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AUTOSPORT

Morgan's Atlantic win at wet Mallory Park



AUTOSPORT

BRITAIN'S MOTOR SPORTING WEEKLY

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A wet but encouraging start for FF2000 at Mallory Park.



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EDITORIAL

Last Sunday's meeting at Mallory Park was excellent from a racing point of view, but suffered tragically from the desperately bad weather conditions. It was these horribly wet conditions which brought up a well known problem: should there be wet weather racing? This time, however, there was a new twist to it, the amateur racing formula union's opinions.

The Formula which created the headaches for the organisers was Formula Atlantic, whose runners were providing the main race of the day. The track was extremely wet when they went out to practice, as it had been for all the other formulae who had gone before. A number of cars spun and one had a fairly expensive shunt. Nevertheless after practice was over the Formula's own little union jumped on its own highly over-rated hobby horse and decided to get the drivers together and call off the race. We recall that the same driver, who is in charge of Formula Atlantic International, tried the same trick last year, happily with the same results — the race went on.

Just who does this person and his little gathering think they are? Maybe they can get all the entries in together (sometimes late, we are reliably informed) and hand out the prize money on time, but in no way have they the right to attempt to call off a race.

If they were happy enough to practice in the conditions then they should be quite prepared to race in them.

We accept that many of the drivers do not enjoy racing in wet conditions and if they feel they are not up to overcoming them fine, as individuals they have the right not to start. If a person decides to be a racing driver does he really think that he's going to be on a bone dry circuit every week?

A complete and professional driver will adapt himself and his car to suit the conditions. If he feels he can't then he withdraws. It is not right that a driver so obviously out of depth in the wet should campaign for all the others to withdraw? Nobody goes racing unless they want to and it should be a completely individual decision.

We accept the fact that there is a genuine need for low key unions or associations, call them what you will, to handle certain parts of the administration on club racing, but to call for boycotting a race, no way.

Considering the conditions at Mallory there was a very encouraging crowd, if they bother to turn up and stick it out they are entitled to see some racing. They are, after all the people who enable it to happen anyway.

It is the Clerk of the Course's job to decide whether racing should be stopped in the case of bad conditions. It is him, after all, who has to face the coroner's court. In an excellent move towards the end of last year the RAC stipulated that International meetings, such as this, should only be organised by professional clubs with a permanent secretariat. Sunday's meeting was run by the oldest established club in the country and every man involved in the organisation knew what he was doing. Mallory Park may have its limitations but the experienced Clerk of the Course knew what he was doing when he allowed the racing to take place.

If the jumped up Formula Atlantic Association thinks it was wrongly over-ruled, tough. We think the organiser's attitude was the right one. If Atlantic is to become as big as its Association says it will, then the self-opinionated people that run it must stop making fools of themselves

our cover picture

Richard Morgan, the king of FF last year, scored his first Atlantic victory at the second time of trying last Sunday in Tom Wheatcroft's Chevron B29. *Photo: David Winter*

Wilds and BRM split

The Stanley-BRM team may not be setting the world on fire with its track performances this year, but Louis Stanley is being as controversial as ever and keeping the team in the news.

This week comes the announcement that Dempster Development and Mike Wilds have mutually agreed with Stanley-BRM to severe their relationship and any agreement they had is now void.

This decision was taken on Monday of this week between Colin Phillips of Dempster and Louis Stanley.

Wilds' stay with BRM has been short and fairly fraught. He contested the two South American GPs in the P201, which was plagued by mechanical problems, and he never really had a chance to give of his best.

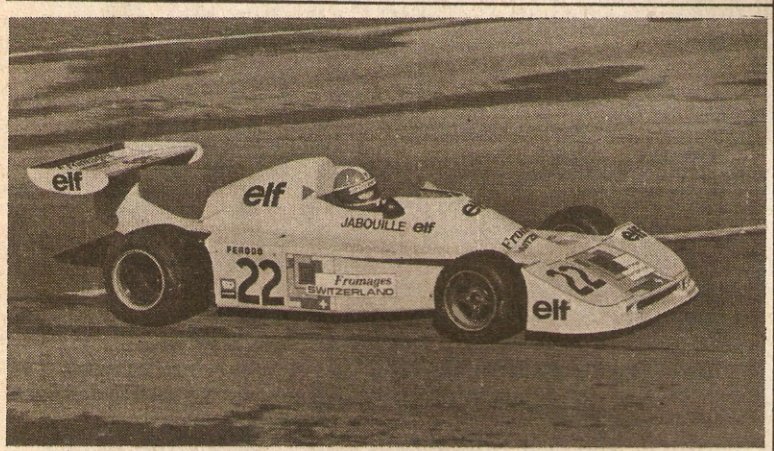
Stanley, true to form, then issued a release saying that Wilds was to be 'rested' because his wrist was not strong enough and that Bob Evans would drive for the team in South Africa.

Wilds contested the fact that his wrist was not strong enough and his comments to the press did not amuse Stanley.

The contract that Dempster and Wilds had with BRM was that Mike would contest all the Grands Prix and any non-championship races that were considered advantageous by both sides. The signing of Bob Evans for South Africa was, apparently, contrary to the agreement with Dempster. Stanley was then unable to give confirmation that Mike would do any of the other GPs. Hence the mutual agreement to terminate the contract.

Colin Phillips still has Wilds' services as a driver and he is free to drive any F1 car without the complications of the FICA transfer system. He told us on Tuesday that talks were in progress at the moment with another team, and there was a possibility that Mike would be at the Race of Champions.

Meanwhile we gather that Stanley has taken up the option on Bob Evans' services for the rest of the year. Evans was testing the P201 at Silverstone on Tuesday and we were unable to get a confirmation of this.



Jabouille gave his new Elf 2J its debut at Estoril last weekend.

Jabouille's F2 attack

At one stage, earlier this year, there were plans to run Frenchman Jean-Pierre Jabouille in an Elf-backed March Grand Prix car supported by the works. That was before the arrangement with Lella Lombardi came to fruition.

However, in Portugal last weekend the Frenchman told us that he was not planning on taking part in any F1 races at all this year. Instead Jabouille intends to concentrate on his F2 and sportscar programme.

"If I drive F1," said Jabouille, "as well as F2 and sports cars, then it would only be for a few races. That would not be good for me. It would be like Dijon last year."

Jabouille has promised that two of his new Elf 2J F2 cars will be at Thruxton for the Easter F2 meeting, the second to be driven by Gerard Larrousse.

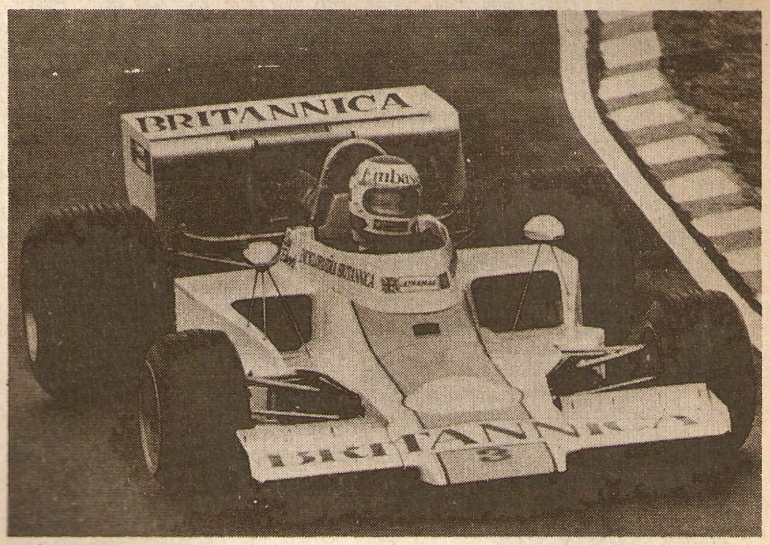
Warwick Brown's Talon

As Chris Amon arrives in this country with a Talon to contest the ShellSport F5000 series, so Warwick Brown has fixed up to run a similar car in the US F5000 series. Amon, with help from John Dalton, has arrived in this country and should be at Brands this weekend. If all goes well in Britain, it is said that he'll go over to the States to contest the last four or five races of their series.

Brown meanwhile, will be doing the whole US series, his Talon powered by a Molloy engine, which of course he used to win the Tasman series. The car will be run by the works, and may even be seen in Norris colours.

● Chrysler will be taking a more than passing interest in the Shadow F5000 car when it tests for the first time later this month at Riverside. The Shadow team will have both Chrysler and Chevrolet mills available and it is expected that back to back tests will be undertaken.

Chrysler have come on strong with a certain amount of financial assistance, for the development of their engine. The mill is slightly heavier than the Chevrolet unit, but all the weight is in the head.



Edwards testing his newly sponsored F5000 Lola at Brands last Saturday.

Edwards' new sponsor

Guy Edwards has landed himself yet another big sponsor for his racing programme. Announced this week is that his Formula 5000 Lola will be backed by Encyclopaedia Britannica, the world's biggest and most famous reference book. It is perhaps fitting that Edwards should have such a sponsor, having been a door-to-door salesman earlier in life.

The team will be entered as Encyclopaedia Britannica Lola and Edwards will initially be driving the Lola T332 he had last year in Embassy colours. The car will again be run in conjunction with Lancashire business man John Butterworth, who has been closely involved with Edwards' F5000 programme since 1972.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica sponsorship ties in with the launch of the new edition, Britannica 3, which has taken 15 years and £12,000,000 to produce.

Britannica state their reasons behind the sponsorship as being "that motor racing has become a family entertainment and that it is a sport in which Britain leads the world.

"Most Britannica buyers are families, and Britannica would like to be recognised as a necessary aid to every families' career and educational opportunities, not as an elaborate toy for intellectuals."

In addition to Britannica, Edwards has secured backing from the all British oil company Ultramar, who will be having their first year in competition.

The Lola will use Dave Whitehurst prepared Alan Smith engines and will also have a Roy Fewkes Chevvy to call upon.

Laffite to curtail F1

"I signed my Elf contract before Frank Williams offered me the Formula 1 drive," said Jacques Laffite earlier this week. This was in answer to stories that the Frenchman would not be competing for Frank in Spain or Monaco, preferring to concentrate on his F2 programme instead. Spain clashes with the F2 race at Pau, while Monaco is on the same day as Jarama.

Laffite added that his main objective this year was the European F2 championship and he is under an obligation to Elf to accomplish just that. Asked who would be replacing him at these Grands Prix, Laffite said that both Jean-Pierre Beltoise and Hans Stuck had been mentioned. Frank Williams was unavailable for comment, having "jetted over" to Italy on business.

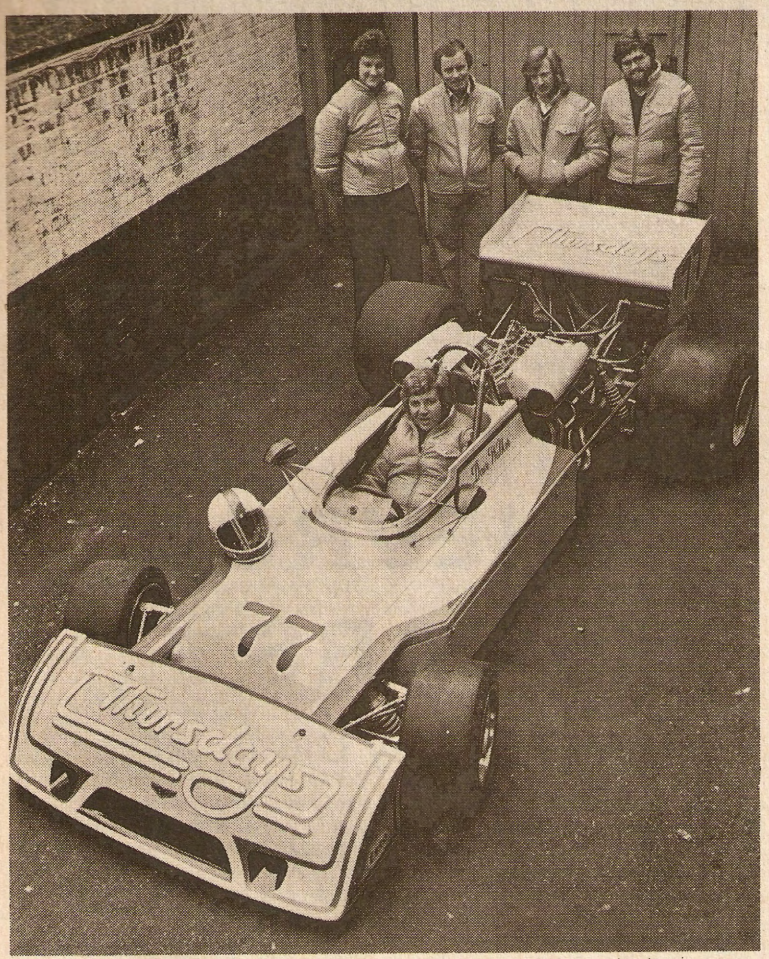
Laffite was entered to drive one of Frank's F1 cars this weekend at Brands Hatch but, due to other commitments, Frank has given Italian sports car driver Mario Casoni the opportunity to make his F1 debut. Casoni, it will be remembered, has driven one of the Porsche 908/3s with Reinhold Joest.

Goodyear's price rise

As you can gather from the opening round of the European F2 championship which started in Portugal last weekend, there were a few worried looks when the Goodyear tyre truck arrived only a matter of hours before practice started. This was the first foreign sortie for Bernie Ecclestone's new tyre servicing company which will be supplying rubber exclusively to all F2 competitors this season.

One thing that is bound to hit the teams (and not just in F2) is the phenomenal rise in costs over the winter of the tyres themselves. Last year a front tyre cost £38. This has risen to £62.21. A rear tyre in 1974 cost £45.00. Now it retails for £69.38. That is about £260 per set. Fitting and balancing is £3.29 per set while each tyre change-over is an extra £1. A rough estimate of tyre sales over the weekend came to something in the region of £2,000.

March Engineering, who incidentally have an exclusive Goodyear contract, would, had they been customers, have spent just short of £1,300 on tyres alone last weekend. Of those however, half were returned unusued.



The RAM team and Dave Walker with their Thursdays backed F5000.

