They had long rodent-like tails; it was horrifying." Well done David, for a fine effort in action photography.



One's first ever drive on loose surfaces normally tends to be a rather timid sortie — when the vehicle happens to be a works-built Lancia Stratos, one might refer to the exercise in terms of 'jumping in at the deep end' — but the driver's name was Tom Pryce . . .

It was the Chequered Flag and would I like to go down to Chobham and partake of a little testing with Tom Pryce and the Lancia Stratos? Naturally it was a difficult decision to forsake the grey unkempt confines of my little concrete hutch; to stretch the ever-tautening bounds of copy deadlines still further, and with a heavy heart I came to the inevitable conclusion — sprinting out to the car before I realised I had left the keys with the bills, on the floor.

Out of the Shadows

A typewriter full of blank paper, dust gathering on the record sleeves, crumpled clothes in the corner, last week's milk on the table — the flat was looking its perennial sartorial self; and it was raining, just the merest smattering at first, but a withering glance at the leaden washed-out cloud ceiling, unbroken at about 50 feet of altitude, confirmed my pessimistic fears . . . life was at a low ebb that morning; there were empty pages to fill, an empty wallet to commiserate with, and an empty head to solve both these pressing problems. A pile of smirking bills rustled gleefully off the creaking table and settled like autumn leaves at my feet — must get that glass pane replaced. The telephone rang — a momentous occasion in itself- who could this be? Verbal as well as written harassment perhaps . . .

"Excuse me, sir; have you a seat vacant?" Tom prepares for his first sortie on the loose.





Oops! a minor off during practice. The undamaged car was rapidly back in action however.

It was not however at Chobham that I found Ron Pellatt and the Lancia, for there was merely an empty transporter lying forlornly in the rain . . . gone. Surely they would not risk it at Bagshot . . . not with all those potholes, would they? The seeds of doubt sown, and with nothing left to lose, I slipped back through the lanes to the A30, heading west. Ron was busy changing over to Pirelli knobbies. Times must have changed since the days when they were afraid to run the car on the loose at all for fear of a total suspension collapse. The newly-built Stratos is now to full works specification with 'Safari' suspension set-up. Bagshot is a hard uncompromising little circuit and it is so rough now that its use for rally purposes would seem to be limited to ascertaining how quickly a car breaks-up under the battering of incessant potholes and six inch boulders. No one seemed in the least concerned, despite the fact that they had just been given a wild demonstration run round in the resident Land-Rover.

Tom was sitting thoughtfully in cockpit of the tiny projectile and after brief introductions he motored out for his first exploratory laps. The familiar Ferrari growl recedes into the trees as Tom examines the way round. He returns after three laps, face flushed with effort and enthusiasm — "You have to work bloody hard at this game don't you, I'm knackered!" Ron wants him to check the intercom system, it is going to need a passenger, so I arrive at my second major decision-making 'crisis' of the day — I was in the car before anyone had time to change their minds.

Just occasionally the job of motorsport journalist becomes, as the advertisement says, 'sheer enjoyment'; this was one of those rare moments which make up for the drudgery. Tom is coming to terms with the machine and the harmonious scream of camshafts, chains and valves descends the octave spectrum behind our heads as he downshifts, double declutching immaculately for one of the sweeping cambered bends around the back of the circuit. He is trying to master the little machine which defiantly wants to understeer on the exits. Being something of a Formula 1 sceptic I was not quite prepared for this. If F1 drivers are all alike, they really are a breed apart. Tom's feel for the car is uncanny and he is already beginning to go really quickly — using the brakes to set the car on the entries, counteracting the understeer as the Stratos fires out of the corners. He is always looking for ways to help the car round, piles of grading stones, cambers, suddenly everything is flowing past the side windows in that unique and exultant feeling one rarely experiences when being driven in this style. The writer has noticed it twice before at this very same circuit, its hard to describe in words: but the symptoms are easy to recognize. A slow ever-widening grin spreads across the face and the involuntary urge to laugh sometimes becomes overpowering. Another corner, a square left; Tom slides through the gearbox, leaving his braking impossibly late before hauling the little machine down from its ecstatic heights. The car is very sideways now, set up in the beginnings of a classic reverse flick. He has soon found out that the

quickest way to slow down on the loose is to go sideways, but long before the apex he is back hard on the power and the engine note deepens as we rocket wide with power-understeer, blurred scenery and faces streaming past the windows, turning them opaque.

The Stratos is not an easy car to drive near its limits on loose surfaces and anyone who has watched Waldegaard grappling with his Alitalia car through stages, hands twirling mightily at the wheel, will know that — to the spectator the machine seems to flick about and change its attitude totally in a flash — a racing car on the loose, and lethal in the wrong hands. Pryce's reactions are staggering as indeed they would have to be to hold a Shadow in powerslides at comfortably over 100 mph on dry tarmac, but this is something else again — a cautious glance across at the frenetic arms working at the wheel and the feet dancing on the pedals says it all — and he is grinning too! The car rushes onward, hurling itself towards the distant line of trees controlled by the remarkable Welshman.

Suddenly the dream shatters like crystal — he has forgotten all about the ess bend before the home straight, the rhythm is broken and the little car is lost. Tom almost manages the impossible, but then the Lancia is skirting some small trees before clattering down a bank; the engine stops and the silence is suddenly all-pervasive. Now he

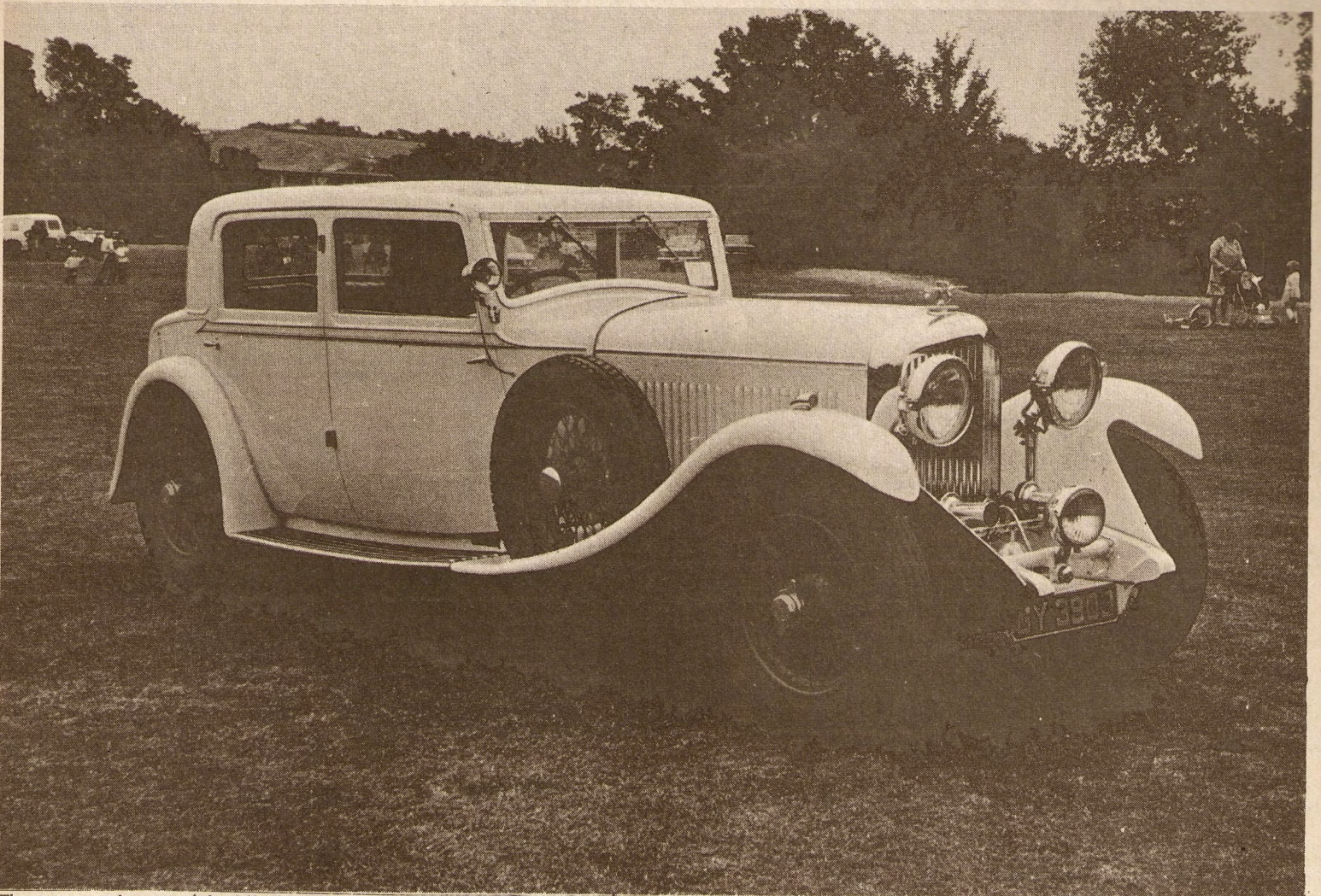
Tom seemed to have enjoyed himself immensely during the day — here he powers through Bagshot roundabout for the first time.



is apologizing — to me! A few heaves and we are out and running again. The grin is gone now and suddenly there's a flash of the intense spirit which won him that award at the Nurburgring this year. Far from treading carefully and letting the car dominate, Tom is now going to put in some really quick ones. There are times when one feels a little vulnerable, and a rapidly driven Stratos can be one of those places — staring out over the steeply raked screen, wide eyes gulping in the high speed visual effects, the little car suddenly seems very frail, and its paper-thin glass fibre cocoon a positive inducement to the trees flashing by outside. The run back to the roundabout contains the longest straight on the short loop at Bagshot — only its not quite straight, there is a testing kink in its centre, a right-left sweep with some fierce ruts ready to trap the unwary — Tom flings the car sideways, catches and holds the slide and the Stratos blasts out of the curve, an extra-terrestrial black and white demon of appalling ferocity — it scatters the watchers whose white faces peer out from behind the stoutest trees, a welter of stones curling high in the air to clatter in the bushes behind, the noise lost in the bellowing exhaust note. The revs have not changed at all — 7800 in fourth gear or just on 100 mph. The feeling of insecurity is over — the roundabout is upon us; Tom swings in late and hard, and is on the bump-stops of the steering lock before we are halfway round. Yet that is as far as the car gets as he forces it to hang there — giant rocks are flashing inches past the co-drivers door — the return straight is in front of us, the car is riveted to the ground by the astounding traction and we're gone, engine note rising to a screaming cacophony of sound, the sort of sound which sends shivers down the spine, it alters scarcely half-an-octave with the gear changes.

The memory of those last laps lives on where the description falls down; the words simply are not there. Tom brings the car back to the paddock, switches off and grins hugely. How did he enjoy it? He is ecstatic and now reveals his initial misgivings — "I never thought I could do it — how fast do you think I should be going? — I'd like to finish the rally at least somewhere in the middle order . . ." the questions are mingled with honest delight and exultation and the car has been tremendous, its suspension disdainfully coping with the roughest Bagshot surface this writer has witnessed. 'How many times have you done this before Tom?' An embarrassed grin and the unassuming Pryce replies — "Oh never, this is the first time I've ever driven on the loose." (!) A rare breed indeed; beyond the bounds of comprehension. Tom may not win Eppynt, he may even crash, but I will remember those laps at Bagshot over Christmas and there will be no need of any coal fires or central heating to keep warm when I recall that afternoon.

PETER NEWTON



The enormous bonnet of the 8-litre Bentley is almost full of engine, but the high radiator and shallow screen were fashionable around 1930.

Bentley's all time great

I suppose that a road test driver should have no conscience. Unfortunately perhaps, mine is still in full working order, in spite of the ravages of alcohol and *anno domini*. Just imagine how I felt, therefore, when I took the wheel of Peter Agg's superb 8-litre Bentley after a total rebuild, followed by walking off with the top prize at the Bentley Drivers' Club concours. If I had spun off when I drove the Camargue, I could always have bought them another one, but this car, ladies and gentlemen, is irreplaceable.

When W. O. Bentley introduced his 8-litre, it was intended to blow off the Rolls-Royce Phantom II and take over the super-luxury market, lock, stock, and barrel. That was a very brave thing to do, too brave as it turned out, but it was the reason why the makers stressed its virtues as a town carriage and made no mention of performance. As it was certainly the fastest touring car in the world, that may seem illogical, but the Bentley image was too sporting by half for the upper-crust market.

When I was a mere stripling, I did my first 100 mph on the back seat of an 8-litre Bentley saloon. Much later, I raced an open one that had received the McKenzie treatment, but I was all the more interested to try Peter Agg's car because it really is standard, with none of the usual modifications, good or bad, which is rare indeed.

The 8-litre Bentley was the last of the really big six-cylinder cars. They had had a splendid innings, lasting a quarter of a century, but thereafter power would come in smaller parcels, and more of them. The earlier big sixes, such as the Silver Ghost and the Delaunay-Belleville, had been extremely smooth and silent because they had low compression ratios and did their best work below 2000 rpm. The 8-litre had the highest compression

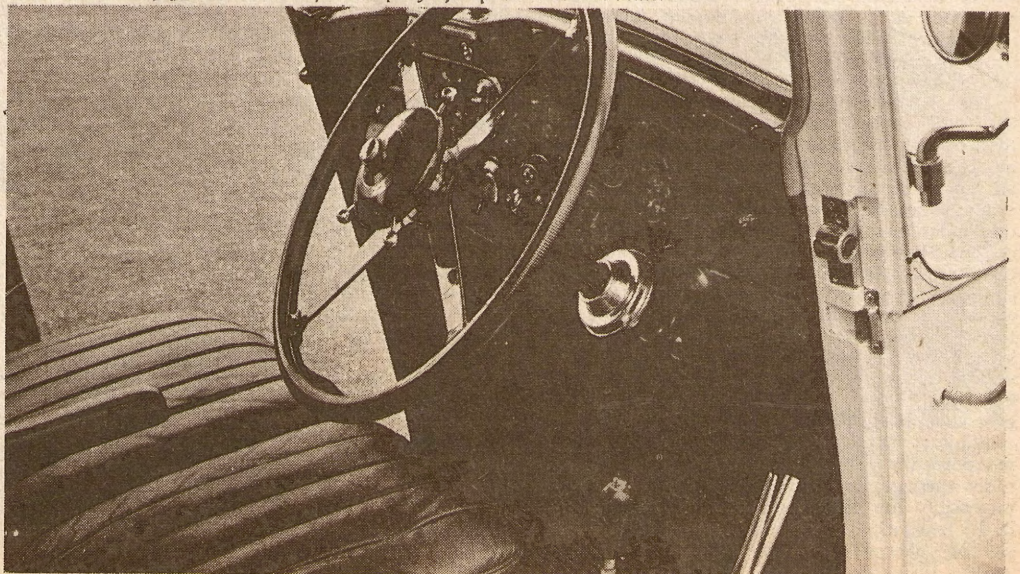
ratio that the petrol of its era would stand, and it ran up to 3500 rpm, which was really something with pistons that size.

The crankcase was of aluminium and carried the vast crankshaft on seven main bearings. The cast-iron cylinder block was made integral with the head and had four valves per cylinder, like all the previous Bentleys; the overhead camshaft was

driven by connecting rods and eccentrics, as used on the 6½-litre Bentley and the Leyland Eight. Dual ignition was by coil and magneto.

A huge dry-plate clutch had a clutch-stop brake for quick up-changes and the separate gearbox was of the plain, sliding pinion type, the gate-change lever being on the right, of course. The dynamo was driven directly from the front of the crankshaft and looked rather splendid poking through the bottom of the radiator, where the supercharger went on the "Blower 4½." The vast channel-section chassis frame sat on four semi-elliptic springs and the brakes were mechanically operated in such huge drums that they nearly filled the 21in rims. The back axle was

Ignition advance and retard, throttle and mixture controls are at the steering wheel centre. The polished wood instrument panel carries a fine display of separate round dials.



quite an early example of the hypoid bevel, following the Packard and the Phantom II among others.

The body of Peter Agg's car is a superb 4-door saloon by H. J. Mulliner, giving the sort of interior space that you get with a 12ft wheelbase. The whole outfit weighs close on 2½ tons, the very high radiator and long bonnet occupying much of the drivers' view. The clutch is smooth and the car moves off easily, but here I come to my sole point of criticism. Though the changes on the 8-litre box must be judged with some skill, I have never found them exceptionally difficult. However, this one proved both tricky and inconsistent, but it was probably only a matter of clutch-stop adjustment. The indirect gears have an audible whine, but the box is much quieter than those of earlier Bentleys.

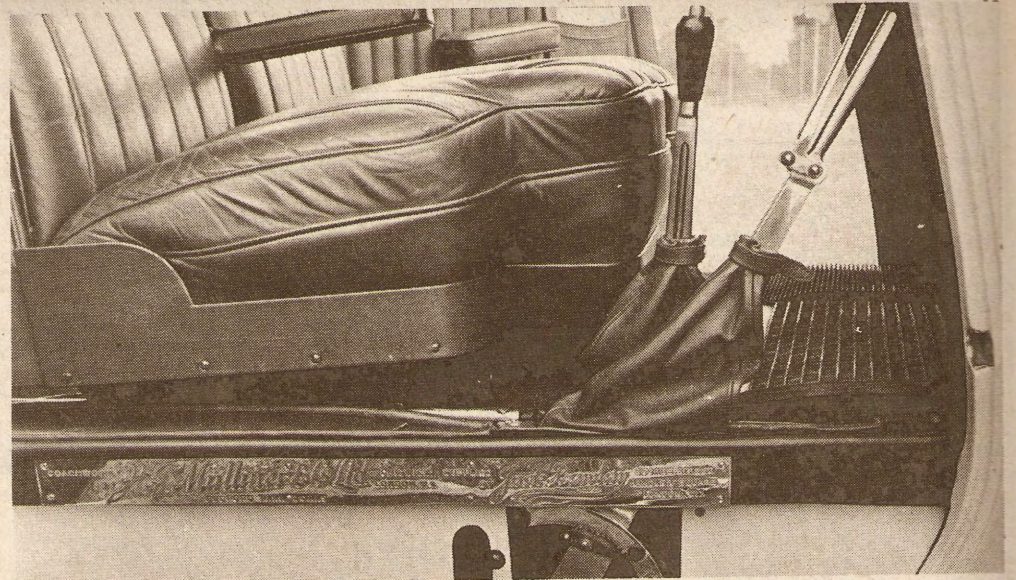
It would have been sacrilege to subject such a car to wheelspin starts and snatched gearchanges, so I did not take acceleration figures. However, the tremendous torque is almost unbelievable and the sensation of unlimited power is marvellous. Actually, I suppose she accelerates like a good modern 1.6-litre to 2-litre saloon through the gears, but her low-speed pick-up in top is fantastic.

The huge engine is not flexibly mounted and one can feel the urge of each piston as it fires. It's not particularly smooth or silent, but then, nor was the Phantom II.

You have only to compare an 8-litre or a PII with a straight-eight Packard of the same era to realise that the future lay with smaller cylinders. Nevertheless, the sheer sensation of power and animal vitality is something that we have lost and the fact that the engine is pulling 2½ tons along is never apparent. I would love to sit behind that huge engine and just drive and drive as fast as I dared, until suddenly I realised that the 25 gallon petrol tank needed filling again — oh dear!

The car has a really modern performance and the brakes are much better than one would expect. There's a very slight delay as the servo comes into action, but the brakes are smooth and powerful. An 8-litre with an open body and low radiator can handle pretty well, but with a saloon nearly 6ft high it seems much more of a juggernaut. Any 8-litre will do an easy 100 mph, but one wouldn't do it among a lot of other traffic, even if it were legal. It's a case of hanging on and paying a lot of attention, especially if the road is bumpy.

The chassis is quite whippy, while the radiator and scuttle are both flexibly mounted, so the



The gear and brake levers had leather gaiters to prevent draught. The wing nuts for taking up hand and foot brakes can be seen in valance.

bonnet seems to wriggle a good deal, which is disconcerting at first. The steering is quick and responsive, only becoming really heavy on sharp corners. Compared with its rival, I would say that the 8-litre has an altogether more potent engine than the PII but in other respects the Rolls-Royce is the better car. Both these battleships ride quite well, with none of the spine-jarring of the 4-cylinder Bentleys.

When one comes to examine Peter Agg's 8-litre, one is lost in admiration at the perfect restoration. He bought the vehicle in a totally dismantled state and now it can only be described as a brand new Bentley. From the walnut veneer of the instrument panel to the Connolly hide and pile carpets, everything is beyond criticism, and there is not the slightest sign of the over-restoration that can spoil a beautiful car. If she were mine, I would make only one change, for those fitted bottles of perfume might well be replaced by something more tasty — Dom Perignon champers would suit a car like this.

I loved driving a big Bentley again — its one of the great cars of all time — but I breathed a sigh of

relief when I completed my stint without a scratch on that immaculate coachwork!

SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA

Car Tested: Bentley 8-Litre 4-door saloon, price: chassis £1,850, body to customers' choice. (Manufactured from 1930 to 1932).

Engine: Six-cylinders 110 x 140 mm (7982.8 cc). Single overhead-camshaft, driven by eccentrics and connecting rods, operating four inclined valves per cylinder through rockers. Twin SU carburetters.

Transmission: Single dry plate clutch. 4-speed sliding-pinion gearbox with right-hand lever. Open propeller shaft. Hypoid rear axle. Overall ratios: 3.533, 4.75, 6.32, and 11.45 to 1.

