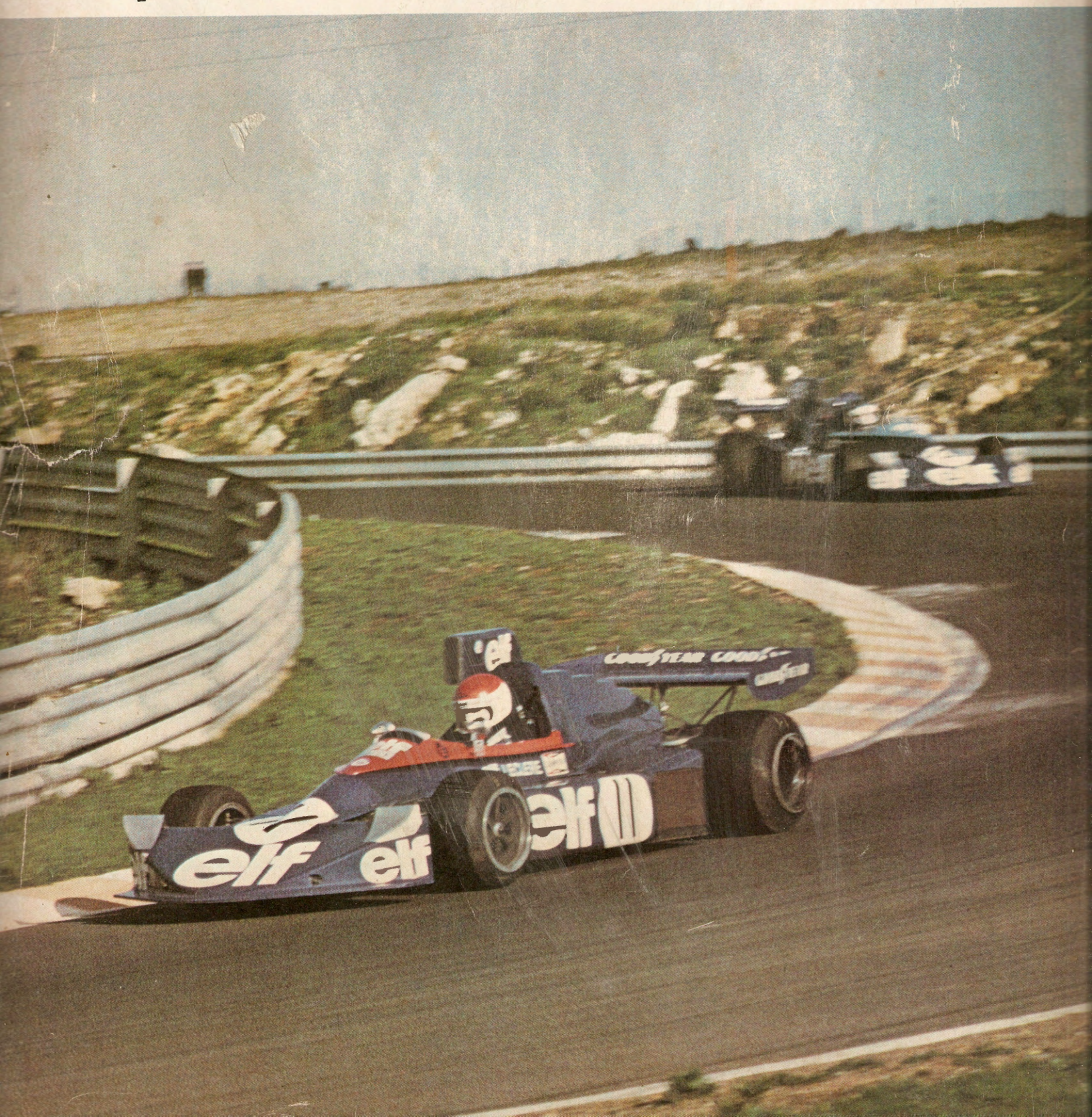
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AUTOSPORT

Full report of Thruxton F2 championship race



AUTOSPORT

BRITAIN'S MOTOR SPORTING WEEKLY

April 3, Vol 59 No 1

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EDITORIAL

Although the weather did its best to ruin any sort of outside leisure activity over the weekend, as far as motor racing is concerned the holiday period was undoubtedly successful.

The two Easter Monday meetings at Thruxton and Brands Hatch both had significant points to them. They were the two biggest meetings of the weekend and it was gratifying to hear that both were extremely well attended. The main point though must be the fact that Thruxton featured Formula 2 as its main race and Brands Hatch featured F5000.

These two formulae have been pitched against each other more strongly than ever during the past few months, yet Monday proved that the two could be promoted together on the same day in the same country.

For Formula 2 supporters it was indeed a good weekend. The BARC managed to attract a full field with many top names taking part. In contrast to the opening round of the championship at Estoril three weeks ago, Thruxton had 31 starters as opposed to 16. That is a mighty increase and one which shows signs of getting bigger still. If promotors had doubts about the Formula seeing out the year then they will no doubt be heartened by this showing.

It seems that the recent criticism levelled at the Formula has made those involved even more determined to see it carry through. The future, clouded somewhat by the impending change in regulations, is viewed with optimism by those close to the Formula. This is most heartening. We have been guilty of spreading the gloomy forecast, but there is nothing we'd like to see more than for F2 to really fulfil its proper role as the major international intermediary Formula. Last weekend proved that this doesn't have to be to the detriment of any other Formula, which is as it should be.

Formula 5000 received a nicely timed boost on Monday also. For the first time since it was introduced on this side of the Atlantic, a car powered by something other than the Chevrolet V8 engine has won a race. It wasn't by default either, it was won fair and square. We, and we hope nobody else, are not going to start leaping about saying that this will change the basic Formula. Of course it won't, at least not in the immediate future. But its performances this year have surprised a lot of people and certainly created a great deal of extra interest in the Formula. F5000 is not noted for its technical innovations, let's hope it never is, as the costs would certainly start to spiral. However, the advent of the Ford V6 as a competitive engine, not only adds technical interest, it may, in the long run, be a money saver and that's got to be good.

Finally, while we are talking about things that are good, we'd like to blow our own trumpet briefly. During the last six months or so AUTOSPORT has campaigned almost alone in the media for the return of big time Formula 3 racing. Well it finally happened at Thruxton on Monday. The field of 28 cars is still short of the projected mark (there were however nearly 100 competing at the Nurburgring on the same day), but it is more than any meeting could muster throughout last year and the racing was close, tough and truly international. it's taken a great deal of hard work by a small number of people to restore faith in the Formula, we think Thruxton was just reward. Long may it continue.

our cover picture

The works F2 Marches are seen here at Estoril three weeks ago. Last weekend they headed the return of F2 racing to Britain. Our report of the Thruxton meeting starts on page 8. PHOTO: CHRIS WITTY

Illegal F5000 tyres?

There were some heated scenes in the Brands Hatch Paddock after last Monday's F5000 championship race, which resulted in a number of protests being put in.

The problem surrounds the rear tyres fitted to the Chevron B28 driven by Dave Walker and the B24 driven by Tony Dean which finished in second and third places respectively. The rear slicks (grooved in Dean's case) were not stamped "F5000."

Following an agreement between Jackie Epstein, the F5000 Europe technical representative, the RAC and Goodyear one wet and two dry compound tyres of a set size and compound were specified for use in F5000 during the year. These would have the appropriate stamp on them. No other tyres would be accepted.

However, the two Chevrons in question were built specifically to take last year's Firestone F5000 tyres and it has been found that the regulation size of Goodyear, which must be used this year, foul the rear radius arms and uprights and are impossible to use.

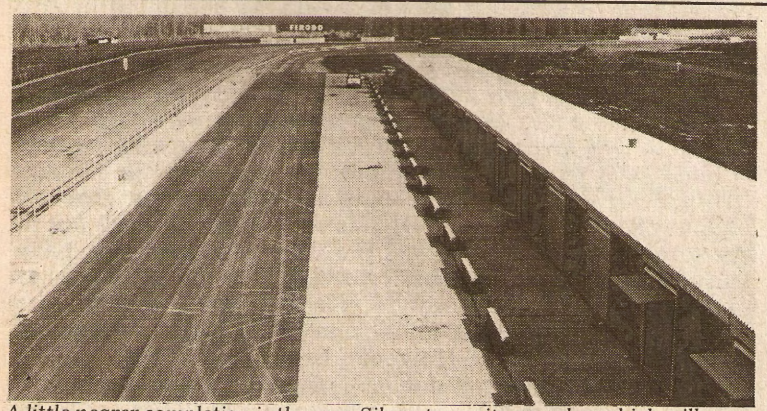
Thus Goodyear released 10 equivalent tyres to be fitted to the relevant Chevrons. However, these are not stamped. Both Walker and Dean used these tyres at Brands and the VDS Team protested.

John Macdonald, co-entrant of Walker's car, told us on Tuesday that he bought a set of tyres from Goodyear, paid for them and sent his rims down for them to be fitted and these were the tyres which were supplied to him. There was no question of "demon" tyres being supplied illicitly. He also added that these particular tyres are 2.4 ins narrower than the standard size and are of a slightly different compound. The car passed the eligibility scrutineer with them fitted and used them for the whole of one practice session without a word being said. What also upset him was that the teams who were complaining were just not in the same race as the two Chevrons: "It certainly wasn't a tyre advantage, no tyres were working on that surface. If we wanted to get nasty, and the way some of the F5000 entrants go on it makes you want to, we could protest hand grooved tyres because they're not the tyres as specified." Dean just said, "If this is the way they want to carry on, I'll just sell the car."

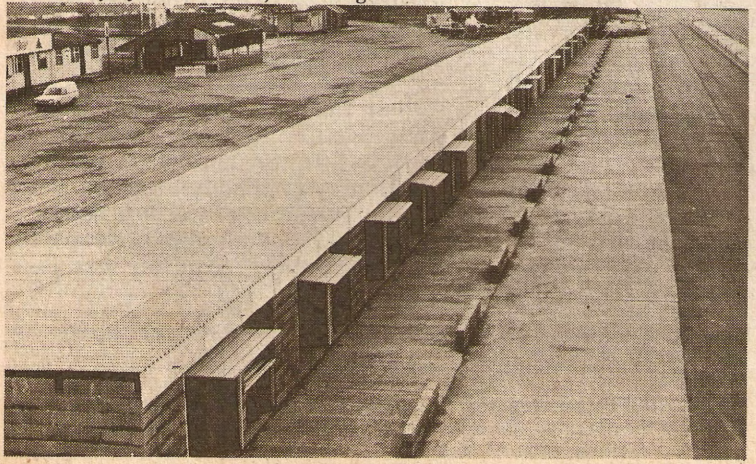
Keith Greene from International Race Tire Service, the Goodyear agents, advised us to contact Dave Alexander of the Racing Division but they were all on holiday. Greene did say that he received a panic call from Wolverhampton to pick up the ten tyres to supply to Chevron F5000 customers, which he did in time for the Race of Champions. Subsequently 13 more have been found and bought into the IRTS stock. Greene went on to say it would be dangerous for the Chevron runners to use the stamped tyres.

The results of Monday's race are to remain provisional until an RAC tribunal has heard the case.

The whole thing seems very petty to us; the tyres obviously played no part in the advantage of the two cars at Brands (remember Dean won the last F5000 race on the club circuit and Walker set fastest lap at Oulton Park using "proper" wets two days before). If the protesting teams have their way then the Formula will lose two competitive teams.



A little nearer completion is the new Silverstone pits complex which will come into use in a fortnight's time at the International Trophy when it will be opened on raceday by HRH Duke of Edinburgh.





Will Stuck try and drive his NASCAR stocker like this?

Stuck goes NASCAR

Hans Stuck told us over the Thruxton weekend that he would probably not be taking part in any American Formula 5000 races after all. The young German ace told us that as there was an IMSA race almost every weekend and as he had forsaken his German license for an American one in order to compete in these events, it was unlikely that he would have time for F5000. However, he did say that in conjunction with his BMW drives in the States, he intended to compete in some NASCAR races later on this year.

Stuck is expected to make his debut in the second Roger Penske-prepared Coca Cola AMC Matador at Talladega on May 20 running alongside team leader Bobby Allison. Hans was visably thrilled at the prospect of driving such a car and laughed when we suggested that his sideways driving style wouldn't be appreciated by the likes of Richard Petty and Cale Yarborough.

Stuck's single-seater plans this year look, at the moment, like being confined to just two more Formula 2 races in his Jagermeister March-BMW 752 at Hockenheim and Nurburgring.

After his poor showing over the weekend, Stuck will be anxious to make amends on home territory.

Scheckter wins again

The third round of the South African F1 championship took place last Sunday at Pietermaritzburg and provided Ian Scheckter with his second consecutive win in his much revised Lexington Racing Tyrrell 007.

Following the second round at Welkom last week, which was one of the closest races seen in South Africa for some time, this latest round was described as one of the finest races ever seen in the country.

Once again Scheckter made a scorching start and for five laps pulled away from the rest of the field, headed by Eddie Keizan's Lotus 72. Dave Charlton made a poor start in his Lucky Strike McLaren and took some time to pass Keizan. However, once past he charged after Scheckter and soon caught him. For the rest of the race the two raced hard nose to tail with Scheckter getting the verdict by 0.3s. Keizan did not give up when Charlton got past and hung on as best he could to finish third four seconds behind. This was his first finish of the year. His team mate Guy Tunmer was not so lucky, however, and dropped out after ten laps with a broken valve while in fourth place. Tony Martin's F2 Chevron B25 was fourth and Joe Domingo's Surtees TS9B fifth.

Scheckter now leads the championship with 20 points to Carlton's 16.

● We apologise to any readers who did not receive copies of AUTOSPORT or expected mail last week. Central London was once again hit by a post office dispute.



Brian Henton – a struggle

Henton's hire deal

Following his brilliant showing during the Thruxton Formula 2 race last weekend, it's amazing to think that Brian Henton is having to struggle so hard to find the finance to run his brand new March 752. Consequently, he will be hiring it out for three non-championship races to his F3 team-mate from last year, Brazilian Jose Chateaubriand.

While fellow March competitors seemed to struggle to make their cars lap at competitive speeds, Henton, aided by Vittorio Brambilla, were easily the fastest Marches on the track. Henton's effort is all the more notable as he was using a three year old Brian Hart Ford BDA engine and the car was only finished at midnight the night before practice.

Henton, who has gained a tremendous reputation for speaking his mind, will, at this rate, find himself in an F1 car shortly. Certainly if his recent F1 testing times are anything to go by when he's been quicker than Brambilla.

Now US F5000 boost!

Although the prospects for the SCCA/USAC Formula 5000 Championship have recently been dampened by the cancellation of the Mid-Ohio round and rumours of potential additional cancellations, it now looks as if the two clubs will be able to announce a finalised nine-race schedule within the next few weeks.

Doctor Joseph Mattioli, President of Pocono Raceway, has denied stories that he will not stage the opening round of the series on May 4 regardless of whether he finalises current sponsorship negotiations. Mattioli recently refinanced the Pocono operation and in light of this stated that he will definitely run three major races during the year, the other two being the USAC Schafer 500 and the NASCAR Purolator 500.

Road Atlanta have completed a sponsorship deal for a F5000 race and are currently deciding on taking the up to now vacant June 1 date or a mid-August date. It seems possible that the August 31 Ontario Motor Speedway race *will* take place in spite of the Speedway's major financial ills.

Vel Miletich, who is quite obviously a strong supporter of F5000, is adamant that he will stage the event which may take on an interesting new format utilising the 2.5-mile oval itself.

On another front, Dan Gurney, talking as a spokesman for the Long Beach Grand Prix Association, said that he was sure the September 28 F5000 would take place, even if the CSI failed to provide the California City with a 1976 World Championship event.

Meanwhile the SCCA themselves are continuing with their efforts at reviving G7 sports car racing. Cliff Tufte, President of Road America, announced last week a $60,000 handicap race to be run on the old late August Elkhart Lake Can-Am date. It is hoped that a full field of 50 cars will arrive to compete in the five classes (SCCA production classes A, B and C plus SCCA A sedan, FIA G2 and G4, under 2-litre sports racers, normally aspirated G7 cars (including 3-litre/5-litre 1976 regs) and turbocharged G7 cars) in what must surely be the richest *libre* race of the year. . . .

Ferrari to quit F1CA?

News from Italy suggests that Enzo Ferrari is dissatisfied with the way his Ferrari Grand Prix team are represented within the Formula 1 Constructors Association and has threatened to withdraw them, prefering to negotiate the team's own financial terms on an entirely separate basis with the race organisers.

This move, or rather, this "threat", comes at a time when the Formula 1 Constructors Association have done an awful lot during the past few years to establish a firm understanding with individual race promotors by offering them "package deals".

Last year we had the situation where many smaller and private teams were desperately trying to obtain membership to FICA so as to reap the benefits it had to offer its current members, already an association made up of teams who had been well established in Grand Prix for many years now.

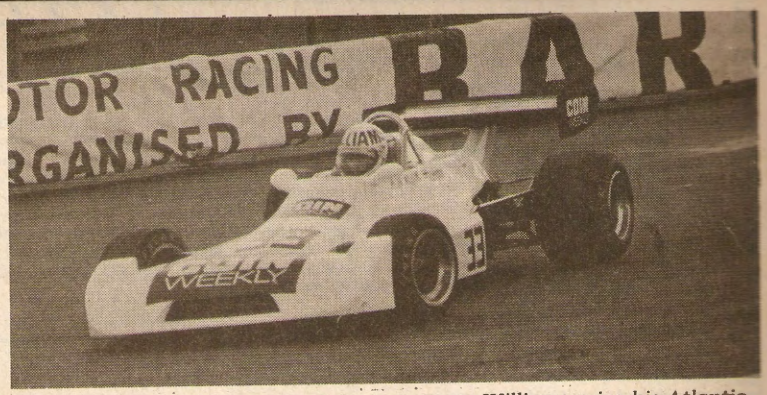
Some teams however felt that even if the opportunity came to join, they may prefer to remain outside the affiliation and, like Ferrari wants to, negotiate terms on their own.

We spoke to several FICA members during the last week about the proposed Ferrari "withdrawal" and were met by a mixed reaction. Some preferred to remain silent, others were prepared to explain the situation a little clearer. Peter McIntosh, secretary of FICA, preferred to offer "no comment" on the matter when we spoke to him on Tuesday morning.

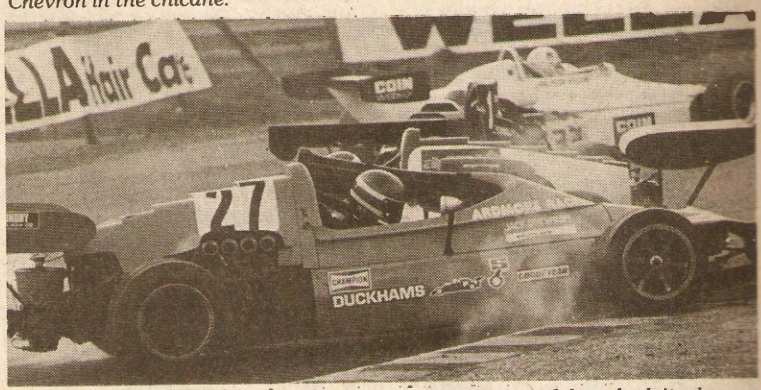
If Ferrari do leave, and from what we hear, their reasons are somewhat "trivial" according to one source, then perhaps some other teams will follow suit. Teams would then start asking the organisers for their own individual start monies. We're told for instance that the current rate of payment for F1 teams is approximately on a sliding scale rate of £200 per World Championship point gained the previous season. Ironically those at the top are Ferrari who scored a total of 96 points between Niki Lauda and Clay Reggazzoni last season. And yet somewhow we don't think it's the money that Ferrari are worried about.

Enzo Ferrari and the men who brought him the most points in the World Championship last year, Clay Regazzoni and Niki Landa. Does he really want to leave FICA?

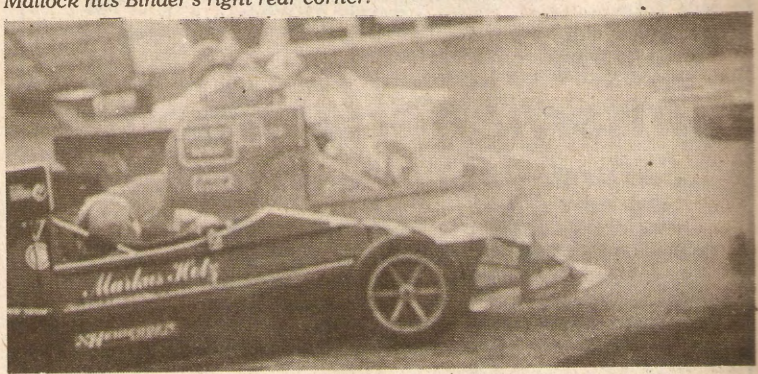




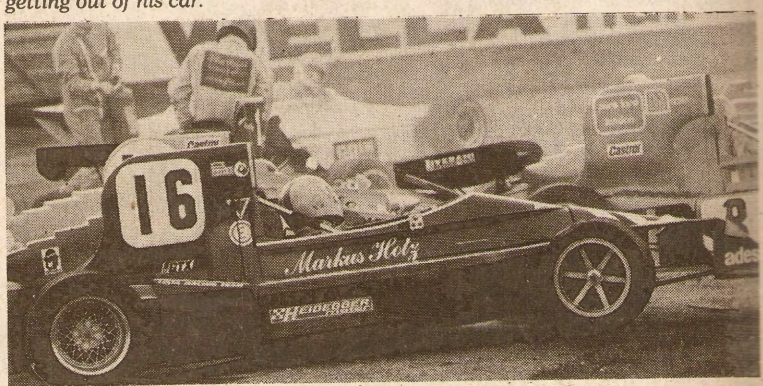
The beginning of the Thruxton debacle as Peter Williams spins his Atlantic Chevron in the chicane.



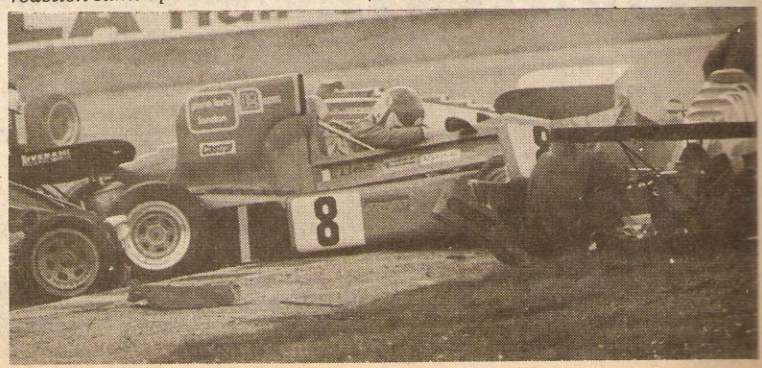
With Peterson and Binder having hit the Chevron and knocked it clear, Mallock hits Binder's right rear corner.



Seconds later Leoni and Hotz arrive on the scene. Peterson can be just seen getting out of his car.



As the dust settles, Hotz finds himself alongside Colombo (above) while Leoni's reaction sums up the whole situation (below).



Ron's Ralt is a flier

The new Ron Tauranac designed Ralt RT1 F3 car made its first public appearance at Thruxton last weekend driven by Australian Larry Perkins. It's the first time that Tauranac, the former Brabham Grand Prix car designer while at Motor Racing Developments, has built a Ralt since 1959.

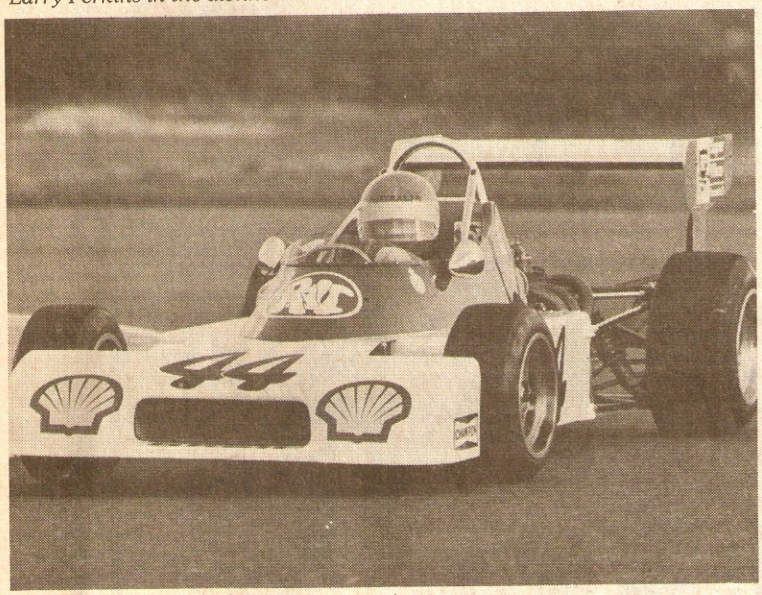
Tauranac first laid down plans for this new car, the sixth in the line of Australian Ralts, last October just prior to his new company moving into their premises in Woking. He told us that with the intention of making the new F3 a production car, it was kept to "a set of standards and the basic concept remains unchanged."

What he wanted to achieve was a car which would remain in similar form for a long time, only having to be changed through the natural progression of development. Tauranac looked around at his competitors and, coupled with his previous knowledge of F3 and racing, produced components on the car that would be beneficial to the competitor who only has one mechanic. In appearance the car is vastly different to the March for instance. The nose is about a foot shorter and is square and stubby. Besides being less vulnerable in traffic, it's also as efficient as it needs to be. Tauranac is also a firm believer of filling in the area between the wheels and has, on the Ralt, taken advantage of this as far as the regulations will allow.

The car looks quite large and squat but this is a little deceiving because the cockpit section has been designed to sweep upward so that, if required, a head fairing and tail section could be fitted. Tests on these items are to follow.

The latest bodywork was only completed last Thursday night and although the team intended to treat the meeting as a test session, they found themselves right among the quick boys after the first session and thereby daren't change anything for the race.

Larry Perkins in the distinctive new Ralt RT1 at Thruxton.



McLaren's F5000 for sale

Possibly still the most competitive F5000 car never to race was the McLaren M25, the F5000 version of Gordon Coppuck's highly successful M23 Grand Prix design.

Only one chassis was ever built and that was tested back in 1973 by John Nicholson and Denny Hulme. It proved highly competitive in testing and, for a curious reason, was bought by Brazilian Carlos Avallone.

However, the car was immediately impounded following a legal action undertaken by Yorkshire hillclimb driver David Hepworth who had lost a lot of money, along with several other people, when the proposed Brazilian sports car series, organised by Avallone, fell foul at the beginning of 1973.

Hepworth telephoned us last week to say that although this was only just the beginning, the M25 was now free of the law and, as it has now passed into his hands legally, it's his to sell.

Hepworth has decided to stay away from racing for a year but would dearly love to sell the car to "an ace" as he so rightly believes it still to be a winner. "It would mop up on both sides of the Atlantic" he said.

McLaren Cars have constantly received inquiries about the M25 but its only now that genuine terms can be agreed upon. However, Hepworth has stipulated to McLaren cars that they will be consulted as to whom the car shall be sold too. Mike Hailwood perhaps?

Andersson wins F3 Nurburgring

Tim Schenken and John Fitzpatrick were both competing at the Nurburgring over Easter in their respective sponsors' Porsche Carreras. On Sunday Schenken finished second behind Albricht Krebs (Schnitzer BMW Coupe). Helmut Kelleners (Carrera) was third having closed up dramatically towards the end when Tim started having handling problems. Toine Hezemans (Loos Carrera) was fourth and Clemens Schickentanz was fifth. Fitz had big gearbox problems and retired.

On Monday Rolf Stommelen won easily in one of the ex-works Capris while Schenken was again second after a big dice with Kelleners who eventually retired with gearbox trouble. Schickentanz was third, Hezemans fourth and Fitzpatrick fifth having come up from the back of the grid.

A massive Formula 3 entry took a great many heats to sort out and eventual aggregate winner was Conny Andersson (March-Toyota 753). Freddy Kottulinsky was having a one off outing in one of Obermoser's Jo Marquart penned Toj F3s fitted with the works BMW engine. This mill gave a great deal of trouble throughout and the Swede's best result was a fourth in one of the heats.

New F3 rule

Quite a significant change of the F3 engine regulations was passed quietly by the RAC recently. That is the permitted use of thick wall cylinder blocks.

This was the centre of much argument about six months before the regulations came into force at the beginning of 1974 when certain interested parties felt that pressure was being put on the RAC to outlaw such blocks by companies interested in pushing a different type of engine.

It was felt initially that the banning of the thick wall blocks would make it impossible to stretch the existing 1600 twin cam engines safely to the new 2000cc upper capacity limit. However, certain engine tuners did find a way round the regulations and some of the full 2-litre twin cams have proved to be very successful.

In view of the recent decision Holbay, who brought the change to our notice, have decided to undertake conversions of their 1600cc twin cam units to a full 2000cc. They point out that over 200 of these engines were built up in 1973 alone and powered the winning cars in seven European Championships.

Crawford's F1 crash

Apologies for not being able to expand on Jim Crawford's testing shunt in an F1 Lotus 72 last week but, as you may have guessed, we only received the information at the last minute. From the reports that we've heard, we gather it was a pretty horrendous accident from which Jim was extremely lucky to walk away.

It happened on the approach to Abbey at Silverstone. It is thought a tyre went down and the JPS Lotus, speeding along at around 160 mph, left the road on the outside of the track and piled into the Armco.

The barrier stayed firm thank goodness, but the car flipped several times as it was directed back but fortunately came to rest the right way up. Crawford unstrapped himself and climbed out. Just to show he was okay, Jim was sipping a nice cool pint with Colin Chapman and Ronnie Peterson at the *Green Man* an hour later.

The accident, which totalled the car usually used by Jacky Ickx, came a day after team manager Peter Warr suffered leg injuries in a road accident which we reported in last week's issue.

Just to show there may be something in the superstition that ill omens always happen in threes, Ronnie Peterson, the JPS team leader, suffered bruised knees as a result of his F2 shunt on Monday.

Scottish joy

Ingliston has been granted an extension of their racing activities for a further ten years, following an agreement reached recently between the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland and Scots Circuits Ltd. There is a further option on another 10 years.

Scots Circuits Ltd, who operate the neat little circuit on the outskirts of Edinburgh, envisage modifications to the circuit in the future which will enable the public to walk all round the track and plans are currently under consideration for an extension to the circuit, which would increase its length from 1.03 miles to 1.4 miles.

M20 by Brands

Work is to start this month on the M20 Motorway link between Swanley and Maidstone. It will pass close to the Paddock rear entrance to Brands Hatch, across the occasional camp site and will involve the re-location of the adjacent spectator car park and the construction of an entirely new, level (three cheers) paddock below the present one.

The substantial earth moving necessary to fill much of the present valley will commence any day now and will last until the winter.

While this work is under way, alternative paddock accommodation will sometimes be necessary opposite the circuit filling station. Diversionary traffic routes will also be used.

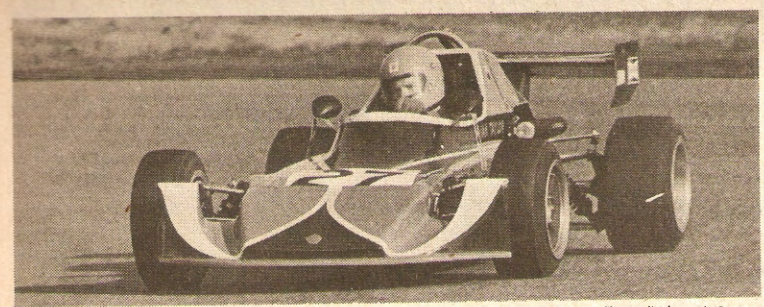
The circuit itself and the main A20 road will be unaffected.

When the new road is completed, in about three years' time, access points for Brands will be Swanley and Wrotham while the A20 will be in a much improved position to handle the traffic.

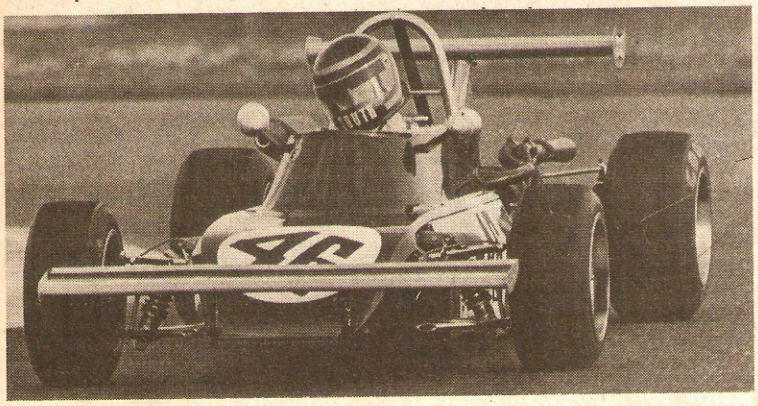
● There's only one race meeting on in England this weekend, the BARC (SE) Centre's six race Clubmans meeting at Lydden.

Races cater for FFs, Clubmen's Supersports, Modsports, FVs, special saloons and *libre* cars. First race starts at 2 pm.

● Helmut Marko, the former BRM Grand Prix driver who now holds a worthwhile position in Ford Austria, tells us that there will be a Ford Escort Sport (*nee* Mexico) race supporting this year's Austrian Grand Prix and ten British drivers will be invited to compete.



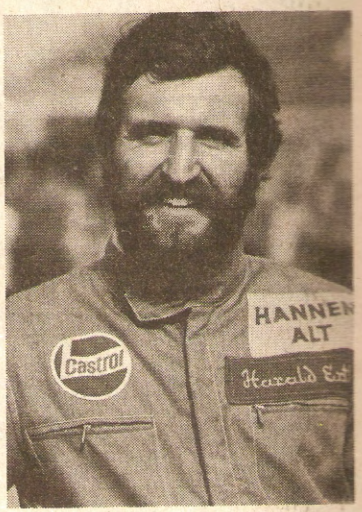
Formula 3 debuts at Thruxton for Ian Taylor in the new works GRD 375 (above) and Stephen South's attractive Ray. They finished third and sixth respectively.



Jaussaud to join Ertl for F2

Austrian driver Harald Ertl appeared at Thruxton last weekend in a bit of a rush, having only just been able to get his ex-Baty Chevron B27 F2 car finished in time for practice. Consequently, most of the meeting was spent sorting out the car.

However, Ertl told us that it looks as if he will have a brand new F2 B29 fairly soon which he will share with Frenchman Jean-Pierre Jaussaud. The car is expected to be run under the guidance of American Chevron importer Fred Opert who is currently in Europe looking after the young Mexican driver Hector Rebaque who is receiving tremendous morale-boosting and financial support from Cafe Mexicano, a government-owned company who are backing their young hopeful in Europe rather like Cap Meat do in Argentina for Carlos Reutemann and Cafe Brasil for Emerson Fittipaldi and Carlos Pace.



Harold Ertl – new car.

● The official crowd attendance put out by the BARC on Tuesday for the Thruxton Easter race meeting last Monday was 18,000.

● Simon Kirkby, who originally intended to go F3 this year, has decided to move into SuperVee instead. He recently ordered a new Super Nova and Heidegger engine.

Alpine again?

The turbocharged Alpine-Renault, winner of the last round at Mugello a fortnight ago driven by the French pairing of Gerard Larrousse and Jean-Pierre Jabouille, will take to the Dijon-Prenois track this weekend with the same overall intention. Having beaten the Italian Alfa Romeos (albeit German financed and run) on Italian soil, the Alpine crew will be hoping for a French victory in France. What is more, with the car running on Michelin radial racing tyres, the effort is even more nationalistic.

The Alfas run by Willi Kauhsen's team will once again be challenging hard with probably driver pairings of Henri Pescarolo/Derek Bell and Arturo Merzario/Jacky Ickx.

Also on hand will be at least three of the turbo Porsche 908/4s for their regular driver pairings while Georg Loos will obviously be hoping his recently acquired Gulf Mirages last a little longer than just one lap.

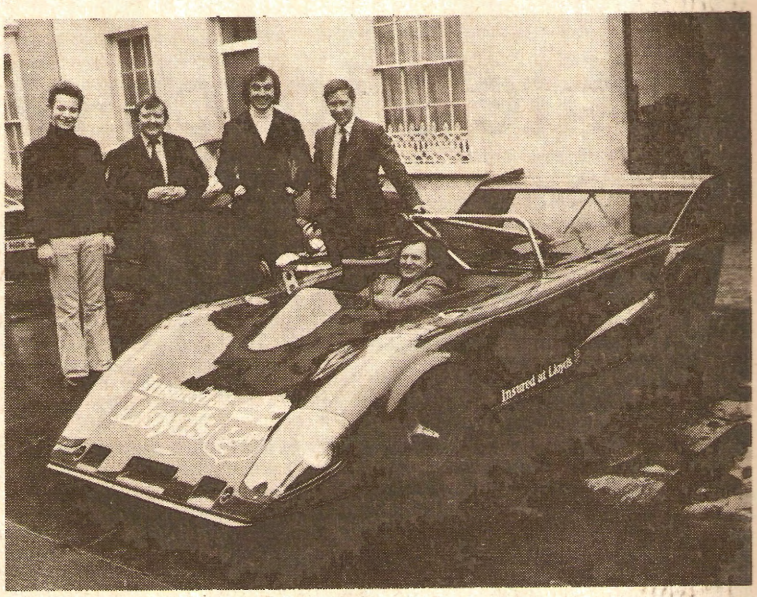
● On sale for the first time last weekend was the Brands Hatch Souvenir History book which has recently been prepared by Mike Kettlewell. The book celebrates the 25th Anniversary of the circuit which is attained next month.

Written and produced in typical Kettlewell easy-and-enjoyable-to-read style it traces the circuit's progress from the original 1 mile anti-clockwise circuit through to the current day club and GP circuits. The 48 pages are heavily illustrated in colour and black and white.

The history is on sale at Brands Hatch or by post at 50p (incl P&P). Cheques and Postal Orders should be sent to Souvenir History and Brands Hatch Circuit Ltd, Fawkham, near Dartford, Kent DA3 8NG.

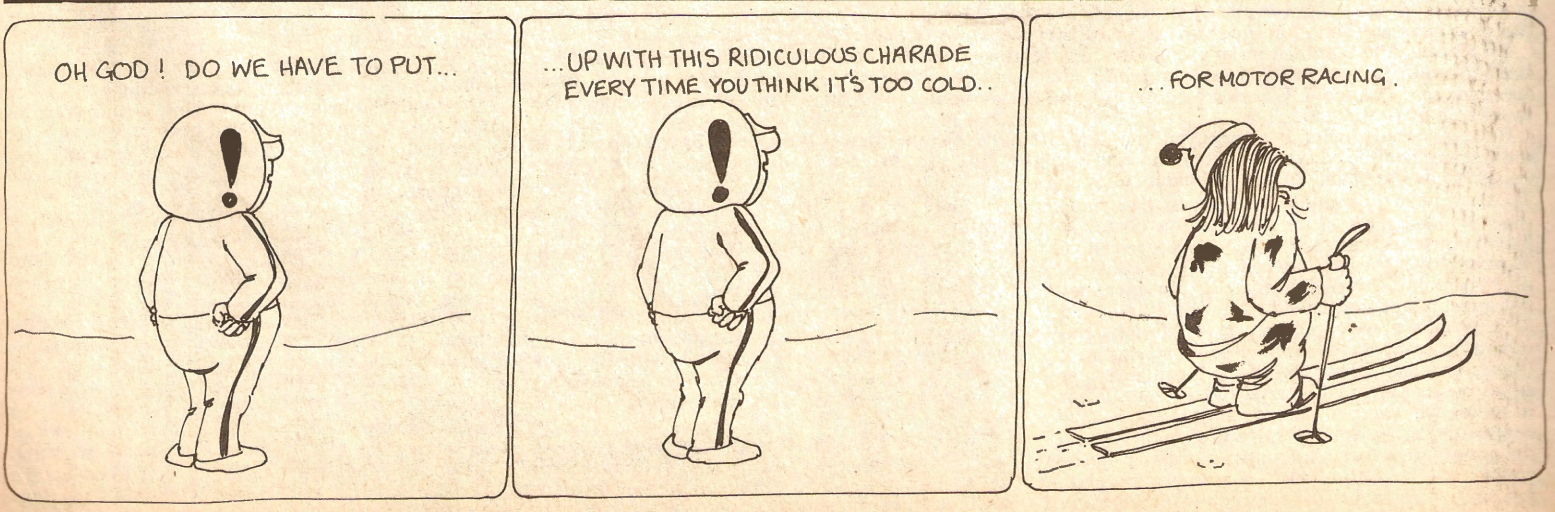
● Jo Raminez, the former Elf Tyrrell mechanic who now is employed as crew chief on the Richard Divila-designed Fittipaldi Copersucar Grand Prix car, phoned us last week to inform one and all that their current address in England is the old ex-Chris Amon premises at 47, Gosbrook Road, Caversham, near Reading, Berks. Tel: Reading 470620.

Five into one Lola T294 will go. Tony Birchenough sits in his sportscar which is now sponsored by Lloyds and will be driven on occasions by, from left to right, Belgian Claude Crespin, "Baked Bean," Ian Harrower and Brian Joscylene.

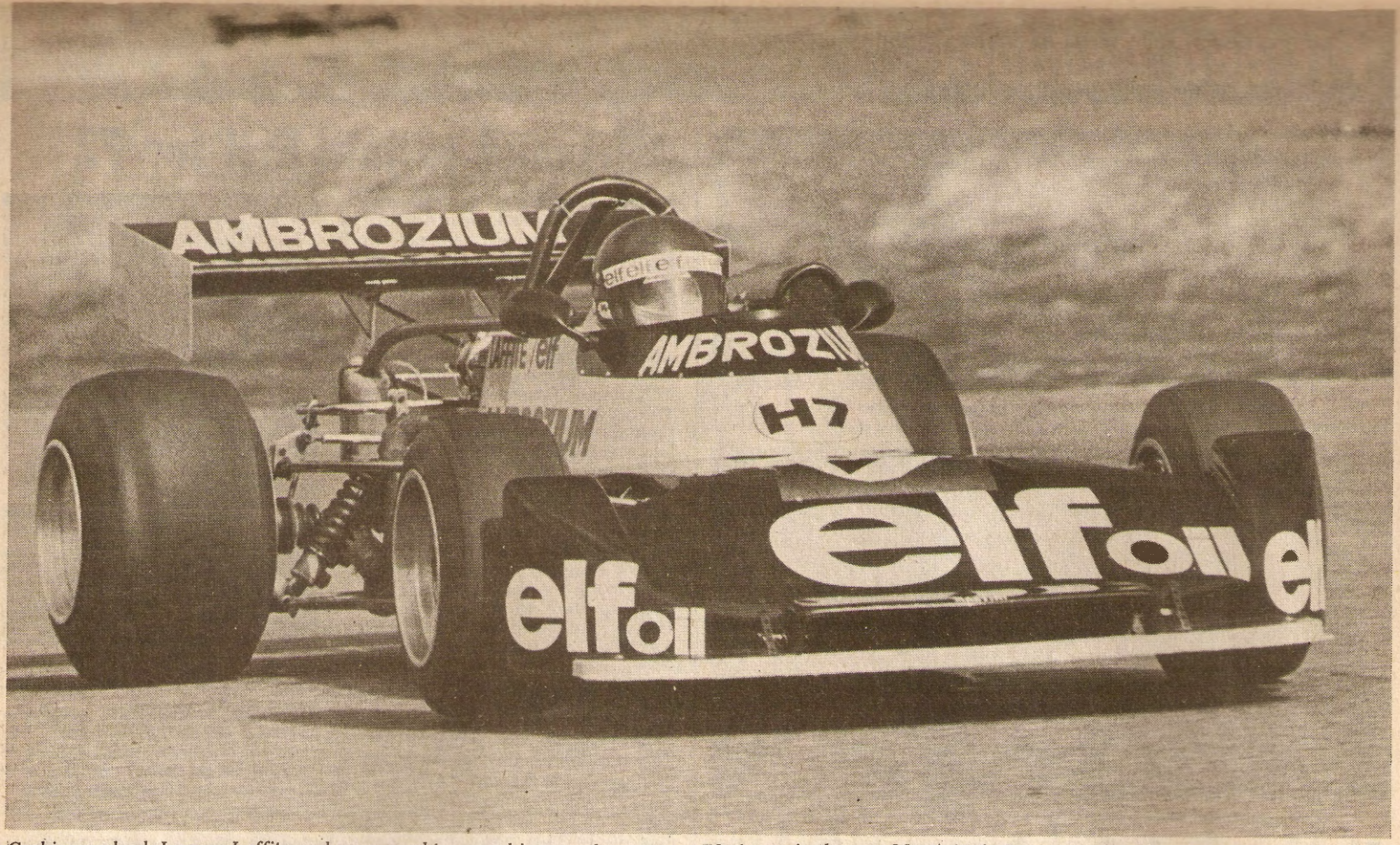


CATCHPOLE

By Barry Foley



© Autosport 1975



Cocking a wheel, Jacques Laffite rushes onward to score his second successive F2 victory in the new Martini Mk16.