Disco back RAM F5000

The RAM F5000 Chevron B28 which Dave Walker will be using in the Shellsport championship this year will be sponsored by Thursdays, London's newest night spot for dancing, dining and drinking in Kensington.

RAM is, of course, the team run by former F3 and saloon driver John Macdonald and his partner Mick Ralph.

This is Thursdays' first venture into motor sport and they plan to promote the venue through motor racing. It is owned by the well-established family entertaining and entertainment company Goodhews. In fact John Goodhew has experience as a driver having campaigned a competitive Clubmen's car some years ago.

The first appearance of the Thursdays/RAM car will be at Brands Hatch this weekend.

USAC/F5000 plans outlined

At a joint SCCA and USAC meeting on March 5, agreement was officially announced on the joint sanctioning of the two bodies for F5000. USAC cars will again be admitted on the same basis as before, and will be allowed 40 gallons of fuel.

As initially stated in the regs, USAC cars will have to make a pit stop, which will mean coming into the pits, stopping, and then being allowed out again. This makes it virtually impossible for a USAC car to win an F5000 race, although on a fast circuit, AJ Foyt may well be in with a chance.

However, Foyt is being kept sufficiently busy with his USAC commitments not to have time to enter F5000 events, and none of the other USAC people seemed all that interested either, so the meeting may well have been a waste of time.

Henton goes F2

Brian Henton, who drove the works March F3 last year and has carried out virtually all the testing on the latest works models over the past few months, is, after all, going to contest the European F2 championship. Henton, as we suggested a couple of weeks ago, will make his debut at Thruxton in a brand new March 752 powered by Brian Hart-prepared Ford BDA engines. The car will be run from Henton's own premises and sponsorship comes from AGV, the Italian crash helmet manufacturers.

Henton's only F2 drive to date was at Mugello last year when he stood in for Hans Stuck in the works March. He finished an encouraging sixth and would obviously have been higher placed had it not been for a broken nose cone.

Redman in Amon out

Good news and bad news concerning this weekend's British Airways Race of Champions meeting at Brands Hatch.

First, the bad news is that Chris Amon will not be entering after all. The Talon, in which he contested the recent Tasman series is still awaiting the arrival of its special engines. Due to an industrial dispute in Sydney, they were late leaving and aren't expected to arrive until Thursday. With the Chevrolet V8 mounted particularly low in the chassis (one of the car's assets), special sumps have to be fitted and there just isn't time to manufacture one.

Amon will therefore debut the car at Oulton Park.

The good news is a late entry for Brian Redman in one of the ex-Team VDS F5000 Chevron B24/28s. Redman, the current American F5000 champion and a popular favourite everywhere, last drove a F5000 Chevron (the original prototype) back in 1972. He has driven Lolas ever since.

Stuck at F2 Thruxton

March Engineering will run a third works F2 car at the Easter Thruxton meetings for German driver sensation Han Stuck and not Ronnie Peterson, as had originally been suggested. The works BMW driver will run alongside the two Elf March-BMWs of Michel Leclere and Patrick Tambay in a Jagermeister-backed car. Stuck will also take part in further F2 races driving a third works March, the second being at Hockenheim at the beginning of April.

Stuck drove for the works last year in both F1 and F2, coming close to winning the European F2 championship. He is, of course, now a graded Grand Prix driver and ineligible for championship points.

De Cadenet's new Lola DFV

Alain de Cadenet will be back at Le Mans again this year, once again as an entrant. This time he will not be taking the Gordon Murray-designed Duckhams that has flown the flag so well for Britain during the past two years. Instead de Cadenet has bought a brand new Cosworth DFV-powered Lola T390 which he will enter in the Le Mans four-hour race in a fortnight's time as well as the 24-hour classic in June. Like last year, de Cadenet has employed John Nicholson as one of the drivers.

● Australian F5000 driver, and current Gold Star Champion Max Stewart has written to British promoters saying that he hopes to be able to compete in some of the British F5000 championship rounds.

Schuppan's F1 deal off?

Although an entry was made for Vern Schuppan for the Race of Champions in an F1 car, he told us last week that there was very little chance of this materialising.

The entrant was stated as being Theodore Racing with March Engineering which is the result of a deal which sports car entrant Roger Hire has been trying to put together over the past few weeks. The idea was that Vern should have one of last year's ex-works F1 chassis and that the team should use the three DFVs Vern's sponsor Teddy Yip, of Theodore Racing, has left from his disastrous courtship with Ensign. Yip does not return to England until the middle of this week and Schuppan said there was little chance of the deal coming off.

The Australian will be competing at Brands weekend though, in the Shellsport F5000 race.

Teddy Yip has confirmed that he will continue to back Schuppan in this category in the Sid Taylor run Lola T332. This was the car that Schuppan took over from Brian Redman last year and, although he proved very fast, suffered a great deal of ill-fortune which did not allow the right results to come through.

In addition to this, there is a strong possibility that Vern will compete in the American series backed by Californian Ferrari dealer Francisco Mir.

F1 rain rule waived

When the new Silverstone pits complex is opened for the *Daily Express* International Trophy meeting on April 13 it will signify an important concession by the F1 Constructors' Association.

As a direct result of the multi thousand pound building, the Association have decided to drop their 'Rain Rule' from the regulations for this meeting and the John Player Grand Prix in July.

Because of the generally poor standard of pit facilities around the world, the regulations for most F1 races state that in the case of rain during the race the event must be stopped so that tyres can be changed and the race restarted. However the vast new area at Silverstone has persuaded the Constructors that it will be perfectly possible for drivers to come in at their own discretion to change tyres during the race in the event of rain, without the race being stopped.

This follows a recent decision by Formula 5000 drivers to drop the 'stop it if it rains' ruling. Both are decisions that will be welcomed.

Incidentally the F1 Constructors' Association has stated that they request other GP circuits to use the new Silverstone pits arrangement as a yardstick when modernising their own facilities.



One of the new Capri IIs in which Holman Blackburn will contest the Tropheé de l'Avenir.

Hermetite's European Capris

As predicted in AUTOSPORT some weeks ago, Hermetite will be contesting the Trophé de l'Avenir this year with the two ex-Boreham Capri IIs that were driven by Fitzpatrick/-Walkinshaw and Bourgoignie/Fontaine at the Spa 24 hours last year.

Both Walkinshaw and Fitzpatrick will again be driving on occasions, as with Holman Blackburn who established the team, and Mike Crabtree.

The cars have been stripped and rebuilt by Holman Blackburn's garage, Mann's of Chiddingfold, and will be prepared and maintained by them. Blackburn has been attached to Hermetite for a couple of years, now, and has been racing Group One with them for the past two years.

The Trophé de L'Avenir comprises ten races in Italy, Germany, Belgium, Spain, and Austria. The first race at Nogaro will be contested only by Blackburn and followed by the first of the four long distance races, at the Nurburgring. At each of the long distance races, the team will enter two cars for Blackburn-/Crabtree and Fitzpatrick Walkinshaw. In the smaller races, there will still be two cars, with just Blackburn and Walkinshaw driving.

Blackburn will be continuing his campaign in the Southern Organs RAC Group One championship with a Hermetite sponsored Capri II, which should be ready this weekend. As well as the national G1 series he will contest both the Avon/*Motor* tour of Britain, and the Access TT at Silverstone.

Hermetite make a wide range of sealants for engine parts and also special property paints.

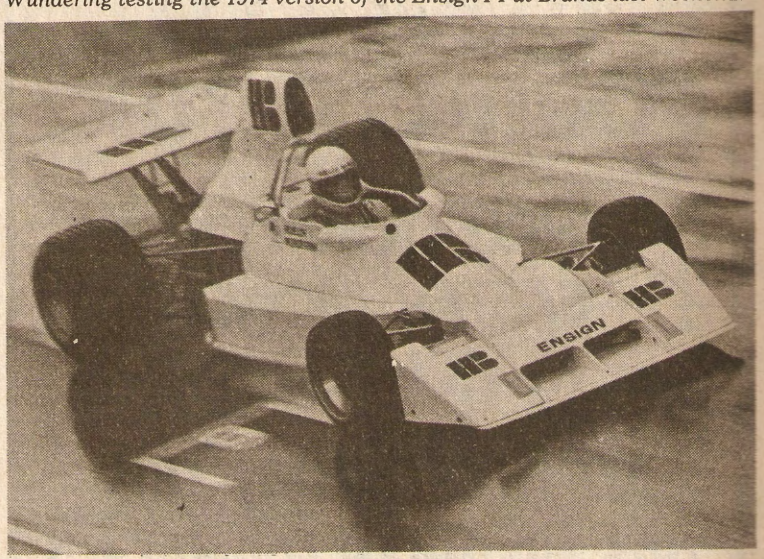
Wunderink's F1 debut

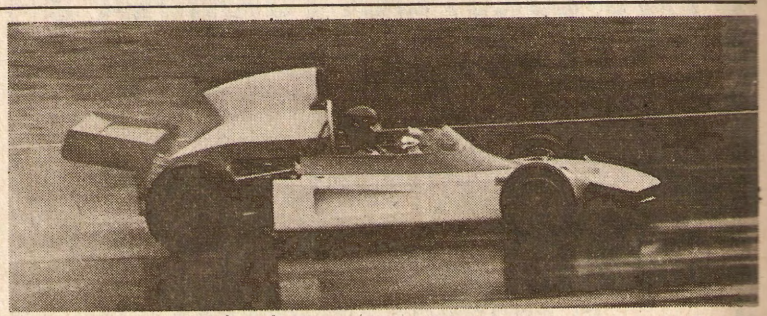
Roelof Wunderinck was at the very wet Brands Hatch long circuit test day last Saturday with the HB Alarm systems Ensign. This was only his second opportunity of driving the F1 car, which hopefully he will debut at this weekend's Race of Champions.

Mo Nunn, who is still very unhappy about his position with the F1 Constructors' Association, told us that the all new Ensign will not be ready until April. "It should be ready in time for the International Trophy at Silverstone, but we will not use it until the Spanish Grand Prix."

After missing the first three Grands Prix of the year, it is anticipated that the team will contest all the remaining races of 1975.

Wundering testing the 1974 version of the Ensign F1 at Brands last weekend.





Tony Trimmer gave the Token, now renamed Safir, a run at Brands. He hopes to race this weekend at the RoC.

Revised Token tested

A late arrival at the Brands test day last Saturday was the Safir *(nee* Token) F1 car which Tony Trimmer will drive in the Race of Champions. Trimmer tells us he has rebuilt the car "from stem to stern during the past six weeks" and that the team is hopeful of a good showing this weekend.

Although the car looked identical to last year on Saturday, it will in fact feature a new front end and cockpit surround in time for practice and other tidying up has been done by designer Ray Jessop. The car will use a DFV built up by John Nicholson which according to Trimmer is giving in the region of 447 bhp.

BMW effort to reduce F2 costs

The cost of Formula 2 has fallen. This was pointed out in Estoril last weekend by BMW's sales and service engineer Herbert Staudenmaier who said that since the formula was changed to two litres in 1972, the cost of engines has dropped. For this year, even with inflation, the BMW F2 motor costs the same as last year. However, he emphasised that just as F2 was finding a realistic economic level, the FIA have changed the regulations again for next year to accept the more costly racing engines.

However, BMW even with their current production based block which produces in the region of 285 bhp, are hopeful that they can remain competitive next year. Various camshaft modifications are expected to put them on par with the 300 bhp Renault V6 and, according to Staudenmaier, he hopes the superior torque of the punchy four cylinder engine would be able to outrun the V6 on tighter circuits like "the Nurburgring."

It's optimism like this, from people at the heart of F2, that makes the future look even brighter. If BMW remain in the Formula next year, then costs should stabilise a little more quickly.

Mallock to go F2

As hinted in last week's issue, Team Ardmore will indeed be campaigning their March in F2 this year, and the first event will be Thruxton over Easter. Ray Mallock's March, a deformable structured 75B, will be fitted with a Swindon tuned Cosworth BDG next week and should be out testing before the end of the week, Mallock doing the driving of course. Their entry has been accepted by the BARC, and it should be worth watching the battle between the Ardmore team and the Wella equipe, both in converted Formula Atlantic cars.

Scott's sponsor

Irresponsibly leaked by an over eager journalist last week was the fact that Richard Scott has lined up a major sponsor for F5000 this year.

The London Rubber Company, manufacturers of Durex, have agreed to back a new Lola T400 for Scott and the car will be run by Alan McKechnie Racing. Further details will be announced shortly.

Tom's fiftieth

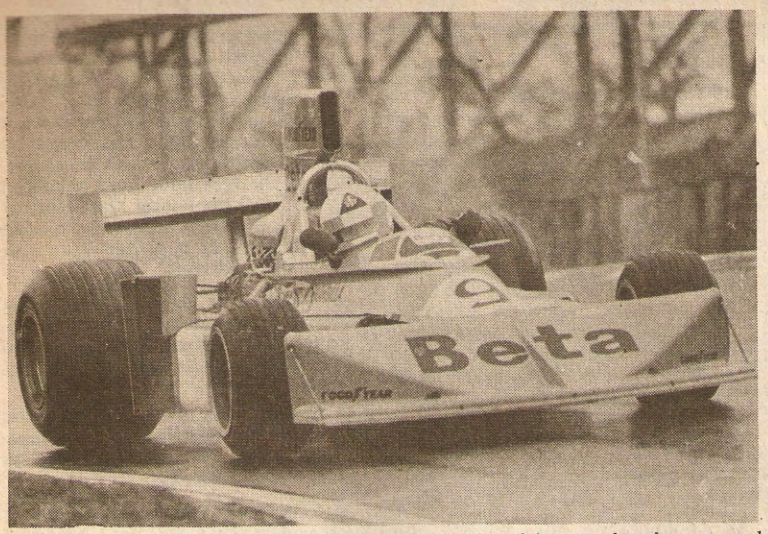
Richard Morgan's win in the John Player Formula Atlantic race at Mallory Park last Sunday was the fiftieth victory for Tom Wheatcroft as an entrant. It was, of course, Morgan's first win for Wheatcroft Racing and his first success in Formula Atlantic.

Progress is being made on Wheatcroft's own Mike Pilbeam designed car, but it will probably be at least another month before it is ready for use.

