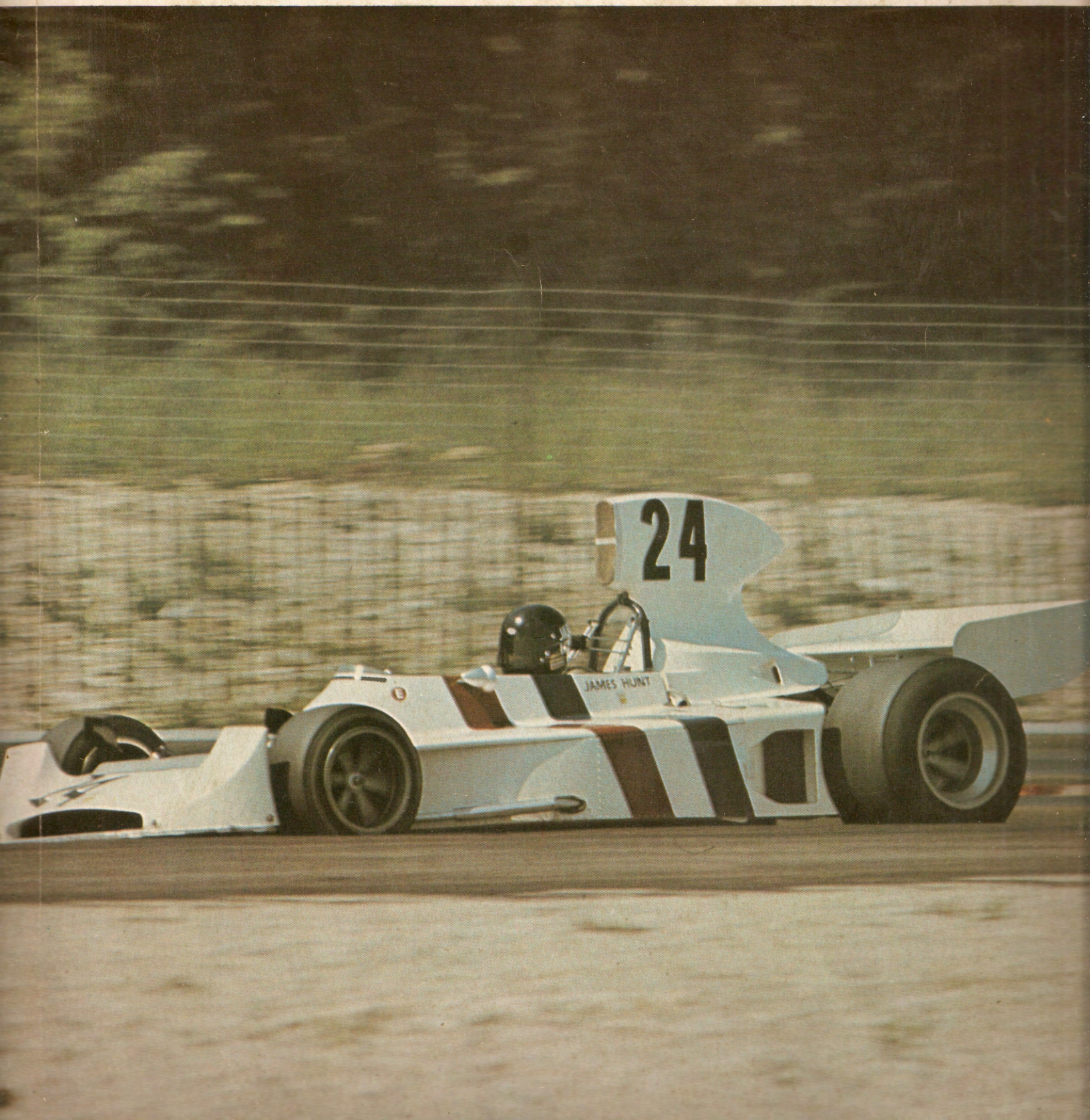
TOUR OF DEAN - DAF ROAD TEST - RUSSELL BROOKES

AUTOSPORT

Argentine GP: Hunt stars but Fittipaldi wins



AUTOSPORT

BRITAIN'S MOTOR SPORTING WEEKLY

January 16, Vol 58 No 3

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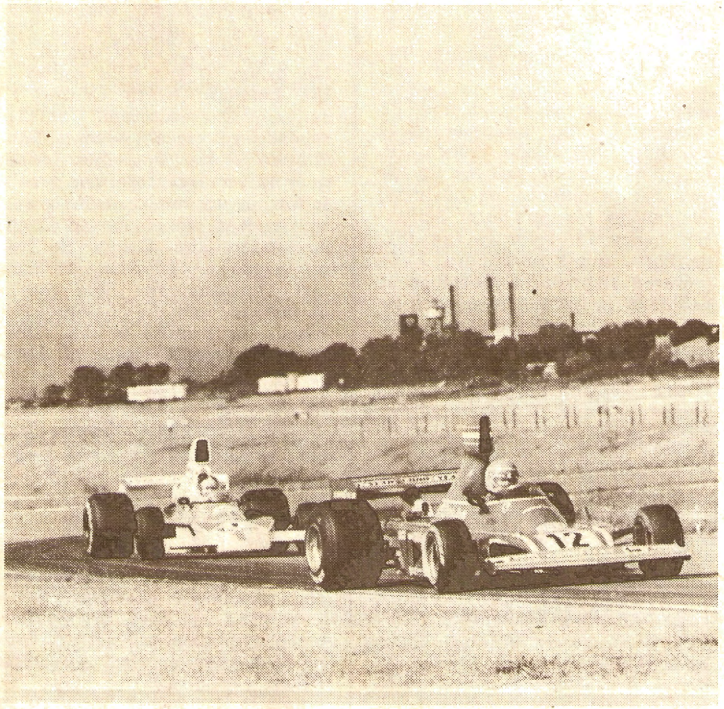

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EDITORIAL

Last week we reported in *Pit and Paddock* that a large row was brewing between the commercial sports car manufacturers and the CSI. The basic bone of contention is that recommendations, made by the sports car manufacturers at a meeting in Zurich towards the end of last year, have been completely ignored by the CSI, who have come up with their own proposals which will undoubtedly kill off sports prototype racing.

The committee of constructors proposed that there should be three types of engine allowed from 1976: 3-litre racing engines, such as are used now, 5-litre stock blocks, as currently employed in F5000, and turbocharged engines using the F1 equivalence formula, that is half the cubic capacity, 1.5 litres. It was proposed that all these should be subject to the same 700 kg minimum weight limit.

When the regulations were announced the majority of the committee members found that turbocharged engines of up to 2.2 litres would be permitted (the equivalent of 4.4 litres) with the same weight limit as the 3-litre racing engines. The 5-litre stock block-engined cars, however, will be subject to a minimum weight limit of 810 kg.

It does not take a great deal of know-how to realise that these proposals will favour the 2.2-litre turbos. The problem is that only one manufacturer actually has such an engine in running trim. To design, build and develop such an engine from scratch would not only be of preventive financial proportions but probably take until 1977 at the very earliest to get ready. So what of the alternatives? The 3-litre racing engine has proved uneconomic and unpopular during the past three years while, as it stands, the 5-litre stock block V8s just would not be competitive with their extra 110 kg weight. Result, no interest in sports car racing.

Just why this situation has been allowed to evolve is uncertain. However, the blame can easily be pointed at the CSI which has representatives on it from teams no longer involved in this type of racing, some of whom are not unnaturally in league with their compatriot who has a suitable car to run. Apparently the decision taken on the turbo was to counteract totally unfounded rumours of the good old stock block V8 producing in the region of 600-plus bhp. The only ones we know of are in drag racing and they last about 15 s, which really won't be of much use.

Sports car racing is, perhaps, the oldest form of motor sport but the nails are being driven into its coffin by the French who, ironically, have been its biggest supporter. There was support for the V8 stock block engines from America and England with the very real possibility of privateers being able to compete in what would basically be two-seater F5000 cars without drastic drainage on their resources. This surely would have provided grids of at least 20 cars of equal performance, a factor which has to be taken into account from the promoter's point of view. The best line-up for the current formula has been 11 3-litre cars and that has occurred but once and the spectators don't like it.

The package has got to be one which attracts competitors and spectators. We are sure the original proposals would have done this. Reinstate them now.

our cover picture

James Hunt came very close to making it an all British win in last Sunday's Argentine GP. Driving the latest Hesketh he led for a good deal of the race before a spin dropped him to a close second. Pete Lyons' report starts on page 10. Photo : Peter Burn

Gitanes back Ligier new F1 car planned

Having had a fair amount of success with his Maserati-powered Ligier JS2 sports cars, former French Grand Prix driver Guy Ligier has been commissioned by Gitanes to set up and build a brand new all-French Formula 1 effort. Drivers for this ambitious and exciting project will naturally be Jean-Pierre Beltoise and Henri Pescarolo, thereby resurrecting their partnership in the Matra Grand Prix team back in 1970.

Guy Ligier — big project.

Gitanes have always been extremely keen to continue their support of motor racing, despite the withdrawal of the Matra-Simca sports car team a couple of months ago. Many rumours have been circulated as to exactly what they would do. However, Gitanes' director of Public Relations Jean-Pierre Aujoulet told us on Monday that the deal with Ligier was finalised "two weeks ago." He went on to explain that Gitanes had also tied themselves up with Ligier's own sports-prototype programme for this year and, as was already known, the two-car team would consist of Beltoise, Pescarolo, Jean-Pierre Jarier and Jean-Louis Lafosse, the latter replacing Gerard Larrousse "who has signed to go with Renault."

A total of seven brand new Cosworth Ford DFV engines have been purchased by the team, which is based in Vichy, and they will replace the Maserati engines in the JS2 chassis which will be used once again, suitably updated. The team intends to compete at Mugello, Dijon, Monza, Spa, Enna, Le Mans, and the proposed race at Karland.

On the Formula 1 front, both Aujoulet and Pescarolo were at the British Racing Car Show last Saturday outlining the team's plans. Apparently, Matra have shown very little interest in supplying this new French F1 effort with their potent V12 engines which is somewhat surprising. Aujoulet said that "the people at Matra want three times that of a DFV for one of their engines. We have tried and are disappointed not to have received one."

Last season's Matra sports car team manager Gerard Ducurouge and three of the design staff at Matra have moved across to Ligier to help build the new F1 car which is due to make its debut around July. "We would like to race two cars in Austria," stated Aujoulet. He went on to emphasise that this year's F1 effort would be one of learning and they naturally hoped for better things in 1976.

Ligier himself last raced regularly in 1968 in F2 with a McLaren M4A, having stepped down from F1 where he was a regular (if rather slow) campaigner with a Cooper T81B Maserati and the ex-Denny Hulme Monaco-winning Brabham BT19/20 in 1967. He scored a solitary championship point by finishing sixth at the German GP in 1967.

Jean-Pierre Beltoise—back in F1.

When his great friend and F2 team-mate Jo Schlesser was killed in 1968 at the French GP, Ligier quit racing and set up his own car manufacturing business, designating his cars after Schlesser, hence JS. Prior to the JS2, he built and ran a Ford FVC-powered JS1 sports prototype at Le Mans in 1970 driven by himself and Jean-Claude Andruet. Last year, his Ligier JS2s won the Tour de France. His foray into F1 will be the first time his company has constructed a single seater.

Holbay's F3 unit cleared

"The tribunal to investigate the legality of the air bleed device fitted to the Holbay engine of the March car driven by Jose Chateaubriand and sealed following a race meeting at Brands Hatch on October 13 was reconvened on January 9, 1975.

"The engine of this car was put to an independent test at the Ford Motor Company's test bed at Boreham when Mr John Read of Holbay Engineering, Mr Peter Jowitt, eligibility scrutineer and Mr Les Needham of the RAC Motor Sport Division were present.

"This specific engine with the diaphragm protection device was found to perform in the manner claimed by Holbay Engineering and was therefore legal. The tribunal instructs that Jose Chateaubriand be reinstated in the results of the competition."

This is the statement put out recently by the RAC which finally brings to an end speculation which had arisen regarding the eligibility of the Holbay Pinto engine in the works Formula 3 March 743 of the Brazilian driver at the final round of the Lombard North Central F3 series. Chateaubriand finished second to race winner Alex Ribeiro. He was then subsequently removed from the results following an initial investigation by the RAC which moved Conny Andersson and Danny Sullivan up a place. However, as from last Thursday, the final results of the race and the championship remain as printed in the subsequent October 17 issue of AUTOSPORT.

Peterson came close

A normally tight lipped Alan Rees revealed last week that "we came incredibly close to signing Ronnie Peterson." Negotiations were still going on last Tuesday but finally Colin Chapman and Peter Warr were able to persuade the blond Swede to stay with John Player-Team Lotus. Shadow mechanics did not place Jean-Pierre Jarier's name on the side of the DN5 chassis until Friday morning. The thought of having Peterson take over the new car soon spurred Jarier on to his best ever Grand Prix performance.

Apparently the door is still open for Peterson to join Shadow. Rees makes no secret of the fact he would still like the Swede in the team. "He's a winner," was his comment. But apparently the terms of Peterson joining have changed considerably since the new DN5 demonstrated its potential.

BL ST to support Broadspeed and Bill Shaw G1 Dolomites

British Leyland have confirmed their racing plans for this forthcoming season and, as we surmised in our November 14 issue, it will be *Motor* editor Roger Bell who will be partnering Andy Rouse in the Ralph Broad prepared Triumph Dolomite Sprints in the 1975 RAC British Touring Car Championship. This means that former *Motor* employee Tony Dron, who was Rouse's team-mate last year and won the Alcoa Man of the Meeting award for his splendid drive into a class winning third place at the Silverstone Tourist Trophy, will not be associated with the team this season.

A third car will run with BL's works blessing and this will be prepared by Bill Shaw Racing in North London for John Hine, thereby resuming their partnership from last season.

The three cars will be entered by Leyland ST, the Abingdon-based performance and tuning centre from British Leyland.

John Barber, deputy chairman and managing director of British Leyland, said: "The Sprint's first season in racing proved to be extremely exciting and worthwhile. We succeeded in the kind of motor racing (Group 1 saloons) which we believe has the most relevance for both our customer and ourselves.

"We gained a lot of success and worthwhile feed-back to make our production cars even better for 1975. This year's programme will fully establish Leyland ST in saloon car racing and add a touch of glamour to a generally depressed market which I believe will help sell our cars to new buyers."

Sponsorship arrangements for the cars will be announced at a later date.

McGuire buys Evans' Lola

The McKechnie Racing Bob Evans championship winning F5000 Lola T332 has been bought complete with engines, spares, Transit and trailer by Australian Brian McGuire. He made the purchase last week after deciding that to go through with his proposed purchase of a new Lola T400 and engines would be too expensive.

Even having bought the McKechnie equipe at a competitive price, McGuire says he is still desperately short on running expenses and is searching hard for some aid in this direction.

McGuire moved into F5000 last year, initially with the ex-Hexagon Trojan 101, which he recently sold to John Kejho. That was replaced with a new T332 in which he put in some very promising drives in the second half of the year. This was sold to Gordon Spice.

● The Dijon ETCC round scheduled for October 11/12 has been cancelled.

Brown takes Pukekohe

Australian Warwick Brown moved into the lead of the Peter Stuyvesant sponsored Tasman series when he brought his Pat Burke Racing Lola T332-Molloy Chevrolet home in first place at Pukekohe last Sunday. The race, which was the second round of the series, was very much a wet and dry affair with tyres proving an extremely critical factor. Friday's practice had seen Chris Amon in the American Talon MR1 lead the way with the former New Zealand champion ending up quickest after a mere eight laps. Amon expressed his delight of the car saying that it was "absolutely tremendous" and that it was "the nicest car I've driven since the Matra MS120D."

Graham McRae — second pole.

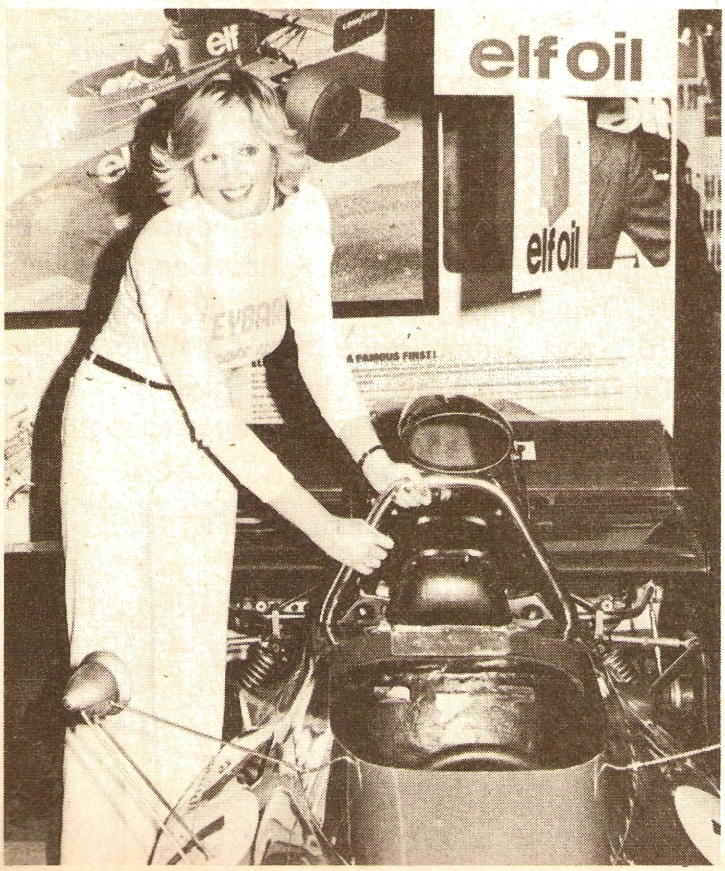
The following day saw the arrival of rain but not before Graham McRae had taken out his revamped GM2 and pipped Amon for the pole. Race day on Sunday dawned wet and as Goodyear still hadn't delivered any of their new rain tyres, there was a mad panic to obtain suitable rubber. Amon managed to get hold of a pair of two-and-a-half-year-old Goodyears but as they had been used already in a dry race, they were to prove totally inadequate.

When the race got underway, McRae virtually gave up and it was Kevin Bartlett in the new Lola T400 that romped away. The track began to dry out but Bartlett looked a sure winner until he ran out of petrol. Thus Brown emerged as the winner with Jim Murdoch, who raced in Britain a couple of seasons back in a Formula Atlantic Tui, bringing the new Begg 018 in second ahead of Levin winner Graeme Lawrence.

However, following a pit stop to change over to slicks, Amon carved his way back following lost time and set the fastest lap of the race right at the end, eventually finishing seventh.

Johnnie Walker came home fourth in his Repco-engined Lola T330 followed by Ken Smith's ex-Redman T332 and John McCormack's Elfin MR5. Pre-series favourite Max Stewart in the other new Lola T400 was a troubled 8th.

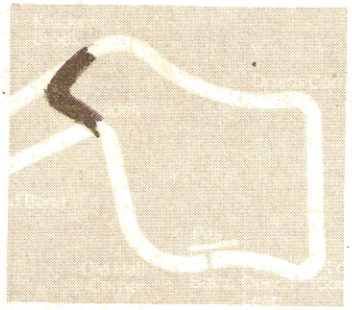
"Miss Aleybars" at Olympia last week was unanimously voted "Miss Racing Car Show."



Oulton's short circuit

A new link of 174 yards running across from Cascades to Knickerbrook is about to change the entire character of the Oulton Park race circuit. Work is about to start shortening the existing 2.76 mile course by approximately half to a much shorter 1.6 miles. The new track will be in use in time for the first of the season's international car race meetings, the European ShellSPORT F5000 championship round on Good Friday, March 28.

The new Oulton link.



The revised section leaves the existing track at Cascades corner, which will become a slight kink instead of a sharp left-hander. Then the track turns sharp right (it is thought many cars will go down into second gear) to rejoin the existing circuit at a much slower and safer approach to the right-hander sweep of Knickerbrook.

The new course (which will be appreciably safer for competitors, as it will not be bordered by steel barriers) will be a little slower than the existing one in terms of speed, with Formula 5000 cars lapping at well under the minute, perhaps at around 110 mph. The existing lap record is held by the F5000 cars of Brian Redman and Teddy Pilette at 118.32 mph.

The existing 2.76-mile circuit will be retained for most motor cycle meetings and riders will no doubt appreciate the removal of steel barriers and other obstructions over a third of its distance.

More F3 for Alex

Brazil's brightest hope for future Grand Prix honours Alex Dias Ribeiro will not be driving one of the new Copersucar Fittipaldi F1 cars at next week's Brazilian Grand Prix. Apart from the fact that this new Brazilian team have had a serious setback with the fire that virtually destroyed their car in Argentina, Ribeiro told us that "I'm definitely out of the Brazilian GP and I'll do some tests when the team goes up to England."

Ribeiro will in fact be returning to Britain in the next week or two to set-up arrangements for his second season of F3 racing, the young Brazilian having impressed already last year with his aggressive handling of the works GRD 374. He has managed to secure contracts with Rastro Perfumes and Copersucar to contest all the major F3 races, although as yet he has still to decide upon which chassis to use.

Following several late season outings in the new GRD Formula Atlantic car, Ribiero may well continue in this formula as well, providing he can retain his association with Mangels, a large steel company based in Sao Paulo.

● The F2 race at Estoril, Portugal, on March 9, has been reinstated in the FIA calendar. If it happens, and there is some doubt as it comes right in the middle of the country's political elections, it will be the first round of this year's European F2 Championship. A proposed F2 race at Ricard on May 18 has now been cancelled.

New surface

The biggest resurfacing operation ever carried out on a British Grand Prix circuit is in progress at Brands Hatch which celebrates its Silver Jubilee this year.

Both the 2.65-mile Grand Prix and 1.24-mile short circuits are to be completely resurfaced by Wimpey Asphalt Ltd, the first time the whole distance has been covered in one move since the circuits were opened.

A considerable amount of "infill" will be used to level off some of the undulations of the circuit and this, combined with the new consistant surface, is likely to make the circuit faster. The work, which also includes improvements to drainage in some areas, is scheduled for completion before the start of the forthcoming season. General practice has been cancelled until further notice, but it is hoped to open the circuit in late February.

First race meeting on the resurfaced 1.24-mile short circuit will be the Clubmans Motor Cycle meeting on March 1 and first use of the Grand Prix circuit will be at the British Airways *Daily Mail* race of Champions on March 15/16.

● Although there was never any real intention of holding it anyway, the British Airways 1000 Kms sports car race which was to have been held at Brands Hatch on September 13/14 has been cancelled. So too has the Paul Ricard 1000 Kms race on August 14 and the 2-litre European championship qualifier on April 26/27. There is a possibility that the 1000 Kms race will be restaged at the new Karland circuit on the west side of Marseilles.

F1 Ensign progresses

Work is progressing on the brand new Ensign Grand Prix car which is being built at Mo Nunn's premises in Walsall. The car is expected to be finished around March, according to Nunn, and will be raced by the team's newest recruit, 26 year old Dutchman Roeluf Wunderink in the distinctive white, black and red HB Bewaking colours.

Nunn was quite enthusiastic when we spoke to him earlier this week, saying that the team were completely rethinking their approach to F1. "We're changing our policy completely," he said, "and we aim to make ourselves competitive. If it means missing a race to do so, then we'll do just that." He explained that only Wunderink, who completed no less than 420 laps in their recent test programme at the Paul Ricard circuit, will race the new car when it is finished. "Only until we're satisfied with his performances will we even think about another car." But what of Wunderink's team-mate Arie Luyendyk who was originely thought to be destined for F1 as well? "I think he'll do F3," stated Nunn.

Wunderink's untidyness in his ex-Pilette F5000 Chevron B24 last season and inexperience as a race driver (he only started in 1970) is causing a certain amount of concern within Grand Prix circles. And so it seems once again that Nunn finds himself up against the F1CA. But even having failed to make it into the Association as a valid member, Nunn intends to carry on, especially now that his Dutch sponsors have enabled him to design and construct a car of advanced thinking. The team didn't go to Argentina, nor for that matter will they go to Brazil or South Africa, primarily because they aren't recognised F1CA members and it "would have cost us something like £10,000 just to go to Buenos Aires," added Nunn, "and anyway, I think it's better that we all stayed behind and concentrated on the new car."

Referring to the new car, Nunn said they've approached it with "no holds barred. It has everything we can dream of; rising rate suspension front and rear and inboard brakes front and rear. We're building the tub here for the first time as well as many of the bits. We hadn't done this with the old car. The monocoque tub is much smaller and must be lighter as we've done away with the front and rear frames. The old tub weighed 130 lbs because it was built with the FT4 specification bag tanks and even then, that car was only 46 lbs over the limit. I shouldn't think we'll have any trouble getting down to the present limit.

"I can't tell you what the nose shape will be because we've still got a couple of days wind tunnel testing left to do. When we built the first car, we didn't really know what way to go. At Watkins Glen, it was the slowest car through the speed trap. Now at least we have something to work from. The new car is certainly better aerodynamically!

"We've yet to finalise the positions of the radiators, but even then I don't think I'd want to tell you! However, unlike the old car, we will be able to move them if required."

Lella's Alpine-Renault

Even with a Grand Prix commitment to March and her American and European F5000 plans, Italy's lady with pace, Lella Lombardi, is undertaking a five race sports prototype programme with the French Alpine-Renault team this year. She will be partnered by France's top woman race driver Marie-Claude Beaumont and they will compete in one of the current European Championship winning A440/1 chassis'. The World Championship races they intend to contest are Mugello, Dijon, Monza, Enna and Le Mans.

Quite whether Miss Lombardi's press-on tactics will suit Miss Beaumont in these long-distance events remains to be seen.

Lella Lombardi tries an F2 March for size at the Racing Car Show.

Girl wins the Mexico!

Hand your heads in shame all you chauvinistic racing and rallying men, the AUTOSPORT Win an Escort competition held throughout the Racing Car Show was won by a woman.

Setting the best time of the Show on the very last day was 23-year-old Miss Alison Brooks from Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire. Her time was 2 m 54.91 s set in the Ford Escort RS2000. It was a close thing though as on the same day two other competitors got within a second of this time.

Alison says she has no special interest in motor sport "I just like big hairy cars," intends to use the new Ford Mexico which she has won on the road "to replace my rather beaten up Anglia."

The ten rally jackets for those setting STD on each day of the show have been won by: K. A. Brittain, 3 m 2.97 s; M. Heathcote, 3 m 12.05 s; S. M. Foxcroft, 3 m 9.30 s; J. Hazell, 3 m 11.15 s;

Our lady winner celebrates.

M. Lear, 3 m 8.05 s; R. Freeborough, 3 m 12.68 s; A. Gordon, 3 m 4.50 s; D. Culver, 3 m 59.73 s; P. Mayer, 3 m 11.50 s; C. Orman, 3 m 54.15 s.

Response to the caption competition for readers unable to compete on the computer stage has been so heavy that the GPO have been unable to cope. The results of this will be announced in next week's AUTOSPORT.

Arian get works Mazda

Although they have terminated their existing agreement with Mathwall Engineering, Mazda Cars (GB) will again be continuing to run an RX3 Coupe in the forthcoming RAC British Saloon Car Championship for Barrie Williams.

Initially it will be a one-car effort with Wendy Markey's 1974

Wendy Markey — club series.

Penthouse RX3 Coupe being retained and prepared by John Markey's Arian Automotive concern. In fact, the *Penthouse* car has been prepared by Arian (who amalgamated with Huron Cars a few months ago) since mid-season when Mrs Markey split from Mathwall, although it is undergoing a thorough strip-down at present.

It's unlikely that John Markey will race this season, preferring to concentrate on preparing the Mazdas (his wife Wendy will race an RX3 Coupe in the BBC

Barrie Williams — continues.

Radio 1 club series) in association with Mike Chambers, a former member of the Cooper Grand Prix design staff.

The sponsorship arrangements for the RAC effort with Williams will be announced by a later date (probably in March). Mrs Markey's club car will be backed by Peter Russek Publications, one of John Markey's backers when he raced the works Toyota Celica GT last season. *Penthouse* are no longer connected with Mazda.

At the time of going to press, Williams' Team Castrol car from last season still remains unsold which, considering its proven ability, is rather surprising.

● Despite a disappointing start to his F3 career last season with the works Modus, Bob Arnott is hoping for better luck this coming year and at the Racing Car Show last week was looking for a suitable chassis in which to contest the F3 series.

No changes

Among various points discussed at the RAC recently regarding regulations for the forthcoming G1 British Touring Car Championshp, there were moves afoot to bring the current fuel tank regulations into line with the FIA regs while ground clearances were suggested to be the same. There was also talk of trying to change the rulings on the replacement of sway bars and even a standard limit on wheel rims. However, Neil Eason-Gibson of the RAC Motor Sport Division told us earlier this week that the rules would remain the same as last year, despite all the suggestions put forward.

● The first British F3 event of the year will be a 10-lap non-championship race at Thruxton on March 2.

USAC Ferrari

Currently undergoing construction in America is a Ferrari engined USAC car. The chassis is being built by the Cicada group who first built a car in 1974 for Dan Murphy to drive. His best placing was seventh at Michigan before writing off the car at Phoenix.

Plans are to build four cars, two oval racers, one road course car and a back up. The Ferrari engine will be a modified version of the 512M long distance mill. The engines are being developed by Champion Spark Plugs, who incidentally are preparing the Boxer engines for the NART IMSA Ferraris. The chassis which is currently taking shape features two huge dihedral wings on the side of the cockpit similar to the original Maurice Phillippe designed Parnelli USAC car.

Penthouse back Mexicos

Penthouse magazine announced their extensive backing for the 1975 Mexico championship last week. In fact although the championship has been known as the Ford Escort Mexico Challenge since its inception in 1970, it will now be known as the *Penthouse* Escort Sport Championship to coincide with the new model due to be introduced next week.

The *Penthouse* backing sees the championship retain its £4 per point prize money scale (9-6 . . . -1 scoring) and end of season money but also the introduction of many other exciting additional awards.

The outright winner of the championship will have an all expenses paid intercontinental trip for two, while the winner of each of the 16 races will be treated to a candlelight champagne dinner for two at the *Penthouse* Club—value £30. (If the driver has previously qualified for this award it will be passed on to the next highest placed driver who has not previously won it.)