THRUXTON

Laffite's touch of class

By CHRIS WITTY **Photos by DAVID WINTER**

He came, he saw, he conquered. Thruxton belonged to Jacques Laffite last weekend. The little Frenchman totally dominated the Wella Trophy meeting in his superbly constructed French-built Martini Mk 16 and powered by one of Joseph Schnizter's latest BMW engines. It was the second win in a row for the Laffite/Martini combo, the pair of them having scored a maximum in Portugal three weeks previously.

Even with the likes of Ronnie Peterson, Hans Stuck, and Vittoria Brambilla on hand in their latest March-BMWs, Laffite blew them all off in convincing style. He annexed pole position having been quickest in both sessions. He led the first half of the two part race from start to finish, shared a new circuit lap record despite an inoperative clutch and cheekily played with the opposition in the second part, playing it safe and finishing third.

There was no answer to the superb handling of the French car around the ultra fast Hampshire circuit. The only men who came close to challenging Laffite's supremacy were Brambilla and Britain's Brian Henton, who like Brambilla, was debuting a brand new and untested March, only this one running with a Brian Hart Ford BDA engine. Another Ford engine user, who was to prove a revelation over the weekend, was American Ted Wentz having his first ever F2 race in his converted Formula Atlantic Lola T360B. He proved every bit a front runner and diced merrily in company with the likes of Brambilla, Henton and the works Marches of Michel Leclere and Patrick Tambay, the latter eventually coming through the rigours of the two-part event to claim second place.

As for superstars Ronnie Peterson and Hans Stuck, it just wasn't their weekend. Stuck had a poor, drama fraught, practice and during the race suffered a high speed puncture which eventually broke his suspension. As for Peterson, he spun and it was during his climb back up through the field that he became involved in a huge seven car pile up at the chicane, caused when an Atlantic car spun and stalled. Four Marches were written off in the shunt and a further one badly damaged.

For Henton and Wentz, it wasn't to be their day of glory for when both looked secure for a second and third overall, Henton suffered tyre problems and a moment, which was caused by a wrongly fitted oversized rear rim, while Wentz, holed his rad and consequently blew the engine while avoiding a high speed spin by Brambilla.

It was generally hailed as an excellent meeting although the opinion was it may well have been an even better event had the F2 race been just one long straight fight. But then the Wella-sponsored car of Wentz wouldn't have been able to last the distance . . .

The European Formula 2 contingent had more than doubled itself since the opening round at Estoril three weeks ago when they arrived at Thruxton over the Easter weekend. It was the first time Formula 2 cars had raced in Britain since they last appeared at the airfield circuit back in Easter 1973. It was a welcome return. Their presence served to reflect the tremendous strength in character which exists within the formula. It was an impressive array of international talent. What is more, we were at last getting back to the confrontation between the Grand Prix driver and the young pretender. Full marks and much of the credit must go to the BARC, the organising club, for one, acquiring sufficient sponsorship and backing for the event from the Wella hair cosmetic concern, and second, making available sufficient funds in order to attract the likes of people such as Ronnie Peterson.

The situation of the Thruxton circuit makes it liable to the forces of nature. Coupled with its dogged fight for planning permission, the character of the venue is indeed a little sparse. The enthusiasm generated by those who believe in its very existence more than make up for such a handicap.

The last F2 race at Thruxton gave us a race of many a changing fortune. It was full of controversy, highlighted by the much publicised incident at the chicane near the end between Gerry Birrell's Chevron and Mike Beuttler's March. Previous to that, we'd seen a superb race between Ronnie Peterson and Graham Hill back in 1971, a five-car debacle in 1972 for which Peterson's dominance served merely to mark his unequalled superiority. It is Peterson, the tremendously popular Swedish Grand Prix star, whom the BARC have always seen fit to include in their race. Prior to that it was always Jochen Rindt. It's a pity they never graced the track together at Thruxton.

ENTRY

Consequently it was no surprise to see Ronnie Peterson at the head of a very impressive entry list. Last minute wheelings and dealings had seen the BARC and March Engineering come to terms and from that, a car was provided by a brand new team making its F2 debut. It was, in fact, a lot of old faces moulded into new surroundings.

The team was run by Ron Dennis, the former Cooper and Brabham mechanic who was so actively involved in the Rondel Racing set-up two years ago and who ran those desperately slow Ecuadorians in a pair of Marlboro-backed F2 Surtees TS15As last year. He has a rather more competitive equipe this time which should benefit from his tremendous experience in F2.

Peterson was in a brand new chassis which had only just been completed by the factory and ran with a works Paul Rosche-prepared BMW engine under the banner of Project 3. The car was unsponsored and will be handled by March team-leader Vittorio Brambilla in future.

The second car, which is sponsored by Scaini, the Italian equivalent of Lucas, is due to be driven by Italian F3 driver Sandro Cinotti on occasions but for Thruxton, terms had been agreed to have Brambilla drive it. Like Ronnie's it was brand new but ran with one of Joseph Schnitzer's latest BMW engines.

Brambilla's last outing was at Vallelunga late last year in one of the Brian Lewis March-BMWs. He is a tremendous competitor and very underrated. Many regard him as a superb test driver and this was to show later on.

With Peterson and Brambilla taking part, this meant that the actual March works team were pushed to full stretch. Seemingly not content with just handling their Elf-backed cars for Michel Leclere and Patrick Tambay, a further third car was added to the charge of the men from Bicester. It was a welcome return for Hans-Joachim Stuck in what was a familiar sight last year — an orange Jagermeister-backed 752-BMW. Stuck's car was in fact the works test car which Leclere had used

at Estoril. Leclere had Tambay's car while Patrick had a new one and all three had the 3in longer wheelbase first seen in Portugal.

Due to the vast build programme which had been going on at the factory trying to get cars ready for this race, no one had been able to get out to conduct any testing. Was this to prove an Achilles heel?

Also under works supervision, making a grand total of six cars, was Brian Henton who was to have his first race in his brand new Ford-engined 752. Having won everything that was expected of him in their works F3 car last year, Henton found himself in a dire predicament for this season., March couldn't offer him a car with which to go into F2 with as they were already committed to Elf. However, the irrepressible March sales manager Sandro Anglieri created Henton's entire deal more or less.

The chassis was completed the night before practice and consequently hadn't turned a wheel. The choice to use one of Brian Hart's full 2-litre alloy-blocked Ford BDA engines was both an interesting and economical exercise. The engine wasn't a new one, but it possesses all of the Harlow engine builder's expertise.

The inclusion of the alloy-block unit saves about 35 lb in weight over the BMW engine. It was the first serious attempt of halting the German engine domination since Team Surtees and Alpine in 1973.

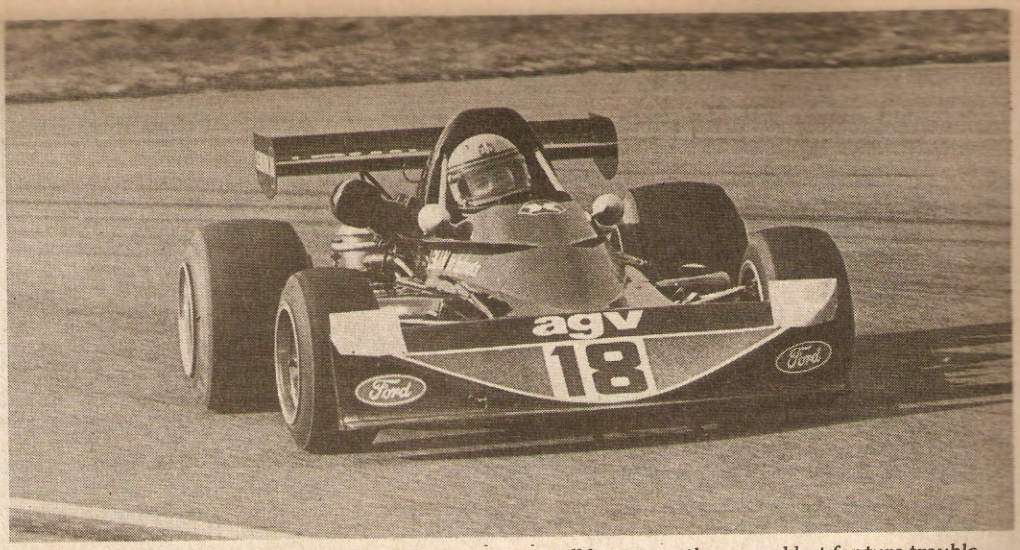
Henton's car received support from AGV, the Italian crash helmet manufacturers and also Lexan, a plastics subsidiary of General Electric. Those who remember the Chaparral with the "sucker" system will recall the name.

With so many cars present, everyone March could spare was on hand to assist. Together with all the customer cars, it was a tiring task but, in view of the economic crises whch have afffected the racing car sales market in the last 18 months, it's no wonder a spectating Frank Williams just had to congratulate the ever beaming Max Mosley after having seen the entry list, in AUTOSPORT of course.

The Italians who'd been down at Estoril all arrived and each had the same equipment. There were, however, two additions and a further two alterations. Dullio Truffo had left his March 742 at home and the Osella team had finished their second FA2 chassis for him as they had promised. It was a gleaming red and alongside Giorgio Francia's original yellow prototype, they both looked immaculate. The only addition to the BMW powered cars since Portugal was a new rear wing and a resculptured nose with a longer lip to aid downforce.

Garbriele Serblin and Alberto Colombo both had their Trivellato-run March BMW's, Colombo's car having had a new monocoque after his Estoril practice shunt.

Like the two above, Lamberto Leoni, the Formula Italia champion, and Giancarlo Martini had their usual Scuderia del Passetore-entered Everest-backed 752-BMWs. The two new additions were in fact two of last years 742 chassis' for the hard charging Cosimo Turizio and former F3 ace Carlo Giorgio. Both had appeared spasmodically last year in these same cars, Giorgio



Brian Henton finished second in the first heat and may well have won the second but for tyre trouble.

persevering with the F2 version of the Ford Pinto ohc engine developed by Holbay. The unit, which had given him a lot of headaches last year, was still fitted in the car. They say perseverance pays.

Giorgio was the only driver to persist with an old style open face helmet. They look really strange these days. Funny how times change.

Of all the Italian's present, only Brambilla and Giorgio had seen the circuit before.

Of the private single car teams that are expected to pose a threat to the works supremacy at some stage this year, Thruxton saw another new addition in the form of Masami Kuwashima, the fiery little Japanese driver who tried so hard last year, showed flashes of talent, but never quite had the results to show for it.

For his second season of F2, this former British F3 graduate was once again sticking to the March chassis and, once again, his neat little set-up was run by the eagle eyed Roy Kennedy. He's so quick to incorporate the latest works tweaks on the car, like lengthening the wheelbase, that one day the works cars will run with no air in the tyres in order to pare off excess weight! Careful Roy.

Although David Purley had given the car a shakedown run, Masami hadn't tried the 752, which was running one of the Ken Horton prepared ex-Team Harper BMW engines, before practice.

After showing initial promise in Portugal, it was good to see Hans Binder present, once again with Helmut Marko in attendance. Like many of the other March runners, it was down to experimenting with spring rates, roll-bars and ride height, there being no opportunity to test the cars. Binder's car now had the latest Schnitzer BeeEm installed but he, like all the March 752 runners, was to suffer from a strong handling phenomenon that inflicted itself upon the cars during practice.

Willi Deutsch appeared with his Schnitzer-propelled 752 as did Swiss Jo Vonlanthen, although his particular car was brand new and unraced, his old model having been sold to a Swiss hillclimber. Another Swiss newcomer in a brand new March 752-BMW was Marcus Hotz, patron, creator and sometime driver of the Horag Formula Super Vee. Hotz is 32 years old and comes from the north east of Switzerland where he has just become the Swiss March importer. We're told he's quite quick and has beaten Vonlanthen's F2 car in his FSV on occasions at local races held at Dijon.

Also in a newly refurbished March was rapid Formula Atlantic driver Ray Mallock, this being an Atlantic tub fitted with a Swindon Engines Ford Cosworth BDG engine and run by the wealthy band of clubmen's drivers who call themselves Team Ardmore.

Mallock had tested the car in F2 trim beforehand although he did race it a few weeks ago in Atlantic trim at Brands. It would be Ray's first appearance in F2 although his father, Arthur, creator of the infamous Mallock U2s, last raced one of his unique front engined cars back at Crystal Palace F2 meet in 1967. The torque of the engine on that day transmitted through the BMC solid rear axle bent the radius arms as the Major left the grid!

One team that looked very smart and impressive in the paddock was the re-emergence of Bang and Olufsen, the Danish hi-fi specialists, in motor racing and, for that matter, Formula 2. This year, as we've already said, the team is being run entirely for Belgian drivers and run, very wisely, by Brian Lewis Racing in Britain. They were fortunate in being able to give both the cars and drivers a shakedown run prior to Thruxton's practice. The lead car was being handled by "veteran" campaigner Claude Bourgoignie while the young tubby and inexperienced Bernard de Dryver opted for a jump into the deep end and decided to pedal the second car. Both had BMW engines prepared by Dr Peter Schrick, the German camshaft expert.

The man who nearly caused the big upset in Estoril, Swiss Loris Kessel, was also present with his Jean-Claude Favre-owned 742-BMW as was Jorg Siegrist's ex-Laffite 742-BMW. These completed the vast number of March runners.

Perhaps their greatest challenge was to come from Jacques Laffite's fleet Martini Mk16 or Jean-Pierre Jabouille's neat Elf 2J. As in Portugal, both ran with Schnitzer BMW engines.

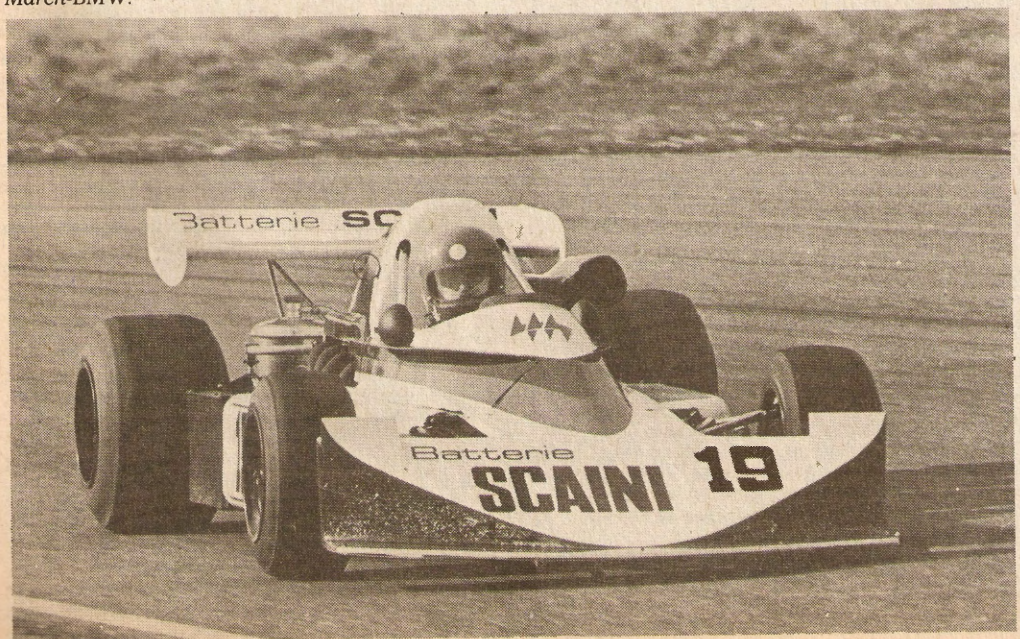
Laffite had in fact managed to carry out some testing in between races at Ricard and also at Magny-Cours, the team's base, late last week when the latest engine was installed. Save for a slightly reprofiled nose, the car was more or less unchanged from its winning trim last time out.

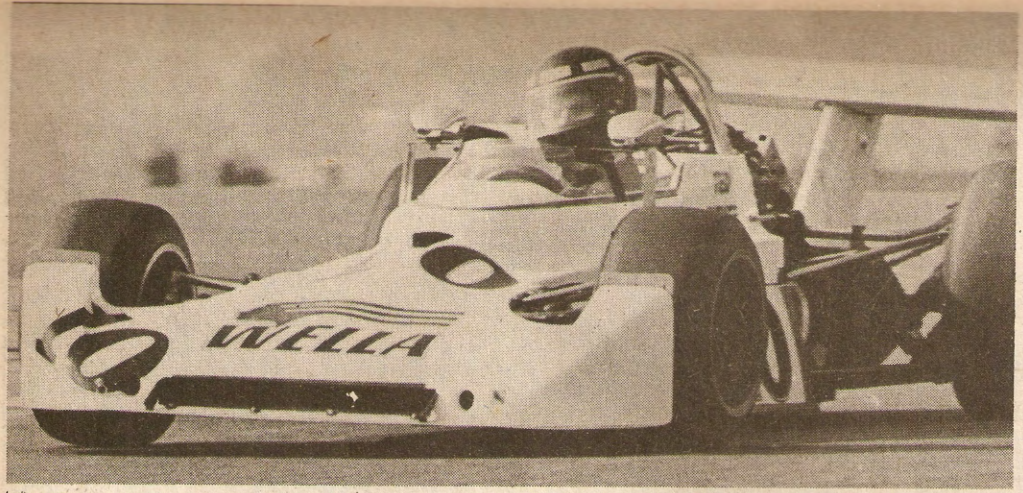
Jean-Pierre Jabouille brought along his new car which, unlike Laffite, hadn't had a chance to exercise itself in the meantime, much though Jean-Pierre would have liked to have been able to.

A second car was brought along for Gerard Larrousse to drive, this being Jabouille's Alpine A367 from last year (*nee* Elf 2) which had been brought up to this year's specification and repainted the team's pleasant shade of yellow as Larrousse's new 2J won't be completed until after Hockenheim. Power predictably came from a Schnitzer BMW and this would be Larrousse's first taste of F2.

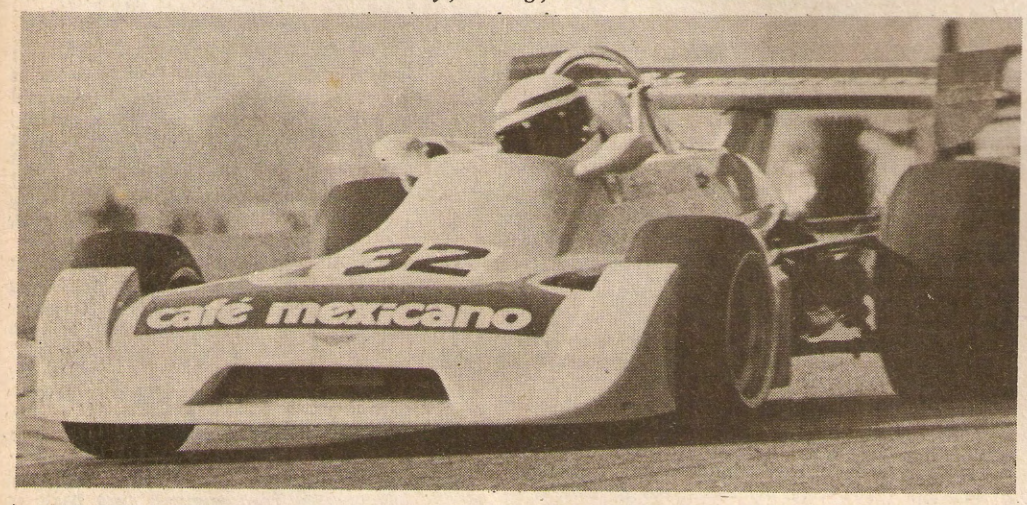
Try though they might, the organisers failed to make available a suitably competitive Chevron for either James Hunt or Tom Pryce. Various ideas were thought of, including preparing one of the

Vittorio Brambilla was delayed in the first heat but won the second part in his brand new Scaini March-BMW.





Ted Wentz (above) went extremely well in his converted Atlantic Lola while Hector Rebaque (below) fulfilled the promise he'd shown in Estoril by finishing fourth in his Chevron B29.



Team Harper cars, currently about to be sold, but all came to nought. Therefore it was a rather mediocre offering from Bolton in the face of such stiff opposition and considering what they nearly achieved two years ago.

Following his promise shown three weeks earlier, Mexican Hector Rebaque was having another crack in his Fred Opert-entered Chevron B29-Hart Ford BDA.

If anyone was going to put one of Derek Bennett's cars up towards the front, then possibly Austrian Harald Ertl, who won the Tourist Trophy with Derek Bell two years ago in a G2 Schnitzer BMW CSL, would be the man.

Ertl purchased the ex-Tom Pryce/Baty B27 late last year but failed to make the grid at Hockenheim in September. He nearly didn't make it to Thruxton either for it was a rush job getting the actual car ready, there being a last minute change of plans which necessitated the removing of a Schnizter engine for the conventional BMW unit.

The two Chrysler-engined French ROC Cars failed to appear, the FIA refusing to grant their engines homologation papers until April 1. A problem had arisen some weeks ago over the legality, or rather, the way the cylinder head was machined. Silly delaying tactics in Paris cost the team and Chrysler a month, the original schedule having been set for March 1.

Completing a trio of Chevrons was Peter Williams in his new Coin Weekly Atlantic B29, still running with a 1600 cc Ford BDA. Seems the penny has yet to drop.

Last, but certainly not least, was another Formula Atlantic man, only this one had taken the step of preparing for the Thruxton race a little more seriously. He *had* to. He is sponsored by the meeting's sponsors!

It's been quite a few weeks since American Ted Wentz has had his Wella-backed Lola T360B converted to F2 spec. It turned out to be a neat job undertaken at Maurice Gomm's workshops. What was even more pleasing was to see this neat little team put their faith in the Ford engine and this happened to be one of John Dunn's Swindon Ford Cosworth BDGs.

Wentz's rise has been more or less down to Wella's financial marriage to him ever since he won their Formula Ford championship back in 1973 and an Atlantic car as the prize. He knows Thruxton well and it suits his Lola well, this being underlined by last season's BBC televised Atlantic race last November when he debuted the car.

PRACTICE

Two sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, both totalling three hours, a familiar Thruxton pattern, would determine just who had gathered it altogether at the right time. One question was to be answered before the day was out and that was how true had been Estoril as a pointer to the success and failures in this year's championship.

As a race track, the 2.4-miles of Thruxton, set out around the perimeter track of the airfield, are all predominantly right handers. What sorts the men out from the boys, or rather the well sorted cars from the others, are the superb fast sweeps out around the back. It's here that the tenths are won or lost. Some reckon it's as much as whole seconds. Because it is situated on the far side of the circuit, well away from all the hustle and bustle, no one really knows what goes on. The familiar cry in the pits is "are you taking the back flat?" It's a great confidence trick. A superb psyche on your opponent. Only the marshals who brave the climatic conditions get the benefit witnessing a truly superb sight, watching these low slung projectiles hurtling by, every joint straining, the outer coil springs moulding into one solid mass, the driver's neck muscles flexing under the G-forces, the engine note solid, firm and barking at maximum revs.

It's part of Thruxton's character this "back" section. Even as long ago as 1969, in the halcyon days of Rindt, to take the back flat was almost unbelievable, but Jochen did it. Nowadays it's still *the* thing to do. It hurts and deflates one's ego to smile and shake your head in reply to a driver's claim that he's not "nailing his foot to the board." Lap times have always been part of Thruxton's charm. More to the point they're an enigma and this year showed just why.

We haven't had F2 cars there for two years. The last time they came, three drivers (Jean-Pierre Jarier, Carlos Pace and Jacques Coulon) left the record at 1m 11.2s. This was in reply to Patrick Depailler's pole winning time in a Hart BDA-powered Alpine at 1m 11.0s, although the conditions weren't exactly ideal. The big lumbering F5000 have used their extra horsepower to lower the outright record to 1m 11.0s while Vern Schuppan has actually held pole on 1m 10.2s in his Lola T332. Where does all this leave us you may ask? Well, after practice it was noticed that only three drivers had got below all those times listed above. What is more, in 1973 Jarier reckoned that 1m 9.5s was on then (he didn't do it mind you) and even as far back as 1972, Ronnie Peterson in his works Cosworth BDF-powered March 722 recorded 1m 10.8s, admittedly on qualifying rubber, but he apparently wasn't taking the back flat.

In trying to analyse the situation by looking at the grid, it seems that an awful lot of people were well off the pace.

What is more embarrassing is the fact that the 1600 cc Formula Atlantic record is 1m 13.4s. It's fair to say those cars are much lighter (120 lbs approx) and that can be as much as 1s a lap advantage, but it served only to encourage several Atlantic middle order runners, who were spectating, that they were about to blow off Peterson and the likes.

One of the first priorities the teams must have had to do first thing on Saturday morning was to try and operate in near freezing conditions. The heavy snow showers that had strafed the country fortunately had missed Thruxton but there was a bitter nip in the air. In some cases people found their engines icing up and you could actually see the ice forming down the injection trumpets while the engine was being run. Tyres, so critical for any sort of lap time, also have little chance of reaching their optimum under such conditions.

Practice belonged to two people, certainly to start with. They were to be joined by one other and thus the front row was formed, curiously out of reach of their pursuers.

Brambilla and Laffite led the way during the morning, both the Italian and the Frenchman slipping their cars around the Hampshire countryside in 1m 11.7s. It was still some way off the record, but at least it was a foretaste of what they had to offer a few hours later. Hard on their heels came no less than two Ford powered cars in the form of Brian Henton and, almost unbelievably, Ted Wentz. Immediately, people began to think of "converted Atlantic car" and "weight limits." Strangely, all the above mentioned men improved later on and they were to form at least four fifths of the first two rows.

Peterson led the rest on 1m 12.2s, an uncharacteristic position for a man with his reputation. Maybe something was wrong? There was. It was a gradual problem, and a problem that seemed to affect virtually all the quicker March runners.

It seemed to be either vast oversteer coupled with too much understeer on the slower corners.

It caught Ronnie out around the back and having lost its nose splitter, the black March gyrated sufficiently violently enough to cause a hurried blue replacement section to be fitted for the afternoon. Stuck was another driver expected to be circulating within the record as if he were standing on his head. The Jagermeister car was destined to only complete several laps before the spark box failed out on the circuit, delaying the German somewhat before the car was rectified. He recorded 1m 12.3s, a time that he surprisingly failed to improve upon. It was also equalled by Jabouille while further back Tambay found himself on a par with Atlantic times as did Binder. For Mallock, it was the start of a (hoped for) workmanlike performance. He got down to 1m 13.7s, slower in fact than he's done with his Atlantic Brabham, but a serious petrol leak in the second session stunted his progress.

Rebaque, again threatening with more to come, headed Serblin, Kuwashima and Francia while poor Leclere, having survived a jammed throttle (full open) by spinning his car purposely to slow it down and stopping mere inches from the Armco, found himself in the 15s and very, very, apprehensive about the whole thing.

One theory thrown up by the March handling malady was a suggestion that the front roll bar might be flexing thus causing understeer at least. There would be even more scratching of heads on the 'morrow.

The tyre situation was as it had been in Estoril with the International Tire Service providing Goodyear rubber of G50 (softer) and G51 (harder and suggested race wear) compounds. Although several people were to try the softer tyre in order that it would warm up quickly in the cold conditions, many stuck to the recommended G51s. The front row times were to be set on this type of rubber, even though several people spoke begrudgingly of Peterson and Laffite, to name but two, using special qualifying tyres. It was categorically denied by the tyre personnel present. It was an Estoril trick being played again, only this time Laffite wasn't the accuser.

The reason was simple. Laffite was on pole by 4.30 pm on Saturday afternoon. In a smooth and unruffled style, the black and yellow Martini sped almost innocently around the circuit to push deep

into, and eventually under, all the best times ever recorded to post 1m 10.1s, an average speed of 121 mph.

A similar style was adopted by both Brambilla and Henton who, unlike the rest, seemed to be using their vast testing record in March cars to the full. As if to prove that the long wheelbase tweak on the works cars was irrelevant, certainly at Thruxton, they chased hard after the Martini. It looked initially as if Henton, his Ford sounding beautifully crisp as his car skated nervously through the 150 mph sweeps, would nestle in the middle of the front rank but Vittorio had other ideas and towards the end, as both circulated for the real quickie (a sub 70s lap) like wolves for sheep, "Superhen" came out on the wrong side of a tenth, even though he said he'd done the time on three separate occasions. A Ford on the front row.

Wentz shaved another tenth off in continuence of his "rising to the occasion." He was dispelling first fears of "looking like an accident waiting to happen." However, much though credit must go to Wentz, the Lola and Ford, Jabouille asked just that little bit more from his Elf to record the same time (albeit first) and report that the car was "fantastic."

His team-mate Larrousse was having a total reversal of fortune. The car had only just been completed in time and when the mechanics started it up in the paddock at Thruxton, they hadn't added sufficient fuel and it was suspected that some grit had got into the fuel system. Consequently the car refused to start and Gerard failed to go out. It was but a little better in the afternoon. The car started and ran. Well, actually it spluttered around for four laps before Gerard called it a day and the car wheeled back into the transporter, the mechanics burbling something about fuel pressure and electrics.

Stuck was another of the fancied runners in trouble again. This time his ill luck struck on his first lap when, having had new brake pads fitted, they expanded under heat and locked on while out on the circuit. Stuck lost further time before resuming. Then on his second lap, the new pads jammed on again. This time he stayed put on the circuit for good and he wasn't very pleased, justifiably so.

Peterson tried and tried and tried. The March would rush up to the chicane in a cloud of locked wheels and bounce through off the kerbs as Superswede tried for that magic lap. But it just wasn't to happen. He'd even spin wildly in his quest for the optimum. He was trying harder than the car would allow. Perhaps too hard for he failed to improve on his earlier time by 0.1s.

Leclere however fared a lot better and he pushed his works car ahead of Peterson and Stuck with a hard earned effort. It was Tambay's turn to look dismayed for although he improved, it wasn't really sufficient. Also beginning to force their way upward were, after a scheduled engine change between sessions, Serbin and Kuwashima. The latter ought to be thankful for being able to avoid Turizio whose car appeared to lose a wheel as he hopped over the tricky Church Curve out around the back and disappeared off into the undergrowth.

Brian Henton March-Ford 752/U1P 1m 10.4s		Vittorio Brambilla March-BMW 752/17 1m10.3s		Jacques Laffite Martini-BMW Mk16/1 1m 10.1s
	Ted Wentz Lola-Ford T360B/HU7 1m 11.9s		Jean-Pierre Jabouille Elf-BMW 2J/01 1m 11.9s	
Hans Stuck March-BMW 752/9 1m 12.3s		Ronnie Peterson March-BMW 752/18 1m 12.2s		Michel Leclere March-BMW 752/12 1m 12.0s
	Gabriele Serblin March-BMW 752/4 1m 12.7s		Patrick Tambay March-BMW 752/19 1m 12.4s	
Alberto Colombo March-BMW 752/1 1m 13.2s		Hans Binder March-BMW 752/10 1m 13.0s		Masami Kuwashima March-BMW 752/— 1m 12.9s
	Giancarlo Martini March-BMW 752/15 1m 13.5s		Giorgio Francia Osella-BMW FA/01 1m 13.3s	
Markus Hotz March-BMW 752/15 1m 13.9s		Hector Rebaque Chevron-Ford B29/3 1m 13.8s		Ray Mallock March-Ford 75B/U1 1m 13.7s
	Jo Vonlanthen March-BMW 752/16 1m 14.1s		Duilio Truffo Osella-BMW FA/02 1m 13.9s	
Willi Deutsch March-BMW 752/13 1m 14.7s		Lamberto Leoni March-BMW 752/3 1m 14.3s		Loris Kessel March-BMW 742/27 1m 14.3s
	Harald Ertl Chevron-BMW B27/12 1m 15.7s		Claude Bourgoignie March-BMW 752/14 1m 15.2s	
Bernard de Dryver March-BMW 752/8 1m 16.7s		Jorg Siegrist March-BMW 742/24 1m 16.6s		Carlo Giorgio March-Ford 742/28 1m 16.4s
	Peter Williams Chevron-Ford B29/17 1m 17.7s		Cosimo Turizio March-BMW 742/22 1m 17.6s	
				Gerard Larrousse Elf-BMW 2/A367 1m 37.7s*

* did not start

The rest came at intervals, each time reflecting some particular tale of woe. Of those that were expected to improve quite significantly, but didn't, there were Binder, Mallock and Rebaque, the latter's session cut short by a broken water pump belt.

HEAT 1

Sunday may well have been a day of rest for the drivers but for many of the teams, and that meant the mechanics, it was a day of decision. An opportunity to work out those lacking tenths by theory and slide rules. It was also an ideal opportunity for several teams to change engines, the most notable being both the works Marches. Any thought of some of the fancied runners playing around with tyre compounds and running a slightly softer tyre on one corner was quickly dispelled by the distinct lack of the softer rubber. Thus everyone that mattered opted for the regular race wear.

A pleasing crowd had gathered under the warm spring sunshine which had made Saturday's freezing temperatures seem a long way off.

As the field assembled on the grid, there was a last minute panic around Brambilla's car to fix a cracked injector pipe but all was soon well and as the flag whipped down, Laffite strove hard to force the Martini into the first turn as Brambilla came barreling across. Jabouille too had made a neat start from the second rank to push out Wentz while Henton hadn't really got it all together and lay in 6th place as the field completed the first lap, the Wella Lola having now reclaimed third place. Leclere was also well in touch as was Stuck.

However, the unfortunate German just wasn't having any luck whatsoever. Apparently he felt a puncture develop on his fifth lap when in sixth place. He was just contemplating coming into the pits when the tyre let go around the back. "I think I spun one, two, three, maybe four times. Peterson went past me one way and Tambay another." The force of the wind had also dislodged his visor but he hadn't hit anything fortunately. He pitted and had a new wheel fitted but, unbeknowingly to anyone the bottom wishbone had been nearly worn through as Stuck limped back from his spin. Fortunately Hans gave the car a real bootful on leaving the pit road and the rear suspension promptly broke. "I'm glad it happened there and not out around the back" mused the lanky German afterwards.

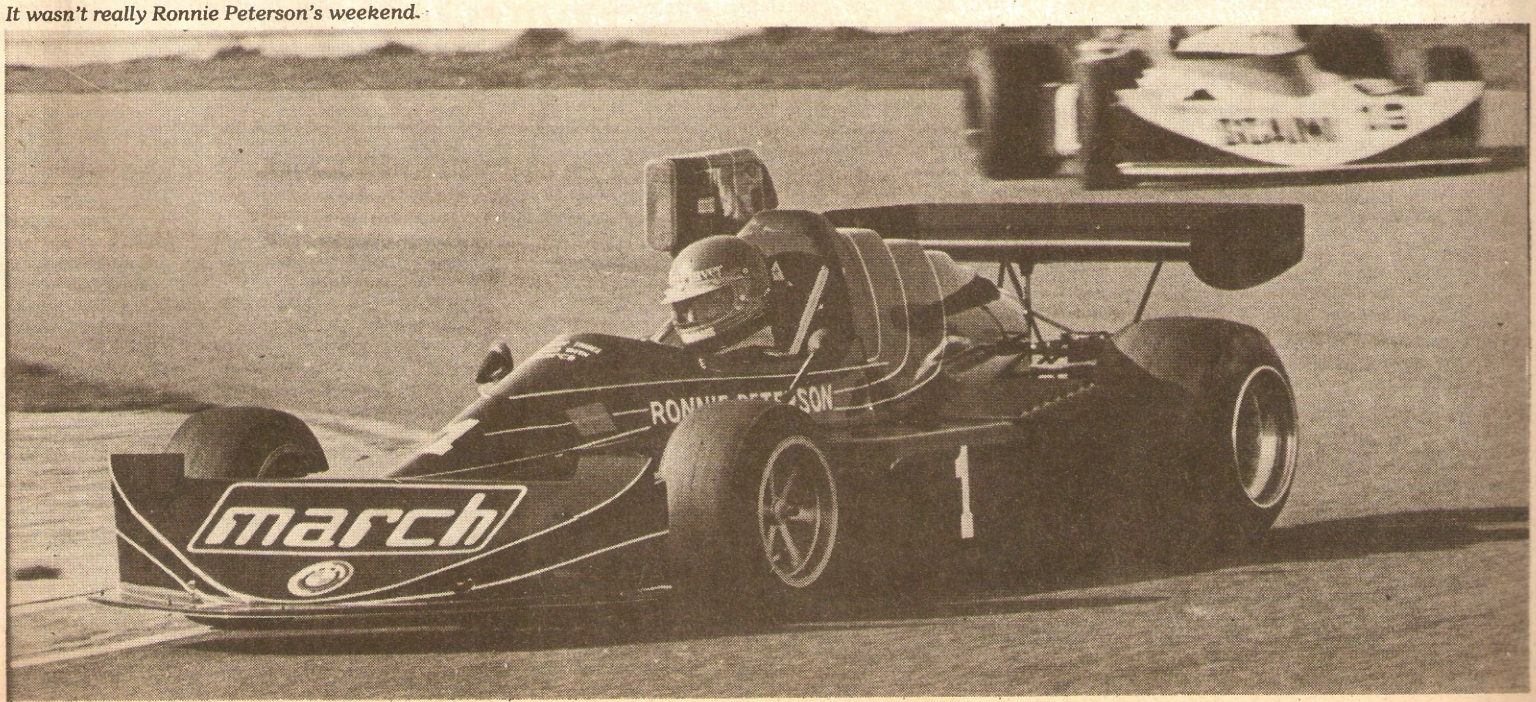
Up front, Laffite was having things more or less his own way. Brambilla's initial threat was now beginning to wane as the spark box had already come loose and the Italian's engine was misfiring slightly.

Wentz was doing a real hero's job of holding onto his third place for he now had Henton and Leclere climbing all over him and the American was having to make his car rather wide at times. Jabouille's expected challenge was now fading fast, the fault being just a broken injector pipe that caused a persistent misfire. From as early as the second lap, the Elf just dropped further and further back.

After Stuck's demise, Tambay found himself in the top half dozen with Peterson and Kuwashima in tow. Colombo has also been with them but he had a moment and dropped down a few places.

On lap 5, Henton finally forced his way past Wentz for good and immediately began to pull away in his chase after Brambilla. The gap

It wasn't really Ronnie Peterson's weekend.



gradually came down and down and on lap 11, Superhen thrust his Ford-powered car into second place. By now, Laffite was a cool, calm and confident 9s ahead. Could Brian do anything about it? It was a difficult task, made no easier by the superior handling of the French Martini out around the all important flat out sweeps.

Brambilla's spark box eventually fell off and he called into the pits on lap 15 to report the tale of woe. He eventually rejoined, although well out of the hunt. Wentz was still doing extremely well and had put a little daylight between himself and Leclere while Tambay kept in reasonable touch, his task made a little easier following a spin at the chicane on lap 9 by Peterson.

The black March restarted a lowly 17th and just behind a huge 11 car train that was to prove his downfall.

That amazing snakelike bunch of howling F2 cars was being led by Giancarlo Martini's Everest March-BMW ahead of the recovered Colombo, Rebaque, the ailing Jabouille, Binder, Hotz, Mallock, Ertl, Leoni, Francia and Ronnie.

The Swede, following his earlier mishap, had obviously decided to tiger his way back up through the field for he began to make gradual progress. By lap 19 he had pushed through into 9th place and lay behind a trio which was now headed by Rebaque. A lap later, disaster struck at the chicane.

Peter Williams, after some hairy driving in his mere Atlantic Chevron, spun at the chicane and stalled his engine. He claims he was stationary for at least 10s before the howling mass came pouring through, Rebaque somehow missed him as did Martini but Peterson and Binder, both going on either side of the stricken Chevron, smote it a mighty blow. Quite who hit the Chevron first is open for comment.

As the two Marches came to rest, Messrs Leoni, Colombo, Mallock, Hotz and Ertl became involved, the latter two actually carrying on although both with visible signs of contact.

The chicane looked like a battlefield with Peterson, Binder, Colombo, and Leoni all having the entire front ends of their cars written off. The only injury was the unfortunate Colombo who cracked a bone in his right wrist.

Some thought the race should have been stopped. It wasn't, although the carnage had naturally slowed everyone down a bit. Everyone except Henton who pulled back 6s in one lap on Laffite. What was wrong? Well, the Frenchman had lost his clutch after about a dozen laps and found difficulty selecting a cog while negotiating the chicane debacle. Henton continued to close and to cries of encouragement for the Briton, the March forced its way right up to Laffite's gearbox. However, the cool Jacques just checked his mirrors and exerted a little more from his car. The gap began to grow. "There was nothing I could do about the f. . . ." said Brian afterwards "as my left rear tyre had gone off."

Wentz drove really well to thwart Leclere's last ditch attempt while Tambay came home a lonely fifth, the only runner on the same lap as the Martini.

As for Kuwashima, who had been in touch with Tambay earlier on, he pitted with fuel pressure problems and then retired a couple of laps later when an O-ring in one of the injection trumpets split.

Another notable retirement was that of Serblin who, after an early stop to replace a puncture, had his engine blow up which curtailed his weekend's sport.

HEAT 2

There was feverish activity in the Martini camp as the team set about changing Laffite's clutch which they carried out in time. Stuck on the other hand didn't make it as a gearbox fault was found and there wasn't time to fix it. Naturally Peterson was a non-starter as well.

This time it was Henton who smoked away from the middle of the front rank and rushed off into the lead chased by the remarkable Wentz, Tambay and Laffite, the Frenchman wisely taking no chances as he left the line with his new clutch.

It didn't take him long to pass Tambay and by the third lap, we had a superb six car train all battling for the lead with Henton just heading Wentz, Laffite, Tambay, Leclere and the fast rising Brambilla. A little further back, Martini was holding yet another consistent station, only this time ahead of Turizio and Francia's Osella. However, the last pair both spun off during the course of the race in separate incidents and this allowed Jabouille to come rushing through from the back for a good run in his Elf. He was pleased afterwards although feels he has lost out to Laffite by not having had a chance to test the car.

Kuwashima also came through quite well from the back, although the Japanese driver's progress was hampered a little by the traffic he came across. Rebaque once again put in another workmanlike drive and was finally rewarded well for this efforts at keeping out of trouble.

However, all eyes were up front where a real battle royal was taking place. On lap four Laffite pushed past the Lola and then on lap six everything changed round in one helluva hairy lap. It resolved itself with Laffite now leading from Henton, Tambay, Brambilla, Wentz and Leclere but a lap later, the Lola was up again to 2nd as Brambilla, who had now taken second place, lost it on the very, very fast Church Curve. How they missed him. only they know. Suffice it is to say that both Leclere and Wentz visited the grass, the works March suffering badly in damaging its nosecone. It was to cost Leclere a place in the points. It was also to cause the retirement of Wentz ten laps later when the engine expired. Apparently the grass mowing moment might have holed the rad but, as Ted explained afterwards, when the temperature gauge did move, it was too late.