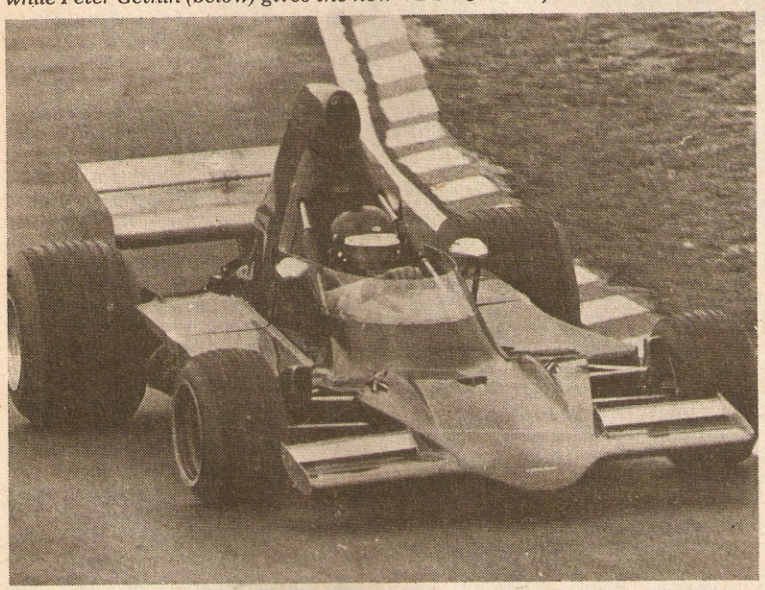
OMS up for sale

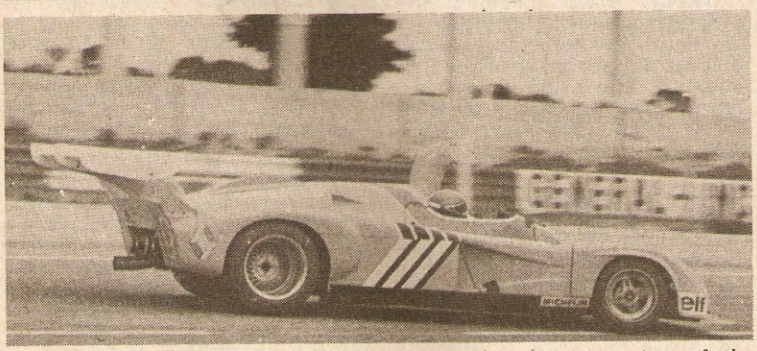
Ontario International Speedway comes up for auction at the end of this month, making the F5000 date somewhat uncertain. The circuit has always had financial problems, and at $4000 per day when *unused*, it's a tremendous financial burden for anyone.

As well as the Ontario date, the Edmonton date has been dropped from the calendar so that now, including the Ontario date, there are nine races in the calendar.

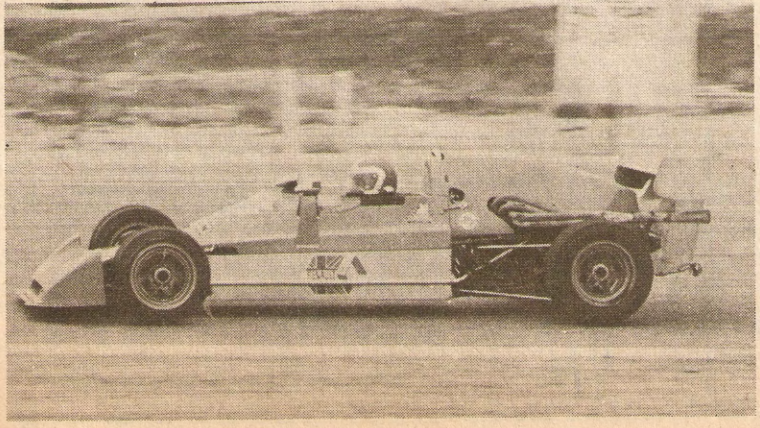


Lella Lombardi (above), Italy's women Grand Prix driver, makes her second consecutive F1 appearance in a brand new works March 751 this weekend while Peter Gethin (below) gives the new VDS F5000 its first race.





Jean-Pierre Jabouille (above) has been continuing his testing of the turbocharged Alpine-Renault sportscar at Ricard, this time fitted with Michelin tyres. Also present was Jacques Conlon (below) in the Heine Mader-prepared Lola which he will run in the Formula Super Renault series.



Samuri's G1 Toyota

As we forecast earlier this year, the Samuri Motor Company, renowned for their modsports Datsun 240Z Big Sam, were running the Toyota Celica at Mallory Park in the opening RAC/Southern Organs G1 race. They will, of course, be contesting the whole series, and got off to a very good start by scoring maximum points in the up to 1600 cc class.

The Bedfordshire based company, well known for their Datsun 240Z and 260Z road car conversions, have been lent two cars by Toyota, but while they will be initially entering one car, driven by westcountryman Win Percy, they have first to secure some sort of sponsorship before the second car enters the fray.

The car raced by Percy was the same car as raced by John Markey last year.

A number of GI competitors noted its speed during the unofficial testing at Mallory on Saturday, and Percy kept Roger Bell's Dolomite at bay for around two laps during the session.

More for F3

Dyfed Roberts, the 25-year-old farmer from Abergele, N. Wales, who has raced FF Alexis and Merlyn cars for the past four years, has bought the ex-Jose Espirito Santo F3 March 743 to contest the BP Championship. The car was rebuilt after one of Santo's accidents around an ex-Depailler F2 tub and will run this year with John Penistan-prepared Novamotor/Ford twin cam engines. Roberts, who broke both thumbs in an accident at Oulton Park which wrote off his Merlyn last year, hopes to be able to take in some Continental races as well if suitable sponsorship is forthcoming.

Kettlewell's championships

Freelance journalist Mike Kettlewell will once again be keeping track of all the MCD Championship points positions this year. These range from Shellsport F5000 to the *Kent Messenger* up to 1000cc Special Saloon championship. In addition he will be keeping tabs of the Tarmac championship and to the relief of many competittors, the Southern Organs/RAC Saloon car championship.

Anyone wishing to receive copies of the points listing after each round should write to "Ketters" at The Mill House, Station Road, Eastville, Boston, Lincs. Cost is £5.40 (incl VAT) for one championship and £3.24 (incl VAT) for each additional one.

● Ladbrokes have made Emerson Fittipaldi favourite for the Race of Champions this weekend. The full list is Fittipaldi, 9/4; Jarier and Scheckter, 7/2; Peterson, 5/1; Pryce, 8/1; Ickx, 10/1; Mass, 14/1.

Odds have also been issued for the SPARKS Celebrity race and favourite is Chay Blyth at 11/10.

Doubt over Estoril

The future of Estoril, as a solvent race circuit, looks to be seriously in jeopardy. Last weekend the Automovel Club de Portugal and the Estoril Autodromo combined resources to stage the opening round of the European F2 series. It may well have been more or less a gesture by the Portuguese to convince the rest of Europe, via the motor racing fraternity, that the political strife in their country does not effect everyday life.

Hopes of at least 30,000 spectators by the organisers were dashed, due to bad weather, and they were lucky to have attracted 5,000. Financially, the race was a disaster for the club and circuit who are already drastically short of money anyway. The circuit is adequate and very interesting and has tremendous potential but the quality of the organisation is poor to say the least.

We were told by one local that money was "no object" but no one was prepared to spend the required half a million pounds to improve and complete the circuit facilities due to the political climate.

Claude LeGuezec, of the CSI, was present "to oversee the new F2 regulations" and was not impressed with the way the meeting was handled from the organisers' point of view. The confusion over the lap charts at the end of the race was total; but Leguezec, a man of great authority in the governing of motor sport, seemed to do little. Perhaps the organisers were already condemned to extinction.

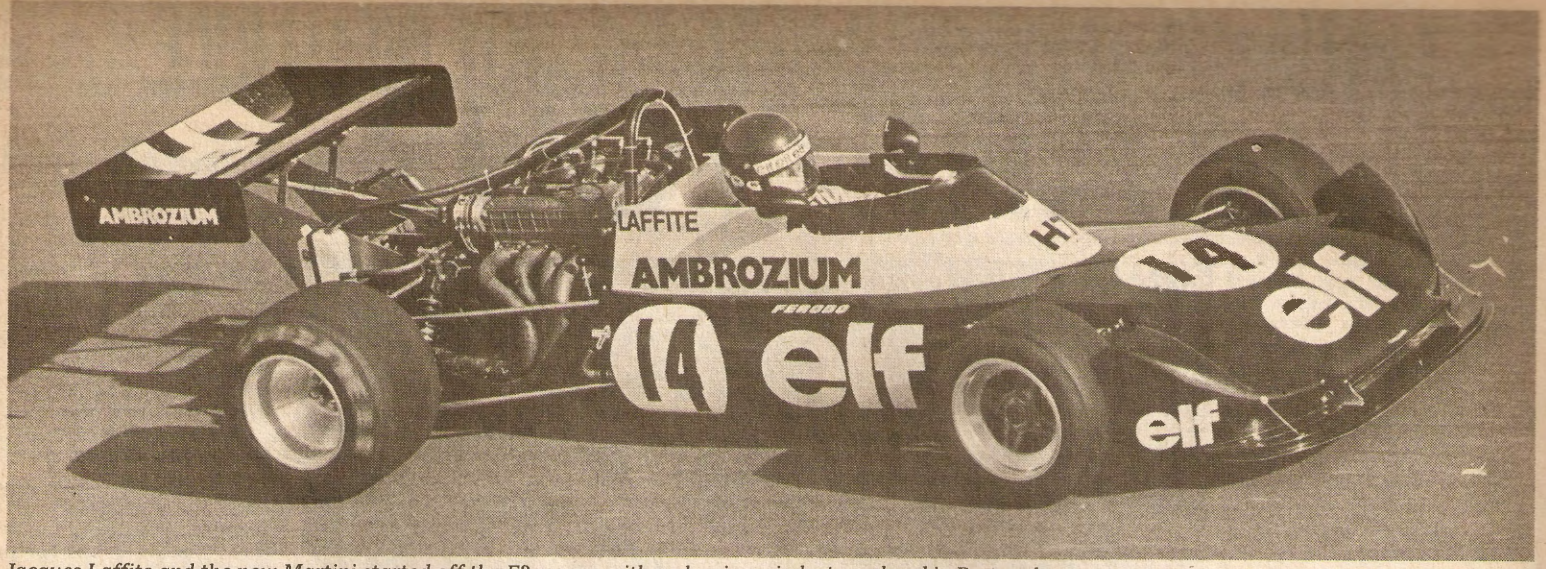
Big engined G1 Camaros

To fit, or not to fit a seven litre Chevrolet Camaro engine for G1: that is the question? Following Richard Lloyd's Group One win at Mallory Park on Sunday, it must be in the minds of some of the principal runners. The Camaro put up a fine performance, but Stuart Graham's 5.7 powered example wasn't far behind, although Graham admitted that the superior power produced superior torque in the wet conditions.

Vince Woodman is another who has a 7.4 engine, but his mill suffered piston trouble during the previous day's unofficial practice and was subsequently replaced by a 5.7 engine, whose exhaust then broke.

Of course, it isn't the first time that a 7.4 litre engine has been used. Lloyd had one fitted in his Camaro for the Snetterton round of last year's series, and although a combination of flashing lights hinted that something was wrong, the engine eventually overheated. It was this engine rebuilt that Lloyd used on Sunday.

Stuart Graham's reaction to Lloyd's 7.4 litres was "if that is as far ahead as he can get with seven litres, wait 'til I get mine," but Lloyd countered that with: "Maybe I wasn't trying as hard as I might . . ."



Jacques Laffite and the new Martini started off the F2 season with a pleasing win last weekend in Portugal.

ESTORIL F2

Laffite prevents an upset

Story and photographs by CHRIS WITTY

Before we get down to basics, let's start by saying that the opening round of this year's European F2 Championship nearly produced a real turn-up for the book. Fortunately the end result saw a worthwhile winner in Jacques Laffite debuting the brand new Schnitzer BMW-powered Martini Mk 16. As for the remaining places, let's say the fluctuating weather conditions, together with conflicting lap charts, gave a few drivers rather better starts to the season than they would have imagined.

Had it not been for a broken gear linkage, then the race would undoubtedly have gone to Loris Kessel, a 24-year-old Swiss driver from Lugano, who was having his second ever F2 race in an Ambrozium-sponsored March 742-BMW. His decision to stay on wet tyres during a race which started on a rain sodden track but later dried out, nearly paid dividends. Kessel retired just six laps from the end when well in front of Laffite.

Also in contention for victory, due to a similar decision on tyres, was fellow Swiss driver Jo Vonlanthen. Fortunately Laffite passed him near the end.

The works March-BMW of Michael Ledere and Patrick Tambay dominated the early stages but both retired soon after half distance. It was an eventful race. . . .

The Automovel Club de Portugal, having had a reputation in the past for cancelling their races at the last minute, surprised many, none more so than the actual F2 circus, by actually hosting and holding the opening round of this year's European Formula 2 Championship at the initially impressive Estoril Autodromo.

After much talk over the winter as to how the future of Formula 2 was doomed and how it had priced itself into virtual extinction, it was a particularly gladdening sight to see just who had been buying new cars and equipment during the winter lay off.

From an original entry of 23 cars, 16 actually turned up which, although it may not sound a lot, at least gave the paddock the air of growing optimism that this year's European F2 trail wouldn't be terribly different from the others.

The Estoril circuit is very impressive at first glance. To refresh the memory a little, it is situated about 30kms west of Lisbon and nestles in the foothills above the tourist resorts of Estoril and Cascais. The circuit is reminiscent of Interlagos in its layout, having a perimeter track together with a tricky internal section. In length this amounts to 4.42 kms and virtually all of it can be seen from the back of the pits or up in the two main grandstands.

The character of the actual circuit combines every type of corner and is indeed quite a test for any driver. There are three second gear hairpins of varying radius plus a couple of almost flat-out curves. The main straight sees the cars flash past the start approaching close on 160 mph while they are not much slower on the return section behind the pits. The whole emporium has a vast potential that will sadly never be realised. They would love to host a Grand Prix but admit that the mandatory £27,000 European F2 travel and prize fund is just about all they can afford. Incidentally that's about three times what F5000 can offer.