The driver who scores the greatest number of points in races 1-4 inclusive will have an all expenses paid trip for two to Paris or Brussels. The same applies in races 5-8, 9-12 and 13-16. (Again this can only be won once and the next highest placed driver who has not won will have the trip.)

Every competitor who competes in the championship will have a free year's subscription to *Penthouse* magazine—value £6—and a free membership to the *Penthouse* Club—value £10.

In addition there will be the Dunlop Novice award. At each of the 16 races there will be £15 for the best placed novice, and £10 for the second best placed novice. A novice is defined as any driver who has never previously scored a point in an Escort or Mexico championship race.

Dates for the championship rounds are: March 2, Brands Hatch; March 29, Rufforth; March 31, Croft; April 20, Mallory Park; May 4, Brands Hatch; May 25, Brands Hatch; May 26, Llandow; June 8, Croft; June 15, Mallory Park; July 12, Oulton Park; July 27, Cadwell Park; August 24, Mallory Park; August 25, Snetterton; September 6, Castle Combe; September 20, Oulton Park; October 5, Brands Hatch.

Briefly . . .

● The Monza Shellsport F5000 Championship date has been replaced by an F3 race scheduled for the same June 29 date. However, John Webb said last week that he expected the Casale race on June 22 to take place.

● Added to the international F3 calendar for this forthcoming season is a race at Monza on September 21 while the Swedish race at Ring Knutsdorp has now been brought forward a week to August 31 from September 7.

● Long time Swedish F3 stalwart Hakan Dahlqvist will remain in the formula this coming year and once again will drive a Merlyn, albeit a new chassis from the British Colchester concern.

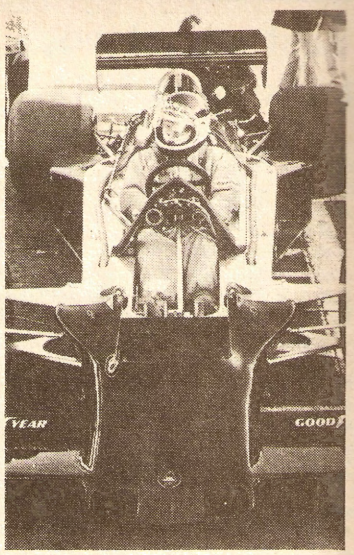
● Brett Lunger, who was in England for the Racing Car Show, said that if Dan Gurney can find backing for a second works F5000 car in America, he will be the driver.

● Midland hillclimbers, Margaret and Peter Blankstone, have sold their GT40 to Radio One DJ Noel Edmonds. He was due to pick up the car at the beginning of the week.

● Despite prophecies of gloom surrounding the European Touring Car Championship this year, John Webb told us last week that he is still planning to go ahead with the British round at Oulton Park on April 27.

● There will be no Group 5 sport prototype class in the World Manufacturers' championship round at Daytona. The race will still be over 24 hours but for IMSA and American GT cars only.

● Larry Perkins has been joined in the works Ralt team by his brother Terry for the F3 season. The first Ralt designed by Ron Tauranac should be ready in three weeks' time for testing by Larry, who is currently looking around for sponsorship. Of the initial five car run, two have gone to the Perkins, and two abroad, leaving just one of this initial batch to be sold.

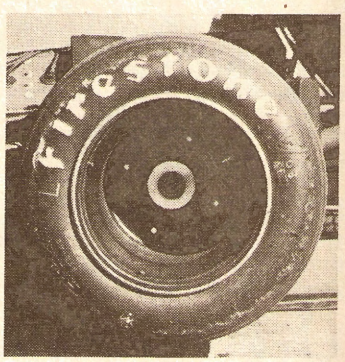


The unluckiest man in Argentina?

● Bang and Olufsen, the Danish hi-fi specialists who are based in Brussels, are thought to be sponsoring a two-car F3 team this year.

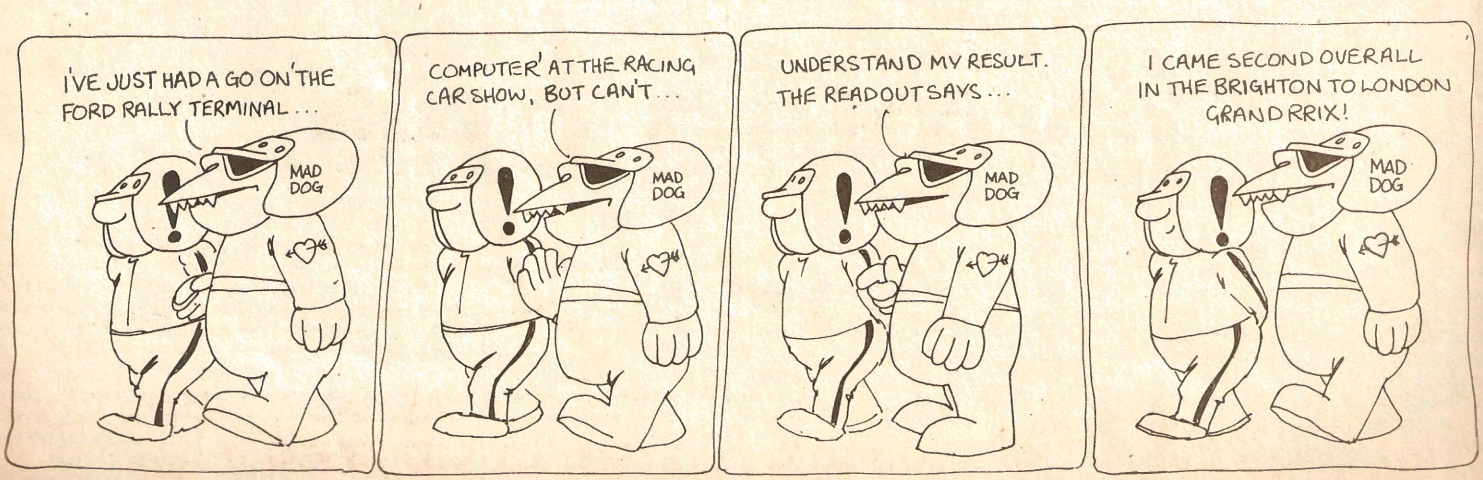
● Although Ford themselves will not be contesting this year's RAC Touring Car Championship in any official capacity, their blessing will go out to several private dealer teams who will endeavour to wave the flag. One of them is Wisharts Garage who will run a pair of Capri IIs for Gordon Spice and F2 refugee Bill Gubelmann.

Parnelli, success and Firestone—only time will tell.



CATCHPOLE

By Barry Foley



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Correspondence

The editor is not bound to agree with readers' opinions

Best organised cock-up of '74

With regard to your page 34 column in the Boxing Day edition of AUTOSPORT regarding the Castrol/AUTOSPORT Special Stage Championship Round 11 — Tour of Eppynt, I quote: "Marshals are still in short supply and if they wish to sign on (or indeed if they have done so already) they must meet at the bottom of the Llywell dual carriageway at 07.30 am or at the Tirabad end of the ranges at the same time."

I had spoken to the Clerk of the Course on the telephone on Friday morning and he assured me that marshals were still required and so I told him that several of my friends and myself would be at either Llywell or Tyrabad at 07.30 to sign on.

We arrived at Llywell at 07.10 to be met by approximately 100 people who, like ourselves, had turned out to give their services voluntarily, despite the poor weather conditions. After an hour or so had passed and only four cars and an ambulance had been allowed on to the range, there was still no sign of anyone with signing-on sheets and so enquiries were made, and the person who appeared to be in charge said that no more marshals were required, but they were still needed on the Halfway Forest stage.

On arrival at the forest we were met by some people wearing Castrol safety jackets who proclaimed themselves to be marshals and said that no more marshals were needed, and charged us 50p per car to spectate on the stage, the money, so they said, was to go to the Port Talbot Motor Club and the Forestry Commission. At this time there were no RAC warning signs displayed and the spectator marshalling was virtually non-existent.

Is this the way to get co-operation between the "Organisers," and I use that term loosely, and the members of the marshalling community, who, we usually hear are in short supply, leading to stages being grossly undermanned? Also, since spectators are no longer allowed on to the mountain ranges, who was manning all the places where cars usually come a "cropper" and have to rely on spectators' assistance to get them and their drivers out of difficulty; and if they were manned, how much did the marshals have to pay for the privilege?

My friends and I who have marshalled on several other rallies, including the Welsh, Tour of Britain and RAC, have awarded the Tour of Eppynt the title of The Best Organised Cock-Up of 1974.

COWBRIDGE, S. GLAMORGAN. J. UPSTONE.

Leave modsports . . .

I was sorry to see Alan Goodwin's letter in AUTOSPORT (December 19) about revising the modsports classes because all these arguments were voiced a year ago, drivers meetings were called and petitions were signed in response to John Quick's silly proposed rule changes. The outcome of it all was that everyone felt the best arrangement was to leave well alone—modsports was starting a comeback which it continued last year (1974) with some fine races and especially the Blue Circle (now Miller Electronic) races being very exciting. As I understand it the RAC, BARC and all interested parties (including the BRSCC even though they show no signs of interest!) agreed to leave the rules alone, especially the classes. I personally hope this will be the case because I have spent all my available money on building a new 1150 engine for my car for 1975. (Yes, really—I'm one of the few AUTOSPORT contributors who actually finances his own racing nowadays! All offers, to . . . .) Seriously though, my final word on classes must be leave well alone, even though it seems a shame that the 1300 cars rarely have their class used—but who on earth is going to build a racing 1500 Midget? The GPDA would love those awful deformable structures on the front and rear!

If I could possibly run onto another subject I would like to be controversial about the Davrians. Everyone has written rave reports (me included) about Bob Jarvis and Pat Longhurst's performances (on the track) this year and I would never decry their driving skill and Adrian Evans' preparation of the super little sports-racers, but what I do question is if they really comply with the spirit of modsports (I know they are legal—they're in the Blue Book). We have Jaguars, Porsches, Datsuns, Elans, MGBs, Spidgets, TVRs, Marcos, etc all of which one can see road going examples regularly as they are production sportscars, but I, for one, have never seen a road going Davrian. I've seen more GT40s and even one Lola T70GT on the road, so why not allow these into modsports as well! But seriously I think these works prepared Davrians put a lot of ordinary, less affluent people off going modsports racing in their Spridgets, etc when we ought to be encouraging as many would be competitors as possible. A competitive Davrian must cost some astronomical figure to build (I don't know but £3000 would seem a fair estimate) whereas a Spridget must be one of the cheapest cars to prepare for racing even with all the suspension and engine goodies available.

So, I'm sorry and all that but I think Davrians are stopping modsports becoming an even more popular category than it is now—it's not sour grapes just plain economics in these inflationary days and a feeling of what's fair and in the spirit of the game.

BIRMINGHAM. PETER RICHINGS.

. . . classes alone

I feel that Alan Goodwin's letter on the subject of Modsports classes must not go unanswered, as all over Britain cries of "oh no, not again" were heard from competitors in this much maligned category of racing.

Under the present class system, Modsports has established itself at two levels. On the one hand, the BARC championship offers full grids at every round (grids which are filled with a great variety of well prepared cars), close competition—complete with the popular Giant Killing performances of the smaller cars, and most of all clean enjoyable racing, free from protests, brawls and bickering. At club level, on the other hand, Modsports offers competitors a real opportunity to compete in attractive cars at low cost, my own car for example cost £550, in a formula in which "big money" plays a very small part, with little or no works participation and with the emphasis very much on friendly rivalry. At club level also, races are "close, clean and competitive," and if some of the cars bring back nostalgic memories—so what?

Against this background then, how can anyone suggest a change which would leave over 50 per cent of competitors with out-of-date machinery, and which would transform the formula to one in which competitors would have to spend "saloon car type" money to be competitive—money which is, at this time, very hard to come by.

No, for once and for all, will the vested interests please leave Modsports alone.

BIRMINGHAM 31. MIKE DONOVAN.

Congratulations

May I, through your columns and hopefully on behalf of competitors generally, thank AUTOSPORT and Castrol for putting on a splendid championship in 1974, and especially for helping to popularise Group One stage rallying. Long may this series flourish — and I hope it survives the present Burmah Oil difficulties!

The season ends with one slight disappointment: that you and Castrol exert insufficient influence with the BRSCC and SMMT for your champion cars to be on display at Speedshow '75. Surely it is a worthwhile small reward for sponsors, who give so much to the sport, to have their colours seen by all at the end of the year.

But one must, it seems, face the fact that rallying is still the poor relation, in spite of great spectacle value, powerful and exotic cars, huge crowds, and more participants than all other branches of the sport put together. Even AUTOSPORT keeps it firmly in its (incorrect) place, in terms of space allocated! Please think about it!

Best wishes to all in 1975.

LEIGH, WORCESTER. JOHN BROWN.

Not a drag

As sponsors of drag racing in this country, it is with regret that we feel that we have to write to you to complain about the most distasteful way in which Mr Barry Foley conducted his approach to "Catchpole" on December 19 with the knocking of Santa Pod Raceway.

AUTOSPORT Magazine is a National "Motor Sport" publication for which we all have a great deal of respect and not a circuit racers comic. Drag Racing is a National motor sport; and, for the interest of Mr Foley, attracts far larger crowds than the majority of circuit races held in this country. After all, I am sure that Motor Circuit Developments Ltd would not have considered Snetterton Raceway as a permanent Drag Strip had the sport been "boring." In fact the first meeting held there attracted one of the largest crowds for the last couple of years and people even had to be turned away for lack of space.

Santa Pod Raceway are a company who have invested large sums of money in drag racing and given many people many pleasureable hours of colourful and exciting racing.

Motorsport of all forms these days, needs a great deal of sponsorship to keep machinery and race tracks operational, and when a national publication like AUTOSPORT knocks any form of motorsport it can surely do no one any good.

We therefore feel that both AUTOSPORT and Mr Barry Foley owe Santa Pod Raceway a very big apology, as comments like these can do a great deal of harm in time when all forms of motorsport can do without them.

SOUTHEND-ON-SEA, ESSEX. K. E. HARDIE
(Proprietor, Americar, The Chevrolet Centre).

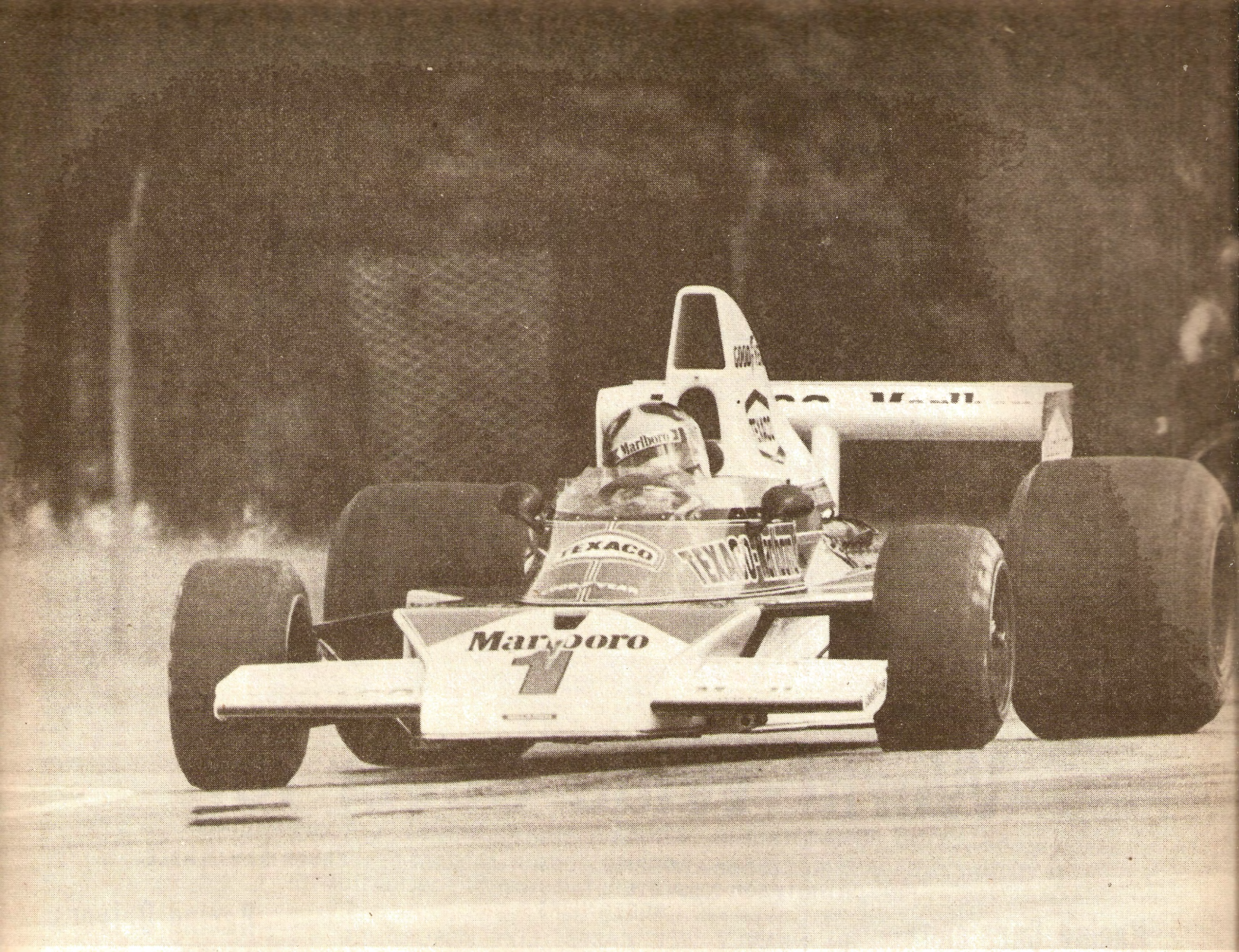
Please write

I was as disappointed as many of your readers by the poor coverage of the RAC Rally by the two television companies. My disappointment prompted me to write to the BBC and ask the reason why, and the reply that I have received from the Editor of Motoring Programmes for Television Outside Broadcasts makes interesting reading. The following extract says it all.

". . . but I fear we were not able to interest any of our sports programmes to cover the event. Please do raise the question of motor sport coverage as often as you wish, and wherever you like. I have the greatest difficulty in convincing my own management and colleagues that there is a large audience for motor sport, and letters like yours are a great encouragement."

So the answer lies with us, the enthusiasts, and would-be viewers to make our point directly to the programme producers and not simply bleat helplessly in the columns of the motoring press.

TAUNTON, SOMERSET. N. J. A. MILTON.



Driving with calculated restraint Emerson Fittipaldi was always in contention and had victory handed to him as others spun away their advantage.

ARGENTINE GP/BUENOS AIRES

First blood to Fittipaldi

By PETE LYONS Pictures by PHIPPS PHOTOGRAPHIC

Race Data by ALAN PHILLIPS

So the World Champion sets the New Year off to his own pattern but can he develop it? He's going to have a struggle because the opposition at Buenos Aires was strong and fierce and it ran deep. The eye-opening weekend began with Jean-Pierre Jarier setting his new UOP Shadow on to pole at a new record speed — only to fail to start the race when a new crownwheel, freshly fitted for reliability the night before, broke on the warming-up lap. Carlos Reutemann spiritedly jumped the start from the second row and snatched the lead of his native GP, but it was a far cry from last year for Lole because he found he had unrelenting pressure from his team-mate Carlos Pace, from James Hunt, and from Emerson Fittipaldi. All the while the Ferraris were not that far back, nor was Patrick Depailler's Elf Tyrrell, and Ronnie Peterson and Mario Andretti stayed in the chase while they could. The Champion won finally on driving ability, as both the Martini Brabhams as well as the Hesketh were dropped off the road from in front of him — in every case while leading the race. The Texaco Marlboro driver took the lead finally from Hunt, despite James setting fastest lap, and held him off by some 5 s all the way to the flag.

It was a tough old motor race all down the line. Emerson's brother, Wilson, unfortunately crashed the family's new Copersucar Fittipaldi out of its first event in flames, apparently because something broke. AUTOSPORT'S **new columnist Jody Scheckter was crashed into at the start by Jochen Mass, the two managing to continue afterwards although handicapped. Vittorio Brambilla was putting up a splendid weekend in his Beta March, but was robbed by gearbox trouble at the end. Peterson's whole weekend was bedevilled by brake trouble which finally brought about the destruction of his gearbox.**

One driver did, however, stay impressive right to the end, and this was Mark Donohue who drove as hard as he knew how for the whole distance and suffered not so much as an oil leak from his superbly prepared Penske.

One other aspect of the new season started off generally well. The one type of tyre offered by Goodyear proved to be a reasonably good choice for most cars, and most teams said they were happy with the less frenetic, more predictable, new rubberware situation.

ENTRY

There was a distinctly spare quality about the Grand Prix Circus 1975 as it set up shop for the first event. As Ford's Stuart Turner recently observed, motor racing is being put on a financial diet this year, and the tightened money belts were easy to see in the Buenos Aires garage compound. Only 15 teams had been able to come, bringing with them but 26 Formula One machines to serve 23 drivers. The cars were, for the most part, very similar to those last seen in October; many were, in fact, identical and virtually unaltered, and even those few designers who had produced new models had not departed at all from their established principles.

Spareness was to be seen, too, at the very waistlines of several of the drivers, who had obviously decided the season to come is going to be arduous beyond their experience and had spent the three months past seriously improving their physical condition. Everyone was conscious as well of the diminished role tyres were going to play. With Goodyear supplying every team but one, what had been the last "wild card" in the F1 technical deck was all but laid aside — now no driver could count on bolting on another second or two advantage simply because he was famous. He was now under fair attack from all newcomers.

Much of the talk in the paddock was of money; of sponsorship lost, or hopes for, or only occasionally gained. There were mechanics who announced with some delight that they had, at last, been paid for last year. . . .

All these facts-of-modern-life conspired to produce a palpable "nitty gritty" atmosphere.

The Argentine atmosphere itself lent itself to the mood as the hour for first practice approached; it seemed symbolically in keeping that the sky was clouded over and spitting down raindrops. The breeze was unseasonably chill.

At the top of the entry list, proudly bearing numbers 1 and 2 in bold red paint, the pair of Texaco-Marlboros (manufactured by McLaren Cars) were very much the same machines that had conquered the world last year. In fact the M23 for Jochen Mass was the very car, chassis 8, used by the World Champion and was essentially the same. Emerson Fittipaldi himself had a new car, No 9, which was fitted with a revised, simpler (and Brabham-like) rising-rate front suspension. There was also a more steeply-sloping nose "chisel," as well as a subtly altered engine airbox. At the back of the new car, the track measurement was some 2 in less. But it was still an M23, going now into its third racing season, still carrying the confidence of its designer Gordon Coppuck.

The confidence of Elf Team Tyrrell designer Derek Gardner was riding on the identical 007s used at the end of last year, with only minor modifications. There was, at the front, a more efficient way of adjusting the downforce produced by the nose fins. At the rear was a new profile of wing, together with a new way of mounting it on double plates. The formerly inboard front brakes were now mounted inside the wheels, and Jody Scheckter's chassis No 2 was wearing a new, second, roll-over bar to protect the head of AUTOSPORT's new columnist — who our readers are, of course, extremely fortunate to have. His team-mate Patrick Depailler was using No 4.

Down to race-numbers 5 and 6 were the John Player Specials, who most people regrettably still think of as the "Lotus 72s" introduced five long years ago, looking spruced up with new paintwork but largely unaltered from the trim in which they scored four F1 victories last year. Both cars were using the normal, narrower front track dimension. The one real mechanical mod was a change to larger, stronger brakes at the front, comprising Girling calipers (there were still Lockheeds at the rear), different "straps" to mount the discs, and stronger brake shafts. As last year, Ronnie Peterson had chassis 8, and Jacky Ickx No 5 (actually the ninth type 72 built); there were no spare cars. The situation as regards who SuperSwede would drive for, the details of which controversy varied with whoever one discussed them with, seemed to have been resolved by Friday morning. Shadows expressed that they would like to include him on their team, but Ronnie admitted that as long ago as last July he had signed a contract with Team Lotus covering the 1975 and 1976 seasons. But he felt that Colin Chapman was obliged to provide him with a new racing car.

First lap: Reutemann leads Pace, Lauda, Hunt, Fittipaldi, Peterson, Regazzoni and Depailler.

The Martini-Brabham marriage — one of the happier stories in this rather gloomy end of the year—had borne fruit in the form of three cars being pushed on to the pit road. All were to Gordon Murray's new BT44B specification, which involves a stiffer chassis structure, altered suspension geometries, and aerodynamics helped by both a revised nose-piece and narrower front track. Only the one assigned to Carlos Reutemann was actually a brand new structure, the other two (both of which were used in practice by Carlos Pace) being fundamentally rebuilt BT44s from last year. The team had covered plenty of test miles at the circuit during 10 days preceding the race meeting, so that "El Lole" had to stand as one of the best favourites to win his home Grand Prix.

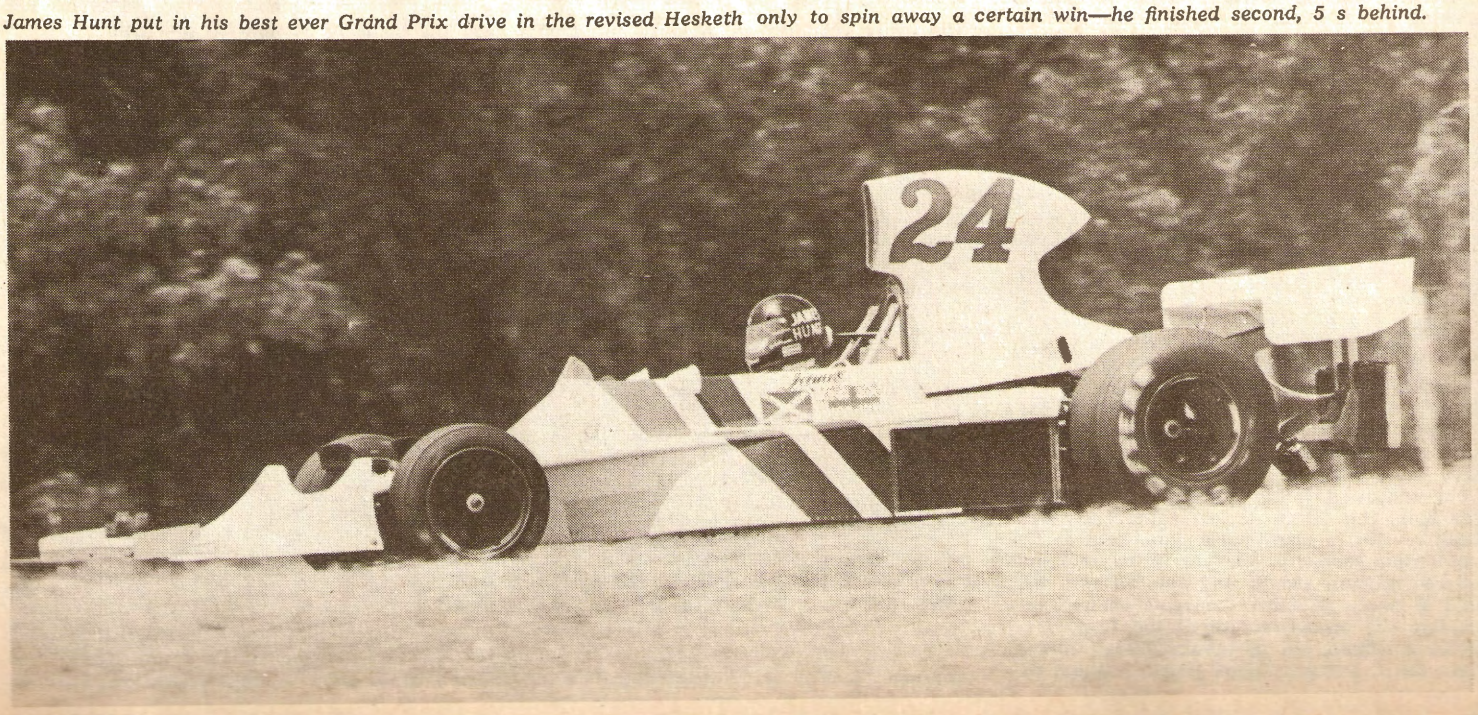
With but four days to do the work, March had found themselves able to come with the familiar Beta Tools 741 for Vittorio Brambilla. Apart from having to fit the newly-required engine-compartment fire extinguisher system, as was the case with every other team, the only major alteration done to Robin Herd's design was to move the battery from the rear to the nose.

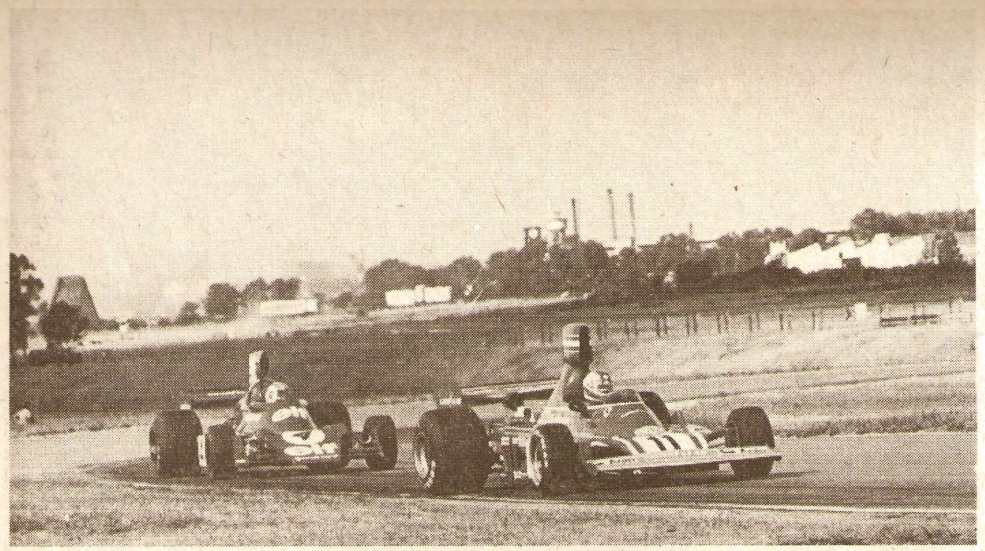
SEFAC Ferrari were plunging into the new season with three machines, all to the familiar 312 B3 specification although Niki Lauda's was actually a new chassis. Clay Regazzoni's had been raced before; the team never did bother to assemble the third tub into a running car. The winter's testing had provided yet another pattern of rear wing, better brakes, altered front suspension, bigger oil coolers — and rather more weight, it appeared. Together with the story that the engines had been detuned for reliability, one wasn't sure whether to automatically rate the Prancing Horses as highly as last year's form in 10 out of 15 GPs would suggest. Of course, the newer "Trasversale" model lurks in the background, having done literally thousands of kilometres of testing so far. Ferrari strategy seemed to be to hold this one back until it is as perfectly sorted and reliable as the older car.