Chassis: Channel-section steel frame. Rigid front axle on semi-elliptic springs. Worm and wheel steering. Live rear axle on semi-elliptic springs. Friction-type dampers. Drum brakes with mechanical operation through differential cross-shaft, rods, Perrot-shafts, and cams, with Dewandre vacuum servo. Hand brake operating in rear drums. Knock-on Rudge Whitworth wire wheels, fitted 7.00-21 tyres.

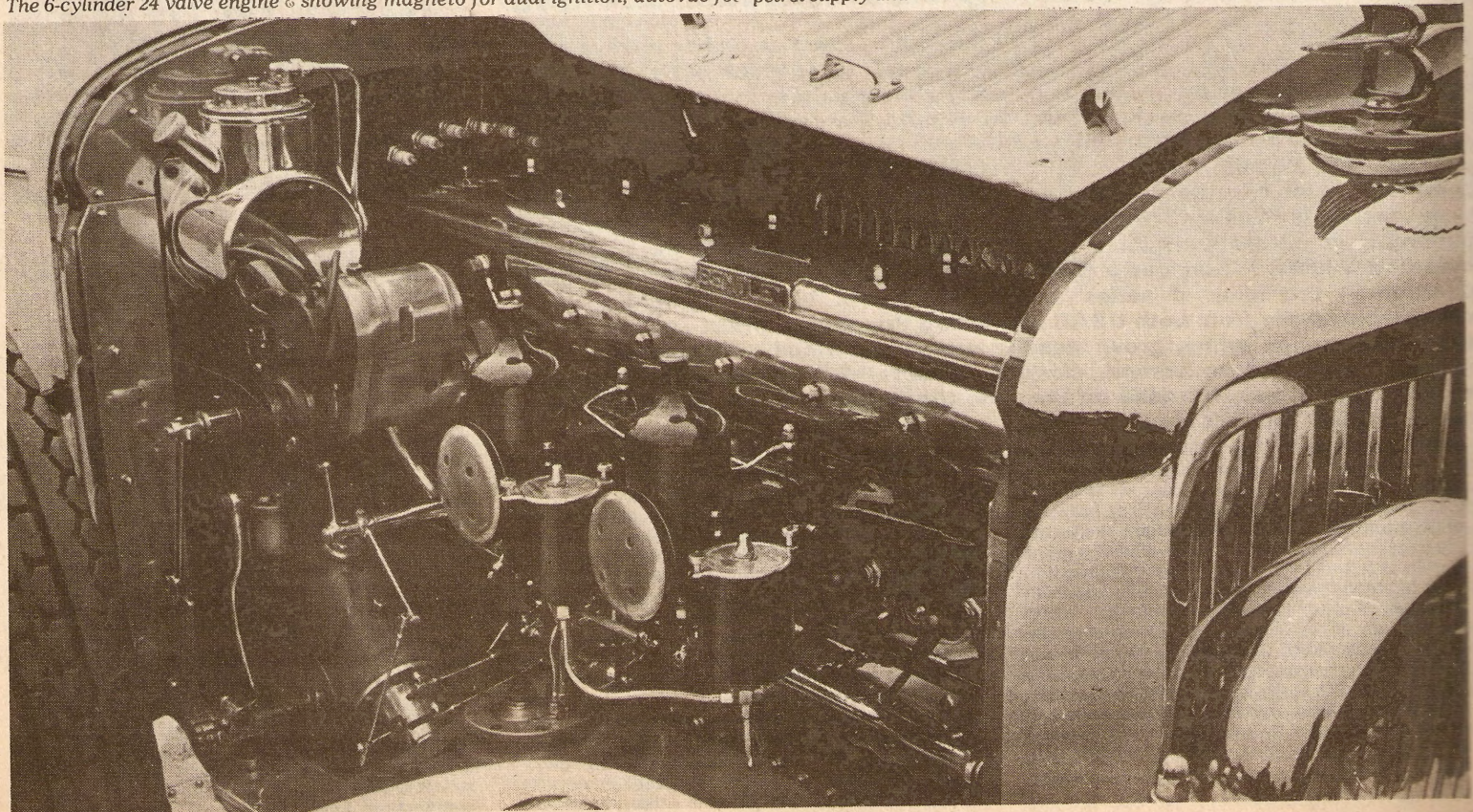
Equipment: 12-volt lighting and starting. Speedometer. Rev-counter. Ammeter. Oil pressure, oil temperature, water temperature, and fuel gauges. Tapley meter. Clock. Windscreen wipers. Semaphore direction indicators. Spotlight. Picnic tables. Perfume bottles.

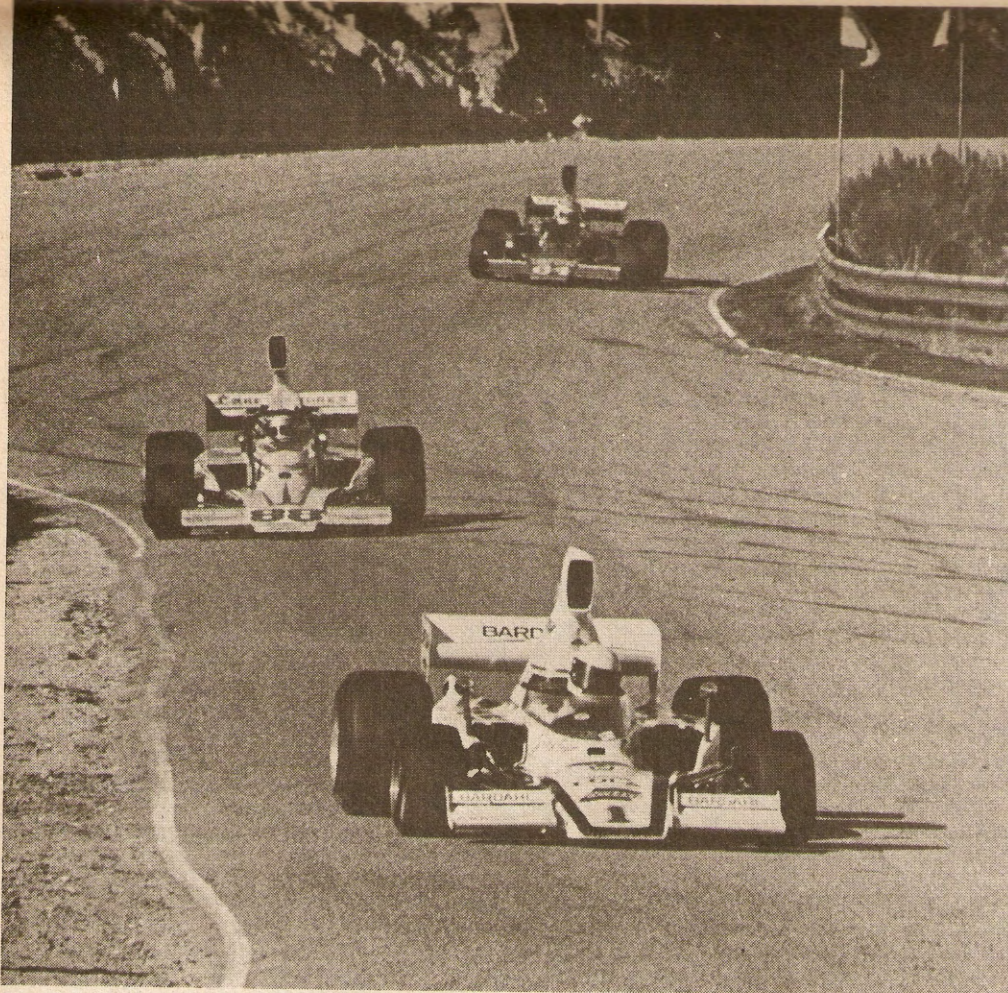
Dimensions: Wheelbase 12ft. Track 4ft 7½in. Overall length 16ft 8½in. Width 5ft 9¾in. Height 5ft 11½in. Turning circle 55ft. Weight 2 tons 8 cwt 14 lbs.

Performance: (Timed at Brooklands by *The Autocar* in 1930) 101.12 mph.

Fuel Consumption: 10 to 11.5 mpg.

The 6-cylinder 24 valve engine showing magneto for dual ignition, autovac for petrol supply and twin SU carburetters.





Two-time champion Brian Redman in his all-conquering Haas/Hall Lola T332 heads the similar car of Tuck Thomas (being lapped) and Tony Brise at Laguna Seca.

SEASONAL SURVEY: SCCA/USAC FORMULA 5000

'The final emergence of Machismo as a mid-Atlantic man'

By GORDON KIRBY

Pictures by CHARLES LORING

Road racing has never been much of a business in America. It has always been superceded by the brawny lure of speedways and more recently by the instant adrenaline explosion of drag racing, and while the pragmatism of business brought its nose to bear on those other forms of American automobile racing, the world of 'sports cars' has remained a dilettantish realm of stealthy amateurs. For years the "gentlemen" of the game debated among themselves about facing the agony of striking a compromise with the open market. Yet at the same time they were spending huge amounts of their own monies expanding the romantic notion of "unlimited sports cars"—CanAm racing as it came to be known—and before they knew it they had a full-blown series of their own with a promotion platform in the form of series sponsor Johnsons Wax, the right kind of promotable names from both USAC and Grand Prix racing and . . . an impossible financial equation which grew steadily worse and finally, thanks to the bad management of all concerned, choked itself to death. The CanAm, perfect showbiz that it was, lay dead by the time the gentlemen realised they already had a business on their hands.

They turned rather begrudgingly to Formula 5000, a style of racing that was essentially the antithesis of CanAm, based as it was on stock-block engine rules and firm chassis specifications. But those regulations were the very ones which allowed the F5000 series, affected as it was by the same poor organisation which blighted the CanAm, to continue and even show signs of prospering. At the same time Mario Andretti, one of the biggest legends of American auto racing, began to formulate a change in the path of his own career to becoming that of a full-time Grand Prix driver. Naturally enough he chose Formula 5000 to instigate this change and with the appearance of Andretti, Vel's Parnelli Racing and their sponsor Viceroy, F5000 found itself with a reputable series for any self-respecting American racer to engage in.

As Andretti and his team turned to F5000 so the United States Auto Club fell into an agreement with the SCCA for the co-promotion of the series while Dan Gurney, supported by Jorgensen Steel brought a brightly-coloured, speedway-style team into the races and soon other stars from the likes of Indianapolis and even drag racing entered the new game. By the middle of last summer Formula 5000 had become a very saleable motor racing series yet the gentlemen who directed the game remained unable to make the sale. They remained unable to expand the series' coverage in any or all aspects of the media, unable also to increase attendances to marketable numbers and unable even to maintain proper communication between themselves, the competitors and the circuit owners. It was plain that another point of crisis, much like

that of the CanAm in fact, was waiting to foil F5000 not far down the road.

Almost at that very point the SCCA/USAC Championship brought itself to a pair of substantially different and interesting races, each of them aimed clearly at insinuating a solution to the inertia which was settling across the series. The first of these was at Road Atlanta, the sixth race of the season which was promoted by a group with their roots in the business of rock concerts. Under the name of 'Rockin' Road Productions' they planned a combined rock concert/motor race for the Georgia circuit. This was not a new idea but it was the first time it was put into play by people from the music business and too, if the experiment was a success the stated intentions of Rockin' Road were of developing a complete series along the same lines and attracting a series sponsor with that point of view. As it was the Atlanta event was only a contained success for despite drawing more people than any other race at the circuit, the costs of staging and promoting the weekend upset the balance so that Rockin' Road found themselves reassessing, although by no means withdrawing their interest.

The second noteworthy event was the next race of the series, run a month later through the streets of the southern California city of Long Beach. It was an event which had been talked about publicly for as many as eighteen months beforehand. An ambitious project requiring huge financial expenditures, the Long Beach F5000 race was intended as a test case for the establishment of a second United States Grand Prix. To the surprise of many the first Long Beach race was completely successful. It attracted easily the finest field of F5000 cars ever assembled, it drew 65,000 people — an unqualified record for F5000 — and for the first time the formula found itself televised nationally and written about internationally in all kinds of publications. It was almost incidental that the race itself was the finest of the year and that



Good on yer, Brian — the Stateside F5000 king.

Brian Redman should come through to victory and thereby secure for himself and the Haas/Hall team their second consecutive SCCA/USAC Championship.

The success of the race catapulted its founder, Chris Pook, to a position of prominence not only in American motor racing as a whole but also among the rather loosely organised Formula 5000 Entrants Association. For some time the entrants had been trying to establish themselves as a combined front which would be able to offer itself to promoters and sponsors as a packaged unit much like the FICA, but each of the members had been busy enough maintaining their own teams within the framework of their weak forum so that they remained too desperate to coalesce into a single-minded group. Pook meanwhile, as well as establishing his own event, had been well aware of the entrants situation and had been keeping a close eye on them. The success of his race went a long way toward confirming the entrants' faith in him and as the F5000 season ran to a good finish at the historically strong events of Laguna Seca and Riverside, Pook and the entrants began to work themselves together.

By the beginning of December Pook had finally struck a basic accord with the entrants and in conjunction with establishing the promotion



Maybe in America but it ain't no rockin' road production anywhere else.

platform for his March 28 US West Grand Prix, he was ready to announce the official formation of a revised F5000 Entrants Association under his auspices. Effectively the marketing and promotional arm of the Entrants Association, Pook's "LBGP Advertising and Marketing" is to be operated by Pete Biro, a very well-known American photographer who has worked extensively for both Goodyear and All-American Racers and is the current President of the American Racing Press Association, the primary, road racing oriented organisation of American motor racing journalists and photographers. The entrants are represented by a steering committee consisting of Vel's Parnelli Racing's PR chief Alan Bodeau, All-American Racers financial man Don Markland and Carl Haas and Jim Hall, while other members include Mike Hillman of Phoenix Racing (as the previously UOP-sponsored team is known), Joan Clayton, team manager of Eppie Wiezes' team and Carl Hogan, doyen of Hogan Racing.

In reaction to this the SCCA have made some recent changes in their organisation. Wally Reese, formerly the unpaid chief SCCA steward and Burdie Martin who filled the same role at various times for the Can-Am, Trans-Am and Super Vee series, have been appointed as full-time liaison men between promoters, entrants and sponsors. Quite how these positions will work in practice is not yet known nor is the effect of giving the club's executive director Cameron Argetsinger full power in making decisions regarding their professional racing series. It is obvious that while the SCCA's stance remains rather vague the aims of the Entrants Association are clear. In that way the blunt edge of business seems finally to have come to rest on the doorstep of the SCCA.

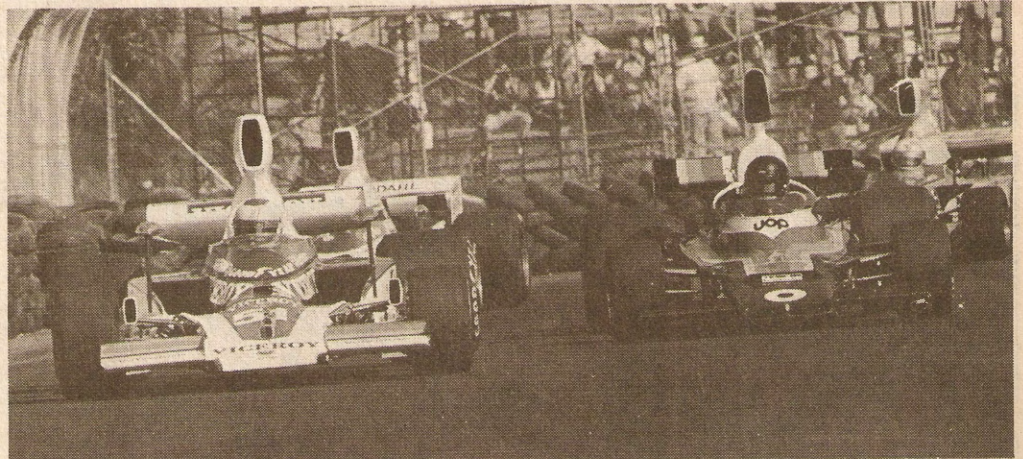
The similarities of this situation with that of the FICA versus the CSI are obvious. Chris Pook is particularly mindful of that when he says, "We are not going to go to promoters and ask for prize monies to be shot up in the air because we know we have to increase attendances first." Drawing on the experiences from his first event and the development of a television contract for next March's Grand Prix at Long Beach, Pook has been able, he says, to elicit considerable interest in televising at least six of next season's F5000 races. "Mind you," he adds, "we have to talk to the promoters yet about TV but as it's a profit-making plan it should be attractive to them."

Pook talks quietly and matter-of-factly as he discusses his plans and in a field which has seen so many failed pretenders, it's perhaps promising that he manages to encourage firm confidence from every one of the major F5000 entrants. Now 34, Pook emigrated to southern California from his native Somerset in 1967. He settled in Long Beach and soon developed his own thriving travel agency. But his old days of being an amateur racing driver—he raced Juniors in the early '60s — kept pushing his thoughts to other things and by early 1974 Pook had conjured up a vision of a race through the streets of his adopted city. By soliciting the help of Dan Gurney the idea, originally looked upon as a joke (if Long Beach is known for anything it is for its conservatism) soon took shape. In the next year Pook raised

three-quarters of a million dollars, appeased and beguiled all the local and state government committees and worked his way through the bureaucracy of the FIA to establish a Grand Prix date for his imaginary racetrack!

Pook obviously has the background and credentials to bring American road racing in its most sophisticated form to a position of financial balance and profit. There is still however a great deal of what you might call professional maturation to yet come to the constituents of Formula 5000 and Pook portrays that situation perfectly when he says, "One of the problems we're having is to make some of the authorities in the sport realise they are in the entertainment business and competing with football, golf, baseball, hockey, tennis and so forth. Motor racing is not yet a major league sport in this country."

On December 11 Pook and Cameron Argetsinger met at the SCCA's Denver office and reached a verbal agreement regarding their



America's Monte Carlo was the new road circuit at Long Beach. Shown here are series "find" Al Unser in the Viceroy Lola and Jack Oliver's UOP Shadow.

respective interests in F5000. Del Owens, PR Director for the SCCA said the following day, "It's a positive proposal, one that's going to do a lot for the sport. It's what we've been wanting to do but have never been able to afford."

It seems then as if this winter will be a very important one for F5000 in America. Already it is under a closing attack for the available media exposure from IMSA's well-established and expanding Camel GT Championship and also from the CASC's, fully-televised Player's Formula Atlantic Championship. Perhaps even more there are the strong and traditional competitors represented by NASCAR's eminently successful Winston Cup Grand Championship and USAC's apparently-reviving Championship Trail, based as it is on that great bulwark the Indianapolis 500. With that kind of competition it is probable that if Chris Pook is unsuccessful in procuring a sponsor, or TV coverage, or generally enlarged media coverage, then both Formula 5000 and the SCCA will not get another chance for a long time to come.

The product which Chris Pook must sell is one of steadily improving sheen. It has been so throughout the past three or four years but in the latter stages of the past season the quality of the field took on a depth and breadth unmatched even by the most halcyon days of the CanAm. There were as many as a dozen and a half good car and driver combinations, including a handful of both Grand Prix drivers and USAC speedway aces as well as more American comingmen than we've ever seen before.

The races, though not classics in the Grand Prix tradition were certainly formed by hard, sustained chases. Marked by the explosive resonance of those big stock-blocks and the comparatively slow, torque-laden deflections of the chassis a single, hard-driven F5000 car can on its own provide some fine spectating and well I remember the rangy, beaming face of AUTOSPORT's AOE Jeff Hutchinson turning away from his camera for a moment at Long Beach to exclaim, "This is a good race. It really is!"

Unfortunately the season as a whole was not that good. It started fairly well, with as many as six cars appearing to have the potential of at least harassing pacemakers Redman and Andretti. But perhaps that was because the race was run at Pocono's rather deceptive oval cum road course which featured an awkward combination of more than a mile and a half of flat-out speedway motoring and three-quarters of a mile of frantic, bending pavement which includes two hairpins among its half a dozen turns. The form at the second race, run at Mosport's real road course was certainly very different than Pocono as Andretti and Redman sprang away on their own and lapped every other car in the slim field of eighteen. Only the ferocity of Brian and Mario's personal battle saved that race from total ignomy.

The next three races were a little better as a few more good cars appeared and a number of teams began to make progress towards offering a realistic challenge. Even so Watkins Glen, round three, was all too much like Mosport in its lack of style and even at that early stage of the summer, as Redman earned his second win of the year, it had begun to look as if the Champion would easily retain his title. The feel at Elkhart Lake was a good bit stronger and denser however and Redman even contrived to finish eighth because

of a flat tyre so that Andretti's win brought the hope that he just might be able to wrest the Championship away from the Englishman. Mid-Ohio was much like Elkhart but a first lap accident mortally injured B. J. Swanson, a very talented young driver who had appeared from nowhere at the beginning of the season and suddenly began to look the strongest challenger to Redman and Andretti. The race itself, an almost forgotten affair, was won by Redman when Andretti dropped from the lead because of a failed gearbox.

It was both ironic and unfortunate that Road Atlanta should have been the last race on the eastern side of the country as well as preceding Long Beach in the schedule. As a result a number of teams went home to California in order to regroup and prepare themselves for what they knew was going to be an important race. In that way the southern circuit and the Rockin' Road group were robbed of a legitimate representation of Formula 5000. What they did get to see though was a historic first as Al Unser displayed his

by coming through from third place in a confused race of both wet and dry to pass first Andretti and then Redman and score his first major road course victory as well as the first combined defeat of the two Kings of F5000.