ENTRY

Naturally it was the March chassis, that were most numerous as the teams struggled into the paddock, justifiably weary after the long trek across France, Spain and most of Portugal. Coupled with the customary aggravation at the custom posts, it was a form of reward that plenty of practice was allowed *and* at reasonable hours of the day.

The last F2 race scheduled for this track was cancelled late last year when, according to the organisers, they were informed that only nine cars would be coming. Rather than risk a fiasco, they opted out and decided to rekindle their enthusiasm and resources into opening, rather than closing, a season.

However, at one stage it looked as if we were in for a repetition. Possibly we have March Engineering's Italian sales wizard Sandro Anglieri and his superb talk to thank for, the two works cars aside, there were a total of six brand new March 752s, four of them handled by Italisns. Apart from these there were a further four March 742s. Naturally all were BMW powered.

Ranged against them were two brand new French-constructed F2 cars from Martini and Elf, the prototype Italian-built Osella and a brand new Chevron B29, the latter being the only car powered by a Ford engine.

Numerically heading the entry and, for that matter, the large six car Italian contingent, was the dour faced Gabriele Serblin. He had a brand new March 752-BMW which he had tested at the Fiorano Ferrari test track in the weeks leading up to the race. Serblin's car is run by Bino Trivallato, the Italian March importer with sponsorship this year from Elba who make kitchen ware. With Serblin at the helm, Trivallato are obviously hoping that Italy's top F2 driver will give them better results than Paulo Bozzetto did last year.

Stebel, who are Italian air horn manufacturers and who backed Serblin last year, have had their support switched to Alberto Colombo's brand new Trivallato-run March 752-BMW. This is the former F3 driver's first serious attempt at F2 and, if his F3 results are anything to go by, then he should go well.

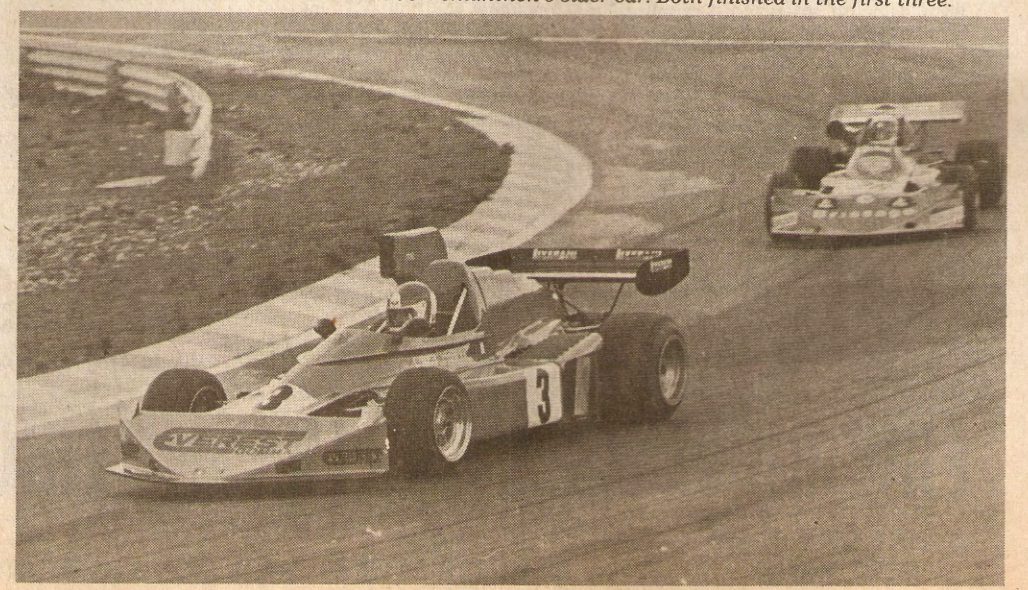
Completing the Italian quartet of new Marches were the two Everest backed cars for Formula Italia champion Lamberto Leoni and Giancarlo Martini, the latter having had several F2 outings last year also in an Everest backed car.

The new Osella F2 car which appeared at the end of last year and raced once at Vallelunga by Arturo Merzario appeared again, this time in a yellow colour scheme for last year's European Polifac F3 champion Giorgio Francia. Since it's last public outing, the car has been tested by Vittorio Brambilla who, contrary to Merzario, liked the neat compact looking car.

A second chassis is currently being completed for Duillo Truffo, but in the meantime he is making do with his March 742 which he drove for the CSAI team last year. Both cars carried support from CAR, an Italian spares part service.

From Italy, we move over to the French who were four strong. Of those, everyone was a likely

Lamberto Leoni's new March 752 leads Jo Vonlanthen's older car. Both finished in the first three.



candidate for outright victory. If Angelieri's done a sterling job on the Italian F2 recruits, then Elf in France have done equally as well in continuing their support of the formula.

The way the French petroleum company goes about their racing is very impressive and the way they have farmed out their drivers to various teams is particularly intriguing.

The two drivers with the most potential, in other words, being groomed for F1, are Michel Leclere and Patrick Tambay. Last year they both drove for the Alpine Elf team, although under separate management. This year they are together and driving for the works March team. Both are comparatively inexperienced but eager to learn. With March, Elf hope they will learn much from the Bicester concern's impressive record in the F2 Championship over the past few years.

Certainly this year sees March "up against it" for Elf, again in their wisdom, have given them two potent foils with which to contend with.

Jean-Pierre Jabouille, last year's Alpine Elf team leader, has been given a free hand to construct and race his own car under his own team. The Frenchman's engineering expertise is reflected in the new machine which made its debut in Portugal and promptly caused a stir.

It wasn't until the beginning of December that Jabouille got the go ahead to construct his new F2 for this year. He explained that Alpine weren't prepared to build a new car, preferring to concentrate on next year's Renault engined model and their sports cars. The new car was started on December 20, Jabouille having designed it entirely by himself.

It features a tubular frame rather than a monococque, Jabouille preferring this method of construction which he doesn't reckon to be a disadvantage, weight-wise, over a monocoque. The water radiator is front mounted with the oil rads tucked in at the side. All the fuel is carried between the driver and engine. Power naturally comes from one of Josef Schnitzer's reverse inlet BMW engines.

The car had only managed 50kms of testing at Dijon prior to Estoril and in fact, although it was clothed in an attractive all enveloping body, Jabouille apologised for the car's tattiness: "It looks like sheet" he mused, but promised an improvement for Thruxton.

The car has nothing to do at all with Alpine, having been built in a little garage in Paris, "a little bigger than dis," pointing to the circuit's garaging facilities. A second chassis is being built to be driven by Gerald Larrousse and this will, hopefully, appear at Thruxton.

Larrousse was originally entered for Estoril in an old Elf 2 but as Jabouille explained, the old car doesn't have the new mandatory deformable structures and wouldn't comply.

The second all new French car was the Tico Martini designed F2 for Jacques Laffite. This is the first F2 built by the Magny-Cours based team and, like Jabouille's car, everything had been a bit of a rush job because the team were convinced the race would be cancelled. The car was also fitted with a Schnitzer BMW engine.

The single car team is sponsored by Elf while Laffite has brought along some additional support from Ambrozium H7, a Swiss health tonic. The team is managed by Hughes de Chaunac who last year looked after the Leclere/Serpaggi F2 equipe.

A mere handful of laps at Magny-Cours, prior to Laffite jetting off to South Africa for the GP, was the Mk16's initial testing. On arrival in Portugal, the team were still building the car. However, de Chaunac admitted after practice that they were very surprised the car was working as well as the lap times suggested. Like the Elf 2J, a second monocoque chassis is being constructed with minor alterations although new bodywork is envisaged for Thruxton. Laffite will test it at Paul Ricard next week.

Both the works Elf Marches (now painted royal blue) were more or less unchanged from their original customer specifications. Wayne Eckersley was again in charge of the team which now had a new crew plus another new face; the team's F2 development engineer Martin Walters.

Originally a Cosworth employee, which is where he first met Robin Herd, Walters (who hails from South Wales) originally started his term of employee at March's engine division in Reading at the beginning of 1973. He moved onto the "shop floor" last year, looking after the sports car effort and this year intends to devote his time to the F2 team.

Leclere's car was the chassis in which the team have been carrying out all their testing at Ricard (this amounted to three days) and was more or less sorted. Tambay's was a brand new car and had, like several of the customer's cars, never turned a wheel before. Power for both cars from works BMW engines prepared by the ever present Paul Rosche. According to BeeEms engine man, the units are unchanged from those used right at the end of last season.

Josef Schnitzer on the other hand admitted that *he* had carried out development work over the winter and had modified several areas. "Rather than tell them all to you" he said "let us say I have made about 20 modifications." They were items like new inlet valves, modified Mahle pistons, a different type of clutch (a German made FUS) and many more. The three-plus per cylinder arrangement had been dropped as Schnitzer said "it proved too expensive and there was only a small increase in horsepower anyway."

Runner up to Francia in last year's Polifac F3 series was a 26 year old Austrian by the name of Hans Binder. Well, he appeared with a brand new March 752 and Schnitzer BMW power, to embark on his second foray into F2. Also on hand to oversee the team's first proper effort was former Grand Prix driver Helmut Marko. A large insignia on the car showed additional support from the Raiffiesen Bank (the same people who helped Niki Lauda) and one couldn't help noticing Binder's similarity to his fellow countryman in some ways. This was reflected by his driving style later on.

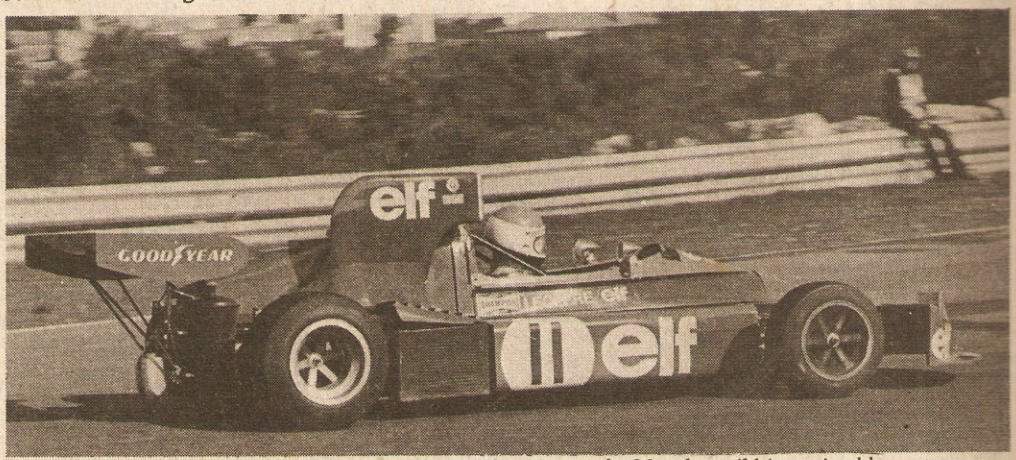
The final new March was that of twice German F3 champion Willi Deutsch who had backing from Warsteiner Breweries and, like Binder, ran with a Schnitzer BMW engine.

Everyone was a little worried as Friday evening drew in and still no truck had appeared. Competitors had to make do with what was already fitted to their cars and this turned out, in many cases, to be a very strange mixture of compounds and constructions.

Finally the truck arrived, an employee explaining that it wasn't a customs hold-up that had delayed them after all. Apparently Goodyear had only delivered the batch of F2 tyres on Tuesday and consequently, the whole operation was hopelessly behind schedule before it had started. Still, everything was resolved for the race but spare a thought for the two unfortunate tyre fitters who worked themselves black and blue servicing the entire field in the two hours available before practice got underway.

Goodyear brought along three types of dry tyre plus a wet. However everyone opted between the G50 and G51s, both of them being to Formula Atlantic specification:

Prior to the first official session, Leclere had cut in the fastest lap so far at 1m 36.4s late on Friday. The track was still slightly damp in parts from the ever threatening rain showers that were to prove their worth on race day. Tambay in the second works March was somewhat slower but unlike Leclere, had a very strange set of tyres on and even tried the higher profile (and now obsolete) 25in diameter rears at one stage. The only dramas within the team affected Tambay when an oil line came adrift from a pick-up on the cylinder head and sprayed lubricant onto the exhaust. "I saw them waving at me in the pits and, remembering a similar instance at Karlskoga last year when I didn't know what they were doing and crashed, I switched off immediately," explained Tambay.



Poleman Michel Leclere led the early stages with the new works March until his engine blew up.

Completing the March entry were Swiss drivers Jo Vonlanthen and Loris Kessel in their 742s, the former still with support from Chiclets and Brissago and awaiting delivery of his new March 752 for Thruxton, complete with Schnitzer BMW. Vonlanthen was originally mooted to be driving for Team Surtees but declined the offer when, according to Vonlanthen, Surtees wanted all the money before hand. Kessel's car, like Laffite, had support from Ambrozium H7 and is owned by Jean-Claude Favre. Finally there was the ex-Laffite BP Racing modified March 742 for Swiss Jörg Siegfrist.

Last, but certainly not least, was the second British *marque* represented, this being the Fred Opert entry for the young 19 year old Mexican Hector Rebaque. The car had never run until practice, even though it was on show at the Racing Car Show in January. Opert intends to run Rebaque, who raced Atlantic in Britain last year, in the first five F2 races before contesting the American and Canadian Player's series. This latest Chevron looked really attractive and was the only car with a Ford engine, naturally a Brian Hart alloy-blocked BDA, although of three years vintage.

PRACTICE

There were only two 90 minute timed sessions allocated as official practice and this took place on Saturday. However, virtually everyone took the opportunity of Friday's long unofficial afternoon training period while even earlier arrivals sampled the track alongside the local boy racers the day before.

The target time was naturally the course record held by Jean-Pierre Jarier's works March 732-BMW back in 1973 at 1m 35.87s although the Frenchman had gone slightly quicker in practice.

The major drama on Friday was the non-arrival of the Goodyear tyre truck. With Firestone having pulled out, Goodyear are exclusively supplying everyone with relevant rubber wear through Bernie Ecclestone's new company *and* at increased cost.