Mike Wilds was the Stanley-BRM spearhead, his Dempster-supported P201 the single machine brought out from Bourne. A noticeably cheery little team, the new British colours stood out proudly on the familiar chassis with its Aubrey Woods-modified V12. This modification involves mainly the whole lower end of the engine, the upper parts being the same narrow-angle cylinder heads used last year, the whole unit now carrying the designation P200. Woods claims a substantial power improvement due to the more efficient crankcase, to around 460 bhp at 11,200.

The UOP Shadows were of two different kinds. Tom Pryce, as second driver, was using one of last year's DN3s, brought up, thanks to a number of little mods, to "Type B" specification (in fact if not in chassis-plate!). Jean-Pierre Jarier was using the first of the new DN5 models, which had been recording such encouraging times at Paul Ricard recently. It was interesting to compare the two designs side by side, and see how Tony Southgate has, for three years, now held true to his original DN1 principles while refining the concept into a competitive state. His view is that speed nowadays is to be found in very minute

James Hunt put in his best ever Grand Prix drive in the revised Hesketh only to spin away a certain win—he finished second, 5 s behind.





Regazzoni and Depailler finished fourth and fifth although neither Ferrari nor Tyrrell were quite as fast as had been expected.

adjustments around a basic centre; thus the DN5 has a slightly cleaner airflow, slightly better cooling, slightly different weight distribution — and the overall weight is as near as could be to the weight limit: "If we took out the gearbox spacer we'd be on the limit."

John Surtees was presenting his Matchbox TS16 for John Watson, this being one of the "dash-2" models of early last year turned out now in "dash-4" specification (although here again the plate in the cockpit did not reflect this). The major outward change was the placement of the water radiators in the sides of the car either side of the engine, angled only slightly like the March or the Parnelli. There were changes, too, to suspension and steering geometries, and the wheelbase had been given another inch for accessability around the front of the engine.

At last Frank Williams had bowed to what everyone would have been calling them anyway and lent his own name to his cars. These were revised in small detail and looked trim in their new all-white paintwork. The same team that had been settled on late last year, Arturo Merzario and Jacques Henry Laffite, were preparing to follow the indomitable Williams into his seventh year in GP racing.

Moving higher on the entry list than last year, the Embassy Lolas were virtually identical to their '74 configuration, Graham Hill using chassis 2 and Rolf Stommelen No 3. This ambitious team were, like Ferrari, preparing more for the introduction of their new model which, with inboard suspension and other differences, should take place at Kyalami.

Hesketh Racing brought along two cars, making James Hunt only the second driver to actually have a choice of machines. In this case, unlike Pace's, it was a real choice to make, as 308-3 was fitted with the Aeon rubber springing medium at the front for a direct evaluation with the original car's steel coils. Other alterations from last year's design on both cars was the long structure carrying Harvey Postlethwaite's oil radiators well out to the rear under the wing. There were also little milled bridge-pieces attached to the front brake calipers to add stiffness.

The Viceroy-Parnelli headed the entry of the newcomers at the bottom of the list, a singleton car, chassis No 2, for Mario Andretti built identically in nearly every respect to the Maurice Phillippe original seen in North America last season. Alone of all the entries it was using Firestones. Alongside in the garages was the superbly refinished Penske Cars chassis No 2, or rather the First National City Bank Traveller's Check (read Cheque if your education leads you that way) Special (or Spl); this, since its last appearance, had been revised in many particulars, such as its suspension geometry, its wider front track, its altered cockpit, airbox, and aerofoil sections, and in many structural concepts as well including the remanufacture of the front suspension rockers out of tubular pieces, rather than sheet. Designer Geoff Ferris was not on the scene, but Mark Donohue was in his old familiar dual role of driver-cum-development engineer looking tougher and leaner and browner than ever before in his 38 years.

It seemed just a bit unfair that the new Copersucar-Fittipaldi was assigned a garage next to the new American teams, for there was something of a contrast in the detail finish of the Brazilian effort. However, it is early days yet in a very new game, and the fledgling team — which includes some extremely fine personnel of deep experience — had very properly concentrated their last two months on sorting out the basic mechanism as well as could be. A round thousand miles — 1,607 kilometres — of testing had been accomplished at Interlagos (a small amount having been done by Wilson's brother, Emerson), during which absolutely nothing had fallen off or broken. Unfortunately, though, almost all of those miles were bedevilled by a fault in the fuel system, which caused a persistent misfire in left-hand corners. The team were literally on the point of withdrawing from Argentina when, on the last day, a fix was discovered.

Since its introduction in October, the FD-01 has been only somewhat altered. Although there were experiments with mounting water radiators at both sides and the nose, the car appeared at Buenos Aires with the one cooler mounted in its original location at the tail; the NACA-ducting remained, assisted however by large scoops. On one engine cover of two brought, there was an additional engine air scoop atop the original part-of-the-cockpit inlet. An interesting tweak appeared for the exhaust piping, a pair of ducts taking the gasses out into the (presumably) low-pressure area behind the rear tyres.

The long awaited Berta had been withdrawn at the last minute because of piston trouble in the Argentine built engine. As Oreste Berta apologetically explained, he had had some new pistons forged in the United States and while his specifications had been properly followed as to the crown profile he had neglected to set specs for the skirts. The mis-shapen skirts proved to cost upward of seventy bhp in each of three test engines. Experience had shown his own cast pistons would not go any worthwhile distance so he sadly had to withdraw Nestor Garcia Veiga from his home GP.

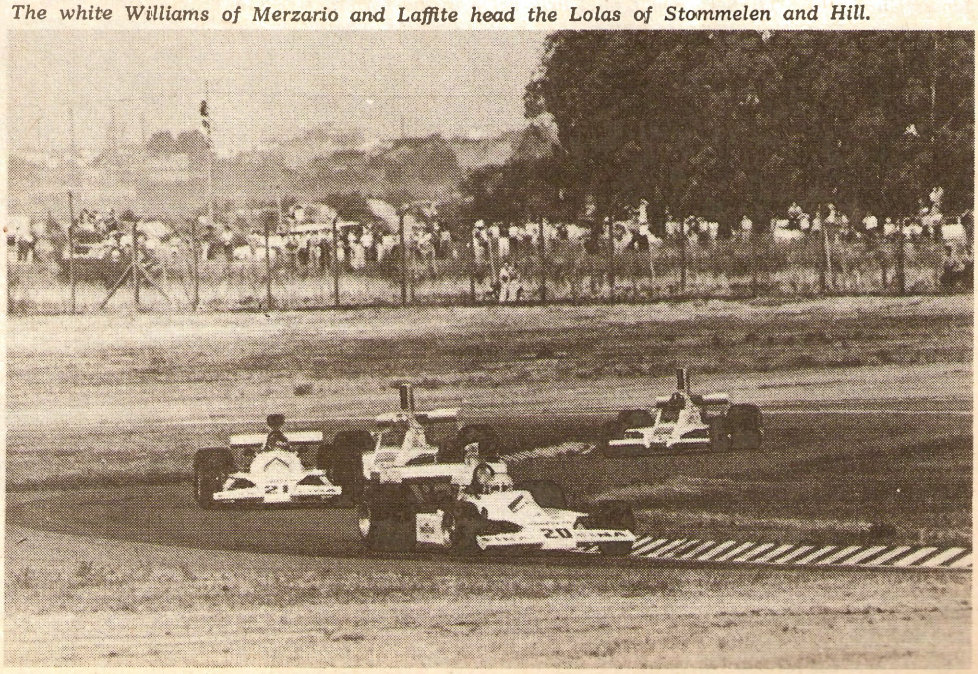
PRACTICE

There had been plenty of hot, summery sun as advertised, and many mechanics who had been given the Thursday off to lie around the swimming pool were sorry afterwards! But the conditions of Friday seemed the wrong kind of improvement: it was cold to the point of needing jackets or pullovers, the sky was cloudy, the breeze was stiff, and there was actual rain in the morning. As practice got under way and carried on for two and a half hours altogether, there were several occurrences of little spots of rain, and at several points it almost seemed to be on the edge of being impossible to run without rain tyres. In the end the moisture never got that bad, and the racing line remained adequately dry all round the 5.97 kms circuit No 15. For quite a while the surface was dirty, and even after the racing line itself was cleaned to wander off it was to slide desperately. There were in fact quite a few excursions carried out by some famous people, the National Autodromo being one of those places where there is usually plenty of open grass.

Both Goodyear and the Firestone-supplied Parnelli team had brought along just two different kinds of tyre rubber, one compound calculated to work under the anticipated conditions plus a backup should a harder rubber be needed; plus of course there was rain wear available. In fact in no instance was it decided to try the harder stuff—or the ribbed patterns—and there were only two or three cases of tyre blistering throughout practice and those were laid to factors other than the suitability of the basic rubber. Both firms had apparently done their sums right, and if those running Goodyears for the first time formed an opinion that the rear tyres didn't stick as well as the fronts, well at least it was equal for everybody and they could look forward to more choice of compounds later in the season.

Practice was thus no longer what it had developed into over the GP years, a massive,

The white Williams of Merzario and Laffite head the Lolas of Stommelen and Hill.



at times frantic tyre-test programme, and the 23 drivers spent their available time at the more mechanical arts of selecting gear ratios and wing angles and suspension settings.

That first, cold practice ended with—surprise—Jean-Pierre Jarier taking the new rainbow-coloured UOP Shadow to the fastest lap ever recorded at the circuit, his 196.736 kph breaking the existing practice lap record by over 1.5 s, leaving it at 1 m 49.21 s. A member of another team had remarked that testing at Ricard sometimes gives "the wrong kind of information" but it seemed that the Shadow test in France was of worth in Argentina. Jean-Pierre was in fact the first man out for the first practice of the new year, his crewmen pushing him up to the front of the queue with many minutes left to go, showing a determination to make this third year in F1 a first class one. All day the Shadow was quick, and it was only a last minute effort by Carlos Pace that came anywhere near. The Brabhams in fact looked like being the opposition to the Shadow, and Reutemann made the early pace; however, late in the afternoon a master switch played up and stranded Big Carlos on the grass.

Both Carlos' earlier had a delay when their fire bottles went off automatically. The new engine-system units had been installed on the rear wing struts, which apparently was too hot a location! It was the hasty replacement of these which, the theory went, caused Lole's later stoppage. The other Carlos had a problem of his own around the same time. Do you remember how, back at Watkins Glen, he had to slack off late in the race because his seat was hurting his ribs? Well, yes, a new seat had been moulded up—but Moco had carried on with his diet. He found, after an hour or so of flogging around this time, that the new seat pained him just as much as the old! When he came in at the end his rib area was densely bruised and he went to hospital to be given pain-killing injections.

Almost everyone else ended the day disgruntled and disappointed. The circuit, with its variety of corners of both fast and slow nature, proved as usual very difficult to tune for. There may have been some drivers accustomed to using different tyre compounds to help dial their chassis into the conditions, but for whatever reason almost nobody had their cars balanced at the end. There was in particular a lot of complaint about wheelspin and oversteer.

Of actual incidents there were few. Scheckter lost time with a collapsed gearbox bearing. Peterson was having persistent trouble with locking front brakes. Brambilla hardly started practice before he stopped at the end of the pit road, his fuel pressure valve playing up. Lauda had to climb out of the new 020 when—wait for *this* one—"the seat belt doesn't fit." Wilds had a fuel bag leak in the BRM, Laffite had a gear selection trouble in a brand new box, Donohue had a wing adjustable valance tear apart, and Andretti—Mario it turned out had a severe case of 'flu.

Later on, Mass stopped on course when the engine "made bad noises." Peterson had an incident with Wilson Fittipaldi which tore off a JPS front wing and punctured a tyre; later on Ronnie had a spin all by himself which was simple and undistinguished except it happened in fifth gear.

Having made its symbolic point, the weather went back to January normal for Saturday's practice. The sun beat down relentlessly from a nearly clear sky, its heat relieved only slightly by a breeze blowing as a semi tailwind along the main straight. It soon emerged that the hotter air was robbing horsepower, for the quickest times were not of the same order as Jarier's flier of Friday. However times were closer as more drivers got their chassis tuned to the circuit. Again the tyre compound seemed to cope properly with the conditions.

Goodyear had incidentally gone round to their fourteen teams offering (for sale) a packet of do it yourself tyre instruments: a pyrometer, a pressure gauge, a diameter tape, etc. Together with a sheaf of instructive literature. As the weekend progressed the mechanics could be seen earnestly learning how to be tyre technicians. It seemed to be an entirely workable scheme, too, for although there was a rash of punctures caused by debris on the circuit there was no single traceable instance of a neophyte puncturing a tyre with his temperature probe!

The majority of drivers were still talking of lack of traction and oversteer, although just to confuse the issue a few were reporting understeer. Occasionally a setting was hit upon, often by aerodynamic trimming, that gave a workable compromise between the ultra-quick bends at one end of the lap and the cramped twisty bits in the infield section. As the magic balance was achieved more and more drivers got up among the quick cluster.

Fittipaldi, in an introspective uncommunicative mood, came out on top of the first session. Obviously from his thumb to tooth attitude the car wasn't perfect yet, and both McLarens were running rather too warm. Jarier was very close, and so were the two Martini Brabhams and Lauda's Ferrari. It was still not settled who was going to be quick, and as the last session opened at half past five in temperatures that had not yet abated noticeably everyone along the pit road was sunk into a mood of grimness.

Most dramatically in bother were Lotus, as the front brake system of Peterson's car was still giving him unpredictable wheel locking and finally a stuck caliper piston was discovered and the caliper had to be changed. Only then could the balance between the two dissimilar systems front and rear be arrived at and it was only very late in the day that Ronnie began to sort his handling. He didn't get it right before the last chance was gone, and he came in from following Jarier's Shadow muttering to himself. "That car is so fast in the fast corners. He only just lifts for the Esses and the long loop at the end he must be taking flat."

The Frenchman was almost the quickest of the day, but just before the end Reutemann strapped on his biggest—er, attributes, and took the honour by two hundredths of a second. Then he disappeared. After everyone else had come coasting into the pits and begun packing up, the national hero came in on the end of a rope. He'd neglected to follow instructions about stopping for more petrol. Said a forgiving mechanic, "he must have been having fun."

The other Carlos who had so shone the day before was taking it much easier today. His main concern was to save his ribs further injury, although of course by now his seat had been fixed. Unlike his teammate he wasn't quite there with his car's handling anyway, for he was getting too much wheelspin and oversteer. He went on to say that compared with the older model the B seemed to be quicker in a straight line but it had a tendency to be "lazy" about turning into corners at high speed. The newly slimmed down Moco was obviously determined to have the best season of his career, and worriedly distressed about his painful ribs. But regarding the chances of his team on the morrow, he noted that in contrast to many other cars the Brabhams were running at normal temperature.

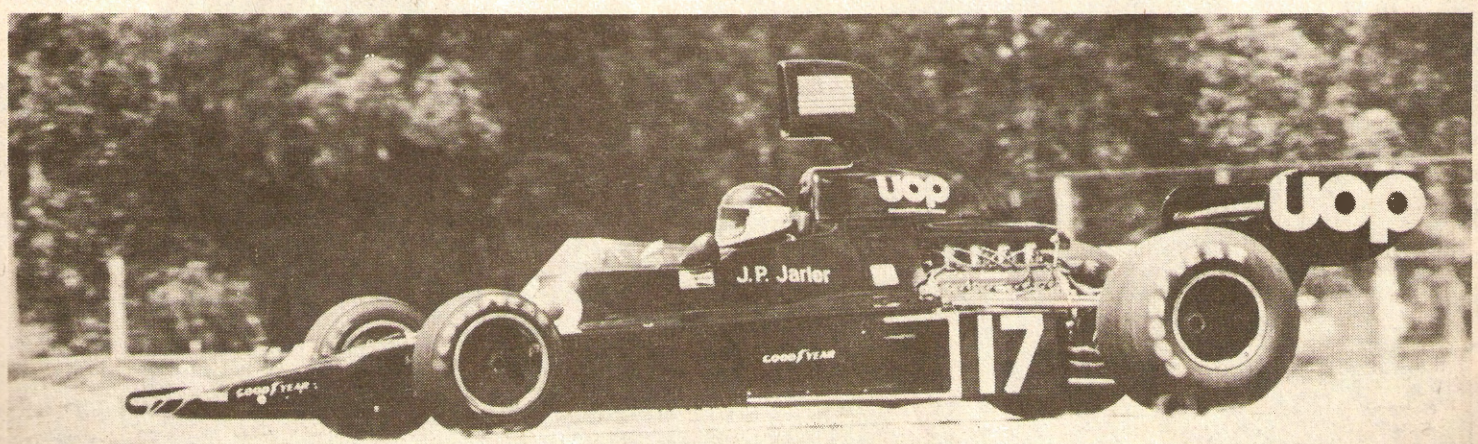
Third quickest by the end was Lauda, who cannily spent most of the day trimming the car on full fuel tanks. Only late in the day did he empty them out and put on a fresh set of tyres—drivers seemed to think that when only a few laps old the tyres were at their quickest, to the amount of perhaps three or four tenths of a second—for a final effort. He found that although there wasn't anything wrong with the Ferrari it wasn't in the same relationship to the Ford cars as last year. "It's losing a little bit everywhere. It just isn't quick enough."

Hunt, using the two differently suspended Hesketh's alternately without being able to express where one was better than the other, nevertheless chose the "rubber" car and with it set what became sixth grid place—rather to his amazement the same position he'd become all too accustomed to last year.

Others were running into more in the way of troubles. Neither Tyrrell was handling very well. Scheckter speaking of an oversteer happening as he bent into corners, and after Depailler had a wheel come loose both cars were sent back to the garage and given a careful realignment with different geometries. This didn't bring them quite up to snuff, and Jody was disappointed to find, like Lauda, he was just simply too slow. Nor was Ickx at all pleased with his JPS, which was behaving viciously at high speed. Trying to maintain a jocular mood, he said "No, you have the stories wrong: it is myself who is joining Shadow."

Brambilla was going outstandingly well,

Sensation of practice was Jean-Pierre Jarier in the new Shadow DN5 which took pole position. Late mechanical trouble prevented him from starting.



Despite handling problems Mark Donohue plugged on in the Penske to finish seventh.

taking the March onto the middle of the grid alongside Peterson although there was a delay with a transmission problem. Wilds, driving with rather startling verve, was making progress with the BRM although with the new power available — and he said there was enough to stay with the Ferraris on the straight—the car was not sticking to the road at the back. His practice came to an early end when the oil tank split. Pryce expressed that he was getting along well enough with his old model Shadow. That it was good in the fast parts of the track (the B model mods showing their worth) although it didn't feel comfortable in the fast Esses. Watson was keeping his chin up, saying that the team were learning a lot about the latest Surtees and more testing and thinking would give an end to the basic problem of getting a balance.

Merzario's efforts were cut back at the last minute by a self-richening fuel mixture, and Laffite was the quicker Williams driver. Hill was fairly pleased with his Lola, although Stommelen's was mysteriously handling very badly. Generally the Parnelli was running and handling reasonably, although it seemed slow in a straight line which a change of engines didn't cure. Like Reutemann, Andretti ran out of fuel at the last moment.

Donohue, like Andretti, was making steady progress up the time sheets, improving in every session as he learned more about setting an F1 car to the course. But to do this, he said with considerable surprise, he had to, "set it up entirely differently than I had expected. I don't have the answer yet." The Penske was visibly the worst handling car on the track, for it was likely to step its back wheels sideways at the slightest provocation.

Meanwhile the Fittipaldi car was giving one trouble after another. As the ever determinedly cheerful designer Richard Divila said, "we're point by point giving our new mechanics practical lessons in everything that can go wrong with a racing car." It was presumably therefore by plan that Wilson had to run back to the pits twice during practice, once to have the mechanics come out to cure a vapour lock and again to trace an electrical fault to a duff solenoid. There was also a lesson in repairing a broken gearbox shaft, and in between times slow progress was made in getting the car set on to the proper springs and the aerodynamics set the best way. Nervously the young team watched the end of practice tick away, and their best lap of the final session was well over ten minutes long but worried calculations on paper indicated that by the skin of the Copersucar's teeth, they would be just inside the 110 per cent rule and could start their first GP.

The other branch of the family was having trouble of his own. Emerson vanished in the middle of the last session, and a couple of mechanics ran out with a new front wheel and a jack. It seemed that during the previous stop the relevant front disc bell had, unnoticed, started working loose and this prevented the wheel being tightened properly. Diagnosing the problem, getting the car back to the pits, double checking it again, and explaining it to the driver, left only enough time for two laps at the end, so just what sort of speed the Champion had in mind for the period in which Reutemann and the others were going quickly went unrevealed.

But at least the second day of practice had got the circus settled into the routine of their show and there was more sense of confidence that the kind of race we would see could be predicted. The consensus was that it would probably be hot and long, that the running would be among the Brabhams, the fast Shadow, the fast McLaren, the Ferraris and the Hesketh with perhaps the Tyrrells able to join in and don't discount the Parnelli. A race of intelligence, patience and attrition was the general expectation. A good one to watch, in other words.

RACE

It was pleasing to find Sunday's weather was more moderate, warm rather than roasting hot, with a light breeze that now blew as a delicate headwind. It was an ideal climate to bring out the largest number of singing Argentino citizens that could possibly jam into the sprawling Autodromo, plus the inevitable additional hoard of loudly patriotic Brazilians to keep international feeling running high and hot. As the hours wore away toward the four thirty start the teeming row of huge grandstands were the scene of the most cheerful behaviour imaginable. The Argentine nation, remembering Reutemann's run nearly to glory last year, was working itself up to have what nobody had any doubt would be the finest hour of the Republic.

As at long last the racing machines, all 23 of them, came rolling out to do their warm-up lap once round the circuit, the giant crowd greeted them with a swelling torrent of happy noise. If motor racing's health could be measured by a decibel meter, this is going to be a perfectly splendid Grand Prix season.

Alas for poor Jean-Pierre: it was his last moment of cheer in the Argentine GP meeting. Doing one of the flat-out practice starts he does, charging out of the pits with wheels spinning and engine screaming from nearly dead cold, he felt the final drive fail behind him. A new cwp had been fitted the night before, for supposed reliability, but it didn't last a hundred yards of the way now, and the remaining 22 cars formed up without their titled leader.

As Mario Andretti remarked after it was all over and done with, "man, I never saw so many guys jump a start. That Peterson, he was by me before I started movin', I practically went backwards. I didn't know you could jump the start in Formula One—but I know now."

With a clear track in front of him thanks to Jarier's transmission, Reutemann made one of the, shall we say, more inspired getaways and was into the lead of the GP almost before it started. Up the long, long starting straight he shot, his teammate's identical white airbox in pursuit, a weaving smoking, dusty mob of Lauda and Hunt and Fittipaldi and Peterson and so on threading the anarchy behind.

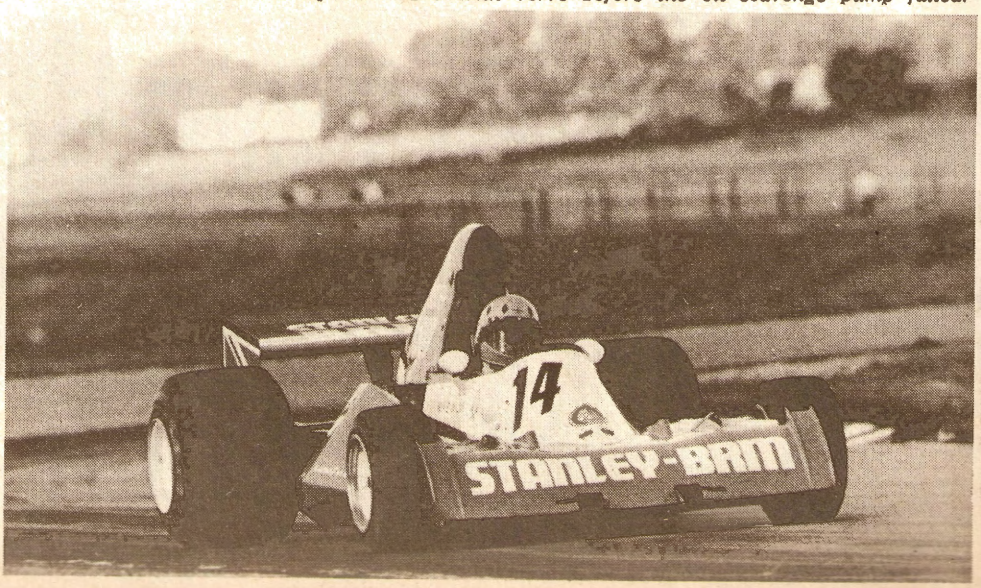
As the pattern formed and the lap ended and was succeeded by more laps, all the hopes of a close, bitterly fought race seemed to be coming true. Already there were some numbers missing. Watson was out of things, the yellow Surtees parked on the infield because a fuel pipe had broken halfway round the first lap. As John reported this, he also described something else that had nearly happened to him a mile or two before that. As the madding crowd herded together into the first corner, he was making a splendid run up through them and was in about eighth place. Then he saw Mass coming back up alongside and going deeper, going by into the bend—and ramming straight into the stern of Scheckter's car.

The McLaren went on round to the pits, its nosepiece in such disarray that the mechanics had to fit their only spare to it: this took a long time because that spare was the new blunter pattern which required another subframe. Number two rejoined finally announcing that its front half was number 1, but none of the officials seemed to mind. Scheckter, too, came in, a rear tyre flat from the collision and a bend in the Tyrrell's rear suspension too. He was back at the tail of the race quickly, but twice more he made stops because the misaligned wheel was wearing through the rubber.

Watson meanwhile was sitting idly by waiting for assistance. Eventually his mechanics found a way by the ever obstructive military guards and fixed the fuel line so he could drive away. After completing a few laps—after all why not?—the Surtees was black flagged into retirement.

Hardly had all this settled down when another drama enlivened the back part of the race. Going around his thirteenth lap Wilson Fittipaldi, his new car running well enough if a little slow because of some oversteer, suddenly felt a big oversteer. This was in the

Mike Wilds drove the Stanley-BRM P201 with verve before the oil scavenge pump failed.



tight left hander called Mixtos Hairpin, and it was about all he could do to catch the wildly gyrating Copersucar and bring it back into alignment with the circuit. Partway down the next straight then, behind the pits, as the car seemed to be holding course properly, Wilson planted his foot once more. Like a mad thing the car swapped ends and spun violently across the road to the right and slammed sideways into the end of a guardrail at the edge of the track. Instantly a little fire burst out. The driver was out a second later, but seemed just dazed enough that a marshal, at whose feet this was all happening, ran out to restrain him from wandering out on to the track. The lad very nearly collected a haymaker from the strong Fittipaldi arm for his trouble; Wilson was in obvious desperate anxiety about his car, for the fire was mounting. Big orange flames were licking the air and a dense plume of black smoke was beginning to blow straight across the circuit.

Once they got themselves mobilised, the emergency crew got to the spot and had the fire knocked down rapidly and the damage wasn't allowed to progress further. For a few moments the oncoming race had to burst blindly through a totally opaque wall of white extinguisher powder, however, and into mind came too many thoughts of Zandvoort.

Bursting through the white wall on this lap the leading white car wasn't number seven any more, but eight, and it was Pace's yellow arrow pointing the way. Nothing wrong with his rib cage, obviously, and equally obviously he considered he was just as much a number one driver as the Big Carlos, no matter whose country this was. Why shouldn't a Brazilian lead for a while?

But only for a while so short as to not appear on the chart. Down through the esses called the Tobogan to the Horquilla before the pits the other Carlos plunged—and then he plunged off the road. Right off out of his nascent lead. He had fallen to behind the first half dozen cars by the time he got back up to speed. Moco would like to explain his disgrace by saying the patch of extinguisher powder had got on to his tyres as he passed through, but it seems like a long way from the patch to the corner. . . .

There was Reutemann leading again, without pause as far as anyone in the pits knew, and Hunt was now past Lauda in second and Fittipaldi was fourth. Regazzoni had outbraked Peterson, who was in fact in the process of losing his gears as a result of having lost his brakes, and Depailler was sixth once Ronnie retired. Pace was going at speed again and was just ahead of Andretti, who was still in sight of the leading string but losing touch.

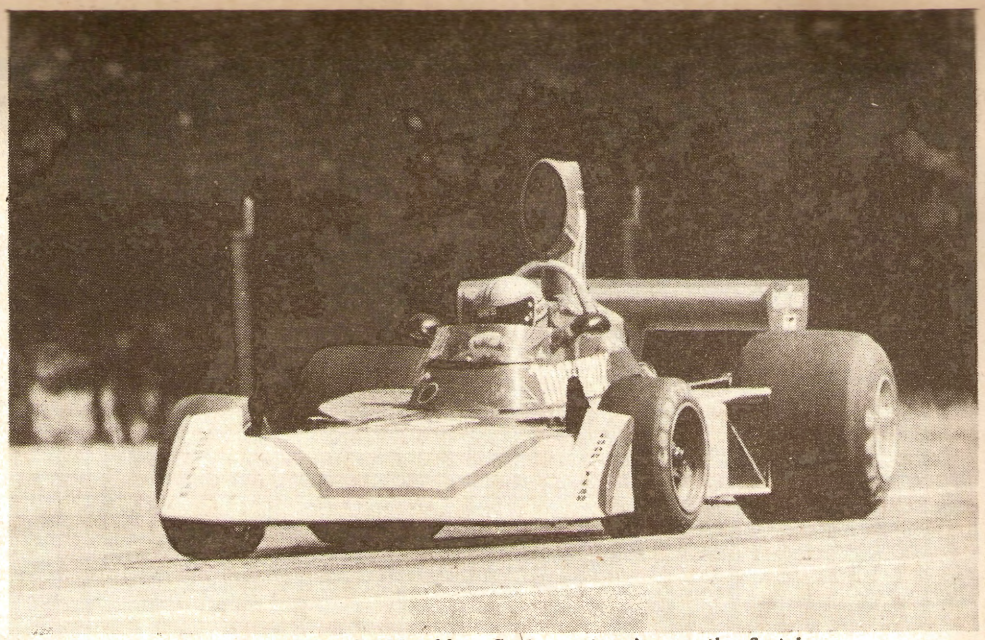
The Parnelli, besides showing some understeer, had been put on to an extra tall top gear with the idea of keeping its water temperature down. It was too tall to keep up with the cars ahead, though, and even with their tow Mario was seeing only ten four and once he dropped behind it was hopeless.