Unser confirmed his Atlanta form by starting from the pole at Long Beach, but it was the late Tony Brise, making his very first appearance in America who stole the show. Not long into the race he snatched the lead and then with Andretti and Unser beginning a heavy chase he . . . pulled away! It was a remarkable display which became even more so after he finally did make a mistake, spun then came back to pass both of the Vel's Parnelli men and pull away yet again! Then suddenly Brise was out of it when his Theodore Racing Lola broke a driveshaft and with Andretti's gearbox having broken a few laps earlier and Unser hitting a wall and breaking his suspension before that Redman, whose practice had been troubled with failing differentials, came through to win both the race and the Championship. A good race that one, in every respect.

The final two races were a bit of an anticlimax after that. They did allow Andretti and Unser to regain their demeanours after Brise's handling of them at Long Beach as they scored convincing one-two finishes in both races. Brise showed more of his fine, memorable talents, scoring a fourth at Laguna Seca and at Riverside running third, even second ahead of Unser for a few laps, until dropping to sixth on the last lap when his car ran dry of fuel. Redman and the Haas/Hall team showed the kind of mettle and resilience which had brought them their second SCCA/U-SAC Championship when they recovered from a very extensive practice shunt to finish third at Laguna and had to resort to their unsorted T400 Lola to rebound from a similar problem at Riverside and again come home third. The rest of the field really seemed to come alive in those final races and at Riverside in particular there was more racing and notably improving form than we have ever seen. It was the kind of finish to a season which would normally leave one enthusiastic and content about the summer to follow.

Yet this hasn't been the case. The announced schedule for next year consists of only seven firm dates and one tentative date which is one less round than this past season. The SCCA have

The "ideas" men (below) behind the North American F5000 scene. Morrie Eisenman (left, foreground) of Rockin' Road, Cameron Argetsinger, august czar of the SCCA (second from right) and Frank Cipello (right) former general manager of Michigan International Speedway, plus friends, suss the talent at Road Atlanta.



suggested that another race would be held at a new road course at Charlotte Motor Speedway but a representative for Charlotte said last week, "We did talk to the SCCA about a race a few months ago but we're no longer interested." Harvey Hudes, GM of Mosport whose date is not yet firm said the reason for that was, "Specifically because we haven't been told who will be in the field." He recalled that last year there were only eighteen cars at his race and that as the situation looked to him to be the same as it was a year ago he could well find himself in the same position again come next June. Hudes emphasised the old maxim that a promoter needs 'names' and asked rhetorically "Who do you know of who will definitely be there other than Redman and Unser, who can sell me a ticket?"

And that is precisely the problem. By the

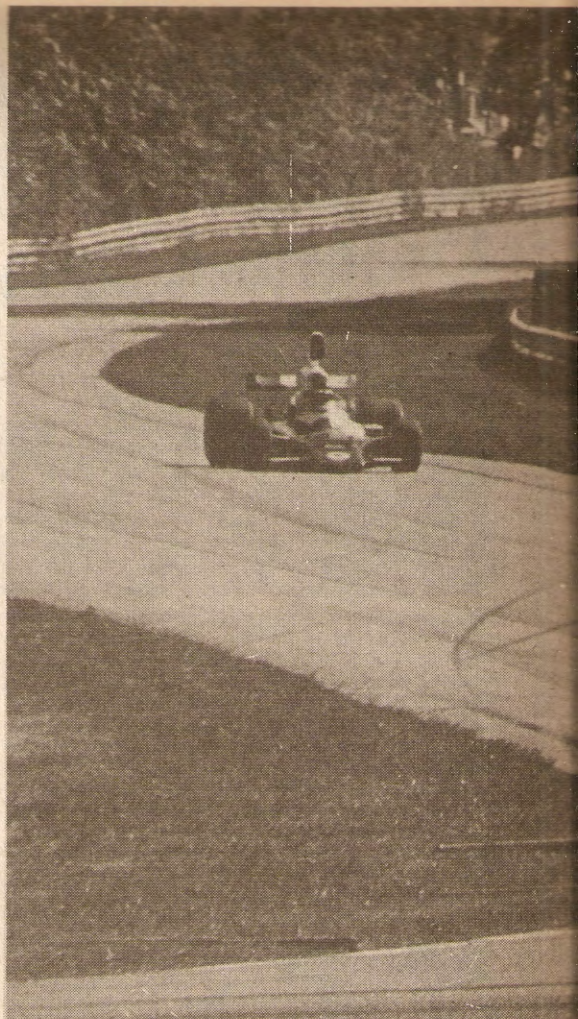
middle of December Champion Redman was the only confirmed 'name' for the '76 SCCA/USAC Championship. The Parnelli team were on the verge of completing a major sponsorship deal which would probably confirm Unser's F5000 season (Andretti hopes to leave the formula behind and concentrate solely on F1), while Phoenix Racing, although apparently well on the way to securing a Formula One sponsor, have not found the same kind of promotional interest in F5000. Carl Hogan, although not definitely withdrawing, has allowed his driver David Hobbs to confirm a NASCAR drive and is saying he will not run his cars if he cannot find a sponsor. Eppie Wietzes' team is in a similar situation.

The crux of the matter is that it's obviously difficult to sell a sponsor on a series consisting of only seven or eight races which have thus far been largely ignored by the national press and almost totally snubbed by television. Prize money, which remains at a per race total of \$50,000 as it has for the past two years, is far from adequate particularly when there was more money three and four years ago when L&M sponsored the series and that as long as six years ago CanAm races offered \$75,000 in prize money.

It will certainly be a sad thing if the American F5000 series fails to find itself on a sound footing for 1976. The state of competitiveness has improved so much in recent years that last summer the faster cars were able to lap both Mosport and Watkins Glen just as quickly as the F1 lap records while the quality of preparation and finish among the bulk of the field is something which always brings surprised smiles to the faces of visiting European journalists or the odd Grand Prix driver who might arrive for this or that race.

THE TOP TEAMS

As has already been noted the Championship was won for the second successive year by the Haas/Hall team and Brian Redman. The key to their success was again based in the remarkable reliability record which the team has continued to maintain through three seasons of F5000. In that time Redman has started a total of 46 races for the team (23 each of heats and finals) and has failed to finish only twice, once because of a contretemps with a slower car at the Mosport final in 1974 and the other time because a rear upright failed in a heat at Elkhart Lake this year. From the

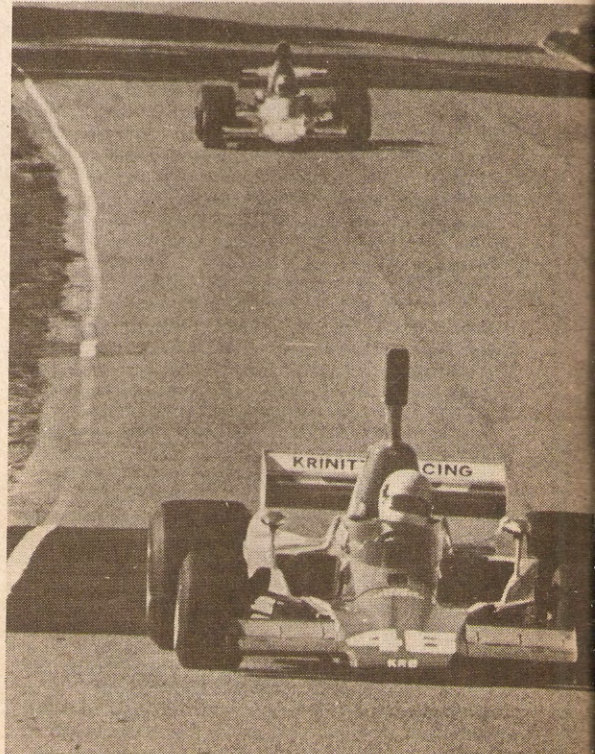


Mario Andretti (above) in the Vel's Parnelli-entered Viceroy

Redman campaigned throughout the year, his driving displaying as always, a fine combination of bravado and sympatico.

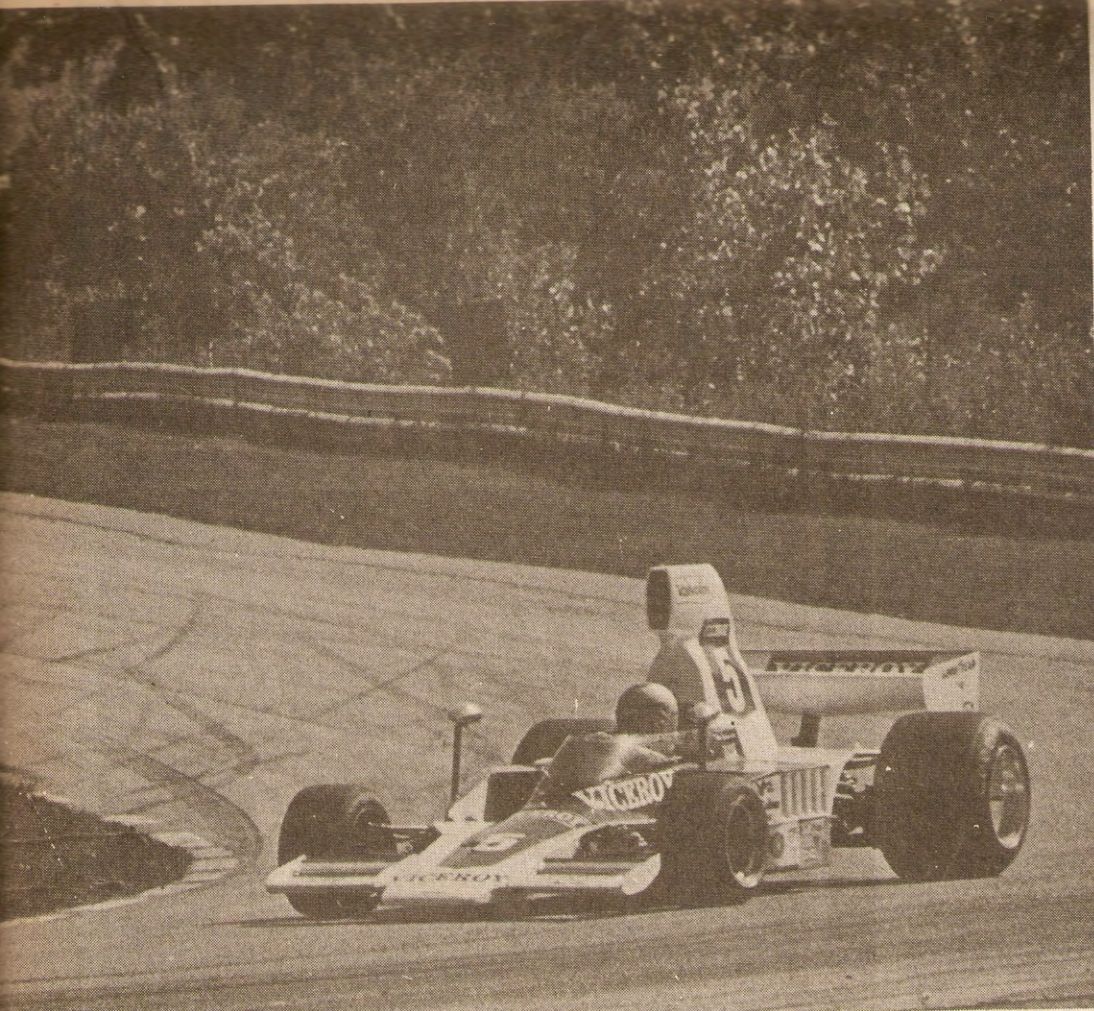
Reasoning that the end of the straight had become the only realistic passing point on most courses, the team usually tried to obtain as much straightline speed as possible and to this end the car most often appeared with a distinct 'rake' to the chassis, the nose very low to the ground and the wings trimmed as flat as possible. Perhaps as a result of this the team often had trouble with differentials which upset their practice at

John Morton's Lola T332 (left) comes under pressure from an US series in a works Talon. Both men ran well, although off



23 finals Redman has started in Haas/Hall Lolas he has won twelve, finished second seven times, third twice and eighth once. In the nine races of 1975 he won four times, took two seconds, two thirds and one eighth. A very estimable achievement indeed.

The team started the season with a T400 Lola on which Jim Hall had worked some modifications previous to Redman driving it for the first time in practice for Pocono. It became immediately obvious that the car was going to be difficult to sort out and when that opening race was postponed for a month because heavy overnight rain had flooded the infield portion of the track, the Haas/Hall team took the opportunity to replace their T400. For that purpose they bought a crashed version of the previous year's T332 and it was this car which

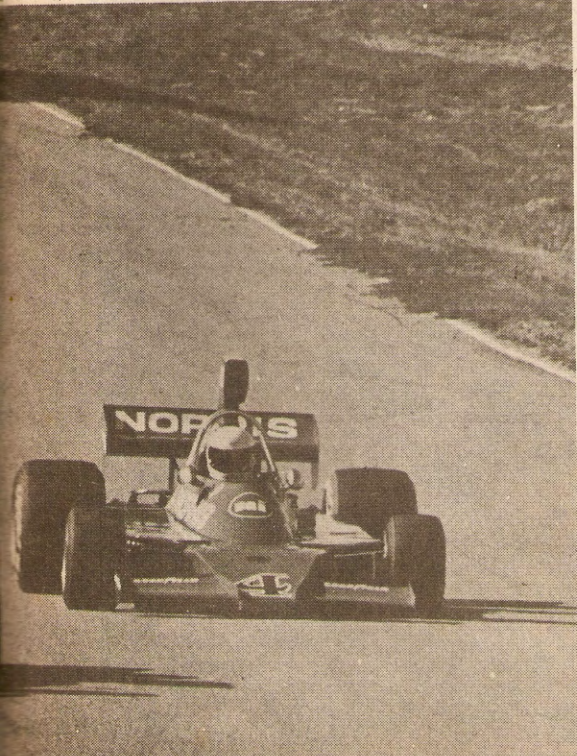


T332 was easily the quickest F5000 runner. Oliver following is literally a mere shadow.

Mid-Ohio and Long Beach in particular. But on these occasions and others their troubles were solved by yeoman work from the mechanics and similar application by the relentless and very human driver.

Once again the Viceroy-sponsored Vel's Parnelli team offered the only real challenge to Haas/Hall although this time they had two cars instead of one, Al Unser joining Mario Andretti in the team. They retained their T332s from the previous year and it was these cars which they used at every race, although Unser was forced to race the spare

lean Tasman champion Warwick Brown who contested the pace of the leaders.



T400 at Mosport after his T332 was written off in a practice shunt. Both cars enjoyed good reliability but unfortunately neither were quite as dependable as Redman's machine and they ended up second and third in the Championship, Andretti beating Unser by a mere four points. In conjunction with Redman they dominated the winner's circle with Andretti equalling the Champion's four wins and Unser winning once. Unser also scored five seconds and it is of interest to note that between he and Mario and Brian they took nineteen of the twenty-seven first three positions available in the nine races. Some domination!

It was generally conceded that Vel's Parnelli's Falconer engines were consistently the most powerful motors of all. The two cars were consistently the fastest machines in a straight line even though they usually carried more front wing than Redman's car. The engines proved reliable as well with Andretti failing to finish only once because of engine travails and Unser losing an engine in a heat at Elkart.

Andretti was certainly the fastest man in the formula, qualifying quickest eight of nine times (Redman was fastest at the Glen) and leading seven races. But twice he went out with gearbox breakages, once his engine stopped on the pace lap and in the rain at Atlanta he cooked his tyres in a charge from the back of the grid after experiencing another gearbox failure in his heat. It was usually a case of win or bust for Mario.

Unser meanwhile methodically improved his speed so that by the end of the year he was as fast if not faster than all save his teammate. Al will be a very serious threat next year.

The Shadow team had a busy and rather unsuccessful first year of F5000 but they succeeded in laying the groundwork for a first-rate 1976 season. The chassis, nameplated the DN6 was almost identical to the team's F1 car and if anything hindered their progress it was perhaps their insistence that the car should work just like a Grand Prix machine. As it was the Shadow suffered a shortage of traction and control away from corners and when the team turned to the heavier (by 72 pounds) Dodge engine it only served to compound the problems. The Dodge did however produce very nearly as much power as the best Chevrolets and its future looks good. It is certainly a very good thing for the formula which has always been thoroughly dominated by

Jackie Oliver drove the lone Shadow throughout the season, scoring a second, a third and a couple of fourths and if the veteran Englishman wasn't blindingly fast he could be counted on to provide some fine displays of sideways motoring. Jean-Pierre Jarier, Tom Pryce and Jody Scheckter each raced a second Shadow once with Scheckter qualifying the Dodge-engined car third at Riverside although his race was ruined by engine troubles.

It was a big surprise for the team to lose their UOP sponsorship just after the end of the season but they have been looking hard for a replacement and still hope to run both Oliver and Scheckter in all of next year's races. As the biggest Lola-challenger the Shadows are badly needed.

Finishing fifth in the Championship, behind Oliver, was Canadian veteran Eppie Wietzes. Starting the year with a new T400 Lola, the privateer was the only runner to persevere with the design and slowly and at considerable expense he and his mechanic developed the car into a very useful weapon. Towards the end of the season Wietzes really began to get the measure of the car which early in the year had been fitted with T332 rear suspension, new bodywork and modified front suspension which retained rising rate springing. At Riverside he qualified fifth and was running fourth behind Brise and Unser before engine problems intervened. Wietzes failed to finish only twice and earned two thirds, a fourth and a pair of fifths.

Sixth in the Championship was David Hobbs who again drove for Carl Hogan. Running on a tight budget the team were never able to offer Hobbs a really competitive example of a T332 and though he scored a third, a fourth and two fifths he was reasonably competitive on only one or two occasions.

When Jody Scheckter was drafted into the team at Long Beach (he actually drove Hobbs' regular car while David was given an updated T330 Lola) and could run no higher than sixth in the race, it was as much a relief to Hobbs as anything to see that even an established hero could not make one of the Hogan Lolas approach Andretti and Redman's pace.

The Talon team, which had consisted of three cars the year before, trimmed itself to a one-car effort for most of the season with Tasman Champion Warwick Brown doing the driving. Brown started the season well, running a good third at stages of both of the first two races, but thereafter his performance seemed to tail off. By the middle of the season the team seemed to have become confused and even a change of mechanics and the re-introduction of Norris Industries sponsorship for the three concluding rounds did not result in much improvement. Chris Amon joined the team at Long Beach, finishing a very creditable fourth after missing most of practice, but he was involved in a road accident the day after the race and the damage his foot received kept him out of the Talon for the remaining races. English F3 man Dick Parsons took over Amon's car for Riverside but engine and gearbox troubles kept him out of the race.

Bobby Unser started the season in the Jorgensen Eagle which he had tested extensively over the winter, but it was immediately obvious that the car was a long way from being competitive and just before Watkins Glen the displeased Unser was replaced by Vern Schuppan. It took a couple of races for Vern to adjust the car to his liking but at the same time the team's engines were failing regularly and little progress was made. The suspension was revised for the final races, the new system dispensing with rising rate at the front, but other than a well-earned second place at Long Beach, the results were not at all encouraging. A whole new car is planned for next year.

One of the brightest aspects of the early part of the season was the arrival upon the scene of B. J. Swanson. An unknown 25-year-old with a couple of years FF background, Swanson was brought into F5000 by a new team financed by Bob Bay and run by Jerry Eisert. The ex-Redman Lola T332 was purchased and Swanson was able to test the car in Texas before the start of the season. He impressed with some strong efforts at the first race which brought him a seventh place result and then at Mosport he held off David Hobbs for sixth place until a driveshaft broke. In the next two races Swanson suddenly arrived, coming home a fine third at Watkins Glen and an equally impressive fourth at Elkhart Lake. But at the next race, Mid-Ohio, Swanson crashed at the first turn, his Lola uprooting a guardrail which in turn struck his helmet squarely. He died three days later.

In the few, short months of his professional career, B. J. Swanson had sparked a lot of excitement. He was the first American racing driver in a long time to offer a challenge to the established stars and it was ironically tragic that he had only just become Golden Boy at the time of his death.