As for Laffite and Jabouille, the newness of their cars was very much in evidence at this juncture, the Elf 2J suffering from fluctuating fuel pressure which was eventually traced to dirt in the fuel pump. However it required an engine change between sessions to cure it although Jabouille said he was never able to manage more than one flying lap before the misfire cut in.

Laffite's car seemed cured of its fuel and oil pressure problems that had ailed it during its pre-race shakedown but the only regular Grand Prix driver present was still settling himself in. The team had a clutch release problem early on but this was soon rectified. The lower lip on the nose was also lengthened and strengthened following "grounding out" around the track.

The first official practice was about 35 minutes old when the drama started. Then in the space of five minutes, three further incidents occured that looked to put the whole meeting in jeopardy.

It was during Giancarlo Martini's first exploritory lap that it happened. The Italian March was just entering the fast 3rd gear sweep onto the long main straight when a rear left tyre deflated and he spun to a very sudden stop. Then a matter of moments later, the unfortunate Siegrist had a rear left tyre deflate while hurtling past the pits. The car turned sharp right into the pit wall at around 140 mph and came to rest slightly battered about one side near the pit exit lane. To start with, both incidents seemed isolated enough not to be connected. Then Colombo tore past the pits and prepared to dab his brakes for the tricky 3rd gear corner after the main straight. Once again a rear tyre looked to have collapsed and the brand new March 752 thumped itself hard into the catch fencing and then the Armco barrier. The Italian had just started his walk back to the pits when Leoni, Martini's team-mate, suffered a similar fate. Watching the Formula Italia champion cope with a blow out at over 150 mph was quite exhilarating.

He brought the car to rest undamaged, hopped out and turned to Colombo. The Latin gesticulations were enough to convey his feelings!

After what seemed an age, the organisers decided to curtail practice and add the remaining fifteeen minutes onto the following afternoon session.

The cause of the tyre blow-outs was quickly traced to the actual wheels themselves. The two Everest cars, Colombo's and Siegfrist's, were all running on a combination of Speedking and Gotti Italian manufactured rims. Neither had a sufficiently large safety lip inside (the Gotti didn't have any) and consequently when the tyres grew at speed, the sidewalls sucked in and the tyre collapsed. Fortunately March themselves had sufficient spare rims to give to the bewildered Italians.

Colombo's car was well rooted but he just happened to have the only spare car available, this being Serblin's 742 from last year. As for Siegrist, he began performing a miracle repair job on his car, borrowing what he could and spending all night manufacturing new parts out of tube in order to qualify for his start money. It was a noble effort.

When the times were released for the first session, it was evident that the March v Martini battle was on. Tambay ended up quickest on 1m 37.07s with Laffite's wheel lifting Martini exactly a tenth behind. Leclere was a further half second adrift while Binder (who impressed in his pursuit of Leclere for many laps) and the tigering Serblin were the only others to break into the 37s. As for the unfortunate Rebaque, he never even made the session as the tyres couldn't be fitted in time.

Conditions improved considerably for the afternoon and the sun actually made the effort to thoroughly dry out the damp patches that had remained during the morning.

The times started to tumble down towards the circuit record and it became evident that just four Frenchmen were in the ball park. Binder also looked to be trying, the Austrian always on the lookout for a works March and the works Marches always trying to avoid performing such favours.

The heat was on and first to show the way was Tambay who brought himself right into contention by breaking into the 34s bracket. He was trying hard, perhaps too hard as he admitted afterwards, for when Leclere and the irrepressible Laffite both bettered his time, Tambay was a little dejected. Jabouille was also given a time under the record but although his new car looked impressive out on the circuit, Jean-Pierre reckoned he never got anywhere near it.

Binder's progress would certainly have improved had his Schnitzer engine not let go and the team had to negotiate with Laffite to borrow his spare. A big surprise were the two candidates who were destined to occupy row three. Vonlanthen's time was regarded as a little optimistic whereas the Rebaque certainly wasn't.

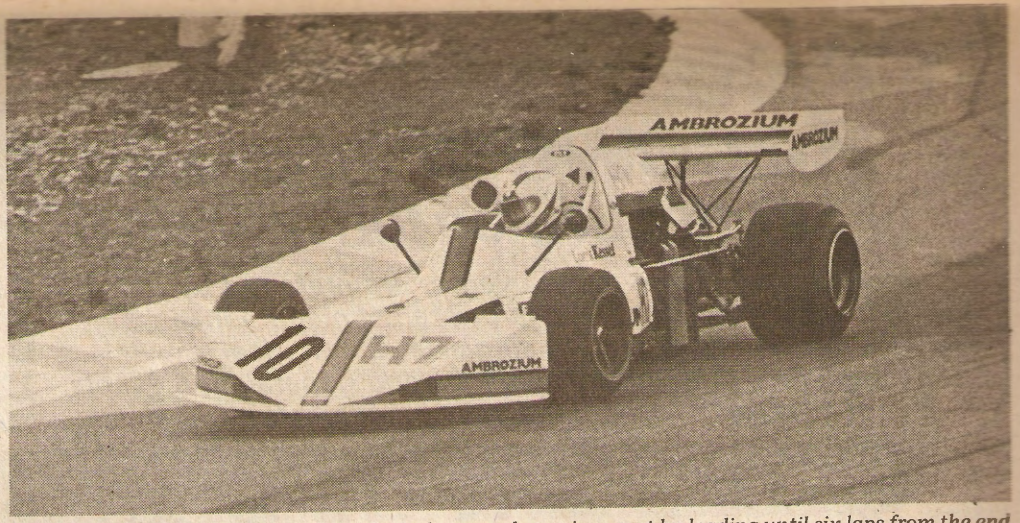
The young Mexican who had a poor and unimpressive year in British Atlantic races last year, sudeenly got it altogether. The bright yellow Chevron got quicker and quicker as Hector constantly exited the tighter corners in full powerslides, the Hart motor sounding crisp and powerful.

RACE

Prior to the race, which was due to start at 4.00 pm but in fact started an hour late, there was an untimed warm-up session in the morning. Everyone took advantage of this. Jabouille's car was more or less cured, Binder's new engine had developed a bad misfire, Truffo was running in a new engine, Kessel blew one, Siegrist qualified and Rebaque blotted his copybook by "over correcting" on one of the hairpins and thumping the left front corner. It was fixed by Opert's mechanics in time for the race.

Some fifteen minutes before the start, large black storm clouds moved in from the surrounding mountains and proceeded to drop one helluva lot of water. It meant that the track became pretty wet and everyone started on wets, Jabouille opting for a harder compound (from last year) in case it dried out. After all, his car, like Francia's, had a four stud wheel fixing and that would cost valuable time had they to make pit stops for slicks. And that is exactly what happened.

Neither Leclere nor Laffite made particularly good getaways but Jabouille and Serblin did, the Italian swerving around the helpless Rebaque who sat with his hands aloft to indicate a dead engine. The car refused to fire afterwards (due to cold plugs) and when he did get going several laps down, he suffered a puncture and the engine played up again in the pits so he quit.



The unknown Swiss driver Loris Kessel nearly caused a major upset by leading until six laps from the end in his Ambrozium March 742.

Jabouille slithered into the first corner but slid a little too wide at the second and the incredible Serblin, chased hard by Leclere, Laffite, Tambay and the fast rising Francia, was through in a flash. Leclere, anxious to get clear and use his brilliant wet weather skill to an advantage, closed right in on the Italian, getting neatly chopped twice before slipping through on the inside approach to the long main straight. From then onward he pulled away at 3s a lap.

Jacques Laffite Martini-BMW Mk 16/1 1m 34.87s	Michel Leclere March-BMW 752/9 1m 34.61s
Jean-Pierre Jabouille Elf 2J-BMW 75/1 1m 35.17s	Patrick Tambay March-BMW 752/12 1m 34.92s
Hector Rebaque Chevron-Ford B29/3 1m 35.83s	Jo Vonlenthan March-BMW 742/5 1m 35.71s
Gabriele Serblin March-BMW 752/4 1m 35.95s	Hans Binder March-BMW 752/10 1m 35.94s
Duillo Truffo March BMW 742/21 1m 36.68s	Giorgio Francia Osella-BMW PA2/1 1m 36.52s
Loris Kessel March-BMW 742/27 1m 36.93s	Lamberto Leoni March-BMW 752/3 1m 36.75s
Willi Deutsch March-BMW 752/13 1m 38.49s	Alberto Colombo March-BMW 742/15 1m 37.36s
Jorg Siegrist March-BMW 742/24 1m 53.14s	Giancarlo Martini March-BMW 752/15 1m 41.17s

Serblin still kept Laffite, Tambay, Francia and Jabouille in station but a spin by the Elf 2J driver on the second lap dropped him to the rear of the field.

Tambay succeeded in ousting Laffite out around the back on the second lap only to spin on the treacherous surface a lap later and lose out on his two pursuers. By lap 5, Leclere was an incredible 16s clear of Serblin who, in turn, spun and allowed Laffite and a recovered Tambay after their fellow countryman. Serblin's spin dropped him just in front of the impressive Francia, and then came a large gap to Truffo, Kessel, Vonlanthen, Leoni and Martini, the latter making a pit stop after 7 laps to investigate bottoming. Deutsch, who had climbed to the 7th by lap 3, had to stop to replace a puncture while Binder's expected progress was seriously hampered by clutch failure as he left the line.

Up front, as the track started to dry out, it was noticeable that Tambay was gaining on his team-mate. The gap started to shrink, little by little. 12.4s, 11.5s, 9.9s, 8.2s, 6.2s, 3.6s, 2.0s and then, on lap 19, down to a mere one second. What is more, Laffite had been tucked in behind Tambay and all signs pointed to a superb three way battle. Then the Martini performed a lurid spin, just dinging the rear wing on the barrier as he did so.

Leclere, was, by now, having to cope with growing understeer and all hopes of yet another works one-two were diminishing. Tambay shaped to pass along the straight while they were lapping Jabouille, the latter having made a pitstop to change a puncture. He waited momentarily, assessing the situation before moving through and immediately pulling away from his ailing team-mate.

Laffite, following his misdemeanour from which he was rather fortunate in restarting as the exhaust had collected some mud up its orifice and the battery only just caught the churning starter, now found Serblin making a spirited attack while further back Kessel (despite an early spin) and Leoni had passed Vonlanthen's sick sounding March for sixth and seventh respectively.

Serblin passed Laffite at exactly half distance, both of them 21s behind Leclere. Tambay, on the other hand, was now over 5s clear but then the drama and chaos started.

First Tambay's front left tyre threw its tread passing the pits and almost simultaneously, Francia's did the same. So lap 26 saw Tambay limp in but, just to confuse the March team, Leclere also came in, joining Francia as the pair screamed down the pit road. From then on the others began to follow like flies.

This put Serblin into the lead for two laps before he too swooped in to change over to slicks. Who should now hit the front but Kessel followed by Colombo, his rear wing now at an alarming angle after a stay had snapped. But he too was soon to pit. The only people not to at this stage were Kessel and Vonlanthen, both of whom now headed the field. Oh no!

More or less everyone had made their stops but Leclere's car was now spluttering, badly. It signalled the end for as he pottered around at a greatly reduced speed, the engine let go in a cloud of smoke. A broken cam follower was suspected. Tambay, climbing back towards the front with Laffite, then made another stop to complain of fading rear brakes. He was sent on his way only to slide off into the catch fencing two laps later. A broken caliper seal had leaked out most of the fluid.

Serblin was another to go. A lap after he changed to slicks, he spun at one particularly notorious left hander at the end of the back straight. He resumed only to go straight on at the same place a lap later. The marshals (that's what they're called) pushed him back towards the track, realised he shouldn't receive outside assistance, and pushed him back again. He wasn't happy about it to say the least!

Kessel maintained his lead, still on wets. Despite signs to pit, the young driver from Lugano kept on going, his crew unaware that his clutch had packed up soon after the start and he wouldn't have been able to resume. He continued to lead for 16 laps, becoming involved in a furious scrap with Francia (now on dries) for what he thought was a lead dice. The Swiss driver's moment of glory took a dive just six laps from the end when a bolt broke in his gear linkage.

According to some, this put Vonlanthen, who chose to soldier on with wet tyres (he wasn't going quickly enough to wear them out that fast), into the lead. Fortunately the Martini of Laffite was able to make up sufficient ground during the final stages (after his stop) to avert what would have been one helluva upset. But, had Kessel not retired, it's doubtful that Laffite would have caught him.

2nd Grand Prix do Estoril
March 9, 50 laps — 221.00 kms
European F2 Championship — round 1

1, Jacques Laffite (Martini Mk 16-Schnitzer BMW), 1hr 35m 05.83s, 137.228 kph;
2, Jo Vonlanthen (March 742-BMW), 1 hr 35m 36.02s;
3, Lamberto Leoni (March 752-BMW), 1 hr 35m 36.40s;
4, Giorgio Francia (Osella PA2-BMW), 1hr 35m 17.88s, 49 laps.
5, Duillo Truffo (March 742-BMW), 1hr 35m 24.01s, 49 laps;
6, Giancarlo Martini (March 752-BMW), 1hr 35m 06.37s, 48 laps.
7, Alberto Colombo (March 742-BMW), 1hr 35m 49.45s, 48 laps; 8, Jean-Pierre Jabouille (Elf 2J-Schnitzer BMW), 1hr 35m 55.00s, 48 laps; 9, Hans Binder (March 752-Schnitzer BMW), 1 hr 36m 27.86s, 48 laps; 10, Jorg Siegrist (March 742-BMW), 1 hr 36m 46.21s, 45 laps.

Fastest lap: Francia, 1m 44.06s, 150.490 kph.



"It was the same place where Peter Revson was killed last year and if it wasn't for that fence instead of the Armco I think I'd be history now too."

The advertising slogan for Coca Cola tells you it;s the Real Thing, Martini claims to be The Right One. They are both wrong. For me The Real Thing was winning the South African Grand Prix. For me it was The Right One.

Last year when I won my first ever GP in Sweden I figured that was going to be the most memorable GP win in my career. It wasn't until I stood up on the winner's rostrum at Kyalami that I realised how proud I really felt over winning my own country's Grand Prix. Every kid who ever build his own orange crate go-kart with a pair of pram wheels secretly likes to believe that he's going to get out there and win The Big One some day.