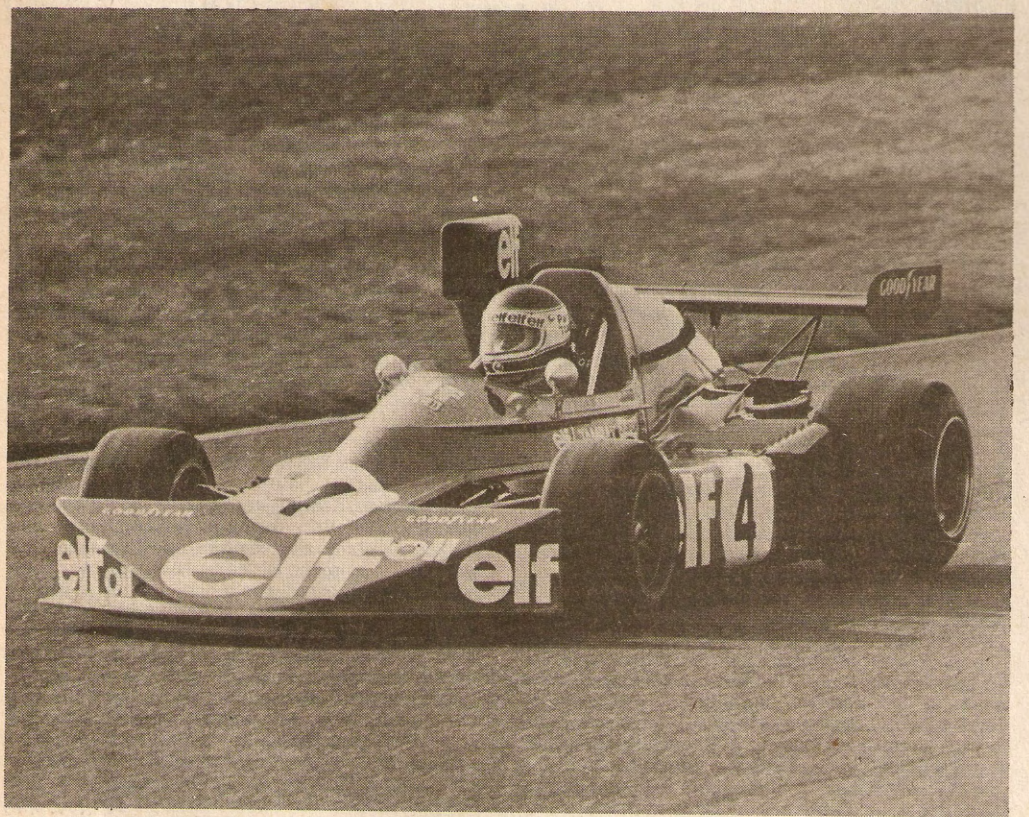
Laffite was now clear for Henton was in trouble. Tambay dived past him around the complex and Brian got onto the marbles, running out onto the grass and damaging the nose. He pitted and found that as he expected, the newly replaced left rear tyre had chunked. What he subsequently found out was the actual rim, which he had borrowed from a mate as he hadn't any spares himself, was 2 inches wider than the opposing wheel, This was noticed on the grid and immediately, the tyre technicians probably thinking that the newly fitted tyres hadn't settled on the rim, pumped 60 psi into it, They were just about to let the air out when the marshals waved them off the grid. Consequently Henton started the race with a pair of odd rear wheels and one tyre with 45 psi more than the other. It cost him second place.

Henton's stop allowed Tambay up to second but Brambilla had recoverd well and was now pulling back ground. As Laffite eased off, happy at his vast lead from the first part, Brambilla moved past Tambay and set off after the Martini. Tambay followed enthusiastically while Henton and Leclere, both happily rejoined the company after their pit stops for nosecones. What a pity they were so far down.

With seven laps to go, Brambilla took the lead going past the pits. Two laps later, Tambay also moved ahead but Laffite wasn't worried. He just sat there, keeping the Elf March in sight until the flag.

Much further back, Martini just managed to hold off Jabouille's late charge while Rebaque gave way to Kuwashima on the last lap, thinking he was one of the leaders.

It was a brilliant win for Laffite and the new Martini. It was so obviously brought home to everyone just how well the car and driver were suited to the track. Laffite now leads the championship by 12 points with two wins in two starts. But so did Hans Stuck last year and we all know what happened to him!



Patrick Tambay's second place in the second heat gave him second place overall.

Wella European F2 Trophy
Thruxton — March 31
aggregate of 2 x 30 lap heats
European F2 championship — round 2

1, Jacques Laffite (Martini-Schnitzer BMW Mk 16), 1hr 13m 07.8s, 115.97 mph,
2, Patrick Tambay (March-BMW 752), 1hr 13m 51.4s,
3, Giancarlo Martini (March BMW 752), 1hr 14m 0.8s 59 laps,
4, Hector Rebaque (Chevron-Hart Ford BDA B29), 1hr 14m 19.6s 59 laps
5, Jean-Pierre Jabouille (Elf-Schnitzer BMW 2J), 1hr 14m 38.2s, 59 laps
6, Duilio Truffo (Osella-BMW FA2), 1hr 14m 53.6s, 59 laps
7, Michel Leclere (March-BMW 752), 1hr 13m 27.6s, 58 laps; 8, Brian Henton (March-Hart Ford BDA 752), 1hr 14m 08.8s, 58 laps; 9, Jo Vonlanthen (March-Schnitzer BMW 752), 1hr 14m 09.2s, 58 laps; 10, Giorgio Francia (Osella-BMW FA2), 1hr 14m 15.6s, 58 laps; 11, Jorg Siegrist (March-BMW 742), 1hr 15m 00.6s, 57 laps; 12, Vittorio Brambilla (March-Schnitzer BMW 752), 1hr 13m44.2s, 56 laps; 13, Harald Ertl (Chevron-BMW B27), 1hr 14m 49.0s, 56 laps.

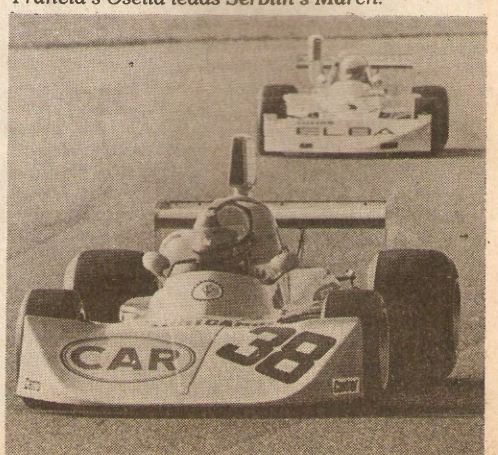
Heat 1: 1, Laffite, 36m 14.0s, 117.04 mph; 2, Henton, 36m 18.8s; 3, Ted Wentz (Lola-Swindon Ford BDG T360B), 36m 39.2s; 4, Leclere, 36m 39.4s; 5, Tambay, 37m 00.0s; 6, Rebaque, 36m 28.2s, 29 laps; 7, Martini, 36m 31.8s, 29 laps; 8, Francia, 36m 34.4s, 29 laps; 9, Vonlanthen, 36m 56.0s, 29 laps; 10, Truffo, 36m 56.2s, 29 laps.

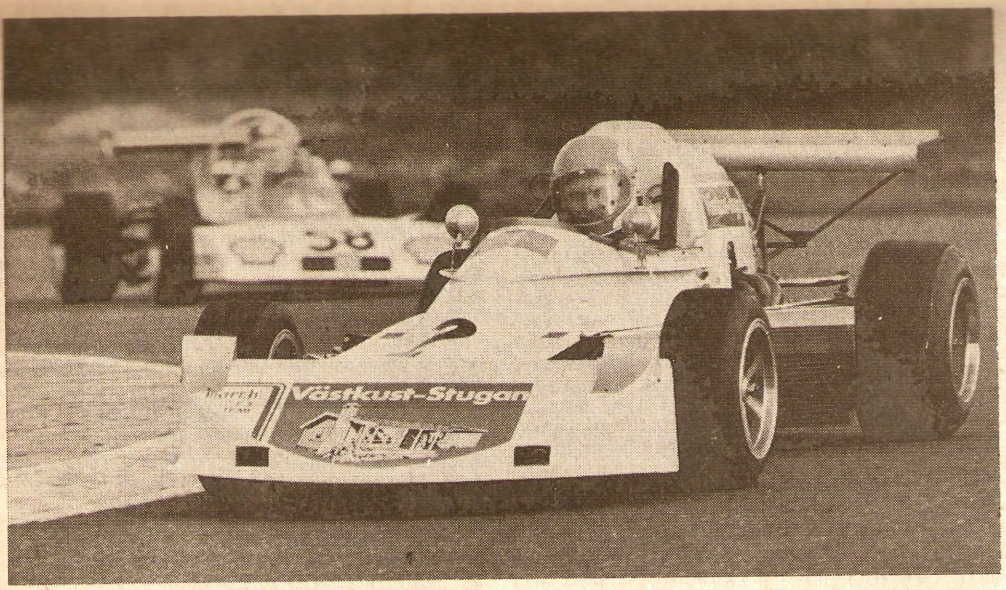
Fastest lap: Henton and Laffite, 1m 11.0s, 119.46 mph **(equals circuit record and new F2 record).**

Heat 2: 1, Brambilla, 36m 47.6s, 115.26 mph; 2, Tambay, 36m 51.4s; 3, Laffite, 36m 53.8s; 4, Martini, 37m 29.0s; 5, Jabouille, 37m 29.6s; 6, Masami Kuwashima (March-BMW 752), 37m 50.4s; 7, Rebaque, 37m 51.4s; 8, Ertl, 37m 57.0s; 9, Truffo, 37m 57.4s; 10, Willi Deutsch (March-Schnitzer BMW 752), 37m 10.0s, 29 laps.

Fastest lap: Brambilla, 1m 11.4s, 118.79 mph.

Francia's Osella leads Serblin's March.





Gunnar Nilsson takes the works March towards victory chased by Patrick Neve's Safir

Nilsson takes BP F3 honours

By CHRIS WITTY **Photos by DAVID WINTER**

His clenched fist held aloft signified the pleasure felt by Sweden's Gunnar Nilsson as he took his works March-Toyota across the line to win the opening round of the new BP-sponsored Super Visco Formula 3 series that will see further qualifying rounds staged right across Europe thus confirming that F3 is back with a bang.

Nilsson's task was made a little easier by being able to beat his team-mate and arch-rival Alex Ribeiro off the line, but he had to wait until the ever exhuberant Larry Perkins, giving Ron Tauranac's brand new Ralt a stirring debut, overcooked it and handed the race to Nilsson.

Dick Parsons threatened the leader only to be forced into the pits, while Ribeiro spun when blinded by oil from Parsons' engine and so it was left to Patrick Neve, giving yet another new car, this time Ray Jessop's Safir, a fine debut and challenging Nilsson hard during the final laps.

A fine battle for third place was fought out with typical F3 spirit and it saw Bob Arnott's ex-Ippokampos March out fumble Ian Taylor's works GRD on the last lap.

ENTRY AND PRACTICE

The sight of five or six Formula 3 cars rushing into the chicane almost as one during practice signified quite clearly that F3 was back. Many people were seen to smile in appreciation at the thought of the formula's re-birth. It's a good thing too.

While various European countries concentrate on their own individual formulae, the re-emergence of F3 has been lucky enough to gain a good sponsor in the BP fuel and petroleum company who are undertaking to back a 15-round European Championship under their Super Visco oil brand.

This was to be the first round.

Heading the entry and, ironically, on pole position was the young Brazilian Alex Ribeiro in the first of the works March 753s, which are running the Italian Novamotor-prepared Toyota (and heavier by 45 lbs) engines taken from the Celica. Ribeiro got it all together in both sessions and, aided by some stickier Goodyear tyres (G50s as opposed to G52s), recorded a conservative 1m 17.3s. This is just outside the record but almost a second off the time Brian Henton achieved in practice late last year.

Equalling the time was Australian Larry Perkins who was giving Ron Tauranac's Ralt a superb public race debut.

Perkins, who was using a Novamotor-prepared Ford twin-cam, was a lot hairier than Ribeiro, but for the first time up against the opposition, the team were confident there was more to come. Tauranac was especially anxious that Larry did well as some foreign orders rested upon the car's opening performance.

It's possible that Gunnar Nilsson, the fiery Swede who's Ribeiro's new team-mate in the works March team, may have bettered his 1m 17.4s considerably for after just six laps of the second session, the gearbox broke.

The second rank was taken up by one of last year's F3 revelations. Heading the Dunlop challenge in his Neil Brown tuned Ford t/c was the bespectacled Mike Tyrrell in his ex-Tony Brise JP F3 series winning March 733. Tyrrell was supported on the second rank by Belgian FF star Patrick Neve, who was making his debut in Ray Jessop's brand new Safir, his Lola deal having fallen through.

Proving that F3 is going to have variety in the engine field, Neve's car was fitted with a Ford Pinto ohc unit supplied by Holbay.

These were the only drivers to break 1m 18s.

Fullfilling his predictions in last week's issue, Dick Parsons showed a fair turn of speed in his newly acquired ex-works Modus M1. Parsons was a little weary after having to change the engine on Thursday night after it had sheared the oil pump drive while being started up. The engine, a Nova Ford t/c, was rebuilt by John Penistan at Norvic's on Friday, and refitted during the early hours of Saturday. Consequently Parsons' bleary eyed effort was a good one.

Another all night slog was put in by Bob Arnott who spent right up until practice screwing his ex-Ippokampos March 743-Brown Ford t/c together. Considering the car was far from ready, Arnott's time was also encouraging.

Next up, and making his F3 debut and also competing for the first time on racing tyres, was former FF star Stephen South in the new Bert Ray-designed Ray. This distinctive little car, with its Ferrari-like wing mounted at the front, lapped with surprisingly little problem and could well become a threat in the not too distant future with its Toyota Novamotor.

Ian Taylor made his return to F3 after an enforced break of a year with a reputation at stake. He's been given a lot of responsibility now that he's got a works drive handling the sole GRD 375. The car is powered by the Pinto engine but the team have suffered badly with engines during testing of late.

During the first session, the timing was found to be out and the subsequent detonation blew the engine. This was the supposed demon mill and so Taylor had to make do with the test "hack" as a replacement in the afternoon and this is what he set his time in.

Another former FF driver making the step into F3 this season is young Rupert Keegan, the oft hairy pilot of a BAF Hawke last season. Being the son of the chairman of British Air Ferries, Rupert should fairly fly along this season and has purchased the ex-Brian Henton works March 743-Toyota Nova just for this purpose.

The two American protagonists were next up led by Tony Rouff in the substantially revamped Erhlich with its all steel monocoque. Rouff, running on Firestone tyres like Parsons and Arnott, also was the fastest Vegantune Ford t/c user.

Behind him, after a troubled practice, was Danny Sullivan in the brand new works Modus M2 running, as we thought last week, a Neil Brown Ford t/c, the team's Toyota still having to be delivered. Sullivan had got out late in the first session after it was discovered that the teams new wheels (designed for the Goodyears which happened to be locked up in Norwich railway station) wouldn't fit the new Dunlop tyres, so Sullivan ran a few laps on Firestones. Then in the afternoon, he found the engine cutting out on left handers and this was traced to a sticking fuel float level.

Scottish FF driver Graham Hamilton came next, proudly displaying the famed colours of Ecurie Ecosse, who are now back on the scene co-entering his new March 753 Nova Ford t/c. He was just ahead of the current British FSV champion Chris Barnett who, following a previous engine blow-up only received his rebuilt Max Heidegger BMW engine on Saturday morning and had to fit it during the first session.

Things weren't exactly right during the afternoon, but at least Barnett was the quickest BMW runner, just ahead of Belgian Herve Regout in the Brian Lewis-prepared B & O car.

The second car, driven by Pierre Dieudonne was in bad trouble. After refusing to start for the first session, Pierre completed just one lap before a water leak curtailed his activities for the day *and* the weekend.

The rest of the impressive entry recorded their respective times, although well off the pace. Of those that were expected to be higher, Richard Hawkins, yet another FF graduate, fell off and ruined three tyres while South African Robert Joubert rooted his only Vegantune t/c engine in the new Lola T350 and promptly went and ordered two new Novamotors.

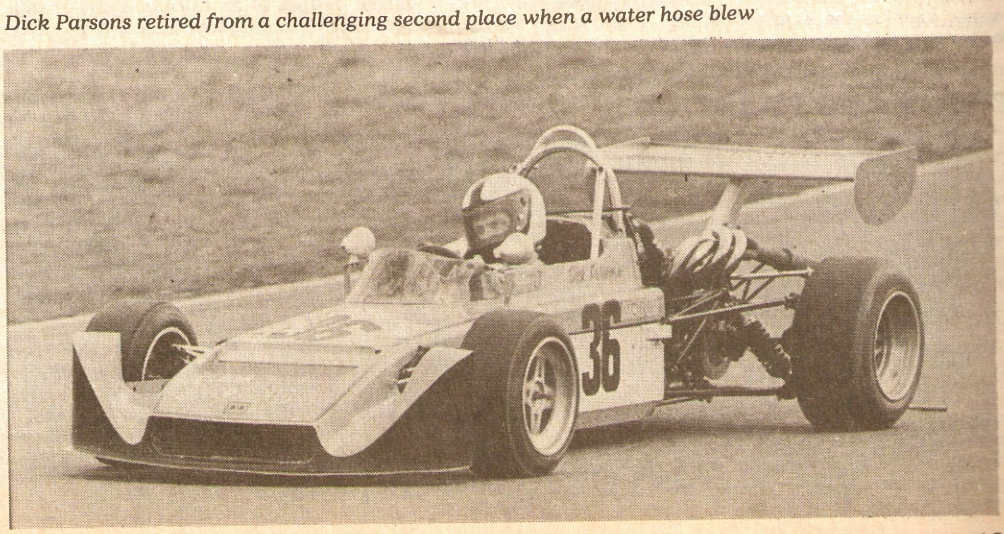
It promised to be a fine race and worthy of what F3 has stood for in the past.

RACE

There they were, three very tough customers occupying the front row for this, the first round of the new BP Super Visco British Formula 3 Championship. It would be a brave man who was prepared to forecast just who would get the verdict after an all too short 15-lapper.

After a hurried last minute tyre change when the author noticed that one of Gunnar Nilsson's rear tyres was badly cut, the field completed the

Dick Parsons retired from a challenging second place when a water hose blew



customary warm up lap and were released almost immediately. It caught a few out, notably Mike Tyrrell who was still searching for a gear but Perkins and Nilsson had the rear Goodyears already biting into the tarmac to head into the first right hander with Perkins forcibly shutting the door on pole man Ribeiro in the other works March. The little Brazilian had to lift, otherwise it would have meant solid contact and this allowed Nilsson and Dick Parsons in his Modus to sweep around the outside and chase Perkins up towards the complex.

The Ralt seemed to gain a few lengths out around the back but some kerb hopping by the eager Aussie allowed Nilsson to close right up as they completed the first lap with Parsons, Ribeiro and Patrick Neve's Safir already in tow.

Perkins held on for another lap, Nilsson confounding his critics by curbing his aggression and sure enough, the Ralt succumbed to its off road tactics by spinning away the lead at the complex.

Away went the March but Parsons, his Firestone-shod Modus looking extremely sure footed, closed in and threatened to perform the *coup d'etat*. A thin wisp of spray appeared from the back of the car. It lasted for just over a lap and then the engine, a rather tired unit lent sportingly by Dyfed Roberts, after Parsons had blown his in practice, succumbed to a broken water hose. Parsons was out but, unbeknowingly to him, he had almost taken Ribeiro with him.

Apparently Alex was tucked into his slipstream and when the engine, in its death throes, blew out some oil, it covered his visor completely. The Brazilian thus performed a lurid spin out in the country, restarting well down and out of contention.

Perkin's *faux pas* had also dropped him back but he was to suffer from his tyres going off and could only sit and watch the squabble that raged in front of him between the Marches of Bob Arnott and Mike Tyrrell together with Ian Taylor's works GRD. Taylor always held the upper hand, despite a badly grained front left tyre, until the last lap when Arnott got through. Tyrrell meantime had been squeezed out at the chicane on lap 14 and had to take to the escape road, losing out in the end to Stephen South who, besides knocking the ignition switch off once, brought the new Ray home in a tidy and encouraging 6th place.

Up front Nilsson looked to have things all his own way but it was not to be so. On lap 5, Neve had his Safir just 4.8s behind. Thereafter the gap reduced itself to 2.7s by lap 8. Nilsson explained afterwards that he suddenly saw Neve appear in his mirrors and got a little out of shape around the back. He collected it together and, with the help of some traffic, eased away again. But the former Belgian FF star came again but it was all to no avail for the Swede coolly hung on to win his first ever F3 race for the works March team.

Notable absentees from prominent places higher up were Danny Sullivan driving the brand new Modus M2. He spun on the first lap at the chicane and then had problems with the steering rack coming loose forcing an early retirement. The other American, Tony Rouff in the Erhlich, had to make an early stop to change a plug but thereafter lapped consistently quickly but to no avail.

It was a good start to the championship. The quality of the entry far surpassed last season and, thankfully, it's safe to say that F3 is on its way back again to where it belongs. Roll on Silverstone and round 2.

BP Super Visco British Formula 3 race
Thruxton, March 31, 15 laps, 37 miles

1, Gunnar Nilsson (March-Novamotor Toyota 753), 19m 37.8s, 108.02 mph
2, Patrick Neve (Safir-Holbay Ford Pinto RJ03), 19m 38.4s
3, Bob Arnott (March-Brown Ford t/c 743), 19m 50.0s
4, Ian Taylor (GRD-Holbay Ford Pinto 375), 19m 50.0s
5, Larry Perkins (Ralt-Novamotor Fordt/c), 19m 50.2s
6, Stephen South (Ray-Novamotor Toyota 75), 19m 20m 01.0s
7, Mike Tyrrell (March-Brown Ford t/c 733), 20m 01.6s; 8, Alex Ribeiro (March-Novamotor Toyota 753), 20m 03.6s; 9, Graham Hamilton (March-Novamotor Ford t/c 753), 20m 08.2s; 10, Chris Barnett (March-Heidegger BMW 753), 20m 22.6s.

Fastest lap: Neve, 1m 17.2s, 109.87 mph **(equals class record).**



Battle royal was waged between the Hermetite Capris and Chris Craft's Wisharts car. Here Craft leads Holman Blackburn.

Graham robbed by jinx

After a faultless race, and seemingly within spitting distance of breaking his Thruxton "jinx," Stuart Graham entered the chicane for the twenty-first time on Easter Monday with a healthy lead over his nearest adversary Richard Lloyd. Exiting, a half shaft simply sheared, sending the Brut Chevrolet Camaro spinning tightly into retirement. Nothing would seem to have stopped him from certain victory. In establishing his lead, he'd equalled his and Richard Lloyd's lap record, Lloyd had had a spin, and his lead stood at around 18s with just two laps to go. But after his retirement, it was Richard Lloyd in the Simoniz Racing/Think Automotive Camaro who took the flag after an eventful race. In the early stages, he was led by the incredible Dolomite Sprint of Andy Rouse, overcame Rouse, spun at Campbell, and ended up taking the flag. The crowd had rooted for Rouse, and in taking second overall, the Broadspeed employee lowered Barrie Williams' lap record by 2.2s. Tony Shaw drove in steadily for third place, followed equally steadily by Brian Pepper. The Capri class was really closely fought, with the Hermetite cars of Holman Blackburn and Mike Crabtree having to do everything they knew to keep the effervescent but slightly rusty Chris Craft from scraping off the rust on their bodywork. Crabtree and Blackburn crossed the line together, with Blackburn just ahead. In the small class, Win Percy took the Toyota to its third win out of four events, keeping the Avengers at bay, and taking a new lap record. Percy's engine was sealed by the RAC for scrutineering, much to the delight of the Samuri team!

ENTRY AND PRACTICE

Arriving at Thruxton for most competitors was like a breath of fresh air after the trials and tribulations of the previous day at Oulton Park. Those trials and tribulations had taken their toll of course, Holman Blackburn had been rammed by Stuart Rolt when stationary in the middle of the track, and Vince Woodman and Tony Lanfranchi had damaged their cars mechanically. However, with some sterling work by their respective teams, all the cars eventually made it to the grid, as did Roger Bell's Dolomite.

The session was arranged for an hour, the first half hour or so of which was dry, and then snow showers cut down hopes of a quick time. Thus anyone who had any running in to do, bedding brakes or just turned up late, found themselves down on the grid.

One man up and at it early on was the previous day's victor, Stuart Graham, showing the flag for Fabergé and Brut, and gaining pole position. Stuart was most concerned about a near jinx that he has with the circuit, having never won in Hampshire. The car had had no further tweaks following Oulton, and was obviously in peak condition, a credit to brother Chris Graham, and bodywork and chassis men Ted and Keith. Having bedded in new brakes, he set a 1m 31s, although he found the circuit quite slippery.

Still going as well as ever, and keeping the men of British Leyland very happy, was Andy Rouse. He set a 1m 32.6s to sit alongside Graham despite more powerful machinery, in the Triumph Team Piranha 2.0 Dolomite Sprint. Ralph Broad had a 'practice' tweak up his sleeve for Rouse to set an even faster time but the snow came before Rouse had a chance to try it.

Completing the front row, on this his home circuit, was Tony Shaw in the National Organs, ex-Stuart Graham Camaro. The heads of his 5.7 engine are completely untouched, and Shaw hopes that this is the next job on the agenda, which should provide some extra speed. Shaw was 1.2s slower than Rouse.

Row two was headed by Roger Bell in the second Triumph Team Piranha Dolomite Sprint. Following their petrol pump disaster at Oulton, it was discovered that the engine was mainly OK, although as a precaution, the big end shells were replaced, allowing Bell to set a 1m 34.6s. He was quite happy with this, as it allowed him to chose either team mate Rouse to follow at the start, or Stuart Graham, both a very good bet.

On 1m 35.4s came Richard Lloyd in Rob Potter's 7.4 Camaro. Lloyd did a minimal seven laps in practice, four in the dry and the rest in the wet. The car is now prepared by ex-Willment man Mike Brown of Rally Services in Hayes, and in search of lost power, they'd changed everything that could be changed to try and cure this. The car wasn't ready for the dry session, so Lloyd's time was understandable. However, Richard has never lost at the circuit and was quite happy with his few laps.

Brian Pepper, now sponsored by General Relays, headed row three on 1m 35.8s, steadily improving, sharing the row with Barrie Williams' Mazda. Arian are now concentrating on getting the Castrol/Japanese Airlines sponsored car right before running Brian Muir again, and after Oulton, were quite confident that they'd got the misfiring and cutting out problem beat. However, during their practice, the fuel pressure was giving trouble, and the car was understeering too much. To abbreviate their practice, a carburettor diaphragm punctured, although Barrie had a lot of fun in the snow, flinging the car around with his usual gay abandon. setting a 1m 36s.

Completing this row was Chris Craft, driver of all cars, who had been seconded into the Wisharts team as Gordon Spice was concentrating on F5000 at Brands Hatch. The car ran well for a 1m 36.6s on the driver's first outing of the year.

An all Hermetite row came next. Having dinged his Capri II on its first outing, Holman Blackburn brought out 'old faithful' which he has used so far this year, which was to have been driven by Mike Crabtree, even though it is 1.5s slower round Goodwood than the new car. Blackburn set a 1m 37.2s. So what of Crabtree? The ever hard working Jim of Mann's Garage suggested they take the engine out of the Capri II and put it into the 'production racer' that Blackburn used in the club Group One early this year, changing the suspension, brakes, springs, seats, etc, and run that for Crabtree. Which is what they did; and Crabtree then rewarded their efforts by setting a time exactly the same as Blackburn's.

It was the same story on the next row where Jennifer Birrell wasn't so polite to her team leader, Bernard Unett, but set her 1m 38s quicker than the Chrysler man — but then, ladies first. The Halesfield Avengers were running quicker than ever before, and Unett was quite happy. Bill Gubelmann in the second Wisharts Capri II shared that row on 1m 38.2s.

Mike Wooley was on row six in his Treble S sponsored Opel Commodore on 1m 38.2s, still sorting the car, with Win Percy's Toyota Celica for company. This was an all new car which had

taken class victory the previous day at Oulton, and in fact had been built, sprayed and the old engine fitted in exactly a week, the team trying to recover from four all-nighters. The car had not been tested and still carried a lot of excess weight, including a standard fuel tank, but Percy set a 1m 39s.

The Penthouse Alfas kicked off the next row on 1m 39.4s (Clark) and 1m 39.8 (Dron), with Jon Mowatt's BMW 2002 Tii alongside. Dron's car had had a new exhaust fitted after Oulton, and the car was in fact entered by Roger Clark Cars, while Stan Clark had the Penthouse backing.

Terry Sanger was having his first outing in his Research Consultants Chevrolet Camaro for a 1m 41.2s with lots of sorting to do, alongside the rather dramatic David Vizard's Avenger. Stuart Rolt rolled out his spare car, the Hermetite coloured one, to share row nine with the troubled John Olding (Chevrolet Camaro) and Hugh Oliver-Bellasis (Avenger). John Hine was unaccustomedly far back on the grid after brake problems in practice, and then upset by the rain.

Completing the runners were Tony Lanfranchi (Chrysler Hemi Cuda) and Shaun Jackson's Opel. Lanfranchi had had a dropped valve at Oulton, and a special seven cylinder qualifying engine had been built while the various bits were found for the Sunday rebuild. However, the whole effort nearly came to naught when young Lanfranchi spun the whole equipe, trailer and all, on the M3 after a giant wobby. However, all survived with just a dented rear bumper on the tow car. Shaun Jackson's Opel just had enough cylinders working to take his ex-Peter Hanson Tour of Britain car round, but failed to turn up for the race. Jackson feels that there's still a lot to be done.

Before the race got underway on Monday, there was an urgent figure clutching a piece of paper rushing round the Paddock, collecting signatures. It was Vince Woodman, who had managed to borrow Lloyd's ex-TT engine and had spent Sunday fitting it. With everyone's consent, he did three careful laps to qualify his Esso Uniflo sponsored Camaro on Monday.

RACE

With the raceday dawning bright and dry, there was little doubt as to what tyres should be used. With little ceremony, the flag was dropped and round four of the championship was under way. The notorious slow starting of Camaros allowed Rouse to get away first with Bell following his team mate, soon to be demoted by Graham at Campbell. Lloyd was quickly past Bell up the hill to the chicane, but Rouse was another matter. Early problems with second gear halted the Camaro's progress, and Rouse was to lead Loyd for the first four laps, while Stuart Graham lengthened his lead. Bell quickly grabbed fourth spot, followed by Blackburn, Shaw, Crabtree, Craft and Pepper. Hine was charging up through the field and Woodman had started his climb. Jennifer Birrell had command of the small class, although Percy was splitting the Halesfield Avengers.

By lap three, Graham had pulled out a good two seconds on Rouse still troubled by Lloyd, while Tony Shaw was charging up to challenge Roger Bell for fourth. Brian Pepper's Camaro was splitting the Capri trio, led by Blackburn, but Percy had pulled ahead of Mrs Birrell. Williams had already pitted with the front brakes binding, but after some of the brake pressure was relieved, the car was mobile again, albeit some way down the field.

By lap five of the 23 laps, Lloyd had got his problems sorted, and took Rouse up the hill to the Chicane, pulling out enough to prevent the Dolomite driver outbreaking him again, and thereafter pulled away. Shaw had taken Roger Bell, Pepper had fought free of the Capris, who were now mixing it in fine style, Blackburn doing the leading and Crabtree doing a shielding job, although to the detriment of his body panels. Hine had caught up well on this bunch, with Sanger in his wake, leading the Toyota. Lanfranchi and Woodman were next, but Lanfranchi's power steering had failed on lap one, and the car was a real handful without it. Unett had allowed Mrs Birrell to drop behind him, which left her in the clutches of John Olding, who promptly took her off into the boonies. This ruined the exhaust, necessitating a stop to have it rectified, but it dropped her out of the class running. There was no change up front, although Brian Pepper was closing on Bell, and on this lap seven, Craft was in front of the Capri battle, which now had both Hine and Sanger involved as well.

By lap ten, Graham was running as smoothly as ever, 9s ahead of Lloyd, then Rouse, Shaw, Pepper going well, and Bell. Then the interesting battle of the race, with Hine leading Blackburn, Sanger fighting through the lot of them, Craft, Woodman advancing, and Crabtree. Percy was next.

While the gap at the front remained static, Hine detached himself from his battle, and tenaciously set off after Bell. Woodman and Sanger too, were leaving the Capris to their own devices, and Percy and Lanfranchi completed the unlapped runners.

On lap 16, the gap was still roughly the same at the front, but Woodman was making his mark and catching Hine, while they were both catching Bell. Crabree now had a couple of inches over teammate Blackburn, while Craft was finding that his car went as well as the Capri GTs, but didn't stop so well. Woodman's tremendous drive got him by Bell on lap 19, the same lap as Lloyd spun at Allard which seemed to assure Graham of victory, even if he did the same.

But as Bell caught up Hine, so Graham, with 18s in hand over Lloyd, went into the chicane, exited, there was a big thump and a spinning Camaro. "Stuart doesn't do things like that," said a nearby onlooker, and nor he had. A halfshaft had sheared, the wheel had dropped, and the car was stationary and out of the race. So it was left to Lloyd to cruise home the winner, and the Graham/Thruxton jinx to be satisfied with another good day's work done. Rouse was a clear second, Shaw clear of Brian Pepper, both putting in good drives, especially Pepper.

But behind, there was a final drama. Woodman's borrowed engine was thirstier than his own, and over the final two laps, the pump was having difficulty picking up the last of 14 gallons. Thus in the corners, he slowed, to be caught by Bell and Hine. Bell thought he was being given a tow, and by slotting in behind the Camaro, was automatically baulked. Hine nipped by for fifth place after a really good drive. Bell realised his errors and pipped the Camaro, while down in the Capri class, some team driving kept out Craft, and the Hermetite cars crossed the line together, Crabtree allowing Blackburn to take the class win. Percy was the first lapped finisher, some 13s ahead of Unett and an exhausted Lanfranchi. The Alfas came next, with Dron leading Stan Clark, who'd been following Mike Woolley throughout.

Not a great race, but some good drives, and some exciting Capri mixing. The question must now be however, how does anyone stop Triumph and Andy Rouse from a clean sweep, even if they don't always have the maximum number of starters?

BOB CONSTANDUROS

RAC/Southern Organs British Touring Car championship
Thruxton, 23 laps, round 4

1, Richard Lloyd (7.4 Chevrolet Camaro), 35m 33.4s, 91.44 mph; 2, Andy Rouse (2.0 Triumph Dolomite Sprint), 35m 40s; 3, Tony Shaw (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro), 36m 14.6s; 4, Brian Pepper (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro), 36m 14.6s; 5, John Hine (2.0 Triumph Dolomite Sprint), 36m 41.6s; 6, Roger Bell (2.0 Triumph Dolomite Sprint), 36m 42.2s; 7, Vince Woodman (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro), 36m 42.6s; 8, Terry Sanger (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro), 36m 42.6s; 9, Holman Blackburn (3.0 Ford Capri GT), 37m 5.6s; 10, Mike Crabtree (3.0 Ford Capri GT), 37m 5.6s.

Over 4000 cc: 1, Lloyd, 91.44 mph; 2, Shaw; 3, Pepper; 4, Woodman; 5, Sanger; 6, Tony Lanfranchi (6.9 Chrysler Hemi Cuda). **Fastest lap:** Stuart Graham (7.4 Chevrolet Camaro), 1m 30.2s, 94.03 mph. **(Equals record).**

2501 cc to 4000 cc: 1, Blackburn, 87.65 mph; 2, Crabtree; 3, Chris Craft (Ford Capri II); 4, Mike Woolley (2.8 Opel Commodore GS/E); 5, Stuart Rolt (3.0 Ford Capri GT); no other finishers. **Fastest lap:** Crabtree, 1m 35s, 89.28 mph.

1600 to 2500 cc: 1, Rouse, 91.15 mph; 2, Hine; 3, Bell; 4, Barrie Williams (2.3 Mazda RX3); 5, Jon Mowatt (2.0 BMW 2002 Tii); no other starters. **Fastest lap:** Rouse, 1m 32s, 92.19 mph **(record).**

Up to 1600 cc: 1, Win Percy (1.6 Toyota Celica), 86.62 mph; 2, Bernard Unett (1.6 Hillman Avenger GT); 3, Tony Dron (1.6 Alfa Romeo GT); 4, Stan Clark (1.6 Alfa Romeo GT); 5, David Vizard (.16 Chrysler Avenger GT); 6, Jennifer Birrell (1.6 Chrysler Avenger GT). **Fastest lap:** Percy, 1m 36.4s, 87.98 mph **(record).**

Kicking off proceedings at Thruxton was the British Air Ferries Formula Ford event over ten laps. Poleman Frank Bayes' Merlyn took an early lead, but a demon start by Rick Morris from the third row meant that his Hawke was challenging hard round the back, and up the hill. Into the chicane, he outbraked the Merlyn, and those two set off to dice for the rest of the race. Down in third place were Terry Richards (Merlyn Mk 11A) and David Heale (Dulon LD9/15) also contesting the place, while fifth was a battle between two hardened campaigners both in new cars, Tiff Needell in the new Elden Mk 17, and Lou de Marco in his works assisted Hawke.

Up front, Morris held on to his lead for the first five laps, Bayes trying all he knew to get round, eventually getting by into the chicane. Richards moved up past Heale, but Heale hung onto him, while Needell was caught by de Marco. Richard Eyre, meanwhile, had spun out of a good position in his Javelin.

Bayes hung onto his lead until lap nine, when Morris did a little dress rehearsal for the final lap and took him into the chicane. Bayes led the next time round, and up came Morris to try the same again. But it was to no avail, and Bayes ran home by 2.6s, the biggest margin of their race. Richards kept control of Heale for the rest of the race, and de Marco passed Needell on lap eight, although Needell hung on until the end, being given the same time.

Final event of the day was for the cherished Speed Merchants *Classic Car* Post historic car contenders. Although he had pole position in his 3.3 Ferrari Testa Rossa, Colin Crabbe was led off the grid by Richard Thwaites' fleet little 2.0 Elva BMW Mk 7S. At the end of lap one, it was clear that these two were in a class of their own, for they had already opened up a sizeable gap over Brian Classic's 5.3 Iso Grifo Bizzarini. Ian Hilton headed the chasers in his 5.0 AC Cobra, but he was soon to be overtaken by Brian Baker's 1.6 Lotus 23. Baker slipped a little on lap six, with Hilton in front again, and Baker being caught by Rupert Glydon's Lola Mk 1.

While all remained static at the head of the field, the two early sports racers were catching the Cobra, and by lap 11, they had overhauled the Cobra to take fourth and fifth, with Glydon taking fourth. John Webb in the Rochas Perfume Elan just failed to pass Robert Cooper's Lister Jaguar, but took his class, despite having had to start from row six after blowing up in practice. These completed the unlapped runners.

British Air Ferries Formula Ford round (10 laps): 1, Frank Bayes (Merlyn-Minister Mk 17A), 14m 46s, 95.73 mph; 2, Rick Morris (Hawke-Scholar DL12), 14m 48.6s; 3, Terry Richards (Merlyn-Scholar Mk 11A), 14m 49.8s; 4, David Heale (Dulon-Oselli LD9/15), 14m 53.6s; 5, Lou de Marco (Hawke-Close DL12), 14m 56.8s; 6, Tiff Needell (Elden-Scholar Mk 17), 14m 56.8s. **Fastest lap:** Bayes, 1m 27s, 97.49 mph.

Speed Merchants Classic Car Post historic round (12 laps): 1, Richard Thwaites (2.0 Elva-BMW Mk 7S), 18m 48.6s, 90.18 mph; 2, Colin Crabbe (3.3 Ferrari Testa Rossa), 18m 53.2s; 3, Brian Classic (5.3 Iso Grifo Bizzarini), 19m 46.4s; 4, Rupert Glydon (1.2 Lola Mk 1), 19m 56.0s.

Over 2000 cc front engined: 1, Classic, 85.79 mph; 2, Ian Hilton (5.0 AC Cobra); 3, John Harper (3.0 Ferrari Breadvan 250GT).

Fastest lap: Classic, 1m 37.4s, 87.08 mph **(record).**

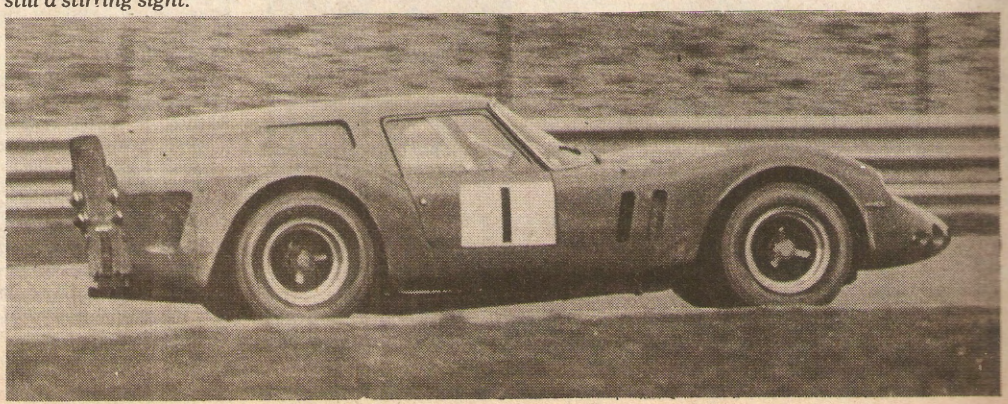
Up to 2000 cc front engined GT: 1, John Webb (1.6 Lotus Elan S1), 82.88 mph; 2, Jem Marsh (1.6 Marcos GT); 3, Aubrey Brocklebank (2.0 Morgan SLR). **Fastest lap:** Webb, 1m 39s, 85.67 mph **(record).**

Up to 2000 cc sports racing: 1, Crabbe, 89.82 mph; no other finishers. **Fastest lap:** Crabbe, 1m 32.4s, 91.79 mph.

Up to 2000 cc sports racing: 1, Thwaites, 90.18 mph; 2, Glydon; 3, Brian Baker (1.6 Lotus 23B). **Fastest lap:** Thwaites, 1m 32s, 92.19 mph **(record).**

Historic Racing cars: 1, Robert Cooper (3.0 Lister Jaguar), 82.94 mph; no other starters. **Fastest lap:** Cooper, 1m 39.2s, 85.50 mph **(record).**

John Harper's fabulous Breadvan Ferrari was handicapped in the Classic Car *race by road tyres but was still a stirring sight.*





The Andersson/Hertz Peugeot 504 tackles a rough stretch of the dry sun-baked terrain

Peugeot victory from Stratos

After a copy-book performance from Ove Andersson and Arne Hertz, the highly experienced Swedish crew brought their Peugeot 504 to victory on the Safari without experiencing any mechanical troubles. The Lancia Stratos of Munari and Waldegaard were robbed of victory by a variety of time-consuming troubles while last year's winning manufacturer, Mitsubishi, had to be content at fourth place with the crew of Andrew Cowan and John Mitchell. Of the 79 starters 30 crews reached half-route back at Nairobi and only 14 cars completed the route. Organisation and routing was of a very high standard and the weather held fine until the last day, when rainy and humid weather in the Mt. Kenya region produced uncomfortably muddy going.

Lancia fielded the strongest threat to Peugeot's well-deserved victory and Sandro Munari was hampered with several punctures, losing half an hour on one main road section when he was forced to drive 35 kilometres on a wheel rim before Lofty Drews acquired another tyre. Very lucky to finish, let alone in third position, was Borjn Waldegaard with his Stratos. First his alternator broke before reaching half way, then, whilst maintaining second place and challenging for the lead the gearbox had to be changed and the suspension comprehensively overhauled on the Nakuru section. Further troubles on the last morning, with a rear brake calliper pulling away, a fan belt breaking and another set of gear selectors being required, gave Waldegaard a lucky third place.

Both the Beta Coupes of Mehta and Ulyate suffered badly in the rough conditions, Mehta's car suffering a smashed windscreen (stone throwing), serious suspension maladies and, finally, Mehta went o.t.l. on the third night with the car virtually split in two. Ulyate suffered a similar fate, also on the third night.

Peugeot were unlucky to lose both Makinen and Mikkola early in the event. Makinen was forced out on the first night with a con-rod through the side, while Mikkola was extremely unfortunate to run off the road after only 300 miles whilst driving in heavy dust from Joginder Singh's car.

Datsun suffered badly. Kallstrom (Datsun 710 — basically a "Violet") had a new 16 valve engine flown in just prior to the start and had the unit let-go just 300 miles after leaving the ramp; while Hans Schuller, persevering with a 260 Z, had his shockers give-in after only 80 miles motoring, had to change the carburettors twice and finally retired with serious electrical problems without completing the first half. Remtulla drove his 710 Datsun steadily into sixth place after suffering a roll early in the rally.