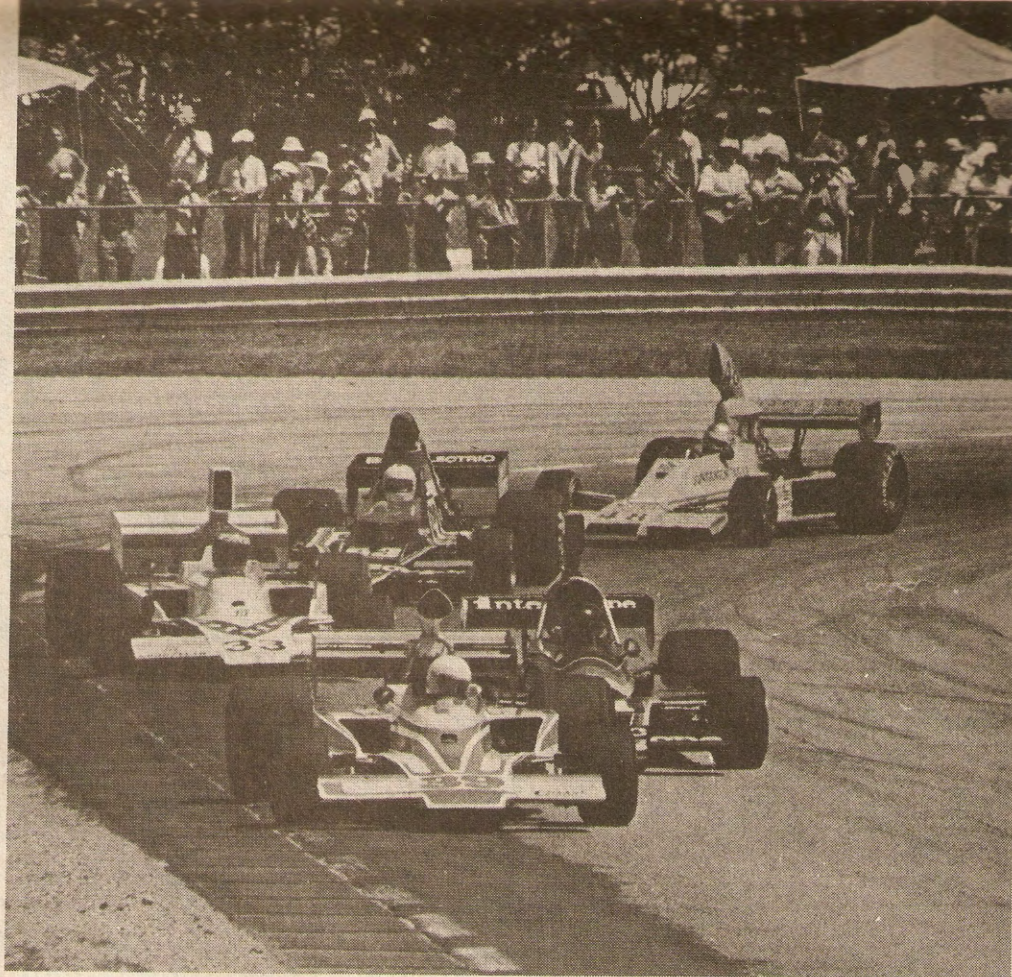
At the other end of the season, Tony Brise leaped onto the American racing scene in an unprecedented manner by leading at Long Beach with the Theodore Racing Lola T332 in what was his first American appearance. He failed to finish that race because a driveshaft broke but at Laguna he hounded Redman all the way to a fourth place finish and at Riverside he looked to have third place sewn up before running out of fuel on the last lap. In those three races Brise showed every ounce of the skill, intelligence and youth for which he will always be remembered.

It was of course, Lolas which always formed the bulk of the field and those that stood out from the rest included versions driven by John Morton, Elliott Forbes-Robinson, Graham McRae and Danny Ongais. Morton showed up at the fifth round with a shoestring-run T400 with which he acquitted himself well. He "kitted" the car into a T332 by the time of Long Beach and struck good form in the last two races, finishing fifth at Riverside.

EFR began his F5000 season at Elkhart, signing on with Francisco Mir's Evil Knievel-backed team. In fact that first race was his best of the year as he brought the T332 into fifth place. He ran well in all the remaining races but only finished one of them. Nevertheless it was a good teething exercise for the team who should be back next year in precisely the same trim.

McRae ran five races during the year with a tightly-budgeted T332. He showed all of his old mettle in the west coast rounds, qualifying fourth and running fifth before spinning at Laguna. With a consistent programme McRae could still be a leading contender. Danny Ongais started the season well, running as high as sixth with the Bell Electric Lola T332 in the first race, but at Mosport he crashed badly in practice, breaking a leg and writing off the car. He spent the next four races in Interscope Racing's Lola T400 with which he never had any joy. For the final races however Ongais had a T332 at his disposal and at Riverside he showed clearly his best form of the year as he pushed his way into fifth place not far behind Redman only to have a backmarker knock him off the road on the last lap! For next season Ongais will have two Interscope T332s solely for his use. USAC star Gordon Johncock ran six of the races with the Patrick Racing Team's T332 prepared by George Bignotti. Johncock had a difficult time however and though he showed improvement with each race it was never enough to make him at all competitive.

John Cannon ran every race, save Atlanta, with a March 73A which was steadily developed and updated with the finance and encouragement of John Lane. For a while the project showed little sign of progress but with the addition of Ray Wardell and a pair of North American March



All midfield runners: John Gunn (T332) leads Jon Woodner (Talon), Elliott Forbes-Robinson (T332), Danny Ongais (T400) and Vern Schuppan (Eagle) at Elkhart Lake.

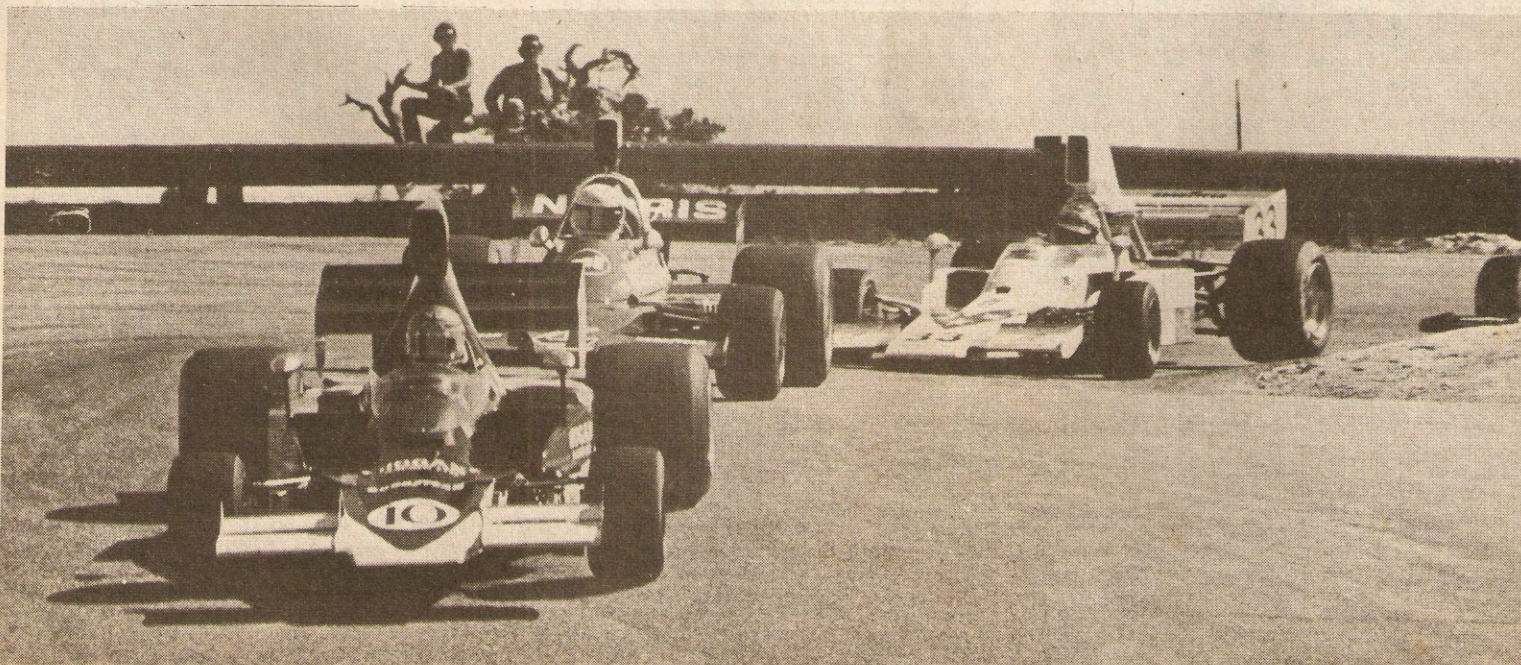
mechanics, the car really began to come right both in appearance and performance. At Riverside Cannon qualified ninth and came home an excellent fourth, the narrow-track, sports car-nosed machine showing itself to be very fast "through the air". It was nice to see a project such as this finally achieve some success as well as giving both Cannon and Wardell confidence for the future from their individual perspectives.

In addition to the works-run Talons there were a further three cars which appeared during the year, but only Jon Woodner's Interscope entry managed to score any notable results. Woodner had started the season in a Lola T400 but he and his team soon decided to revert to a Talon which they had raced the previous year. Unfortunately Woodner had little luck with the car and his only troublefree run was at Riverside where he finished

eighth. Ironically his best finish of the year was a fifth with the T400 at Pocono.

Others who showed reasonably well included ex-F3 man Randy Lewis and 1973 American FF Champion Bob Earl. Lewis ran a T332 in Wrangler Jeans colours at the last four races while Earl raced his own T330. Both did well considering their severe financial and equipment disadvantages. George Follmer debuted Lance Smith's tidy, narrow Lance LSR1 at Long Beach but the car was thoroughly untested and did not do well. He crashed the car in practice for Laguna but at Riverside he finally managed to put in some time with the car which at least saved his and Smith's seasons from total disaster. Oreste Berta's neat F5000 design also appeared in those final three races but with Bill Simpson and Luis de Palma doing the driving, the car was unable to show any

Not a good season for David Hobbs. Here he leads Warwick Brown and Elliott Forbes-Robinson through the Corkscrew at Laguna Seca.



of the potential which its workmanlike chassis might have harboured.

A total of 61 drivers contested the 1975 SCCA/USAC Formula 5000 Championship and of them 36 drove Lolas. Of them all only five drivers — Brian Redman, Mario Andretti, Eppie Wietzes, David Hobbs and John Gunn — started every race. Perhaps that fact alone tells the story of the inconsistency which still bedevils the series.

A FORMULA 5000 COST ACCOUNTING

Eppie Wietzes has raced Formula 5000 cars in Canada and the United States every year since 1969. In that time he has acquired a reputation for being fast, consistent and practical in his approach. Wietzes is one of those people who is almost invariably around at the finish and the record of his placing in the Championship over those years is graphic proof of the effectiveness of his method. Since 1970 he has finished fourth three times, fifth twice and sixth once.

In all that time Wietzes has been supported both organisationally and financially by Joan Clayton, a bright, energetic, independently wealthy woman who is a technical librarian by profession. She takes meticulous care of Formula Racing's books and allows Eppie to concentrate on overseeing the preparation of his cars and driving them. The combination of Wietzes and Clayton has been an integral part of American F5000 over the course of the formula's maturation and yet they are currently faced with the prospect of not competing next year because the financial proposition of the F5000 series has become for them, an impossible one.

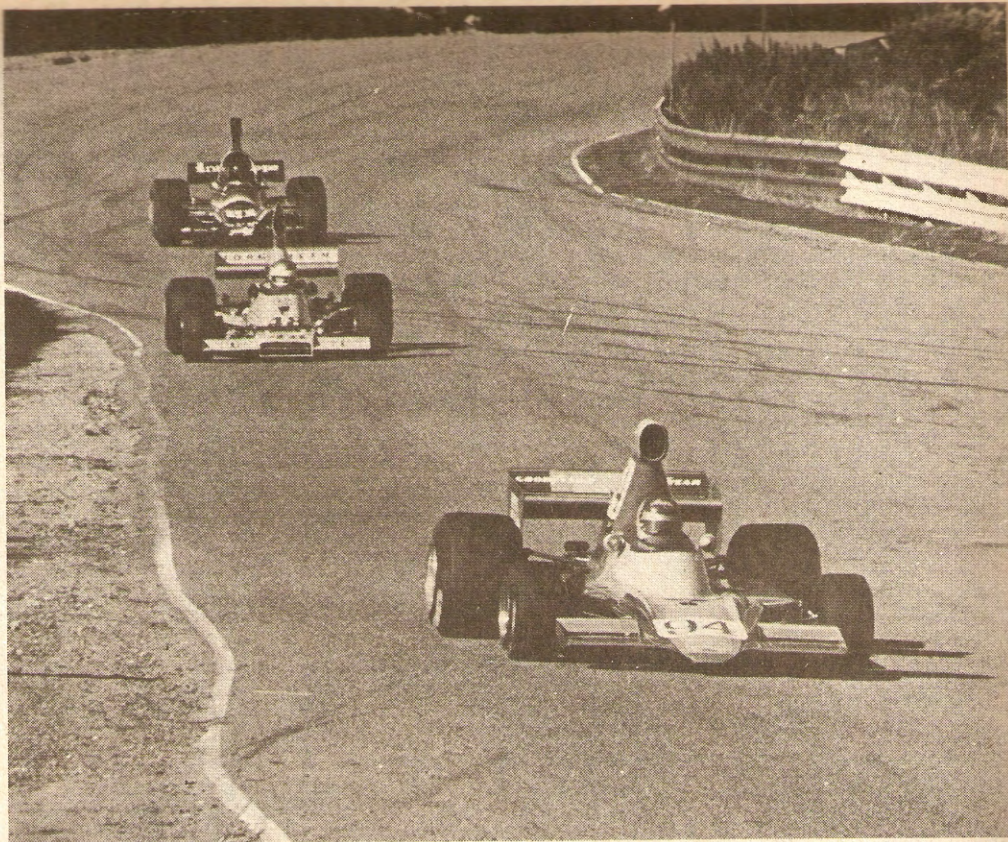
A cost breakdown of Wietzes' season is included which plainly shows the problems of F5000. Applied against the total figure expended is a prize money sum which amounted to about \$30,000, resulting from a fairly consistent season and an overall fifth place in the Championship. Also the sale of the car will further defray costs but it is obvious that a net loss of nearly \$100,000 is an inevitability for a serious, well-run team!

It should be noted that some extra costs were incurred from having to develop their T400 and from using McLaren engines which were new to the formula. "We feel like we've paid for their development programme," said Joan, although she added quickly, "Mind you they've solved everything and if we were to race next year I would definitely use their engines." She felt that a total for engines should be closer to \$30,000.

Clayton insured her car while it was being transported from race to race but she did not purchase any on-track insurance, "because Eppie doesn't drive into things." Shop expenses include rental and electricity as well as fabrication and fibreglass work done both within and outside the team's shop. The figure for travel costs include all gasoline, rental cars, hotels and airfares, the latter usually covering Eppie, his wife and Joan both to and from each race.

By the end of the year mechanic Dennis Swan and Eppie's oldest son Mike had put about 25,000 miles on their Chevy truck and trailer combination and as well as a saleable racing car they had in assets three engines which they reckoned had depreciated about \$2,000 in value.

Bearing in mind that Formula Racing is an



Eppie Wietzes leads Vern Schuppan and Jon Woodner. Despite a promising season and \$30,000 prize money, Wietzes made a loss of around \$100,000.

WIETZES' COST BREAKDOWN

Cost of Car	\$24,000
Basic spares bought in January	\$5,000
Spares over season (includes mods for T400 to T332 as well as aerodynamic testing and bodywork development)	\$11,000
Engines (\$9,500 ea. complete, \$5,700 per short block)	\$45,000
Air freight and brokerage	\$10,000
Insurance (truck, towing and shop)	\$1,300
Salaries (mechanic, helper and consultants)	\$15,700
Entry Fees (9 races)	\$1,800
Truck and trailer maintenance	\$1,300
Shop expenses	\$11,000
Travel	\$15,000
Miscellaneous (magazine subscriptions, press kits, paint, etc)	\$3,200
Tyres	Supplied by Goodyear
	\$144,300

amateur team — only the mechanics are paid, — and that they have been at the same business for six years from the same fairly centrally-located home base in Toronto, it must be true that most teams would spend a good bit more than they.

SYNOPSIS

Plainly, American F5000 has become a highly professional business requiring large expenditures in order to achieve even minimal success. A solid core of entirely competent drivers and teams gave the races some considerable substance in the latter part of the past season, while a small handful of "stars" gave the series credibility and saleability. On the other hand the nature of the series as it stands is patently unable to sustain the kind of growth which brought F5000 to its zenith at Long Beach.

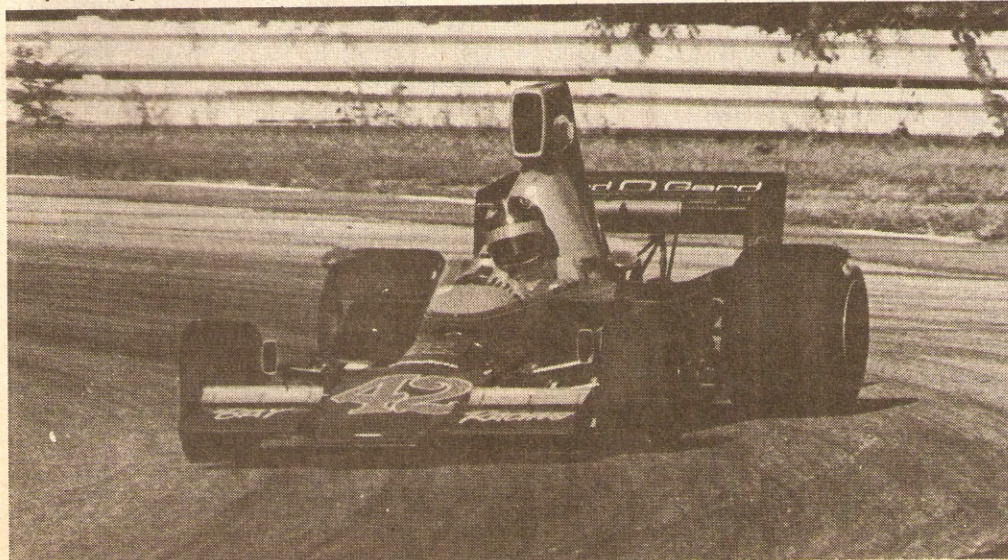
The crossroads seem finally to have forced themselves upon the SCCA and their major professional racing league. At the very least it has come time for them to either muster the abilities to complete their strange boho dance with the open market or retreat into some other, lesser form of motor racing.

FINAL POINT STANDINGS 1975 SCCA/USAC FORMULA 5000 CHAMPIONSHIP

(As differentiated from those issued by the SCCA which are incorrect in three instances)

	pts
1. Brian Redman (Haas/Hall Lola-Chaparral T332 and T400)	227
2. Mario Andretti (Viceroy Lola-Falconer T332)	165
3. Al Unser (Viceroy Lola-Falconer T332)	161
4. Jackie Oliver (UOP Shadow-Chevrolet and Dodge DN6)	77
5. Eppie Wietzes (Lola-McLaren T400M)	60
6. David Hobbs (Lola-McLaren and Bartz T332)	50
7. Warwick Brown (Norris Talon-Molloy MR1A)	42
8. Vern Schuppan (Jorgensen Eagle-AAR '75)	39
9. B. J. Swanson (Lola-Chaparral T332)	32
10. Tony Brise (Theodore Lola-Smith T332)	17
11. John Morton (Lola-Falconer T400 and T332)	15
12. John Cannon (Lane March-Bartz 73A/75.1)	13
13. Elliott Forbes-Robinson (Evil Knievel Lola-Mir T332)	
Chris Amon (Norris Talon-McCormack MR1A)	
Jon Woodner (Interscope Lola T400 and Talon-McLaren MR1A)	12
16. Evan Noyes (Lola-Bartz T332)	10
17. Jerry Karl (Lola-Bartz T332)	
John Gunn (Lola-Crane T332)	
Tony Dean (Chevron-Whitehurst B28)	
Graham McRae (Lola-Armstrong T332)	7
21. Danny Ongais (Interscope/Bell Electric Lola-Falconer T332 T400)	
Bobby Unser (Jorgensen Eagle-AAR '75)	
Gordon Johncock (Patrick Racing Lola-Bignotti T332)	5
24. Tuck Thomas (Lola-Bartz T332)	4
25. Bob Earl (Lola-Falconer T330)	3
26. James Dunkel (Chevron-Smith B24)	
Roger Bighouse (Chevron-King B24)	2
28. Dan Furey (Lola-AMC T330)	
Skeeter McKitterick (Chevron B24)	
Randy Lewis (Wrangler Lola-Chaparral B24 and Bartz T332)	1

The promising career of B. J. Swanson was cut short by his untimely death at Mid-Ohio.





The latter half of the season was dominated Teddy Pilette's V8 Lola and Alan Jones' V6 March — honours were about even.

SHELLSPORT EUROPEAN F5000 SERIES

Time gentlemen please

By IAN PHILLIPS

When it was good it was very good, when it was bad it was very bad. That saying probably sums up the stormy seven year history of Formula 5000 in Europe. After yet another hit and miss season Formula 5000, as we know it, has finished on this side of the Atlantic.

After a solid year in 1974 everything looked good for 1975 when the circus was to contest the new Shellsport championship. But somehow it just never happened. There were some excellent races, but there were few and far between. There were quite a number of competitive cars, but rarely did they appear or click in unison. New management of the Formula added some professionalism to the class, but was mis-used generally into trying to blackmail the promoters into giving more money. The whole thing blew up towards the end of the summer and in the face of ever decreasing attendances the promoters had no option but to say that they would no longer run races for the Formula.

It's a shame that it had to go this way but logically it had to be the way. Anyone who was ever involved in 5000 will remember it for its friendly attitude to racing — for there was a true sense of camaraderie within in the ranks. Unfortunately this was never communicated to the public who, by the end of the year, showed positive antagonism by staying away.

A thought at this time should be spared for Motor Circuit Developments and John Webb in particular, who, since 1969, have backed the Formula one hundred per cent and worked hard to make it a success in the face of some very adverse publicity. It must have been a hard decision to kill it and admit you were wrong... let's hope that the replacement Shellsport 5000 series has more success.

The final Formula 5000 European crown was taken by Teddy Pilette, the 1973 champion, who made up for his many disappointments last year by putting in a tremendous run in the second half of the year and clinching an easy victory. Peter Gethin, his Team VDS team mate, and first ever European F5000 champion, took second place in the series while Count van der Straten's team walked away with the entrants' award; a just return for a team that probably poured more money into contesting the championship than all the rest put together.

Although there was really only one manufacturer making pukka F5000 cars during 1974, Lola, there was perhaps more in the way of technical interest than in previous years.