As in practice Brambilla was showing marvellous form, and it was the orange March that was the head of the race's second bunch, holding off the Ickx Lotus and the Donohue Penske and the Merzario Williams, while the Pryce Shadow, Tom driving with the steadiness of growing maturity, tagged on at the end. There weren't any other bunches or dices, the last few cars running around and around by themselves.

Thus it was another of the best sort of GP, where most of the competition is at the front, and it was still a great four car crowd at the front. The Brabham, the Hesketh, the Ferrari and the McLaren . . . no, now Fittipaldi had passed Lauda. The Ferraris were dropping back together, not losing much ground, staying still easily in sight behind, but not running quite with the Fords.

For Reutemann as well this was a new year with a new situation. Improved his Brabham certainly was, but two other teams had hoisted themselves up as well, and were on to him like wolves on a deer. Neither James nor Emerson were going to let Carlos get to that safe place on the victory rostrom if lung and leg had anything to do with it.

And Lole slipped. So suddenly that he wasn't prepared for it, Hunt found himself popping by into the lead. There it was, third actual leader of this Grand Prix. Now, can he hang on to make it official? In this same race last year James had gone into the front, only to spin off a matter of yards later. But yes . . . a steadier hand was in charge today, and the Hesketh was in front securely. Lap after lap it stayed in front, as Fittipaldi too found a way by the obviously troubled Reutemann. The Brabham's heart was cracked, its speed up the straights inadequate now and its front tyres not gripping as well as needed any more. Gradually Lole dropped away and the Argentine GP went on without him, a two man race.



John Watson was out of luck in the Matchbox Surtees, stopping on the first lap.

The BRM exploded in a cloud of white smoke as its scavenge pump seized. Andretti's game drive clanked to a halt as a drive shaft joint failed. Merzario, whose team mate Laffite had retired of a holed oil radiator, came spluttering into the pits as well, but this time the problem was the little rod in the metering unit that is always breaking and it was soon fixed.

The other Carlos was doing the best he could to recover from his nonsense. It must have taken special pluck, for no matter what he said later, his bruised ribs must have been taking a hammering the way he was hurling the other Martini car around the circuit. Thoughts of the Siffert award were generated in many minds as Moco, slowly but relentlessly, forged up and passed the Tyrrell (Depailler struggling with severe understeer that cost several hundred revs in the longer corners) and then overhauled and, one by one, vanquished the Ferraris. Presently this Carlos was in fourth place behind the big one again, and at least some sort of honour was being salvaged. And then his engine went clunk, just stopped, right by the pits rail.

The Ferraris weren't the machines they ought to have been by now. Regga's was smoking as it was overheating and stuttering a little as its fuel boiled. Still it was the better, for Lauda's began handling more and more evilly as a rear damper went awry. By the end of the race which came just about a couple of laps before Niki would have given up by himself he said, the suspension was so cocked that the inside edge of the tyre tread was nearly through to the canvas.

It was turned into a bitter race by now. There were vicious hard stones flying, and Pace's windscreen showed a disturbing hole. In Hunt's windscreen too, out where it was still cleaving the air at the front of the race, there was a big chunk missing, there was another puncture in the Hesketh's nosepiece, and James was congratulating himself that just at this meeting he was wearing a new, extra tough visor.

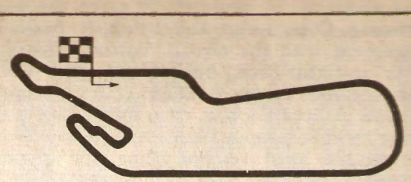
James was off. He had been holding a steady advantage on the steady Fittipaldi, running fast and smooth, both men looking comfortably in their element at the limit, apparently perfectly matched. And then, in the space of a second, Hunt was off the road at the final hairpin, on the grass inside, and the Texaco Marlboro McLaren was sweeping ahead.

There was nothing to be done about it. James re-established his speed, and he was 5 s behind Emerson, and there was no way to win back any of it. Cursing himself, seething, he could only follow. Could he expect. . .? No, no way, Emerson was not going to put a wheel wrong, not today.

His McLaren running "fantastic," the World Champion swept neatly around the hairpin for the 53rd time and came up the hill and saluted the chequered flag. It was, after all was said and done, no matter who or what was in contention, a race in the pattern of last year's racing. The qualities that had given him this first round of the new battle.

Wilson Fittipaldi had a torrid time in his Copersucar before it was destroyed in an accident.

ARGENTINE GRAND PRIX. DATE JAN. 12. 1975 CIRCUIT BUENOS AIRES 15



WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 1 LENGTH 53 laps of 3.708 mile circuit. 196.548 miles

WEATHER WARM SUNNY. BREEZY. No. of STARTERS 22 FINISHERS 14

WINNER E. FITTIPALDI in TEXACO-MARLBORO M23 av. speed 118.601 mph

FASTEST LAP J. HUNT in HESKETH-FORD 308 No. 24 on lap 1 in min. 50.91 sec. 120.378 mph

EXISTING LAP RECORD C. REGAZZONI in FERRARI 312.B3 in min. 52.10 sec. 119.094 mph

PREVIOUS YEAR'S RESULT D. HULME in TEXACO-MARLBORO M23 at 116.723 mph

ENTRIES

NO.	DRIVER	CAR	ENTRANT	FUEL/OIL CONTR.	TYRE	CHASSIS	ENGINE	
1	E FITTIPALDI	TEXACO-MARLBORO M23	MARLBORO TEAM TEXACO	TEXACO HAVOLINE	GOOD	M 23/9		NEW CAR
2	J. MASS	TEXACO-MARLBORO M23	MARLBORO TEAM TEXACO	TEXACO HAVOLINE	GOOD	M 23/8		
3	J. SCHECKTER	TYRRELL-FORD	ELF TEAM TYRRELL	ELF ELF	GOOD	007-2		
4	P. DEPAILLER	TYRRELL-FORD	ELF TEAM TYRRELL	ELF ELF	GOOD	007-4		
5	R. PETERSON	JPS-FORD 72E	JOHN PLAYER TEAM LOTUS	- DUCKHAMS	GOOD	72-8		
6	J. ICKX	JPS-FORD 72E	JOHN PLAYER TEAM LOTUS	- DUCKHAMS	GOOD	72-5		
7	C. REUTEMANN	BRABHAM-FORD BT44B	MARTINI RACING WITH M.R.D.	- -	GOOD	BT 44B-1		NEW CAR
7T	C. REUTEMANN	BRABHAM-FORD BT44B	MARTINI RACING WITH M.R.D.	- -	GOOD	BT 44B-3		REVISED CAR
8	C. PACE	BRABHAM-FORD BT44B	MARTINI RACING WITH M.R.D.	- -	GOOD	BT 44B-2		REVISED CAR
9	V. BRAMBILLA	MARCH-FORD 741	MARCH ENGINEERING	- -	GOOD	741-2		
11	C. REGAZZONI	FERRARI 312 B3	S.p.a. FERRARI S.E.F.A.C.	AGIP AGIP	GOOD	312 B3 014		
11T	C. REGAZZONI	FERRARI 312 B3	S.p.a. FERRARI S.E.F.A.C.	AGIP AGIP	GOOD	312 B3 012		
12	N. LAUDA	FERRARI 312 B3	S.p.a. FERRARI S.E.F.A.C.	AGIP AGIP	GOOD	312 B3 020		NEW CAR
14	M. WILDS	STANLEY-BRM P201	STANLEY-BRM	- DUCKHAMS	GOOD	P 201-4	P200-001	
16	T. PRYCE	UOP-SHADOW-FORD DN3	UOP SHADOW RACING TEAM	UOP VALVOLINE	GOOD	DN3-3A "B"		REVISED CAR
17	J-P. JARIER	UOP-SHADOW-FORD DN5	UOP SHADOW RACING TEAM	UOP VALVOLINE	GOOD	DN5-1A		NEW CAR D.N.S
18	J. WATSON	SURTEES-FORD TS 16	TEAM SURTEES	- -	GOOD	TS 16-04-2		REVISED CAR
20	A. MERZARIO	WILLIAMS FW	FRANK WILLIAMS RACING CARS	FINA FINA	GOOD	FW-03		
21	J. LAFFITE	WILLIAMS FW	FRANK WILLIAMS RACING CARS	FINA FINA	GOOD	FW-02		
22	G. HILL	EMBASSY-HILL-LOLA T370	EMBASSY RACING WITH GRAHAM HILL	- DUCKHAMS	GOOD	HU 370-2		
23	R. STOMMELEN	EMBASSY-HILL-LOLA T370	EMBASSY RACING WITH GRAHAM HILL	- DUCKHAMS	GOOD	HU 370-3		
24	J. HUNT	HESKETH-FORD 308	HESKETH RACING	- -	GOOD	308-3		RUBBER FRONT SPRINGS.
24T	J. HUNT	HESKETH-FORD 308	HESKETH RACING	- -	GOOD	308-1		
27	M. ANDRETTI	PARNELLI VPJ-4	VEL'S PARNELLI JONES RACING	- -	FIRE	VPJ-4-002		NEW CAR
28	M. DONOHUE	PENSKE PC-1	PENSKE CARS	SUNOCO -	GOOD	PC-1-002		NEW CAR
30	W. FITTIPALDI	COPERSUCAR-FITTIPALDI FD	COPERSUCAR-FITTIPALDI	- -	GOOD	FD-01		NEW CAR

RESULTS

POS	NO.	DRIVER	CAR	LAPS	TIME	SPEED	BRAKES	DAMPERS	GEARBOX	PLUGS	INJECTION	ELECS.
1	1	E. FITTIPALDI	TEXACO-MARLBORO M23	53	1h. 39m. 26.29s.	118.601 mph.	LOCK FER	KONI	HEW FG-400	CHAMPION	LUCAS	LUCAS
2	24	J. HUNT	HESKETH-FORD 308	53	1h. 39m. 32.20s.		LOCK FER	ARM	HEW FGA-400	CHAMPION	LUCAS	LUCAS
3	7	C. REUTEMANN	BRABHAM-FORD BT44B	53	1h. 39m. 43.35s.		GIRL FER	KONI	HEW FGA-400	CHAMPION	LUCAS	LUCAS
4	11	C. REGAZZONI	FERRARI 312 B3	53	1h. 40m. 02.08s.		LOCK FER	KONI	FERRARI 312.2 axle	CHAMPION	LUCAS	MARELLI DINOPLEX
5	4	P. DEPAILLER	TYRRELL-FORD	53	1h. 40m. 20.54s.		LOCK FER	ARM	HEW FG-400	MOTORCRAFT	LUCAS	LUCAS
6	12	N. LAUDA	FERRARI 312 B3	53	1h. 40m. 45.94s.		LOCK FER	KONI	FERRARI 312.2 axle	CHAMPION	LUCAS	MARELLI DINOPLEX
7	28	M. DONOHUE	PENSKE PC-1	52			LOCK FER	BILSTEIN	HEW FGA-400	CHAMPION	LUCAS	LUCAS
8	6	J. ICKX	JPS-FORD 72E	52			GIRL-F LOCK-R FER	KONI	HEW FG-400	CHAMPION	LUCAS	LUCAS
9	9	V. BRAMBILLA	MARCH-FORD 741	52			GIRL FER	KONI	HEW DG-300	CHAMPION	LUCAS	LUCAS
10	22	G. HILL	EMBASSY-HILL-LOLA T370	52			LOCK FER	ARM	HEW FGA-400	CHAMPION	LUCAS	LUCAS
11	3	J. SCHECKTER	TYRRELL-FORD	52			LOCK FER	ARM	HEW FG.400	MOTORCRAFT	LUCAS	LUCAS
12	16	T. PRYCE	UOP-SHADOW-FORD DN3	51			LOCK FER	ARM	HEW TL-200 MK I	CHAMPION	LUCAS	LUCAS
13	23	R. STOMMELEN	EMBASSY-HILL-LOLA T370	51			LOCK FER	ARM	HEW FGA-400	CHAMPION	LUCAS	LUCAS
14	2	J. MASS	TEXACO-MARLBORO M23	50			LOCK FER	KONI	HEW FG-400	CHAMPION	LUCAS	LUCAS
	20	A. MERZARIO	WILLIAMS FW	44	RUNNING AT FINISH BUT UNCLASSIFIED.							

RETIREMENTS

NO.	DRIVER	LAPS	REASON
17	J-P. JARIER	0	CROWN WHEEL. WARMING-UP LAP. D.N.S.
18	J. WATSON	6	FUEL LINE. DISQUALIFIED FOR OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE.
30	W. FITTIPALDI	12	CRASH.
21	J. LAFFITE	15	STONE HOLED RADIATOR.
5	R. PETERSON	15	BRAKES AND TRANSMISSION.
14	M. WILDS	24	SCAVENGE PUMP.
27	M. ANDRETTI	27	C.V. JOINT.
8	C. PACE	46	ENGINE.

CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS

DRIVERS

E. FITTIPALDI	9
J. HUNT	6
C. REUTEMANN	4
C. REGAZZONI	3
P. DEPAILLER	2
N. LAUDA	1

MANUFACTURERS

McLAREN-FORD	9
HESKETH-FORD	6
BRABHAM-FORD	4
FERRARI	3
TYRRELL-FORD	2

DATE FRI. p.m. 10 JAN WEATHER OVERCAST COLD MOSTLY DRY.

PRACTICE 1

17	J-P. JARIER	1m. 49.21s.
8	C. PACE	1m. 49.64s.
7	C. REUTEMANN	1m. 49.93s.
1	E. FITTIPALDI	1m. 50.74s.
4	P. DEPAILLER	1m. 50.80s.
12	N. LAUDA	1m. 50.84s.
24	J. HUNT	1m. 50.86s.
11	C. REGAZZONI	1m. 51.36s.
5	R. PETERSON	1m. 51.65s.
9	V. BRAMBILLA	1m. 51.77s.
3	J. SCHECKTER	1m. 51.81s.
16	T. PRYCE	1m. 52.39s.
2	J. MASS	1m. 52.49s.
27	M. ANDRETTI	1m. 53.22s.
6	J. ICKX	1m. 53.23s.
20	A. MERZARIO	1m. 53.81s.
18	J. WATSON	1m. 54.38s.
28	M. DONOHUE	1m. 54.70s.
22	G. HILL	1m. 55.21s.
23	R. STOMMELEN	1m. 55.66s.
14	M. WILDS	1m. 56.04s.
21	J. LAFFITE	1m. 58.13s.
30	W. FITTIPALDI	2m. 00.93s.

DATE SAT. p.m. 11. JAN WEATHER DRY. HOT SUN.

PRACTICE 2

1	E. FITTIPALDI	1m. 50.02s.
17	J-P. JARIER	1m. 50.22s.
7	C. REUTEMANN	1m. 50.42s.
8	C. PACE	1m. 50.51s.
12	N. LAUDA	1m. 50.81s.
4	P. DEPAILLER	1m. 51.01s.
24	J. HUNT	1m. 51.14s.
11	C. REGAZZONI	1m. 51.36s.
3	J. SCHECKTER	1m. 51.63s.
27	M. ANDRETTI	1m. 51.68s.
5	R. PETERSON	1m. 51.98s.
16	T. PRYCE	1m. 52.61s.
18	J. WATSON	1m. 52.83s.
21	J. LAFFITE	1m. 52.91s.
9	V. BRAMBILLA	1m. 52.94s.
2	J. MASS	1m. 53.01s.
23	R. STOMMELEN	1m. 53.12s.
6	J. ICKX	1m. 53.15s.
28	M. DONOHUE	1m. 53.96s.
22	G. HILL	1m. 54.00s.
20	A. MERZARIO	1m. 54.22s.
14	M. WILDS	1m. 55.53s.
30	W. FITTIPALDI	2m. 00.22s.

DATE SAT. p.m. 11. JAN WEATHER DRY. HOT SUN.

PRACTICE 3

7	C. REUTEMANN	1m. 49.80s.
17	J-P. JARIER	1m. 49.82s.
12	N. LAUDA	1m. 49.96s.
24	J. HUNT	1m. 50.26s.
11	C. REGAZZONI	1m. 50.71s.
3	J. SCHECKTER	1m. 50.82s.
4	P. DEPAILLER	1m. 51.01s.
8	C. PACE	1m. 51.04s.
27	M. ANDRETTI	1m. 51.06s.
5	R. PETERSON	1m. 51.44s.
1	E. FITTIPALDI	1m. 51.75s.
2	J. MASS	1m. 51.82s.
16	T. PRYCE	1m. 51.92s.
9	V. BRAMBILLA	1m. 51.96s.
18	J. WATSON	1m. 52.13s.
28	M. DONOHUE	1m. 52.36s.
21	J. LAFFITE	1m. 52.88s.
6	J. ICKX	1m. 52.90s.
20	A. MERZARIO	1m. 53.43s.
23	R. STOMMELEN	1m. 53.85s.
22	G. HILL	1m. 54.31s.
14	M. WILDS	1m. 54.48s.
30	W. FITTIPALDI	10m. 43.55s. (2 laps)

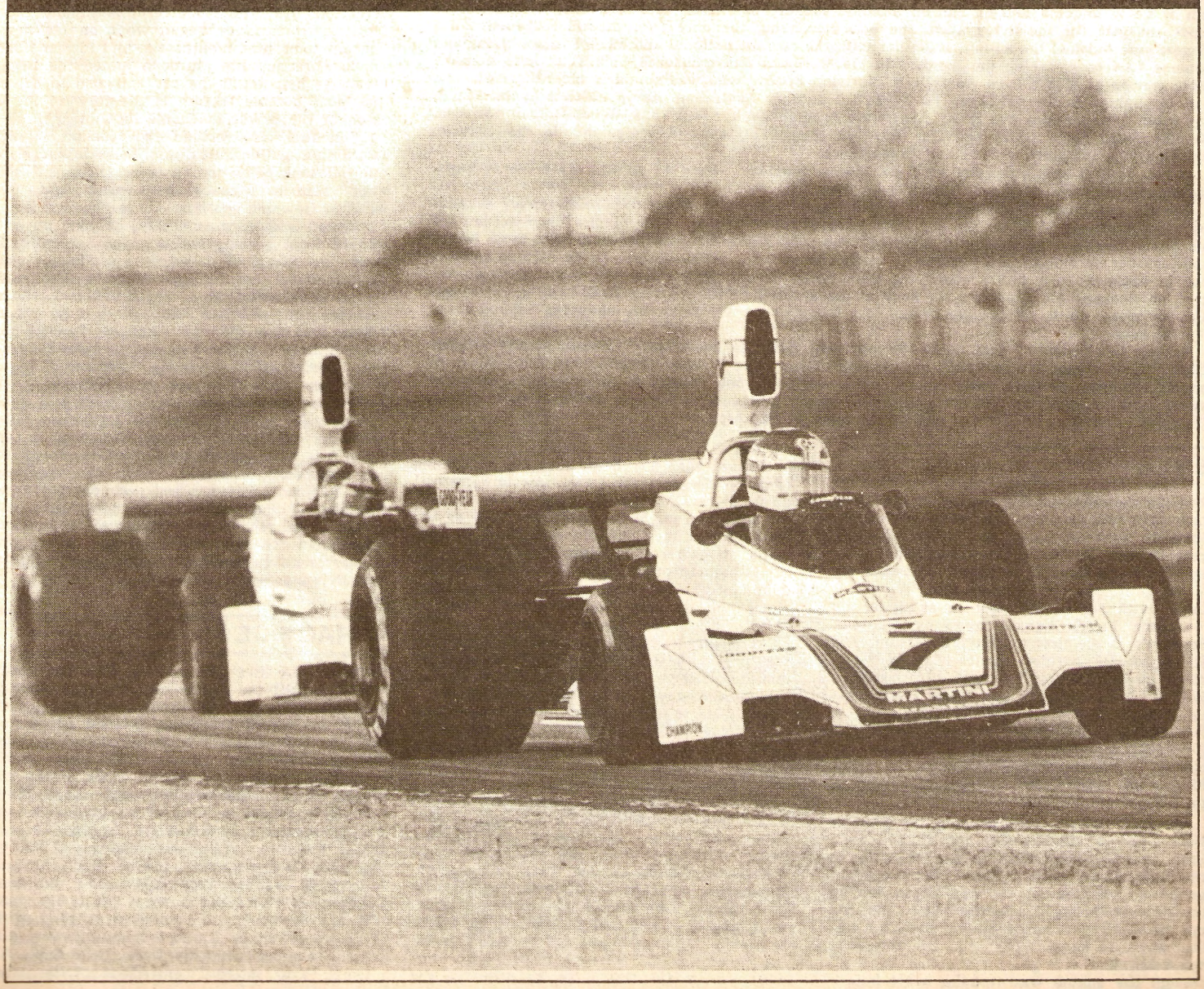
STARTING GRID

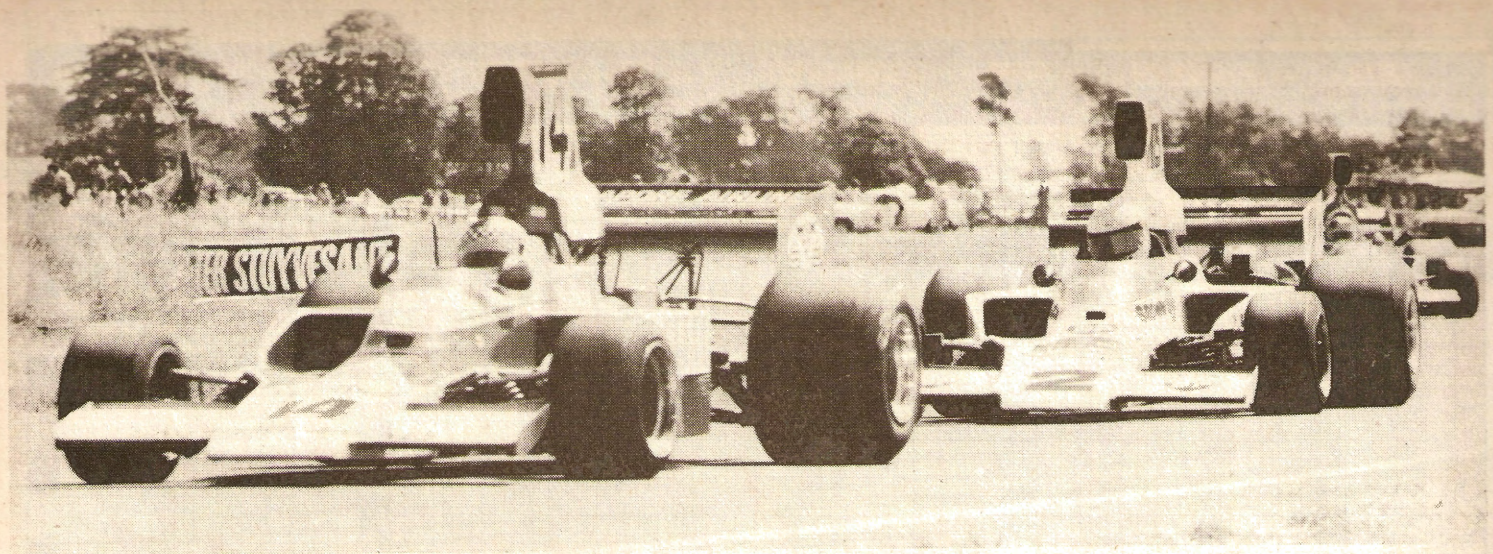
POLE

8 C. PACE 1m. 49.64s.	17 J-P. JARIER D.N.S. * 1m. 49.21s.
12 N. LAUDA 1m. 49.96s.	7 C. REUTEMANN 1m. 49.80s.
24 J. HUNT 1m. 50.26s.	1 E. FITTIPALDI 1m. 50.02s.
4 P. DEPAILLER 1m. 50.80s.	11 C. REGAZZONI 1m. 50.71s.
27 M. ANDRETTI 1m. 51.06s.	3 J. SCHECKTER 1m. 50.82s.
9 V. BRAMBILLA 1m. 51.77s.	5 R. PETERSON 1m. 51.44s.
16 T. PRYCE 1m. 51.92s.	2 J. MASS 1m. 51.82s.
28 M. DONOHUE 1m. 52.36s.	18 J. WATSON 1m. 52.13s.
6 J. ICKX 1m. 52.90	21 J. LAFFITE 1m. 52.88s.
20 A. MERZARIO 1m. 53.43s.	23 R. STOMMELEN 1m. 53.12s.
14 M. WILDS 1m. 54.48s.	22 G. HILL 1m. 54.00s.
	30 W. FITTIPALDI 2m. 00.22s.

* No 17 JARIER BROKE CROWN WHEEL ON WARMING-UP LAP AND DID NOT START. POLE POSITION WAS LEFT VACANT.

AUTOSPORT





With Graham McRae sidelined, the race developed into a nose to tail battle between Graeme Lawrence and Warwick Brown in Lola T332s.

LEVIN

Lawrence leads the Lolas

By PETER GREENSLADE Pictures by HARRY RUFFELL

Although the eight-race Antipodean series for Formula 5000 cars, the winner of which takes the Tasman Cup, thanks to sponsorship these days from the Peter Stuyvesant cigarette people, has attracted drivers from Britain and Continental Europe in the past, this year's contest is very much parish pump, as evidenced by the entry and result of the first round which was run at Levin under a blazing sun on Sunday, January 5. Fifteen cars turned up to qualify, 14 made the grid for the flying start, the defaulter being the only "foreigner," American Evan Noyes; nine finished the 84-lap, 100-miler with the current national and 1970 Tasman champion, Graeme Lawrence, taking the honours in his Marlboro-Wix-sponsored Lola T332 by a comfortable margin of 32.3 s from Australia's Warwick Brown, who was similarly mounted.

A lap behind in the new Lola T400 was yet another Australian, Kevin Bartlett in third spot, and a lap down on him was South Australian Johnnie Walker in a T332, Repco-Holden powered. Kennie Smith (Lola T332) and Jim Murdoch (Begg 018) kept New Zealand in the picture, finishing fifth and sixth with 81 and 79 laps each.

If you look at this quick-fire eight successive Sundays' series on an aggregate points basis, the score after Levin stands at Australia 13, New Zealand 12.

There's not much likelihood of it developing into even a triangular tournament because twice-Indy winner Al Unser did not show up because of "other commitments" and neither did his lesser known compatriot Bill Simpson. The only North American present was Evan Noyes and whether he will be in a position to remain involved is problematical. In an earnest endeavour to improve on a 44.6 s qualifying time, which would have given him ninth place on the grid, he slammed his T332 into the bank at the notorious Cabbage Tree Bend and, to all intents and purposes, wrote off the car. When last heard of he was reputedly shopping around for a replacement.

Among the "names" that made the start but failed to finish were Graham McRae (McRae GM2), Chris Amon (Talon MR1) and Aussie champ Max Stewart (Lola T400). They were all among the front runners early on, but were sidelined soon enough to have time to wipe the sweat from their brows and settle down to watch Lawrence, who won this race in a Ferrari Dino 246 in 1970, do so again at an average speed of 94.3 mph.

ENTRY

Perhaps the most notable feature of the Levin race card was the fact that seven of the 15 entrants were in Lolas, all T332s with the exception of Bartlett's Chesterfield-sponsored and Stewart's Coca Cola T400s. Bartlett's car is the prototype which, it is said, arrived at Levin with some 1500 test miles under its low-slung belly, thanks to Frank Gardner. Stewart's is the first production version. The fuel-injected Chevrolet engines have been prepared in Sydney. Among the Lola contingent, Walker is the odd man out to the extent that he is sticking with the Holden Repco V8, as also is 1973 Australian champion John McCormack. In New Zealand, at least, he has elected to use the Repco-Holden in his Ansett Elfin MR6 rather than the Repco version of the Australian Leyland P76 alloy V8.

Lawrence, fresh from winning the premier New Zealand single-seater award, the Gold Star, arrived biting his fingernails because in the final round at Bay Park, Mount Maunganui, a week earlier he won easily but in the process damaged a cylinder head and did not have a replacement on hand, as he was still awaiting engines from the US. However, the team had it "glued" together and although the engine was running a bit hot, it seemed to be reasonably sound.

McRae, who has been back in his home town, Wellington, for some time now, turned up with the GM2 which, if appearance counts for anything, might be fairly described as the GM3. McRae has Commonwealth Bank of Australia sponsorship in New Zealand and the car is painted predominantly blue. It was predominantly black last year, but the changes since then are more than skin deep. There is a full-width front aerofoil mounted some six or so inches over the nose and no airbox at the rear, with the rear wing appearing to be mounted rather lower than is customary, although that could be an optical illusion.

The GM2 is running on Firestones—said be be surplus to Mario Andretti's requirements—and the 1971, 1972 and 1973 Tasman winner has five engines which, he says, he has prepared himself.

Entered by Jack McCormack, Amon's Talon was a late arrival at the circuit and, in fact, Chris, who had not seen the car until the day before qualifying trials, did not get to drive it until the second and last qualifying session. Apparently when it was fired up for the first time the previous day something went "pop," according to Amon, and so it was back to the workshop for an all-night and following morning repair session. Warwick Brown, who went very well in the few races he drove in the US last year as well as on his home circuits, was entered by his usual mentor Pat Burke Racing, the man himself is one of Sydney's brighter accountants and the T332 was fitted, as usual, with a Peter Molloy Chevrolet engine.

John McCormack was on hand with the Elfin MR6, which featured a full-width nose and much squatter airbox over the Repco-Holden V8 than is generally fashionable these days. The car, as usual, was in the red and cream Ansett Airlines of Australia livery.