Other prominent drivers with troubles included the unlucky Joginder Singh, who was side-lined when a valve dropped while he was rally leader. The valve had been weakened and was rotating in its collar, gradually wearing away at its location until it hit the piston crown. Vic Preston Junior (Stratos) lost precious time when he had to turn around in his tracks and head back to a passage control, some fifteen miles back, after he and John Lyall realised they had left their scrutineering card lying in the dust by the control point.

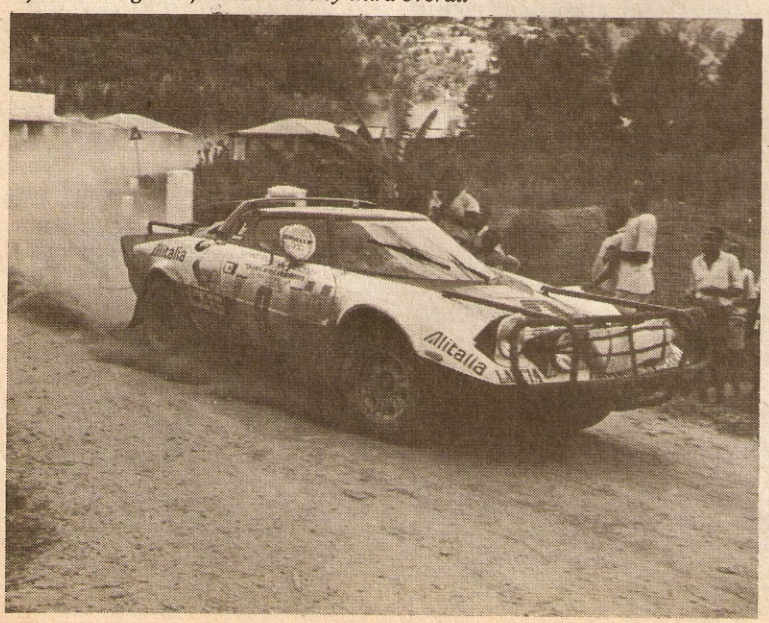
Renault Alpine suffered as many disasters this year as they did last year. First, Nicolas was involved in a practice accident and couldn't start (both crew members are recovered apart from a minor bone fracture (Laverne), and a strained neck (Nicolas), and will be in action on a minor French rally this weekend). Robert Collinge stood in to drive the Alpine but suffered complete clutch failure on the first morning. Neyret had a painful rally with a burnt foot in bandages, and because of his foot injury had no self-made pace notes —only the organisers'—while the R17TSs' failed; Piot with a defunct clutch on the Meru-Embu section, and Simonian with a drive shaft on the first night. Therrier (Alpine) was also a first night victim with a seized engine.

Through thick and thin, however, the Andersson/Hertz Peugeot soldiered on, the only time lost on the entire rally being when rear brake pads were replaced. A minor mis-fire was cured with new fuel filters installed. Shankland's car was similarly ultra-reliable, again a slight mis-fire had developed but a new set of spark plugs put that to rights.

AUTOSPORT's full Safari report will be published next week.

1, O. Andersson/A. Hertz (Peugeot 504)	11h 58m
2, S. Munari/L. Drews (Lancia Stratos)	12h 36m
3, B. Waldegaard/H. Thorszelius (Lancia Stratos)	13h 57m
4, A. Cowan/J. Mitchell (Colt Lancer)	14h 31m
5, B. Shankland/C. Bates (Peugeot 504)	15h 01m
6, Z. Remtulla/N. Jirvani (Datsun 710)	16h 34m
7, J. Hellier/K. Shah (Datsun 160B)	18h 12m
8, D. Singh/R. Barnard (Colt Lancer)	19h 05m
9, F. Pundo/A. Levitan (Datsun 710)	19h 15m
10, Mr & Mrs Prem-Choda (Colt Lancer)	23h 01m
11, V. Preston Jnr/J. Lyall (Lancia Stratos)	23h 04m
12, J. Noon/J. Heather-Hayes (Colt Gallant)	23h 17m
13, B. Neyret/Jaques Terramorsi (Renault Alpine)	23h 37m
14, M. Singh/K. Doig (Datsun 1800SSS)	25h 58m

The custom-built Stratos was further adapted for the Safari's conditions — Bjorn Waldegaard finisned a lucky third overall



Safari — the accidents increase . .

A number of serious accidents, always a possibility with such a high speed rally, marred the Safari this year. The worst of which being to Kim Gatende's service crew which crashed on a road section, killing three of the vehicle's occupants. Gatende immediately withdrew.

Vic Preston Senior was injured (suspected spine damage) when he fell from the wind of a service car when being transported to a service point from his liaison plane.

Mme Chennisse, wife of Renault Alpine team leader, was also involved in an accident to which the "flying doctor" was called. Luckily, there was no injury.

Winner — Ove Andersson.



STOP PRESS NEWS

Rohrl for Welsh?

Stop-press news from Opel concerns the likelihood of Rohrl being entered on both the Welsh and the Scottish, while it is also likely that Rohrl will be tackling the Moroccan with an Ascona.

Stop-press news of the Acropolis indicates that the dates will be June 4th to 8th, staying clear of the Portuguese Port Wine Rally. Claude Fin, who used to organise the Monte Carlo Rally will be assisting with the Acropolis planning.

Coleman captures the 'Circuit'

—Brian Evans, Russell Brookes and Adrian Boyd star

BENSON & HEDGES
CIRCUIT of IRELAND INTERNATIONAL RALLY

Provisional results

1, B. Coleman/P. Phelan (Escort RS) 591.56s.
2, D. McCartney/T. Harryman (Porsche Carrera) 596.04.
3, B. Evans/R. Roderick-Jones (Porsche Carrera) 599.52.
4, A. Boyd/F. Main (Renault Alpine) 616.56.
5, R. Brookes/J. Brown (Escort RS2000) 617.09.
6, H. Morley/R. Saunders (Porsche Carrera) 617.22.
7, B. Fagan/K. Johnston (Escort RS) 650.34.
8, I. Gemmell/F. Bryden (Avenger) 652.03.
9, C. Gunn/H. McEvoy (Escort RS) 653.09.
10, P. Faulkner/M. Peters (Vauxhall Magnum) 655.00.

Picture spread — over page



Adrian Boyd and Frank Main enjoyed one of their best ever rallies with the unlikely near "bog" standard Renault Alpine. Suffering a huge power disadvantage and running without knowing where the next tyres might come from Adrian showed all of his old skill hurling the Alpine over the 61 special stages to finish in an excellent fourth position. Perhaps one other driver deserving even more credit than Adrian Boyd was Russell Brookes. Everything in the book was replaced in attempts to cure overheating, which always took them near to their lateness and on top of the engine problems the differential was replaced twice, and then repaired with pieces from the removed units to keep the Andrews Heat car going. A thoroughly amazing, if almost expected, performance from Russell Brookes and John Brown.

All of the best

Although the Aberdeen and District Motor Club may have suffered ill-luck in procurement of an overall sponsor for the Granite City Rally; they have certainly hit the jackpot on entries. Aberdeen is also likely to be crawling with that peculiar form of rally-parasite – journalists. All the old perennials are rumoured to be preparing for the journey north, a pilgrimage for the first public rally-appearaince of the new Mk 2 Escort RS to be driven by Roger Clark.

According to reliable sources, the "new look" car, virtually identical to the old car underneath and in all important mechanical aspects, has been in a sorted state for the past few weeks. The only significant test-finding being that the new car is fractionally slower. However, undeterred the new car for Roger Clark will undoubtedly prove a substantial crowd-puller and column-inch accumulator.

Also vying for a major share of spectator interest will be Will Sparrow (Magnum), Tony Pond, Tony Fowkes, Andrew Cowan, David "Piggy" Thompson, George Hill, Paul Faulkner, Tony Drummond, Billy Coleman, Colin Malkin, Brian Culcheth, Robin Eyre-Maunsell etcetera. Bolstering all the "big" names will be, of course, the top-Scots including Heggie, the Samsons, Bill Taylor, Findlay, McRae, Milne, Robson, Arneil, Howden, Crawford and the rest.

With the competitive motoring run on 70 top quality forest stage miles, the Granite City takes place on Saturday, April 12. A full preview will appear next week.

● Increased sponsorship has been given to Terry Brown, of Llanddarog, Carmarthen after being nominated Ford's rallyman of the month for February.

His performances this season, winning the Gwynedd Stages rally and a class win on the South West Stagds, have impressed Central Tyre Services Group, Carmarthen who have boosted support to £1,500 and paid for a ZF gearbox for the 230 bhp Escort.

Tough Chieftain

Mud, not so glorious mud, was the story of Sunday's Chieftain Rally held over the traditional ruthless tank testing grounds of Salisbury Plain.

Victory after a relatively trouble-free run over the 19 stages went to Malcolm Smith and Keith Baud in their 1760 cc Escort Mexico, Smith having driven consistently quickly while watching his rivals side-lined by mechanical failures.

The Chieftain was the second round of the *Cars and Car Conversions* Rally Championship and a full entry of 120 cars set out to do battle with the Army's notoriously rough yumps.

Heading the field was Terry Brown, February's Ford Rally Man of the Month, in the Central Tyres Escort RS. At number two were Mike Ranger/John Martin in their Imp while at three was Pat Ryan in the leading Allegro 1300 of the Western Mail/Team Howells, the Alligators and service barges looking exceptionally smart in their bright new colours.

Terry Kaby/Brian Rainson, leading the CCC Championship after the first round, were at number eight in their Mini. As befits a "club" rally the entry list showed a healthy variety of cars; Alan Cadogan and Eric Silbermann were to have problems in the mud with their Alpine Renault, and the mid-field was spiced with such things as a Triumph Vitesse, a Skoda, Beetle, Sprite, plus a handful of Army-entered Land Rovers and Range Rovers contesting a special four-wheel drive class.

From the start at the Beaufort Hotel, Bath, the route wound out into the country to the 2.5 mile opening stage of Lodge Camp.

The rally virtually ended here for Pat Ryan and Roger Smith when a diveshaft broke on their Allegro within sight of the finish. However, after taking a maximum, the team decided to persevere to see how the car would cope with the rough going and spent the afternoon trying different tyres and pressures.



Development is still continuing on the Allegro and after the event team manager Dave Ross was pleased with the way the bodyshell and the LSD had stood up.

Fast and deeply grooved Maddington followed, then Greenlands which was a two mile wet tarmac run. Then came the real car tester, the 2.5 mile Sidbury Hill, riddled with massive jumps and ruts.

Some of the entrances to stages were almost as rough as the stages themselves, none more so than the final stage before lunch at Milston Down where poor Eric Silbermann spent an unhappy 20 minutes wading in the mud trying to rescue their Alpine from a massive quagmire at the stage start. His efforts were in vain for the car finally retired on Stage 17.

At halfway David Jones/Rob Roebuck's Escort led by three seconds from Malcolm Smith with Ivor Jones/Bob Ward third. Stan dukes had already been slowed with a damaged wheel on stage six, something they were to repeat when the stage was re-run in the afternoon and Clarles Eveson/John Wilcox had suffered tyre problems.

After two new stages, the afternoon run repeated six of the morning stages, and although most of the day was dry and sunny, days of rain and snow had ensured that all stages would be very slippery and muddy. David Jones retired in mid afternoon to leave Malcolm Smith with a good lead which he held by some steady driving through the last stages.

Everyone who does the Chieftain knows it will be rough so there were no complaints about the tough stages. However two Mickey Mouse runs through narrow, very slimy tracks in woods at the end of the afternoon were not appreciated by many and one or two drivers slid expensively off into the trees.

Results were slow to come through, but when provisional results were put up they showed that Terry Kaby had won his class again, pleasing his new sponsors Dunham and Haines of Luton, by retaining his lead in the CCC Championship.

1, M. Smith/K. Baud (Escort Mexico) 2,759 pens; 2, I. Jones/R. Vard (Escort TC) 2,841; 3, R. Whittle-Williams/R. Hemmings (Escort RS) 2,873; 4, P. Shaw/D. Shaw (Escort RS) 2,886; 5, C. Eveson/J. Wilcox (Escort Mexico) 2,890; 6, T. Nicholas/R. Winter (Escort TC) 2,909; 7, R. Wall/A. Barnard (Escort TC) 2,928; 8, S. Dukes/P. Dukes (Escort RS) 2,936; 9, C. Barrell/R. Briscoe (Escort TC) 2,949; 10, D. Wallis/P. Mayhew (Escort TC) 2,956.

● Colin Malkin (Avenger) oil pressure fait resulted in piston failure. SS19. Had suffered gearbox problems earlier but had nevertheless amazed many with stage times.

● Roger Cree (Mini) engine seized, Moll's Gap, car slewed off road. Derek Boyd (Escort RS) Watts linkages required frequent welding, finally engine expired. Joe Pat O'Kane, big off into Porsche sized ditch SS51. Russell Brookes set fastest time on final stage. Brian Evans going v. quickly final night taking as much as 24s off McCartney on final stages, was within 55s, then puncture on SS59, lost 3 mins.



A sad end was in store for Brian Nelson's lightweight BMW, the car ending as a "ball of scrap" on Saturday afternoon, after going out of control on a fast downhill series of bends and brows on Sugar Hill. Up to that point Nelson, complaining of a lack of power, had been driving superbly and was holding eighth place. The pace of the rally claimed many top competitors including Roger Clark with a blown engine (while leading); Nigel Rockey with a cylinder head gasket (also while leading) and Cahal Curley with a dropped valve after completion of only three special stages.



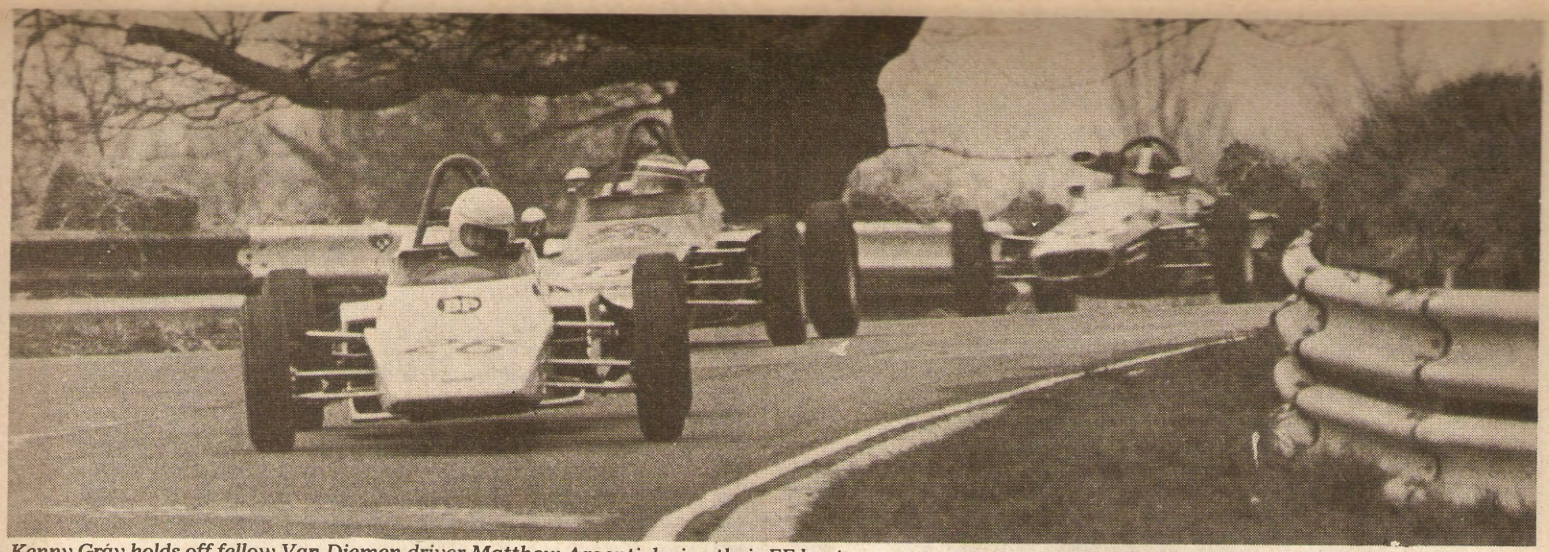
The end was already in sight for David Agnew, pictured above on the Sunday run around the Kerry loop. The Carrera's front wheel has already adopted a camber attitude which developed until the crew were forced out with a collapsed front strut. Dessie McCartney (2nd) suffered a variety of bothers including an inconsistent brake pedal, and tyre problems. Harold Morley's Porsche ran without fuss for sixth place, though towards the finish was over-hauled by Russell Bookes' incredible group one Escort RS.



Tough luck, possibly the toughest luck of the rally, came Will Sparrow's way. In second place and setting times which would have indicated he was to go to the top, Sparrow was first hampered with clutch problems and then was forced out by a sheared oil pump drive. George Hill, with the Martin Group car, suffered similarly cruel luck early on Monday when the crankshaft let go and ruined high hopes. Hill had been involved with more than his fair share of problems earlier in the rally, including a broken throttle cable and tyre problems. Hill had a moment on the Sunday run when his car shot through a dry stone dyke – luckily the entry speed prevented the car from feeling the effects of the wall. Hill had been momentarily distracted when he caught Derek Boyd on the stage.

Whoops! Brian Evans (third overall) has a time-consuming moment on the first afternoon's run but amply demonstrates the importance of the Circuit's "Look" notices. Spectators in silly places caused problems for many drivers, out in view of the massive spectator turn-out (blocking several narrow access roads) most behaved with commonsense. Evans drove superbly throughout the duration of the event and was slowed with clutch problems on the last day. Porsche driver Noel Smith was less lucky – rolling off the road on the Tim Healy Pass and winding up with co-driver Ian Turkington in hospital, though not seriously hurt.





Kenny Gray holds off fellow Van Diemen driver Matthew Argenti during their FF heat.

MALLORY PARK

Gray weather stops it

When a heavy shower of rain fell on Clerk of the Course Don Truman during the National Organs Formula Ford final at Mallory Park last Monday, he decided to call a halt at which time the leaders were half way round their 12th lap. They carried on for another lap or so in only moderately wet conditions but Kenny Gray was already declared the winner as leader at 11 laps which brought the main race of the BRSCC's holiday meeting to a rather unsatisfactory close. Gray had won one heat in his 1975 Van Diemen while the other saw Peter White have his first race and first win of the year in the DJ Bond Royale RP21 which has already tasted success at the hands of Geoff Lees. Starting dryish, the weather gradually turned unpleasantly wet but this didn't deter a large crowd from staying to the last event of the day, a Simoniz special saloon round which should have been won by Alec Poole in Derek McMahon's Skoda-BDG until it drowned on the last lap.

An indifferent midfield runner last season, Australian Jim Adamson has now found good form in his Van Diemen RF74 and it took Peter White five laps to oust him from the lead of the first FF heat. After that White carried on to an untroubled victory while Adamson had to work hard to fend off John Bright's old Merlyn which had profited from some bumping between Canadian Rod Bremner and Phil Dowsett in their Crosslé 25Fs at the hairpin on lap 7, when Bremner missed a gear. Dowsett, who had been second to Adamson on the first lap, came off worst and dropped to seventh. Mike Blanchet was giving his new Crosslé 30F its début and finished a satisfactory fifth.

The second heat was faster and was a straight two-car duel between South African Kenny Gray and Matthew Argenti, both in new Van Diemens. Gray led every lap from pole position but Argenti tried a big effort at the Esses on lap nine, almost made it but had to back off and lost too much ground to regain in the remaining distance. Richard Dutton's Titan Mk 6A was third, falling away from the leaders and into the clutches of another South African, newcomer Rad Dougall in a new Royale RP21.

The drizzle which had made the heats just a little damp turned to rain for the final and made for a rather tricky race until it was stopped, the majority of competitors having started on their dry Dunlops. Once again Kenny Gray went into the lead from pole with Argenti and White slotting in behind to be joined by Bright's Merlyn. Some gentle tapping by White at the hairpin on the third lap saw Argenti slipping to fourth but he had soon repassed Bright, who spun at the Esses two laps later and fell right out of it. White and Argenti then closed in on the leader but passing did not seem to be on, at least until the final couple of laps which never came. As the race came to an end, the fastest man on the track was Dowsett, who had worked his way up from 11th on lap one to be fourth, ahead of Blanchet's newer Crosslé, by the 10th. Not surprisingly he was credited with fastest lap but, even if the race had gone the full distance, he would probably not have caught the three leaders.

Derek Walker's Fiat 850 Coupé sat on pole position for the 1-litre Simoniz race but he was not particularly confident after the trouble at Oulton Park on Good Friday had been diagnosed as a missing drain plug. His fears were justified for the Ford-engined Fiat almost immediately began to misfire and there was nothing he could do about local man Martin Sellicks in the Marque Cars Racing Mini-Cooper S, one of the fastest "pure" Minis left in this class. Walker plodded on, the misfire getting worse, and managed to salvage third behind Peter Cartlidge's Austin A40-Ford which had had a fright on the first lap when George Hard's Cooper S spun out of fourth place at Devils Elbow when a front tyre deflated. Hard flicked the car out of the traffic at the judicious moment and a major accident was neatly avoided. Bill Barrett's Cooper S was fourth, minus part of its exhaust while Mike Beckett's Anglia fell from fifth to last with a mysterious fuel problem. Dr David Enderby once again won the 850 class with his Mini and looks a good bet for the championship if he carries on like this, the rest of the class being out of sight.

On paper the first Super Vee race of 1975 promised much but a 13-car grid was reduced to 11 starters and only six finishers from 19 entries. Looking more like a Formula Atlantic than anything seen in the formula before, Mike Young's Wallspan Modus M2, complete with rear aerofoil which is permitted under the new regulations, gave its driver and sponsors a pleasing first time win by a goodly gap from the shrinking pack. Commentator John Morrison, whose engine for his new Supernova BH5 has yet to arrive from Liechtenstein, promised that things would not be so easy next time. The battle for second eventually went the way of ex-FF man Barry Hopwood in the Mike Izzard/Thameside Trailers Royale RP18A after Ronnie Grant's own Taurus had lost its clutch on the line and the London taxi man had been forced to ease his pace. He still managed third ahead of Bill Burley's Royale and Tim Keen, having his first outing in a new works Supernova BH5. Bruce Venn's Elden PH14, second for the first two laps, had to retire for the irritating cause of an ignition lead falling off.

As a major move to restore the club's position among mod sports drivers, the BRSCC Midland Centre are running a championship for these cars and had attracted a full entry with some reserves. Alas, only 13 cars actually made it to the line and in the damp conditions no one could touch the immaculate Elan of John Evans who drove well within himself to score his first win from three pole positions so far this year in a car which has seen a lot of work during the winter. The other Elans of Richard Jenvey (a new body for 1975!) and Andrew Smith (the ex-VRM/John Pearson car) failed to start, both with valve troubles. Robin Gray's splendid Morgan Plus 8 was a worthy second overall and class winner while the anticipated battle for the 1150 cc class between Ken Allen's Clan Crusader and Barry Wood's Ginetta G15 never happened because the former, on his first visit to Mallory, spun at Gerards on the first lap while trying to drive round the Morgan, and spent the rest of the race making up for lost time. All the rest were lapped, their leader Andy Bailey's Mk 1 Sprite having thrown its fan belt and then broken a half shaft just before the finish.

Last of the day came the larger special saloons in cold and damp conditions to which the pole position Skoda of Alec Poole took exception. Anxious to show his car's speed while he could, Poole stormed into a vast lead from the fall of the flag and then, from the fourth lap onwards, had to sit and have it whittled away as the car lapsed on to fewer and fewer cylinders. On the last lap the pursuing Tony Sugden (Escort of course) and Tony Westbrook (1.3 Cooper S) went by and then the car died altogether on the back straight and Alec's efforts were all in vain. A first lap fracas at the Esses saw Nick Whiting's Escort in the wars again, this time when Paul Taft attempted to take the corner at his normal speed which appeared to be a good deal faster than Whiting's, and the door was kept closed. Taft was duly admonished by the Stewards, after a complaint from Whiting, presumably for not driving more slowly. . . . Both cars will have to be rebuilt.

IAN TITCHMARSH

Formula Ford 1600, Heat 1 (10 laps): 1, Peter White (Royale-Minister RP21), 8 m 52.2 s, 91.32 mph; 2, Jim Adamson (Van Diemen-Minister RF74), 8 m 53.6 s; 3, John Bright (Merlyn-Whitehurst Mk 11/11A), 8 m 53.8 s. **Fastest lap:** Bright, 51.6 s, 94.19 mph.

Formula Ford 1600, Heat 2 (10 laps): 1, Kenny Gray (Van Diemen-Scholar RF75), 8 m 46.8 s, 92.25 mph; 2, Matthew Argenti (Van Diemen-Scholar RF75), 8 m 47.4 s; 3, Richard Dutton (Titan-Brown Mk 6A), 8 m 54.2 s. **Fastest lap:** Gray and Argenti, 51.2 s, 94.92 mph.

National Organs Formula Ford 1600 Championship round (11 laps): 1, Gray, 11 m 24.4 s, 78.11 mph; 2, White, 11 m 25.0 s; 3, Argenti, 11 m 25.4 s; 4, Phil Dowsett (Crosslé-Minister 25F), 11 m 28.0 s; 5, Mike Blanchet (Crosslé-Minister 30F), 11 m 30.2 s; 6, Rod Bremner (Crosslé-Rowland 25F), 11 m 34.4 s. **Fastest lap:** Dowsett, 1 m 0.4 s, 80.46 mph.

Simoniz Special Saloon Car Championship round up to 1000 cc (10 laps): 1, Martin Sellicks (1.0 Mini-Cooper S), 9 m 27.0 s, 85.71 mph; 2, Peter Cartlidge (1.0 Austin A40-Ford), 9 m 48.4 s; 3, Derek Walker (1.0 Fiat 850 Coupé-Holbay), 9 m 57.0 s; 4, Bill Barrett (1.0 Mini-Cooper S), 9 m 57.6 s.

851 to 1000 cc class: 1, Sellicks, 85.71 mph; 2, Cartlidge; 3, Walker. **Fastest lap:** Sellicks, 55.6 s, 87.41 mph.

Up to 850 cc class: 1, David Enderby (850 Mini), 79.69 mph; 2, Clifford Watts (848 Hillman Imp); 3, David Haigh (850 Mini). **Fastest lap:** Enderby, 58.8 s, 82.65 mph.

Volkswagen (GB) Ltd Silver Cup Formula Super Vee Championship round (15 laps): 1, Mike Young (Modus-Heidegger M2), 12 m 39.2 s, 96.02 mph; 2, Barry Hopwood (Royale-Heidegger RP18A), 12 m 55.4 s; 3, Ronnie Grant (Taurus-Heidegger M24/01), 12 m 56.0 s; 4, Bill Burley (Royale-Heidegger RP18A), 12 m 58.6 s; 5, Tim Keen (Supernova-Heidegger BJ5, 13 m 0.2 s; 6, Tim Rathmell (Crosslé-Heidegger 24F), 13 laps. **Fastest lap:** Young, 48.6 s, 100.00 mph.

BRSCC Midland Centre Modified Sports Car Championship round (10 laps): 1, John Evans (1.8 Lotus Elan) 10 m 39.4 s, 76.01 mph; 2, Robin Gray (3.5 Morgan Plus 8), 10 m 50.4 s; 3, Barry Wood (1.1 Ginetta-Imp G15), 11 m 11.6 s; 4, Ken Allen (1.0 Clan Crusader-Imp), 11 m 28.8 s.

Over 3000 cc class: 1, Gray, 74.72 mph; only finisher. **Fastest lap:** Gray, 1 m 4.2 s, 75.70 mph.

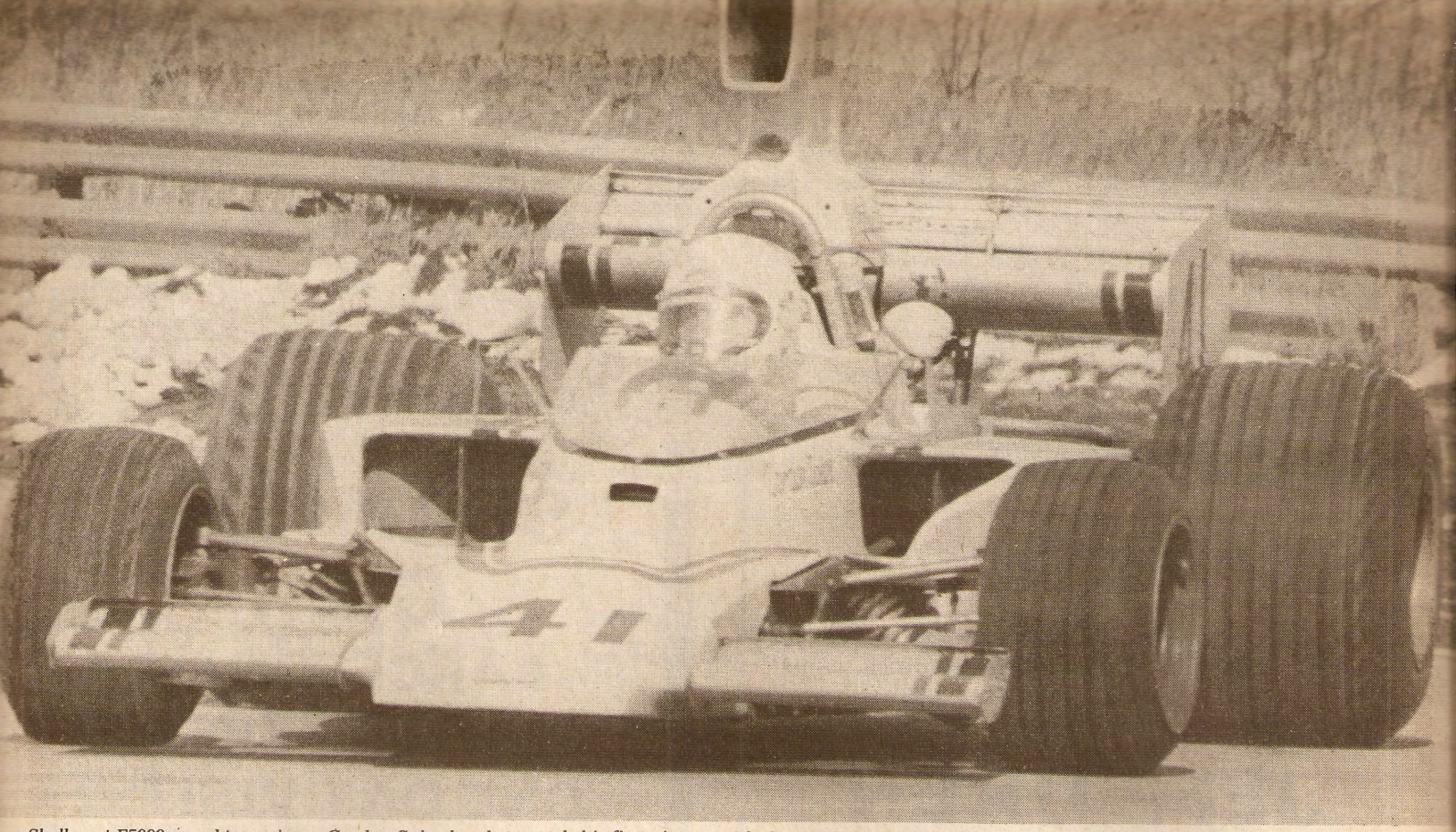
1151 to 2000 cc class: 1, Evans, 76.01 mph; 2, Richard Ward (1.3 MG Midget); 3, David Comley (1.6 MGA). **Fastest lap:** Evans, 1 m 1.6 s, 78.90 mph.

Up to 1150 cc class: 1, Wood, 72.36 mph; 2, Allen; 3, Peter May (1.1 Arkley SS). **Fastest lap:** Allen, 1 m 4.8 s, 75.00 mph.

Simoniz Special Saloon Car Championship round over 1000 cc (10 laps): 1, Tony Sugden (1.8 Ford Escort BDE), 10 m 36.6 s, 76.34 mph; 2, Tony Westbrook (1.3 Mini-Cooper S), 10 m 41.0 s; 3, Ian Blunt (1.3 Mini-Cooper S), 10 m 58.4 s; 4, Melvyn Crowther (3.0 Ford Capri 3000 GT), 11 m 31.4 s.

Over 1300 cc class: 1, Sugden, 76.34 mph; 2, Crowther; 3, Paul Storr (1.7 Ford Escort). **Fastest lap:** Alec Poole (2.0 Skoda S110R-BDG), 59.0 s, 82. 37 mph.

1001 to 1300 cc class: 1, Westbrook, 75.82 mph; 2, Blunt; 3, Edward Taylor (1.3 Mini-Cooper S). **Fastest lap:** Westbrook, 1 m 2.4 s, 77.89 mph.



Shellsport F5000 round two winner Gordon Spice heads towards his first victory with the Reed Racing Lola T332

OULTON PARK

Spice wins — Pilette tastes salt

By IAN TITCHMARSH **Photos by PETER McFADYAN**

Everyone came to Oulton Park last weekend expecting a new experience but thinking that this would be confined to the abbreviation of what used to be Britain's best circuit. Thrown in for good measure, however, was a heavy fall of snow which abruptly terminated Thursday practice and the aftermath of which had a radical effect on the second round of the Shellsport European Formula 5000 Championship. On a track covered in salt and bordered on both sides by thawing snow, and in bitterly cold temperatures, choice of tyres played a vital part and, when most of the faster drivers made the wrong selection, the final results had a rather topsy-turvy appearance. Fastest of those who selected to run the more suitable wets was Teddy Pilette who would have walked the race in one of the VDS Lola T400s had not the battery gone flat. Into his shoes stepped Gordon Spice in the Reed Racing Lola T332,who had earlier led and then held a steady second, to take his first F5000 win after competing in the formula since the days of the Kitchiner-Ford. Guy Edwards, after a dismal practice, worked his way up from the back row of the grid to take second from David Purley when the latter spun two laps from the finish. Fastest lap went to Dave Walker in the Thursdays/RAM Chevron at 1m 6.2s which constitutes the outright record for the new track.

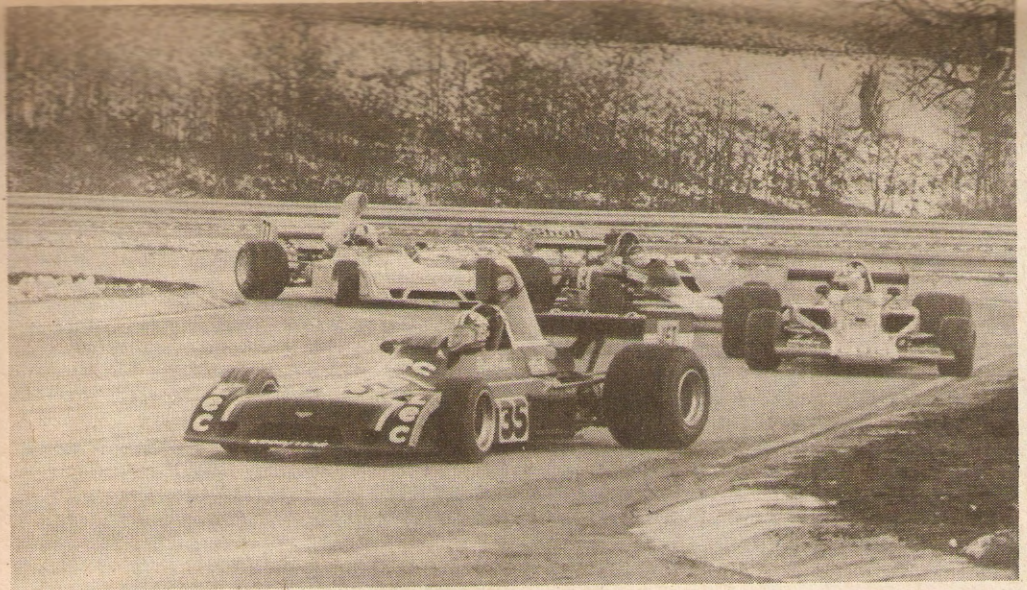
If the F5000 race was eventful to say the least, the other races were rather less so. Two poorly supported rounds of the Southern Organs/RAC Touring Car Championship were won by the familiar names of Stuart Graham and Andy Rouse with class wins to Gordon Spice and Win Percy. Once again Formula Ford 2000 could only muster a meagre 10-starters of whom Derek Lawrence was head-and shoulders above the rest in the works-assisted Crossle, while a *Daily Mail*-sponsored special saloon affair was little better and was won by Jim Evans in his turbocharged Escort. John Ellison and his men from the BRSCC NW Centre worked very hard indeed to make the meeting a success after the disastrous Thursday and they must have been well pleased with the large crowd which eventually turned up on Good Friday itself.

ENTRY & PRACTICE

By the time the F5000s should have been circulating on Thursday afternoon Oulton Park lay under several inches of snow so hasty reorganising provided them with an hour on Friday morning when the track was drying in places but still had snow thawing across it in others. At the start of the session, when it was wettest, two or three drivers stood out as motoring forcefully and with confidence. Foremost among these was Australian Dave Walker, a last minute nomination for the Thursdays/RAM Chevron B28 after his disappointing performance at Brands Hatch, which had ended in a crash but which was later discovered to be due to the wrong choice of tyres. The tub had been rebuilt at Bolton by Derek Bennett's own fair hand and then reassembled in less than 24 hours by John Macdonald's enthusiastic team so that when it appeared at the circuit it looked as immaculate as ever. Concentrating on wet tyres throughout the session, Dave eventually brought his time down to 1m 6.6s for pole position; a Morand engine provided the power. Maintaining his Brands form was the presently almost unsponsored Dane Tom Belso, who retains the number 208 in recognition of a little assistance from Radio Luxembourg but otherwise is having to run his Lola T300 out of a dwindling fund. The incident with Jochen Mass in the Race of Champions had done little damage but Tom had to spend half the session running in a new diff. When he did try for a flyer he found himself without fourth and fifth gears (not that the latter is much use on the new track) and had to over rev his Race Engine Services engine a little to achieve second best time of 1m 7.0s. Completing the three-car front row (a change of policy from the two-by-two line up which caused controversy at last year's Gold Cup) was David Purley in the Southern Organs/LEC Refrigeration/JET petroleum Chevon B30 under the beady eye of Stuart Turner because of the Ford/Cosworth V6 nestling in the back of this neat little car. As practice proceeded muck from the track made the throttle stick but not before Purley had recorded a time only 0.2s slower than Belso to show that the smaller capacity engine was the expected force to be reckoned with on the tight circuit.

Brands winner Ian Ashley came along with his Richard Oaten-sponsored T330 Lola once again, preferring to keep the T400 at home until it has proved itself. Confident as ever Ian was nevertheless worried about having to use wet tyres on a drying track and was one of many who commented unfavourably on the new corner, for which a polite name has still be be found. Indeed Ashley said that it was so slow, the engine was almost stalling and we failed to find one driver who had a good word to say for it. One of the many Roy Fewkes-prepared engines present was in the Oaten car and it recorded a time of 1m 7.4s. Alongside was the second prominent Australian Vern Schuppan in the Teddy Yip/Sid Taylor Lola T332 from last year, running one of Dave Whitehurst's engines. A time of 1m 8.0s was 1.4s better than the next man, Gordon Spice, in another T332, this one the ex-Brian McGuire car now entered by Reed Racing and prepared by Bob Gerard's former driver/mechanic Bob Salisbury. An excursion into the snow did not deter Spice on his return to the powerful single seaters and, with Fewkes power, he was well in contention. Damien Magee was another to confront the tricky conditions bravely in the Jim Kelly/Southern Organs Trojan T101, an ex-Sid Taylor car with a Whitehurst engine. Alas, the Ulsterman's aplomb got the better of him in the end at Druids and he overcorrected into the barrier, rubbishing a corner and rendering himself a non-starter after setting a time of 1 m 9.8 s for the middle of the third row and the last car under 70s.

Eight laps was all Brian Redman could manage in Tony Dean's ex-VDS Chevron B24/28-Whitehurst which has been "fettled" by Derek Bennett but was still in need of circuit-tuning for which there was no time left after a sticking throttle took 45 minutes to cure. Nevertheless Brian showed his calibre by recording a lap of 1m 10.6s to complete the third row. Tony Dean himself came next in his faithful two-year-old B24, which Bennett reckons is the best one he ever built and seems to prove it by going on unchanged for ever. Tony is playing it by ear at the moment but showed no less of his old skill by needing only three more laps than Redman to return 1m 11.0s, with Morand power. Brian Robinson, a sparring partner of Dean's from Rufforth and Croft *formule libre* races, showed the



First lap of the "new" corner with Purley leading Belso, Ashley and Walker.

potential of which his ex-F1 McLaren M19C should be capable by sharing the fourth row on a time 0.6s slower, the Morand engine in this car rebuilt by Tim Close Engineering.

Much further back than he would have wished, and wondering how he was going to make the car go any faster, was the 1973 champion Teddy Pilette in the first of the VDS Lola T400s, as usual running Morand engines. A time of 1m 12.0s seemed to be Pilette's limit in the car and it left him back on the fifth row beside Tom Walkinshaw in the Modus M5, the other car with a Ford V6 but a less powerful one than Purley's because the team's better engine, which had been loaned to Purley for Brands, had not been rebuilt in time to be installed in the smart white Modus. Tom was also hampered by a broken half shaft and only managed six laps for 1m 12.2s. One session at Goodwood earlier in the week was all the experience Richard Scott had had before Friday morning of F5000 power but he was settling in well with the Durex/McKechnie Lola T400 which has a Whitehurst Engine. Richard was delighted to find himself with such a good set-up but typically was anxious not to run before he could walk and pleased that the team did not expect fireworks first time out. A mysterious fuel starvation problem was causing the engine to die going up Clay Hill and Deer Leap and the cause was proving hard to find. A time of 1m 12.8s was a promising beginning.

Another jump of over a second took us to Trevor Twaites in his ex-Colin Hyams Lola T330 which he will be running for another season with Irishman Brendan McInerney. Trevor was so depressed by his Brands showing that he felt things could only improve, his car another to be powered by a Fewkes engine. Former Falcon and Mustang driver Dennis Leech has acquired the ex-Alan Brodie/Steve Thompson Chevron B24 (actually the first one built) and fitted one of his home-built engines. Although not at all happy with the car's handling, he was making progress after his slow race at Brands with a time of 1m 14.2s. The inside berth on the seventh row was a place which Peter Gethin would gladly have swapped for an armchair in front of the fire at home. Whatever they did to the VDS T400, it failed to improve matters so that Peter was in a thoroughly disgruntled frame of mind, no doubt made worse by seeing his 1974 car on pole position. His time of 1m 14.4s was equalled by Dutchman Leen Verhoeven who has hired the ex-Guy Edwards/Nick Wattiez Lola T330 from its current owner Chris Oates for several races. After inadvertently setting off the fire extinguisher, Verhoeven settle down to some steady laps.

Right out of it in practice at least were Brian McGuire in the ex-Bob Evans Lola T332, running an RES engine, and Guy Edwards in the well publicised Encyclopaedia Britannica-John Butterworth Lola T332 which ran last year in Embassy colours. McGuire's best lap was 1m 18.0s while Edwards only managed four, the best a 1m 23.4s, because the metering unit of his new Fewkes engine failed.

RACE

The first three rows lined up without Magee and all on slicks except Spice, who decided after one warming up lap that his were not going to work and changed to wets. Walker, after running the whole of practice and the warming up laps on wets, made a last minute change to plain slicks, as did Belso beside him. Purley, Ashley, Schuppan, Redman and Dean all opted for grooved slicks, Ashley's having the grooves cut laterally. Everyone else stayed on wets except Scott who chose a plain rubber.

To the accompaniment of much smoke and noise the impressive grid of 18 cars thundered into Old Hall with Purley getting the lightweight Chevron off the line best to head Belso and Ashley although the latter was pushed back to third by Walker in a brave move at the new corner. At the end of the lap Purley still led Belso with Walker in close pursuit and then came Ashley with Pilette already right behind from his fifth row start. As Ashley came out of Deer Leap he felt the car begin to wobble and by the time he had reached the end of the pits the car was out of control and heading for the barriers, where it ended its race with a bent monocoque at the front and a broken half shaft, possibly weakened in the first lap fracas, at the rear. Schuppan, Walkinshaw and Spice scrabbled past but Redman had to go snow-ploughing and covered himself and his visor in mud and slush. The rest of the runners had completed the first lap in the order Dean, Robinson, Edwards, Verhoeven, Twaites, Gethin, McGuire, Leech and Scott. Of the last two Leech had run off the circuit at the nameless new corner after outbraking several cars while Scott had been badly held up by a car in front at the start and had been last away.