In 1971 when I ran in the Formula Ford race at Kyalami, winning my Driver to Europe ticket, I didn't have an ambition that said one day you've got to come back here and win the GP. All I wanted to do then was to be able to come back one day and run in the GP. I'm not an emotional person but I don't mind telling you that there was an enormous lump in my throat up there on that rostrum.

It was the end of a weekend full of dramas. So much so that if it had been made into a film script the producer would have said, "take it away it's too corny."

On the first day of practice I'd been fourth fastest behind the two Brabhams and Lauda's Ferrari. The second day I'd devoted myself to hauling myself off the second row and on to the front row. All through that last session with the clocks ticking away against us I'd been whittling down the times. Little improvements here and small adjustments there were making the car feel better and better. After our disappointment in Brazil and Argentina it really began to look good.

There in the last moments of practice I figured everything was as right as it was ever going to be. It was getting towards that cool time of evening so we slipped on a new set of tyres and off we went. I moved up on Emerson, caught him and made use of his slip stream and zoomed past him —here we were all set for a flyer—the golden lap This was going to be for the pole position. It really was. Then coming into Barbeque Corner it got all "loose" at the back. It went once and I collected it, the next time it went I caught it and the third time it was just too much. She swapped ends and suddenly we were doing around 140 mph and I was a passenger.

I remember thinking, Christ Ken will be annoyed. Then I tucked my head down and braced my arms on the wheel. I could feel the catch fence on the sides of the car and I was waiting for the big bump. Then all of a sudden it was like jumping into deep water. The car stopped quite slowly and there was no great juddering and none of that terrible noise of metal and glass fibre fragmenting. I looked up to see myself enmeshed in two layers of fence. The fence was down for about 100 metres up the road. It was the same place where Peter Revson was killed last year and if it wasn't for that fence instead of the Armco I think I'd be history now too.

The car didn't look too bad so I trotted back and told Ken that I thought it was still possible to make it a runner. Later Ken said I'd make a lousy insurance assessor. He said it was a runner like a man with one leg was a runner.

And this was 007/6 our latest car with all the "goodie" new front and rear suspension bits. Happily the goodie bits were not damaged so Ken and Roger Hill, our chief mechanic, decided they would transfer them to the spare car. So in the "day off" between practice and the race they did a complete swap job and made the spare car race ready. There was a one hour unofficial practice session on race morning and during that time we were going to have to shake the car down and try to get it into the same running trim as the one I'd shunted. No easy task.

I was four laps into the session when the engine tightened up. I grabbed for the cut-out switch hopefully before all the dials read £9,000! So there I was with another long walk back to the pits with another sad story to tell Ken. Worse than that was the prospect of a high speed engine change and starting the race with an unsorted car and a brand new engine.

Roger and the boys really excelled themselves getting a new engine into the car in three hours, a job that usually takes four. At this point we figured there wasn't much else bad that could go wrong, so I went back to the hotel for lunch. There was nothing wrong with the lunch and I began to think that life was getting better. The helicopter laid on to lift me into the circuit was on time and things really were looking better — until the door of the chopper flew open in mid-flight. The pilot had the whole thing under control though . . . he shook his head and said, "don't worry, we could use a little fresh air in here."

The flag dropped and I made a perfect start from the inside of the second row. I jumped past Reutemann in the first fifty metres and then on the long run down into Crowthorne tucked in behind Carlos Pace to make the meat in a Brabham sandwich. The first two laps were critical for I was working at holding my second place and at the same time finding out how the car was handling. The simple answer was, good. On the third lap I ducked out from behind Carlos in the braking aréa at Crowthorne and slipped past into the lead.

The next lap the brakes went all spongy and I thought to myself, the bloody gremlins are back again. They stayed spongy all through the race and so long as I pumped them to keep the pressure as they were okay. You can imagine that where there were two corners close together I was going at it like Fred Astaire in the cockpit there. I still have a blister on the side of my foot from the heel-toe tactics.

Reutemann overtook his team mate and started to put the pressure on but I managed to keep between two and four seconds as a gap. My pit boards told that I was lapping consistently in the 1m 19s all the time. Then for about five laps Reutemann closed right up onto my tail filling my mirrors. I managed to find a little more concentration and urged myself on a bit. The traffic helped a little, I think I got lucky with it and it caught Carlos the other way. Anyway, I managed to build up my four second cushion again and felt happier. A few laps from the end the marshals were waving blue flags at me like mad. I checked my mirrors but Carlos was still back there and I couldn't work out what the drama was. Why the flags? Then I looked more closely and saw that they were completely carried away with the idea of a South African victory and they were waving to me with what ever was in their hands.

As we crossed the line Carlos was 3.5s behind me and just behind him was my team mate Patrick Depallier holding off a challenge from the other Carlos in the other Brabham — the whole place seemed to be full of various Carloses in various Brabhams.

When I got in from the lap of honour Ken said to me that he thought I'd started my victory celebrations a little early. I smelt like a brewery. We'd ridden round the track on the back of the fire tender and spectators had been throwing beer, brandy and whiskey at us. The track was solid all the way round with spectators who'd jumped over the fences. I was really thrilled that my victory had given them so much satisfaction and pleasure.

Alex Blignaut, the man who puts the whole show together, looked very shame-faced after all the drama had died away. He confessed that for the past ten years they'd been taking a record of the South African National anthem to the race and never ever used it. This year, for the first time ever, they had overlooked to bring it. Which accounted for the lack of music at the traditional moment.

The following day at the garden party prize-giving it all turned to gold for me. The organising club celebrated the first-ever South African win in the SA GP by presenting me with a set of proof gold Kruger rands and then on top of that I was thrilled to receive the nomination for the *Prix Rouge et Blanc* which is another little nugget of the yellow metal mined in my country.

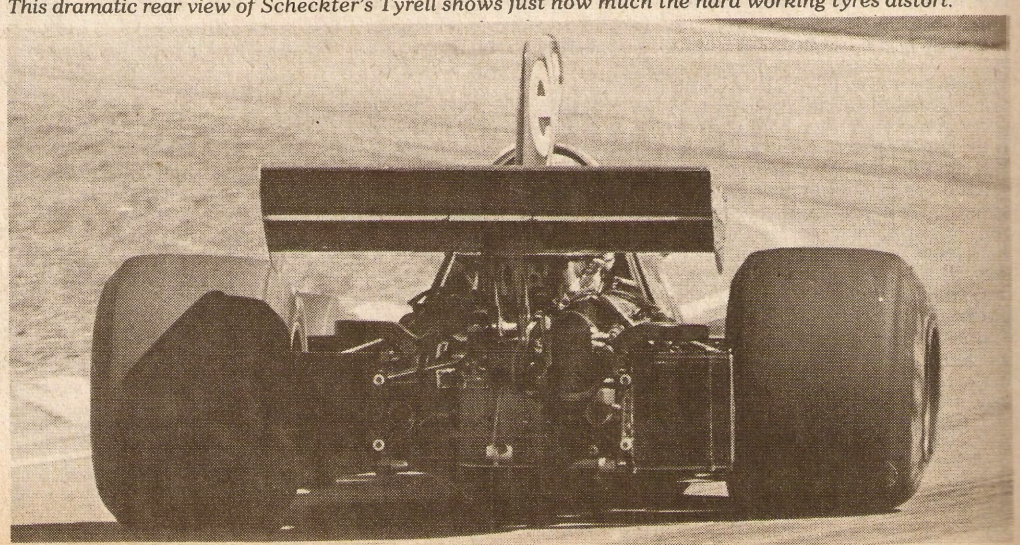
I feel really proud to have made history for my country but the sad thing is that it's only my name that will go down in the record books because it was truly a classic example of a team effort.

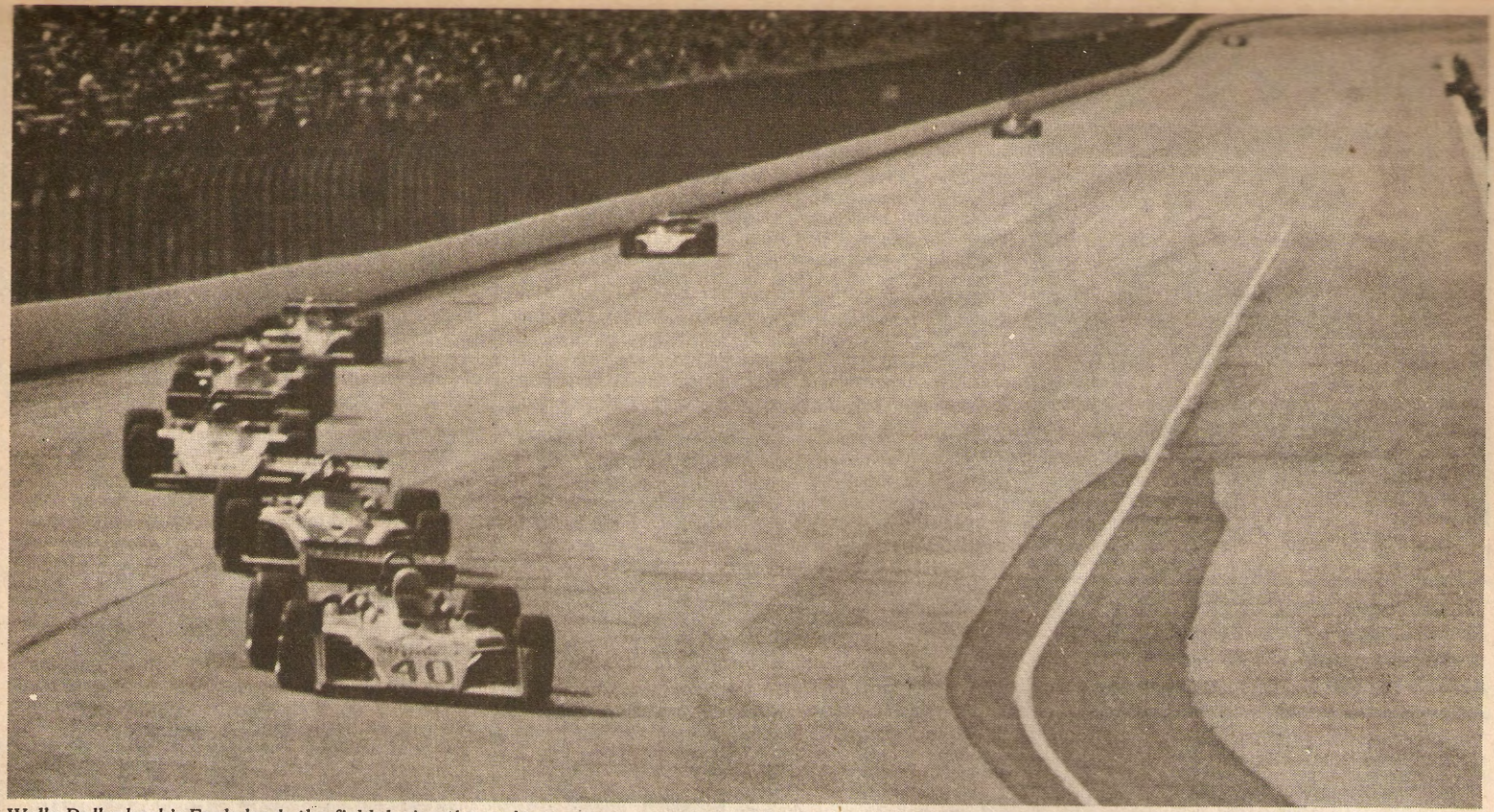
Ken, Derek and Roger and the mechanics really did a fantastic job picking up the trail of rubble that I seemed to be leaving behind me and creating something raceable out of it. I really do believe that they have this happy knack of turning disasters into victories. Jackie Stewart, who was there doing the radio commentary, reminded me that in 1973 he'd tossed his car into the fence and ruined it in practice and Roger and the boys had rebuilt it and he'd gone on and won the race.

Patrick says that he's already made his plans for the French Grand Prix. He's going to write his car off in practice, blow an engine on race morning and come to the circuit in a helicopter with one door hanging off.

What I haven't told him is that I'm sure my lucky omen for the weekend was the baby frog who lived for two days in my shower at the hotel. How do you tell a Frenchman that he should get himself a Frog as a mascot?

This dramatic rear view of Scheckter's Tyrell shows just how much the hard working tyres distort.





Wally Dallenbach's Eagle leads the field during the early stages.

CALIFORNIA 500/ONTARIO

Foyt's Coyote howls home

Story by GORDON KIRBY Photos by CHARLES LORING

It's taken a full year in coming, a full year of picking up the pieces and trying again and again. But last Sunday, at Ontario Motor Speedway, the pieces fitted together perfectly for A. J. Foyt as he drove his Coyote away from all the others into a totally unchallenged 500 mile victory. A. J. did it in precisely the manner that he likes to win motor races. He won himself pole position by a handsome margin, he won his qualifying race by a full lap after leading every one of the forty laps and he won the 500 in a similar style, by over forty seconds from Bobby Unser's Eagle. Foyt's dominance was such that he was able to sit through a couple of muffed pit stops and maintain a comfortable cushion even while Unser's team worked a series of rapid, faultless stops on their Eagle. This was one 500-miler which was over just as soon as A. J. bent his way into the first turn of the first lap.

Other than Bobby Unser, all the other challengers disappeared with some kind of engine trouble. Wally Dallenbach, driving the Patrick Racing Eagle, chased hard after Unser for lap after lap only to be forced in with a broken piston within 50 miles of the finish. Team mate Gordon Johncock gave the Sinmast Wildcat a fine debut but, after sitting comfortably in the wake of Unser and Dallenbach, he had to give up due to a burst radiator hose. Also running comfortably with this lot had been Johnny Rutherford's Gatorade McLaren but his Offenhauser devoured a piston before the halfway mark. Al Unser had been able to lead his brother in the early stages but just after the first fuel stop his Viceroy Eagle became the first of the front runners to drop out with, you guessed it, a burned piston. Viceroy team mate Mario Andretti managed only fifteen laps among the midfield before a broken connecting rod stopped his Eagle while 23-year old Pancho Carter went well until his Cobre Tire Eagle broke its gearbox.