Lola Cars themselves produced a new model, the T400, which was the most interesting of all. To follow a hugely successful series like the T330/T332 was a problem and certainly it took some time for the new model to be accepted as being a fully competitive car. Eric Broadley produced in the T400 the most sophisticated F5000 car yet. At both ends progressive rate springing was adopted with a very complicated suspension layout. The chassis itself was low and flat and in delivery guise was undoubtedly one of the most pleasing looking racing cars of recent years. However, looks are not everything unfortunately, and the new model caused competitors on this side of the water many headaches. Five of them were sold here, three to VDS and one each to Richard Oaten Racing and the Durex/McKechnie set up. The latter scored the model's first victory early in the year but it wasn't until mid-season that it really began to shape up well, this time in the hands of the VDS team who had adopted T332 conventional suspension. Once the Durex car passed into the hands of 1974 champion Bob Evans it too was very competitive and at the end of the year the cars filled the first three places in the final race. The Oaten car only appeared once and was extensively damaged in a testing accident.

Two manufacturers who had previously announced that they had no intention of being involved in F5000 did, in fact, build successful cars. The common denominator was that both built their cars around the Ford GA V6 engine. It was this engine, in fact, which sustained most of the interest in the Formula during the year. After its brief appearance during 1974 four cars appeared during the 1975 season, with it bolted in the back.

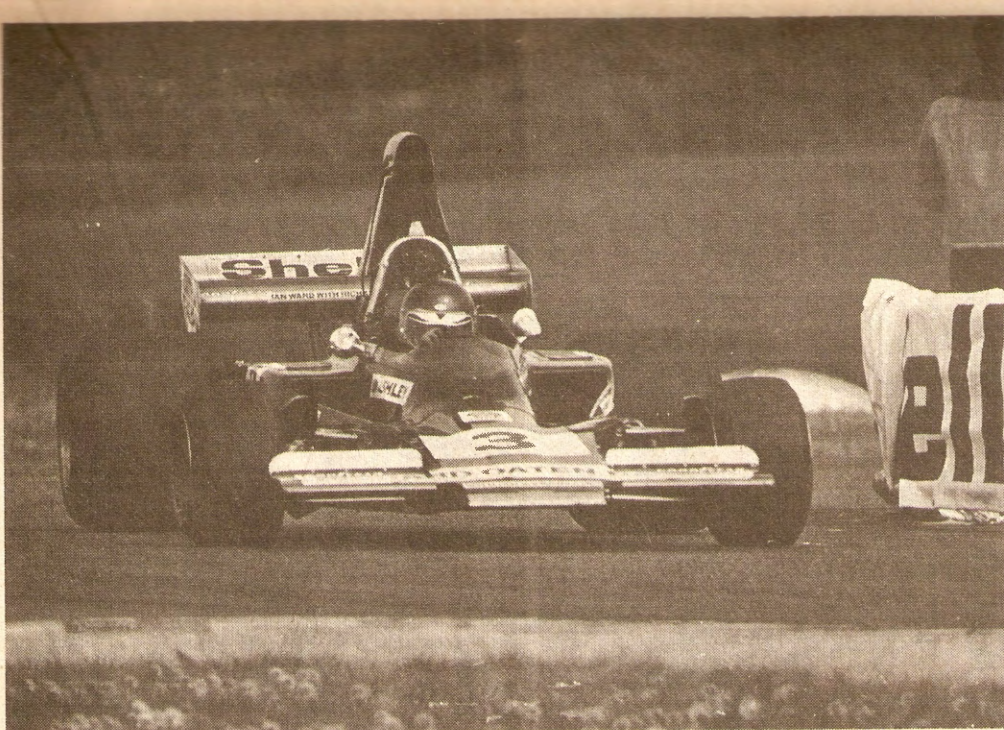
The first to appear was the Chevron B30, a one off car built for David Purley's Lec backed team. Largely based on the previous B28 F5000 car it utilised F2 B29 suspension to give a narrower track and shorter wheelbase. The V6 does not lend itself to being used as a stressed member so a triangulated engine frame was also necessary. Once again Derek Bennett's company had produced a car that was an instant success, Purley taking second place on the grid at its first race and only missed giving it a debut win because of a brake problem. Things didn't go quite as smoothly during the rest of the year but when everything held together it was a tremendously fast combination and was rewarded with two wins but which hardly justified the potential.

After an expensive experience with Chevrolet powered ex-works Chevron B28s early in the year the new RAM team, backed by Thursdays discotheque, reconstituted itself in the middle of the year and came up with a brand new March F1 chassis fitted with a V6. The big 75 series was Robin Herd's most successful big single seater design for a couple of years and adapted to F5000 very well. Two wins and five fastest laps by Alan Jones showed just what a powerful combination this was; the car was also the most immaculate and professionally turned out in the whole series.

The other two V6 engined cars were both in March chassis. Tom Walkinshaw, who had debuted the engine in 1974 with a Modus, switched chassis fairly early on and with backing from his saloon sponsors Hermetite showed up in the ex-Kuwashima, Roy Kennedy run F2 chassis version which showed well on occasion but was prone to be fragile. Dutchman Toine Hezemans bought the ex-Hesketh F1 March 731 chassis and adapted it to take the V6 for fellow countryman Bob Hayje to run. Niggling problems prevented it from showing its full potential although occasionally it looked quick.

Of the rest there was nothing new at all. Lolas of T330 and T332 vintage were dominant in the entry lists, while Chevrons of B28 and B24 spec still appeared plus one McLaren M19, a March 74A, a Trojan T101 and the Ward/Mcrae GM1.

On the engine front the main Chevrolet V8 tuners were Roy Fewkes, Morand, and Dave Whitehurst (nee Alan Smith), while John Dunn's Swindon Racing Engines took care of the Ford GAs. All the engines suffered from unreliability rather badly during the year. After so many years of development one would have thought that the Chevy V8 would have been reliable by this time but it was perhaps worse than ever. All the top runners ran fuel injection which although not giving much in the way of extra power, delivered it more smoothly and gave the driver a much happier time generally. But it was probably the



Ian Ashley was a strong contender until injury spoiled his chances in the later races.

allowing of injection that started the rot. Having got the power coming in more controllably, the tuners went looking for more horsepower and the result was a dreadful spate of unreliability all round.

The V6 engines gave quite a bit of trouble but they were in their first year of 'sprint racing' after all. The touring car spec engines were the more reliable but didn't quite have the power. Initially it was thought that the V6 cars would walk away with the short, twisty circuit races while the V8s would run away and hide on the long circuits. In fact it was almost the other way around. The V6 lacked the enormous torque of the V8s and thus wasn't as quick out of the corners, but give them a reasonable straight to get wound up and they were away. Honours were about even on the short circuits, but on the long, faster circuits later in the year the V6s always set fastest lap and if it finished in one piece, generally won. It was also nice to see the screaming Ford engined cars actually being driven through corners, with plenty of revs on the clock rather than the burbling V8 wallowing and coasting through, waiting until it was out of the corner to be booted.

The V6 was often described as the saviour of the Formula — perhaps it could have been but it came too late and its whole future must now be in doubt.

THE CHAMPIONSHIP

After Rothmans withdrew from the sport F5000 had a new sponsor for 1975 in the form of Shellsport and the prize money was increased from £7,049 to £9,000 for the major events and from £3,520 to £5,000 for the smaller ones. The administration of the Formula was taken over by Motor Race Consultants and it was hoped that their experience in Europe would attract foreign organisers to run the category for the big prize money. A number of them showed interest and went to Zolder to watch the first of the two European rounds. The meeting was an unmitigated disaster with car after car blowing up. Not surprisingly the organisers didn't want to know. Ironically the other foreign race, at Zandvoort, was one of the best of the year. So, in fact, there were fewer foreign rounds in 1975 than ever before.

In addition to this, the F1 brigade decided that they didn't want to race with F5000s. Four of them were allowed into the Race of Champions but none in the International Trophy so two 'proper' circuit, big money events were lost and a third went when the Brands GP circuit broke up in August. The latter two events were compensated for later in the year but the endless number of races at the shortened circuits at Oulton and Snetterton, plus the already short Mallory and Brands led to discontent among the drivers.

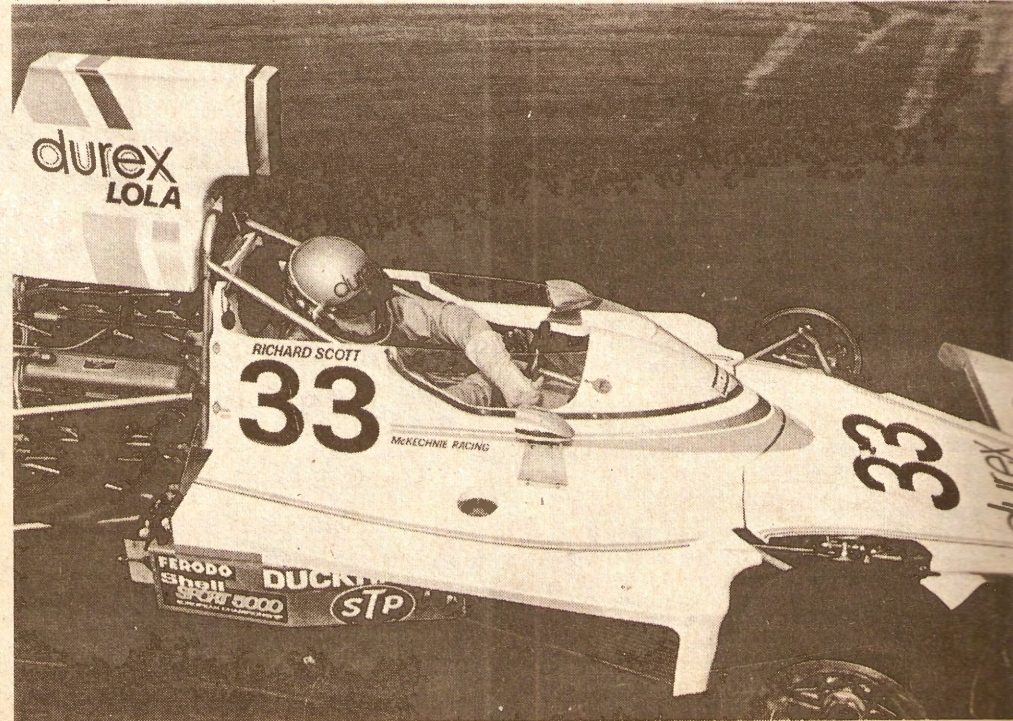
The races did take on a very 'clubbie' air which couldn't have been that attractive to sponsors or entrants spending anything up to £50,000 a car and drivers wanting to earn a living. After yet another

season of putting up with this the drivers and Association issued a statement saying that they would not run in 1976 unless certain conditions were met (first prize of £3000 and £1000 plus for the first four, fewer races etc). The promoters unfortunately had little option but to turn it down flatly. They'd had some pretty awful racing during the year and despite increasing the money annually since 1969, nothing had improved. In the face of dwindling spectators could an increase be justified, just to keep a maximum of half a dozen competitive runners and another half dozen make weights in racing? No, was their answer and it seems that it was the right one. Only time will tell.

THE DRIVERS

The championship itself was wide open until the end of the year, not because of close fought racing though, but due to a high rate of unreliability among the top runners. But in the end there was only one runner who could challenge **Teddy Pilette** as they went into the last race, and that was a very feint hope. The Belgian went through the first half of the year in the same way as he had gone all through 1974. Trying very hard and generally being very fast, but suffering from misfortune after misfortune. He was, of course,

Richard Scott had some good races mid-season but internal team politics left him without a drive at the end of the year.



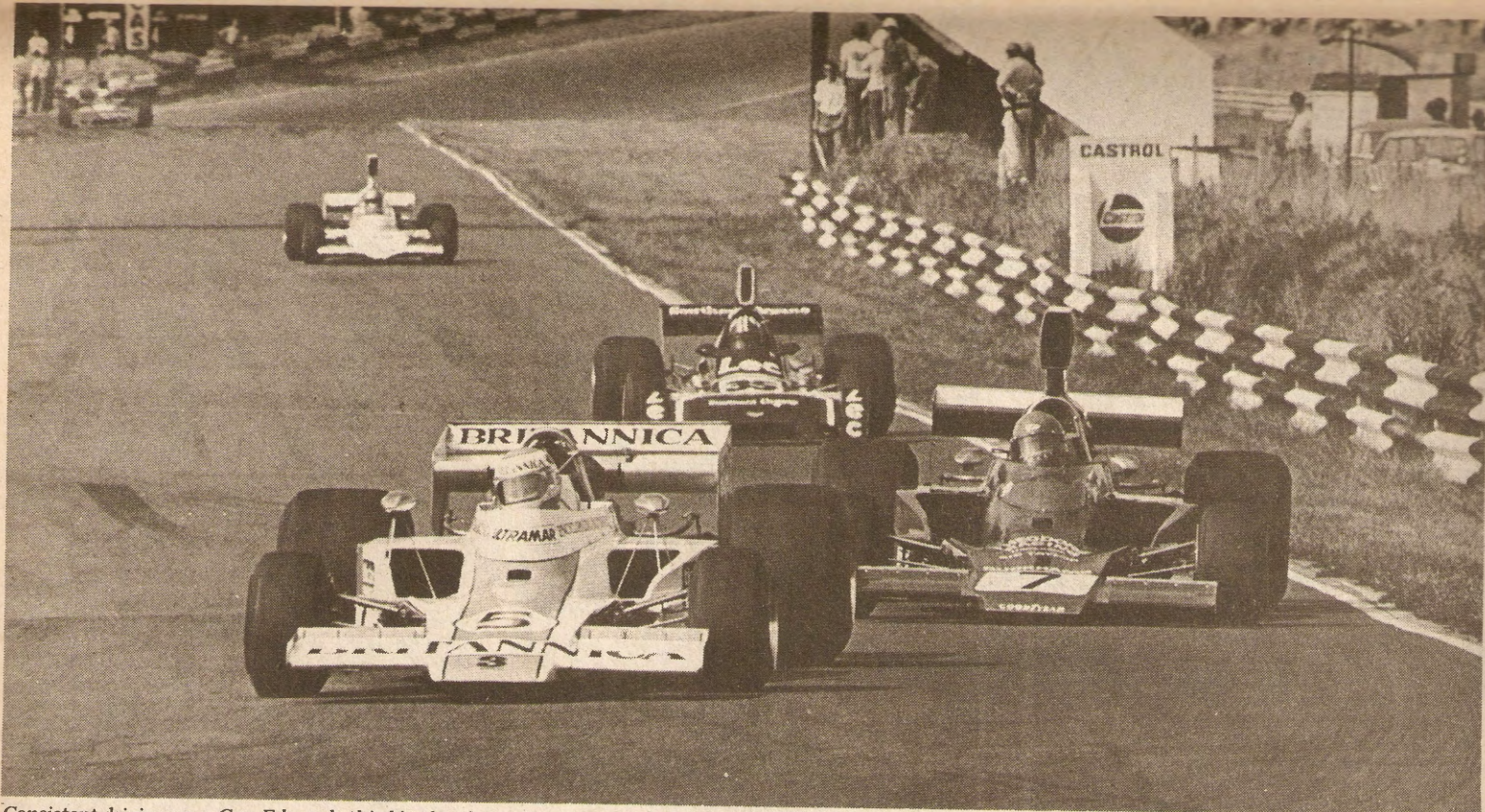
handicapped initially by having a Lola T400 which he couldn't sort out. However by the time the circus got to Mallory Park in August his luck was ready to change. He won four out of the next seven races in convincing style and wound up by winning the title by 31 points.

He was a worthy champion in that in all the years that he has campaigned in the Formula he never once gave up trying and it was fitting that he and his faithful backer Count Van der Straten should take the last championship. Making that victory even sweeter was the team's second driver, **Peter Gethin**, clinching second place in the series, by winning the final race. Again it was a very much up and down year for Gethin. Because of his immense experience and undoubted ability he's none too keen on the current predominance of short, mickey mouse circuits in this country and it was only when he got onto 'proper' circuits that he really excelled. This is borne out by his victories at Zolder, Zandvoort and the Brands GP circuit. Most of his short circuit races were frankly rather disappointing — it would have been nice to have seen him win the first and last F5000 titles, although he does have the distinction (?) of winning the first and last events in this country.

Third in the championship was **Guy Edwards** with his Encyclopaedia Britannica backed Lola T332. This was the car which he'd used the previous year but somewhere it lost some speed. Persistent handling troubles seemed to be apparent but his consistent driving meant that going into the last race he had an outside chance of winning the championship. It would have been an injustice if he had won, because he didn't win a race or even threaten to all year, nevertheless third place in the championship is a fair reward for a season's work.

Ian Ashley led the series for most of the year after running away with the opening race of the series. With backing from Richard Oaten Racing and Shellsport he had his old Lola T330 and a new T400 to choose from. He stuck to the 330 for the year and, despite its age, it served him well. Often very fast, he showed a new consistency in his driving although engines let him down regularly. After winning two races and looking as if he had the series sewn up he had a nasty F1 accident which ruled him out of one race. Really it should have been more, but with much bravery he drove the car while still his legs were in plaster. He kept his points score ticking over slowly but when he was really fit to go again, things just never clicked and the year ended on a sour note as Oaten pulled out and left Ian without a drive for the last race. Ashley is one man who can say that F5000 has really done him good — his three and half years in the Formula transformed him as a driver and he undoubtedly deserves better luck.

One never really got the impression that **David Purley** was very happy competing in F5000, despite the fact that he led the championship at one stage and won a couple of races. The Lec driver went through a bad patch in the middle of



Consistent driving gave Guy Edwards third in the championship while the following Bob Evans and David Purley had some excellent races.

the year when one persistent mechanical fault kept putting him out, while occasionally the car showed up weaknesses which did nothing to increase his love for the formula. He is an intensely competitive person and although this was most welcome in the class it appeared that the challenge wasn't quite big enough to motivate him fully.

Richard Scott had a very disappointing year. Having secured sponsorship from Durex and brought McKechnie Racing out of retirement to run his Lola T400, everything looked set, especially when he won at the big Silverstone meeting. However internal differences between the driver and the team, which latterly included the sponsor, detracted from the job in hand — towards the end both seemed to lose interest and the end of season shake up, although distasteful at the time, probably did both a lot of good.

Joint seventh in the championship were two drivers who only did half, or less, of the races. Last year's champion **Bob Evans** actually did very few races. His terribly disappointing year with BRM was put into perspective when he jumped into Sid Taylor's old T332 at Snetterton at a day's notice and dominated the meeting from start to finish. Subsequent performances in Gordon Spice's T332 and the Durex T400 confirmed that he is an extremely talented driver and one hopes that this will not be wasted next season.

Alan Jones, too, only came in towards the end of the year when he joined the reconstituted RAM/Thursdays team to drive the March 75A-Ford. Prior to this he had competed in about half a dozen F1 races which gave him a more confident approach to racing. Once the car was sorted Jones was nearly always the man to beat. Both he and the team brought a new dimension to F5000 racing — it was professional and intensely competitive without losing its sense of fun. For RAM men John Macdonald and Mick Ralph it made up for a dreadful start to the year and both team and driver deserve to go on to greater things.

Ninth in the championship was **Brian Robinson** who plodded on with his McLaren M19 and, without ever being fast, picked up points consistently. It was good to see **Gordon Spice** back in single seaters with his Reed Racing Lola T332 and he usually ran well, the highspot being a win at Oulton at Easter. A nasty accident in practice at Mallory unfortunately put him out for the rest of the season and ruined any chances of a good championship placing. Sharing his tenth championship position was Vern Schuppan who had a handful of outings in the Sid Taylor Theodore Racing Lola T332 which had seen better days. Nevertheless he was as competitive as ever without ever having the luck he deserved. This car was driven on one occasion in Britain by **Tony Brise** who showed his undoubted class by

adapting immediately and putting on a super show at the August bank holiday Brands meeting.

When the law allowed, **Tony Dean** put in the odd appearance with his Chevron B28 and usually picked up points. Later in the year he hired it to young Brazilian F3 star **Ingo Hoffman** who impressed many with his confident handling of the car. One who didn't really impress in such a car was **Dave Walker** in the RAM/Thursdays model which he drove at the beginning of the year. After a horrifying debut he did show some speed but his attitude was wrong and for the good of all he left the team quite early. **Derek Bell**, **Damien Magee** and **Andy Sutcliffe** also drove the team's Chevrons but were let down by engine unreliability.

Magee also drove Jim Kelly's ancient and very well worn Trojan on a number of occasions. His tremendous enthusiasm and ability put it into places that it should never have been and, in fact, he dominated one race at Brands until the often butchered car let him down. He has so much in the way of entertainment value and ability it's a great pity that nobody makes better use of it.

At least the Formula retained a sense of humour.