For the first few laps Purley controlled the pace while Spice made spectacular progress from eighth on lap one to fourth on lap two, second a lap later and into the lead past Purley at Old Hall on the sixth lap. On slicks Belso soon fell away just as dramatically as Spice went forwards, the Dane finishing the sixth lap in eighth position although Walker was managing rather better on his unsuitable tyres and succeeding in keeping Pilette out of third position until lap eight when the Belgian swept past both Chevrons in one lap to move into second. A lap later Pilette had gobbled up Spice at Old Hall and immediately began to pull away, being obviously the fastest man on the track. Spice was left to the mercy of Purley, Walker and Walkinshaw who had moved the Modus up well despite having to drive on the ignition switch thanks to a sticking throttle. On lap 10 he demoted Walker to fifth but it was not to last and before he could deal with the similarly-powered Chevron of Purley, the fuel pressure dropped and he coasted to a halt near Cascades.

The pit stops began with Brian Redman who called it a day on his sixth lap, unable to see through his filthy visor and reckoning that the car's handling did not make it worth continuing by the time he had either fitted a new one or cleaned the old one. Scott was the first to call in for a change to wets on his 10th lap, after which he was going as well as anyone except Pilette until the fuel starvation problem set in worse than ever. Gethin stopped a lap later with a puncture and also to change the plugs, soon after Pilette had lapped him to make him even more miserable, and although he continued later, it was at very un-Gethin-like speeds. Dean, too, stopped for a tyre change but one of the wheels was not put on its locating pegs correctly and after a few more laps at ever-decreasing speed, he gave up the struggle.

As the Modus disappeared from the race so Edwards arrived on the scene after sorting his way well from the very back of the grid so that by lap 16 he was past Walker and chasing Purley for third with Spice by now drawing away from the Chevron again. Two laps later Belso's quandary about whether to stop for wets or not was solved when one of the rear tyres deflated and he came in from ninth place. In even worse handling trouble was Schuppan who was a lowly 11th from which he never really improved after three spins at various stages of the race. On lap 20 Edwards finally found a way past Purley to take over third. For a few laps, as half distance approached, the race order settled down with 15 cars still running and the next five still on the same lap as the flying Pilette in the order Spice, Edwards, Purley, Walker and Robinson who was unobtrusively keeping up a fast pace which took him up to fifth when Walker brought the Chevron in at exactly half distance for a change of tyres. Purley had at least a triple and possibly a quadruple spin down the Avenue after a misunderstanding about lines with Verhoeven's Lola but was able to continue still in fourth place without hitting anything.

Although Pilette was still keeping up a cracking pace, Belso was now the fastest man on the track after his pit stop but he was down among the back markers in 13th position when Walker rejoined a lap and a place in front after a rather slow tyre change. Walker soon assumed Belso's mantle and brought the lap record down and down, finally leaving it at 1m 6.2s. All this effort was rewarded in the end with a mere seventh place but his performance should ensure his place in the team for the rest of the year. Belso's reward was even less – ninth.

With 20 laps still to run the engine note of the leading Lola suddenly changed. Was Pilette's 1974 luck, when he led race after race only to hit trouble, returning? A few laps later the answer was very definitely in the affirmative as the Lola headed for the pits with a chronic misfire. Spice, Purley and Edwards, who had changed places a few laps earlier, all went by while the VDS mechanics discovered that the trouble was a flat battery and decided it was better to continue as fast as possible with the old one than waste time changing it. A long wait at the pits exit held the

Picturesque paddock snow-scene; or why practice was stopped on Thursday.



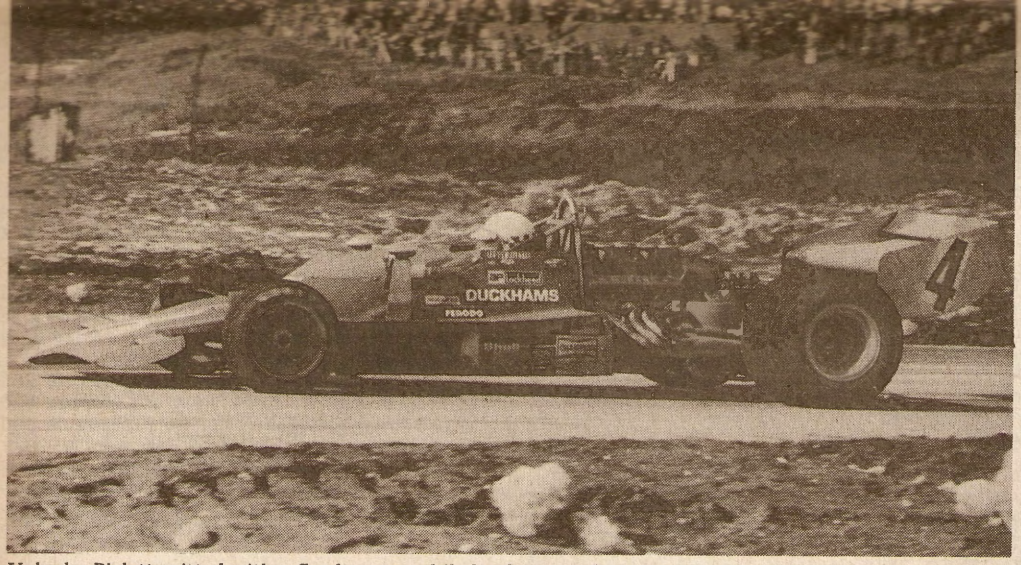
losing several places but his caution had been justified for the engine expired in a cloud of smoke opposite the pits not many laps later.

The final 10 laps saw the first semblance of a stable order but by no means everything was settled. Spice seemed able to control the race from the front but Purley was still trying hard on his unsuitable tyres to close the gap. Too hard as it turned out for, with only two laps left, the Chevron spun again, this time at the new corner and by the time David had it straightened out, Edwards was past once more to claim second place. Robinson was lapped by Spice just before the finish but still took a worthy fourth while Twaites ousted the unlucky Pilette from fifth with two laps to go. Walker, Leech and Belso finished a further lap behind, while the troubled Schuppan and Scott almost dead-heated for the last championship point although the timekeepers had the Scotsman in front by a mythical 1.6s.

Shellsport European Formula 5000 Championship, round 2
Oulton Park, March 28
50 laps, 82.70 miles

1 Gordon Spice (Lola-Fewkes/Chevrolet T332), 1 h 0 m 29.0 s, 82.04 mph.
2 Guy Edwards (Lola-Fewkes/Chevrolet T332), 1 h 0 m 53.6 s.
3 David Purley (3.4 Chevron-Cosworth/Ford B30) 1 h 0 m 54.4 s.
4 Brian Robinson (McLaren-Close/Chevrolet M19C), 49 laps.
5 Trevor Twaites (Lola-Fewkes/Chevrolet T330), 49 laps.
6 Teddy Pilette (Lola-Morand/Chevrolet T400) 49 laps.
7 Dave Walker (Chevron-Morand/Chevrolet B28), 48 laps, 8 Dennis Leech (Chevron-Leech/Chevrolet B24), 48 laps, 9 Tom Belso (Lola-RES/Chevrolet T330), 48 laps. 10 Richard Scott (Lola-Whitehurst/Chevrolet T400), 45 laps, 11 Vern Schuppan (Lola-Whitehurst/Chevrolet T332), 45 laps. 12 Peter Gethin (Lola-Morand/Chevrolet T400), 43 laps.

Fastest lap: Walker, 1 m 6.2 s, 89.85 mph (outright and F5000 record).



Unlucky Piclette pitted with a flat battery while leading comfortably with his VDS Lola

Belgian up even more so that he was only just ahead of Robinson when he re-entered the race and was soon passed by the ex-F1 car to be fifth. A lap after Pilette's stop, Walker blasted past McGuire coming out of Druids, put the power on a little too soon, and twitched into the Lola, putting his fellow Australian into a spin which ended with minor frontal damage against the bailey bridge barrier. Verhoeven who had been following Twaites as the two T330s progressed through the field, peeled off into the pits complaining of overheating. He was sent on his way again after

RAC/Southern Organs G1

Graham and Rouse score again

Twenty-seven Group 1 saloons practised which, on the old circuit, would have made a nice gridful. With the 24-car limit imposed on the new shortened thing, two races were called for and, by the time practice had finished, both had only half full grids. Before the snow started falling on Thursday morning the lesser saloons had completed their session and the Camaros and Capris had started theirs. They were all given a second go on Friday morning in with the special saloons on a damp and salted track. By dint of using intermediates at the right time Jenny Birrell stole a march on everyone to put her Halesfield Avenger GT on pole position for the first race alongside the two Triumph Team Piranha Dolomite Sprints of which Roger Bell's was just the faster. Of note further back was a new Toyota Celica GT built up from a road car by the Samuri team with the engine from the Brands wreck for Win Percy and Bill Sydenham's 1970 Lotus Cortina Mk 2 which was faster than Tony Dron's Penthouse Alfa GT Junior and David Vizard's Avenger GT. Barrie Williams broke the diff of the Japanese Air Lines/Team Castrol Mazda RX3 and fitted the one from the Brian Muir Brands car for the race.

Andy Rouse soon showed who was boss when the flag fell and led the 11-car field into Old Hall, never to be headed. For a lap Jenny Birrell gamely hung on to second in the smaller Avenger before Bell dutifully slotted in behind his team leader, leaving Jenny to struggle with her team mate Bernard Unett, who rudely pushed the lady aside at the new corner on the third lap to take third place. The Mazda had taken a few laps to get going but Whizzo soon had it on song, passing the Avengers and chasing the Dollies. The tail started to be hung out in typical fashion but on lap 10 Barrie spun at the new corner, rode up the ridiculously high FIA kerbs, bent a steering arm and collected a slow puncture. Undeterred, he carried on once more making inroads into the Triumphs' lead until there was less than five secs covering all three cars at half distance. Then the petrol pump diaphragm on Bell's car played up, emptied the vital fluid away and sent *Motor*'s editor into the pits for repairs and replenishment.

Williams then set about Rouse but despite the fan belt falling off the latter's Dolomite on the second lap, obliging him to do without overdrive whenever possible, and a slow puncture of his own, Andy kept things under control to win by three secs. Percy, despite a moment on the grass at Old Hall when chasing Unett, still won the class because the 1974 champion spun at the new corner with eight laps left and fell far behind. John Hine found on the first lap that a change of prop shaft after practice had failed to cure a severe vibration under braking and spun the Bill Shaw/Shellsport Dolomite at Lodge on the first lap. He carried on with unsuitable slicks, stopped at the pits for a brief consultation about the brakes, and eventually finished sixth behind Jenny Birrell. Stan Clark retired his faster of the two Penthouse Alfas with a flat front tyre caused by the silly kerbs, leaving Dron to battle past Vizard just before the end. Sydenham retired the Lotus Cortina with a petrol leak.

After the Capris of Les Blackburn and Stuart Rolt had mated at Lodge in practice, and Tony Shaw had withdrawn his Southern Organs Camaro with clutch trouble, there were just 14 cars to contest the second G1 event. Blackburn had been hoping to give his new Hermetite Capri II its first outing but spun at Lodge and was collected by Rolt's ex-Walkinshaw Capri I before he could escape. This left only four cars in the 4-litre class, a newcomer being former Cobra and TR6 driver Shaun Jackson in Chris Marshall's Ottershaw Motors Opel GS/E which is the ex-Peter Hanson Tour of Britain RHD car, not to be confused with Mike Woolley's which is the ex-Hanson racer. Tony Fall was present but without a car since the engine was still on its way from Germany. Of the Camaros, Richard Lloyd's was still the only one with 7442 as opposed to 5733 cc, but he was not happy with the power output and could not compete with arch-rival Stuart Graham for pole position.

Although Vince Woodman managed to lead away from the line from the middle of the front row with his VMW Motors/Esso Uniflo Camaro, while Tony Lanfranchi stalled the Hemi Cuda on the outside and held up Lloyd, it was the sweet smelling Brut of Graham which wafted past the pits in the lead at the end of the first lap with Woodman in vain pursuit. Already these two had opened up a big lead with Malcolm Wayne initially third in his Camaro from a recovered Lanfranchi in his Southern Organs Chrysler. Jackson led the 4-litres but not for long for a misfire set in over 4000 rpm and he soon fell behind the Wisharts Capris of Gordon Spice and Bill Gubelmann. For 12 laps Woodman chased Graham's rapidly disappearing Camaro before a big end failed which left the leader so far in front that, when Lanfranchi brought the Hemi Cuda in with a broken exhaust valve, he was in with a chance of lapping what was left. This he duly did by passing an unhappy Lloyd opposite the pits with four laps to go, the other Camaros finishing behind Spice's class-winning Capri in the order Brian Pepper, Malcolm West, Malcolm Wayne and John Brindley. John Olding retired his Camaro on the first lap with no clutch and Jon Fletcher not long after with collapsed rear springs.

Unett's Halesfield Motors Avenger goes farming, losing its driver's class lead.





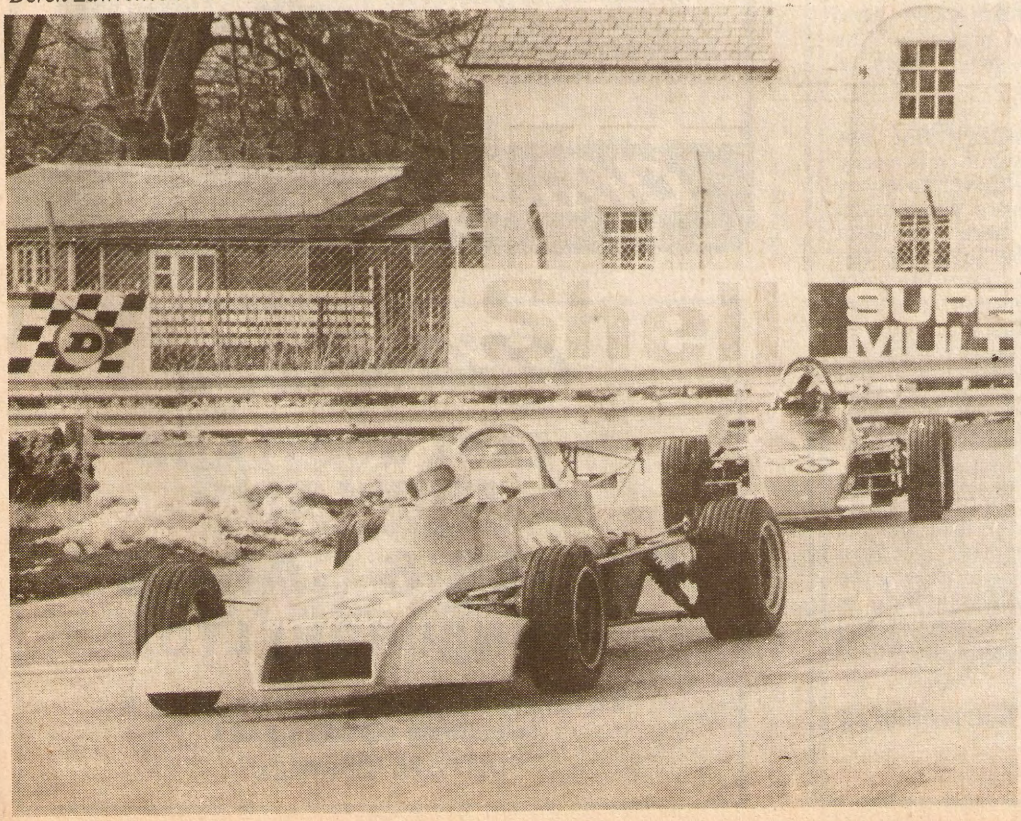
Familiar scene in progress as Andy Rouse's Piranha Dolomite heads for another win.

SUPPORTING RACES

Formula Ford 2000 doesn't improve but may well do given time. Derek Lawrence won the third round of the Allied Polymer Championship with consummate ease in his works-assisted Crossle 31F leading for all but the first half lap and drawing further and further away from Bernard Vermilio's new side-radiatored Merlyn Mk 28. Chris Pryer's threat to Vermilio in the new works MRE evaporated with a spin at the new corner but there was a dice of sorts going on for fourth between Syd Fox (Hawke DL14), David Cole (MRE 75SF), Wil Arif (Palliser P742) and Frank Hopper (Crossle 31F) in which the two veterans Fox and Cole established ultimate supremacy while the new boys fell out and Hopper finished with a bent nose.

Celebrating its new association with Oulton Park the *Daily Mail* let its motoring correspondent loose on a page in the programme which would not have been out of place in Bert Fegg's Nasty Book and also sponsored a special saloon race. With a £15 first prize and an entry fee of £6 it was hardly surprising there were few takers. Of the 12 starters Jim Evans kept his turbocharged Escort RS2000 in front for nine of the 10 laps, the first having been led by the cheeky Fiat-Ford of Derek Walker which paid for its impudence by suffering a blown head gasket before the end. Dave Millington's Firenza never settled down on the cold and salty surface and failed to make any progress from a 10s delayed start so it was left to Phil Hartley's 1-litre Mini to take second place ahead of the Escort TC of Steve Phillips.

Derek Lawrence cruised the FF2000 race with his Crosle 31F by 23s from Vermillio (Merlyn).



RAC/Southern Organs Touring Car Championship, round 3 Oulton Park, March 28.

Up to 2500 cc (30 laps): 1, Andy Rouse (2.0 Triumph Dolomite Sprint), 41m 1.8s, 72.56 mph; 2, Barrie Williams (2.3 Mazda RX3 Coupé), 41m 4.8s; 3, Win Percy (1.6 Toyota Celica GT), 42m 9.0s; 4, Bernard Unett (1.6 Hillman Avenger GT), 42m 19.8s; 5, Jenny Birrell (1.6 Hillman Avenger GT), 29 laps; 6, John Hine (2.0 Triumph Dolomite Sprint), 29 laps.

1601 to 2500 cc class: 1, Rouse, 72.56 mph; 2, Williams; 3, Hine; 4, Roger Bell (2.0 Triumph Dolomite Sprint); only starters. **Fastest lap:** Williams, 1m 19.4s, 74.99 mph (new record).

Up to 1600 cc class: 1, Percy, 70.63 mph; 2, Unett; 3, Birrell; 4, Tony Dron (1.6 Alfa Romeo GT junior); 5, David Vizard (1.6 Hillman Avenger GT); only finishers. **Fastest lap:** Percy, 1m 22.6s, 72.09 mph (new record).

Over 2500 cc (30 laps): 1, Stuart Graham (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28), 39m 24.8s, 75.53 mph; 2, Richard Lloyd (7.4 Chevrolet Camaro Z28), 29 laps; 3, Gordon Spice (3.0 Ford Capri II 3000GT), 29 laps; 4, Brian Pepper (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28), 29 laps; 5, Malcolm West (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28), 29 laps; 6, Malcolm Wayne (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28), 29 laps.

Over 4000 cc class: 1, Graham, 75.53 mph; 2, Lloyd; 3, Pepper; 4, West; 5, Wayne; 6, John Brindley (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28). **Fastest lap:** Graham, 1m 16.8s, 77.53 mph (new record).

2501 to 4000 cc class: 1, Spice, 72.90 mph; 2, Bill Gubelmann (3.0 Ford Capri II 3000GT); 3, Shaun Jackson (2.8 Opel Commodore GS/E); 4, Mike Woolley (2.8 Opel Commodore GS/E); only starters. **Fastest lap:** Spice, 1m 18.6s, 76.76 mph (new record).

Allied Polymer Formula Ford 2000 Championship round (20 laps): 1, Derek Lawrence (Crossle-Thomas 31F), 24m 5.4s, 82.39 mph; 2, Bernard Vermilio (Merlyn-Scholar Mk 28), 24m 28.2s; 3, Chris Pryer (MRE-Rowland 75SF), 24m 40.0s; 4, Syd Fox (Hawke-Holbay DL14), 24m 51.0s; 5, David Cole (MRE-Rowland 75SF), 24m 57.0s; 6, Wil Arif (Palliser-Minister P742), 24m 59.8s. **Fastest lap:** Lawrence, 1m 10.8s, 84.10 mph (new record).

Daily Mail Special Saloon Trophy (10 laps): 1, Jim Evans (2.0 Ford RS2000 Turbo), 13m 54.2s, 71.38 mph; 2, Phil Hartley (1.0 Mini-Cooper S), 14m 1.2s; 3, Steve Phillips (1.6 Ford Escort TC) 14m 2.4s.

Over 1300 cc class: 1, Evans, 71.38 mph; 2, Phillips; 3, Dave Millington (2.3 Vauxhall Firenza t/c). **Fastest lap:** Evans, 1m 20.0s 74.43 (new record).

1001 to 1300 cc class: 1, John Davies (1.3 Mini-Cooper S) 65.08 mph only finisher. **Fastest lap:** Evans, 1m 20.0s. 71.74 mph (new record).

851 to 1000 cc class: 1, Hartley, 70.78 mph; 2, George Hard (1.0 Mini-Cooper S); 3, Ron Hough (1.0 Mini-Cooper S). **Fastest lap:** Derek Walker (1.0 Fiat 850 Coupe-Holbay), 1m 22.0s, 72.61 mph (new record).

Correspondence

The editor is not bound to agree with readers' opinions

Inside information

What a very good report on the Brands Hatch Race of Champions. I am not too keen on the apparent innuendoes, but even so, a very interesting report with a lot of inside information (instead of pure fact alone) which lends depth to the story, and enables one to picture the scene more lucidly.

Also, I am glad to see that at last, Rolf Stommelen is getting the publicity he deserves. He has more experience than a lot of people think. He is a drive anything anywhere *racing* driver. A hard trier, who, in the tradition of sportscar drivers, will get the car home when the weather and/or track conditions are bad, and when the car is giving trouble. He has a style that is exciting to watch, and is the only driver to make the Lola look like an F1 car (Edwards, Gethin, and sadly, Graham Hill are not in the same class). I am looking forward to a good result for Stommelen in the near future.

ANDREW CHATBURN

PRESTON, LANCS.

Fittipaldi's warning

I think it is about time that somebody warned Emerson Fittipaldi that by his uninspired driving, and 'couldn't care less' attitude, which he has adopted during his most recent British races, he is in great danger of losing the support of many fans, myself included, which had been so great not so long ago.

For instance, during the 1972 season, Emerson captured the hearts of British fans, with four victories, including his epic duel with Stewart at the Grand Prix.

Yet at the Race of Champions last year, when drivers such as Ickx, Lauda, Hailwood and Pescarolo put on a great show in the terrible conditions, pleasing a soaked crowd, Fittipaldi just circulated, making little attempt at 'real racing'. The same is just about true of his showings at the Grand Prix, and at this year's Race of Champions. As if this wasn't enough, he has also been moaning loudly about the situation regarding F5000 cars in the British races, a problem which those who prefer to entertain the crowd do not consider worth wasting their breath about. Perhaps if he put all into his racing once again, and recapture his form of 1972, we would all have a little more respect for the 'World Champion'.

RICHARD S. LANDER

MANCHESTER M20.

Brittan challenged

This letter has been prompted by an article which appeared in Nick Brittan's column in your March 13 issue. In the piece, entitled "No Smokes Without Fire" Mr Brittan starts by saying "There are always two sides to every story . . ." and then proceeds to tell only one side of a particular story.

May I now be afforded the opportunity of telling the other side?

First let me say that we, in Canada, have nothing but the greatest respect for Jean-Pierre Jaussaud. He is a very talented driver, and above all a tremendous individual who appreciates the promotional problems of motor racing, far more than many other drivers. He would be a welcome addition to any race or series.

But, on the problem at hand, When Jean-Pierre competed in Canada in '73 and '74 it was in the Atlantic Race at Trois-Rivieres which is not part of the Player's Challenge Series Championship. It is a separate race, sponsored by Molson's Breweries, which runs after our Championship Series is finished.

The organisers of this event always bring in a few drivers from Europe, preferably Francophones and it gives our regular Player's drivers, who make up about 98 per cent of the field, a chance to try on some of the imported hot-shots.

At last year's event Jaussaud heard some very good reports about the calibre of our Championship Series and remarked that he would be interested in running the full season in Canada.

On October 9 Jean-Pierre wrote to me saying that he was trying to put together a deal for the 1975 Player's Series and would another Tobacco Company identification, he ran Gitanes at Trois-Rivieres, pose a problem in the Player's races.

We replied that "in our (CASC) opinion decals or sponsorship from another Tobacco Company would not be in the best interest of the Series and could possibly lead to an advertising conflict which in the long term could affect our relationship with Player's." We went on to say "for this reason it would be very much appreciated if he could arrange another form of sponsorship of a non-conflicting nature."

Our reason for making these comments should be quite obvious. Player's have been involved in motorsport in Canada for 14 years. Our relationship has been both harmonious and beneficial to the growth of Canadian racing.

The Player's Challenge Series has grown tremendously over the past few seasons and the potential in quality of racing and public acceptance is unlimited. It is presently the only fully sponsored road racing series in North America. In 1975 each race purse will be $20,000 and all the races will be televised nationally. Entries in 1974 ranged from a low of 28 to a high of 52 and we expect an average entry in 1975 of something over 40 cars.

None of this would exist without the very generous support of Player's and we don't want the series to turn into a corporate pushing and shoving match which in the end will only jeopardise the long term benefits to a large number of competitors in favour of the short term advantages of one or two.

Nick's statement that the sponsors had the rules rewritten is just not true. The regulations do not contain such a clause, nor have they ever, and Player's would not ask us to insert one. In 14 years of dealing with Player's they have never attempted to write the rules and the same applies to other companies with which we have a pleasant working relationship.

We like to think that one of the cornerstones on which we have built this relationship is our ability to have a sympathetic feeling for the needs and objectives of a commercial corporation and to govern our affairs in a manner which will satisfy both the sport and the sponsor.

Incidentally, our sponsor is Player's Cigarettes, a division of Imperial Tobacco Limited, not "John Player's" as has been reported several times in your magazine.

Trusting that the foregoing will given you a little insight into the other side.

R. J. HANNA
Executive Director

CANADIAN AUTOMOBILE SPORTS CLUBS, TORONTO.

Of two-strokes

Motor racing enthusiasts cannot have helped noticing the slow domination of all kinds and all classes of motor cycle sport by two stroke engined machines. The next step would surely be an entry into car racing. The two stroke offers advantages in simplicity, bph/lbs and bhp/litre.

However, in investigation, I find that the only class where a two stroke engine would be allowed by the regulations is in Formula One. The other formulae state that the engine should be based on a production unit; the main argument in favour of this being one of cost. When one calculates the cost of converting a Chevrolet for F5000 or BMW or Ford for Formula 2, the cost of developing a relatively simple two stroke engine does not seem so great.

There must be some disadvantages, one may say. I think the main disadvantage is peoples' ignorance of the design. Much theoretical work has been carried out in the past ten years and the two stroke has evolved way beyond the smelly moped or smoky lawn mower engines.

I have done some research into the two stroke engine and would dearly love the opportunity to help design, build and develop a competitive engine for car racing. Perhaps any interested people could contact me before noise laws, pollution laws and lack of petrol halt racing forever.

C. P. FORSTER BSc

CHELMSFORD, ESSEX.

Thanks to Esso

ON behalf of the Southern Region of the British Motor Racing Marshals Club I would like to thank Esso Petroleum and Esso Chemicals for extending the use of their magnificent fire training facilities at their Fawley Refinery last Sunday and for their generous hospitality in entertaining marshals from this region and their invited colleagues from the ranks of the BARC and BRSCC. All those present were given ample opportunity of fighting substantial fires both individually and as part of a team and I know they will all be more valuable assets to the sport as a result of this experience.

My sincere gratitude goes to all those concerned in the organisation of this event but a special thank you to the Esso Fire Instructors who gave up their day off for a 'busman's holiday.'

I know that days such as these not only benefit the sport as a whole but do much to promote goodwill between clubs.

D. C. STEEL
Regional Fire Training Officer

BRITISH MOTOR RACING MARSHALS CLUB LTD.

Faintly ridiculous

As a regular reader of your magazine, it has saddened me considerably to read of the ever-increasing number of brick-bats being hurled about, the snide remarks and the underlying insinuations of incompetence of both competitors and organisers, therefore it gives me great pleasure to write this letter and hand out a few bouquets.

The BWRDC is fortunate in having my good friend, Judy Andreason, as chairman. As well as being a competent driver and an excellent administrator she will protect the members of the Club from the sometimes faintly ridiculous criticisms made by the male fraternity of women drivers.

Incidentally I would like to congratulate Wendy Markey and Susan Tucker-Peake on their excellent results at Oulton last weekend. I wish Davina Galica all the luck in the world, she has had a raw deal at the beginning of her career in motor racing, but I think her undoubted skill will overcome the burden of having been thrown in at the deep end. I hope also that Juliette Slaughter when she says "not take ourselves too seriously" means that our members will never forget that motor racing is a sport.

Although I have retired from regular competition now for two years, I would like to take this opportunity to say "thank you" to anybody who may remember me, who helped to give me the most wonderful and exciting time in my thirteen years of motor racing.

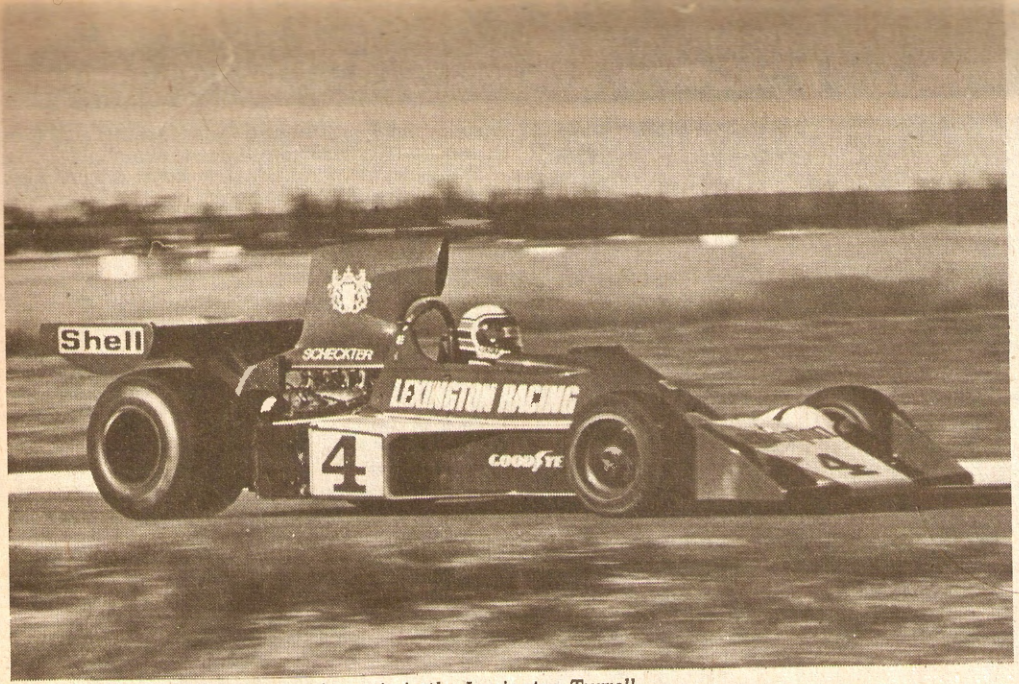
I am very proud that my club have elected to make me their first president.

HICKSTEAD, SUSSEX. MARY L. WHEELER

This week's centre spread . . .

Continuing their allegiance with the young Japanese driver Masami Kuwashima in Formula 2 for a second successive season are Graviner and Sanyo. Both have supported Japan's brightest hope for future Grand Prix honours ever since he first came to Britain to race Formula 3 back in the middle of 1972. Once again, Kuwashima's latest March-BMW 752 will carry the distinctive colours throughout the European F2 championship trail of the fire extinguisher and life support manufacturers together with the hi-fi specialists. Graviner themselves are very much involved in racing and are universally known through their safety equipment. Their efforts were rewarded last year when they became the latest recipients of the coveted AP award. Kuwashima made his debut in the Graviner/Sanyo March-BMW at Thruxton last weekend.

Photograph by David Winter



Ian Scheckter on his way to his first win in the Lexington Tyrrell.

GOLDFIELDS

Ian Scheckter's lucky win

It is not the norm for South African "F1" races to remain interesting from start to finish. The Goldfields 100, staged at the Goldfields Raceway by a friendly band of amateur race fans, fortunately proved to be an exception to this norm. The race was an incident packed affair which saw fortunes changing rapidly throughout the event.

A field of 10 cars came under starters orders with Dave Charlton on pole position with Ian Scheckter next to him. Scheckter made his customary ultra quick getaway and held the lead for the most part of lap one until he spun dropping down to fifth. Scheckter recovered quickly and began to work his way back towards the front while Charlton continued unchallenged. The flying Scheckter first reeled in Mike Domingo, then Guy Tunmer which left only Eddie Keizan and Charlton in the way of victory. Keizan however proved difficult to pass and it was quite some time before Scheckter succeeded in getting past. Once by Scheckter could make little impression on a comfortable Charlton. With three laps to go the reigning Champion's car was heard to miss and a lap later Charlton was in the pits for fuel which was taken on rather hastily and resulted in disqualification. So it was Ian Scheckter who had a lucky win, his first in the new car.

ENTRY AND PRACTICE

Officially 12 cars were entered although only 11 could be expected to start the event. The 12th car being the Chevron B25 F2 car of Lexington Racing which was entered as a spare car for either Ian Scheckter or Roy Klomfass to drive should their normal cars suffer irreparable damage before the event. Dave Charlton had his usual McLaren M23 which had been altered from its S.A. GP form. Whereas the car had previously been in the same form as the works cars of late last year it had now been changed back to short wheelbase form as raced by Charlton last year. The only revised bits being used were the air intake system and rear wing. Charlton said that he felt the car was far too difficult to balance in uprated form and that it just had no feeling. He had thus opted to change back to the old spec which only required minor adjustments to roll bars at the various circuits once set up properly. Nevertheless he took pole position at 1m 23.6s.

The Lexington Racing mechanics had been hard at work since the GP repairing the damage done to Ian Scheckter's Tyrrell 007 in that event. In addition the new coil spring rear suspesion set up had been made available to the team by the works. The matching front springs had however not arrived in time to be fitted so the car was run with uprated back and standard front. Also by courtesy of Tyrrell was one of the team's recently rebuilt and uprated Cosworth motors, this particular example lacking the new exhaust system as the pipe maker was off work and no spares were available. Also new was the nose section which had the newer type of trim tab. Scheckter felt that the modifications had definitely improved the car and that it was easier to drive although not 100 per cent balanced because of the unmatched springs. A further problem was encountered in the suspension department when the new springs arrived. When the first attempt was made to fit the new springs it was found that they were apparently too long. A hasty call to Derek Gardner confirmed this; apparently part of the batch had been supplied too long and the works had not yet realised this fact. Scheckter posted second quickest time of 1m 23.9s.

Team Gunston's two Lotus 72Es were unchanged from their GP specification and were once again entered for contracted drivers Eddie Keizan and Guy Tunmer. They shared the second row on 24.3s and 25.5s respectively. Tumner in fact ripped the left rear suspension off his car after clouting a high kerb.

Team Domingo had their Brabham BT33 for Mike Domingo, this car being the car in which Jack Brabham won the 1970 South African Grand Prix, and their Surtees TS9 for Joe Domingo, which filled row four on 1m 28.5s and 1m 31.4s.

These six cars comprised the Formula One entry for this event.

In the Formula Two class Lexington Racing had entered their two Chevron B25s, one for Roy Klomfass and the other as a spare for either Scheckter or Klomfass. The car entered for Klomfass had been fitted with a 2-litre FVC motor recently acquired from Cosworth and apparently one of only nine examples. The car was otherwise unchanged and was fifth fastest on 1m 28.2s. The spare car was fitted with its normal 1930 FVC motor and remained under covers for the whole event.

The South Coast Motors entry for Tony Martin was their usual 2 litre Hart BDA equipped Chevron B25 and this completed row three with 1m 27.7s.

The Formula 5000 class was supported by two cars, these being the McLaren M10Bs of Nolly Limberis (1:34.9) and perilous newcomer B. Pelser (1:55.9). The latter was in side radiator form.

The circuit is situated in what resembles a dust bowl and is not often used. As a result large amounts of fine grit deposit themselves around the circuit causing the first practice sessions to be rather slippery frightening affairs resulting in many a car entering the pit lane under a cover of dust and grit often with bits of indigenous vegetation attached. The natural hazards are sessions are rather indisciplined affairs with all classes of racing practising together, including motor cycles. It is really quite a sight to see F1 cars dodging in between racing motor cycles.

RACE

The race, due to start at 3.10pm, was delayed to allow Dave Charlton's mechanics enough time to change the motor blown during official practice and eventually they got under way at 3.45pm. Charlton had elected to start from the number two grid position feeling that his position held an advantage over the normal pole position.

Scheckter made his customary excellent start and took an immediate lead from Charlton who was heard to comment after the event, "Scheckter is so quick off the line, it's not worth even trying to beat him." So Scheckter it was with Charlton, Keizan, and Tunmer snapping at his heels and Mike Domingo several car lengths behind them followed by the remaining five in orderly fashion. And so up to the horseshoe they raced and here Scheckter miscalculated and lost the Tyrrell in a big way, at first it appeared that he might be able to catch the car but this was not to happen. With a splendid bit of anticipation Charlton chose the right section of circuit to be on at that moment and scraped through unscathed as did Keizan, Tunmer and Mike Domingo. Scheckter managed to recover before anyone else slipped through and rejoined the race in fifth position. He immediately set about making up lost time and passed Domingo before the cars came around for the second time. Next in line was Tunmer who was passed on lap five. Shortly after this Tunmer slowed dramatically. He had apparently locked up a front wheel on two occasions and was feeling the effect of this maltreatment in the form of severe vibrations caused by a flat on the left front tyre. Meanwhile Martin and Klomfass appeared to be shaping up for an interesting race ahead of Joe Domingo and Liberis.

With eight of the 32 laps gone it was Charlton 4s ahead of Keizan who was 3.5s ahead of Scheckter who was in turn 9s ahead of Tunmer. The expected tussle between the two F2 cars had fizzled out with Klomfass battling with chronic understeer. In an effort to overcome the problem Klomfass tried to throw the tail out with harsh clutch actions. This imposed an extreme load on the drive shafts and on lap 12 one of the shafts broke sidelining him. On lap 17 Scheckter moved into second spot 6s behind Charlton after battling to pass Keizan for several laps. Behind the leading three the race had deteriorated into a rather dull procession with no two cars even close enough to suggest that interest might be restored in the lower part of the field.

Keizan was out on lap 25 when his throttle slides jammed closed as he came up to lap two of the back markers. Poor Eddie must be wondering when his luck will change after spending a year in the wilderness last year and suffering mechanical failures in both of the national championship events held so far this year.

Scheckter had meanwhile closed the gap between himself and Charlton to 4s and seemed now to be scratching. He said later that he realised that he would have to settle for second place unless Charlton suffered some misfortune. This was indeed what was to happen. With only three laps to go the reigning champion's motor was heard to falter, seemingly short of fuel. A lap later Charlton entered the pits to take on more fuel. He did not get out of the car neither did he shut the motor off. This resulted in his exclusion from the results. The drama was not yet over however and Charlton rejoined the race just behind Tunmer and as they came around to complete their 31st lap they were shown the flag which should have been shown to Ian Scheckter, who was on his way to completing his 32nd lap and the scheduled race distance. Tunmer and Charlton accepting that the race was over came into the pits only to be waved out by frantic pit crews as they still had one more lap to complete. Tunmer was then announced as the winner of the event much to the surprise of Ian Scheckter, who immediately lodged a protest on the grounds that he had in fact covered the greatest distance when the flag fell. This protest was upheld and the new result announced. Indeed a lucky win for Scheckter, this being the first time that he has managed to finish a race in the Tyrrell.

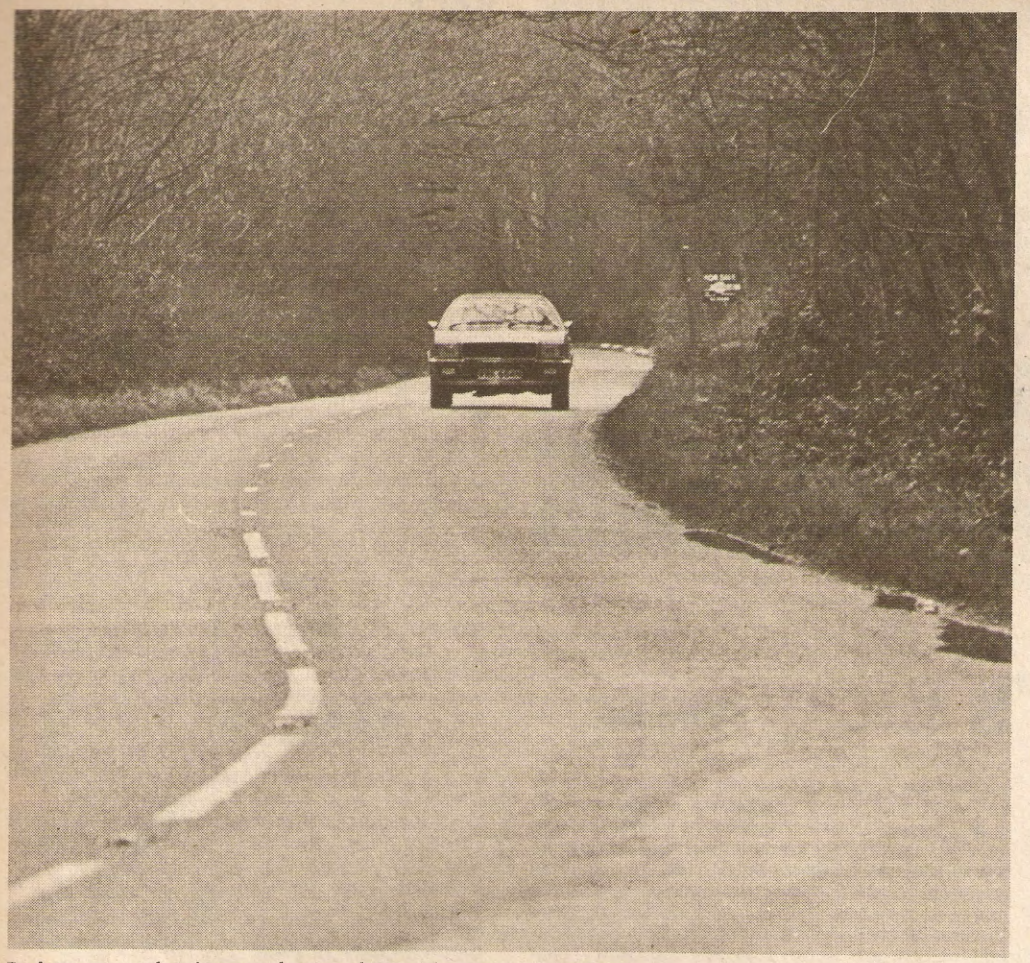
(ALAN TRIM)

1, Ian Scheckter (Tyrrell 007); 2, Guy Tunmer (Lotus 72E); 3, Mike Domingo (Brabham BT33); 4, Tony Martin (Chevron B25); 5, Joe Domingo (Surtees TS9); 6, Nolly Limberis (McLaren M10B).

Fastest lap: Dave Charlton (McLaren M23) 1m 23.0s, **(record)**.

Championship positions: 1, G. Tunmer, 16; 2, M. Domingo, 11; 3, D. Charlton and I. Scheckter, 10; 5, R. Klomfass, 8; 6, T. Martin, 7; 7, N. Limberis, 5; 8, J. Domingo, 3.

by John Bolster



Perhaps no car has improved so much over the years as the Opel.

Commodore GS/E - high standards

The Opel Commodore in fuel-injection form is well-known as a doughty performer on the circuits. However, this article concerns the behaviour of the car when used for normal purposes on the road. I chose the coupé, which is a little lighter than the saloon, and it was equipped with the General Motors automatic transmission, as this is preferred by most purchasers of this model.