One car that attracted considerable interest in the paddock was George Begg's latest creation, 018. The resourceful Southland racing car constructor began work on his new design some nine months ago and former Formula Ford ace Jim Murdoch joined the Begg team to help build the car and also to drive it. Most notable feature is the forward location of the driver to enable location of a 12-gallon fuel tank behind the cockpit, along with eight-gallon tanks on either side and also an oil tank. The engine is set back a little and there is a spacer between it and the DG300 Hewland gearbox. Air reaches the side-mounted radiators smoothly, thanks to inboard front springs and a concealed anti-roll bar. The tub is of polystyrene sandwich type construction and fully deformable. The rear wing is mounted on a single pedestal which houses the oil catch tank. The only other Begg was the FM5 of Graham Baker, for Frank Bray's model was not raceworthy and so he elected to drive his Brabham BT40.

Of the rest, the only other entrant that could be given a chance of making a real impression at Levin was the La Valise Lola T332 of Ken Smith. This car was raced in the US last year under the Armadillo Breeders' Association sponsorship. Smith, who has been an outstanding four-cylinder conductor for a number of years, is using Chapparal-prepared Chevrolets, reputedly the same as those used by Brian Redman in the States. The car features a fully enclosed engine and the latest small wing.

PRACTICE

There were two practice sessions set down for the Saturday and both of them were timed to determine grid positions. There was a certain amount of grumbling because a number of the contestants considered that the time allotted for each session was too short. Another gripe was over the state of the pit road, which was littered with sharp flints which caused a number of punctures. Brown complained to promoter Syd Jensen and was told that if he did not like it he was at liberty to tear up his contract and not start. McRae, privately, was not very happy either, but considered it diplomatic to keep his mouth shut. In any event, they all got down to work with the exception of Amon, whose car was still being worked on away from the circuit. As usual, most interest centred on McRae who

was soon circulating in the low 40 s range and looked by far the quickest. Lawrence did not waste any time either and the pace of these two was in keeping with the day which was a real scorcher. There appeared to be very little drama and most people only made stops for minor adjustments.

By the time the session ended Brown had replaced a punctured tyre and notched third fastest time of 42.8 s—slightly better than 100 mph. But McRae and Lawrence had recorded 42.5 s—104.294 mph apiece. The lap record, held by McRae was 99.063 mph although he had bettered the "ton" in qualifying last year. Smith ran a workmanlike 43.6 s, Walker 43.8 s, Bartlett 44.0 s and so did Murdoch in the Begg 018. Stewart's morning best was 44.8 s and Baker was the only other to break 46.0 s with a 45.2 s.

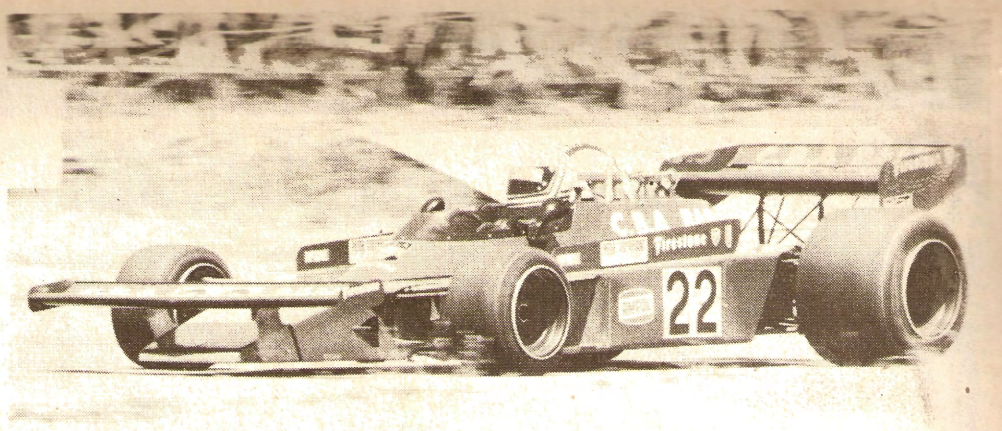
By the time the afternoon session started, the heat was terrific and not too many people believed that the morning times would be improved upon. However, by the time the session ended, McRae had assured himself of pole with 41.9 s, Smith had made 43.4 s, Walker 43.8 s, McCormack 44.0 s, Amon, after a very slow start, 44.1 s, Stewart 44.4 s and Noyes, who had managed 45.0 s in the morning, came down to 44.6 s then crashed and became an enforced scratching. Baker improved to 45.2 s and the others, Steve Millen (Chevron B20), Baron Robertson (Elfin MR5) and Frank Bray (Brabham BT40), failed to break 46 s, their times being 46.4 s, 48.5 s and 48.8 s respectively.

Lawrence failed to improve, but was still outside McRae on the front row. Bartlett also had to be content with his morning's 44 s dead, despite some work on the rear suspension of the T400 which involved changing the rear coil springs. McRae seemed as happy as anybody because his crew had not timed him under 42 s during the session. In any event "Cassius," who is a much quieter man these days, said he did not intend raising the point with officialdom!

RACE

The race was to be televised live from start to finish, the starting time being 3 pm. So the field was lined up early to be in readiness for the "idiot box" watchers. They were lined up in pairs, the order being McRae-Lawrence; Brown-Smith; Walker-Bartlett; Murdoch-McCormack; Amon-Stewart; Baker-Millen; Robertson-Bray. But there were a couple of gaps in the ranks. Baker's crew was fitting a new nose cone on the FM5 and Amon's mechanics were replacing an oil pump drive belt. Baker made it on time, but Amon had to appeal for an extra five minutes, during which, the nation presumably waited breathlessly, if only because that portion of it indoors must have been swooning in the midst of a nationwide tropical heat wave. At last Amon and his Talon were pushed into place and Denny Hulme took his place on the starter's dias and let the field roll away slowly in tight formation to come round for the rolling start. The pace car pulled off the track as Hulme dropped the flag and McRae, with Lawrence, Brown and Smith in close attendance, shot to the front. This group was followed by Walker, Amon, Murdoch, Bartlett and Stewart in the T400s, and McCormack in the MR6.

McRae had drawn out 3.5 s ahead of Lawrence after three laps, at which stage Smith had his T332 in the pits for a hurried front wheel change. Lawrence had Brown within nudging distance and there was some space back to Walker, who was followed by Amon, Murdoch, Bartlett and Stewart. After 10 laps the order was virtually unchanged, at least up front, but McRae had increased his lead over Lawrence to 5 s which, in terms of distance, was just about the length of Levin's main straight! Then things began to happen. Stewart came to an abrupt halt with a connecting rod through the sump of the T400. McRae lapped Murdoch, who had dropped to ninth place, apparently with oil pressure troubles. A couple of laps later Amon, who had worked the Talon up to fifth place, departed the scene with a recurrence of oil pump problems.



Graham McRae was again the fastest Levin qualifier in the revamped GM2, and after front running in the early stages, retired with a rocker arm adrift.

With 18 laps under his belt, McRae had opened up his lead to 10 s over the inseparable Lawrence and Brown. Then came Walker, Bartlett, McCormack, Baker and Murdoch. Smith, who had lost more than a lap during his stop, was making up ground well at this stage. However, it was obvious that all was not well up front because Lawrence and Brown began to move in on McRae very quickly. With 24 laps completed, the GM2 was in the pits with a broken rocker arm and so the favourite and major threat was out of contention.

Lawrence maintained his tenuous lead over Brown for the next 37 laps. Bartlett was now third and reasonably comfortably clear of Walker, Baker, McCormack, who appeared to be having gear selection troubles, and Murdoch, who was plugging along quietly. In the meantime, Smith lapping steadily at 45 s, was moving back into contention.

Lawrence and Brown were now well out on their own and still running nose-to-tail. They lapped Walker, lying fourth, in the course of their 33rd tour and by then were nearly 36 s ahead of Bartlett. Now Lawrence made a move to get out of Brown's sights and increased his lead over the young Australian to 3 s. The order behind was substantially unchanged and, all things being equal, the race's major interest was the outcome of the Lawrence-Brown duel and the meteoric advancement of Smith.

In the course of their 51st tour, Lawrence and Brown lapped Bartlett and Brown began to close in once more on Lawrence. A few laps later Baker, who had been running about sixth, had the FM's engine expire in a trail of expensive-looking smoke.

Lap 60 was the one in which Walker took Lawrence—the latter claimed later that he was taken while the yellow flag was out — and in a matter of three laps he had opened the gap to 3.5 s. Smith and Walker were now running in close formation, although Smith was a lap down on Walker. But these two appeared to be closing in on second-placed Lawrence, although, of course, Bartlett was actually third on the road.

Then, just when it looked as though Brown was going to win the first round in the series, it became evident that all was not well with the T332. Within a few laps Lawrence was tucked in behind him again and on the 74th lap he regained the lead. Poor Brown was contending with a major handling problem, brought about by a deflating left rear tyre. From then on in it was Lawrence's race. However, Brown had plenty of distance in hand over Bartlett and the rest to struggle home in second spot under Denny Hulme's checkers.

Lawrence, who won this race and then went on to win the series without winning another race in 1970, was given a tremendous ovation. But that for Brown was almost as great and Bartlett, who is still walking with the aid of a stick after his NZ Grand Prix practice crash last year, was equally well received. Although there was some disagreement when the official result was announced and the pressmen found that Walker had been placed fourth ahead of Smith, the result stood. And when it was all over, two of the happiest men in the paddock were George Begg and Jim Murdoch, builder and driver, respectively, of the sixth-placed Begg 018.

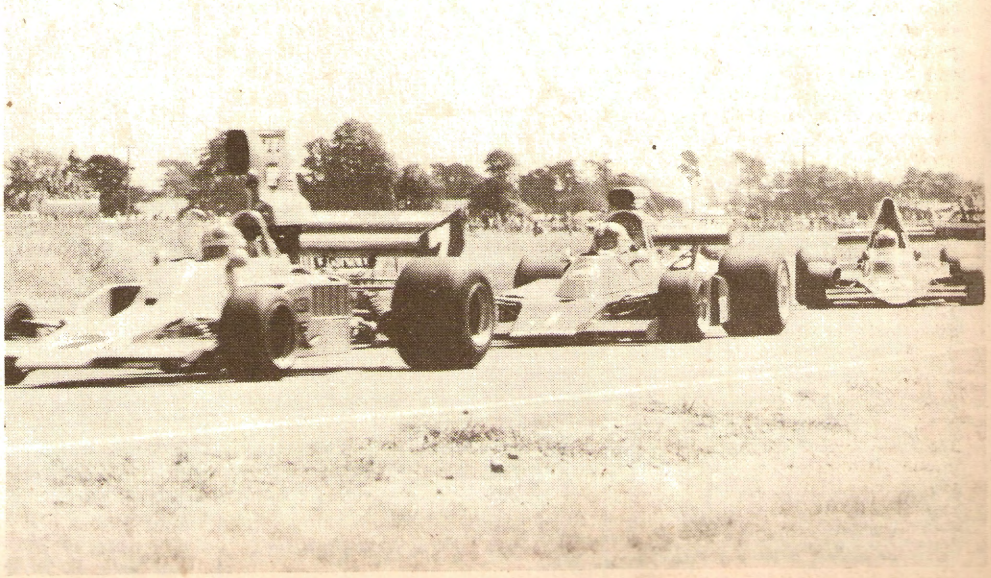
Levin Raceway, January 6
Peter Stuyvesant Series, Round 1, 84 laps

1, G. Lawrence (Lola T332), 62 m 55.6 s, 94.3 mph; 2, W. Brown (Lola T332), 63 m 27.9 s; 3, K. Bartlett (Lola T400), 83 laps; 4, J. Walker (Lola T332), 82 laps; 5, K. Smith (Lola T332), 81 laps; 6, J. Murdoch (Begg 018), 79 laps; 7, S. Millen (Chevron B20), 79 laps; 8, J. McCormack (Elfin MR6), 78 laps; 9, B. Robertson (Elfin MR5), 73 laps.

Fastest lap: Lawrence, 43.7 s (96.796 mph).

Tasman Cup points: Lawrence 9, Brown 6, Bartlett 4, Walker 3, Smith 2, Murdoch 1.

Johnnie Walker failed to repeat his '74 Levin success but finished fourth in the T332, here leading Chris Amon's Talon, and the new T400 of Kevin Bartlett, who finished third.



A Stratos on the Circuit for Curley?

Irish star — Cahal Curley.

The "Power Game" in Ireland is reaching dizzy new heights if a recently heard rumour that Cahal "CB" Curley will be wheeling out a full-works specification and works backed Lancia Stratos for the Circuit of Ireland turns out to be true. Rumoured to involve a cash figure in the region of £30,000 the Stratos would appear to be a venture involving The Chequered Flag of Chiswick, London; Phil Coulter (the rallying song writer whose Mexico Curley drove on last November's Causeway Coast) and an as yet un-named recording company. Sounds interesting — and highly plausible.

Other recently-heard Irish stories include that David Agnew has changed to a Porsche to replace his BMW and that Ronnie McCartney will be concentrating on campaigning the Group One Mazda RX3 while brother Dessie and Terry Harryman will stay with the Porsche Carrera and are planning some continental events with the car.

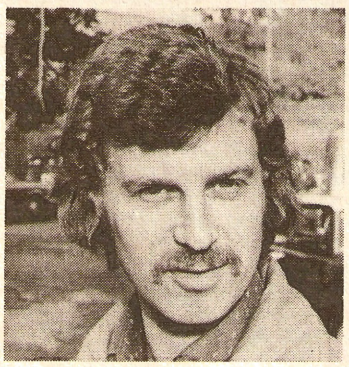
STP Galway

A classic Irish event will soon be with us; the STP sponsored International Circuit of Galway. The three day rally starts on February 7th. Qualifying for the European Rally Championship for drivers, this year promises to be bigger and better than ever. The route is as usual concentrated in a small area so there are 36 special stages totalling 425 miles within a total mileage of just over 625, thus eliminating long road sections. All the stages are being run on closed public roads. The prize fund almost rivals the stages for good value; the first prize is a mere £1000, and there is £4000 more loot to be collected as well. So far around 90 entries have been received and the door will officially be open until tomorrow (Friday). The man to get in touch with is P. J. Dolan at Poitin Stil Inverin Co. Galway, telephone: Galway 73158. Irish rallying enthusiasts will recognise many of the exciting tarmac drivers who currently fill the entry list, but principal contenders are Jack Tordoff (making one of his selected appearances this year) Cahal Curley, Dessie McCartney, John Tansey, Noel Smith, David Agnew and Brian Evans in Porsches; Adrian Boyd with Frank Main in his newly acquired Alpine; John O'Gorman in the ex-John Price car; Billy Coleman, Nigel Rockey (now doubtful), Sean Campbell, Gerry Buckley and John Caplice in Escorts and Brian Nelson and Ashley Armstrong in BMWs. Eamonn Cotter has had to withdraw as Clerk of the Course owing to pressure of business, and the rally committee is headed by Dave Ray (who was CoC of the '74 event, which was cancelled owing to fuel shortages). With its legendary hospitality and superb stage miles, Galway sounds like a very inviting place to be, what more excuses are required for an early holiday?

Pat Ryan likely to be offered number two to Culcheth at BL

Ex-Mini driver Pat Ryan has been strongly tipped to accept the role as British Leyland ST's number two driver to Brian Culcheth. Ryan will be driving for BL in the popular 1300 class which has given Leyland some good results in the past with Culcheth's 1300 Marina drives on various internationals. Ryan is rumoured to have a programme of RAC nationals to tackle, starting with the Mintex Dales and including the Granite City, Welsh, Scottish, Burmah and the Dukeries. The ST car is expected to be the tried and trusted Marina 1300 Coupe but it would seem highly likely that he may return to fwd with the Allegro later in the year, especially in view of Russell Brookes' surprisingly competitive run with the car on the Tour of Dean before the sump shield attacked the differential casing.

During the 1974 season Jersey-based Pat Ryan struggled through the earlier part of the year with a highly competitive but even more highly unreliable Mini. After a top ten placing on the Tour of Lincs Ryan suffered a long string of retirements and after the ninth such failure on the Burmah Rally Ryan decided not to continue the one-way struggle with the Enidrust car. Later in the year Ryan brought the sole-surviving Blazespeed Marina to the finish of the RAC after a steady and consistently quick drive until he had to nurse the car continually over the final stretches.



Pat Ryan — loyal to Leyland.

Snowman opens Scottish series

The first counter of the Scottish Rally Championship gets under way on February 1 (Saturday) at 7 am from Fort William with the Highland CC's Snowman Rally. Sponsored by the Scottish Highlands and Islands Development Board the Snowman will take in many well known stages on its route north to Inverness for the lunch halt. The rally will continue during the afternoon taking in the stages to the east of Inverness before finishing at the Drumossie Hotel. Within the 300 mile route 75 miles of forestry is on the agenda. Further information should be obtained from: Mrs Pam MacKay, 5 King Brude Road, Inverness. Telephone Inverness 37861.

Geoff Shepherd for BL car deal

Geoff Shepherd, who retired from the Army on January 1 has taken up an appointment with the Lex Motor Co of Weybridge (BL distributors) as service manager. The sale of his Alpine to Adrian Boyd has left the ex-REME Captain without a rally car, but his enthusiasm for the sport remains undimmed, and he is hoping to tie up a deal using a Leyland car in the near future. He is going to Abingdon this week to discuss the situation with the ST experts. Nothing has been fixed up as yet, but he says that there are strong possibilities of his return to competition in the next two to three months.

500 stage miles for Rideau Lakes

News from Canada is that Doug Woods has already assumed the mantle of Rideau Lakes organiser for 1975 and is giving up rallying with Walter Boyce in order to be able to devote more time to organisation. He will, however, be making a trip to Europe to navigate for Keith Billows in a Manchester Liners Escort on the Welsh and Acropolis Rallies while at the same time trying to persuade people to go to Canada for the Rideau Lakes later in the year. He is on the point of getting major sponsorship for the rally, and has already a promise of 500 miles of stages from forestry and military sources.

Marc Chappell, who was co-ordinator for last year's Rideau Lakes, has been elected CASC National Director of Rallying, and one of his first tasks was to announce that Castrol had agreed to sponsor the Canadian national rally championship. It will be called the Castrol Rally Championship of Canada, and will encompass events from the Rockies all the way to Quebec. First big event is the Canadian Winter Rally to be held the second weekend in February, when they are hoping to have several European crews over to drive locally prepared cars.

African road race — Argungu Rally

Newly upgraded to international status is the Argungu International Rally of Nigeria. Taking place over a 3,500 km route during February 11 to 13 the rally has been run twice before as a national. The rally was originally run to co-incide with a cultural festival at Argungu in the north west State of Nigeria and it is from this town that it takes its name, although the new route covers the whole country.

Run as a thinly disguised road-race the entire route is to be completed in 36 hours of driving, split into three legs, with very high average speeds and long sections (as much as 400 km between controls). The rally's routing includes fast tarmac and forest reserve tracks where sand patches, rock outcrops and river beds are all part of the fun.

● Held over the same weekend as the International Circuit of Galway is the Belgian Boucles de Spa. Entry fee is a mere £12.50 and an additional attraction is free accommodation to all British crews. For information contact: Andrew Frost, Scarborough 69523.

● The Lindholme tribunal eventually upheld the original amended results with the stage results in question reinstated.

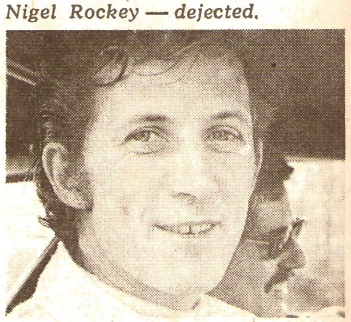
Hustlers hit Dawson's drive

The mystery surrounding the disappearance of the works Escort that Andy Dawson was going to drive on the Tour of Dean had still not been solved as we went to press. The car was parked outside the Gateway Motel overnight along with many other competitors' cars, and a security guard had been posted overnight to thwart just this sort of eventuality. His job was obviously complicated by the fact that many cars were coming and going throughout the evening, but the thief or thieves allegedly took ten minutes of cranking to get the BDA going . . . and this procedure was heard by many of the late nighters who were still looking into their empty glasses at that stage. Whoever the culprits were it seems that they knew enough about master switches and the like to get ignition; but rather less about the procedure for starting a works BDA . . . a feat which requires some inside knowledge. Despite the efforts of the local police there has so far been no trace of the car, and one might now logically presume that the car has been turned into a number of different sized pieces ready for distribution. Under the skin the car was virtually brand new, just rebuilt at Boreham with the latest specialized parts. One anomoly of the car however concerns the back axle, for unlike most of the works cars, it was fitted with drum brakes, although the mountings for the disc calipers are fitted to it, ready for instant conversion; so this may provide a distinguishing feature. One would like to think that anyone being offered brand new Boreham bits at even vaguely silly prices will get in touch with senior Ford personnel, but perhaps the thieves have other plans for the car. At any rate, Jim Porter, who was down to oversee the Dean operation, would doubtless be very relieved to hear from anyone with information.

Nigel Rockey — big setback

Post rally rumours are always rife, especially at the start of a new season, and the Shell Tour of Dean was no exception. One of them that swept the quasi-Alpine auditorium which served as a marshalling area for thirsty competitors on Sunday night was the imminent announcement of Nigel Rockey's sponsorship deal for the coming season. It was a very disappointed Nigel who spoke to us on Monday. It seems that the deal, which was with Regional Tyre Services (who are owned by Goodyear) has fallen through at the last minute. Apparently negotiations, which have progressed apace since before Christmas, were finally dashed by a board of directors vote; this in spite of the optimism of Harry Gee of Goodyear, who has been a leading light in these deals since their inception. After Rockey's recent fine performances this is indeed a bitter pill; especially as this deal would have enabled the talented driver to carry out an ambitious programme this year. Both RAC and Castrol/AUTOSPORT championships were on the cards, and Rockey was also planning a trip to Galway to compete with the car early on in February. Now however he is doubtful about any plans, and although co-driver Ron Channon is currently in negotiation with two interested parties, the situation remains decidedly gloomy at present. Rockey has had very little help from outside sponsors since 1973, as Hoopers, who were his entrants, felt unable to provide the backing that he really needed last year, so an amicable split was arranged to leave Rockey open to any more offers that might come up. Contrary to reports that have appeared elsewhere, Nigel has not in fact bought YEV 208L from Ford; however Stuart Turner, no doubt impressed with Rockey's gritty drive on the RAC has generously agreed to lend him the car for another year, along with a new engine and a favourable arrangement over spares, thus demonstrating the Ford Motorsport Director's faith in Rockey's abilities. What could well have been Rockey's year in 1975 now seems a very much less certain possibility . . . . anyone wishing to get in touch with Nigel can do so on Bristol 674620.

Nigel Rockey — dejected.



Lancia's plans include the Swedish and Safari

For the Monte Carlo, with three Stratos and one Beta Coupé, Lancia are running just two ice note crews; the French speaking one will be Rene Trautmann, and the Italian one, doing notes for three crews, will be none other than Cesare Fiorio and Danielle Audetto, the bosses of the outfit. Both crews will use Lancia Betas and keep each other in touch by UHF radio. Immediately after the Monte, Lancia will be sending a Stratos and a Beta Coupé to East Africa to start testing them for the Safari. If the trials with the Straos are successful, they may well run two of them in the rally instead of just one as planned at present. Munari will definitely have the Stratos, while Shekhar Mehta/Mike Doughty will have the Beta Coupé.

In between, Lancia will send two cars to the Swedish Rally, due to take place on February 13/15 when Bjorn Waldegaard/Hans Thorselius will drive a Stratos and Simo Lampinen/Solve Andreasson a Beta Coupé.

A tight fit

The Twelfth and championship completing round of the Castrol Special Stage Rally Championship with AUTOSPORT has been decided in favour of the Armstrong Forest Rally, to be held on September 6 by York MC. This means contenders will be busy with three of the twelve rounds in September, with the Manx over 12th/13th and the Castrol '76 on the final weekend. An unfortunate and unavoidable run of dates, but with such high quality events competitors might just have to work nights to pack them in.

We can also happily dispel certain rumours concerning the series and Burmah's plight. The championship is quite definitely "on" for this year. Championship regulations should be available very shortly and we remind prospective contenders to apply for registration to: Eric Silbermann, Castrol Rally Championship Co-Ordinator, Clubs Dept., Burmah House, Pipers Way, Swindon SN3 1RE.

Mitchell quits RAC — no new appointment?

Tony Mitchell who has been the Führer of the RAC's Rally Authorisation Department for so long will be leaving at the end of this month. At the present time, there are no plans to replace him as the RAC feel that it is impossible to know what reduction in demand on the RAD will be caused by the present economic crisis. Mitchell is emigrating to Canada where he will start by working for Bill Brack in Toronto. Brack is well known as Canadian racing champion but his business is selling BL cars in addition to Volvo and Lotus. One sincerely hopes that there will be some new appointment announcement in the near future.

ST: the trials and tribulations

Leyland ST supremo, Richard Seth-Smith had a few last minute headaches at the Speedshow, for after a final hard day's work on the BL stand sorting out the avalanche of enthusiastic enquiries about the revamped ST, and fitting hundreds of fashion-conscious bodies in the smart orange ST livery, it was time to get Culcheth's G2 Dolomite Sprint (which had been lurking on the Castrol stand) out of the arena and off to Wales for its Tour of Dean shakedown. Trouble was someone had decided that the Sprint's start number was seven (in fact it was six). When this was brought to the attention of the overworked boss he swung into action quickly and the search for some new numbers got off the ground. He returned triumphant by mid afternoon and all was well. However this valiant effort all came to nought, for on the first stage Brian put the car into a bridge, dislocating the back axle and the fan started to attack the radiator . . . the ill-fated crew struggled on to the end of the stage but were forced to retire virtually immediately.

Johnstone Syer works in vain.

by John Bolster

The little car is pleasantly unassuming, and the estate bodywork is arguably easier on the eye than that of the saloon.

The Dutch DAFs: cars to grow old with

The DAF is, of course, famous for its Variomatic transmission. Indeed, it is so well known that I beg leave to omit a technical description. Suffice it to say that it is unique in providing a stepless automatic gearchange by belts and expanding pulleys.

This year, a new and more powerful version of the DAF has become available, using the 1289 cc Renault engine instead of the 1108 cc unit. When it was suggested that I should test this higher-performance model, I also took the opportunity to refresh my memory of the 844 cc car, which I first tested many years ago. There is such an interest in economy cars nowadays that I make a point of driving all the really small machines on the market.

The smaller car, the 44, has the earlier transmission design, in which slight slipping of the two belts is relied upon to give a differential effect on corners. It also employs a flat-twin, light-alloy, air-cooled engine, manufactured by DAF.

"My" 44 was very new, having less than 1,000 miles on the clock. I was therefore not surprised that my maximum speed and fuel consumption figures were inferior to those claimed. However, a speed of 71 mph is probably as fast as most owners of this sort of car will wish to go. I was hoping for 45 mpg but did not achieve this, though I might have managed it if I had not always been in a bit of a hurry. Part of my trouble was due to my own forgetfulness, as I kept omitting to push the choke knob right home. It's necessary to use a bit of choke until the engine is warm and the usual warning light is absent — the same applies to the parking brake.

When running at 50 or 60 mph, the little DAF is remarkably effortless. The transmission gives a delightfully high gear and the engine seems to be turning relatively slowly. When accelerating from lower speeds, though, or negotiating a winding lane, there is a considerable rise in noise level and the car becomes rather fussy. It gets on well with the job and often keeps ahead of more powerful cars because it is always in the right gear. Whether or not the increased mechanical sound is objectionable can only be a matter of personal opinion, but at higher speeds on easier roads the quiet running is a welcome contrast.

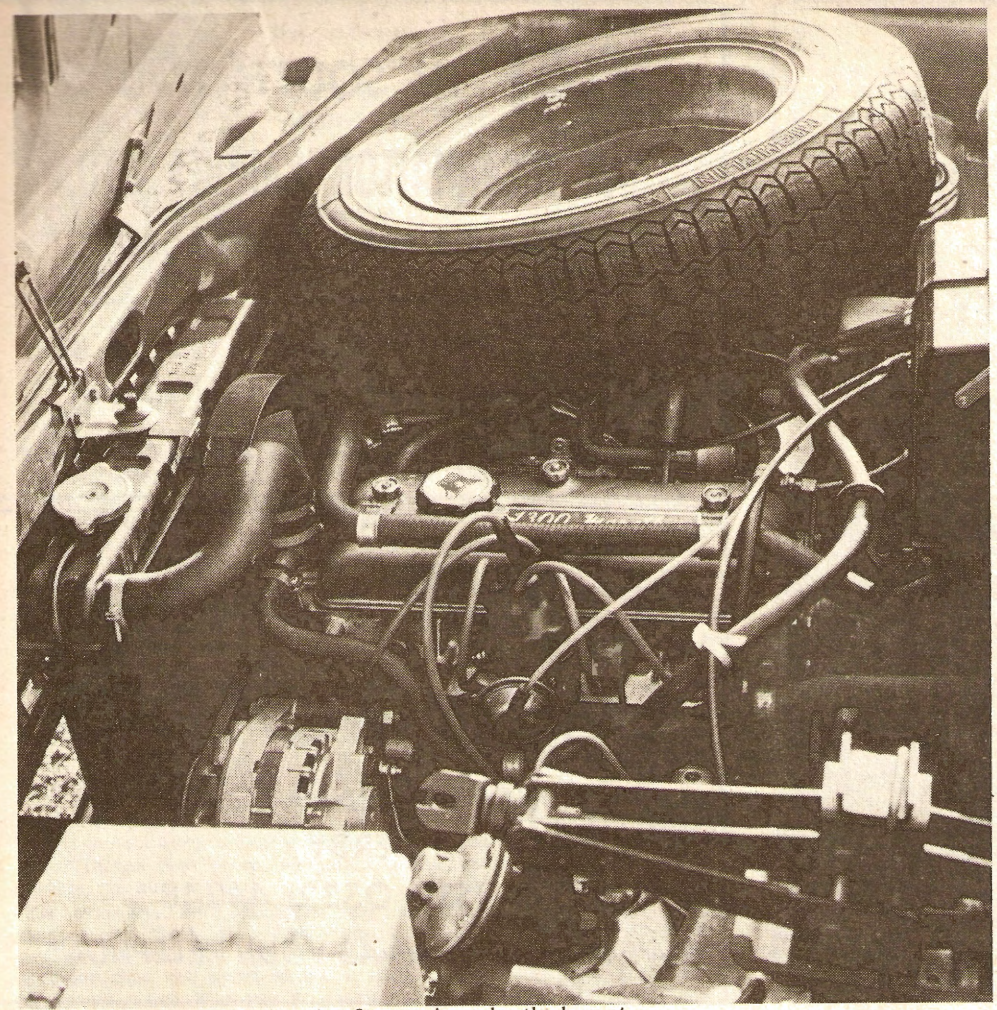
The first DAFs were strong over-steerers but the swing-axle suspension has now been tamed. The machine is well balanced and seems to have no vices, cornering quite fast with no drama. The ride is a bit choppy on bad roads but does not feel harsh on more normal surfaces. The brakes are well up to their rather easy task and, being of drum type, should last for years without costing any money. The heating and ventilation work well and a surprising amount of cool breathing air comes through the small adjustable vents; some engine noise enters by the heater ducts.