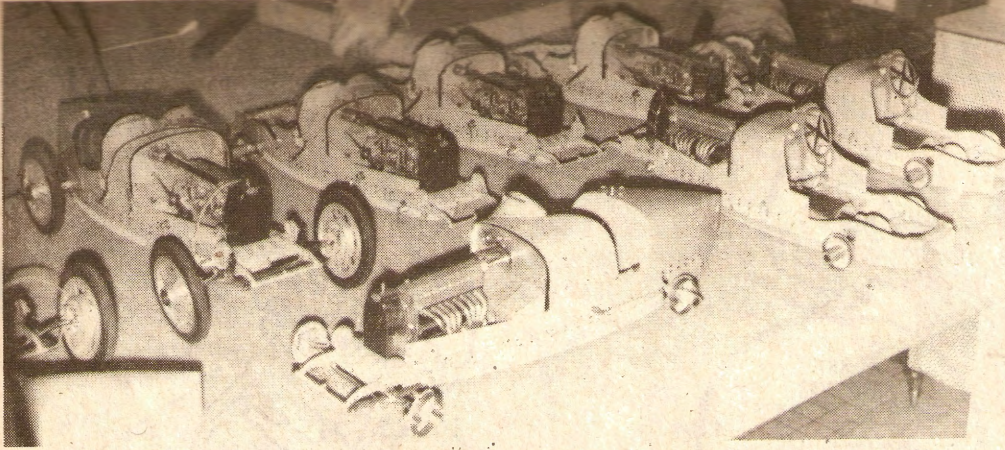


Poor **Tom Belso** tried as hard as he could in his old Lola T330 but was terribly underfinanced and eventually had to pack up.

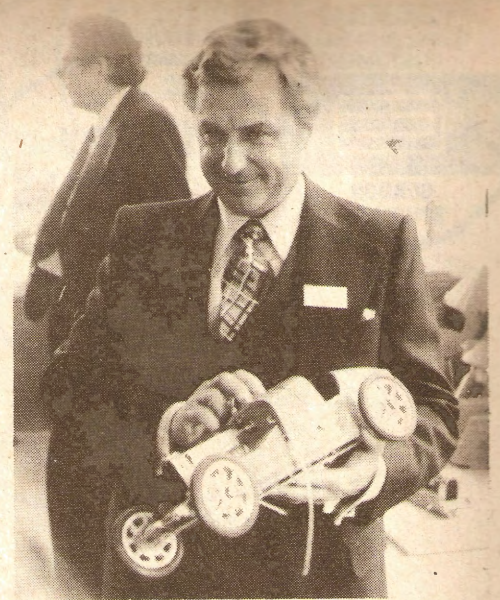
Brian Maguire had a very disappointing year, with the ex-Evans T332 while ex-saloon man **Mick Hill** never really came to grips with his ex-Wilds March, although its former driver put up some sterling drives towards the end of the year when it was loaned to him. Another former saloon driver, **John Turner**, acquired the old ex-Lombardi Lola T330 and occasionally showed up as one of the better also rans, while **Trevor Twaites**, **Dennis Leech**, **Chris Featherstone** and **Gerry Amato** were never in contention except for last place.

EPILOGUE

So it's all over. We've all had some fun, but honestly it couldn't go on — not for anybody's sake. We've had some good races, some bad races; some good drivers, some bad ones — let's hope all the good parts combine for the new Shellsport 5000 series and that it brings with it the F5000 sense of humour.



Molsheim on a bench! Models waiting to have rear axles fitted. Note the traditional "bunch of bananas" exhaust manifolds (above). Right is master modellist Monsieur Costanzo with one of his exquisite Type 35 Bugattis.



A Bugatti for just £900

In a sort of Mini-Molsheim near Vichy, Bugatti Type 35 GP two-seaters are in production again, at around £900 a go. But before you grab cheque book and telephone, absorb the fact the new cars are only one-eighth the size of Ettore's gem — although they cost not much less than did the original full-size Type 35s!

Hand-made by Art Collection Auto of Vichy, the 18in long models are so authentic as to look like the real thing when photographed. Forty dedicated 'mechanics' put the models together with skill that would have pleased even *Le Patron*, the accuracy and finish never failing to turn Bug fanatics a pale shade of green.

There is no plastic whatsoever in an Auto Collection Type 35, only steel, brass, aluminium, leather and wood. The brakes function, as does the steering gear, the springs are resilient, and the throttle linkage moves between accelerator and miniature twin carburetters. There is no blower, for the Art Collection model is of the Type 35 in its original 1924 "Lyon" form — the amazing, so-advanced Bugatti that formed the basis for many later, and highly-successful variants.

There are no engine internals but the castings are completely authentic, in miniature, with the aluminium 'circle-buffed' in the Molsheim manner, and microscopic nuts, bolts, and screws in the right places. There is even the little flat leather belt on the bulkhead drive for the rev-counter! The magneto projects through the aluminium bulkhead in the traditional manner, the tiny instruments are all in the circle-buffed dash panel, plus the mechanic's fuel air-pump on the left-hand side, and Ettore himself would have been proud of the four-spoked wood-rimmed steering wheel with polished light-alloy spokes. Even the copiously-louved body is finished in the absolutely correct shade of "Bugatti Blue". More than 800 parts are incorporated in each model, each being carefully fitted, not just assembled — Ettore would have liked that too. Art Collection Auto's Vichy works has a fully-equipped machine shop where tools, dies etc, are produced for construction of the Company's models, but such items as the beautiful cast aluminium road wheels, tyres, screws etc, are "bought out". The handsome horse-shoe radiator is made-up of many parts, looks entirely authentic, and even sports a cap-top "Calormeter".

Driving forces behind these collectors' pieces are Messieurs Marc Yves Jagorel-Molinier and Francis Costanzo, the former a highly enthusiastic car fan, ex-rally driver, and antique dealer. Monsieur Costanzo started model-making at the age of 14, and the foyer of the Vichy works displays his vast collection of car models and toys which he has been amassing for years. It is rated as one of the world's most important toy car and scale model collections. At 80,000 NF apiece, Art Collection Auto appreciate the fact they won't have to flood the market, so a limit of 900 is to be put on the Type 35. It means it will be a limited-series and that the models will probably appreciate in value as the years go by, rather like a fine painting, or rare porcelain.

The Bugatti will be followed by a similar series of Ascari's invincible Formula 2 World Championship-winning Ferrari of 1952-3, then it will be the turn of the 1955 W196 Formula 1 Mercedes as raced by five-times World Champion Juan Fangio. After that an Indianapolis Miller will be made. The Regie Renault has ordered a series of Alpine Turbo

A442 models for distribution to concessionaires, and the Alpine will be followed by Stewart's Tyrrell and the Ferrari 312T.

Art Collection Auto also plan to later produce a series of classic cars and motorcycles. The directors hope that by making and distributing their amazingly accurate scale models that they will be paying tribute to man's inventive and mechanical genius.

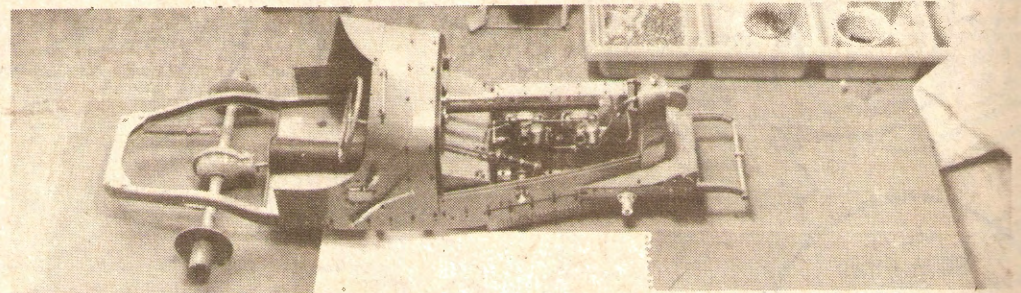
All models will be distributed on the basis of 300 for France, 300 for the rest of Europe, and 300 for the USA. M. Guy Goulet, a French-Canadian (who served with the Royal Navy during the war!), is Commercial Director of Exports, based in Geneva, where he heads an enterprise designated Art Royal SA.

The Vichy company has been in existence only since June 1974 but in that 18 months it has acquired a high reputation for its products, making, as well as Bugatti Type 35s, a fascinating series of three classic horse-drawn vehicles of yesteryear; the French two-wheeled *Mésangère*, the *Opale* State Limousine (in which Napoleon drove to his 1804 anointing ceremony), and the

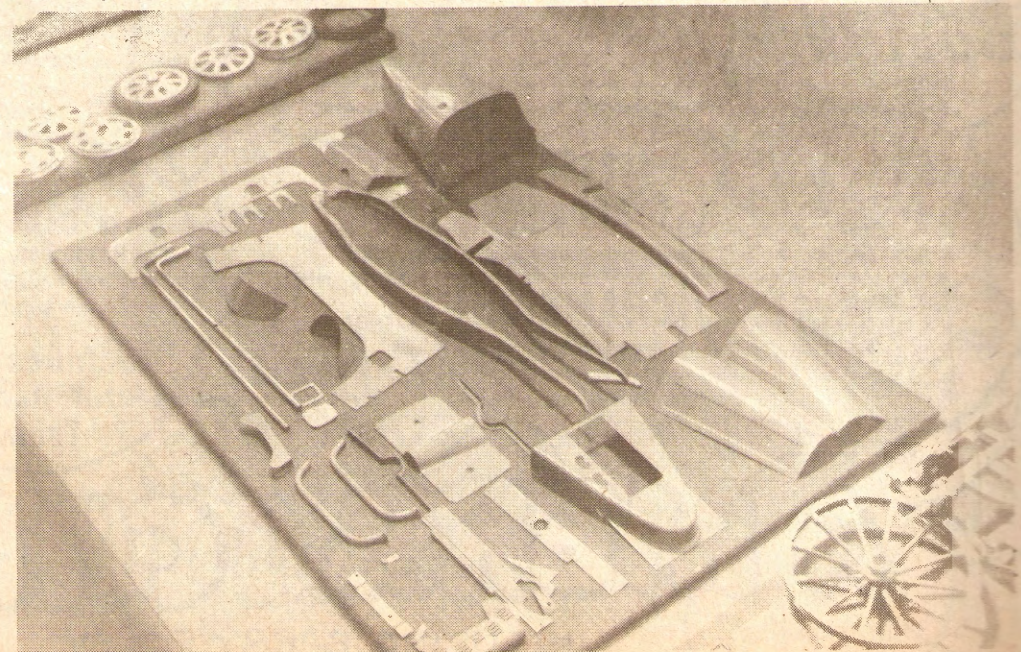
London-Bristol Mail Coach of the late 18th century. The hand-made carriages cost about £325 each. Certainly nothing faintly resembling mass-production is apparent at the Vichy works. The brass frames are shaped and soldered, the hide seats are properly upholstered, and some of the bolts and screws are so small as to need surgical instruments for their assembly. Special spanners are used (made by ACA) to tighten tiny bolts without breaking them. The Bugatti models were not conjured-up from photographs — of the six cars which Molsheim built for the 1924 Grand Prix of the *Automobile Club de France*, only two now exist, one in America, and one in England. The English Type 35 was carefully examined by Art Collection's experts, hundreds of photographs were taken, after which two hand-made prototypes were produced. They were submitted to Bugatti historians, after which tools were made and production finally began.

No-one could possibly object to having their room Bugged with Art Collection Auto's Type 35!

DOUGLAS ARMSTRONG



Above: The bulkhead, engine and rear axle are in place and the Bugatti begins to look real. Note the tiny reversed quarter-elliptic rear springs. Below: Chassis and body parts laid-out for inspection.



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Robin Hamilton
wishes all his customers a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year

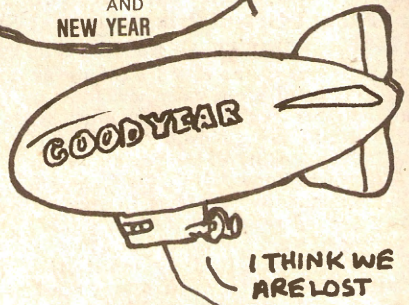
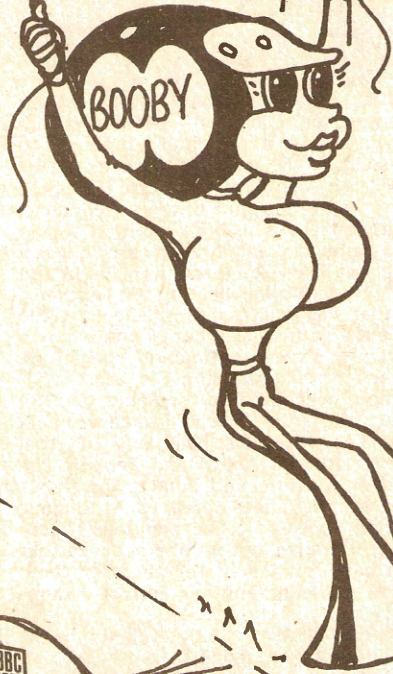
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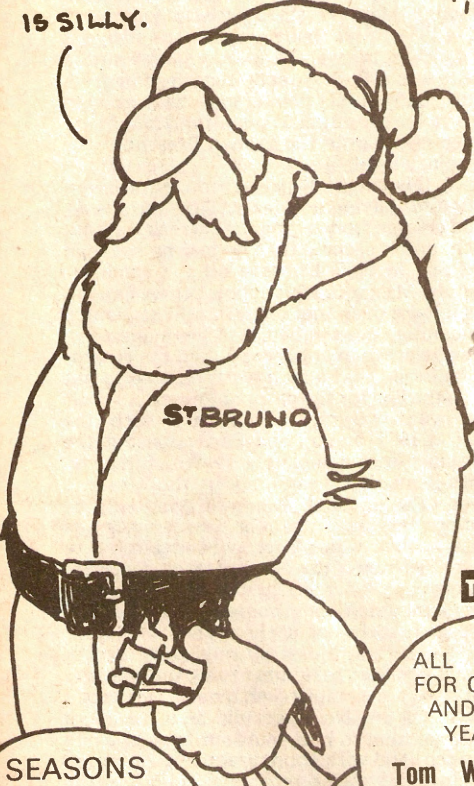
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Jean Behra pour la France

By NIGEL ROEBUCK

We used to have a dirt track near my parents' home. All the kids in the neighbourhood used to race bikes around it, and I used to spend hours up there during the school holidays. Crash helmets, of course, were a must. Not a necessity, but a must. We were, after all, not a bunch of kids racing pushbikes on a piece of waste ground, but Grand Prix drivers at Spa. It was always Spa . . . My bike was a Maserati 250F, and my crash helmet was chequered. I was Jean Behra.

Sometimes, it seems to me that I have never outgrown my childhood – not when it comes to motor racing, anyway. A racing driver must be seen to be a racing driver. Not for me the executive with the Bell Star. All terribly impractical and old-fashioned, I know, but that is the way I feel about it. Consequently, whatever the rest of the world may say and despite the fact that most journalists appear to have a down on him, I am a tremendous Regazzoni fan. And judging by the cheers from the grandstands when Clay passed Pace for the lead of the British Grand Prix, I am not alone in this. By no means is he the best driver in the world, but he does capture the imagination, and there are precious few of them around today. Regazzoni, in fact, was born twenty years too late. He belongs with Castellotti and Musso back in the fifties. And with Jean Behra.

For five years, Behra played an enormous part in my life. When I was eight years old, I was taken to Oulton Park for the Gold Cup. This was back in 1954 when Oulton was new, a glorious road circuit, the best in the country, a place to be taken seriously, as yet untainted by boardroom politics. And the Gold Cup was a serious race, for Grand Prix cars. Saturday, August 7, 1954 was a wonderful day, and there was much for the huge crowd to savour . . . Stirling Moss, with his own Maserati 250F, starting from the back of the grid after missing practice, carving through the field to win superbly . . . Philippe Etancelin, sixty years old, giving his celebrated Talbot-Lago one last run in the *Formule Libre* race . . . and, at the wheel of a works Gordini, Jean Behra. I saw him in the paddock before the race. There, I thought, there is a real race driver.

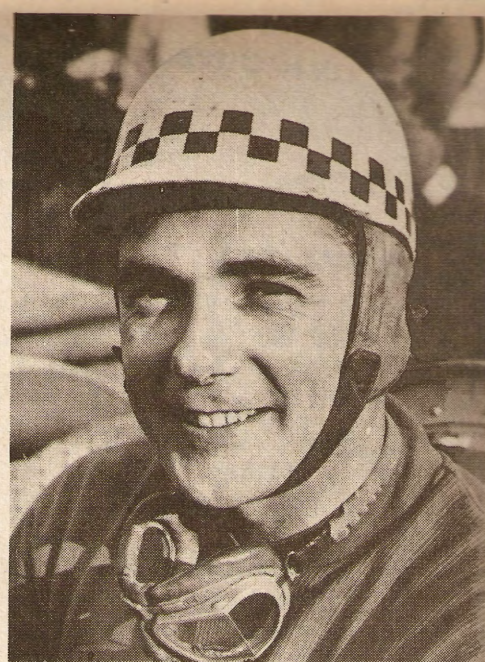
Behra was born in Nice in 1921. From childhood, he wanted to become a race driver, but his was not a wealthy background, and his first job was as a garage mechanic. After the war, he began to race motorcycles, and success was immediate. With his scarlet Moto Guzzi, Jeannot was three times Champion of France. But, as with Jo Siffert, the

bikes were merely a means to an end, a way to make the headlines in the hope that someone, somewhere would offer him a drive. Finally, in 1949, he got to drive a Talbot in the Coupe du Salon at Montlhery and he finished sixth. Occasional drives in Amedee Gordini's team followed, and Behra became a works Gordini driver at the end of 1951.

France at this time was looking for a hero. Wimille and Sommer were both dead, Chiron, Etancelin and Rosier all past it, and the phlegmatic Maurice Trintignant failed to stir them. He was too cool and correct. French enthusiasts cast about in search of a firebrand to seize their sport by the scruff of the neck. At Le Mans in 1952, they felt betrayed. Pierre Levegh, a driver of no reputation and little consequence, tried valiantly to act out his life's ambition, to win Le Mans single-handed, in a French car. He was a hero throughout France all through the night and following morning, he was beating the Germans, he was all that was great . . . until sheer fatigue brought about a muffed gearchange and a blown engine. And the sweet, sentimental spectators, robbed of the *Marseillaise*, spat in his face.

It could have been like that for Behra. Shortly after Le Mans, the *Grand Prix de France* was held at Rheims. The year 1952 was one of total dominance for Alberto Ascari and Ferrari. The Italian could do no wrong and, in fact, won all but one of the season's *Grandes Epreuves*. At Rheims, the opposition appeared to be nebulous. There was Gordini, of course, but no one believed that the French cars could hold together for three hours. No, it would be another Ferrari demonstration.

When the flag fell, Ascari went straight into the lead, and the crowds resigned themselves to an afternoon of heat and boredom. But at the end of the first lap, they stirred. Behra's Gordini was in front! The car wouldn't hold together, they all knew that, but at least here was something to cheer about. Jeannot's prime motivation was



always intense patriotism, and now he had his golden opportunity to show the fans that their search for a hero was over. For lap after lap, the Gordini and Ferrari battled, the lead changing several times each circuit. In the Italian pits, uneasiness was setting in. A joke was a joke, but what the hell was Alberto doing? All became clear when the Ferrari came in with overheating. Villoresi and Farina both tried hard to catch the flying Behra, but could make no impression. The day belonged to France. Jeannot won a famous victory, and his country had a new folk hero.

Rarely, however, did the Gordinis hold together, and although Behra remained with the team until the end of 1954, he was becoming frustrated by his lack of finishes. He wanted to stay with Gordini because it was a French team, but an offer from Maserati changed his mind, and he signed a contract to lead the Italian team for 1955. There was much criticism in the French Press, but the fans remained loyal.

Even at this stage of his career, Behra had a reputation for having accidents. Time after time, he would emerge from a complete wreck without a scratch, and it seemed that he had no sense of fear. At Spa in 1955, he went off the road and wrecked the Maserati, whereupon he ran back to the pits to take over another car . . . Frequently, Behra's courage got the better of his judgement, and often he drove over his head. And the crowds loved him for it. That a man was prepared to put his life on the line for the glory of France . . .

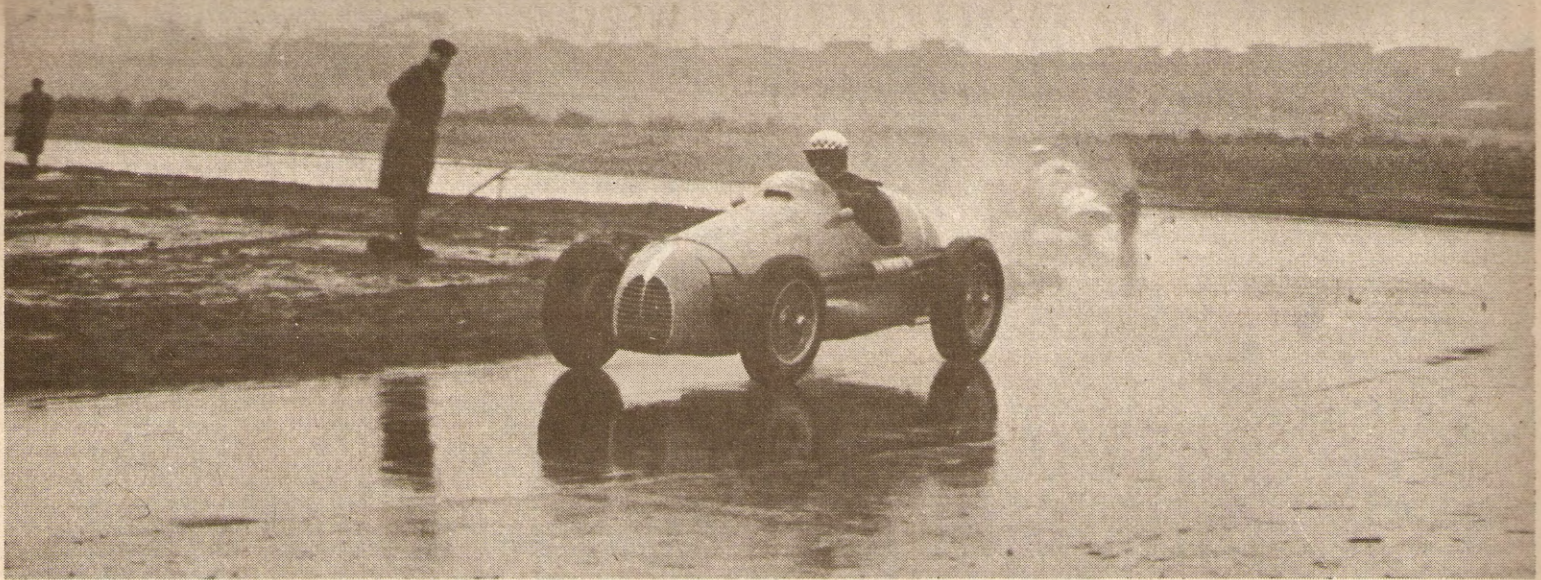
Behra won two races in France with the Maserati in 1955, at Pau and Bordeaux, but the Italian teams were completely overshadowed by Mercedes-Benz that year, and in the *Grandes Epreuves*, Fangio and Moss dominated the proceedings, leaving a trail of broken Ferraris and Maseratis in their wake. There was no answer to the sheer efficiency of the German team, and there was a big sigh of relief when the Mercedes directors announced their company's retirement from the sport at the end of the year.