The specification of the Commodore is completely orthodox and scarcely hints at what a very effective high-performance car it is. The straight six-cylinder engine is a hefty-looking cast-iron unit, with its chain-driven camshaft lying alongside the valves, which it operates by rockers with hydraulic clearance setting. The Bosch fuel injection system is electronically controlled and is worth an extra 18 bph.

While the steel body shell has less interior space than the saloon, the rear seats can be used for long journeys. The front suspension is of wishbone type with an anti-roll bar, the recirculating ball steering gear having power-assistance as standard. A live rear axle is still retained, with four trailing links and a Panhard rod, an anti-roll bar again being found. There are disc brakes all round, those in front being ventilated.

The big Opel is a prosperous-looking car, with restrained styling and no unnecessary decoration. It's easy to enter through the wide doors and the seats are comfortable, the driver finding all his controls conveniently placed and obtaining a good view in every direction. The interior is attractive, with round and very legible instrument dials. The engine starts at once after a second or so has been allowed for the pump to cease work, the mixture strength being automatically controlled during the warming up period. There is no tendency to stall and the car may be driven as soon as the engine fires.

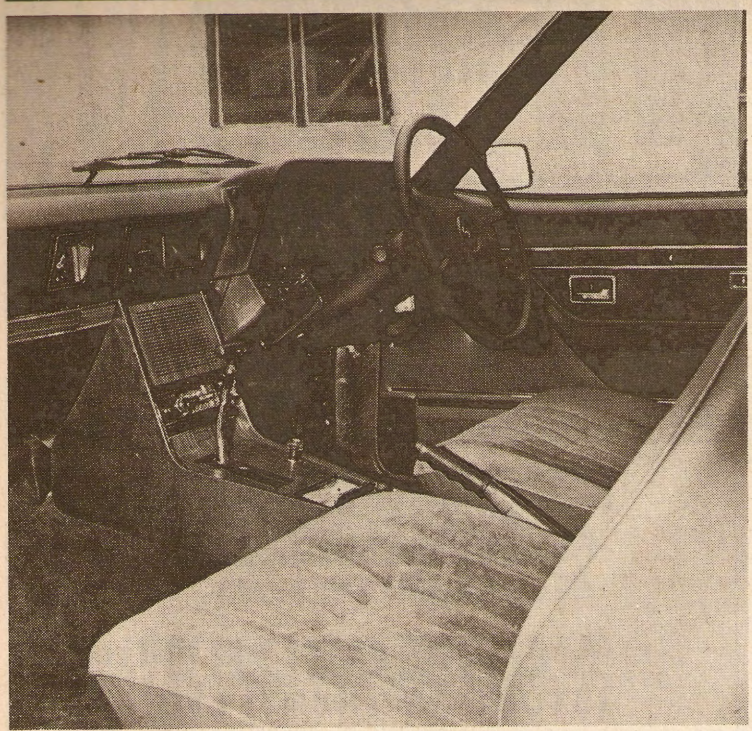
With the smoothness which is inherent in a well-designed six-cyclinder, the power unit is nevertheless distinctly sporting in character. It prefers to rev rather than to slog and its sound is that of a high-efficiency engine, though it is far from noisy. Such an engine would be wasted if paired with an old-fashioned automatic transmission, but this the GM-Strasbourg box definitely is not. It allows the revs to run up close to the red mark on the dial before changing up and it does its work so efficiently that the driver cannot improve the acceleration figures by using the manual control. Very high praise must be given to this transmission, which never gives the slightest jerk whether the car be driven fast or slowly.

Nevertheless, the manual control can be used with advantage to change down for a corner or to retain second gear through a series of bends. As it is easy to attain well over 80 mph on this ratio, it is an excellent gear for overtaking rapidly. The engine is flexible but the low-speed torque is not exceptional, a characteristic which the transmission effectively hides.

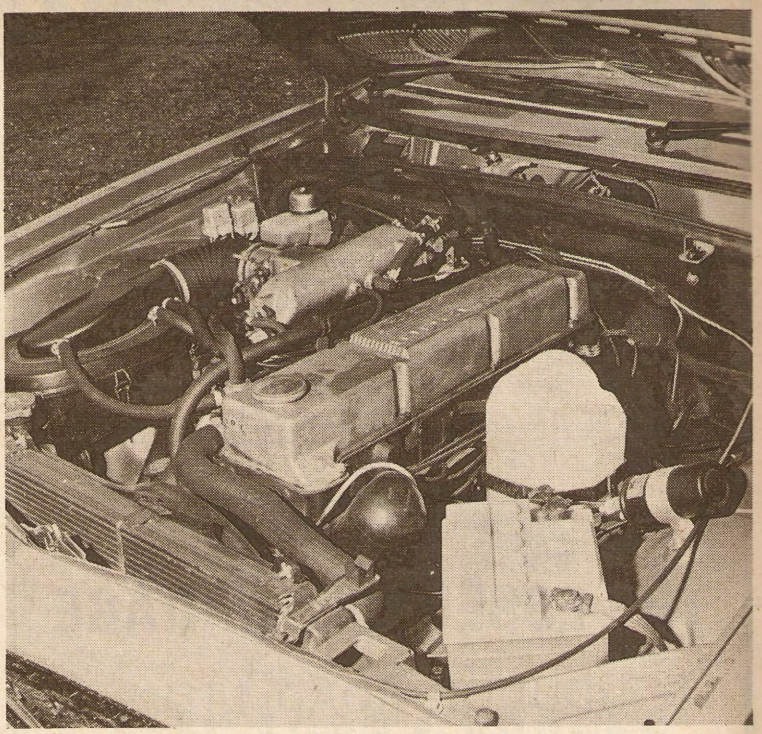
The urgent sound of the engine is well subdued, the car swinging along very easily indeed at a cruising speed of 100 mph. The ultimate maximum



The GS/E's cornering power is of a very high order, in wet or dry.



Attractive interior with round and very legible instrument dials.



The hefty-looking, fuel injected, cast iron straight six cylinder engine.

is just short of 120 mph, the engine then spinning well past its peak and becoming less refined. Wind and road noises are well insulated from the interior.

Though the power-assisted steering makes light work of parking, in spite of the big tyres and the substantial weight of the forward-mounted engine, its influence is hardly felt during fast driving. Indeed, it would almost be possible to be unaware of its existence under these circumstances. There is plenty of feel at the steering wheel for the negotiation of tricky terrain. Compared with previous Commodores, this latest version gives a smoother ride over bad surfaces, at the expense of perhaps slightly less precise handling. Nevertheless, the cornering power, both on wet and dry roads, is of a very high order. There is a moderate degree of understeer, the rear end sticking down well over bumps and only tending to break away sharply if far too much power is used on a tight corner, when rapid correction is easy.

The Commodore coupé is a costly car and one could buy something with a bigger engine for less money. However, the 2.8-litre fuel-injection unit remains quite economical at high speeds and some owners may regularly obtain 20 mpg or a little more. Perhaps no car has improved so much over the years as the Opel and though the lower-priced models may seem better value for money, there's something very attractive about the coupés, by which I mean equally the big Commodore and the little Kadett, which is one of my favourites. Somehow, this firm seems able to maintain its quality control, even in these difficult times.

Although this seems quite a big car, it is light and easy to drive, while its considerable performance is matched by brakes that stand up well to hard driving. It only once displayed a slight fit of temperament when, in thick London traffic, it began to run unevenly and sounded most unhappy. I selected neutral and gave a few quick blasts with the accelerator, after which the engine completely recovered and continued to run evenly in miles of dreary crawling.

The Opel Commodore GS/E is a car of conventional design, but to high engineering standards. A saloon with a similar performance may be bought for less money, but the coupé I tried is certainly the ultimate in Opels.

The GS/E is a prosperous looking car without any unnecessary decoration.



SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA

Car Tested: Opel Commodore GS/E 2-door coupé, price £4,394.52 including car tax and VAT.

Engine: Six-cylinder 92 x 69.8 mm (2784 cc). Compression ratio 9.5 to 1. 160 bhp DIN at 5400 rpm. Chain-driven overhead camshaft. Bosch electronic fuel injection.

Transmission: Torque converter and 3-speed automatic transmission: Hypoid rear axle with limited-slip differential, ratio 3.45 to 1.

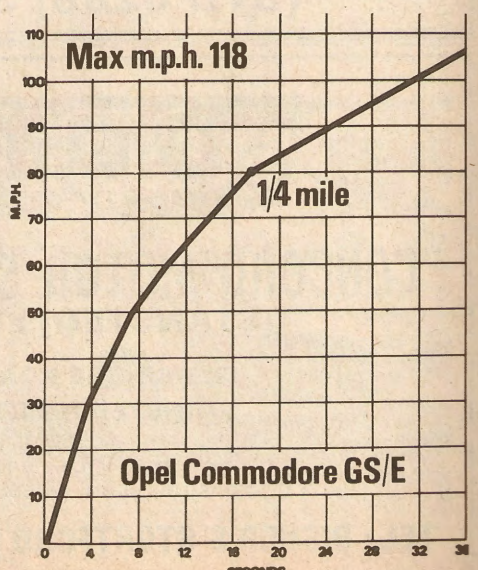
Chassis: Combined steel body and chassis. Independent wishbone front suspension and live rear axle on four trailing links and Panhard rod. Coil springs and telescopic dampers all round with anti-roll bars front and rear. Power-assisted recirculating-ball steering gear. Servo-assisted dual-circuit disc brakes with ventilated discs in front. Bolt-on steel wheels fitted 195/70 HR 14 tyres.

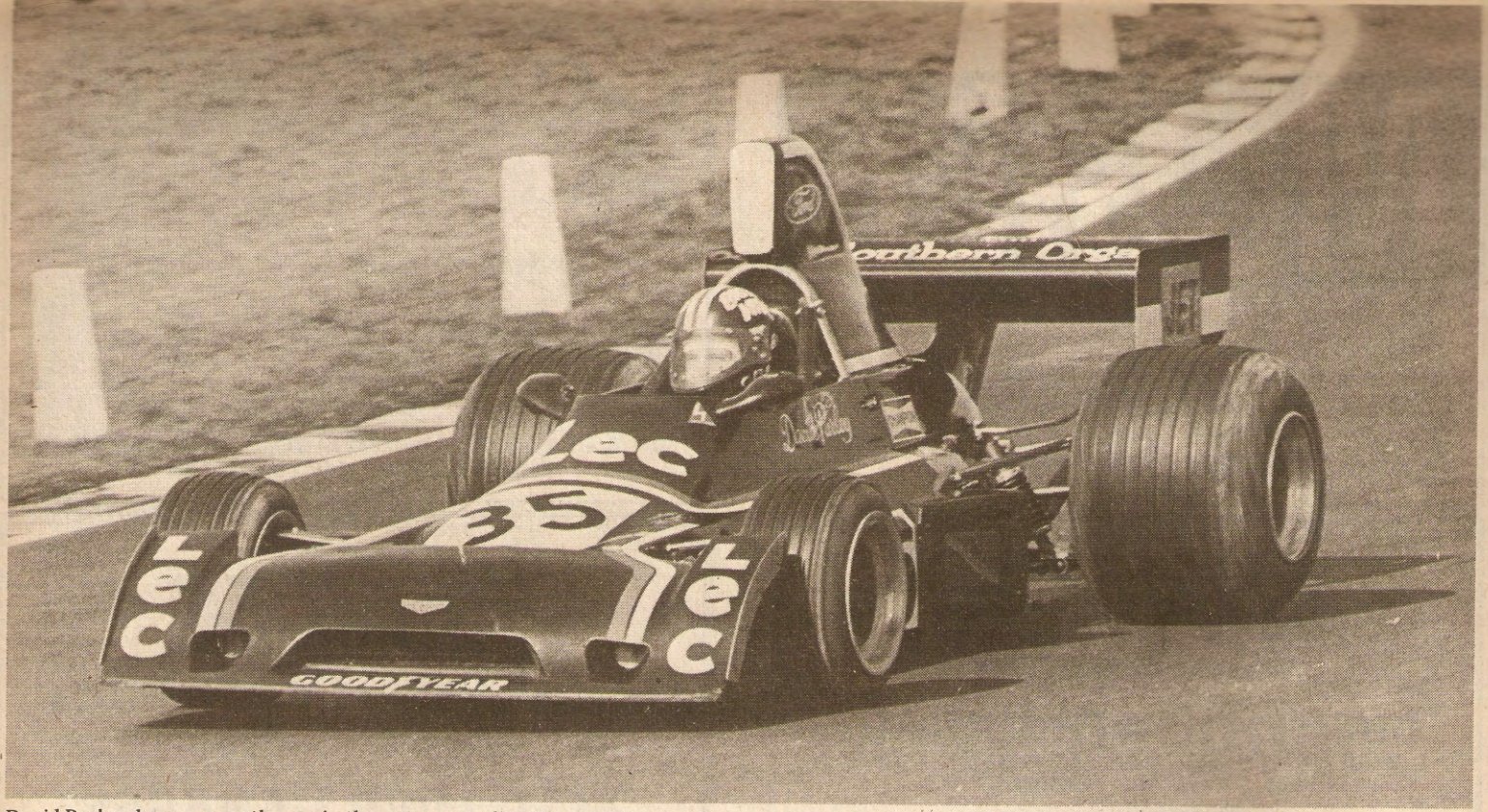
Equipment: 12-volt lighting and starting. Speedometer. Rev-counter. Voltmeter. Oil-pressure, water temperature, and fuel gauges. Clock. Heating, demisting, and ventilation system. 2-speed windscreen wipers and washers. Headlamp wipers and washers. Heated rear window. Flashing direction indicators with hazard warning. Reversing lights. Cigar lighter.

Dimensions: Wheelbase 8ft 9ins. Track 4ft 8.1in/4ft 7.6ins. Overall length 14ft 11.8 ins. Width 5ft 7.8ins. Weight 1 ton 5 cwt.

Performance: Maximum speed 118 mph. Standard quarter-mile 17.5s. Acceleration: 0-39 mph 3.8s, 0-50 mph 7.6s, 0-60 mph 10.4s, 0-80 mph 17.5s, 0-100 mph 31.8s.

Fuel Consumption: 18 to 22 mpg.





David Purley drove a smooth race in the sweet sounding Ford V6-engined Chevron. It was the first non-V8 F5000 victory in this country.

BRANDS HATCH

Purley scores for Ford

By IAN PHILLIPS **Photos by DAVID WINTER**

Confounding the critics, but doing F5000 a power of good, David Purley gave the Ford V6 engine and the Lec/Southern Organs Chevron B30 their first victory in the Formula at Brands Hatch on Monday. With previous results of a second and a third, the Shellsport championship leader was expected to turn the heat on over the gruelling 60 laps of the club circuit. And turn it on Purley did. After an indifferent start he carved his way up to the front and, helped by some specially grooved slick tyres, managed to maintain it to the end without missing a beat, or ever looking like losing it.

It was never a processional race though, as Dave Walker in the Thursdays/RAM Chevron B28 never gave up the chase and his gritty performance saw him just 2s behind at the end and with his second fastest lap of the weekend.

Making it a good day for Chevron and Ford, Tony Dean's B24 took third place and Tom Walkinshaw's V6 engined Modus was fourth. Damien Magee was perhaps the sensation of the race taking pole position and then a commanding early lead before a clevis pin broke on Jim Kelly's Trojan.

The results of the race, however, remain provisional as a protest was lodged about the eligibility of the tyres fitted to the second and third placed cars.

The rest of the meeting, which was watched by a very large crowd, contained some excellent races and the whole thing was packaged together nicely with the help of the combined commentary efforts of BBC man Stuart Grundy and Anthony Marsh.

ENTRY AND PRACTICE

The entry for this, the third round of the Shellsport European F5000 championship, was virtually identical to that at Oulton Park on Good Friday (see p22). The only car missing was the Tony Dean owned Chevron of Brian Redman. The Lancastrian, deciding, apparently, that it was not really worth his while persevering with the car. The only addition to the entry was John Turner in his Shell backed Lola T330 with a caruburettored Whitehurst engine. This was to be his first ever single seater race after many years of cleaning up club saloon races.

The first session of practice was fairly early on Monday morning with the track still very damp and with a covering of salt. This, initially, was to have been the only official session but a further 20 minutes was added prior to the lunch break.

Wet tyres were very much the order of the day for the first session and it was in this period that all the grid times were set. The second session was run on what appeared to be a dry circuit. A number of drivers tried slicks but generally very soon changed back to wets. It wasn't that the circuit actually had water on it; drivers reported that there appeared to be a sort of treacly filling between the tyre and tarmac sandwich. This was partly caused by the salt coating and partly by the new surface sweating. Although the sun was shining through quite strongly the track itself was still very cold and drivers were not getting a temperature of any sort on either wets or slicks. Keith Greene was charging around in his own inimitable style advising, warning and so on about the various tyres around. The prospect of a 60 lap race on a dry, but slippery, circuit meant that the drivers were worried about the wet tyres lasting the distance. Slicks however appeared to be lethal. A number of craftsmen among the teams were to be seen hand grooving tyres, but none of it added up to a very satisfactory solution.

There was, without doubt, an air of slight depression among the leading F5000 runners. They were fed up with the weather which they have had to contend with in their opening races, the lack of suitable testing to get tyres and chassis attuned to one another, and, an unsurprising recurrence of one of last year's grouses, fed up with silly little one mile circuits. 'Silverstone and Brands GP circuits are the only worthwhile circuits in England now,' cried at least three drivers. Well, whatever one thinks on this score there is no doubting the fact that these big cars on the Brands Club circuit do make an exciting spectacle and the public turned up in their thousands to watch. The only argument against the short circuits is the lack of passing places and the terrible driving of some of the back markers.

There were a number of eyebrows raised and gasps of disbelief when the first, and as it turned out decisive, times were announced. On pole was none other than Damien Magee in Jim Kelly's ex-Schuppan Trojan T101. Damien himself was a little disbelieving, he knew he'd gone quickly but to take pole by.4s, well, it just took some getting used to. There was no doubt he was trying like only he can . . . armfuls of lock and plenty of right foot, it was really heroic stuff. Unfortunately, however, the final lap of the session saw the car in the Clearways bank, with some fairly substantial damage it appeared. The offside rear suspension was all broken as was the wing. The car had, of course, been shunted at Oulton when it aquaplaned off and it seemed very likely that this shunt had been caused by a broken rose joint. Incidentally the monocoque was also badly bashed about due to the ramps breaking loose in the transporter. "I explained to the scrutineer that's what deformable structures were for," said Damien.

Despite these setbacks mechanic Keith Tilbrook and half of Ireland got to work and rapidly rebuilt the car in time for two laps in the final session, and a puncture.

Sharing the front row with Magee was Australian Brian McGuire in the ex-Evans Lola T332. Brian was much happier with life after a weekend of hard work on the car. The contretemps at Oulton had only damaged the nose but he was really upset at being ten or so seconds off the pace when really trying hard. A check on the cambers and tracking of the car showed it to be many degrees out in all directions. Straight away at Brands Brian found the car drivable and got going quickly. He reckons there's plenty more to come now as soon as he gets some proper testing in.

Third quickest was Tony Dean in his Chevron-Morand. As always he showed a liking for the circuit in the damp conditions, and other than worrying about the choice of tyres, the seasoned campaigner was quite happy. His time of 48.2s equalled that of McGuire while next man Pilette was just .2s slower. Teddy was still talking about the flat battery which robbed him at Oulton of his first and much deserved win for a long time. He was still none too happy with the VDS Lola T400 despite revised rear suspension pick-up points. 'We leave it all to Mr Broadley, he will sort it out.'

Guy Edwards was happier than of late with his Encyclopaedia Britannica T332. The metering unit trouble was cured and, apart from not really knowing what tyres to run, he had no real cause for complaint. Dave Walker did a 49.0s very early on in the Thursdays/RAM Chevron B28. The front tyres were showing distinct signs of wear and he reckoned a fresh set would put him right in the running. Although not noticeable at Oulton, the old problem of lack of traction at the rear was back again.

Vern Schuppan missed most of the first session due to a troublesome fuel pump but still managed

a 49.2s in the Theodore Racing Lola. In the second session he was fastest on 50.4s with Purley, Pilette and Edwards.

It was, in fact, David Purley who was next up on the grid with a 49.4s. The Lec/Southern Organs Chevron-Ford B30 having a few problems with severe understeer and a water hose which kept blowing off. David also damaged the nose in one big understeer moment. After much deliberation on tyres after the two sessions Chevron's Paul Owens and team manager Mike Earle shut themselves away in the transporter and triple-grooved a set of slicks for the race.

The other Ford powered car, the Modus of Tom Walkinshaw, was next just .2s behind Purley. With the fuel lines cleaned out after Oulton, Tom was reasonably happy with the car. Tom Belso suffered a misfire due to a flat battery during the quick session and couldn't better 50s dead in the 208 Lola. Mick Hill was happy with his progress in the damp in his March 74A, recording 50.2s while Richard Scott was 'still learning' in the Durex Lola and managed a 50.4s. Although he was fairly non-committal about the car's behaviour, preferring to sort himself out first, he did admit there was something of a handling problem which he hoped would be cured with a rise in the ride height. There was an unfortunate coming together with the tunnel after practice which re-aligned the rear end somewhat and settings for the race were courtesy of inspired guesswork.

Oulton Park winner Gordon Spice was right out of luck. He recorded a 50.6s early on in the Reed Racing Lola but it then dropped a valve and became a non-runner for the day. Brian Robinson was next in his McLaren, quite happy with life, while former saloon exponent John Turner was pleased to have completed practice still in one piece with the ex-Lombardi Lola T330. He and Robinson both recorded 50.8s, some 1.2s quicker than Trevor Twaites.

Lurking unhappily near the back of the grid was Peter Gethin in the second VDS T400. He missed out totally on the first quick session when a piece of valve gear dropped through the head. The Morand top half was quickly removed and the offending piece removed so that he was able to have a go in the second session. His time of 52.6s was a couple of seconds off the pace. However, Peter said the car was better than at Oulton, but still not good while the engine appeared to be rather short of its best. Also mixing it at the back with Dennis Leech, Chris Featherstone and Leen Verhoven was Ian Ashley. His Oulton shunt and Lola factory holidays meant that his T330 could not be repaired so the Richard Oaten team rather reluctantly brought out their totally untried T400. It refused to fire up for both practice sessions, due to a fuel system problems and Ian was allowed three laps, just prior to the race, to qualify to start at the back of the capacity grid.

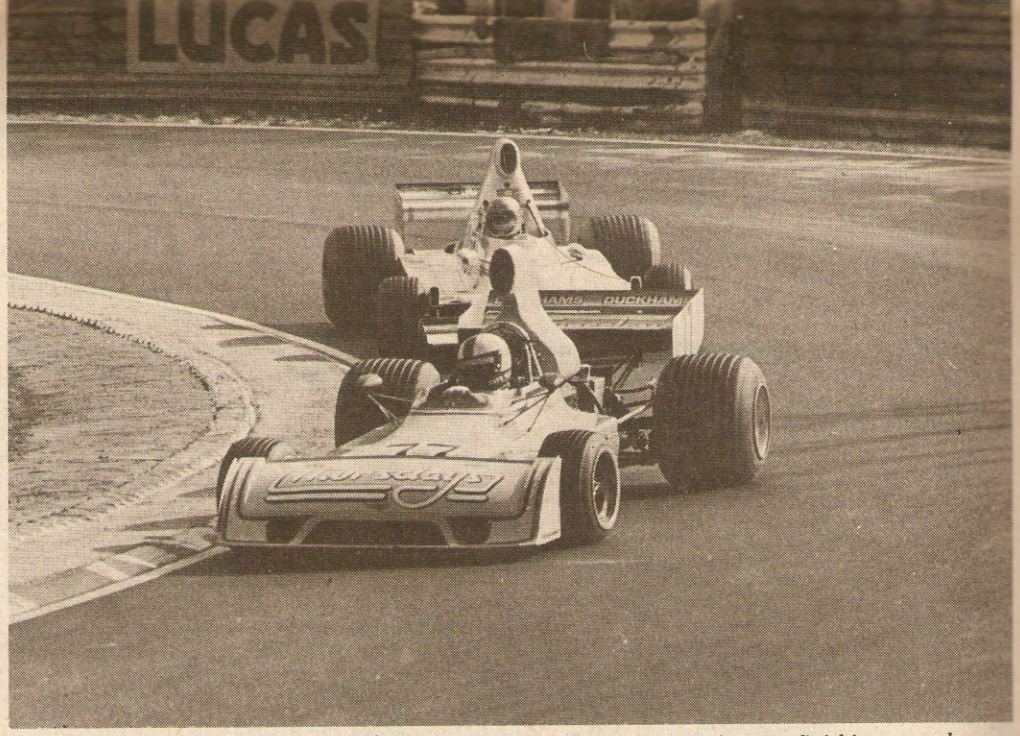
Brian McGuire	Damien Magee
48.2s	47.8s
Teddy Dilette	Tony Dean
48.4s	48.2s
Dave Walker	Guy Edwards
49.0s	48.8s
David Purley	Vern Schuppan
49.4s	49.2s
Tom Belso	Tom Walkinshaw
50.0s	49.8s
Richard Scott	Mick Hill
50.4s	50.2s
Brian Robinson	Gordon Spice *
50.8s	50.6s
Trevor Twaites	John Turner
52.0s	50.8s
Dennis Leech	Peter Gethin
52.8	52.6s
Leen Verhoeven	Chris Featherstone
53.8s	53.6s
	Ian Ashley
dns *	qualified

RACE

It was a very apprehensive bunch of drivers who prepared themselves for the 60 lap grind. The choice of tyres was uppermost in their minds and just to confuse matters the sun disappeared and clouds came rolling over, luckily, however, they didn't deposit their contents. Both front row men Magee and McGuire opted to stay on wets as did Schuppan, Belso, Scott, Twaites, Robinson, Gethin and Ashley. Grooved slicks were worn by Dean, Purley and Walkinshaw, while the rest were on plain slicks.

As the flag dropped the track saw black marks upon it for the first and only time as 1000s of bhp were unleashed in smoke. Magee timed it perfectly; McGuire fluffed it; Walker made a beauty as did Dean and Schuppan.

As they came out of Druids it was Magee; Bottom Bend, still Magee; Kidney, Magee by an increasing margin; Clearways further still and, incredibly, at the end of the first lap nearly two seconds. Schuppan passed Dean as they came out of Clearways and took second, with Walker, McGuire, Purley, Pilette and Belso next up.



Dave Walker put up another good performance in the Thursdays/RAM Chevron, finishing second.

Vern's move into second place was to be his last; as he passed the main grandstand bits of rubber started to fly off the rear tyres. There was a noticable 'pop' and the tyre deflated. Vern coasted to a halt at the bottom of Paddock, left to ponder another race that might have been his.

Meanwhile the mighty Magee was steaming away. It wasn't the Magee of old — it was a grim, determined driving, which genuinely left the opposition behind.

By the second lap Walker was into second place with Dean, McGuire, Purley and Belso line astern behind. A short gap led to Pilette, Gethin, Edwards, Scott, Hill, Walkinshaw, Twaites, Verhoeven and the rest.

For a few laps Magee and Walker seemed to open out on the rest but Purley's progress was the most significant. He left Belso and for a couple of laps harassed Dean before slipping through on the fourth lap at Paddock. It took very little time for the fleet B30 to reel in Walker, who was visibly having trouble at this time on his pure slicks which he used throughout the second session of practice. Despite this though, the gap to Magee narrowed slightly. For three laps Walker showed all his old style and kept Purley away, but on lap nine Pearls forced his way into second place at Bottom Bend. Purley pulled away rapidly and the gap to Magee shrunk visibly all the time, his wet tyres starting to go off already. Purley took the lead at Druids on the 13th lap and, at that point, the first three were all very close, but Magee's race was nearly over. Coming out of Paddock next time round Damien felt the back end go funny. He continued up and round Druids and then just coasted down to the bottom. A clevis pin had broken in the offside upright. It was a sad and unjust end to a really first class drive — really somebody ought to give him some money or a properly equipped set-up.

This left Purley and Walker about a couple of seconds apart in the first two places with Dean a lonely third. Belso was fourth with Pilette and McGuire very much in striking distance. Edwards was seventh with Walkinshaw really getting in the groove and breathing down his neck. Scott had slipped back a little after some encouraging opening laps. Robinson, Twaites, Verhoeven, and Ashley were the only remaining unlapped runners.

Turner lost a lot of time with a spin at Druids; Gethin pitted to replace a puncture on lap eight, while Featherstone and Leech were just not in the same game.

The order did not change at all for many, many laps after that. Purley's lead was safe, but certainly not secure, as Walker was twitching and sliding the older B28 in great style. The back markers were nothing but a bloody nuisance and making life difficult for all the quick boys. They did, however, manage to vary the gap between the two leaders from anything between two and seven seconds. The rest just held station with one or two exceptions.

Edwards spun out of seventh place, while under pressure from Walkinshaw, and promptly went into the pits to put on wet tyres. He continued some laps down with a bent nose fin. It was, in fact, Walkinshaw who was making the most spectacular progress. Once Edwards was out of the way he closed the gap on the wet tyred Belso, Pilette (slicks) and McGuire (wets) who were getting progressively slower. However, it wasn't until lap 38 that he passed McGuire.

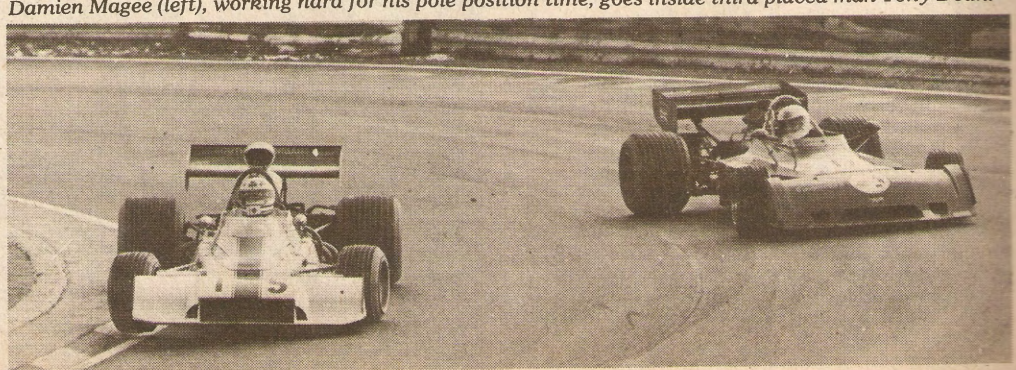
Up to that point Scott was the only other person to visit the pits for a change of a couple of worn wet tyres.

Robinson visited the pits shortly after with a couple of bald wets and replaced them with slicks, which allowed Ashley to move up to an almost respectable place following a sensible drive.

Walkinshaw moved up steadily on Pilette who was finding the handling of the Lola becoming more and more impossible despite the slicks, and on lap 46 took fifth place. This became fourth four laps later when Belso got a sudden puncture as he went past the pits.

Thus, for the last ten laps, the first four ran in

Damien Magee (left), working hard for his pole position time, goes inside third placed man Tony Dean.



the order Purley, Walker, Dean and Walkinshaw. However, just five laps from the end, with a little help from back markers, Walker began to pile on the pressure and the gap came down fairly rapidly, 'I thought there were about five more laps to go,' said Dave at the end, 'I think I could have made life difficult for David.' In actual fact, inexplicably, the flag did come out early, but only by one lap, and the winning margin was two seconds. Tony Dean was nearly 50s behind in third place although he was a lap ahead of Walkinshaw. Pilette struggled on to take fifth with McGuire sixth, the first runner on wet tyres, or what was left of them.

After the race there were protests about the tyres on the second and third placed cars, which has been referred to an RAC tribunal *(see P&P)*.

Shellsport European F5000 championship round 3, Brands Hatch March 31. 60 laps

1, David Purley (Chevron-Cosworth Ford B30), 59 laps, 49m 49.4s, 88.10 mph;
2, Dave Walker (Chevron-Morand Chevrolet B28), 49m 51.4s;
3, Tony Dean (Chevron-Morand Chevrolet B24), 50m 38.2s;
4, Tom Walkinshaw (Modus-Cosworth Ford M5), 58 laps;
5, Teddy Pilette (Lola-Morand Chevrolet T400), 57 laps;
6, Brian McGuire (Lola-Whitehurst Chevrolet T332), 57;
7, Ian Ashley (Lola-Fewkes Chevrolet T400), 57; 8, Mick Hill (March-Whitehurst Chevrolet 74A), 55; 9, Tom Belso (Lola-RES Chevrolet T330), 53; 10, Trevor Twaites (Lola-Fewkes Chevrolet T330), 53; 11, Dennis Leech (Chevron, Chevrolet B24), 53; 12, John Turner (Lola-Whitehurst Chevrolet T330), 53. **Fastest lap:** Walker, 48.6s, 91.85 mph.



Derrick Brunt's Camaro leads Alison Davis (BMW) and Andrew Major (Magnum)

SUPPORTING RACES

Excellent entertainment

The meeting opened with the small class Radio 1 Production saloon race over 15 laps. From an all Mazda front row it was Cozy Powell who made the best start from the outside of the row. He held it until Clearways where he half spun and let through the Marshall Wingfield cars of Jock Robertson and vinyard magnate turned second hand 2CV dealer Jean-Pierre Aux. Cozy really looked quick though and made a determined effort next time round to reclaim his place and half spun once more. On lap five he tried earlier into Clearways and lost it properly dropping to sixth place.

Robertson and Aux then made the race their own, Robertson always holding the upper hand despite Aux driving like a man possessed (quite what with we're not sure, probably a thirst). Wendy Markey took third after her attacker Derek Wileman retired his Avenger with a broken throttle cable.

The small class saw a big battle between Simon Kirkby and Simon Watson with Kirkby's Imp just getting the nod at the end after Watson slowed a shade with a suspected puncture.

The Shellsport Mexicos were donated to the women drivers of this land for a ten lap *Evening News* backed thrash. Straight into the lead from the outside of the front row went Divina Galica and she was never headed, nay never even proposed to, throughout. Juliette Slaughter held second until half distance until she involved herself in something of a gang bang on the bottom straight which also dropped Georgie Shaw way down and messed up a couple of cars. Thus second place went to pole woman Susan Tucker-Peake from Wendy Markey, Lorina Boughton Alison Davis and Gillian West.

The Kent Messenger 1000cc special saloon race was led from start to finish by John Homewood's familiar Sunbeam Imp. A big battle raged for second place throughout the ten laps with Ray Calcutt's Alastair Crawford Racing Imp taking the place on lap eight and just holding it to the end from John Schneider's Mini and Stephen Hall's similar car.

John Brindley's Camaro got the better of the pole winning Camaro of Bob Ridgard at the start of the big Radio 1 production saloon car race. They battled it out until lap six when Ridgard took over the lead, finishing a comfortable 1.2s ahead at the end of 15 laps. Bob Saunders' Dolomite was quickest in the £1,700 to £2,299 class in practice and ran third initially ahead of the Magnums of Jeff Allam and Gerry Marshall, Ivan Dutton's Capri and Derrick Brunt's Camaro. Marshall, suffering a hangover after one of Count J. P. Aux's holiday wine tasting sessions in Bordeaux, barged his way past Allam at Clearways on lap two and he caught the Dolomite when Saunders got it crossed up at Clearways a lap later. Marshall was third by the end of lap four but Saunders got it back going up Pilgrims Rise two laps later. Meanwhile Brunt was slicing his way through the smaller class and by the eighth lap was third, but way behind the leading pair. Saunders held on to fourth place ahead of Marshall and Allam, the latter getting the under 21 award.

Making a return to Clubmen's racing after a very long time, in which he has sampled F3 and *libre* racing, Peter Deal's Norman Abbott Racing ex-Stuart Glass Gryphon-based Pink Panther led the Lec Clubmen's championship round from start to finish. Noel Stanbury's Zerostat Gryphon untypically far back on the grid after much black flagging for an apparently illegible number in practice, threw away second place with a spin at Druids on lap two. Stanbury had made a typical determined and exhuberant start and made contact with a number of cars before finally spinning. John Davies, in Herb Moger's Gryphon, inherited second place and on the seventh lap he caught Deal dramatically. However, Deal's years of experience told and he hung on by 0.2s. Having only finished his new Mallock at 3 am on the morning of the race Geoff Friswell did splendidly to finish third after hitting Stanbury's spinning Gryphon. Third place had originally been the property of Barry Foley's St Bruno but he had to settle for fourth, significantly, perhaps, the first runner not using ancient Firestone B36s on the slippery and now slightly damp track.

Kent Messenger 1000 cc saloon car championship (10 laps): 1, John Homewood (1.0 Sunbeam Imp), 9m 59.4s, 74.49 mph; 2, Ray Calcutt (1.0 Hillman Imp), 10m 04.0s; 3, John Schneider (1.0 Mini), 10m 4.8s; 4, Stephen Hall (1.0 Mini), 10m 5.4s; 5, Mike Chappel (1.0 Hillman Imp), 10m 10.2s; 6, Jo Lockeyer (1.0 Cooper 10m 32.4s **Fastest lap:** Homewood, 58.6s, 76.18 mph.

Radio Production saloon car championship, over £2,300 and £1,700 to £2,299 (15 laps): Overall and over £2,300: 1, Bob Ridgard (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28), 15m 52s, 70.34 mph; 2 John Brindley (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28), 15m 53.2s; 3, Derrick Brunt (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28), 16m 12.6s; 4, Bob Saunders (2.0 Triumph Dolomote Sprint), 16m 18.8s. **Fastest lap:** Ridgard, 1m 00.6s, 73.66 mph.

£1,700 to £2,299: 1, Saunders, 68.41 mph; 2, Gerry Marshall (2.3 Vauxhall Magnum); 3, Jeff Allan (2.3 Vauxhall Magnum). **Fastest lap:** Mike Smith (3.0 Ford Capri11), 1m 3.6s, 70.19 mph.

Lec Refrigeration Clubmen's Supersport championship round, 1001-1600 cc modified and 1600 FF engines and up to 1000 cc modified (10 laps): 1, Peter Deal (1.6 Pink Panther Abbott), 9m 35.2s, 77.61 mph; 2, John Davies (1.6 Gryphon-Holbay C74A), 9m 35.4s; 3, Geoff Friswell (1.6 Mallock U2-Hart Mk16), 9m 48.4s; 4, Barry Foley (1.6 St Bruno-Roughcutter Norvic), 9m 51.0s. **Fastest lap:** Davies, 55.6s, 80.29 mph.

1600 FF and up to 1000 cc modified: 1, Nick Adams (1.6 Mallock U2-Holbay Mk14); 67.32 mph; 2, Peter Clark (Centaur-Davron Mk4B), 3, Alan Webb (Mallock U2-Holbay Mk14). **Fastest lap:** Adams, 61.8s, 72.23 mph.

BBC Radio Production Saloon car championship round, up to £1,299 and £1,300 to £1,699 (15 laps): Overall: 1, Jock Robertson (2.0 Mazda RX3), 16m 42.0s, 66.83 mph; 2, Jean-Pierre Aux (2.0 Mazda RX3), 16m 43.0s; 3, Wendy Markey (2.0 Mazda RX3), 17m 0.6s; 4, Eric Cook (2.0 Mazda RX3), 17m 16.0s; 5, Cozy Powell (2.0 Mazda RX3), 17m 20.2s; 6, Simon Kirkby (1.3 Simca Rallye R1), 17m 37.2s.

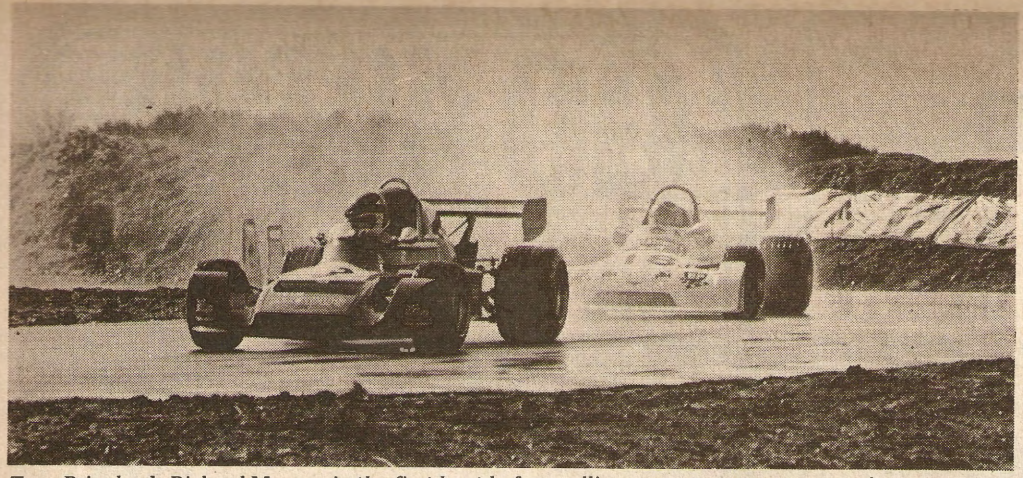
Up to £1,299: 1, Kirkby, 63.34 mph; 2, Simon Watson (875 Sunbeam Imp Sport), 17m 38.4s; 3, Tim Dodwell (1.3 BLMC Mini GT), 17m 50.8s; 4, Tony Stubbs (1.2 Lada), 14 laps. **Fastest lap:** Kirkby, 1m 9.2s, 64.51 mph.

£1,300 to £1,699: 1, Robertson; 2, Aux; 3, Markey; 4, Cook. **Fastest lap:** Aux, 1m 5.6s, 68.05 mph.

Evening News Shellsport Escort Ladies race (10 laps): 1, Divina Galica, 11m 41.6s, 63.63 mph; 2, Susan Tucker-Peake, 11m 56.4s; 3, Wendy Markey, 12m 0.4s; 4, Lorina Boughton, 12m 4.2s; 5, Alison Davis, 12m 10.8s; 6, Gillian West, 12m 25.8s. **Fastest lap:** Galica, 1m 8.8s, 64.88 mph.

Jeff Allam put in a good performance and won the Radio 1 under 21 award.





Tony Brise leads Richard Morgan in the first heat before pulling away to score an easy win.

SNETTERTON

Brise shows his class

The usual three drivers dominated round three of the John Player International Formula Atlantic Championship. At a cold and snowy Snetterton last Easter Sunday, Tony Brise's works Modus simply walked away with both 30 lap parts. Jim Crawford had to settle for second place ahead of Richard Morgan, both in Chevron B29s. Had it not been for a damaged nose cone Richard might have taken second place. However, both he and Brise had the satisfaction of breaking the Atlantic and outright circuit record. Only ten cars started the APG FF2000 race but the racing was quite interesting and provided Derek Lawrence with his second win of the weekend, although Frank Hopper crossed the line first. He was penalised for a jump start though. With Nick Whiting retiring while leading, Gerry Marshall won the Simoniz saloon event by over a minute. Only four races were on the agenda which hardly seems fair to the smallish crowd who had paid £1.20 for the weather-ruined privilege.

Sixteen cars arrived at a very cold Snetterton for the only Atlantic race of the Easter weekend, this being the third round of the John Player Championship. Two practice sessions were laid on, the first being on a damp track, and the second on a dry circuit. Thus, most grid positions were determined during the last session.

On pole, and a full 1.2s inside the Atlantic and outright circuit record was Tony Brise in the locally built Modus-Nicholson M1. Next to Brise on the two-two grid was Jim Crawford fresh from a spectacular accident with the JPS Lotus 72 at Silverstone during the previous week, when a tyre pulled off a studded rim and flipped him at Abbey Curve. Jim was now back in his usual SDC Chevron-Hart B29. Crawford was a little upset about the power output of his Brian Hart BDA, for it seems that John Nicholson's engines have that little bit more on the straight. He was, consequently, 0.8 s slower than Brise.

After being quickest by almost half a second during the damp session, Richard Morgan's Donington Park Collection/Wheatcroft Racing Chevron-Nicholson B29 was pushed on to the inside of the second row with a 1m 4.4s, young Richard being a little unhappy with the handling. Former BRM designer Mike Pilbeam took time off from building Tom's new Atlantic racer to be in attendance. The new car should be ready for testing in four or five weeks time. Sharing the second row with Morgan was Peter Wardle's effective Surtees-Swindon TS15, albeit 1.6s slower.