The DAF 44 looks small, but there is ample room for four large people. Its smooth and efficient automatic transmission makes it an ideal shopping car and it has an endearing character. If it lacks the silence of a big V8, there are certain advantages nowadays in having six fewer cylinders to feed!

The DAF 66 has been greatly improved by the extra 181 cc and the higher compression ratio of the 1300 Marathon engine. It now feels distinctly lively, picking up speed easily at a touch of the accelerator. Resembling the smaller car, it cruises easily on a high gear at the speeds which it is often advisable to use nowadays. Like all DAFs, it keeps its engine revving fairly fast at low road speeds or when accelerating, but the water-cooled four-cylinder unit is much quieter than the twin, of which the fan is always audible.

Both these DAFs had smoother automatic clutches than earlier models. The transmission gears were also outstandingly quiet, while the changing of ratios could not have been smoother. The 1300 is a 30 mpg car, even when driven reasonably hard, and can do a bit better than that at more legal speeds. The extra economy of the two-cylinder might scarcely seem worthwhile, but at present-day petrol prices it could add up to a substantial sum in the course of a year.

There is a close family resemblance between all current models.



The Renault 1300 pushrod engine fits snugly under the bonnet.

The 66 has a De Dion axle, which gives it outstanding roadholding. There is a shade of understeer during gentle driving which can be converted to very moderate oversteer when approaching the remarkably high limit. The car loves corners and can be flung into them with gay abandon, the brakes coping easily with the increased performance of this model. The ride is by no means soft, but is comfortable on all but the worst roads.

The test car had an estate body with three doors, giving very comfortable seating for four people, with adequate rear leg room when the front seats are right back. The backs of the front seats do not tip straight forward but fold at an angle to give vastly better access for the rear passengers. This has been a DAF feature for some time and is a really worthwhile improvement. There is plenty of luggage space behind the rear seat, with a folding shelf to conceal the contents from view. With the rear seat folded there is a useful platform for bulky objects, but a rear sill stands some inches above the floor, causing obstruction to loading. A windscreen wiper and washer keep the back window clear, which is a most valuable arrangement for any estate car — this is an extra on the model tested.

The 66 Marathon 1300 is a considerably more expensive car with everything included, such as four headlamps. As it has the same engine as the SL that I tried, and its equipment includes those long-backed seats — which I happen to detest — I would rather pay £1,580 than £1,730, especially as the standard lights are excellent.

Like most estate cars, the DAF has suspension which feels rather hard with only the driver aboard, a heavier load giving a more comfortable ride. This is a very pleasant car for a long journey, the transmission greatly reducing the effort of driving. It is always ready to dart forward and overtake, because the transmission ensures that the right gear ratio is selected. This is far from being merely a woman's car, for even the enthusiast can find restful motoring enjoyable and most racing drivers use automatic cars on the road.

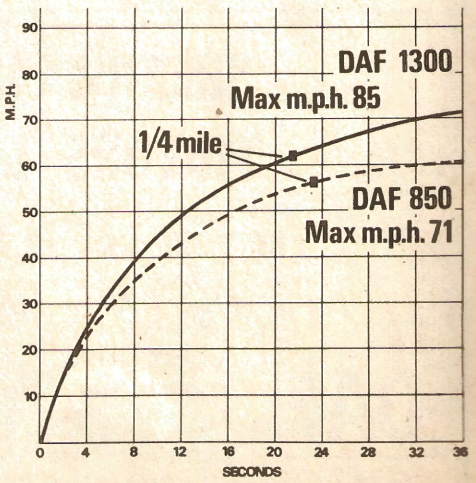
The DAF is not a particularly cheap car but it is becoming steadily more popular in this country. People seem to get a taste for these little Dutch machines that do so much of the driver's work for him, most owners ordering another DAF when the time for change approaches. Both my test cars seemed to be well made and finished, with pleasantly furnished interiors and quite generous equipment. Naturally, the larger car is more refined and no engine noise is transmitted through the heater, the ventilation being excellent, with extraction through the rear pillars. My only suggestion, for both cars, is that a warning light should be fitted to the starting choke for forgetful drivers like myself.

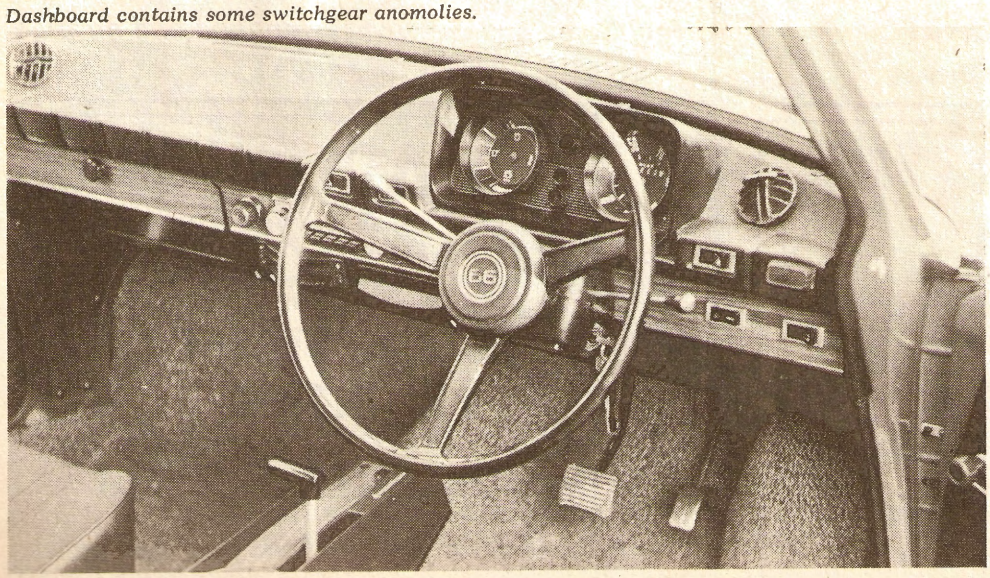
SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA

Car tested : DAF 44 two-door saloon, price £1,095 including tax and VAT.
Engine : Two cylinders horizontally-opposed air-cooled 85.5 x 73.5 mm (844 cc) ; compression ratio 7.6 to 1 ; 34 bhp (DIN) at 4500 rpm ; pushrod-operated overhead valves ; Solex downdraught carburetter.
Transmission : Automatic two-stage centrifugal clutch ; Variomatic belt drive, ratios 3.87-15.44 to 1, including spur gear final drive and primary bevel.
Chassis : Combined steel body and chassis ; independent front suspension by transverse leaf spring and telescopic dampers ; MacPherson geometry ; rack and pinion steering ; independent rear suspension by swing-axles, coil springs, and telescopic dampers ; dual circuit hydraulic drum brakes ; bolt-on steel wheels, fitted 135 14ZX tyres.
Equipment : 12 volt lighting and starting ; speedometer ; fuel gauge ; heater, demisting and ventilation system ; two-speed windscreen wipers and washers ; flashing direction indicators with hazard warning ; reversing lights.
Dimensions : Wheelbase, 7 ft 4½ in ; track, 4 ft 3½ in/4 ft 1½ in ; overall length, 12 ft 8¾ in; width, 5 ft ½ in; weight, 1,632 lb.
Performance : Maximum speed, 71 mph. Standing quarter-mile, 22.5 s. Acceleration : 0-30 mph, 5.6 s ; 0-50 mph, 16.6 s ; 0-60 mph, 32.0 s.
Fuel consumption : 33 to 40 mpg.

SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA

Car tested : DAF 66 SL 1300 three-door estate, price £1,580 including car tax and VAT.
Engine : Four cylinders 73 x 77 mm (1289 cc) ; compression ratio 10 to 1 ; 57 bhp (DIN) at 5200 rpm ; pushrod-operated overhead valves ; Solex horizontal carburetter.
Transmission : Automatic two-stage centrifugal clutch ; variomatic belt drive with primary bevel and helical spur gear final drive ; overall ratios 3.6-14.22 to 1.
Chassis : Combined steel body and chassis ; MacPherson independent front suspension with longitudinal and anti-roll torsion bars ; rack and pinion steering ; De Dion axle on single-leaf semi-elliptic springs with single torque arm and telescopic dampers ; servo-assisted disc front and drum rear brakes ; bolt-on steel wheels, fitted 155 SR 13 tyres.
Equipment : 12 volt lighting and starting ; speedometer ; fuel gauge ; voltmeter ; heating, demisting and ventilation system with heated rear window ; two-speed windscreen wipers and washers ; rear window wiper and washer ; flashing direction indicators with hazard warning ; reversing lights.
Dimensions : Wheelbase, 7 ft 5 in ; track, 4 ft 3½ in/4 ft 0½ in ; overall length, 12 ft 8 in; weight, 17½ cwt.
Performance : Maximum speed, 85 mph. Standing quarter-mile, 21.0 s. Acceleration : 0-30 mph, 5.0 s ; 0-50 mph, 12.5 s ; 0-60 mph, 19.8 s ; 0-70 mph, 32.8 s.
Fuel consumption : 30 to 35 mpg.





Dashboard contains some switchgear anomolies.

". . . . be given a line as to how some sort of penalty be incurred for dangerous driving and the sort of bad driving that could spell the decline of rallycross."

BOB CONSTANDUROS

Anyone who saw the first of the British Embassy European rallycross rounds in this country last year may not be surprised at Stuart Turner's reaction to what happened on the small screen, which roughly speaking, has partially prompted Ford's withdrawal from the sport. As one who was at Lydden, I can say that the whole sport seems to be in need of a little tidying up. There's little wonder that Turner is loth to see his cars being bumped and bored in what may seem to be a glorified stock car race or demolition derby. It's obviously not good for the company's image, his job, nor their cars to be seen in such a rough and tumble that doesn't really prove anything except possibly that with a little more muscle power, foolhardiness, and lack of the right competitive spirit, your car is better than theirs. And if such an idea was passed on to the road user, for whose benefit such works participation comes about in the first place, we might all be in trouble on our roads.

It seems that Ford aren't the only ones who are worried. Saab, who aren't entirely innocent in the bumping and boring stakes, also consider that the sport needs a little more regulation when it comes to track manners. So with such initial good reaction from the manufacturers comes the rub-off that they don't want to know so much if the sport just becomes that glorified stock car race. And then the only way from there is downhill.

To simply knock the sport is unconstructive, and so, with a certain amount of help from John Taylor, who never seems to come off particularly well in these track-bound fracas, I clued myself in on the situation in rally cross.

Last year saw the works participation of Ford, Saab, Porsche Salzburg, Daf and, occasionally, Alpine. The Embassy European rallycross trail stretched from Finland to Austria, with individual automobile clubs organising each round in their respective countries. However, at each round, there was a Thames Estuary Automobile Club official to oversee the organisation.

TEAC, of course, virtually started the whole thing anyway, and as it has been under their jurisdiction, so they have seen the rough and tumble, the clean racing, the incidents, and what constitutes dangerous driving and what doesn't. They have difficulties taking immediate action when dangerous driving comes to light, as rallycross only takes place over three laps, and by the time an incident has occurred, it might well be the end of the run.

On the continent, where the standard of driving is almost certainly lower than in this country, there is a warning flag to tell any driver that he is being observed. Observation is sufficient for one round and, equally, it must be accepted that accidents, as accidents, do happen, and on the slippery rallycross surfaces, sliding, contact, and mistakes undoubtedly happen. But somewhere in the European rallycross organisation, there must be someone who can legislate that a driver must incur a penalty for his driving manners.

In the past, it is known that the Dutch actually banned one of their own, and very well known, drivers. That same driver is often criticised in rounds at many tracks, and it is his driving that partially precipitated Ford's withdrawal from the sport. I don't think that any sport can afford to lose works support through the driving of others, and so it must be considered how it can be cleaned up. If necessary, one man attending the yet unsponsored European rallycross rounds, must be found to take it upon himself, and with the help of others, to tidy up the sport. Threats that so far have been issued to drivers who misbehave are quickly forgotten by the next round and the whole business of bumping and boring starts again.

Penalties could be issued in the form of lost points for a run, or lost points for the meeting. If the driver continues to misbehave, then stern action must be taken. The FIA are involved in rallycross and, of course, there are club stewards at every meeting. These stewards, with encouragement from the governing body, must be spurred on to help clean up the sport, and be given a line as to how some sort of penalty be incurred for dangerous driving and the sort of bad driving that could spell the decline of rallycross. It cannot be allowed to continue in a form whereby manufacturers desert it for the reasons, although unstated, that Ford have.

Amateur status

Stuart Turner (in his run-down of Ford's sports plans) also mentioned the trialling scene, with regard to economy. Fortunately, he realises the incredible amateur status of this demanding sport and, equally fortunately, wishes to preserve that status. Trialling isn't all it seems. Various motor sporting personalities have arrived on the scene from other branches of the sport with high intentions to win, and have almost always had to learn a completely new technique, and hold the true aces in high regard while learning the game.

At the same time as being totally amateur, there's certainly no lack of professionalism in the building and make-up of the cars involved, and the sight of one of the new Kincrafts makes one realise just what is needed to win. Buying a Kincraft is certainly a good way to go once you've got an idea, but they do cost a couple of grand to kick off with. For many of the trialling lot, that's not too much of a problem, and I must admit to being astounded when I first drove into the car park at the BTRDA championship trial to be confronted with a Winnebago motor home. I didn't think they all towed with Cortinas, but that really surprised me. Couple that with a flight of Jensens, the odd BMW or two and Scimitars, and there's no doubting that it's got the sort of gentlemanly affluence of historic car racing, although without quite the investment.

Anyone who hasn't seen a trial might well be advised to go along at some stage. It's quite spectacular, slow moving, you can see the driver, and judge his skill much easier than in many branches of the sport. It takes place in clean country air, often picturesque, and doesn't make so much noise that you need ear defenders. Local country hostelries may be visited during the lunch break, and the whole atmosphere is most friendly. Couple that with seeing an interesting and varied day's sport, and you have a unique day out. In the wintry days of the racing man's discontent, it's a most relaxing way to spend a Sunday.

Rallycross can be close and exciting without the bumping and boring. Here Per Eklund leads Johns Smith and Taylor at Lydden.

Hurtling out of the early morning gloom comes car No 1 ; Pentti Airikkala.

TOUR OF DEAN

Airikkala steals the show

By JOHN DAVENPORT Pictures by PETER NEWTON

Driving an Escort RS1600 under the banner of Clarke and Simpson/Team Castrol, Pentti Airikkala and Henry Liddon swept to victory in the Newport Car Club's Tour of Dean at the weekend, hotly pursued by Nigel Rockey/Ron Channon in a similar car. Tony Drummond and John Foden were third in the familiar stripey Escort now sponsored by Lloyds of Stafford, just 11 s ahead of Frank Pierson/Colin Francis in their somewhat venerable Pierstune Escort which first saw the light of day for the 1972 RAC Rally. Finishing an excellent fifth after some dispute about times and experiments with electric clutches were Piggy Thompson/Geunda Eadie who were 10 s ahead of the Carrefour Hypermarket Escort of Robert James/Brian Tilley.

Ford Escorts dominated the results and filled all 10 top places. It had been hoped to see some upset to this pattern, for British Leyland had entered Brian Culcheth/Johnstone Syer in a full Group 2 Dolomite, but this suffered two unfortunate mishaps in the first two stages and retired. The only other cars likely to shake the Fords from their pedestal were Porsches and of these, Chris Beynon non-started while Brian Evans/Roger Jones had an unhappy day and finished out of the top 10.

The Tour of Dean is always a popular event and deserves that popularity. The Newport Car Club have discovered an ideal format for a rally which is equally appealing to spectators and competitors alike. It has the absolute minimum of road mileage for the competitors, while the spectators can park their cars in properly arranged parks and watch the rally on a multitude of stages. For this year's event the weather was not too kind, especially in the morning, but still there were many people watching and enjoying the sport. Among them were the Mayor and Mayoress of Newport, who not only turned up to start the cars off from Howells garage in downtown Newport, but then insisted on going off to watch a stage and even went so far as to be driven down it "as fast as the rally cars, please" which shows enthusiasm far beyond the call of duty.

Most scrutineering was done on the Saturday, with a second session very early on the Sunday morning for those who had not been able to travel down the night before. With so many rallymen around, the carousing went on quite late, but not late enough for the assembled company to witness the departure from the car park of a certain works Escort which was on loan to Andy Dawson/David Richards as part of Dawson's prize from the Mexico championship. This car was "repossessed" at the start to supply Roger Clark with a car on the Dukeries and now some bright boy had stolen it. Despite the best efforts of the local police, it was not recovered and Dawson did his second works non-start. Rumour has it that Dave Richards was last seen buying a padlock and chain and muttering about the Snowman Rally.

ENTRY

As with every Tour of Dean, the entry list was full, and those that did not turn up soon had their places filled by willing reserves. Star of the rally was Pentti Airikkala, who had been flown in by Finnair to drive for Clarke and Simpson with Henry Liddon, the winning co-driver with Mike Hibbert the last time this rally was held in 1973. There were quite a few mutterings about how a Finn came to be competiting on a British National event, but the truth is that he holds a British competition licence, as have such other well-known Englishmen as Timo Makinen, Hannu Mikkola and Billy Coleman. While he does so, his Finnish licence is held in suspension by the AKK. Starting number two was the familiar orange and black Escort of Cables and Components, with Tony Fowkes/Bryan Harris in control, followed by Tony Drummond/John "I ordered a smaller Griffin" Foden in the Lloyds of Stafford Escort. Nigel Rockey/Ron Channon were in plain colours with their Escort, loaned from Ford for winning the Mexico championship, as they have not yet concluded a deal for 1975. Andy Dawson left a gap and then there was the Team Unipart Dolomite Sprint for Culcheth/Syer which not only looked good but sounded it as well. . . .

All the might of Broadspeed were out looking after Donald Heggie/George Dean in their newly acquired Ralph Special Escort sponsored by IDEM—Wiggins Teape. They were followed off the line by Gordon Batchelor/Ian Carter, the current BTRDA Gold Star Champions in their Escort, and then the Derby Road Garage entry of an immaculate RS 2000 for Graham Lepley/Martin Holmes. This car was originally prepared for Mike Hibbert, and is a proper Group 2 car with twin Webers which Lepley hopes to prove can be as quick as a BDA engined Escort but much cheaper. Bob Chapman did not start in his immaculate Escort, which was just as well as Martin Holmes would doubtless have caught a glimpse of it in his mirror, so the tenth spot was filled by Frank Pierson/Colin Francis. Further back, Russell Brokes had Andrew Bodman next to him in the experimental 1300 Allegro from British Leyland, which is the first time that he has been behind a Cooper S engine for some years. David Stokes/Bill Andrews kept the Chapman flag flying with their Twin Cam Escort. It sports a door proclaiming the driver to be Chapman and has a 2000E gearbox and no limited slip differential. The door was acquired after an embarrassing moment on the South-West stages. Crystals had their 1300 BDA Escort for Mike Jackson/Ian Maxley, and an even longer trip from the north had been undertaken by Ian Wilson/Peter Anderson in their Scopel Kadett. Paul Davis/Rodger Jenkins had the Triple C Marina out on Avon Safety wheels, which made a bit of change from the string of Escorts, as did the ex-works Mini entered by the Buckingham DMC for Terry Kaby/Brian Rainbow. Kaby was the man who drove this car, owned by Bob Freeborough, to 34th place on the RAC Rally, having also done all the preparation. Chrysler, DTV and DOT were conspicuous by their absence, but this possibly reflects the unique status of the Dean, which does not count for any of the

Tony Fowkes in vain pursuit — he stepped up his pace all morning until a roll after lunch finally dashed his chances.

major championships, despite being one of the best British nationals.

RALLY

Under the watchful eye of the law, the cars trundled up the Monmouth road from Newport on a damp and somewhat dismal morning. The conditions in the stages were as one would expect with wet slurry on top making the going very slippery, especially for the first cars. Airikkala had not managed to get hold of any Goodyear Hakkas, and was running on the German Ultragrips, as was Rockey, but the British driver had one set of the Hakkas, and later changed on to them with a noticeable improvement in times. Brian Culcheth would certainly vouch for the slipperiness of the stages as he slid and hit the parapet of a narrow bridge on this first stage, puncturing the tyre and bending the axle. Whether this blow did any further damage was not established at the time, but on the second stage, the engine moved, and put the fan through the radiator. Bill Price, BL's man in the field, could only shake his head in amazement as he could not imagine how such a thing could have happened after all the testing that had been done with the car. Donald Heggie did a very good time to be third quickest on the first test behind Airikkala and Rockey, but on the second, his front brakes locked and he shot off. Dean's window was broken and they lost time getting it back on, but the most important thing was to find out what went wrong. Heggie ruefully admitted that two stages on a proper rally revealed more than a fortnight at some test ground like Bagshot. He thought the problem might be in Broad's redesigned front end, but he was not to have much chance to find out as the clutch expired two stages later. They did in fact do stage four, but stopped in the middle to help Roger Davies and John Morgan, whose Marx Toys Escort had hit a tree at 70 mph and the crew were in need of medical aid, the car being totally wrecked.

There was a radar trap on the Coleford "by-pass" which caught people in the morning and afternoon, but few were competitors. On stage three, Brian Evans spun his Porsche on a straight bit and got stuck, losing four minutes and fifth place while willing hands pushed and heaved. Gordon Batchelor, who had previously been thinking of changing his car, had his mind made up for him when the Escort caught fire and burned to a cinder. He appeared later in the day with his beard intact. Tony Fowkes had already had trouble when his gearlever broke and he was forced to drive a stage with a plug box-spanner over the stump. At one point it dropped off, despite Bryan Harris's attempts to keep it on, and had to be reclaimed from the floor while still trying hard.

Nigel Rockey drove in most determined style, some of the time without LSD.

Above : Tony Drummond was plagued with braking problems all day. Below : The ill-fated Dolomite Sprint smokes towards early retirement.

Airikkala hit a gatepost on stage four and had to have a tail light cluster renewed, while Frank Pierson lost his clutch. This was traced to a missing circlip which had been protected by a hose clip as well, but had still been knocked off. Brookes was looking for petrol at the end of stage four, not knowing that the BL mechanics were still trying to extricate Culcheth. What he should have been looking for was oil, as the Allegro punctured its sump on the next stage, and Brookes did admit that it was coming out faster than anyone could pour. Derek Evans had a one minute off with his 1700 BDA Escort which dropped him out of contention, and later he was to suffer from a misfire; but he still took a well deserved eighth place at the finish.

Stage six suffered from a dodgy watch and was later cancelled, though Airikkala had really flown to pull out twenty-four seconds on his rivals. The start watch of stage seven also gave trouble, and all but three people were credited with cleaning the stage. This was later sorted out as Piggy Thompson would otherwise have had 40 s more penalty than he deserved. In any case, he was running into trouble with his electric clutch, designed and fitted by Ian Drummond, and on stage eight he had the gearbox stick in second gear, so after that he went back to using the normal system. Tony Drummond was not having a happy rally as his brakes just did not seem to come right, and though he suspected a leaking master cylinder, there was nothing he could do about it. Graham Lepley changed to Hakkas but his set was rather worn; though he did say later that it improved the braking. Rockey too had opted for the winter tyre and was now going faster, though he had lost most of the effectiveness of his limited slip differential early on and was getting a lot of wheelspin and losing time on corners. The Escort of David Palmby/Bill Barlow was suffering a slipping clutch which was adjusted out after the lunch halt, while the Crystals 1300 BDA was getting on to full song after an excursion on the very first stage which had cost it a maximum. Mike Jackson was quite pleased with the torque that the engine gave but thought that the top end still needed more power.

As with any event, there were problems for the organisers. The Roger Davies accident had not needed an ambulance thanks to Heggie and Dean, but on stage nine a Mini crashed and they had to send one in, which then delayed all the competitors waiting to attempt stage 10. The last cars to attempt this held up the early cars coming from lunch who wanted to do it in the opposite direction; and hasty arrowing would have led to disaster had not the Colt 1600 course car spotted the trouble and rearranged the arrows in time. On stage eight, they were not so fortunate, and where some arrows blew down, about five cars in the midfield went wrong including John Crosse/John Horton in a 1293 Mini which cost them the class win. At that time they were being led by Terry Kaby, but he slid off down a bank on the first stage after lunch and retired.

The situation at lunch was that Airikkala was leading by less than a minute from Rockey, and on the first stage out, the Finn was beaten by 11 s, so he had to race even the last part of the afternoon to keep his lead. Rockey helped; for with no limited slip he was starting to have moments, and on two occasions had to be helped back on to the road by spectators, going off nine or 10 times throughout the duration of the rally. Paul Appleby/Keith O'Dell in the ex-works Group 1 RS2000 lost part of their exhaust just before lunch, and very nearly did not restart when the scrutineer saw the ingenious side exhaust fabricated by O'Dell. They had to get it put together properly which meant that they were running late on the road, though of course not penalised. Airikkala actually maintained that the stages were better now that they had had all the cars over them, and he was much more pleased with the adhesion that he was getting from the Ultragrips.

Tony Fowkes rolled his car on the first stage after lunch and retired, while Henry Inurrieta/Martin Whale hit a bank just before the finish and bent up the front wing of their Escort RS1600. Paul Davis finished the stage on two punctured wheels, both the same side, with a small tree decorating the Marina on the other side where he had failed to negotiate a corner. Brian Evans had a rear wheel puncture on this stage and drove it for four miles. It was interesting to see that he was using the new Dunlop cross-ply tyres developed for Ford's 15 inch wheels, and was very happy with them, saying that they were much more stable than the radials. Graham Lepley broke both rear shock absorbers on this stage, which shows that perhaps it is not such an economy to stick to the inclined mounting! Still, he finished in the top 10 and was the best single camshaft car, so there is something in cheaper cars for rallying.

The rally came to its conclusion in the dark, although the early numbers just managed to get in the last stage in daylight. David Stokes had a big moment in sight of the finish of stage 14; but kept it in the road, while Jon Lloyd/Norman Jones in the Wolverhampton CC Imp put it off at the finish of stage 16, fortunately just after the flying finish. Back in Newport, there were remarkably few wrangles as no one was willing to dispute the first four places, though there was a bit of clearing up to do over stages six, seven and eight. This was all amicably sorted out and the Mayor and Mayoress presented the prizes at the party in the Gateway Motel which had been Rally HQ. One person missing there was Henry Liddon who had gone off to Monte Carlo to do ice notes for Fiat.

1, Airikkala/Liddon (Escort RS), 770 s; 2, Rockey/Channon (Escort RS), 817; 3, Drummond/Foden (Escort RS), 1024; 4, Pierson/Francis (Escort RS), 1035; 5, Thompson/Eadie (Escort RS), 1089; 6, James/Tilley (Escort RS), 1099; 7, Stokes/Andrews (Escort RS), 1114; 8, Elsmore/Harrold (Escort RS), 1116; 9, Evans/Robbins (Escort TC), 1122; 10, Lepley/Holmes (RS2000), 1170.

Russell Brookes—Group One king on the way-up

By IAN SADLER

Russell Brookes won the Castrol/AUTOSPORT Special Stage Rally Championship, Group One division. Brookes will not be contesting the Group One category this year and by so doing leaves the stage set for another to steal the limelight at the head of this section. A golden opportunity for the right person. To do justice to the vacancy, performance to the equivalent of second overall on a virtually all-forest rally, the Castrol 75 in Russell Brookes' instance, would be required. For an event such as the Tour of Eppynt third overall would be judged good enough, but regular top 10 overall appearances would still be expected. Think you could do it?

Russell Brookes is deservedly moving into the Group Two RAC Nationals arena this year, equipped with the sort of hardware to put him into the super-power league, after a rallying career which has spanned 12 years. Only during the past five years did Russell's career really develop into the force he now undoubtedly is. Since his first event in 1963 Russell rallied spasmodically (as finances would allow) sampled motor racing with a clubmans car and various sprints and races with saloons. Experiences in the sport have been wide and varied with such delights as servicing for Team 848 thrown in. Since 1969 and 1970 Russell Brookes has concentrated on rallying with a fervour and success-score few others can match. His prowess with front or rear wheel drive is unquestioned and his performances, in the David and Goliath category with Group One, are legend.

Russell Brookes.

To start with something topical, what brought about your Austin Allegro drive on last weekend's Tour of Dean?

Basically because I work for British Leyland and I have always taken an interest in what is going on down at ST. They are developing the Allegro with the idea of having a class winning 1300 cc car and they wanted me to try it out, just to hear what suggestions I could make for improving it.

What did you think of it?

I think it has definitely got potential as a class winning car—obviously not more than that. No 1300 can be competitive overall, particularly that car, which weighs nearly one ton. The first time I drove it on the loose was the Tour of Dean. We took it down to Bagshot last Wednesday but I only managed about a mile before the differential stripped. On the Tour it was just like going back to old Mini days—with the howl of the straight-cuts and the l.s.d. heaving away at the steering. During the four stages we completed, the steering wheel rubbed the skin from my thumbs.

How important has group one been to your rally driving?

I think driving group one teaches you how difficult it is to gain speed and how easy it is to lose speed. If you lose five mph in a group one car it is difficult to regain it, therefore you have to learn to drive so you don't lose that speed. I think that a lot of people driving group two and group five cars are probably getting too sideways on corners, or doing something similar, and scrubbing off speed, yet in next to no time they are back to fairly fast speeds. They are not appreciating how much time they are losing through going slowly through corners.

Would you recommend a driver new to stage rallying to start with a group one car?

I would principally recommend group one because it's a cheaper way of going rallying. I think that if you are going to do well in rallying the first thing you have got to be is competitive *and win* — no matter which particular section you are competing in. Whether you are setting yourself a target of winning a capacity class, group one, or winning overall—the aim is to win whatever target you set yourself. To go out and be competitive with a group two car requires a very expensive vehicle. It isn't nearly as expensive to go out and win with a group one car. I think the main thing is just to be competitive in whatever category you choose.