For 1956, Stirling Moss returned to Maserati, with Behra demoted to number two. And the year brought about a complete change in Jeannot's attitude to his job. No longer did he drive like a man with nothing to lose, balls-out from starting grid to ditch. And with good reason. At the end of 1955, Behra had had a terrible accident in the Tourist Trophy at Dundrod. The Maserati 300S had somersaulted several times, and the driver severely injured. That accident, and the fact that Moss's inclusion in the team removed much of the pressure on him, altered Behra's thinking, and he drove carefully and cannily throughout 1956, scoring few wins but an incredible number of places. But somehow consistency did not suit him.

In 1957, Behra really got his act together. The new-found precision was still there – most of the time – but all the fire and dash was back. He was driving better than ever. Moss had left Maserati to go to Vanwall, but his place was taken by Fangio, so Behra was still number two. It seemed not to worry him. With Fangio, he scored a superb win in the Sebring 12 Hours at the wheel of the brutish Maserati 450S. With Moss (still driving sports cars for Maserati), he won the Swedish Grand Prix. In a 250F, he won the Grands Prix of Pau, Modena and Morocco. He was leading the British Grand Prix

A victorious Behra walks to the stands to collect his trophy after winning the French Grand Prix in 1952.





Treacherous conditions at the Daily Telegraph International at Aintree in 1954. Behra leads Moss at Cottage corner.

by a long way when the clutch exploded. At 36, he was finally fulfilling the promises he had made at Rheims back in 1952. During the summer of 1957, Jeannot also made the acquaintance of BRM.

At that time, BRM were in an even worse state than they are today. On reflection, though, maybe not. No, definitely not. The car, at least, was promising and was painted in the right colours. But no world-class driver wanted to know. At the British Grand Prix, however, Behra saw the car in action and was impressed with the handling. Accordingly, he asked BRM if they would be interested in running a car for him at the Caen Grand Prix. It was a non-championship race of no particular consequence, but it was in France, and Jeannot was keen to take part. The collective minds of Bourne were blown by his request. Behra won the race, providing BRM with their first victory since . . . no one could remember that far back. Flushed with success, three cars were entered for the *Daily Express* Trophy at Silverstone, and they finished 1-2-3, Behra heading Schell and Flockhart.

At the end of 1957, Officine Alfieri Maserati announced their withdrawal from motor racing. The money had simply run out. Had they been able to continue, it is unlikely that Behra would ever have left them. He was happy there and the mechanics worshipped him. His whole life was motor racing, and far from regarding testing as a chore, he thrived on it, virtually living at Modena and spending as much time as possible in the cockpit. As with Niki Lauda today, when Behra was not actually driving the car, he was thinking of ways to improve it. And he was confident that the BRM could win races. Therefore, he signed a contract with them for 1958. It was a mistake.

Throughout 1958, the BRM was extremely competitive but equally unreliable. At the beginning of the season, the problem was brakes. At Goodwood, Behra led the early laps before the brakes failed completely on the approach to the chicane. The BRM hit the wall hard, and Jeannot was very nearly thrown out, the incident producing one of the most famous racing photographs of all time. At the same meeting, Harry Schell's BRM ground to a halt with all its brakes jammed on! Clearly, there was scope for investigation here . . . At Monte Carlo, Behra was leaving the field behind when the brakes failed yet again. It was a year of total frustration. At the *Daily Express* Trophy, he was well in the lead when his goggles were smashed by a stone which cut his eye. He stopped at the pits only when his goggles filled up with blood, and rejoined to finish fourth.

There are many parallels to be drawn between Behra and Regazzoni. Like Clay, Jeannot was small and stocky, dark, tough as hell. He was a loner, and didn't really give a damn what others said or thought of him. His life revolved around his job, and he had no interests outside of it. The superficial glamour of his profession held no attractions for him which makes him a little different from Regazzoni, but the attitudes of the two men are very much alike. It is interesting that neither got on well at BRM. As the 1958 season progressed, Behra occasionally gave up trying. He

would stop the car, get out and walk away. His heart was not in it. And Regazzoni's performances in the latter half of 1973 were the same, if you recall. Grown men – particularly men like Behra and Regazzoni – resent being treated like children.

Behra was always more successful in sports cars than in Formula 1, and while 1958 may have been a disaster from the point of view of Grand Prix racing, Behra's new association with Porsche went a long way towards compensating for Bourne. The little German sports cars seemed to bring out all the Frenchman's fighting instincts, and at the wheel of the 1½ litre RSK, Jeannot was a frequent threat to the 3-litre Ferraris and Aston Martins. It was a situation he savoured.

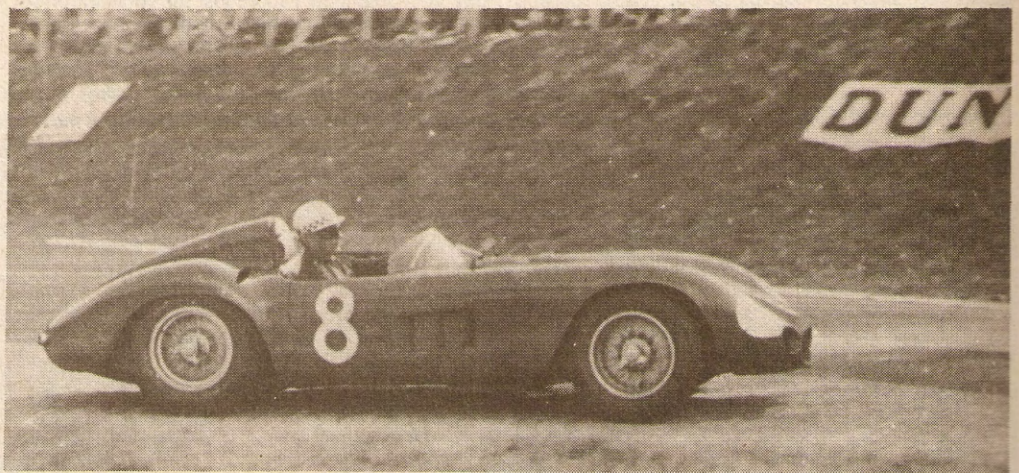
There was never any question of staying with BRM for 1959. And Ferrari was rebuilding a team

Behra's Maserati at Rouen in 1956.

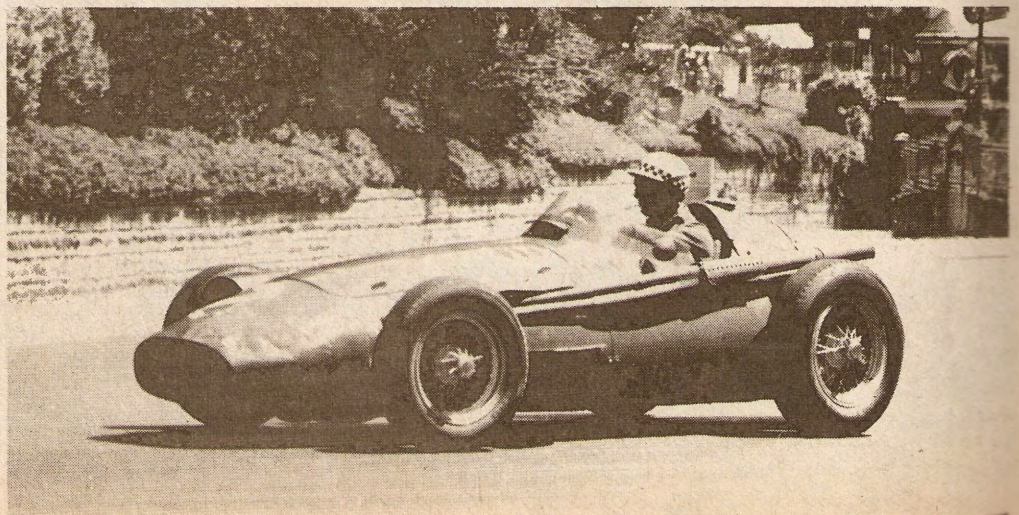
which had lost Musso, Collins and Hawthorn in a few short months. Behra was invited to join, and he accepted with alacrity. I recall the elation I felt when I heard this news. To me, the notion of Behra in a Ferrari had always been so "right".

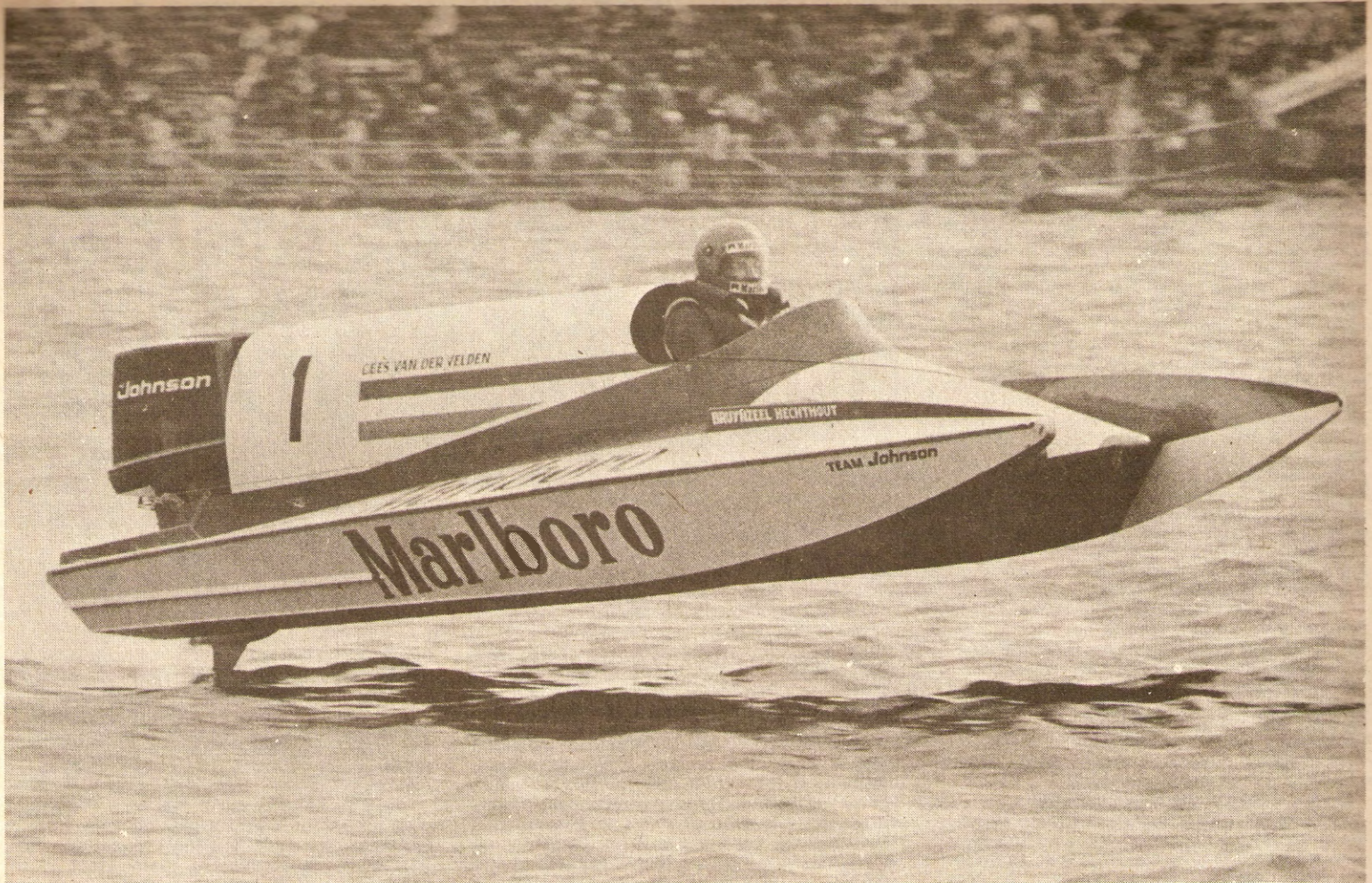
Two Ferraris were entered for the Aintree 200 in 1959, one for Tony Brooks and the other for Behra. It was the last time I saw him race. As we arrived at the circuit, there was the unmistakable sound of a Ferrari racing engine, and I ran to the fence just in time to see the car howl past. It was Behra, doing a bit of unofficial practice. No helmet or goggles . . . It is one of those things I will never forget. Later in the day he won the race, with Tony Brooks second. Was I happy? You can't believe it . . .

From then on, everything went wrong. The 1959 Ferrari team was a cauldron of discontent, and it



Jean Behra on his way to winning at Pau for Maserati in 1956.





Dutchman Cees van der Velden on his way to winning the world championship in his Marlboro boat at Cardiff earlier this year.

Powerboats—a new world

By EOIN YOUNG

IF you felt a lot of the colour and excitement left Grand Prix racing when professionalism moved in and the colourful characters moved out, when cars had the engine in the front and narrow tyres, when drivers had girlfriends (usually someone else's) instead of wives and didn't arrive with a briefcase and a business manager, perhaps you should be paying attention to the growth in popularity of inshore powerboat racing.

It's a curious mixture of the old and the new. The friendly casual atmosphere in the pits is pure 1960 Formula 1 and you keep expecting to see John Cooper come rollicking round the corner. Out on the course it's 1975 with the very latest in racing outboards backed by multi-million dollar factories who provide the spice of political intrigue, and catamaran twin-hull boats that require courage as well as skill to drive them at race-winning speeds. Catamarans took over from monohulls when it became apparent that the wind could be harnessed to good effect and now the deck between the hulls becomes one large aerofoil with the angle of attack trimmed by the tilt of the propshaft — the only part of the boat actually in the water at top speeds.

Because the courses tend to be on docks or lakes they are easily viewable for spectators and for television. The attraction to television brought sponsors in like moths to a flame and Marlboro, John Player and Embassy sponsor different teams while companies like Yardley, Strongbow cider and Carlsberg lager are also involved.

The essence of any form of motorsport is excitement and powerboating has plenty of that. The Formula 1 boats (class one in the involved schedule of racing categories) can run outboards between 1500 and 2000 cc and the latest experimental motors are giving around 250 bhp which fairly catapults the lightweight plywood hulls through the water. The so-called World Championships at Cardiff in September were run-off over a one-mile up-and-back course in a disused dock and the faster men were topping 100 mph in close company on the half-mile straights over choppy water!

Drivers combine the talents of Grand Prix drivers, pilots, and ocean sailors. They have to read the wind and the water and make instant adjustments to course and trim. The boats have buttons on the spokes of the steering wheel (they also have foot throttles) to control the tilt of the prop shaft since this controls the angle of attack of

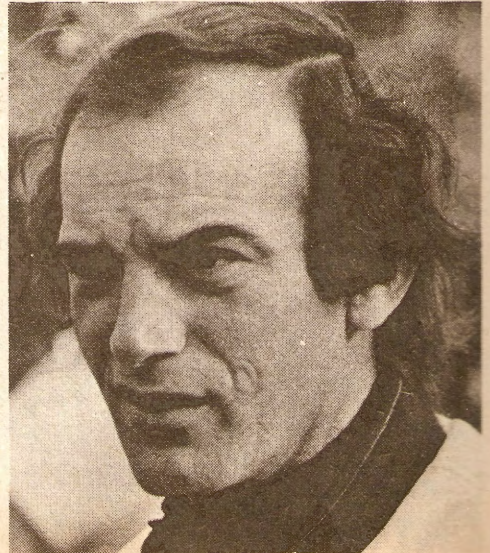
the hull. This prop shaft tilt is a loose version of the standard hydraulic unit available to any outboard owner to save him hand-hauling his motor out when he beaches the boat. Running downwind the hull can run high; upwind is the section that sorts the mariners from the boys. Too little tilt and the wind can climb over the hull and nosedive it — too much angle on the hull into the wind and the whole boat will flip backwards. Too much of either and you will also be losing speed. And remember boats don't have brakes. Or rearview mirrors. Inevitably there are accidents but serious injury is rare even though the drivers choose not to wear much in the way of safety equipment apart from crash helmets. Jack plugs on cords attached to life jackets automatically cut the ignition if the driver is thrown out. Nobody uses safety harnesses as being thrown clear is generally felt to be preferable to going down with the ship — even if following boats have props so sharp at the start of

a race that you could literally shave with them.

The plywood hulls are used in preference to glassfibre because they can be stressed, they are light and relatively cheap. A good hull from a recognised designer can cost around £2,000. The light hull gets airborne quickly, but it also becomes matchwood in an accident. It is not uncommon for the driver to go straight through the bottom of his craft in a flip.

Mercury and Johnson (O.M.C.) completely rule powerboat racing, dictating driver contracts with teams, availability of hulls, and generally taking minimal notice of sponsor's wishes. The situation is completely the reverse from the political situation as we know it in Formula 1 where the sponsor tends to be the power behind the throne. It is rather like Cosworth calling the tune as to who receives the best motors, and snatching them back if the team or driver doesn't measure up. The two American motor manufacturers trade directly with the public in the enormous world-wide sale of outboard motors and race wins can be turned into an immediate boost for boat-shop motor sales. Their investment in racing is enormous and for this reason their developments and driver

Cees van der Velden — world champion.



contracts are jealously guarded. Even now, those outside the Mercury enclave are not really certain whether the top-line T11X (a vertical six with the cylinders stacked one atop the other) 2-stroke is fuel-injected or not, mainly because the internals have never been seen.

When the engine cover is removed, a blanket or tarpaulin is immediately thrown over it and the mechanic works underneath! The equivalent Johnson motor is a 2-litre V6, and both produce in the area of 250 bhp.

The Mercury racing division has an exclusive contract with Renato Molinari (described as the Colin Chapman of powerboating) who builds his Molinari boats on Lake Como and Mercury works drivers are able to buy the latest Molinari hulls. The favoured Mercury men in Cardiff were Molinari, Bob Hering and Tom Percival. The works Johnsons were used by Cees van der Velden, Peter Thorneywork, Alf Bullen and James Beard who builds the Cougar hulls in Britain and has a similar arrangement to Molinari with Mercury. The motor situation has some ironic twists. The John Player Special team of Tom Percival and Bob Spalding enjoy a top class professionally organised team setup — but Mercury will allow them only one of the latest motors (narrow angle V6s) so the other driver has to make do with one of last year's uprated 1750 cc T11X motors which comes free and is works supported, but nevertheless not in the same league as the latest T3.

Cees van der Velden won the World Championship last season driving a boat of his own design powered by a Mercury, but there was some in-house conflict over the win and it was reported that Molinari had told Mercury if Van der Velden ran a Mercury again in 1975, the exclusive deal on Molinari hulls would be shredded. So Van der Velden was reluctantly released and Johnson were delighted to snap up a ready-made World Champion for the '75 season!

Coloured chap in the woodpile is Bill Brown, a director of Cosworth Engineering, who tweaks the noses of his outboard opposition with a boat powered by a 2-litre formula 2 Cosworth motor mounted inboard and putting power to the prop through a Mercury outdrive unit. Bill reckons to get around 245-250 bhp from the motor as fitted in his boat (although the same motor gives 275 bhp in a car) while getting nearly twice the fuel

Nick Cripps in the Yardley boat with which he won the televised Grandstand Trophy at Fairford in May.



The JPS team prior to the championships with drivers John Spalding (left rear) and Tom Percival.

mileage of the 2-stroke 6-cylinder outboards. Cosworth would sell these motors to other boat builders but outdrive units are not readily available and Mercury are not about to change the situation. The outrides are available only with the latest motors, and of course the latest motors are not available — least of all to someone who plans to use the outdrive on an inboard Cosworth! Brown had to buy a complete boat just to get the Mercury outdrive for his racing Cosworth motor.

The tactics of powerboat racing can keep you on the edge of your seat when you are aware of what is happening because it is not always apparent. At the Cardiff race the World Championship was run over two days with two 12-lap, 12-mile heats on each day. Van der Velden won the first heat going away from his Mercury opposition but as he cruised back to the dock to be craned out of the water, he realised he had holed a sponson. It was supposed then that he had perhaps brushed a market buoy but it later became clear that it was a failure caused by the sheer pressure of the water at speed! Since points

counted from only three of the four scores, the Dutchman elected to withdraw from the second heat and rushed to the Cougar boatyard in Southampton with a scrutineer in attendance to rebuild the damaged hull. Tom Percival in the JPS boat had been second to Van der Velden in the first heat and had won the second heat, so when the Dutchman and his Marlboro-sponsored boat arrived for the third heat of the championship the following morning it was obviously going to be a square-off against Percival and Van der Velden was committed to win both heats. To counter this the Mercury men worked out a tactic what would disqualify the Dutchman from the heat if it worked.