All of this attrition allowed a hard-trying Steve Krisiloff to finish third, three laps behind Foyt in this, his first drive for J. C. Agajanian with the Lodeston Eagle. Fourth, two additional laps behind, came Lee Kunzman having his first race in a Cobre Tire Eagle since crashing badly a year ago. John Martin brought his old McLaren into fifth, two laps down on Kunzman and clear of Tom Sneva whose pace was slowed by tyre troubles in his debut in the Penske Racing Norton Spirit McLaren. The other five finishers limped home many laps behind.

Indeed, had it not been for Foyt's brilliant display, this would have been a long, dull grind to the end.

Things are not well with USAC and their National Championship series. Perhaps it is the galloping costs of maintaining a competitive car, perhaps it is the guarded and grim economic climate which has taken root in America this past winter. Whatever combination of those two inequalities is at work, there is but one word to describe USAC's 1975 outlook. That word is uncertainty.

There is uncertainty about the future format of the USAC National Championship. There is uncertainty about future regulations. There is uncertainty about the capabilities of many of the teams to campaign a full season. And last weekend the outlook was confused even more by major uncertainties about the future of Ontario Motor Speedway.

Southern California's own great super speedway had been riddled with financial troubles ever since the first concrete was poured more than six years ago. It's a behemoth of a place, situated in a prime real estate area of the Los Angeles hinterlands. Jim Cook, vice-president of the Ontario Motor Speedway Corporation says the facility devours at least $4,000 per day in taxes, salaries and maintenance costs alone. Last year the holding company lost at least $100,000 and there are certain, usually thoroughly believable persons who will tell you that figure is closer to one million dollars. The one thing that is clear is that Ontario Motor Speedway is a losing proposition of major proportions. It would seem almost definite that the city of Ontario will take over ownership of the Speedway and offer it for bids at the end of this month. One can therefore only sketch the future of both Ontario and the California 500 as doubtful.

This then was the vague and uncertain cloak which fell across the USAC entrants as they gathered together, some three weeks ago, to begin preparing for their opening race of 1975. There were, at least, some new sponsors showing their colours for the first time and a few of the many reorganised teams seemed to house a new potential for offering some much-needed competition to the established kings of USAC.

Heading the entry was the club's National Champion, Bobby Unser who would be driving the same trusty Eagle which has carried him through the last two seasons. For 1975 the Eagle has been repainted in the pale blue colours of Jorgensen Steel who have expanded their support of Dan Gurney's Formula 5000 team to include a single USAC entry for Unser. But the budget is a tight one and right now there is money enough for Bobby to run only the three 500s plus one additional round of the eleven-race series. Reflecting the uncertain tone of the future, the Jorgensen Eagle carried only one modification from last year. That was a wing carrying larger sideplates and a larger slot between the principal section and its tailflap.

Determined as ever to establish himself as the Man to Beat and to erase the image of his Coyote's frailty was Anthony Joseph Foyt. Like Unser's Eagle, the orange Gilmore Coyote-Foyt/Ford V8 was virtually identical to its 1975 specification. The only obvious difference was the lack of a rear anti-roll bar which A. J. had dispensed with over the course of a tyre-testing session prior to the start of the full week of Ontario practice.

Carrying the green and white colours of Stokely Van Camp's Gatorade "thirst quencher" was the squat McLaren M16D of Johnny Rutherford. Here too, there was very little in the way of technical changes. The most apparent novelty were the new radiator shrouds which are now separate from the sides of the car's tub so that the radiators are fed through a completely encircling fibreglass nacelle. Presumably this increases cooling efficiency by minimising the possibilities of boundary layer separation.

Completing the first division teams was the two car Vel's Parnelli entry for Al Unser and Mario Andretti. Partly because of the team's expansion into Formulae 1 and 5000, the USAC division has been thoroughly reorganised over the course of the winter. Jim Chapman, Andretti's chief F5000 mechanic of last year has been promoted to Team Manager of the American Division, which means that he will oversee the operation of the two-car efforts in both Formula 5000 and USAC. As the team will be running only the three 500 mile USAC races Chapman is employing many of the same mechanics on both F5000 and USAC machinery. Hywel Absalom has been hired away from McLarens to fill the role of USAC Chief Mechanic, thereby relieving much of the nuts and bolts burden from Chapman's hands. The two Eagles entered for Ontario would be driven of course, by Al Unser and Mario Andretti. Both men had tested a modified version of the Parnelli VPJIII early in January but the test had borne little fruit and it had been decided to stick with the known quantity of the ubiquitous Eagle for this race at least.

Heading the second division and trying as always to project themselves into the upper

echelons were the two-car teams of Roger Penske Racing and Pat Patrick Racing. Penske's team consisted of a pair of McLaren M16Bs, one carrying the blue of the Norton Company for Tom Sneva and the other the red CAM-2 oil for NASCAR star Bobby Allison. For the 26-year-old Sneva this is his first front-rank drive and it is he alone who will campaign the full USAC circuit for Penske this year, Allison running only the three 500 milers.

Although still carrying dayglo orange paintwork, Pat Patrick's cars have exchanged STP sponsorship for that of Sinmast, a Midwest concrete company who are supporting a pair of cars for Gordon Johncock and Wally Dallenbach. Dallenbach would drive one of the team's three Eagles while Johncock was entered in a new Bob Riley-designed car. Riley has designed cars for both A. J. Foyt and Roger McCluskey over the past two years and his new car, called a Wildcat and built by George Bignotti, reflects the same design principles as seen in both the Coyote and the McCluskey car.

The Wildcat is based around a flat, angular monocoque, with a chisel nose leading the car into the airstream. The front suspension is typical Riley with a top rocking arm picking up a shallow upright at the wheel centreline. The radiators are carried about twelve inches apart from the tub and are parallel to the centreline of the car. The monocoque extends back to embrace the engine so that it terminates just forward of the rear suspension, while the underside of the tub sweeps up so that the belly forms a large, lower wing-section. Rear suspension is, dimension for dimension, a replica of the current Eagle geometry.

The third division of the entry while looking identical to that of last year was in fact, entirely different. While the sponsors and cars remained the same there had been a wholesale reshuffle of drivers. Mike Mosley had left J. C. Aganjanian's Lodestar enterprises team to drive the Sugaripe Prune Eagle. Billy Vukovich had gone from the Sugaripe outfit to the Cobre Tire team alongside Duane "Pancho" Carter and Lee Kunzman. Like the Vel's Parnelli team the Cobre Tire outfit had dropped all reference to Firestone and were wearing Goodyear rubber.

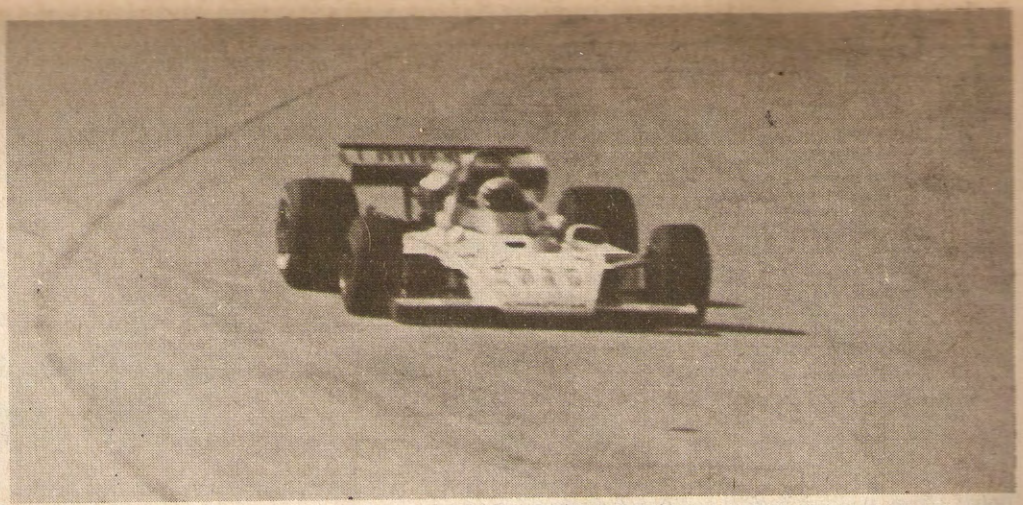
Jimmy Caruthers had left Cobre Tire and was driving an Eagle for a new team, sponsored by Alex Foods, while Mosley's position in the Lodestar team had been filled by Patrick Racing cast-off Steve Krisiloff. Late in the weeks of practice after the qualifying races had yielded only 23 starters, the second Lodestar Eagle was filled by former Coyote driver George Snider. Filling out the major runners were Salt Walther in one of his father's McLaren M16C/Ds, Johnny Parsons in the rather old Finley machine and Roger McCluckey in his Riley, newly painted in the silver hue of Silver Floss Foods. Also in the field were George Follmer who would drive the American Kids Racer Eagle and Gary Bettenhausen who found himself a place in the Thermo King Eagle. Bettenhausen had lost his drive in the Penske team over the winter because of his bad dirt-track crash of last summer which severely damaged one of his arms. Since then he has been slowly re-establishing himself with a some noteworthy dirt-track performances which have pushed him into a contending place in that lesser form of USAC motorsport.

QUALIFYING

The grid for the 500 would be determined largely by the two, 100-mile qualifying races of March 2, although the three places on the front row would be filled by the fastest qualifiers from the two-lap timed runs in the week previous to the shorter races. As he was busy in South Africa during the 100 milers, Mario Andretti qualified in a special session a week previous to the two sprint races.

This was obviously a handicap to Andretti for not only did he miss the chance of sorting out himself and his team during the qualifying races, but he also had but one day to practice and adjust his Eagle. When it came time for his qualifying run (he had to catch a 'plane to South Africa immediately thereafter) he had the added bother of a malfunctioning boost restrictor valve which caused the Offenhauser to fluff badly and kept him to a 185 mph average. So Mario ultimately found himself down in eighteenth place on the grid and on the one aditional day of practice he could fit in before the 500 his Eagle persisted in bothering him, this time with a sticky throttle.

Everybody else was able to slowly dial themselves in and with the benefit of new Goodyear rubber (which, incidentally, was supplied *free* of charge to all cars) some startling times were recorded. First of all it should be pointed out dear reader, that we have misdirected you with recent news to the effect that USAC Championship cars would be restricted even more this year both in turbocharger boost pressure and fuel capacity. In fact, these restrictions will not now come until next season and their specifics have still to be finalised. As it stands now the cars are, like last year, restricted to a fuel consumption rate of 1.8 mpg and must qualify with a "pop-off" valve attached to the turbo charger manifold and restricting the boost to 80 ins of mercury or approximately 2 atmhospheres of pressure.



Steve Krisiloff's Eagle finished third.

As was so often the case last year A. J. Foyt and his V8 Coyote were untouchable in qualifying. Foyt flung the Coyote boldly enough to record a speed of 196.549 mph which was nearly six mph faster than his pole-position effort of last year. A.J. won the first of the qualifying races with ease, leading everyone of the forty laps and lapping second man Pancho Carter well before the end. Foyt had once again established himself as the fastest man on the track so that this new USAC season was starting out much as last year had painted itself. It was all a simple question of would the flat, wide Coyote fail him. If it didn't this would surely be Foyt's 500.

Leading the Offenhauser band and trying as hard as always was Bobby Unser. He was unable to get his blue Eagle to within two mph of Foyt's pace but he was handsomely faster than the others and led the second 100-miler handily before first losing time in a muffed fuel stop and then pulling in with a burned piston. Nevertheless Bobby was assured of the middle place in the front row.

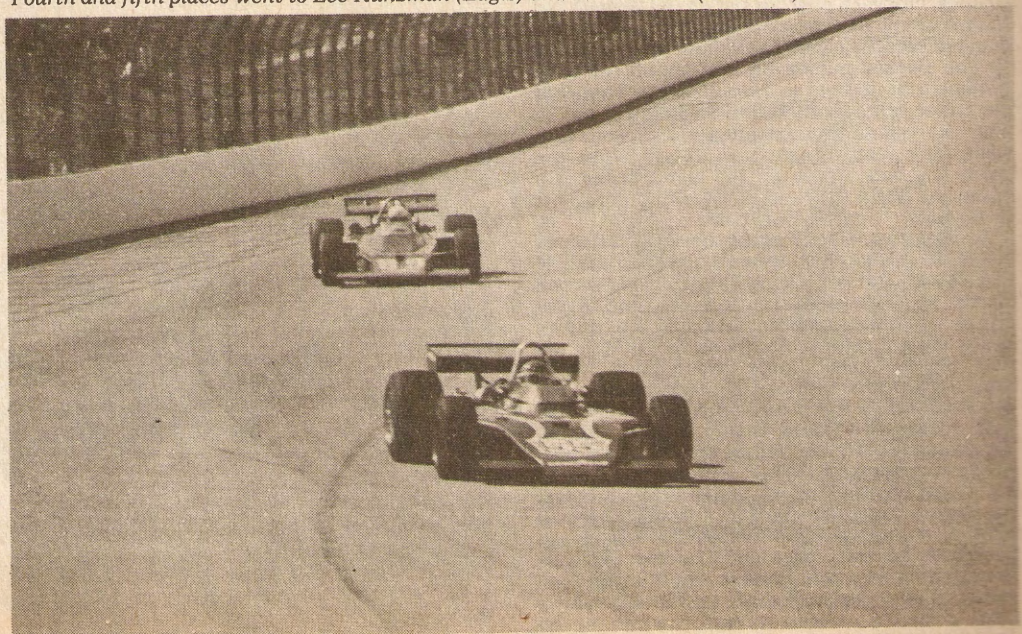
The outside place on the front row was filled by Al Unser, running his red and white Viceroy Eagle with an example of the Parnelli F1 wing and pushing the car around at nearly 193 mph. Al seemed assured of a comfortable second place finish, behind Foyt, in the first qualifying race only to have his fuel pump pack up five laps from the end.