Your group one RS2000 (and Mexico before) seemed to have the capability of getting on "overall" terms. On the Manx last year you were higher placed than many more powerful cars . . .

Well, this is a surprising thing. In fact many people say "I'm surprised you did well in a group one car on this or that rally" — and very often people will pick the wrong rallies. Group one cars can do very well on tarmac events for the simple reason that most of the tarmac events use very twisty roads, all corners, therefore power is not at such a premium. On stage events, the sorts that favour group one cars are ones with a very hard surface so you don't suffer a power loss with the car through loose shale. It is the same with stages which are fast and open. If you have corners which are in the 60 to 80 mph region; it takes a lot of skill to drive around these bends and you can make up a lot of time on people who haven't got that sort of skill. With group one you can stand to gain quite a lot on that sort of stage. Where you lose out, in fact, is when you are confronted with very tight and twisty loose stages, with very sharp corners. Most drivers can negotiate such corners fairly quickly and then use their power to accelerate quickly up the next little straight. In fact, on the Manx we had quite a few problems including the manifold breaking and the alternator packing-up and I think (particularly without the manifold breaking which cost us a fair amount in power) we could have finished the rally quite a bit further up. I wouldn't say it is my cup of tea to drive a group one car. What group one has enabled me to do is a lot of competitive rallying. I've accumulated a lot of experience on tarmac rallies over the past three years but I recognise that I haven't all the experience I need of forests, and therefore I have been doing a large number of forest events this last year. As an indication of that, I've competed on 50 events in the last two years which is a hell of a lot of rallies, including 29 events during 1973.

It seems peculiar that apart from yourself, Will Sparrow, and one or two others, no one else has shone in group one?

Yes, I'm surprised. I think it is very sad actually, because the sport could benefit a great deal if a lot of people would have a go in group one. There are so many drivers who spend thousands and thousands of pounds on a group two car but can't use it and who, I'm sure, would derive more enjoyment from running a group one car. I would like to see bigger classes for group one cars, undoubtedly, but I don't want to see rallies become wholly group one—that would be a very retrograde step.

Will you be doing any group one this year?

No. We have yet to finalise our plans, but we are going to run group two. I've now had three seasons in group one and I think that is enough. For my own satisfaction I want to drive a group two car; I would rather drive a group two car in any case, but finances have forced me to drive group one. It has been the only way I could drive all the rallies I wanted to do. For example, my first year with Brooklyn Garages and the Brooklyn Mexico was very successful and so was the second year. Brooklyn were paying to run the car, I merely paid the entry fees, and it was worked out at the end of the year that a season of 19 rallies with their Mexico cost £1400, which is incredibly cheap.

Mind you, you've had very few breakdowns . . .

In fact I worked out the other day that, including the Tour of Dean, which is my 51st rally in two years, we've had only six retirements.

Your preparation must be very stringent—six retirements must be much less than chance or average?

To start with, I think group one cars are inherently more reliable. Obviously the more power you give a car the more it is going to break itself up, and the more you have to design the components to withstand that. Not all privateers can do that. The other thing is, I am fairly meticulous with preparation and a particular believer in replacing things before they break—not when they already have. So many people, I'm sure, just bolt their bits on the car then expect them to last forever. Preventative maintenance is very necessary in rallying, very necessary indeed.

How do you compare stage driving to road events?

I stopped doing road rallies because I don't think that it is the place for quick drivers and quick teams, or for the commercial attitude with which to tackle motor sport. I also

A thing I believe strongly in rallying is that some people wonder why they are not driving very well, compared with others. I think the problem is that they are not accumulating enough experience. Experience is one of the greatest assets in rallying. By going out and competing in as many rallies as possible I can probably drive—maybe not innately better than the other person—but with the aid of experience I can beat the other driver and that is a tremendous aid. It comes back to the group one story again. It would be far better if people would recognise that they would become more successful drivers by doing many rallies in a relatively slow car, for the same money as just a few events with a very fast car. When you have the experience—yes, go ahead and have the really expensive and quick car. But get the experience first.

Splashing over the rain-sodden Eppynt Ranges on the final Castrol/AUTOSPORT round. Brookes finished third overall with the G1 RS2000.

think that road rallies were getting dangerous because they were becoming so fast. As events themselves I think they were terrific —just sheer road races, the most marvellous form of rallying there was. You could go out on any good night rally and apart from the start and a half-hour or so petrol halt you had, say, seven hours of sheer flat-out driving which you will never get on a stage. I think it bred a lot of stamina as well, which is a very useful thing. You just have to accept that the road type of event is past—past its prime at least—everything is now stage rallying.

The principle thing, I think, is that driving in forests is really marvellous; it really grips you, it is exciting and you get a tremendous satisfaction in getting the flow through all the corners. But, if the only way to have more stage rallying is to use farm tracks and WD land—then let's have those. A lot of people object to the use of Mickey Mouse stages on the RAC. I don't object to those at all. I would have had an RAC with 400 miles of stages including 50 Mickey Mouse miles than just 350 miles of good stage. Any extra stage miles are worth having.

You obviously enjoy your rallying to a very high degree. This year, with the group two car, it looks a little more serious. Do you have any unfulfilled rallying aims?

Yes, the obvious one is to beat Roger Clark, isn't it? He is still unbeaten in this country. Billy Coleman has come very near to him—on the Burmah—but didn't quite make it. Roger Clark is still tops as far as rally drivers in this country go.

You have a long-standing association with your co-driver, how important do you consider his part?

He is the number one ingredient. You can have the slowest car possible and with a good navigator actually get somewhere on a road rally. In fact, even a good navigator and a bad driver can get somewhere. In road rallying he is essential, and I think a tremendous amount of credit for my success on road rallies is obviously due to John Brown. He is one of the most experienced co-drivers in this country and one of the most skilled navigators. He knows so much about the roads in Wales and has so much feel for them, it is incredible. I also think Paul White has done very well, a navigator with comparatively little experience. I'm glad to see that he is getting somewhere with Ford now, via co-driving. So few new co-drivers have come up recently.

I think really one has got to look for co-drivers out of the ranks of road rallying people—that is the sort of rallying which bred the attitudes required in a co-driver. I think a good co-driver is born with a feel for the roads. When John was navigating for me on *Motoring News* events he very rarely read out all the corners in detail. What he would say was "the road is generally fast here," or, "the road is generally twisty." He would pick out sharp corners, but generally he guided me by the way he felt the road was going and it was either "keep your boot in" or "take it a bit easy." As often as not it was "keep your boot in!" I think it is also essential to have a good co-driver on stages. This is why top rally drivers have top co-drivers. I'm sure you would never see a Roger Clark going with a Mister "X"—he would always go with a Henry Liddon or a John Davenport. They impart a sense of purpose into the car. They look after things properly; they are aware of things and pick-up mistakes in timing. They are essential. I think all the top co-drivers in this country have come from the ranks of navigators who have a road rallying up-bringing.

How far into the future are you looking with your current plans and arrangements?

I will just concentrate on this one year. I really think that is the only approach. A future in rallying is so indefinite that one can't plan, in detail, more than one season ahead. I would very much like to go and drive exotic rallies throughout the world but I think there is, ultimately, time to do those when I get a bit older. I want to become one of the fastest rally drivers, and to win, which is why I am going with a group two car this year. The sort of events you have to do to hone yourself, so that you have the abilities, are British nationals and the home internationals. They are the most competitive events about these days. I'm sure that because of this competitiveness many of the British drivers are now becoming a match for the Scandinavians. I am also convinced that it is only the competitiveness of the Scandinavian events which has brought about the type of driver they produce. I'm not a great believer in the theory that it is because they are driving on loose types of road all the time. I think they are good because their events bring drivers of similar abilities together and they are able to compare their times very closely. They put up comparable times and are always endeavouring to extract the last second.

I think this was shown in the Mexico championship when people originally thought the car didn't have a chance of competing against group five cars. What happened was that Nigel Rockey would beat me, and I knew he had a car with identical power to mine, so therefore I had to go quicker on the next selective. It was just the same with him. The Mexicos went faster and faster, and it got to the stage where they were beating group five cars. It was the competitiveness of the series which produced this.

Halcyon days — Russell Brookes and John Brown drive to second place on the Gremlin.

FF2000—prospects good

BOB CONSTANDUROS looks at the regulations and talks to the interested constructors

On March 9, less than two months from the day that you read this, Britain's latest Formula, Formula Ford 2000 ("Grand Prix drivers use SuperFords" said a well known race promoter), will take to the tracks for the first time in earnest, contesting a 17-round championship. The new Formula has the backing of Ford, the BRSCC and is sponsored initially by the Allied Polymer Group. Since its first mooting, doubts, questions, suggestions and amendments have all come into the minds of those connected with the sport. Will it succeeed? Is it necessary? Who'll it be for? Is it just another Formula for motor racing? Who'll be interested? Will it replace Formula 3? Is it valid with the power available? Is it worth while . . . ? The questions go on and on. So what is it all about, what chance has it of helping an ambitious club driver to be a Grand Prix star, or just offering a less ambitious one a satisfying return for his money?

First of all, why did Formula Ford 2000 come about? Nick Brittan is the series' co-ordinator, and he attended the first meeting, held last February. "The idea originated from Formula Ford as it was obvious there was a need for a graduation formula. It came about after Peter Browning of the BRSCC had said that for a Formula Ford championship event, he was kicking out something like 15 to 20 per cent of the entries." Formula Ford in 1974 was obviously over-subscribed and the new Formula would cream off the top blokes in Formula Ford.

"A meeting then, was called in Luton, attended by FF constructors, the engine people, representatives of organising clubs and some of the top 20 drivers in Formula Ford at that time. It was the first time that a Formula had been offered on a democratic basis. Out of that meeting came proposals for Formula Ford 2000, which, in fact, have changed very little since that date—what was decided at Luton has been 98 per cent accepted. We were then able to go to the RAC who said OK themselves.

"At an early date, a very early date, the Allied Polymer Group became involved, with sensible prize money, roughly double that in Formula Ford. It was fantastic of them to enter at such an early stage, when the Formula hadn't run and hadn't necessarily been accepted. The BRSCC had agreed to run races at 17 meetings, all of them of international status meetings. Thus the stature of the Formula is much higher, and equally, a much better story for sponsors."

So Formula Ford 2000 was born, democratically, and it was now the package provided by the Allied Polymer Group, MCD, and the BRSCC which was to attract the drivers, who in their turn, had to accept the Formula, having initially helped in its formulation.

In a booklet, available from Nick Brittan at Talbot House, Broadlands Road, London, N6 4AN, the regulations, prize money and calendar are set out. First of all, for those not so much in the know, what is Formula Ford 2000? The main articles are as follows. Cars must be of tubular construction, single seater, and powered by the Ford 2000 cc sohc Cortina engine. This may have only different jets in the carburetter, but the choke sizes may not be altered. Otherwise, it must be standard, although it may be dry sumped. The inlet and exhaust ports may be reshaped but only by the removal of metal provided the maximum dimensions of the ports do not exceed 39.5 mm diameter and 35.5 mm x 27 mm respectively. Tyres must be Dunlop racing tyres, 6 in fronts and 8 in rears. Gearbox, too, is free, provided it has four forward speeds maximum and a reverse gear operable by the driver.

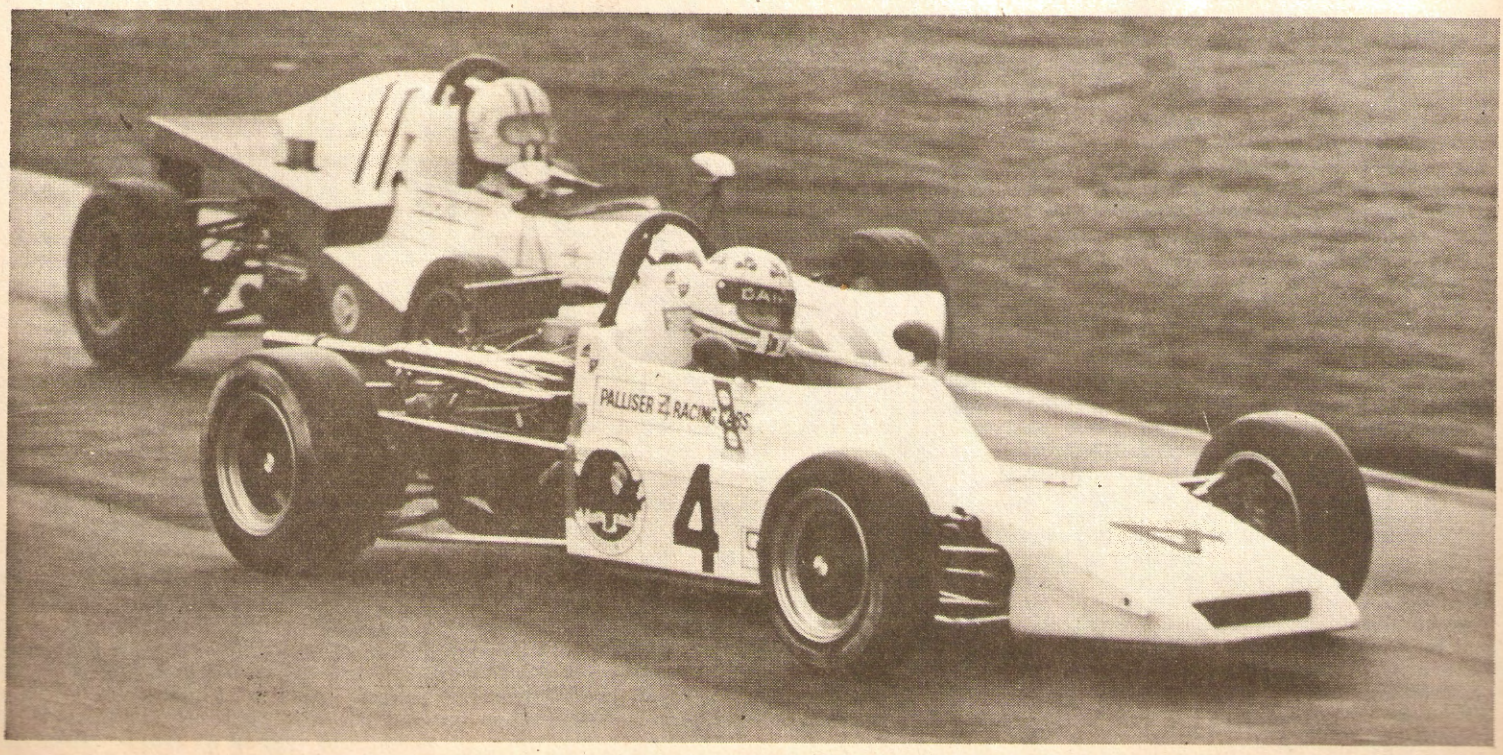
The calendar runs to 17 meetings at the moment, but if there are more entries than allowed for a particular circuit, then heats and a final may be improvised or, possibly, a second championship. The meetings are all internationals, at Mallory Park, Brands Hatch, Oulton Park, Snetterton, Thruxton, and Silverstone. The duration of races will be minimally 25 miles or 15 laps, whichever is the greater. This naturally excludes heats, if any. Perhaps the only disappointment about this calendar, is that, although races abroad had been mooted and virtually agreed upon, it is to the chagrin of many that so far, these rounds have not appeared on the calendar, nor had any further mention been made of them.

Points scored in the championship will be awarded on the basis of 9-6-4-3-2-1 for the first six finishers, the best 15 rounds counting. Double points will be awarded at the final round, but not double prize money. Prize money will be awarded at the rate of £8 per point, thus a prize fund per meeting of £200. The final championship winner will receive £250, the second £150 and the third £100. In addition to this, there are trade bonuses from companies including Castrol, Dunlop, Shell and the McKechnie Wine Co. Further details again from Nick Brittan.

The 1975 Racing Car Show was obviously going to be time to gauge interest. However, before this, there was an FF2000 race held at Oulton Park last season at which Crossle, Dulon and MRE cars made an appearance, while Van Diemen had mechanical trouble and had to go home. By the end of the season, the Palliser made a number of appearances in *libre* races in Damien Magee's hands, and Ian Taylor's works Dulon, too, ran in a number of races.

At the 1975 Racing Car Show, the number of cars actually built and seen further increased. Crossle's car was on show, Hawke had shown their car, there was the new Starfire, Adrian Reynard's self-built car appeared and Elden had talked about their plans. In our Racing Car Show/Constructors issue, a further four manufacturers expressed that they would build a car, and the grand total of cars available suddenly reaches a staggering 14. Are there really that many Formula Ford drivers who should be creamed off even if they don't go into Atlantic or F3 or SuperVee? Is it worth while even building a car for so little potential trade?

I visited all the constructors' stands at the Racing Car Show and talked to the absentees on the phone, and this is how the standings are at present with each constructor. Perhaps strange to relate is that the smallest firm at the show, Reynard, with cars built by Adrian himself come out top of the league with three cars accounted for. Adrian's is a completely new car, and has run at the Snetterton Formula Ford Festival as an FF car. It has a very low centre of gravity, having a ballasted floor pan and, for this reason, can also have a narrow track providing adequate roadholding. The show car was looking very smart in Spax colours, for Adrian reckoned that he was lucky to have been the only constructor to have sold a car, one going to Jeremy Rossiter of Spax. Adrian, too, will have a car, one car being powered by Piper and the other by Osselli, who are very eager to enter the fray. Piper, however,



Palliser "I know we'll take the championship" have been racing with Damien Magee in libre.

have the benefit of Bob Gaylor, who worked on the original Ford engine in Germany when it was designed. Before the end of the show, Reynard reckoned to have sold a car to Charles Allen, a Formula 1300 competitor.

Potentially second in the league come Elden International Racing. Despite their rumoured financial problems (see *Sports Extra*), Elden are intending to run at least two cars, possibly three. Announced last year was their intended car for Tim Brise with Aircall sponsorship. Although Brian Hampsheir said that he didn't expect to sell any cars, both Frank Bradley and Tiff Needell hope to run cars with Durex sponsorship. Bradley will definitely go ahead somehow in FF2000, even if the sponsorship doesn't come through. "After our troubles financially, we are going out to win this year, and not do it for fun," said Hampsheir. They'll be running Neil Brown and Scholar engines, and testing should start next week.

Palliser have probably done more races than anyone. Len Wimhurst has built the Palliser as an entirely new car and has sponsorship from Anglo-Scottish Petroleum (Ascot to you and me) for two cars next year. One will be driven, as in the races, by Damien Magee when his F5000 commitments don't clash, which they do on three occasions. The second car is to be driven by Wil Arif. On top of these two, they've had a further nine inquiries, but Les Oakley reckons that they should have further orders after the Racing Car Show.

Despite some rumours to the contrary, the car has mainly been run with a 1975 spec engine, using a multi-carb set-up only once. But Oakley is still confident: "I know we'll take the championship." So far they've tested Holbay and Rowland engines, and for the future, they hope to have David Minister build one for them, and then possibly do their own.

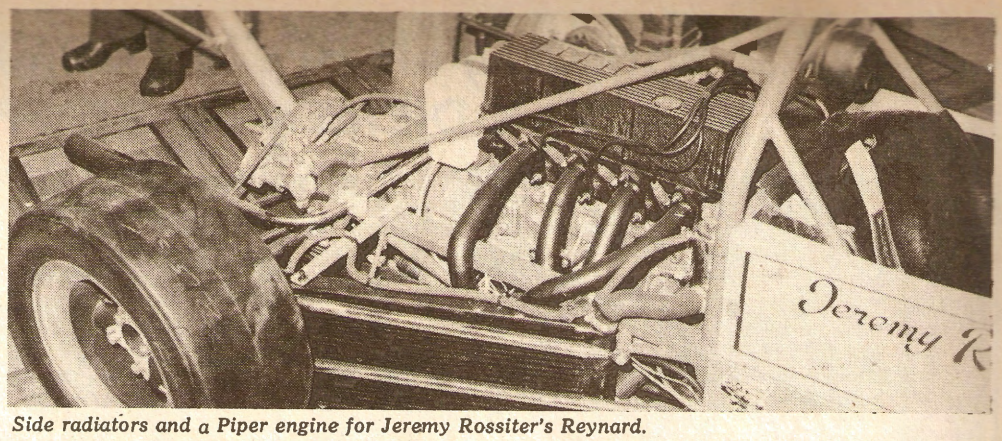
On the Formula itself, Oakley was quick to agree certain points: "It's a necessary Formula, but it could be a flop if there is no more power." It could also help to reduce the cost of F3 he says although no one has ever connected the two formulae, and when questioned on this, Nick Brittan was quick to dissociate them.

Dulon are another firm to have been out testing early on, although the car hasn't been as quick as the Palliser so far. Ian Taylor would definitely be running a works car, and another driver, pending sponsorship, would hopefully run with the team. Meanwhile, Ken Hensley, the Uriah Heap musician, has bought a car, too. Dulon's Andrew Duncan wouldn't commit himself on the engine front, but there are two makes under discussion. The Dulon-type number is MP16 and is more an updated Formula Ford than a new car. Duncan admits to being very happy with the Formula, but would be unhappy if the make-up was changed without a fair trial.

MRE were another to be into the field early on, and came second at Oulton Park. The car is called the 75SF and is an updated and modified Formula Ford. Chris Pryer, who drove their Formula Ford in 1974 will be the works driver in their Rowland-engined car for FF2000. Jim Gleave reckoned he'd sold another car, and hoped very much to run a second works car for a driver who'd driven for them before.

In fact, Gleave was most confident of the formula, and his car. There had been more enquiries for FF2000 than Formula Ford, and he considered his machine one of the best. As for the formula, the running costs seemed on a par with FF, and they had run 600 miles without engine trouble and, apparently no tyre wear. Pryer has done most of the testing so far.

Van Diemen have been testing for some months now, mainly at the hands of former Grand Prix driver Dave Walker, although Bernard Vermilio had driven the car too. Ralph Firman believes the formula to be good, although "It needs more power to make the difference between a good and bad driver, and a good and bad chassis." Ashtune have borrowed a chassis from Van Diemen to run for 1975, and with Oselli engine, they will have Jaybrand sponsorship to run Firman's choice of driver, Donald MacLeod, who, of course, won the BOC championship in 1973. Firman is known to rate MacLeod highly as a test driver, so the combination may well bear fruit. The car will be treated as the works development model.



Side radiators and a Piper engine for Jeremy Rossiter's Reynard.

Hawke's works driver, Syd Fox, was announced last week. However, when told how many chassis were available, David Lazenby was less than happy: "I wish I hadn't built the bloody thing," although the Fox model is the second chassis of its type that he's built, the first being run as a Formula 3 car.

Royale have also had a lot of interest in their RP22. Alan Cornock said that one car would be driven in FF2000 by Roger Orgee, but while everyone had wanted a works drive, he didn't think there would be one. Orgee will use a Tim Close engine in the car, but the testing, done by Tony Trimmer and Geoff Lees has been with a Vegantune mill. The RP22 is a completely new car, as is their Formula Ford. Both Royale's former customers, Scorpion and Ashtune are interested in running hire cars, and Lees is another who'd like to get into the Formula if he can sell his Formula Ford, As for FF2000: "It's got to go with the people behind it. The only problem is to sort out the knockers. Given a few years, it could all be FF2000," Cornock said.

That really concludes the definite deals done up until now, but there are still a number of chassis without drivers, and equally, drivers without chassis.

Starfire, making their first entry into the world of racing cars with the FF2000 designed by Patrick Head, reported great interest, but naturally, many drivers want to see the car run. "We're very satisfied and there are plenty of people in the pipeline. A number of promising people have approached us, all of whom we are prepared to help. They can all test the car," said Gavin Hooper. The car should be ready for development testing in 10 days' time, when Richard Scott, whose F2 car Head designed, will do the testing, probably at Goodwood. Deposits on two cars have been taken, subject to testing, including from a former F3 driver, although everything depends on testing. A further "running" deal has been fixed up by Chris Oates, one of Starfire's agents. Hooper has negotiated to run Holbay engines.

John Crossle confirmed at the show, that his company, which has had so much success in Formula Ford, would be involved in the Formula with their 31F. The car has already been driven by Richard Morgan and tested by Jay Pollock, and is a modified Formula Ford car. "The formula is a logical step. We've had a lot of interest, but I think there's a lot of people sitting on the fence waiting," said Crossle. "We haven't sold any FF2000 cars, but we'll be involved in the formula, although I don't know with whom." Crossle have no engine preferences.

Merlyn, who weren't at the show, have an entirely new car with side radiators and mostly suspension from their F3 cars. Selwyn Hayward considered the Formula to be good, but was concerned with the power. He said that their Mk 28 FF2000 is ready for testing now, and that they'd be running a works car, but for whom had not been decided. "We'd like to run the car before we try to sell it," said Hayward. The cars will have preference to Holbay and Scholar.

Derek Ongaro of Lola seemed to have had a good enough show not to worry about FF2000, but said that they would wait and see how it developed. "I think that with the power, the tyres and wings, it's got too much to push through the air. However, we'll see."

Nike are another company who are building a car for the FF2000 series, the Mk 10C, with basically Formula 3 suspension. Ken Nichols said that they wouldn't put a works driver in the car, so it is basically up for sale. On the formula, Nicholls said that he wished the motor wasn't so heavy, and in fact had no particular engines in mind for the car, although he has great faith in Scholar.

Bert Ray's Clapham-based concern have other things on their plate just at the moment, but have a tentative approach from a driver who may go into the Formula, or possibly into SuperVee. Ray is only interested in works assisted cars, once the sponsorship is forthcoming, and thus wouldn't want to build cars for straight customers, only for people who actually come and approach the company to build a car and they would then run it.

Once again, the power aspect comes up. This, perhaps, has been the sole criticism so far, and some manufacturers are keen to have another 10 bhp allowed. Various ideas to provide this have been considered by the organisers, all with cost in mind. One constructor suggested that carburation should be free, which would put another £50 on the cost of the engine. Another suggestion is to use a Rallyesport cam, off the factory shelf at Ford. The third, and thought to be the cheapest, is that compression ratio and carburetter chokes and jets should be free, possibly with the flywheel lightened, and all those have been considered by the organisers. However, Nick Brittan said that despite representations from three or four constructors, he's reluctant to ask the RAC to change the regulations. "The low lap times are probably because of lack of development, and such requests are half fair. However, history reveals that better lap times have always come about after a few races and development. The best we've had at Brands Hatch is a 48.4 s, and I reckon another second should come off that." Thus, nothing will be done until after at least two or three races. If it is then apparent that something should be done, then he's prepared to go to the RAC. However, a meeting would be held before such moves, and any request would have to be made with a near unanimous vote in favour.

However, with the number of cars available, and further drivers, including Pato Nunez, Nick von Preussen, Bernard Vermilio, Derek Lawrence, Mo Harness and Tim Rathmell all considering participation, then it should be interesting to be at Mallory for that opening meeting. Hopefully, the knockers won't have anything to knock, and all will go smoothly for another motor racing formula in Britain.

Doug Niven — border raider

Super saloon racing has brought together plenty of exciting cars and colourful drivers this past season and one of the best received on both counts has been the combination of Perdal Developments' 5.7-litre Ford Boss Escort and quiet Scotsman Douglas Niven. An established winner in Scotland and the North of England Doug broadened his horizons for 1974 and immediately became a front-runner in Super Saloon races throughout England. From 21 starts the light blue Escort with the white St Andrew's cross on the roof collected eight wins, four seconds and two thirds and Doug Niven ended a successful season with lap records at Oulton Park, Mallory Park, Croft and Ingliston to his name.

Despite his professional approach to motor racing, Doug Niven races very much as an amateur. "These boys all come from garages and that, whereas we're from a farm, so you're up against it all the time. Their budgets are also an awful lot higher than mine. We're a totally unpaid team. Any sponsorship goes into buying bits for the car." Once the weekend's racing is over it's straight back up to Berwickshire and the 600 acre Niven farm at Duns. Doug was 17 when he left school in 1964: "My father died six months later, so I was left to run the farm from then on."

Douglas Niven had a cousin by the name of Jim Clark, so it's hardly surprising that he followed motor sport rather closely. In April 1968 Clark was tragically killed and enthusiasts throughout the world were stunned with disbelief and grief. The loss to the close-knit people of Duns and particularly to Clark's immediate family must have been immeasurable, and yet the following season Doug decided that he needed a bit of excitement as a break from the farm and started motor racing. "There was a certain family opposition to motor racing, but after I got married I just started having a go for fun." Didn't a racing tragedy so close worry him? "There's people killed on the road every day. It can happen to anyone," replies Doug philosophically, and then to demonstrate the reasoning behind that personal philosophy, he adds a third family tragedy: "Three years ago my brother was killed while I was away motor racing. He fell off a roof on the farm."

So, motor racing it was, and an ex-Birrell Anglia put him onto the circuits in 1969. Perdal Developments of Newcastle built up a twin-cam engine for it and Doug took in 10 races at Ingliston and Croft, winning once at each circuit in his first season. The following year another ex-Birrell car came along, this time the Wylies Escort. Its 1800 twin-cam motor again went to Jeff Wilson of Perdal and Doug set about challenging the Escorts of Jenny and Graham Birrell in the Scottish Saloon championship. "I was still without sponsorship at this point of course. At Ingliston that year we went to 10 races, won nine of them and were second in one. So we won the Scottish Championship in 1970, which was what we said we were going to do and then stop. I'd told the family I'd give up if I could win the Scottish Championship, because we didn't think we'd do it. But then we won it in the first year and I couldn't back-pedal then."

In 1971 Doug continued to pedal forwards with the same car under the Team Forbes banner with his first sponsorship from a local garage. Things carried on much as they had before until towards the end of the season at the Yorkshire airfield circuit of Rufforth where the Escort's brakes failed as Doug challenged Mick Hill. The badly damaged car was rebuilt and sold to Ireland. "At that point I talked about retiring and sat about and did nothing. Then I thought what am I going to do now, so I went down south and bought an ex-Alan Mann Escort. We took out

the twin-cam that was in and installed a Jeff Wilson Perdal BDA." But the car proved too heavy and had trouble keeping ZF boxes together. "The car just wasn't competitive."