The improving Alo Lawler recorded 1m 6.2 with the L & B Excavations Chevron-Nicholson B29 to head row three, ahead of Cyd Williams in Graham Eden's Brabham-Eden BT40, which was 0.2 s slower. SDC Racing patron Stephen Choularton was next up with the second Chevron-Hart B29. His 1m 16.8s was 0.6s quicker than Valentino Musetti, whose March-Nicholson 74B occasionally went on to three cylinders. He was sponsored by Bernigra Ice Cream this time, and Val wisely didn't bring any samples. Matt Spitzley has at last taken delivery of his Rapid Movements Chevron-Swindon B29. He had only done a couple of laps in the car the previous Monday at Snetterton, and only had one set of rims at the moment which were fitted with wets for the two practice sessions, Some 0.6s slower than Spitzley's 1m 18.6s was Philip Sharp, having another outing in John Nicholson's Pinch Lyncar-Nicholson. The car's owner had journeyed up from Thruxton to watch over his F1 mechanic, as had Bruno Drury of Pinch. Also having flown up from Thruxton with his team was the enthusiastic Peter Williams who did a 1m 19.2s. His Coin Monthly Chevron-Nicholson B27 will shortly be up for sale. Completing the grid were ex Super Vee driver Peter Munro with his Chevron-Whitehurst B27, and Derek Cook. He had the use of last year's Fred Opert Chevron B27 with home brewed motor. However this dropped a valve in the first session and Lawler's spare Nicholson was quickly hired and installed in the Chevron, although he had to miss the second session. Roy Baker's March-RS 73B and Graham Perry's ex-Purley Harrison of Birmingham March-Nicholson 742 completed the list of starters. Bob Muir's Birrana-Hart 273 non-started after a plug broke and got mixed up in the engine.

As the cars completed two warm up laps in the dry, the heavens opened and down came the sleet which later turned to snow. Thus it was all change and the start was delayed ten minutes while the rubberware was changed accordingly, All swopped except Spitzley, whose only rims had slicks on them. After another three warm up laps the pack were unleashed and they disappeared towards Riches in one big ball of spray. As they slid through Russell on the completion of the first lap it was Brise leading closely tailed by Morgan, then a gap to Crawford, Wardle, Lawler, Choularton, Peter Williams (a good start from near the back), Cyd Williams, Musetti, Cook and Sharp. Spitzley was going so slowly he was almost lapped on his first lap, and he was not surprisingly black flagged on his third lap.

By one third distance (10 laps) the snow had stopped and the circuit was starting to dry on line. Morgan had dropped back from Brise on the sixth lap and was now closely tailed by Crawford. Wardle's fourth place was being threatened by Lawler and Choularton, while the only other significant change was that Sharp got ahead of Musetti on the fourth lap. Choularton continued putting the pressure on Lawler and it paid dividends at half distance when the SDC Chevron slipped into fifth place. Wardle had got away again but this was soon remedied and Choularton made his move at Riches on lap 19 and fourth place was his.

Meanwhile Brise was now pulling well clear of Morgan who had also left Crawford, the Lancastrian having to cope without the use of third gear which he lost as early as the fifth lap. With ten laps to go the order still remained the same, but Lawler was challenging Wardle's fifth place, as was Cyd Williams on Peter Williams' seventh place. However on the twenty second lap, Morgan got on to the grass at Riches while lapping Peter Williams' Chevron and damaged the nose. That hindered him enough for Crawford to catch and pass him for second place by lap 24. Lawler got by Wardle with nine laps to go, but the Surtees only lasted another three laps before the oil pressure took a dive, Peter managing to switch everything off before any damage was done.

Brise ran out the winner by 21s from Crawford who had 18s in hand over Morgan, and so the overall result was really a foregone conclusion unless anyone had a problem. Behind Choularton and Lawler, Cyd got the better of Peter Williams on lap 25 both only completing 29 laps, while one lap further back were Sharp and Musetti, who indulged in a spin at Riches.

Missing from part two were Wardle and Cook, who had had problems with his hired motor in the first part. This time it was dry and sunny and they lined up in the finishing order of the first heat. Surprisingly the opening laps weren't a carbon copy of the first part, Crawford took the lead from Brise, while Morgan got a little boxed in and came through fifth behind Choularton and Lawler, Morgan the younger did Lawler on lap 2 and Choularton at Riches on the third lap, while a lap later Brise inherited the lead along the long back straight. Tigering Cyd Williams took Lawler on the eighth lap and so the order at one third distance was, Brise, Crawford, Morgan, Choularton, Cyd Williams, Lawler, Spitzley, Musetti and P. Wiliams.

Lawler pitted on the eleventh lap to check the suspension and did another eight laps before retiring with problems in that department. Cyd Williams found himself in fourth place on lap 14, when Choularton understeered on tothe grass at Coram, and he retired to the Pits with a broken water hose. There weren't any further changes until the penultimate lap, when Morgan slipped past Crawford at the Esses, Crawford having been held up at Russell on the previous lap by Spitzley. Long after Brise crossed the line, the sole remaining SDC Chevron tried to slip-stream past Tom Wheatcrofts Chevron, but Morgan did it by a length, although both were given the same race time. It was also on the penultimate lap that Richard damaged another nose cone in somewhat mysterious circumstances at Russell. Not surprisingly the order on aggregate was Brise, Crawford and and Morgan, Cyd Williams being the only other unlapped runner in the second part, which also earned him fourth on aggregate. Spitzley finished fifth in the race but as he failed to finish the first part he was out of luck points wise, and so Musetti's consistency paid off, finishing sixth in part 2 and fifth overall. Another consistent runner was Philip Sharp who earned himself sixth overall after finishing seventh in the second part.

Frank Hopper's commanding FF2000 lead from Magee, Lawrence, Fox and Orgee





Alec Poole had his first outing in the ex-Meek Skoda and finished second.

The meeting opened with a round of the Allied Polymer Group Formula Ford 2000 Championship. Eleven cars practised for the 20 lap race, but this was reduced by one when Charles Allen rolled his Reynard at Riches when the steering failed, the driver being taken to hospital where it was found he had nothing more than serious bruising. Frank Hopper will be announcing a sponsor shortly for his Crosle-Rowland 31F, but in the meantime he planted the Irish car on pole, 1.6s quicker than Damien Magee's Palliser and Derek Lawrence's Oulton-winning Crossle. Hopper shot off into the lead, a fraction too quickly in the judges opinion who docked him a minute for his trouble. However he was not shown a 1 minute penalty board. Magee's Anglo Scottish Palliser Racing Team car held second initially, but he had a spin at Sear on the third lap which dropped him to fifth on the road behind Hopper, Lawrence, Syd Fox in the McKinstry Hawke and Bernard Vermilio's Merlyn. Fox retired to the Paddock on lap four with ignition trouble and Lawrence pulled out a safe distance beteween himself and the mightily dicing Merlyn and Palliser. They regularly swopped places and were joined just after half distance by Jeremy Rossiter's hard-charging Spax/Triple C Reynard.

With Magee having difficulty with third gear, the Reynard took third place on the 15th lap. although with Hopper's penalty it was third . They finished in that order, with Lawrence taking a lucky maximum points. Hopper did have some consolation in establishing the Super Ford lap record and getting a single point with sixth place behind a subdued Don Macleod in the Ashtune Van Diemen.

It was a very disappointing entry for the Simoniz Special Saloon Car Championship round. The six cars in the big class were reduced to four when Phil Clarke crashed his Vauxhall Magnum heavily at Riches, and Martin Birrane blew his Boss V8 engine in the Adlards Capri. Another Whiting/Marshall confrontation didn't materialise either. After pulling out a good lead over Gerry Marshall's Firenza. Nick Whiting's *Kent Messenger*/All Car Equipe Ford Escort FVC came to an abrupt halt at Sear on the second lap when a rear axle locating bracket broke. This left Marshall with an enormous lead which he extended throughout the fifteen laps. Second and only other car to finish on the same lap as Marshall was Alec Poole in the 2.0 Skoda-BDG. He had to start at the back with a 10s penalty and it only took him four laps to get into second place. A race long duel for the next place between Jeff Ward's Greetham Imp and Peter Baldwin's 1.0 Mini-Ford resolved itself in the former's favour. Baldwin had intended to race with a 1298 Ford engine but this wasn't ready. However to gain points in the bigger class he chose to enter in the up to 1300 cc class. After an appeal, Baldwin was excluded from the results as his car was not in accordance with the details on his entry form.

PAUL KING

John Player International Formula Atlantic Championship, Part 1 (30 laps): 1, Tony Brise (Modus-Nicholson M1), 36m 43.4s, 93.96 mph; 2, Jim Crawford (Chevron-Hart B29), 37m 04.4s; 3, Richard Morgan (Chevron-Nicholson B29), 37m 22.4s; 4, Stephen Choularton (Chevron-Hart B29), 37m 37.6s; 5, Alo Lawler (Chevron-Nicholson, B29), 37m 48.0s; 5, Cyd Williams (Brabham-Eden BT40), 29 laps. **Fastest lap:** Crawford, 69.6s, 99.16 mph.

Part 2 (30 laps): 1, Brise, 32m 22.0s, 106.61 mph; 2, Morgan, 32m 34.8s; 3, Crawford, 32m 34.8s; 4, Williams, 33m 23.6s; 5, Matt Spitzley (Chevron-Swindon B29), 29 laps; 6, Valentino Musetti (March-Nicholson 74B), 29 laps. **Fastest lap:** Brise and Morgan 63.8s 108.17 mph (outright record).

Aggregate result: 1, Brise, 1h 09m 05.4s, 99.98 mph; 2, Crawford, 1h 09m 39.2s; 3, Morgan, 1h 09m 57.2s; 4, Williams, 59 laps; 5, Musetti, 57 laps; 6, P. Sharp (Lyncar-Nicholson), 57 laps; 7, Lawler, 49 laps; 8, Peter Williams (Chevron-Nicholson B27), 47 laps; 9, Choularton, 43 laps; 10, Peter Munro (Chevron-Whitehurst B27) 42 laps.

Allied Polymer Group Formula Ford 2000 Championship (20 laps): 1, Derek Lawrence (Crossle-Thomas 31F), 24m 00.2s, 95.84 mph; 2, Bernard Vermillio (Merlyn Scholar Mk 28), 24m 05.6s; 3, Jeremy Rossiter (Reynard-Piper 75SF), 24m 06.2s; 4, Damien Magee (Palliser-Minister P472), 24m 08.2s; 5, Don Macleod (Van Diemen-Scholar RA75), 24m 44.2s; 6, Frank Hopper (Crossle-Rowland 31F), 24m 47.8s. **Fastest lap:** Hopper, 1m 10.2s, 98.31 mph (Establishes record).

Simoniz Special Saloon Car Championship over 1300 cc, 1001 to 1300 cc, 851 to 1000 cc and up to 850 cc (15 laps): Overall: 1, Gerry Marshall (2.3 Vauxhall Firenza; 19m 12.0s, 89.96 mph; 2, Alec Poole (2.0 Skoda S110R-BDG), 20m 26.0s; 3, Jeff Ward (1.0 Greetham Imp), 14 laps; 4, Tony Westbrook (1.3 Cooper S), 14 laps.

Over 1300 cc: 1, Marshall; 2, Poole; 3, Tim Stock (2.3 Vauxhall Magnum Coupe). **Fastest lap:** Marshall, 1m 14.4s, 92.76 mph.

1001 to 1300 cc: 1, Westbrook, 81.89 mph; 2, I. R. Blunt (1.3 Cooper S); 3, Tony Mann (1.3 Ford Anglia). **Fastest lap:** Westbrook, 1m 21.6s, 84.57 mph.

851 to 1000 cc: 1, Ward, 82.38 mph; only finisher. **Fastest lap:** Ward, 1m 21.2s, 84.99 mph.

Up to 850 cc: 1, David Enderby (848 Mini), 72.87 mph; 2, Michael Holland (848 Bevan Imp) 3, Bernard Tester (848 Tester Mini). **Fastest Lap:** Enderby, 1m 32.6s, 74.53 mph.

Tony Brise reflects on his second easy JP Atlantic win.



CROFT

Freeman again

The BRSCC (N) put on a neat seven race programme at Croft on Easter Monday. Main event was for Penthouse Mexicos and Mike Freeman took his second victory of the weekend, while third placed Nick Weir set a new lap record in a very close and exciting race.

Other championship victories were taken by Mick Starkey, John Britten, Doug Niven and Andy Barton.

John Simson started in 14th place on the grid in the FF Tait Trophy Race, after practice problems, but came up into fifth place at the end of lap four. Chasing the leading four cars he proceeded to drive into third place by lap nine and to second by lap 10. He was, however, unable to catch Mick Starkey, who drove a cool and steady race to take the honours by four tenths of a second.

An encouragingly large field of 20 Mini Seven cars started the Tri Tire and Auto Centres race and after taking the lead from R. Williams on lap two, J. Wenham was never headed. The ensuing fight for second and third places between R. Williams and R. Armstrong gave them equal fastest laps, with Wenham to set a new Mini Seven lap record for the circuit. Further down the field the lower places were also close fought to keep up everyone's interest.

After losing the lead for two laps to the V12 E-Type of Rod Gretton in Prod Sports race, John Britten's Morgan won by nearly 10 seconds. A fair number of spins took place but this did not prevent new class records being set up by A. Roughton (Europa), C. Alford (Morgan) and C. Wadsworth and R. Goodwin in class C.

Mick Freeman followed up his Rufforth victory in the Penthouse Mexico race to take the honours in this round as well. Nick Weir who finished in third place also set up a new Croft class lap record at 1m 28.6s (71.11 mph). The results do not really do justice to the close racing which took place with the first five places at the finish being filled with the five cars in the lead on the first lap.

A bad crash in practice of the MG and Morgan race saw the Morgan of Garry Caroline take the chicane sideways and upside down. The damage thus caused to the driver meant his removal to hospital with a suspected fractured elbow. In the race, it was the MGs which took the first three places but the B. Tuer Morgan was forced to make a pit stop but otherwise he may have been able to split them. As it was, Tuer claimed a new lap record of 1m 34.8s (66.46 mph). Unfortunately, numerous retirements marred the progress of the Morgans.

Doug Niven returned to Croft after an absence eight months to take up where he left off last year in Special Saloons. He won the Special Saloons race by nearly two seconds from Brian Whiting's Escort, but not without drama, as an oil pipe disconnected two laps from the finish and wreathed the boss Escort in smoke. Keith Bowmaker could not close up on the first two and ran an uneventful third place throughout. Further down the field Pitman (Imp), the only other non BLMC car, was the fastest of the class 'C' runners. Class B went to E. Patterson.

From pole position Andy Barton's Lotus lead all the way to win the Libre race with A. Jeffries' Chevron second, some 50s behind. Bill Wood (Trojan) retired smoking on lap three, after troubles between practice and the race. Class 'A' of the Clubmen's race went to Barry Joel (Gryphon) and Class 'B' to D. Pattle. They were the only finishers in their classes.

PAUL BOOTHROYD

Tait Trophy Race (12 laps): 1, M. Starkey (ATS Merlyn) 50m 15.0s, 82.62 mph; 2, J. W. Simpson (Nike) 50m 15.4s; 3, D. C. Harbour (Crossle) 15m 19.4s; W. N. Williamson (Van Dieman) 15m 22.0s; 5, Phillip (Crossle) 15m 29.4s; 6, C. McLean (MRE) 15m 39.4s. **Fastest Lap:** J. W. Simpson 1m 14.4s, 84.68 mph.

Tri Tire and Auto Centres Race (10 laps): 1, G. Wenham (Micktuned Mini) 14m 58.0s, 70.16 mph; 2, R. R. Williams (Austin), 15m 02.8s, 3, R. Armstrong (Austin Mini) 15m 03.0s; 4, J. Mancey (Jimini) 15m 20.2s; 5, J. West (BMC Mini)15m 21.4s; 6, A. Seekings (Jimini) 15m 27.0s. **Fastest lap:** (new class lap record), J. Wenham. R. R. Williams. R. Armstrong, 1m 28.4s, 71.27 mph.

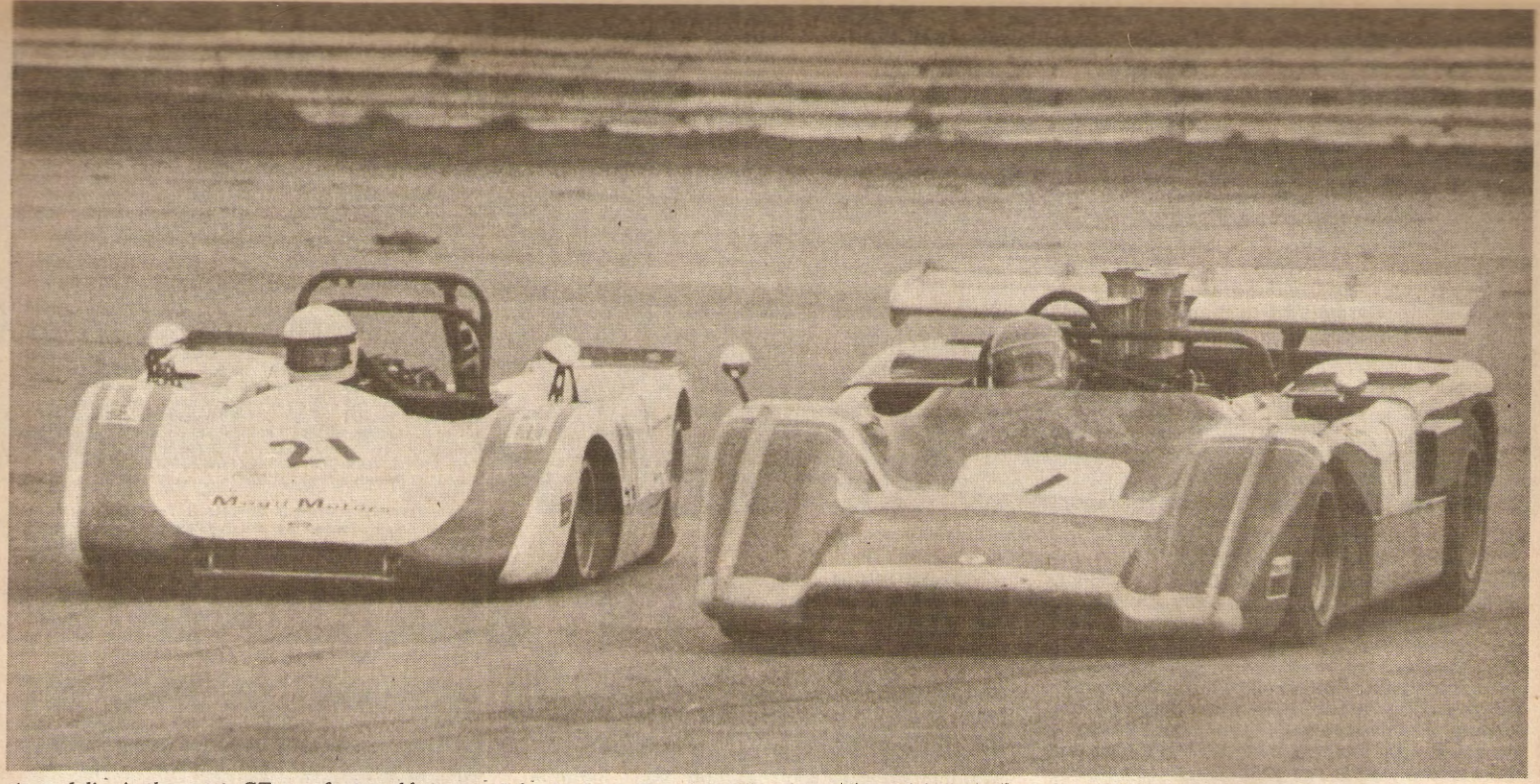
DC Cup (Datsun) Production Sports Car Race (10 laps): 1, J. Britten Morgan) Class 'a,' 14m 23.6s, 72.95 mph; 2, R. Wroughton (Lotus Europa) 14.33.2s; 3, R. Creton (Jaguar V12) 14m 48.8s. Class 'B': 1, C. Alford (Morgan) 15m 24.2s, 68.17 mph; 2, Doc Griffiths (MGB) 14m 27.4s (9 laps); 3, G. Baughan (Triumph TR6) 14m 28.8s (9 laps). **Class 'C':** 1, C. H. B. Wadsworth (Austin Healey) 14m40.8s (9 laps); 2, R. Goodwin (MG Midget) 14m 57.4s (9 laps); 3, D. Karaskas (Austin Healey) 14m 31.0s (8 laps). **Fastest Laps:** Class A: A Wroughton 1m 24.6s, 74.47 mph. **Class 'B':** C. Alford 1m 13.8s, 69.58 mph; **Class 'C':** C. H. B. Wadsworth, and R. Goodwin, 1m 35.8s, 65.76 mph.

BRSCC Penthouse Ford Escort Championship: 1, M. Freeman 15m 05s, 69.61 mph; 2, G. Bruce 15m 05.4s; 3, N. Weir 15m 05.6s; 4, G. N. Rigby 15m 12.8s; 5, G. Evans 15m 28.4s; 6, D. Hiley 15m 41.2s. **Fastest Lap:** N. Weir 1m 28.6s, 71.11 mph **(lap record).**

'T' Type MGs and Prewar Three Wheel Morgans (10 laps): 1, N. Taylor (MG) 16m 00s, 65.63 mph; 2, J. A. B. Naylor (MG) 16m 00.6s; 3, M. Pruton (MG) 16m 02.4s, (9 laps); 4, A. M. Leslie (Morgan) 16m 31.4s); 63.55 mph; 5, J. Harper (Morgan 17m 06.2s; 6, B. Tuer (Morgan) 17.35.4s. **Fastest Laps:** N. Taylor and J. A. B. Naylor 1m 33.4s, 67.45 mph. B. Tuer 1m 34.8s, 66.46 mph **(lap record).**

BRSCC Saloon Car Championship (10 laps): 1, D. Niven (Boss Escort) 13m 04.6s, 80.30 mph; 2, B. Whiting (Ford Escort) 13.06.4s; 3, K. Bowmaker (Ford) 13m50.0s. **Class 'B':** 1, E. Patterson (Morris) 14m 10s; 2, O. Corrigan (BLMC) 14.06s; 3, D. Horsley (Mini Cooper) 14m 13.4s. **Class 'C'(** 1, P. Pitman (Mini) 14m 31s; 2, P. Borrowdale (BMC) 13m 18.8s; 3, C. Lawson (Mini) 13m 24.6s. **Fastest Lap:** D. Niven 1m 13.8s, 85.37 mph.

Formula Libre and Clubmen's (10 laps): 1, A. Barton (Lotus) 11m 16s, 93.02 mph; 2, A. Jeffries (Chevron), 12m 06.8s; 3, B. Joel (Gryphon) 12m 27.2s. **Clubmen's: Class 'A':** B. Joel; **Class 'B':** D. Pattle (Malock 22) 12m 23.2s. **Fastest Lap:** A. Barton, 1m 05.8s, 95.74 mph.



A good dice in the sports GT race featured between John Jordan's Can-Am McLaren M8E and Tony Charnell's little FVC-powered Lola T212. Power told however but only by 0.4s.

SILVERSTONE

Walsh scores on home ground

Steadily deteriorating weather and, in some cases, rather poor grids could have spoiled the Silverstone Bank Holiday meeting had it not been for some stirring battles in almost every race. The result, unlike the Curate's egg, was very good in parts and never really bad. The largely local and extremely enthusiastic crowd which filled all the Woodcote stands almost to capacity cheered Jim Walsh, the Northampton Formula Ford driver, to an excellent win in the Formula Ford final in the Brush Fusegear Championship's second round, his performance in overcoming a start from the back row in his heat, after practice bothers, together with a fine, but restrained, drive in the wet and slippery final gained him the Allied Polymer Driver of the Day award; a decision that few people would argue with.

The first race was the first Formula Ford heat and Glen Eagling from pole, in the trim new Van Diemen RF75, was challenged from the very start by David Barkas' Royale RP16, the two coming through Woodcote side by side on the first lap. Claude Crespin, the cheerful Belgian FF champion and Stuart Baird were in hot pursuit of Richard Wills' MRE and Lee Wroe-Johnson's Rostron which were disputing third place. This battle raged until the third lap when Wills spun entering Woodcote and collected Wroe-Johnson, putting both cars out of the running, letting the two following Merlyns of Crespin and Baird into third and fourth place. Barkas was trying very hard to hold off the challenging Eagling and on the last lap he braked too late, trying not to be outbraked into the apex of Woodcote, and the car got away from him although he was able to recover and finish behind the two Merlyns, in fifth place. Eagling took the chequered flag with Crespin second, pushed hard by Baird and Adam Smith's Lola T340, which had climbed steadily from eighth place after a long battle with Chris Fearon's Titan.

The second Brush Fusegear FF heat was won by Mike King in his Lola T342 although Jim Walsh, starting from the back row of the grid, following practice problems with the oil filter on his engine, stormed through the field and took the lead on the fourth lap until an indiscretion dropped him to fourth place. Terry Fisher challenged all through the race in his Merlyn together with Chris Woocock's Dulon and these two crossed the line almost together with Walsh very close behind, followed by the Merlyns of Mark Syms and Nigel Wright.

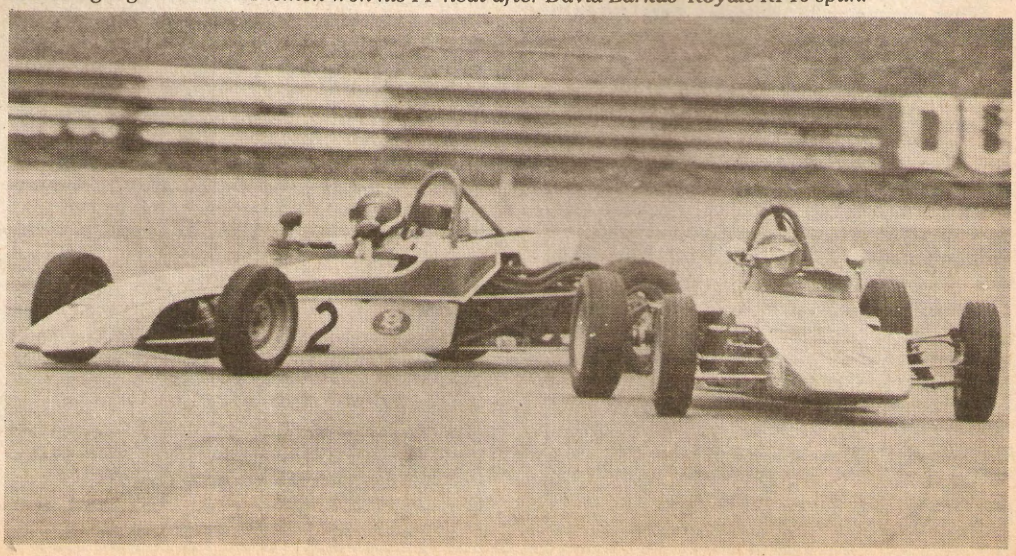
The final was expected to bring fireworks and by this time the circuit was thoroughly greasy; hardly the right surface for the new FF footwear of Dunlop CR65 tyres and the spectators looked almost as apprehensive as the marshals while the grid formed up. Walsh arrived on the line waving his arms about which was taken by his mechanics to mean a complete change to wet-weather chassis tune on his Hawke and they quickly disconnected the rear roll-bar, slackened off the front bar, slackened off the shockers and reduced the rear braking in almost the time it takes to read it. Glen Eagling was on pole position for the final with Mike King and Terry Fisher making up the front rank. Eagling stormed off to lead the field for the first couple of laps but Walsh, after a wary start, took over the lead on the third lap and was unassailable thereafter, Stuart Baird grimly hanging on almost throughout to second place, despite the attentions of Mike King until the latter retired on the 11th of the 12 laps. Chris Woodcock took over fourth place having been caught and passed by David Barkas who had avenged his spin in the first heat by climbing steadily to third place after a slow start.

Walsh's efforts earned him the Allied Polymer Driver of the Day award from the somewhat impromptu panel, a particularly popular decision with the crowd.

A quaint assortment of cars contested the mixed Sports GT and Modsports race although some of the entries were truly mouthwatering. John Jordan's mighty M8E Chevrolet always seems to take time to warm to its work and it seemed that the wily Tony Charnell might outfox the Biggleswade flour-basher early on, Tony's 1975 mount being that special Lola T212 which was specially built for Phil Scragg originally with an Olds V8 but was little seen on the hills and ended up with a 'proper' FVC in it instead. Nevertheless, John managed to gain the flag first after what developed into a really good motor race. Iain McLaren wound his way through the field after starting from the back row with a pushstart, his Chevron B26/31 being starterless and finished third ahead of Brian Green's Davron-powered Gryphon Clubmen's car and John Coles' Chevron B23. Jack Le Fort and Richard Bond swapped places to the delight of the crowd in two beautiful red Lola T70 Mk IIIs, Bond's being quicker until it developed a misfire although it seemed to be rather plagued with that demon of the Modsports brigade, Dave Bettinson in his Lotus 7 complete with sophisticated aerodynamic dams on its underside. Maurice Gates' TVR Tuscan rumbled round to just head off veteran Chris Metcalfe's Lotus 23C with John 'Metal' Pearson's superb XK 120 FHC holding off Simon Watney's 'E' type.

Jeff Ward's Hillman Imp led the first Esso

Glen Eagling's new Van Diemen won his FF heat after David Barkas' Royale RP16 spun.



Uniflow Special Saloon car race from start to finish with Basil Dagge's immaculate Imp behind. At first these two had close company from Richard Oliver's Imp as well until it blew its motor up rather comprehensively on the eighth lap. Incredibly, Charles Bernstein's eight port head Mini pressed the leading trio for several laps, by far the fastest of the 850 cc class, but he dropped back with a deflating tyre as the race progressed. Richard Belcher's handsome Anglia wouldn't start on the line and Richard had to work his way up the field to gain third place, setting the fastest lap in the process. The Imps of Mike Kirby and Graham Williams contested second spot in the 850 cc class but, despite Bernstein's tyre problem, they finished some 10 seconds behind him at the end.

The start of the Monoposto Formula race was delayed while bits of car were swept off the track and Alan Baillie ran away from the only real challenger and his Viking 19M won with ease from Nigel Howard-Jones' RTW and John Chambers' Chamox. Brian Toft's remarkable Anco was fourth, celebrating its 10th year of competitive racing and still eccentric in that it is one of the only front-engined single seater racing cars seen nowadays.

The second Esso Uniflo Special Saloon car race started after the track had been wetted by a mild drizzle. As Tony Strawson said, sitting on pole position in his Capri, "All the other b———s are p———g about somewhere else." And so they must have been, for completing the front row of the grid were the Anglia of Chris Hill and Mini of Dave Hancock; fast, yes, but competition for Strawson — No! Anyway, Tony beetled off into the wide blue yonder in the Capri but behind him raged a real battle between the 1300cc Minis of Peter Baldwin, Bob Fox and Dave Hancock, which emerged from Woodcote on the first lap almost touching each other. Hancock led at first until his engine started to lose its edge and the other two dropped him and battled furiously, tactics flying, bluffing, double bluffing and so on until, on the last lap into Woodcote, Baldwin shot past the wily Bob Fox and scraped across the line ahead of him to a roar from the crowd. Hancock toured home fourth, the only other unlapped finisher.

The Jaybrand *Formule Libre* race was the finisher to the day's sport and in worsening conditions Nick May's tidy Lola T360 pursued and caught John Wingfield's F2 BT35, the last spaceframe Brabham, and ran away to a lonely win. Mike Endean's sleek Lyncar came third ahead of Chris Choat's BT35, having worked his way up the field with John Jordan's misfiring M8E in company with Bobby Bell's wriggling Trojan in fifth and sixth places respectively, Bell sharing fastest lap with the winner. Tony Charnell had been continuing his Sports/GT battle with Jordan until his car packed up at Maggots on the 11th of the 12 laps.

ROBIN REW

Brush Fusegear FF race, heat 1 (10 laps): 1, Glenn Eagling (Van Diemen-Scholar RF75), 11m 2.4s, 87.41 mph; 2, Claude Crespin (Merlyn-Holbay Mk24), 11m 6.4s; 3, Stuart Baird (Merlyn-Ford Mk25), 11m 6.6s; 4, Adam Smith (Lola-Scholar T340), 11m 6.8s; 5, David Barkas (Royale-RE RP16), 11m 8.8s. **Fastest Lap:** Barkas and Eagling, 1m 5.5s, 89.05 mph.

Brush Fusegear FF race, heat 2 (10 laps): 1, Mike King (Lola-Close T342), 11m 3.6s, 87.3 mph; 2, Terry Fisher (Merlyn-Minister Mk25), 11m 6.2s; 3, Chris Woodcock (Dulon-Cooper MP15C), 11m 6.2s; 4, Jim Walsh (Hawke-Scholar DL12), 11m 6.8s; 5, M. Syms (Merlyn-Longman Mk20A), 11m 9.0s. **Fastest Lap:** Walsh, 1m 4.4s, 89.89 mph.

Sports/GT and Modsports race (10 laps): 1, John Jordan (7.0 McLaren-Chevrolet M8E), 9m 48.4s, 98 mph; 2, Tony Charnell (1.9 Lola-Ford 212), 9m 48.8s; 3, Iain McLaren (1.9 Chevron-Cosworth B26/31), 10m 33.0s; 4, Brian Green (1.6 Gryphon-Davron C4A), 10m 34.2s.

Class winners: **Over 2000cc:** Jordan; **1301-2000cc:** Charnell; **up to 1300cc:** Graeme Dodd (1.3 MG Midget) (9 laps). **Fastest laps:** Jordan, 56.8s, 101 mph; Charnell, 57.0s, 101 mph; Dodd, 1m 9.6s, 83 mph.

Esso Uniflo Special Saloon Car Race A (12 laps): 1, Jeff Ward (1.0 Hillman Imp), 13m 59.0s, 82.80 mph; 2, Basil Dagge (1.0 Hillman Imp), 14m .06s; 3, Richard Belcher (1.0 Ford Anglia), 14m 20.4s; 4, Charles Bernstein (850cc Mini), 14m 54.2s, 77.68 mph. **Class winners:** Ward and Bernstein. **Fastest Laps:** Belcher, 1m 8.4s, 84.63 mph, and Bernstein, 1m 10.0s, 82.70 **(record).**

Monposto Formula Race (12 laps): 1, Alan Baillie (1.6 Viking-Ford 19M), 12m 59.4s, 89.1 mph; 2, Nigel Howard-Jones (1.6 RTW74/5 Lion), 13m 8.6s; 3, John Chambers (1.6 Chamox-Ford), 13m 17.2s; 4, Brian Toft (1.6 Anco-Ford), 13m 23.6s. **Fastest Lap:** Baillie, 1m 3.4s, 91.3 mph.

Brush Fusegear FF Final (12 laps): 1, Jim Walsh (Hawke-Scholar DL12), 15m 21.6s, 75.38 mph; 2, Stuart Baird (Merlyn Mk25), 15m 32.8s; 3, David Barkas (Royale-RE RP16), 15m 34.2s; 4, Chris Woodcock (Dulon-Cooper MP150), 15m 34.4s. **Fastest Lap:** Barkas, 1m 15.0s, 77.18 mph.

Esso Uniflow Special Saloon Car race B (12 laps): 1, Tony Strawson (5.0 Ford Capri), 14m 20.4s, 80.7 mph; 2, Peter Baldwin (1.3 Austin Cooper S), 14m 49.2s; 3, Bob Fox (1.3 Mini Cooper S), 14m 49.6s; 4, Dave Hancock (1.3 Mini Cooper S), 15m 31.6s.

Class winners: Strawson and Baldwin. **Fastest Laps:** Strawson, 1m 10.4s, 82.2 mph; Fox and Baldwin, 1m 12.6s, 79.7 mph.

Jaybrand Formula Libre Race (12 laps): 1, Nick May (1.6 Lola Ford T360B), 13m 23.8s, 86.42 mph; 2, John Wingfield (1.8 Brabham BT35), 13m 43.8s; 3, Mike Endean (1.8 Lyncar F2 FVC), 13m 50s; 4, Chris Choat (2.0 Brabham BT35), 13m 54.2s; 5, John Jordan (7.0 McLaren-Chev M8E), 13m 55.2s; 6, Bobby Bell (Trojan Chev T101), 13m 56.2s. **Fastest Lap:** Bell and May, 1m 5.6s, 88.24 mph.



Peter Baldwin's Mini leads the similar cars of Bob Fox and Dave Hancock.

LOTON PARK

A turn up for the book

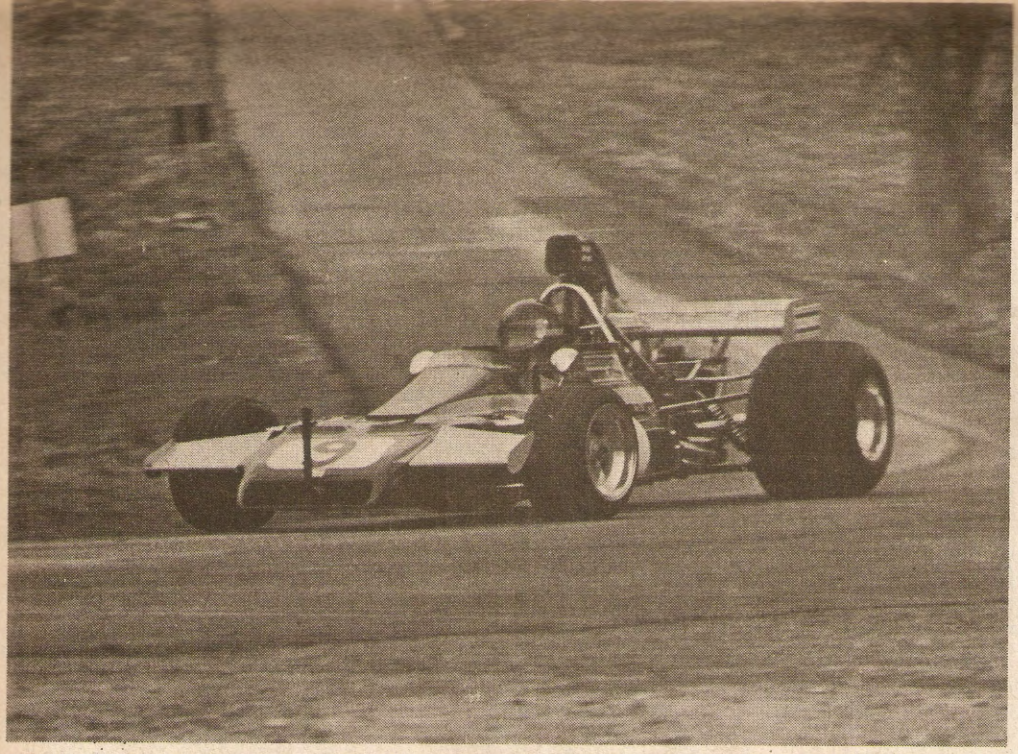
The Hagley and District Light Car Club played host to the hill climb championship circus last Monday when they staged the opening meeting of the RAC Championship series. Unfortunately the weather did little to assist the organisers or competitors with rain falling before the second class runs thus ensuring that all the class winners were decided on first run times, the second efforts generally being of academic interest only. However by the time that the top ten championship run off was due, despite darkening skies the course was drying and last years' hill climb find Alister Douglas-Osborn took full advantage of the improving conditions to take his first ever championship win with his BDG-engined Pilbeam despite an off course excursion after the finish which sidelined him for the second runs. But he was safe despite massive efforts from Chris Cramer and Roy Lane, many people's favourites for the title this year.

The class runs opened with the up to 1600cc saloon cars and immediately Alan Cox carried on where he left off last year with the John Brown Motors one litre Cooper S by skittering to the top in 64.62s. Even the redoubtable Robin Yeomans with his 1380cc version failed to quite match that, finishing in second place just 0.37s down on Cox and half a second ahead of that very versatile sporting motorist Phil Darbyshire with his Cooper S. The large saloon car class contained just three starters and with Stuart Lewis still sorting his Chevrolet-engined Capri, it was left to the father and son Wainwright combination to battle for the class with their smokey supercharged Rover-engined Capri with Wayne taking the honours at 66.24s over four seconds clear of Basil.

A hot favourite to take the Woking Motors Leaders title this year is Russ Ward with his Aldon Healey Sprite entered under the John Brown Motors banner but he failed to finish a run in the

"It was left to the father and son Wainwright combination to battle for the class with their smokey Supercharged Rover-engined Capri."





Tony Griffiths spun his Brabham-DFV BT33 in the championship run-off, so finished eighth.

small mod sports car class due to a sick motor and it was left to the Clan Crusader of the very neat Di MacMaster to show the way home with a fine run of 68.35s which defeated the quickest of the males in the class, Mike Williams with his Cox GTM by just under four seconds. With Martyn Lock almost smiting the Armco at the Triangle on his first run with his TVR Tuscan and then retiring for the rest of the day, the Turner of Jim Gathercole was the only runner in the large mod sports car class but he never stopped trying finally recording a time of 67.44s.

In the Clubmans class, despite an excessive amount of understeer with his Mk6B Mallock U2, Peter Matthews was in a class of his own taking the division by some seven seconds from the Mk8/11 version of Tony Griffin with his ascent of 63.80s. Last year Martyn Griffiths dominated the up to 1600cc sports racing car class with his U2 which is now in the formidable hands of the Blankstone family and needless to say, still winning. Having recorded 62.39s for his climb Peter looked home and dry for the class as his nearest challenger, with wife Maggie still to run, was John Pascoe well over a second adrift. But Maggie really rose to the occasion with a splendid drive to pip her husband by just over a tenth of a second with a time of 62.24s. Of the two runners in the large sports racing car class John Stuart with his Mallock U2 Mk15 was always the winner and he confirmed this with a superbly controlled run at 58.85s which left him over ten seconds ahead of the Lotus 7 of Simon Dominey.

A quick flurry of rain just before the 500ccs racing car class meant a slippery road for these hardened enthusiasts and they responded admirably with much opposite locking and wheel waving and probably everyone of the sixteen drivers in the class suffered a moment or two somewhere along the line. Certainly John Turner did with his Cooper Norton but despite nearly running out of road at the Triangle, he still made the top in 67.09s which was to prove unbeatable. Ron Warr as always gave his all to bring his Cooper into second place a second down on Turner and a similar margin ahead of his co-driver Barry Oddy. Richard White's F.M.S. was a further three quarters of a second down. Of the modern five hundreds, the Castrol/BARC winning Voigt-Renwick special now in the hands of Scotsman David Fyffe proved over four seconds quicker than the Hocus Pocus of Paul Rhys although even he could not quite match Turner's time with the historic version, his best being 67.47s.

Terry Smith continued his Yeovilton form from the day before at Loton and never looked like losing the up to 1100ccs racing car class for his handling of the Dinitrol Vixen was again a joy to watch and he needed just 60.39s for his winning climb which left him over two and a half seconds clear of the Brabham of Chris Dowson. He headed his co-driver David Lee by over three seconds while Alan Richards came through well to take fourth place with his Gryphon with a wet run time of 70.30s having stopped on the first and drier run with a dead motor.

There wes never any doubt that David Franklin was going to win the 1600ccs class for again he was flying with the Huntsman Ensign needing just 56.99s to settle the issue. Despite competing in only his sixth hill climb regular sprinter Rob Turnbull handled his Brabham BT35 well to take second spot on 59.63s just a third of a second ahead of Geoff Deakin who is rapidly coming to grips with his recently acquired March 713M and headed the now 1600cc Ensign of David Way by two seconds.

The large racing car class saw Alister Douglas-Osborn really flying in his Pilbeam-BDG (formerly Brabham BT38) and despite the slippery conditions he really got the power to the floor to take the class at 54.57s, 0.34s up on the hard trying Roy Lane with his Fenny Marine GM1. The real surprise of the class was provided by Ken MacMaster with his new Modus M4 with a great time of 56.03s in the relatively unsorted car which netted him third place ahead of John Cussins and the Waring and Gillow Chevron B32 who spun on his dry run but was fortunate enough to receive a red flag as he carried on the hill and so received a re-run. Fifth place fell to the off sounding Hart-engined Grunhalle Lager March 74B of Chris Cramer who fought every inch of the way for his time of 56.44s which left him 0.4s ahead of the Chevron B25/27 of Richard Shardlow who was making a one off appearance in the championship.