To understand this you have to know that a form of rolling start is used on a similar principle to that in yacht racing. The boats gather about quarter of a mile from the start line with the drivers watching big one minute signals that count down from five minutes with the final 60 seconds counted off on a giant clock face. The ideal is to cross the line at full throttle just as the



big hand reaches the top and then power down into the first turn ahead of the pack in calm water and clear visibility. If you should anticipate the start it is immediately apparent and the miscreant is disqualified from that heat, but it isn't really regarded as a cardinal sin because these full-throttle run-ins to the starting line are difficult to judge, especially in company with 20 other boats.

So the Mercury tactic was to lure Van der Velden into jumping the start in the third heat by slamming down on the start line seconds early in an effort to goad him into chasing after that clear water lead. But he had seen it all before and charged cannily along in their wake, making a correct start while the others were disqualified. Gamesmanship rather than cheating and certainly a touch of spice to the World Championship.

Van der Velden went on to win both remaining heats and his second World title — this time for Johnson!

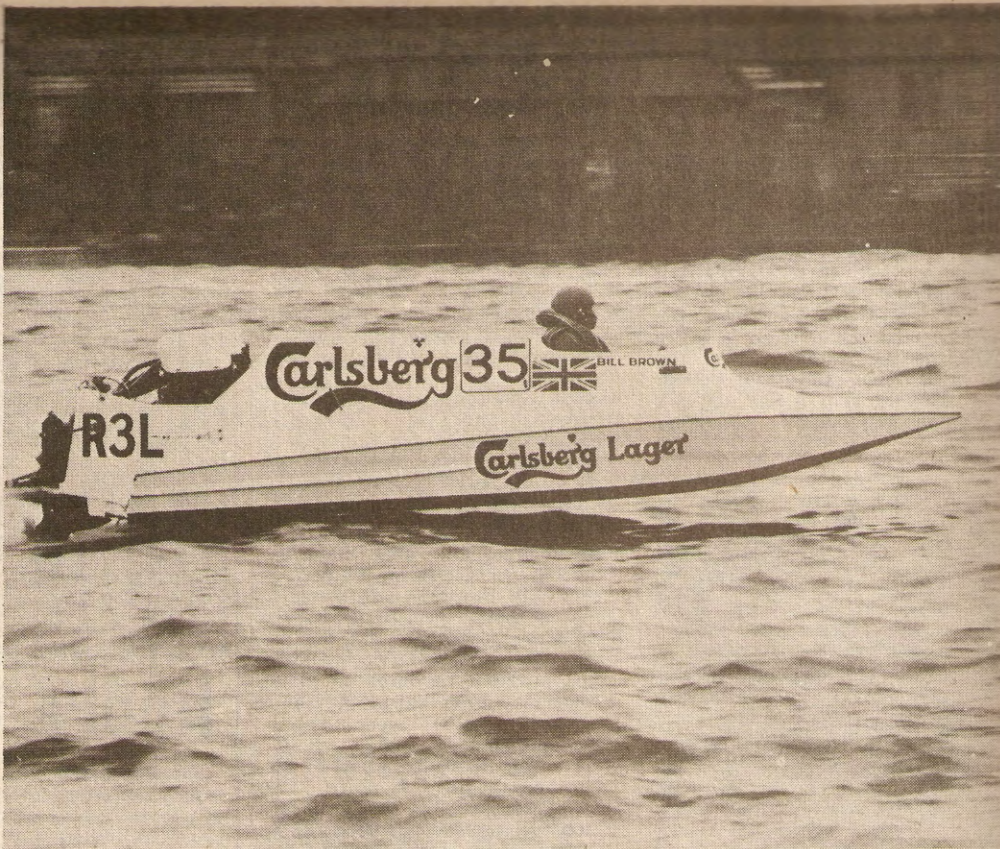


Nick Cripps — TV Trophy winner.

Inshore power boat racing (as opposed to the big offshore racers) is an infant sport that seems to be growing rather faster than its controlling body (the Union Internationale Motonautique) realises. There are races in most European countries, yet the 1975 World Championships for Formula 1 and Formula 2 (class 01 — or 1000 cc-1500 cc) were staged in the Cardiff docks over one wet weekend.

It was rather like trying to hold the Grand Prix and F2 championships over 15 heats in a weekend at Lydden Hill instead of holding major national events all over Europe and all over the world during the course of the year so that the sport enjoys an international glamour rub-off for 12 months. As it was, the event was probably the best-kept secret in Cardiff and the amenities for competitors left a fair amount to be desired

Flagship of the Embassy fleet is this giant off-shore boat powered by twin turbine engines and crewed by such nautically inclined business men as Harry Hyams and Colonel Ronnie Hoare.



Making a different but not unfamiliar sound is Cosworth Director Bill Brown's F2 engined in-board boat.

considering the international status of the event.

The sport is at a difficult stage in its development; it isn't really sure whether it wants to stay as a grub or change into a butterfly, but it will soon have to make up its mind. It is quite simply too much of a spectator event to be kept for the denizens of Cardiff's dockland. It provides an ideal package for television and therefore attracts sponsors who get a very economical deal compared with the six-figure sums required by Grand Prix teams for a similar business arrangement. Yardley were probably the most popular sponsors in motor racing and yet they seemed to be constantly getting abrasive treatment for their cash injections, so they dropped out of the £100,000 league and went into powerboating where their involvement for a season with two top teams is said to be less than £10,000. And for that they were rewarded with a win in the televised BBC Formula Johnson Grandstand Trophy by Nick Cripps and therefore yards of TV exposure.

Cripps is typical of the powerboat drivers, a handsome 33-year-old farmer with 750 acres in

Gloucestershire who interests himself in design, antiques, a building company and a deep freeze business.

He looks as though he just stepped off a Battle of Britain set, One of the Few, who should be in a Spitfire instead of a speedboat. He has the standard off-course glamour interests and tows a double-decker boat trailer behind a Range Rover. Cripps gives Yardley excellent value for their modest outlay and can expect greater rewards as the sport grows. He tried his hand briefly at motor racing in the early 1960s but discovered that stardom was easier to attain on water.

The sponsorship situation is very much in its infancy and uncertain following the new regulations controlling the involvement of tobacco sponsors in sport, but other sponsors are preparing to step in to what has to be a lucrative involvement for both the sponsor and the team as the sport becomes better established.

Major event in Britain next year looks like being an international race on the Thames and tests have already been made to test the suitability of the water in the London area.



Lloyd's marathon day

"It's always been an ambition I suppose. I've always wanted to see if it could be done"; that was Richard Lloyd's reply to our query about the fact that he was entered in every race that he could enter at the Brands Hatch Christmas meeting. With the help of Simoniz, he's racing in the production saloon car

Richard Lloyd - five races



event, the Formula Ford race, the special saloon race, the FF2000 event and the libre closer.

It's taken quite a bit of arranging really, trying to fit the right cars into the right events. The biggest problem has been in the production saloon car race which is being run to 1976 club rules, so that the Camaro Lloyd has pedalled this year is ineligible. He's currently negotiating the hire of a Ford Capri, but has been having difficulty. For the Formula Ford race - his first incidentally - he has hired a spare works Dulon, and his big 7.4 Chevrolet Camaro is entered in the special saloon race.

Even though he's been racing a Dulon in FF2000 this year, this has been loaned out to David MacPherson, so Lloyd has hired an Elden, which may mean that Divina Galica will drive in the libre event instead in the same car.

For the final 15 lap libre race, Lloyd has the use of Roger Hire's 2.0 Lola T294, the 2-litre sports car he's raced on occasion this year in long distance races. It all adds up to an exhausting day - "you could say it's in training for my holiday on the Cresta run" - but it's sure to wear away those Christmas excesses.

APG's Driver awards

The Allied Polymer Group will once again be sponsoring their Driver of the Day and Driver of the Year awards at Silverstone during the 1976 season. The awards encompass the International and promoted championship meetings at the circuit, and judging is once again in the hands of an APG representative, a member of the motoring press, and a representative of Silverstone Circuits.

The Driver of the Day bonus points are awarded towards the APG Driver of the Year award, for which points are allocated on overall positions in each race, for setting

fastest lap and for breaking a lap record, at each meeting. A new rule for 1976 is that a driver can only score once at any meeting, and naturally, his highest score will count.

A recipient of the Driver of the Day award at championship meetings receives £25, and £50 at Grand Prix Circuit Internationals. A first prize of £500 and the attractive APG Trophy makes for an excellent end of season award for the Driver of the Year competition, with prizes of £250, £125, £75 and £50 going to the next four places. Past recipients of this prize were John Harper in 1974 and Frank Sytner in 1975.

Noel's Opel

With the sale of his Capri, it's said that Noel Edmonds is driving an Opel Commodore next year in the Radio One championship. No sponsor names have yet been mentioned.



More post-historics

Post historic racing can, it appears expect an influx of GT40s next year, not the least from Viscount Doune. The latter has returned the memorable Project 212 Aston Martin to his collection, and now intends to field Mike Salmon in a GT40 in the same races. Salmon's early racing career came to an unfortunate halt in one of these beautiful motor cars when it caught fire at Le Mans. Meanwhile other cars expected to appear on the tracks are the Lola-Aston Martin and Chris-Stewart's 2.0 Alfa-Romeo T33 V8.

Four Clubmans Centaurs

At least four Centaurs will be seen in Clubmans racing in 1976. This is the good news from Richard Scott's Halesworth concern. Former F1300 ace David Childs is moving into the A Sports class with a Davron/Holbay powered Mk15, which is the prototype of the 1976 model available from the works, which has a type number of Mk15B.

With lots of Wolfrace support, Peter Clark will be racing his Centaur in B sports again in 1976,

and the car will be updated from this year's Mk14 spec to Mk15B spec. Clark's car will be running on the smart Wolfrace wheels, and will be in their livery. At least two other B sports Mk15Bs are expected during the year. The cars are available in kit or rolling chassis form, as is the Mk11C which is Centaur's 750F model. Kits for the latter start at £200, and for the former, £250, which must be one of the cheapest ways of going racing.

Gerry on two wheels

During the Brands Hatch Christmas car races, there will be a short bicycle race between just two people. It comes about due to a side bet between Brands Hatch and Tricentrol, that Brands' lady, Divina Galica, can beat Tricentrol's Super Saloon champion, Gerry Marshall. As Marshall's current weighing-in level is around 18 stone (pre-Christmas), and Miss Galica's considerably less, the distance will only be over something like the top straight, but Brands are confident that they will win the £50. However, the money will ultimately find its way to the British Womens' Olympic Fund to help send various ladies to Innsbruck for the Winter Olympics, to be held in February.

● Derek Cook, managing director of the largest Datsun dealership in the north of England, is planning on running a Datsun Z-type in Mod-sports next season. Cook raced in Atlantic this year.

Briefly . . .

● Dave Stone will take over the driving of the Stardust funny car next year, alternating with Tee Rat. The team's 'Tender Trap' Escort Chev has been sold, but will still be driven by Gerry Andrews and possibly Dave Lee Travis when possible.

● Gerry Taylor, the former saloon car driver, has resigned as social secretary of the BRSCC Midland centre due to business commitments. He would like to thank all those who have helped him over the past three years, and wishes his successor all the best.

● Steve Sanville's Norvic Racing Engines Ltd has moved from Norfolk to Westgate Hangar, The Airfield, Little Staughton, Bedford MK44 2BN, tel: Colmworth (023 062) 700.

● The RAC have confirmed that next year's FF1600 and FF2000 tyres will be supplied by Dunlop.

● Starting on February 15 with the Sevenoaks CC event, the 1976 London Counties Association Production Car Trial championship will run through to October with a total of eight rounds. Secretary of the series is P. Smith at 126 Cardinal Avenue, Morden, Surrey.

Two club BMWs in 1976

Two men who are obviously well prepared for the forthcoming production saloon car series are Derrick Brunt and Jim Marsden. They've both entered BMW 3.0Sis for the production saloon car race at Brands Hatch after Christmas. The BMW 3.0 Si is the one BMW 3.0 which is eligible for more than a year, and offers a better long term investment for production saloon car racing in the over £2,300 class.

Brunt of course, used to race a Chevrolet Camaro, but has sold the car to Sweden, while Marsden's experience is limited to Formula Ford and crewing Brian Pepper's Camaro in the 1975 Tour of Britain. He's sponsored by General Relays, with whom, of course, he's well connected.

● Gerry Marshall's role as an entrant takes on a historic look for next year with a Lotus 11. As well as other plans, Marshall hopes to run such "historic" aces as David Piper, Alan Foster and Keith Cgreene. The Lotus is the ex-Mackay Fraser record breaking model which did 143 mph around Monza.

Race on for 9s mark

With Gary Goggin having just failed to crack the nine-second mark this year (best 10.01s) in his drag racing Pro Stock Camaro, the race will be on to do it next season, with Tony Dickson leading the chase with extensive engine work in hand. Howard Smith, who again failed to run recently with his Nova through the same oil problem that has stopped him twice before this year will also be keen to make it - his car being perhaps the only other one with immediate potential to do it if things go right.

TEAC's Rally Cross

Don't forget TEAC's rallycross at Snetterton on Boxing Day. The action starts at 11am with practice, and racing starts at 12. Among the entries are Hugh Wheldon and Peter Harold (VWs), Nick Jesty, Mick Bird, Roger Brunt, Dave and Viv Potter (Minis), and Tony Merridale, Dave Fuell (Escorts). There'll be three runs for each car.

TEAC are currently short of marshals, and volunteers should either call at the TEAC caravan on the day, or phone John Asquith at Southend 557311.

Hillclimbers' plans

Hill climb supreme Roy Lane has finalised his 1976 plans and the surprise news is that he is to be partly sponsored by Goodyear.

Lane has linked up with narrow boat builders Fenny Marine from Fenny Compton again and also with Castrol to give four colours on his McRae GMI and the Goodyear deal involves the company in developing a new tyre for the front wheels.

Understeer has always been a problem on single seaters particularly in hill climbing and Lane told AUTOSPORT recently that the company will endeavour to cure the problem by experimenting with stiffer walls and a new tread pattern for the tyres he will be using. It's possible that if the tyres are successful they will be made available generally.

Other news from the RAC contenders of last year include hopes of a Formula One engine for the Pilbeam of Alister Douglas-Osborn who really burst on the scene after early season problems with his car and Ken MacMaster is fitting a slightly larger 2.2 litre Hart engine into his Modus M4 to try and improve on his fifth place — his best championship placing in four seasons in single seaters.

News from the West Country is



David Franklin—March-BMW?

that David Franklin has disposed of his Ensign and will purchase a March-BMW but Chris Cramer has yet to announce his plans though it's thought he plans to get rid of his March which carried the lager sponsorship.

One of the quickest U2 pilots, John Stuart has acquired the Martin BM8 campaigned with much success last year by Richard Brown who, in turn, is looking for a single seater.

Mrs Williams' top award

With many more events in the past year, competition has been keen for the various championships in Rhyl and District MC. In particular there was an exciting tussle for champion novice driver and in the end D. Singleton and K. Cross tied for the honour. Expert award in this class goes to P. Chadwick.

J. Spiller and R. Proffitt are expert and novice navigators and the off the road championship goes to D. Jones. One of the club lady members Mrs Gwenda Williams has won the club member of the year award and the lady champion is Sue Price.

Bentley building

Remember the Bentley specials of Peter Morley and David Llewellyn? Well, there's another on the stocks currently for Barry Eastick, and it's said to be the first of a number.

The idea is that any special should use the front and rear suspension from a Bentley, plus the frame. Otherwise it's all free. Martin Slater, who not only built the Lyncar F1 and Formula Atlantic cars, but also did the hillclimbs Marlyn and Lyncar respectively for Sir Nick Williamson and David Good, is the man who's building up Eastick's monster, using a 6.2 Silver Shadow engine. He says the car is much lower than most Bentleys, although it is naturally still front engined.

ANWCC classes

There will again be three classes, experts, semi-experts and novices in the 1976 ANWCC Rally Championship, but registered entrants are reminded that should they change the class in which they are running they must notify the organising secretary within 14 days of an event causing the change, otherwise they will be disqualified from any points. Points in general classification will be 25pts for first, 24pts for second, etc, while bonus points will be awarded to finishing novices 10pts, semi-experts 3pts, and experts 1pt.

Intending entrants should register with Mrs M. McGivern, 13 Canterbury Road, Wallasey, Cheshire, enclosing a fee of £1.

Another Walker goes racing

After three races this year, former British Junior Karting Champion, Sean Walker is going Formula Ford seriously next year. Sean, who is 17, is son of the well known racing driver and engine builder Ian Walker, and it's with father's help that Sean is making an all-out effort next year.

The Hawke DL11 which he raced three times this year is to be sold, and a new Royale RP21 is being acquired. It will be fitted with an engine built up by IWR which will, according to father, be more torquey

Sean Walker — new Royale



than many FF engines. Veteran mechanic John Pledger, who used to look after the Walker Lotus, will tend the Royale. Having impressed his father with the three races this year, Sean may only be in Formula Ford for a year before moving up into other Formulae.

Meanwhile, on the Clubmans scene, after a year in which his engine in Richard Groombridge's Hustler has seen little success, Walker is staying with the car next year, now believing it to be well sorted.

● Roy Lane for circuit racing? The Monopostos Register's *Startline* reports that Lane is currently restoring a Cooper T56, a car that is eligible for the Register's Formula Junior class of near historic racing. Could Lane be taking to the circuits?

Briefly

● Regs are now available for the Riponian Rally, sponsored by Harrogate Motors and run by the Ripon Motor Sport Club on January 10/11. The route is over 190 miles of public roads, starting at Harrogate Motors in Ripon. Prospective entrants should write to Mrs P. Simms, 47 Priest Lane, Ripon, North Yorks.

● There's another date to be added to the DJM Formula Ford championship announced recently in these pages. A round is to be held at Silverstone on March 28.

● Racing at Croft next year is definitely on, says the Nottingham Sport Car Club's new competition secretary, Alan Bragg. The club already has four dates at the circuit, on March 21, May 23, August 1 and October 3. They've also changed their address to 1 Fisher Lane, Bingham, and Bragg may be contacted there on Bingham 38664.

● Next year's BT&RDA Autotest Championship will comprise 22 rounds starting with the Eastbourne weekend on February 8 and going through to October 3 when the 62 Car Club run a round. This is three more than during the past season's series and newcomers are Bath MC, Sherwood Forest MC and 62 CC.

● Everyone knows that FF2000 entrant and driver Ken Hensley plays with the Uriah Heep group, but in our ignorance he's been lumbered with playing every single instrument under the sun. Having enjoyed his concert at Hammrsmith recently, we can officially declare that he plays keyboards, occasional guitar, and does a fair bit of singing. Thanks Ken, we enjoyed it.

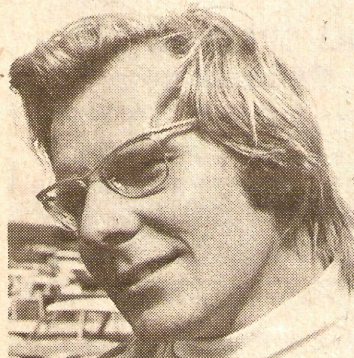
● Regs are now available for the 40 places on the Green Belt MC's Plot and Bash Paperchase rally on January 3/4. It's pretty much a beginner's rally over 150 miles, and entrants should contact Miss Hilary Bedford, 211 Cuffley Hill, Goffs Oak, Waltham Cross, Herts ENY 5HA, tel: Cuffley 2046. Willing marshals should contact Dick McCarty, tel: 01-360 2161.

● Two hot new chassis look to be coming out of Clubmans Super-sports constructors for 1976. Arthur Mallock's U2 design features a 4in longer wheelbase with revised bodywork although little else, while Peter Cooke is expecting to have a new chassis from Ken Harrison, the builder of his successful car this year.

● Competitors competing in non-RAC sanctioned events may like to learn from the experience of one J. Hutchin who took part in an unauthorised autocross, and was suspended by the RAC for a year and had costs of £35 awarded against him. The relevant article is on Page 52 of the Blue Book, article 161.

● West Suffolk MC are running the Fildyke Rally on February 7/8. An event previously run by Cambridge CC, regs are now available from Tony Thorne at Newmarket 5462.

● Stephen Walker and Nigel Mee, who raced a Lotus 61 in Formula Ford last year until Walker wrote it off at Old Hall, have brought a new Image in kit form. They already have sponsorship from a restaurant business for a couple of races, and seek more for the Silverstone FF championship.



Chris Alford — prod sports champion

Prodsports Morgans

Chris Alford and John Britten are currently trying to secure sponsorship for a two car team of Morgan Plus 8s in production sports car racing. While Britten, who is Alford's boss in his garage business, drove a Plus 8 this year, Alford drove to considerable success in the smaller 4/4, winning the BRSCC Production sports car championship. There are also plans to run the 4/4 next year for a journalist not unknown in production sports car circles.

McKerrell's award

By navigating Ted Cowell to victory on the recent Welsh Marches Rally, John McKerrell clinched the navigators award in this year's Welsh Road Rally Championship.

His regular driver Mick Briant had already won the driver's category. Second place in the respective classes go to Howard Davies and Phil Jones, while Geoff James and Colin Francis are third.