Doug kept the car until August of 1972 when he replaced it with the ex-Tate of Leeds Chas Beattie built 5.7-litre Boss Escort V8. "This car was really a handful. I don't want to be sued for libel—but, it was very unsorted." After a disappointing season dogged by the car's unreliability, Doug's mechanic Archie Simmonds, who had been with him since he started racing, moved to Perth to look after the racing exercise at SMT. At this point Doug was all for giving up, but: "Jeff had a look at it and reckoned it was worth having a go." So the present set-up was formed with Jeff Wilson taking over full preparation of the car, which now resides in his care at Newcastle.

Considerably modified, the car reappeared at the start of 1973 backed by the Duns based Celtic Homes company. "They were good sponsors to me. We spent '73 just doing a big sort-out job on the car. We had 16 wins with the Escort but we were really using it as a development year for '74. We won the Wendy Wools Northern Saloon car championship that year and broke the lap record at Croft five times. At the end of the year Don Waugh, who's a graduate at Glasgow University, was getting a post-graduate degree in aerodynamics, so he did a model of the car and put it in a wind-tunnel, and we spent a long time on the aerodynamics, which was quite worth while."

Managing director of Celtic Homes is Ian Scott-Watson, the man who formed the legendary Border Reivers team to start Jim Clark's racing career off. In a move that was guaranteed to bring respectful nostalgia flooding back to the Niven racing effort, Scott-Watson suggested reviving the Border Reivers name. "This year Celtic Homes sponsorship has changed, but the Border Reivers team was formed after lying dormant for 12 years since Jim Clark had used it. We had to get money up to run the thing, so we got eight firms in the border area."

Bearing in mind the fact that Scotland has produced two of the best Grand Prix drivers the world has ever seen within the same decade, I asked Doug if he thought there was something inherent in the Scottish temperament that made them better suited to be racing drivers than the English: "They're slightly more mean and aggressive—in a nice sort of way. There's a certain sort of determination. You're worked damn hard to get there, so you want to make sure you do well. I think I drive harder down south than I do at Ingliston because I'm doing it for the honour of Scotland."

Encouraged by the successes of the past year and the interest caused by the resurgence of the Border Reivers team, Doug plans to continue with the Escort next season. "Next year we've got a full super-saloon championship, which should be good. We had a big shunt at Croft with the car in August. The car went over a bank in a tremendous downpour. It was a major disaster and we've had to rebuild the car from scratch."

How has he found the super-saloon scene in the past year?: "I like motor racing from the point of view that you meet a lot of people, nice people too. The saloon boys are a good bunch of folk. It's good fun. I'm still a farmer. I've still got 600 acres to run. It's all cattle and grain and it's got to be the mainstay of the thing. I've got a wife, Liz, and two daughters, so with that as well I can't disappear too far into the distance. But it's getting more and more of a commitment because we're getting more and more sponsors and I've got to give value for money. Sponsorship is a necessary evil. But I've always been lucky and had good sponsors who've let me do what I want. I do it as a hobby, for fun. As long as I enjoy doing it and can get sponsorship I'll carry on doing it. But I've always said, farming first, racing second and that's how it's got to work."

DAVID GORDON

Doug Niven's Escort rounds Copse at Silverstone ahead of John Turner's Skoda, Mick Hill's Capri and the rest.

Knockhill events axed

The next rallycross at Knockhill will not now be until March 9. This follows the somewhat chaotic meeting reported within these pages. The chairman of the Knockhill Development Company admitted that they had tried to do too much too quickly, and the nine weeks before the next meeting would give them time to get everything right.

The mudhole on the track which caused so much trouble was due to a broken drain, and this and other drains would be immediately checked. Some of the surface will also be replaced with stabilised flyash to give a hard surface in some places. Other improvements including a pedestrian footbridge, fencing, car parks and spectator roads brought up to standard.

Denys Dobbie, chairman of the company, said that he had been informed by quite a few drivers that the rallycross circuit was potentially the best in Britain.

A common sight at Knockhill; the bulldozer clears mud away.

Naylor beats Harmer's Mini by a tenth

Local government officer Richard Ineson took BTD at last Sunday's Airedale & Pennine MC autotest at Central Motor Auctions car park at Rothwell, Leeds. Ineson, in his Cooper, beat a field of 40 with a total time for the six tests of 130.7 s which was almost 3 s quicker than anyone else.

Best of the class battles saw David Naylor take his Riley Elf to a one-tenth of a second win over Paul Harmer's Mini in the up to 1-litre class; Howard White (1328 Cooper), had 2½ s in hand in taking Class 2 and Bernard Shaw (Viva) was nearly 5 s ahead of the rest in the over 1300 cc conventional saloon class.

The up to 1300 cc class went to Paul Zillessen in his Escort Sport who finished 7.4 s up on David Spirrett in a 1300 Escort GT. Harmer gained a little glory by being fastest on the third test by a whole second.

BTD: R. Ineson (Cooper), 130.7 s. **Class winners:** D. Naylor (Riley Elf), 141.4 s; H. White (Cooper), 133.6 s; P. Zillessen (Escort Sport), 162.6 s; B. Shaw (Viva), 152.8 s.

● Car collectors may be interested in a couple of Astons currently for sale in the AMOC bulletin. Substantial offers are requested for an ex-Graham Whitehead DBR1/5, residing in South Africa, and a little closer to home is the Project 199 prototype Le Mans car for 1959 in East Suffolk, still asking for substantial offers though.

Supersport employee beats boss

Supersport sales manager Phil Wardle, ably assisted by Doug Smith, beat the Supersport boss Rod Cooper on the West Essex CC Dynaglaze Cloverleaf rally over 200 miles of Norfolk countryside last Saturday night.

Wardle, last year's London Counties rally champion, beat the boss by a huge 7.5 m in the company's Escort TC, completing the event with loss of only 5 m 36 s. Rod with Ian Cooper, used an RS2000 to finish on 13 m 6 s while Roy Collins and Phil Smith were third in another Escort TC. A fine effort by Rod Cattini and Preston Ayres in a G1 Ascona gave them sixth spot.

Best novice crew Steve Gipson and Bob Gadsby were 46th overall in an RS1600 and the Image Trophy for best lady navigator went to Mrs Judy Hamey who navigated John Webber (Escort GT) into 28th spot.

1, P. Wardle/D. Smith (Escort TC), 5 m 36 s; 2, R. Cooper/L. Cooper (RS2000), 13 m 6 s; 3, R. Collins/P. Smith (Escort TC), 14 m 24 s; 4, A. Baker/D. Haines (Mexico), 16 m 19 s; 5, T. Arnold/V. Clarke (Mexico), 18 m 37 s; 6, R. Cattini/P. Ayres (Ascona), 18 m 57 s. **Novice:** S. Gipson/B. Gadsby (RS1600), 3F 61 m 31 s.

● In recognition of their 200th year, the perfume house of Houbigant will be sponsoring hill-climber Simon Riley in the RAC and BARC sprint championships. Simon Riley has raced sports cars and single seaters on the hills, and will use a McLaren-Chevrolet M10B in his sprint bid. The car will run under the Monsieur Houbigant banner, an aftershave.

Design Formula broke

Rumours concerning the financial state of Elden haven't been entirely unfounded, but with considerable orders from the States, there's no way that they're going to go under. However, Design Formula is going into liquidation, and with letters of credit from their reorganised American set-up, they will continue trading and building cars under the title of Elden International Racing.

A total of 25 Formula Fords 11 Super Vees and their 2 FF2000 are all cars being paid for, so it's not surprising that the Hampsheir brothers aren't giving up yet. Elden have been in trouble before, and after a successful season, there seems to be every reason to continue.

One fail win

It's unusual for a rally to be won by a crew forced to cut a control but it happened last weekend down in Hampshire where the winners of the Independent Broadcasting Authority MC Hilary Rally R. Hancock and G. Davis (Mini), had a total of 1F and 37 m against them on the 135 mile route.

Running in a field of only 27 starters they easily beat M. Crockett/D. Steptoe (Vitesse) on 2F 17 m while Ken Hutton/John Hill (Avenger Tiger), were third on 2F 45 m. An Escort, a Morris Minor and an Alfa Romeo 2-litre were fourth, fifth and sixth!

Argenti's RF75 for FF

Matthew Argenti will be running the works development Van Diemen Formula Ford RF75 in the Southern Organs championship with McInnes Amcron backing in 1975. Argenti ran his own Van Diemen last year, and the Woodbridge driver has now sold his car to the Allied Polymer Group. In 1975, he also hopes to fit in some F3 races towards the end of the year, although in what chassis is as yet unannounced.

McInnes Amcron will again be supporting Jon Dooley's Alfetta efforts in prod saloon racing, this year contesting the Radio 1 championship, the Access TT and the Tour of Britain. Finally, Ian Marshall of McInnes Amcron will be fielding his ex-Oliver/Gold Leaf Team Lotus 47. It's currently being fitted with a BDA, and Marshall hopes to enter sports/GT events and *libre* races.

Donald MacLeod, '73 BOC champion, is driving the works development Van Diemen in FF2000 with Scholar power.

Davies' C74

As mentioned last week, John Davies will indeed be changing chassis for his coming Supersports season. He will be driving Herb Moger's Gryphon for 1975, with Holbay power. Moger was uncertain whether to continue driving and it was suggested that Davies might like to drive the car. A proposition was immediately made and gratefully accepted, although as the whole discussion came about at a party in Hertfordshire, and Davies was in Wales, the latter was never very certain for whom he would be driving, as the slightly inebriated caller at the end of the phone declined to give his name at the time of calling.

Marshals' first aid training

The St John Ambulance Brigade will be holding a training weekend for personnel carrying out duties at motor racing circuits on January 25/26 at the Leicester County Headquarters. The idea comes from Mick Mardon, the divisional superintendent of the J. L. King Division, the main division concerned with motor racing in the Leicestershire area.

Features of the weekend include a number of demonstrations on rescue procedure and medical equipment, co-ordination of the various services and racing, a number of films depicting treatment required as a result of a racing accident with accompanying lectures by doctors, and simulated rescue from cars. BOC, Jim Russell Racing School, and the BRSCC have all agreed to loan equipment.

● The trials world is coming under the scrutiny of Ford. At the recent annual motor sport press conference Stuart Turner said, "This is a much neglected part of the sport. It needs to grow a little but it is certainly an area to watch.

● One G. Marshall will be the speaker at the Wolverhampton and South Staffs CC's dinner dance, held at the Dunstal Suite, Wolverhampton Race Course on January 25. Tickets are available from Miss A. Philips, 82 Sandwell Road, Handsworth, Birmingham B21 8PS. Telephone (work only): 021-235 3995.

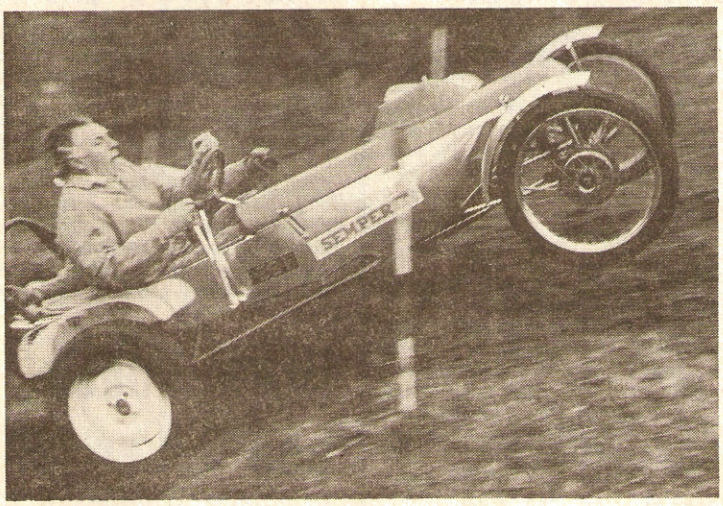
Reg Allen's first

Reg Allen scored his first major success in a championship round when he took his Mk IV Kincraft to a clearcut victory on last Sunday's Harrison sporting trial organised by the Sheffield and Hallamshire MC at Dronfield near Leeds. He dropped 79 marks on the 20 sections to finish 17 marks ahead of veteran Ralph Needham, who in turn, was eight marks ahead of the reigning champion Jack Pearce.

With 23 competitors tackling the event—it was making its debut in the championship—the lunch time leader was Tony Harrison (Kincraft), who led Allen by four marks. Pearce was third but already lagging Harrison by 12 marks while Needham and Lol Hurt (BMC Special), were respectively single marks down on Pearce.

Allen inherited the lead midway through some atrocious weather which drenched everyone immediately following the break when Harrison dropped a pushrod. The weather forced the organisers to cut the event to a single round and in the remaining sections, Needham overtook Pearce and Laurie Brown, sixth at half time, retired with a broken gearbox.

1, R. Allen (Kincraft), 79 marks; 2, R. Needham (Cannon), 96 marks; 3, J. Pearce (Kincraft), 101 marks; 4, L. Hurt (BMC), 109 marks.



Reg Allen (Kincraft) proves that trialling isn't all slow moving. He took the Harrison trial on Sunday.

Hutchinson: new champ

Mike Hutchinson and Eric Cowcill are the new East Midlands Rally Champions. They clinched the title after a tremendous battle on last Saturday's Ystra Rally run by the Dukeries MC. Hutchinson and Cowcill, in their Lloyds of Stafford Escort RS 2000, finally won the rally by a handsome margin but the lead was disputed until the last stage where their strong all-night challengers fell out with a blocked fuel line.

Hutchinson and Cowcill had been engaged in a three way struggle early on in the 190 mile route for their nearest challengers in the series, Steve Webster and John Chadwick (Magnum), had been joined by Peter Doughty and Graham Daws in their Mexico. All three were level until near halfway when the Magnum crew dropped out of the battle with a broken halfshaft. This meant that Hutchinson had taken the championship but Doughty was all out to try and make sure the champions finished runners-up on the last event.

Never separated by more than a minute throughout the entire second half, the battle raged on to a mere five miles from the finish when the Mexico died suddenly and Doughty and Daws eventually crawled home in ninth spot.

The rally was also the first round of the ANEMC Group 1 championship for this year and the winners here were Bob Wells/Bob Snazell in their Magnum who finished fourth overall on 47 m.

1, M. Hutchinson/E. Cowcill (Escort), 28 m; 2, R. Godfrey-Jones/S. Bruce (Escort GT), 37 m; 3, A. Scobie/P. Knight (Cooper), 40 m; 4, B. Wells/B. Snazell (Magnum), 47 m 5, G. Brooker/P. Lythell (Escort GT), 48 m; 6, P. and D. Burns (Mexico), 53 m. **Novices:** N. Collingwood/T. Cook (Escort GT), 3 F 67 m.

BWRDC trophy to Lorina

The Lord Wakefield Challenge Trophy, a magnificent silver statue standing over three feet high, has been presented to the British Women's Racing Drivers Club by the last holder of the trophy, Mrs H. Wood. It was first presented to the Women's Automobile and Sports Association in 1929, and awarded to the woman who had done most in motor racing during the Brooklands days.

When war broke out, the association disbanded, and the last winner of the trophy, Mrs Wood, has now passed it on to the BWRDC, who in turn have awarded it this year to Formula 4 driver Lorina Boughton. Lorina has scored a number of wins in F4 in Jeremy Gambs' GRD, and was awarded BP's "Man of the Meeting" title for her performance at Mallory Park. She intends to continue in Formula 4 with the updated GRD for the coming season.

Potter's comeback

Making a return after a year's lay off partially due to his holiday camp commitments, Brian Potter proved he had not lost his touch by scoring an easy win at Stowmarket last Sunday when Eastern Counties MC ran their Suffolk Trophy autotests for a field of 22. On the nine tarmac tests Potter's Cooper finished with a time of 341.8 s to beat Mike Bunn's Spitfire by a shade over 16 s, Bunn taking his class.

Rich Eichhorn threw away the Mini class by clobbering a pylon on the last test to give the class to Alec Turner by 1.3 s and Stuart Perren, debuting an MG 1100, was some 20 s up in his class ahead of Terry Davies in his Escort GT.

Overall: B. Potter (Cooper), 341.8 s. **Class winners:** M. Bunn (Sprite), 357.6 s; A. Turner (Mini), 379.7 s; S. Perren (MG 1100), 448.5 s.

● Although theoretically he scored 15 pts for winning last Sunday's Harrison sporting trial, Midlander Reg Allen can't count the points. Reason? He hasn't registered for the championship yet and points are not allowed to contestants in retrospect.

Penrose shakes off rivals

R. Penrose and J. Coupland scored a three minute win on the St Andrews Rally run by Soar Valley MC over a 145 mile route in Leicestershire and Northamptonshire last Saturday night. After being concerned in a three cornered tie for the lead at halfway, they went on to complete the event with the loss of 38 m leaving Martin Hurst/Kim Stephenson second in their RS2000.

Frank Spencer and Keith Brown, who had tied the lead on 13 m at the break in Market Harborough, brought their Lotus Cortina home third on 42 m and Steve Bryan and Nick Hall (Escort 1300), finished fourth on 43 m.

There was a tie for fifth place between John Beaty and Barry Harrison (Escort 1600) and Ken Willday and Dave Horwood (Mexico), both dropping 45 m. Eric Swan and R. Parrot who had been joint leaders with Penrose and Spencer, retired with mechanical troubles in their Mexico.

1, R. Penrose/J. Coupland (Escort), 38 m; 2, M. Hurst/K. Stephenson (Escort), 41 m; 3, F. Spencer/K. Brown (L/Cortina), 42 m 4, S. Bryan/N. Hall (Escort), 43 m; 5 equal, J. Beaty/B. Harrison (Escort) and K. Willday/D. Horwood (Mexico), 45 m.

Longton's £1100 series

Longton and District MC's sprint and hillclimb championship will comprise 14 events this season with the best 10 to count, and a very healthy prize fund of £1100. Main event will be the final round on the Isle of Man on their TT circuit hillclimb. Other venues include Longridge, Aintree, Harewood, Oulton Park, Loton Park, Castle Howard and Blackpool.

Entries will be limited to 100 for the championship, and entry forms may be obtained from J. P. W. Hylton, Town End Cottage, Smithy Lane, Stalmine, Nr Blackpool.

Opel's 2m victory

South Cumbria and Lancashire was the setting for Geoff Birkett and Ryzard Lenartowicz to take their Opel Ascona to a 2 m win on last Saturday's January Trophy Rally run by Kirkby Lonsdale MC over a 100-mile route.

Birkett, winner of the event in 1973, and Lenartowicz dropped 16 m to beat Lol Catterall/Bob Hughes (Escort 1600), with David Airey/Malcolm Capstick (Escort 1600), third.

1, G. Birkett/R. Lenartowicz (Ascona), 16 m; 2, L. Catterall/B. Hughes (Escort), 18 m; 3, D. Airey/M. Capstick (Escort), 20 m; 4, T. Brunskill/C. Pudsey (Mazda), 21 m; D. Scaise/J. Vipond (Mexico), 21 m. **Semi-exrerts:** D. Leach/C. Woodward (Escort TC), 21 m. **Novices:** J. Park/C. Marshall (Spitfire), 33 m.

● Ivor Portlock is in the wars again. He slipped while walking down a trial section, dislocated an arm and although it was snapped back into position he was in too much pain to continue.

● It's a long time since a 14-year-old Cannon took second place in a championship trial but Ralph Needham's car has twice won the championship—in other hands.

Mick Bird charges through the mud in his Airey Mini.

Potter in the mud

The Knockhill Circuit near Dunfermline was host to a rallycross meeting on Sunday, January 5, organised by the Thames Estuary Automobile Club in association with the 750 MC, Lanarkshire and East Ayrshire Motor Clubs which, despite an extremely dull sky with a gale blowing, attracted a very encouraging attendance.

The course layouts, while meeting with the approval of the more experienced rallycross drivers from England, nevertheless suffered from the effects of prolonged heavy rain prior to the event, which turned the power station ash which had been laid on the cross-country sections, into a sticky porridge. Some parts of this became so badly cut up during practice and between heats, that a bulldozer was called in to level it out. In fact any car which strayed off course anywhere on the circuit became hopelessly bogged down, making the breakdown wagons the most frequently seen vehicles around.

Of the 40-odd cars taking part, the visitors from England certainly showed what rallycross was all about. At least this was before they became bogged in the mud, and these included the Minis of Tom Airey, Nick Brice, Mick Bird and Pip Carrotte while Bernard Rodemark bogged his Porsche on the first bend and was promptly thumped up the tail by an Escort, also going wide.

However, David Potter in his Airey tuned Mini took the honours, with Ian Gemmell in the Maconochie's Avenger GT in rally trim, taking a fine second place overall and the trophy for the highest placed Scottish driver, just ahead of the 1293 Mini of Peter Vaughan.

With the early onset of darkness and the frequent delays, times for the first runs only were counted for awards.

1, David Potter (1500 Mini), 4 m 05.8 s; 2, Ian Gemmell (1589 Avenger GT), 4 m 29.0 s; 3, Peter Vaughan (1293 Mini), 4 m 30.4 s; 4, R. P. Smith (1293 Mini), 4 m 35.2 s; 5, Ian Smith (1800 Escort), 4 m 42.2 s.

Rallycross at Snetterton this weekend

The second round of the Snetterton rallycross championship series takes place this weekend on the same circuit as used previously. Racing begins at 12.30 with a total entry of 80 cars for the Castle Street Garage (Thetford) sponsored event, with organisation in the hands of the Sporting CC of Norfolk and the West Suffolk MC.

Championship leader after the first round, Mick Bird, heads a trio of Airey Minis, while other interesting entries come from Dave Montague (Lancia-engined Mini), Hugh Wheldon (2.4 Volkswagen), Bernard Rodemark (2.7 Porsche), David Potter (1.3 Mini), John Greasley (3.5 Imp) and John Smith (2.0 Escort).

This is the second round of the three round championship, and racing takes place on Sunday, practice starting at 10 am.

Marshals required

Redditch and District CC, who are running two rallies on consecutive weekends desperately need marshals for both. On January 25/26 they have the Brooklyn Valve Chatter rally over a 190-mile route in the Cotswolds. The following weekend they have the Esso Uniflo-sponsored special stage rally on a 160-mile route with 15 stages of between 35 and 40 miles on private land.

The chief marshal for both events is Peter Gray, 4 Brentnall Drive, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B75 5BB. Tel: 021-308 4088.

● The latest additions to the BTRDA autocross committee are Mike Skerratt of the Potteries and Newcastle Club and GEC (Stafford) and Anne Harries from the Bath Club. The full committee of 15 is headed by Bob Davies, chairman, and Andy Thwaite continuing as secretary.

MacDowel's withdrawal

"Last year I won nine meetings out of 10, and how the hell do you beat that?" asked Mike MacDowel when asked why he was selling his car. MacDowel has been RAC Hillclimb champion for the past two years, but will not be seen in the championship next year, and both his and John Cussins' cars are currently up for sale. "I seem to have become a victim of my own success" he said explaining how the pressure of meetings, and life at the top of the table had become somewhat overwhelming towards the end of last season. Consequently, he'll sit back and take a look for the coming season, although "I'd like to get a sports car and have a go at some of these handicap events, things like the Prescott Gold Cup and some of the sports car records." However, the reigning champion won't be out of hillclimbs for ever. Just resting for this season.

Runaway victory for Mack/Thomas

Colin Mack and Dave Thomas scored a runaway victory last Saturday night when they won the Wallasey MC Hairpin Rally by more than 9 m in their Avenger GT.

On a 190-mile route in some of the best North Wales scenery, they put their local knowledge to good purpose by paralysing a field of 96 starters to finish with penalties of 34 m 32 s. Second, in their RS2000, were Bob McKenzie and Brian Goff on 43 m 52 s and they finished more than 5 m ahead of Jim Corner and Brian Garton.

Fourth and best of the semi-experts, were Ian Hughes and Arthur Davies in their Escort 1600 who were class winners by nearly 4 m from John Braid/David Taylor (Cooper). In the novice class Alun Owen/Michael Bennett (Escort TC), beat Jim Buckley/Chris Elmore (Cooper), by nearly 4 m.

1, C. Mack/D. Thomas (Avenger GT), 43 m 32 s; 2, B. McKenzie/B. Goff (Escort RS2000), 43 m 52 s; 3, J. Corner/B. Garton (Cortina GT), 48 m 1 s; 4, I. Hughes/A. Davies (Escort 1600), 49 m 29 s; 5, J. Braid/D. Taylor (Cooper), 53 s 18 s; 6, M. Edwards/R. Young (Escort RS2000), 55 m 21 s.

Prepare for Group One

Production Power is the name of the new Group One preparation service offered by Peter Semus of SHARP Racing. The name came about because having undertaken to prepare Neville Knight and Cozy Powell's Mazda sponsored by Hitachi, they came up against the latter as Sharp are of course Hitachi rivals in the audio field. For this reason, Production Power came into being.

Production Power take on the burden of entry, negotiation and preparation of cars for sponsors and drivers. They currently have 3.0 Capris, RS2000s, Simca Rallye Ones and the RS2000 with sports pack. Production Power may be contacted at 21 Castle Street, Brighton, Sussex, or Brighton 25348.

Beddow for the first time

Chris Beddow is champion rally driver of the Wolverhampton and South Staffs CC for the first time. In his Cooper S he won the award with 405 points, more than 100 ahead of John Lloyd in his Imp. The latter's navigator, Mick Kind, took the navigator's championship for the first time, ahead of Derek Woolley. Champion off-the-road events is Mick Chick, who was also third in the rally driver's category in his Escort.

Brown does and takes all

Only driver to compete in all four rounds, Malcolm Brown, is the winner of the Dudley & Dist CC Production Car Trials Championship.

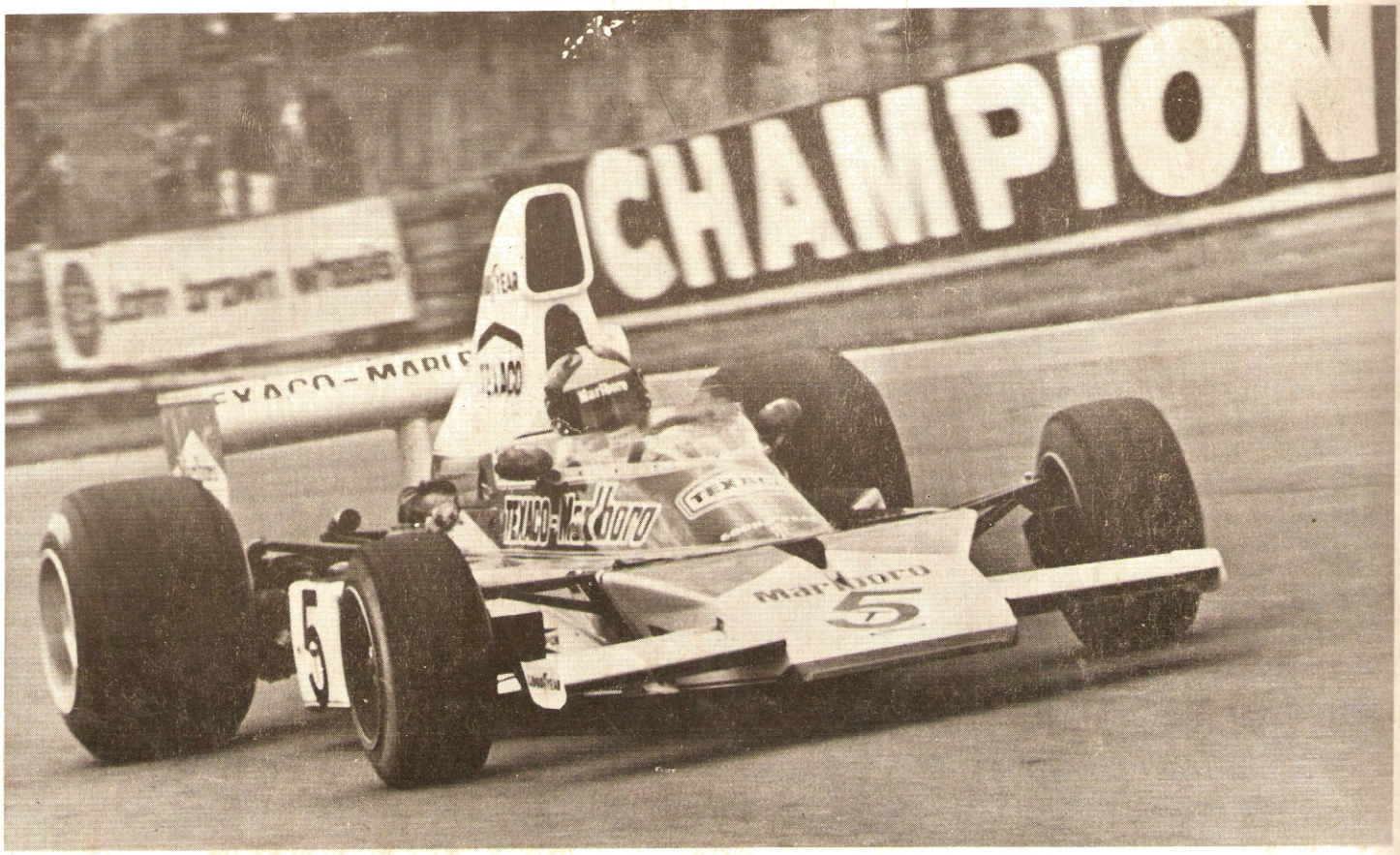
Brown, in his Sprite, scored 49 pts to take the title by a margin of 6 pts from Mike Harrison (Midget), with Ian Spencer (son of RAC Champion Geoff Spencer), in third place in his Mini with 40 pts from three events. Spencer's mother, Mrs Hazel Spencer, and Austen May, in Mini and Imp respectively, tied with 38 pts for fourth place.

Twenty-five competitors scored points and there will again be four events in the 1975 calendar starting with the Tocky Bonk on February 3.

● The Rugby Albany Inn are again offering special facilities to Silverstone competitors during the 1975 season. Overnight accommodation is offered at £4.50 per person per night in twin or double room including breakfast, service and VAT. Silverstone is approximately 30 minutes drive from the Inn, which has 96 rooms with private bath and shower, radio, colour television and shower. For the more wealthy, there's a heliport at the Inn, and it is situated at Crick, near Rugby, half a mile from exit 18 on the M1.

● The Lotus 7 Series 3 has been accepted by the BARC for mod-sports racing for the coming season. The Series 4 is no longer manufactured, so the Series 3 is the car available, in either kit form or finished.

Every picture tells a story.



CHAMPION

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