The final class of the day contained the Hagley members only and not surprisingly the quickest car proved to be the Lotus 41 of Neil Mabbett with a climb of 62.09s while the next fastest car was the ex Dave Preece Cox GTM of Ken Hayward with a very spirited climb of 66.31s.

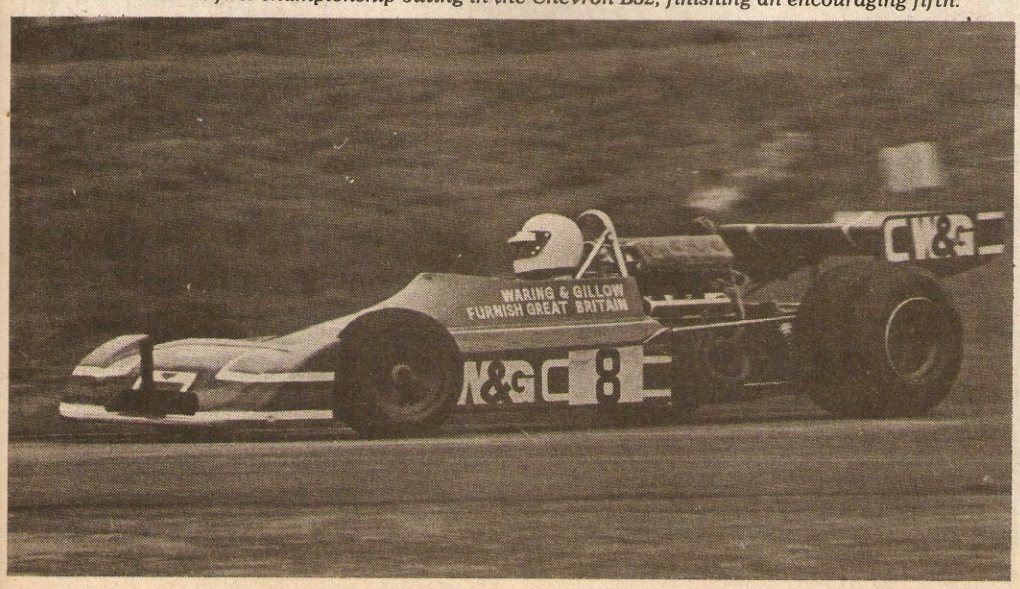
Malcolm Dungworth led the championship chasers away on the top ten with his Waring & Gillow Brabham BT35X Repco and recorded 61.69s, a time which the Chevron B25/27 of Reg Phillips could not match. In his efforts to get on terms, Tony Griffiths spun the Kidderminster Motors Brabham-DFV BT33 fortunately without incurring damage. David Franklin looked a little on the ragged side but still managed 59.56s and Richard Shardlow's engine sounded far from well and he just failed to beat the minute. Chris Cramer then set the crowd buzzing with a determined effort despite his off-form motor with 57.55s and a happier-looking John Cussins recorded 58.51s. Ken MacMaster did not quite repeat his class from with 59.05s. Roy Lane as always was fast and neat and he slipped the Fenny Marine GM1 into the lead just ahead of Cramer on 57.46s but it was short lived for Alister Douglas-Osborn looked visibly quicker than anyone else and so it proved, 56.44s, but he lost the car after the finish line and swiped off the nose and sidelined himself. He would have to sit back and wait, watch and hope, as the second runs took place.

Dungworth improved nicely with a tidy climb at 59.32s, seventh place in the run off while despite trimming his earlier time by nearly two seconds, Reg Phillips took just tenth spot behind Richard Shardlow whose engine sounded terrible with flames leaping from the exhaust, but he persevered and equalled his first time, 60.20s. Tony Griffiths made no mistakes the second time, 59.34s netting him eighth place and MacMaster was slower and took sixth place with his first run behind Cussins who improved by a quarter of a second to 58.27s. David Franklin again looked a little on the desperate side with his 1600cc Huntsman Ensign but it was a good run, 57.58s and fourth place.

The next man to go was Cramer with the engine sounding a little better and it was Cramer at his best, 56.88, still slower than ADO but ahead of Roy Lane. So it all rested on Lane and he really give it everything with the Fenny Marine car using all the course but a little slide and a touch of the grass after the Triangle and his chance was gone, only marginally slower than before but third place only. So Alister Douglas-Osborn has taken his first championship win and judging by his performance at Loton, could be a hard man to beat this season.

ROBIN BOUCHER

John Cussins had his first championship outing in the Chevron B32, finishing an encouraging fifth.



1, Alister Douglas-Osborn (2.2 Pilbeam-BDG), 56.44s; 2, Chris Cramer (2.2 Grunhalle Lager March-Hart 74B), 56.88s; 3, Roy Lane (5.0 Fenny Marine-Chevrolet GM1), 57.46s; 4, David Franklin (1.6 Huntsman Ensign-Holbay LNF373), 57.58s; 5, John Cussins (5.7 Waring & Gillow Smith-Chevrolet B32), 58.27s; 6, Ken MacMaster (2.0 Modus-BDA M4), 59.05s; 7, Malcolm Dungworth (5.0 Waring & Gillow Brabham-Repco BT35X), 59.32s; 8, Tony Griffiths (3.0 Kidderminster Motors Brabham-DFV BT33), 59.34s; 9, Richard Shardlow (2.0 Chevron-BDG B25/27), 60.20s; 10, Reg Phillips (2.2 Chevron-BDA B25/27), 61.95s.

Class winners: Alan Cox (1.0 John Brown Motors Mini Cooper S), 64.62s; Wayne Wainwright (3.5 Ford Capri Rover), 66.24s; Diana MacMaster (1.0 Clan Crusader), 68.35s; Jim Gathercole (1.6 Turner-Ford), 67.44s; Peter Matthews (1.6 Mallock U2-Ford Mk6B), 63.80s; Maggie Blankstone (1.6 Mallock U2 Mk8B TC), 62.24s; John Stuart (1.8 Mallock U2-BDA Mk 15), 58.85s; John Turner (0.5 Cooper Norton), 67.09s; David Fyffe (0.5 Voigt Renwick Special), 67.47; Terry Smith (1.0 Dinitrol Vixen-Imp VB5), 60.39s; David Franklin (1.6 Huntsman Ensign-Holbay LNF3), 56.99s; Alister Douglas-Osborn (2.2 Pilbeam-BDG), 54.57.

CASTLE COMBE

White scores twice

Despite the cold and intermittent rain, Easter Monday at Castle Combe attracted a large crowd who saw Martin White take two wins in his Clubmen's Mallock while Brian Cutting scored a fine debut win with the new supercharged V8 Oldsmobile-engined Escort.

Steve Harris led the Miglia championship round for eight laps only to find the Wessex Kentred Mini of Mike Curnow outbrake him on the penultimate lap. Waved yellow flags at Camp prevented any last lap outbraking attempt by Harris. John Hazell and Tom Hurn had lonely races in third and fourth.

Gordon Rae's neat Rae, complete with airbox, saw off Peter Wimhurst's Veemax to win this Formula Vee championship round. The tussle for third was no less lively with Glen Hay's Landar leading home Tim Green's CM Mk 1 after an indiscretion by Green at Quarry. Len Merxer's Scarab made it a trio two laps from the end but was not close enough to challenge for third place.

The new 1.0 special saloon car championship, organised by the BRSCC (SW) centre, was dominated by the exhaust dragging Longman Mini of John Routley. Following the retirements of John Peachey-Austing's Imp-engined Mini and Robin Bastable's Clements Mini, Russell Dell's Miglia Mini annexed third. The 850 class winner Francis Taylor warded off the closely following 1.0 Mini of Alan Presbury, the two nearly colliding at Camp on the last lap.

Malcolm White took the first of two wins in the Pole Position Clubmen's race after a tussle with Malcolm Jackson's similar Mallock Mk 14. Sid Marler's Gryphon retired at half distance elevating the dice between Keith Norman's Gryphon and Alan White's Mallock for third. They finished in that order with a similar encounter in the standard engined class ending with Keith Money's Mallock a shade in front of Nick Scott's similar car.

Terry Van-Der-Zee's new 3.5 supercharged Oldsmobile V8 Escort scored a fine debut win in the other special saloon car race with Brian Cutting working hard keeping ahead of Martin Kent's Chevrolet-engined Rapier. Brian Thackray's normal sized Escort was an unmolested third throughout while a spate of retirements enabled Tony Pearce to take fourth overall and a good class win in Jack Winter's Mini.

Renault 5 victor Neil McGrath



Robin Mayhew's elderly Alexis stayed in front of Rob Newall's Jamun and John Peters' Jonig to take the local BRSCC championship round. Six Formula Ford cars were involved in a frantic struggle for third with Mike Wallaker's Jomic having a moment on the last lap allowing Len Fletcher's Crossle to head the queue over the line.

Stuart McCrudden managed to keep his Renault 5 right side up this time but it was left to Neil McGrath to once more dominate the race on a rainsoaked track. McCrudden was a car's length behind at the close with Mick Hill's hairly driven 5, a further 0.2s behind and just ahead of David Hodges.

The libre race turned into a fine disc between the Mallock of Ian Jones and Martin White. With the demise of Jones on lap eight, White coasted home to his second win. The Formula Ford 2000 Royale RP22 of Roger Orgee managed to thwart Sid Marler's Gryphon, the Clubmen's driver having started from the back of the grid.

COLIN MASTERMAN

Mini Miglia championship round (10 laps): 1, Alan Curnow (Longman Mini), 13m 10.6s, 84.20 mph; 2, Steve Harris (Austin Mini), 13m 11.2s; 3, John Hazell (Interpart Mini), 13m 40.8s; 4, Tom Hurn (EAG Mini), 13m 52.6s. **Fastest lap:** Curnow, 1m 17.2s, 85.80 mph. (**Record**).

Formula Vee championship round (10 laps): 1, Gordon Rae (Rae Special), 12m 24.0s, 89.03 mph; 2, Peter Wimhurst (Veemax), 12m 24.4s; 3, Glen Hay (Landar), 12m 55.2s; 4, Tim Green (CM Mk 1), 12m 56s. **Fastest lap:** Wimhurst, 1m 12.6s, 91.24 mph.

Special saloons BRSCC (SW) (10 laps), overall and 851 to 1000 cc: 1, John Routley (1.0 Longman Mini), 13m 13.2s, 83.50 mpg; 2, Russell Dell (1.0 Ripspeed Mini), 13m 34s; 3, Francis Taylor (850 Clements Mini), 14m 8.8s; 4, Alan Presbury (1.0 Mini), 14m 8.8s. **Fastest lap** Routley, 1m 17.8s, 85.14 mph.

Up to 851 cc: 1, Taylor, 78.04 mph; 2, Dieter Dhalemann (Mini); 3, Malcolm Jaggard (Clements Mini). **Fastest lap:** Taylor, 1m 22.4s, 80.39 mph.

Pole Position Clubman's round (10 laps); overall and 1600 cc fully modified: 1, Martin White (Mallock Mk 14), 10m 52s, 101.59 mph; 2, Malcolm Jackson (Mallock Mk 14), 10m 55.2s; 3, Keith Norman (Gryphon C73), 11m 13.8s; 4, Alan White (Mallock Mk IIb), 11m 14s. **Fastest lap:** Martin White, 1m 4s, 103.50 mph.

1600 cc FF: 1, Keith Money (Mallock Mk 14), 87.87 mph; 2, Nick Scott (Mallock Mk 11B); 3, Tony Harris (Mallock Mk 11B). **Fastest lap:** Money and Scott, 1m 12.6s 91.24 mph.

Special saloons (10 laps): overall and over 1300 cc: 1, Brian Cutting (3.5 Escort Oldsmobile), 11m 58.6s, 92.18 mph; 2, Martin Kent (5.7 Sunbeam Rapier), 12m 3.6s; 3, Brian Thackray (1.8 Escort), 12m 26.4s; 4, Tony Pearce (1.3 Mini), 13m 18s. **Fastest lap:** Cutting, 1m 10s, 94.63 mph.

1000 cc to 1300 cc: 1, Pearce, 83.00 mph; 2, Mick Davies (1.3 Cooper S); 3, Dave Thomas (1.3 Cooper S). **Fastest lap:** Steve Harris (1.3 Cooper S), 1m 16.2, 86.93 mph.

Formula Ford BRSCC(SW) round (15 laps): 1, Robin Mayhew (Alexis Mk 18B), 18m 21.2s, 90.23 mph; 2, Rob Newall (Jamun T3C), 18m 22s; 3, Len Fletcher (Crossle 25F), 18m 31s; 4, John Skinner (Dulon MP15), 18m 32.6s. **Fastest lap:** Fletcher, Skinner and Mike Wallaker (Jomic Mk 2), 1m 11.8s, 92.26 mph.

Renault 5 championship round (10 laps): 1, Neil McGrath, 16m 33.4s, 66.68 mph; 2, Stuart McCrudden, 16m 33.6s; 3, Mick Hill, 16m 33.8s; 4, David Hedges, 16m 34s. **Fastest lap:** Hill, 1m 30.4s, 68.71 mph.

Formula Libre (10 laps): 1, Martin White (1.6 Mallock Us Mk 14), 12m, 16.4s, 89.95 mph; 2, Roger Orgee (2.0 Royale RP22), 12m 25.4s; 3, Sid Marler (1.6 Gryphon), 12m 26.2s; 4, Brian Songhurst (1.6 Royale RP16A), 13m 30.8s. **Fastest lap:** White, 1m 104s, 94.09 mph.

LLANDOW

Rally boys versus the racers

Four mile traffic jams in all directions, more nasty armco and goodbye to all the centre marshals posts could only mean the start of the new season's racing at Llandow. Lots of locals had new and interesting machinery including Georgie Constantine's 145 bhp Longman Mini-Ford. Bernard Richards with a 1300 cc twin cam Mini-Ford and Dave McCloy with a five litre Boss-Mustang. Rally cars were once again in evidence and more incredible than ever.

Special saloons kicked-off the programme with a bang, with Bernard Richards in his self-built 1300 TC Mini-Ford storming away with his teammate Phil Rees in a 1600 TC Mini-Ford, closely followed by a large and tightly-knit bunch. George Constantine and Allan Parfitt, with his Chosen Cooper 'S' repeated last year's battle for the Welsh Racing Drivers Championship, with the usual nose to tail and side by side dicing. Bernard Richards won, followed home by John Morgan in his 3.8 litre Jaguar Mk 1 who fought through the traffic to challenge and eventually pass Rees.

Next on the programme was the rally car race which brings excitement of real road racing on to a circuit. The variety of attempted racing lines (or not remotely racing lines) spell-bound and thrilled the crowds. Tony Morris in an ex-works Escort RS, 1840 cc, led away but Robert James in his Carrefour Escort RS 1700, veteran of several such races, soon flashed past to demonstrate his skill and saving of rubber from offside wheels, the front off-side wheels spending more time in the air than on the ground. A depleted grid of Formula Fords saw Tony Broster in his new Dulon MP17 beaten by his Newbridge racing team-mate, David Buttigieg, in his old car with Tony Pollock in another Dulon MP15 taking third place.

The all-comers race should have been a Mallock U2 benefit but both Pete Cook and Keith Powells spun into the infield at Devils and left the race to John Morgan in his Jaguar Mk1, chased home by Derek Chambers in a 1000 cc Mini and Dave McCloy getting the reluctant Boss Mustang across the finishing line in third place to repay the many hours of work by his mechanics during the last week of nights.

The Formula Libre race saw Peter Cook in his Mallock U2 Mk 14 keep it on the track and vanish into the distance leaving the Formula Fords to fight for the minor placings; Tony Broster taking second place and Ivor Griffiths, in a new Scholar engined Alexis Mk23, making third place.

The next race was the handicap race for rally prepared cars where high brake horsepower didn't help at all. At this moment the big clouds dropped enough rain to make the track really slippery. The David in this battle being Pat Ryan in the G2 Alligator (sorry, Western Mail Team Howells Allegro) who, with the front wheels pulling for him, beat all the big boys to the prize of a free entry on the International Welsh Rally. Robert James in the Carrefour Escort RS1700 thrilling the crowds as usual, this time with lurid 360 degree spins and 720 degree spins at Devils Elbow and Old Paddock bend.

The last race for special saloons handicap again saw the David beat the Goliath, with Barry Reece's mechanic John Finlayson trying his hand in his own immaculately prepared car and winning at his first meeting. Bob Hennings, another newcomer, finished second leading hard chasing (but beaten by the handicapper) Bernard Richards in his 1300 TC Mini-Ford to third place.

A great start to the season. South Wales Automobile Club surely deserve a bigger entry for this well run meeting with an enormous crowd of enthusiastic spectators.

ANDREW THOMAS

Special Saloons (15 laps): Class 1 up to 850 cc: 1, B. Rees (Sigma Mini 848 cc), 10m 49s, 77.66 mph; 2, J. Finlayson (Mini Clubman, 848 cc) **Fastest lap:** B. Rees 44.8s, 80.36 mph. Class 2, 851 to 1000 cc: 1, J. Constantine (Austin Mini, 997 cc), 10m 49.92s, 83.18 mph; 2, A. Parfitt (Chosen Cooper 'S' 1000cc); 3, K. Walsh (Mini, 999cc). **Fastest lap:** A. Parfitt 42s, 85.71 mph. Class 3, 1001 to 1300cc: 1, B. Richards (Mini Clubman, 1297cc)10m 29.8s, 85.47 mph; 2, D. Williams (Wolseley Hornet, 1300cc). **Fastest lap:** B. Richards 40.6s 88.67 mph. Class 4, over 1300cc: J. Morgan (Jaguar Mk 3800cc), 10m 37.6s, 84.60 mph; 2, P. Rees (Mini - Ford, 1600cc); 3, B. Dickens (Anglia, 1650cc). **Fastest Lap:** J. Morgan and P. Rees 41 2s 87.36 mph.

Rally Prepared Cars: 1, R. James (Escort RS, 1700cc), 10m 15.8s, 87.69 mph; 2, A. Morris (Escort RS, 1840cc); 3, M. Stuart (Escort RS, 1840cc). **Fastest Lap:** R. James 41.8s, 86.12 mph.

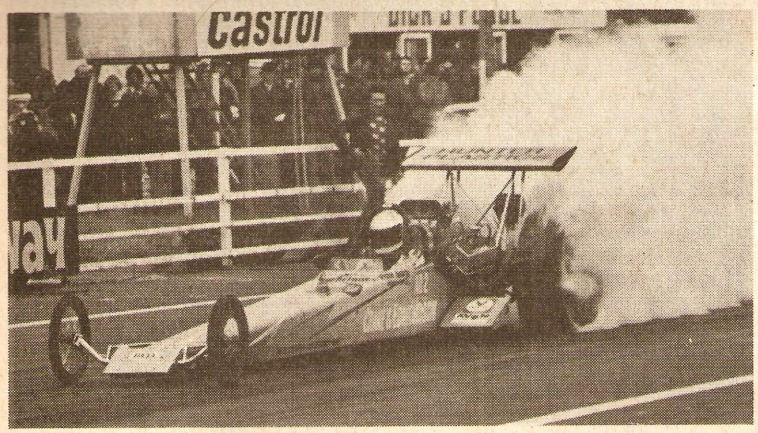
Formula Ford: 1, D. Buttigieg (Dulon MP15), 9m 50.4s, 91.4 mph; 2, T. Broster (Dulon MP17); 3, T. Pollock (Dulon MP15).

Allcomers: 1, J. Morgan (Jaguar MK1, 3800 cc), 11m 24.8s, 78.85 mph; 2, D. Chambers , (Manx-Mini, 1000cc); 3, D. McCloy (Boss Mustang, 5000 cc), **Fastest Lap:** P. Cook (Mallock U2 Mk14), 38.2s, 94.24 mph.

Formula Libre: 1, P. Cook (Mallock U2 Mk14, 1600cc), 9m 53.4s; 91.0 mph; 2, T. Broster (Dulon MP17); 3, Griffiths (Alexis Mk 23B). **Fastest lap:** P. Cook, 38.2s, 94.24 mph.

Rally car Handicap: 1, P. Ryan (Allegro, 1300cc), 6m 50.08s, 61.43 mph; 2, M. Stuart (Escort RS, 1840cc); 3, D. Moody (Capri, 3000 cc). **Fastest Lap:** M. Stuart 47.3s, 76.27 mph.

Special Saloon Handicap: 1, J. Finlayson (Mini Clubman, 949 cc), 6m 29.8s, 64.65 mph; 2, R. Hemming (Mini Clubman, 997 cc), 3, B. Richards (Mini Clubman, 1297cc). **Fastest lap:** B. Richards 45.4s 79.29 mph.



Pete Crane was the star of the show at Santa Pod – despite spinning.

Crane lifts fever

Highlight of the Easter meeting at Santa Pod was undoubtedly Peter Crane's electrifying run of 6.37s, faster by more than a tenth of a second than the existing record held by Dennis Priddle. Like many meetings over the weekend, the weather spoilt much of the racing, with only a few runs taking place on Sunday. Among those that did was a good 7.3s from Allan Herridge in 'Firefly', and a 7.2s from Priddle, but this was at the expense of a short block as two rods let fly some way before the finish. Roz Prior broke a rocker in the Miss Revell car, Liz Burn suffered a brake failure with the ex-Skilton car in the pits and Pete Crane failed to get a time on his run. Last of the six entrants was Mike Hutcherson, who recorded an 8.8s between snow flurries.

With four cars eventually making the elimination, Allan Herridge had an easy 7.55s run when Mike Hutcherson's reverse gear lever broke, off, leaving him stranded on the line.

Then Crane faced Roz Prior, who lost fire on the line as Crane rocketed to the quickest time ever at 204mph, his chute failing to open for the second time that day as he crossed the finish. A later run-off between Prior and Hutcherson ended in a good win for the Fast Lady as she got a hole-shot victory 8.37s to 8.21s.

Equally outstanding in Funny Car was the performance of Roland Pratt, who almost pulled off a big upset against Herridge in 'Stardust'. Running a high percentage for the first time, the car sounded very serious as it staged after a short burn-out, but few gave it much chance against the 480 cubic inch motor barking and spitting alongside. But Pratt made a beautiful start and made every one of his 392 cubes work for him as he sped to a 7.7s at 196mph. But Herridge had responded to the threat and got past in time to record a 7.2s at 192mph, just quicker than Owen Haywards earlier 7.33s bye run.

Some exciting finals were promised, but true to form, the rain returned and stopped any further meaningful runs.

Taylor heads Escorts

A near capacity crowd gathered at Lydden on Monday for the penultimate round of TEAC's rally-cross championship, and some motor cycle scrambling. John Taylor won the event, but had a hard time from both fellow Escorteer John Smith, and Hugh Wheldon in his VW. Conditions for the 57 entries were damp to begin with, drying out towards the end of the day in the sunshine, and this did not favour the Minis. Behind Taylor, Smith, and Wheldon came another Escort, that of Trevor Hopkins, before the Imp of Nick Jesty. Tom Airey followed him home closely in this racing, rather than time oriented event.

In the final round of the day, the run off of the quickest six, Taylor had considerable trouble from Wheldon's VW, and it was only after 3½ laps of the 5½ lap event that he got past, and then had difficulty pulling away. Taylor now leads the championship by one point, going to the final round in August. Bruce Bamber (Mini) won the "also rans" run-off.

1, John Taylor (Escort), 16; 2, John Smith (Escort), 11; 3, Hugh Wheldon (VW), 10; 4, John Hopkins (Escort), 9; 5, Nick Jesty (Imp), 7; 6, Tom Airey (Mini), 6.

Championship positions: Taylor, 32; Airey, 31; George Warren (Escort), 25; Trevor Reeves (Mini), 23.

Two front runners at Lydden were John Taylor (right) and Nick Jesty.



Monoposto go Varley

The Monoposto Club has secured a sponsor for this year's racing series in the form of Varley batteries whose equipment is almost universal throughout racing cars. The prize fund of £600 has yet to be allocated and divided up to the various positions in races and final championships, but an announcement is due on this soon.

Meanwhile the club had their first round at Silverstone over the weekend, and the championship positions now read: Allan Baillie, 16 pts; Nigel Howard-Jones, 12 pts; John Chambers, 10 pts; Brian Toft, 9 pts; Paul Maxwell, 8 pts; John Lancaster, 6 pts.

Meanwhile, on their Formula Junior revival side, things are going well with already 24 cars in existence and at various stages. These include Coopers, Lotus 20s and 18s, Lolas, plus the occasional Tojeiro, Elva and Gemini. Their first race is at Snetterton on June 8, and already, there are thoughts about dividing the front engined and rear engined cars into classes of their own.

New Jag E

A "new" mod sports E-type was seen in the paddock at Mallory on Sunday, and it should have been on the front row of the grid too. Liverpool garage owner Brian Murphy, who last raced over 12 months ago in the 4½-litre fixed-head E-type now owned by Bryan Litherland, bought from former E-type exponent Warren Pearce over the winter an E-type chassis which Pearce had been building up into a racer to replace his original car which was written off a few years ago at Castle Combe. Murphy was only running in a new 3.8 engine but the oil pump drive sheared and stopped him racing. However, he has another 4.5 up his sleeve which, when fitted, should put some of John "Plastic" Pearson's records in danger.

● Elden's Formula Ford 2000 driver Tim Brise, hopes to be out soon providing long awaited sponsorship is forthcoming. Final agreement on a deal is now pending.

● The Stripteaser crew were out at Santa Pod with their new car — basically a new body and some minor modifications that netted an 11.1s qualifying run, though for once their luck deserted them when the rotor arm broke on the line in the first run of Middle Comp.

Training day

This Saturday, April 5, at Croft sees a co-promoted marshals' training day. The BARC, BMRMC, BRSCC D&DMC, NRRRMC, NSCC and SMMC have got together to lay on a full programme for marshals old and new.

There is a chronic shortage of marshals in the North East at present and new faces will be more than welcome. The day is open to anyone whether or not they are members of the above clubs.

The day will consist of lectures and demonstrations followed by a practical session on the Croft circuit itself. Anyone interested in attending should contact Chris Hobson, Ballaugh, 34 Greenlea Road, Westfield Park, Yeadon, Leeds LS19 7SN or telephone Rawdon 506352 any evening.

Generosity

A collection for the BRSCC's Roger Williamson Fund at Mallory Park on Easter Monday was generously swollen by a gift of no less than £20 from Dr David Munro, the Lancashire GP who was so badly injured in the Formula 5000 startline shunt at Mallory exactly a year ago. After numerous operations Munro is now able to get about with a stick but his legs are permanently crippled. Last Monday was the first race meeting he had been to since the accident, when he was hit by an out of control Lola, and the BRSCC invited him as their guest of honour.

Two too many?

A very tired Peter White was gazing at his two DJ Bond Royales at Mallory wondering whether he could really combine his full time occupation of flying jets between London and New York with sorting out two new racing cars. Fortunately the FF car had already been well set up by Geoff Lees which left Peter with little more to do than drive it, which he did to good effect by winning his heat and coming second in the final. The RP19 Super Vee was more of a problem and still needed the full time attentions of its designer to put it into a raceable condition. A front row grid position was a promising start but the gear linkage fouled itself up on the warming up lap and the car returned to the paddock.

Buyer revealed

As a certain Mr Birrane turned up at Snetterton with a large engined Capri, it can now be revealed that the mystery trier/buyer of Mick Hill's SuperSaloon Capri is none other than Mr Adlards himself, Martin Birrane. His initial tryout in the car at Snetterton on Easter Sunday was not a happy one, for the engine blew. Whether this means that the deal is complete is uncertain at this time.

Bristol pair battle

The second round of the 1975 RAC Sprint Championship at Yeovilton last Sunday saw a thrilling run off on a rapidly drying track for the vital sprint championship points. A real battle raged between two Bristol drivers, current series leader David Franklin with his Huntsman Ensign and last year's runner up Dave Harris with his McLaren-Chevrolet M10B/14D. Harris led the way on the first runs by just a fifth of a second and improved marginally to 58.73s on the second run and this netted him the vital ten points as Franklin in a desperate effort to take the lead spun out of contention at the hairpin although his second place added to his Longridge victory leaves him well at the head of the championship table. Third place in the run off fell to the Manpower Surtees of Jonty Williamson showing greatly improved form over last year and he headed the Brabham BT35 of David Render by half a second with his time of 60.63s whilst the Kidderminster Griffiths' completed the first six home with Tony taking fifth place in his Brabham BT33 DFV at 61.40s a half second ahead of the McLaren M10B of Martyn who spun on his second run. Longridge runner up Simon Riley could only make seventh place with his McLaren M10B complete with cracked liner and he managed to hold at bay the Brabham BT18 of David Hartley, Terry Smith's Dinitrol Vixen and the Mallock U2 of Norman Hutchins, the latter two doing extremely well to qualify against sofe very stern opposition.

RAC Sprint Championship Round Two: 1, Dave Harris (5.0 McLaren Morand Chevrolet/M10B/14D), 58.73s; 2, David Franklin (1.6 Huntsman Ensign-Holbay) 59.05s; 3, Jonty Williamson (5.7 Manpower Surtees-Chevrolet TS11), 60.63s; 4, David Render (2.0 Brabham-BDA BT35), 61.16; 5, Tony Griffiths (3.0 Kidderminster Motors Brabham-DFVBT33), 61.40s; 6, Martyn Griffiths (5.8 McLaren-Chevrolet M10B), 61.90s; 7, Simon Riley (5.0 Mounsieur Houbigant McLaren-Rover M10B), 62.66s; 8, David Hartley (3.5 Brabham-Buick BT18), 63.52s; 9, Terry Smith (1.0 Dinitrol-Vixen-Imp), 64.16s; 10, Norman Hutchins (1.8 Mallock U2-BMC Mk8B). 66.42s.

Current RAC Sprint Championship Positions: 1, David Franklin, 19 pts; 2, Simon Riley, 13pts; 3, David Hartley, 11pts; 4, David Harris, 10pts; 5, Jonty Williamson, 8pts; 6= David Render & Alan Staniforth, 7pts; 8, Tony Griffith, 6pts; 9, Martyn Griffith 5pts; 10, Terry Smith, 2pts.



APG Driver of the Day Jim Walsh collects his cheque from an APG representative at Silverstone on Monday. Hang onto that cheque Jim, there are other eyes on it . . .

Double award

London garage proprietor Bob Merridale journeyed to the West Country for the Easter Sunday autocross meeting run by the South Hams MC near Kingsbridge in Devon, and, after carefully winning his class at the slowest possible speed, he lifted the Sunnycliffe Cup, the top award at the event.

Merridale, in his 1300 Escort, won his class in 1m 47secs, and then, with all the other eight class winners went into a run off, the winner to take the top award on a best improvement basis. This Merridale managed by clipping no less than 11 secs off his class winning run. Quickest man at the meeting was David Baskerville in his potent Cooper S who did 1m 34.6s on his second run, this being almost a second quicker than Mike Turpin in his Turpin Special who was having trouble with his gear lever staying in the box.

On a damp course which dried out during the day, a Jensen Intercepter beat a Range Rover in the standard car class, Ken White beating David Brooker by almost five secs. Local man Ron Easton had a comfortable win with his TVR Vixen and M. Musson (Mexico), held off C. Crockett's Firenze to take the large saloons class. Dave Harris gave Baskerville a run in the big Mins class getting within half a second, while B. Light's Special took its class after Turpin gained a major award.

Sunnycliffe Cup (Best improvement): B. Merridale (Escort), 1m 36.0s. **BTD (Saloons):** D. Baskerville (Cooper), 1m 34.6s. **BTD (opposite class):** M. Turpin Special), 1m 35.4s. **Class winners:** K. White (Jensen Interceptor), 1m 48.2s; G. Stockley (Mini), 1m 50.6; B. Mack (Anglia), 1m 50.0s; R. Easton (TVR Vixen), 1m 43.0s; G. Hoare (VW), 1m 50.4s; T. Smith (Mini), 1m 42.4s; M. Musson (Mexico), 1m 42.2s; B. Light (Special), 1m 40.4s; C. Watten (RS 2000), 1m 44.0s. **Ladies:** Mrs H. Kerswell (Capri 3 litre).

● The Snetterton drag meeting was another to be virtually abandoned, as only a third of the entry turned up to do some practice runs after the early morning snow had cleared. Nevertheless, over 3,000 spectators turned up to watch in atrocious weather, while the Pod saw over 5,000 way down on usual Easter figures, but encouraging all the same.

Turpin on top

With his gearbox sorted, following troubles the day before, Mike Turpin ran away from the opposition to claim BTD by almost 3.5s at the Easter Monday autocross run by Haldon MC at Broadhempston, near Newton Abbott. In almost perfect conditions with a slightly moist track and dry weather throughout, he took his Turpin Special to victory in 1m 36.4s.

A field of nearly eighty cars contested the event over a 1200 yd course with three laps per run and competition was keen in several classes. David Baskerville (Cooper) the only other driver to beat 1m 40s crept in at 1m 39.8s to take the big Mini class by a second and a similar tight struggle in the up to 860 cc Mini class saw Nick Miles beat G. Stockley by 1.1s.

In the big conventional saloon class, Dimitrius Navropoulos took his RS1600 to a class win by 0.7s ahead of Chris Crockett (Firenza) while Bob Merridale had the easiest class win of the afternoon with his 1300 cc Escort taking his class by nearly seven seconds. The biggest class of the day — with 14 starters — was that for standard saloons and Chris Watten (RS2000) beat Dave Liddell's Cooper S by 1.6s.

BTD: M. Turpin (Turpin Special), 1m 36.4s.
Class Winners: N. Miles (Mini), 1m 48.3s; T. Smith (Mini), 1m 41.6s; D. Baskerville (Cooper), 1m 39.8s; B. Merridale (Escort), 1m 44s; D. Navropoulos (RS1600), 1m 45.7s; K. Newland-Hodges (Simca Rallye), 1m 50.8s; R. Easton (TVR Vixen), 1m 43.9s; B. Light (Special), 1m 43s; C. Watten (RS2000), 1m 44.7s. **Best Haldon:** A. Davies (Mini), 1m 45.1s.

● The second rallycross ever to be held at Knockhill takes place this Sunday at a meeting organised by the 750MC. It starts at around 1 pm, and the entry stands at over 50. From the south, Tom Airey, Mick Bird and Bernard Rodemark will be travelling north to challenge the Scottish brigade.

Crane in a spin

As well as making history with his record E.T. at Santa Pod, Pete Crane became one of the very, very few people ever to spin a Top Fuel car on his Monday morning qualifying run. After his parachute had popped out on the burn-out it was hastily re-packed whilst he kept the motor running, and not surprisingly, it failed to open at the vital moment. With the end of the strip looming up the car started to weave under heavy braking, and eventually spun round completely, as marks on the side walls clearly showed. Pete's only comment was that despite recent debate on the subject, perhaps dragsters could turn corners as well!

● A welcome sight in the Santa Pod pits was a van full of M&H slicks flown in by three ex-Firestone employees who are setting up an operation in England for the number 1 American drag tyre, and who hope to move into club racing as well later this year with new designs. Their first customer was Crane himself who needed two new tyres to replace those ruined by his spin, so the new record for the Valvoline backed car came at the right time for them as well.

Sorted out

With twenty three clean sheets at the end of the first half, last Saturday's All Fools rally run by Stafford and District car Club looked as though it was going to be decided on the two selectives. However, a much tighter second half together with a blizzard varying in density soon sorted out the 83 competitors.

Eventual winners in their RS1600 were Jeff Whittaker and Jeff Hignett who dropped 14 minutes on the road and finished with a total of 16m 6s. One of the smallest cars in the event, the Imp of J. Bothwell and J. Furniss was second on 17m 40s and they were more than 1m 20s up on Tony Revell and David Taylor in their Cortina. Peter Dalby and Brian Garton brought their Ascona home fourth and completing the leader board were W. R. Chadwick/K. Jones (Mexico) and J. McKie/L. Todd (Cortina GT) who collected the semi-experts class by a mere seven seconds.

1, G. Whittaker/J. Hignett (RS1600), 16m 6s; 2, J. Bothwell/J. Furniss (Imp), 17m 40s; 3, T. Revell/D. Taylor (Cortina), 19m 5s; 4, P. Dalby/B. Garton (Ascona), 21m 40s; 5, W. Chadwick/K. Jones (Mexico), 23m 8s; 6, J. McKie/L. Todd (Cortina GT), 23m 36s. **Novices:** S. Bennett/J. Morris (Escort TC), 32m 47s.

Viva takes spot three

A modified Woodvale course, altered to reduce the noise factor where possible to neighbouring house owners, was used by Lancs AC on Easter Sunday to stage their sprint meeting. The entry was down a little at 64, the club having to enforce regulations demanding the use of silencers.

Man of the meeting was undoubtedly Mike Newman in a Viva GT who not only took his class for special saloons over 1 litre by a margin of 20s, but he finished up with third BTD in 94.40s. This was less than a second down on BTD man John Briggs in his Harris Traco who did a third run of 93.51s to pip Anthony Taylor (Lotus 69) literally on the post. Taylor had led all day and his final run of 93.80s seemed to be good enough especially as Briggs had been somewhat erratic earlier.

Newman, who could be a strong challenger for championship honours this season, put in an outstanding drive in a car on which the gearbox broke the previous weekend at the Longridge sprint. Robert Speak, another of the northern experts, has got to grips with his Europa which has replaced his Elan and a run in 96.35s gave him his class by over two and a half seconds on a E Type. Alan Smith's Morgan vanquished Andrew Brown's Elan by more than a second and Mervyn Bartram held off Geoff Lambert by a couple of secs. The Rev Brian Whitehead's RB2 had a three seconds advantage in taking the up to 1100cc class for racing cars.

BTD: J. Briggs (Harris Traco), 93.51s. **Class winners:** P. Houghton (Datsun Cherry), 109.82s; B. Sutcliffe (Mini), 106.51s; D. Hollinshead (RS 2000), 106.26s; G. Brookes (Datsun Cherry), 109.68s; M. Newman (Viva GT), 94.40s; A. Smith (Morgan), 115.39s; R. Speak (L/Europa), 96.35s; M. Bartram (Bartram Special), 99.32s; B. Whitehead (RB2), 106.49; A. Taylor (Lotus 69), 93.80s; I. Higgins (Ginetta G4), 105.18s. Ladies: Miss S. O'Donnell (Spitfire), 132.60s.

Three covered by 8s

Only eight seconds separated the top three crews at the end of last Saturday's Rally of the Dales run by Durham AC over 195 mile route in Co Durham, Yorkshire and Cumbria. A total of nine selectives helped sort out the winners, Geoff Birkett/Dave Orrick who brought their Ascona home on 466 marks beating Ron Beecroft and John Millington in his Escort by three marks.

Third, a further five marks behind were Fred Henderson and Trudi Binks in their RS1600 to provide a thrilling finish to a fairly tough event in which 58 out of the original entry of 78 made it to the finish.

A total of five crews cleaned the road section and the top three each collected best times on two of the selectives.

1, G. Birkett/D. Orrick (Ascona), 466 marks; 2, R. Beecroft/J. Millington (Escort), 469 marks; 3, F. Henderson/Miss T. Binks (RS1600), 474 marks; 4, G. Graham/M. Wood (Escort), 591 marks; 5, L. Dodds/A. Pearson (RS2000), 699 marks; 6, J. Saint/A. Graham (Escort), 847 marks.

Ron Beecroft and John Millington were beaten out of first by three marks.



Davies lowers record

A wet practice session was followed by dry conditions for last Sunday's first sprint meeting of the year at Talbenny Airfield, run by the Pembrokeshire MC. Conditions were not ideal for record breaking but Tim Davies was in determined mood in his Sidewinder racing machine and clipped more than a second off the up to 1100cc class in getting a time of 97.35s. Later in the day he went even oetter in a top ten run off and reduced this to 96.28s.

Fastest in an entry of only 39 was David Morris, as usual with his brother Bill, sharing their Ensign. David did 94.83s which was more than two seconds slower than his course record but Bill was not as competitive as usual and only did 97.75s which, however, was good enough to take the class.

Best performance of the day was set up by Midget man Peter Waldron who clocked 106.1s to take the mod sports up to 1300cc class with ease and this run was more than seven seconds better than his own class record set in 1973. Waldron, last year's Welsh Speed Champion, using an Elan, has transferred his allegiance for the third year in succession, having run a Sprite, before. Brian and John Wilson, battling with their U2, were first and second in their class, Brian getting in a 96.63s which was two seconds better than John's best run in the class last year.

BTD: D. Morris (Ensign), 94.83s.
Class winners: M. Davies (Anglia), 11071s; M. O'Brien (Cooper S), 121.25s; G. Hollis (RS 2000), 109.35s; P. Waldron (Midget), 106.13s; S. Watts (Elan), 106.43; B. Wilson (Mallock U2), 96.62s, T. Davies (Sidewinder), 97.35s; W. Morris (Ensign), 97.75s.

Jackson scores first

Gordon Jackson scored his first RAC sporting trial championship win of the year on Easter Sunday when he won the Brian Lewis trial run close to his home by Maidstone and Mid Kent MC. Taking the lead from the start of an event which was run over 30 sections, in very tricky conditions he brought his Ibex home on 116 marks to finish handsomely ahead of a pair of the previously all conquering Kincrafts. Reg Allen was second, 19 marks adrift while Jack Pearce was third on 152.

Extremely wet conditions down at Bexley made almost every section impossible initially for a mere twenty competitors and scores were high on the first round but steadily reduced thereafter. Jackson had the event won before lunch for at the end of the first ten sections, he led by sixteen marks and consolidated his lead thereafter.

Colin Walker held fourth place initially in his Cannon but dropped behind Chris Highwood (Cannon) at the lunch break after two tours of the ten sections. He finally finished three marks down on Highwood with a 178 marks total. Hugh Pollard climbed into sixth place in his Jabs machine but a 190 mark total told its own tale. There's no change at the head of the championship where Pearce still leads by a street from the Fack brothers, neither of whom made the long journey south.

1, G. Jackson (Ibex), 116 marks; 2, R. Allen (Kincraft), 135 marks; 3, J. Pearce (Kincraft), 152 marks; 4, C. Highwood (Cannon), 175 marks; 5, C. Walker (Cannon), 178 marks; 6, H. Pollard (Jabs), 190 marks.

Dino returns

Making a welcome reappearance to the ranks of Clubmen's Super-Sports cars on Easter Monday at Brands Hatch was the Dino 4 of Melvyn Coon. The Dino last appeared two years ago when it was involved in an accident with Caldwell Smythe. Having had a very successful career as a 1.0 car, it might have been a generous gesture to let the poor overworked thing retire, but no, it was just a holiday.

In fact, the car reappeared on Monday looking smarter than it ever did in its previous life, and it was good to see one of the longer supporters of the formula back behind the wheel again.



Imps various at Snetterton – above Tony Dickinson's Ford-powered version with 1298cc engine. Below, Jeff Ward autocrosses in his 1.0 Greetham version.



Cox debut

Making their debut this weekend at Knockhill in a Cox GTM will be Edinburgh lads Malcolm Blyth and Ian Robertson. Both have autocross and rallying experience and they hope to secure the 1975 Players No 6 Scottish autocross championship under the Team Almond banner. They will also contest some rallycrosses (as at Knockhill). The car will have a full race Mini engine from Alval Engineering and it is hoped to contest events across the board from autocross to hillclimbs, sprints and possibly even rallies.

Success by 7m

Brian Jupp and Cliff Brookes, who only teamed up together at the start of this year after several years experience individually, gained their first success over Easter when they won the Cadmoc Rally, run by the Croydon and District MC in Surrey, Sussex and Kent. It was quite a sizeable success for despite conditions which deteriorated gradually during the night as snow fell in some quantity, they drove to a seven minute win in their Mexico over experienced campaigners Jack Barnard and Paul Beeson. The latter pair, in their Escort, only took second by dint of furthest cleanest from John Smith and Rod Wray (Mexico).

1, B. Jupp/C. Brookes (Mexico), 31 mins lost; 2, J. Barnard / P. Beeson (Escort), 38m; 3, J. Smith/R. Wray (Mexico), 38m; 4, P. James/P. Turner (Alfa Romeo), 47m; 5, B. Skittrell/R. Sawyers (Cooper S), 56m; 6, B. Nash/V. Baines (RS 2000), 62m. Novices: P. Brackstone/D. Jones (Mini), 3F 115m.



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