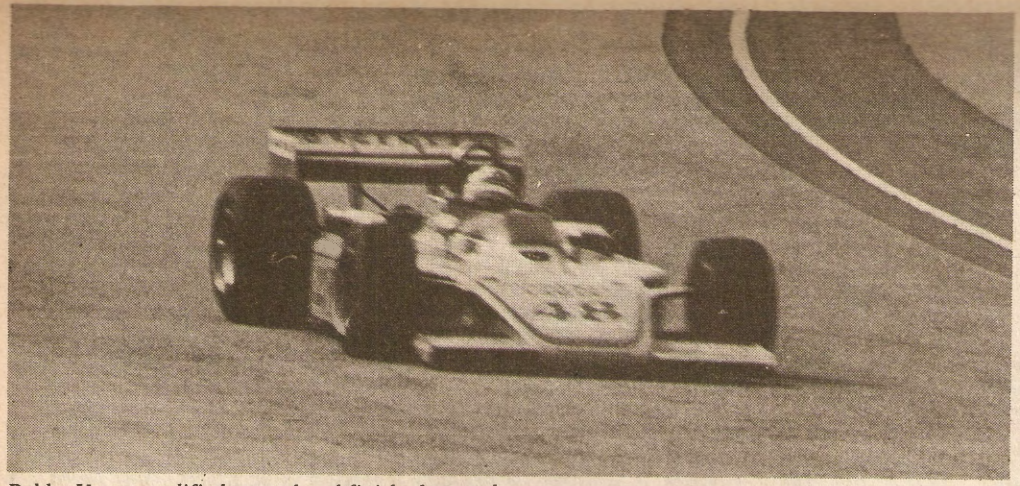
Wally Dallenbach qualified fifth fastest and won the second qualifying race so that he would sit in fourth place on the grid in the Patrick/Sinmast Eagle. Beside Dallenbach would be the Gatorade McLaren of Johnny Rutherford which had lapped almost as fast as Al Unser in qualifying and finished a close second to Dallenbach in it's qualifying race. Completing the second row was the white Cobre Tire Eagle of Pancho Carter who had gone extremely well to record a qualifying effort of more than 190 mph and had then finished second to Foyt in the first 100-miler. A very encouraging performance for this young man who is starting his second full USAC Championship season.

The next row consisted of Krisiloff, Vukovich and Caruthers who had finished in that order behind Dallenbach and Rutherford in the second qualifying event. The rest of the grid was filled out with consideration given to both qualifying speed and finishing position in the 100-milers. George Follmer failed to make the race after crashing badly in his qualifying race when a halfshaft failed on his Eagle. The car was damaged extensively and expensively enough to preclude any chances of repairing it during the ensuing week.

USAC themselves had the problem of there being only 28 healthy cars and with 500-milers traditionally consisting of 33 starters the club began to canvass the garages looking for spare cars and unemployed drivers. They found Rick Muther and paired him up with the spare Foyt Coyote, Bob Harkey was allowed to run in the ancient Joe Hunt Magneto Eagle and the back row was filled by George Snider (Lodestar Eagle-Offy), Jim McElreath in Bruce Crower's stock-block Eagle-Chevy and Larry McCoy in the spare Dayton-Walther McLaren M16B. This sort of thing can hardly be a healthy sign and it seems more than possible that even this year's Indy 500 may have a short grid. It seems that USAC have yet to learn that times *do* change.

Fourth and fifth places went to Lee Kunzman (Eagle) and John Martin (McLaren).





Bobby Unser qualified second and finished second.

RACE

Saturday, the day before the race, was a dark, wet day in Los Angeles. Grey clouds rolled raggedly across the sky for most of the day and it wasn't until sunset that they began to peel back and the sun poked its nose out for a few hours. But by Sunday morning the clouds had returned and during the long morning drive across the freeways towards the speedway spittles of rain slapped lightly against everybody's windshields.

The eleven o'clock start was put back an hour while officials and safety crews climbed into their cars and trucks to plow around the Speedway in an effort at drying out the damp road surface. Thankfully the rain stayed away and by mid-day the track was dry enough and clean enough for Tony Hulman, boss of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, to interrupt a long series of rousing high-school style Americana songs with his stirring words, "Gentlemen, start your engines." Finally the business of 500 miles of motor racing was about to begin.

Foyt must have set the pace just perfectly for as he brought the field off the fourth turn and down towards the green flag the Coyote shot away easily, leaving the others to bunch up among themselves. A.J. took his own line, just as he pleased, into the first turn and throttled away three, four, now five car lengths clear of the tight knot behind. Down the backstraight and into the third turn the Coyote whistled clear and as A.J. came past the pits for the first time, more than two seconds ahead, the swarthy Texan must have begun to think already of trying to lap the field.

It was Al Unser who had pushed his way into second place, with Rutherford sticking his McLaren's nose hard up behind the Viceroy Eagle and Bobby U's Jorgensen Eagle sitting discreetly behind them in fourth place. This trio soon separated themselves from the next knot with Rutherford in particular trying often and hard to get by Al.

But nothing they could do could hold Foyt within range. He was disappearing by a handy two seconds with each new lap and on the seventh lap when a yellow flag came out the Coyote was more than ten seconds clear. The yellow was prompted by Bob Harkey pulling his old car off the road through turn two and as soon as the flag came out the Unser brothers darted immediately into the pits. The yellow was extended a few more laps when Billy Scott's Eagle blew up and when the green flag was waved on the eleventh lap A.J. again got down to the business of winning this motor race.

As Foyt disappeared again the Unser brothers began the labour of working through the midfield and Wally Dallenbach and Gordon Johncock started pressuring Rutherford for second. Rutherford soon succumbed to their pressure and as the two bright red machines went by the McLaren they brought Pancho Carter into the hunt. At the same time the first round of fuel stops began and it was then that Al Unser dropped from the chase to join teammate Andretti in the garages. A brief, depressing race for the Vel's Parnelli Jones team.

The race wore on through the second series of fuel stops, Foyt pulling further and further away, his Coyote sounding sharp and clean. It seemed only a matter of time before he would lap everybody at least once and possibly twice or more. The others continued to run into troubles. Bobby Allison had pulled off on the second lap with a couple of bent valves, the result, the stock-car man thought, of too much throttle at the start. Rick Muther worked the spare Gilmore Coyote into the top dozen in the first fifteen laps only to pull in with clutch failure just two laps later. Billy Vukovich dropped out of a good place with piston failure, then Jimmy Caruthers stopped with a dropped valve in his Offy. This was becoming an expensive 500-miler for many of the teams and the field was slowly inevitably thinning itself out.

Just about the seventieth lap Pancho Carter, running cleanly and well and in contention for second place had a large spin through the third turn. A few seconds later Foyt bent his Coyote into the turn and suddenly got very crossed up. "Actually I got damn near backwards through there," Foyt said later. As both men sorted themselves out and carried on the yellow flag came out. It was raining. But only at turn three. The rest of the track was bone dry.

But that small portion of the track was very slippery and as the offending cloud passed on the yellow flag stayed out while the field bunched up and drove slowly around waiting for the dampness to disappear. It soon became apparent that it would take some time to dry out turn three and everybody began to take the opportunity of stopping under the yellow.

Johnny Rutherford stayed out throughout this period and when the green flag came out on the 83rd lap he was able to jump into a lead, hoping to pull out some space while Foyt, Unser, Dallenbach and the others worked their way through the field. But Rutherford's lead and plans suddenly disappeared as the McLaren lost itself in a pall of blue smoke. Its Offenhauser had broken a piston and Rutherford was out.

So it was now Unser leading from Foyt, both of them having almost worked themselves to the head of the queue now, the Eagle running third on the road and the Coyote fifth. Within two laps they had both separated themselves from the rest and A.J. began to bear down rapidly upon the Eagle. On the 88th lap Foyt jumped out from behind the Eagle and swept inside into turn one. A.J. was back into a lead which he would never again relinquish, even during the shuffle of pitstops.

Foyt pulled further and further away, the Coyote running perfectly, his only troubles coming when a rear wheel refused to come off during one of his four remaining pit stops. But A.J. was lucky enough to have a yellow flag come out just as he was about to make two of those stops and the trouble with the wheel occurred during one of those yellow flag stops. Fortune was smiling on A. J. Foyt last Sunday.

Foyt spent the last ten laps running comfortably behind Bobby Unser, nursing his dwindling fuel supply and just keeping the Eagle in sight. The Texan crossed the line a few seconds behind. Unser with enough fuel to do two more laps. He became the first man to win all three USAC 500s and as his thoughts turned to Indianapolis he talked later about his new Coyote. "We should have it out testing next month," he said, and then added with a boyish twinkle in his eye, "You know, I think it'll be a lot quicker than this one."

The fight over second place finally resolved itself into a two-car race between the Eagle of Bobby U and Dallenbach. Carter's excellent performance had ended much earlier with gearbox failure and Johncock, who had slowly been pulling his Wildcat into Dallenbach's tow, slowed and pulled off with a burst water hose (USAC rules prohibit the addition of water during a race).

Unser and Dallenbach carried themselves into the last 25 laps with Bobby holding the upper hand most of the time. But there seemed to be nothing in it, each man could lap just as quickly as the other on his own. It was true that Dallenbach had been unable to actually pass Bobby despite making a couple of big efforts but he had also made a pit stop on the lap previous to end of the last yellow flag period on lap 172. It was just possibe that Dallenbach could make it to the end without another stop.

But then this final chance of a pace ended suddenly when the unfortunate Dallenbach pulled onto the apron as he started his 184th lap, his engine dead. So Bobby carried on to the end, unlapping himself when Foyt made his last stop under the yellow flag with a dozen laps left. Unser was vastly disappointed with his second place. On the form of Ontario it seems that this year even he will be unabe to offer a real tooth and nail challenge to A. J. Foyt.

6th California 500
Ontario Motor Speedway — March 9
USAC Championship — round 1

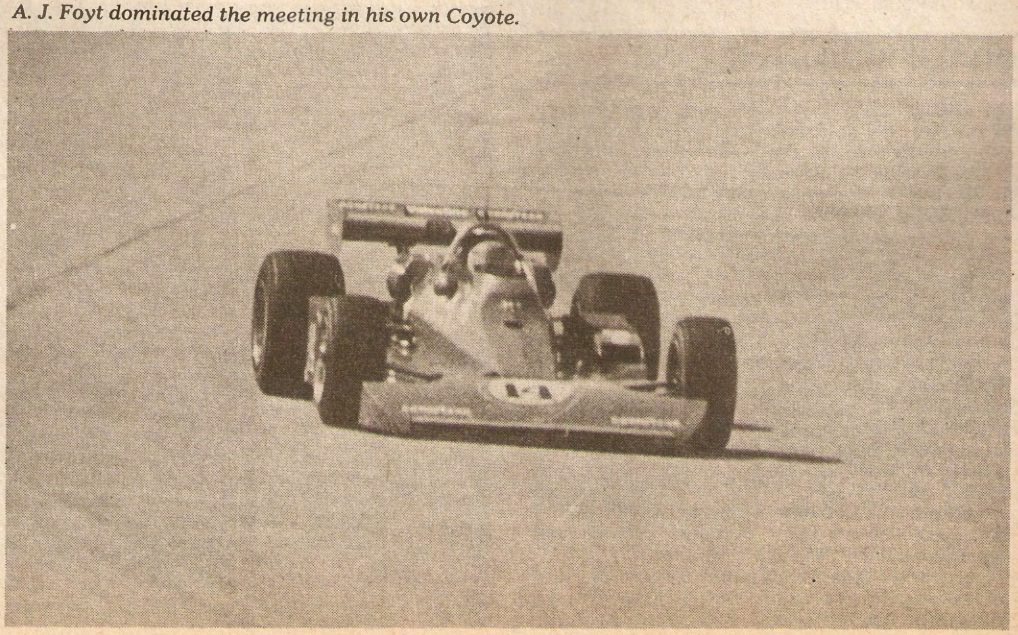
1, A. J. Foyt (Coyote-Foyt/Ford), 3hr 14m 22.28s, 154.344 mph, 200 laps;
2, Bobby Unser (Eagle-Offenhauser), 3hr 15m 05.59s;
3, Steve Krisiloff (Eagle-Offenhauser), 197 laps;
4, Lee Kunzman (Eagle-Offenhauser), 195 laps;
5, John Martin (McLaren M16B-Offenhauser), 193 laps;
6, Tom Sneva (McLaren M16C-Offenhauser), 193 laps;
7, Al Loquasto (McLaren M16B-Offenhauser), 188 laps; 8, Salt Walther (McLaren M16C-Offenhauser), 187 laps; 9, Eldon Rasmussen (Rascar-Foyt/Ford), 186 laps; 10, Wally Dallenbach (Eagle-Offenhauser), 184 laps, DNF.

33 starters — 10 finishers

First qualifying heat (March 2): 1 Foyt, 33m 52.92s, 177.085 mph, 40 laps; 2, Duane Carter (Eagle-Offy), 39 laps; 3, Kunzman, 39 laps; 4, Bill Scott (Eagle-Offy), 38 laps; 5, Gordon Johncock (Wildcat-Offy), 36 laps, DNF; 6, Martin, 36 laps, DNF.

Second 100 mile qualifying heat (March 2): 1 Dallenboch, 39m 55.13s, 150.305 mph, 40 laps; 2, Johnny Rutherford (McLaren M16D-Offy), 40 laps; 3, Krisiloff, 40 laps; 4, Bill Vukovich (Eagle-Offy), 40 laps; 5, Jimmy Caruthers (Eagle-Offy), 40 laps; 6, Bobby Allison (McLaren M16C-Offy), 40 laps.

A. J. Foyt dominated the meeting in his own Coyote.





Cahal Curley explores Lancia Stratos oversteer for the first time

The 'Flag' Stratos unveiled



Curley – victories to come?

After weeks of rumour and innuendo it has finally happened officially. Early this week the latest acquisition of the Chequered Flag garages of Chiswick was exhibited at Chobham test track. Principal recipients were BBC's outside broadcast camera team working for the Nationwide programme, but some members of the press were in attendance including our intrepid photographer David Winter. Object of interest was what is the first "real" Stratos to be entrusted to private hands, the heartrending loss no doubt softened an alleged deal involving some £30,000 changing hands. The car is the ex-Pinto machine that was partially destroyed (he said he rolled it) on the Monte and comprehensively rebuilt by the works. As it now appears the car is immaculately turned out in Chequered Flag colours of black and white, bearing the insignia of the garage and the marks of Shell who are financially involved in the project. For such a grandiose and ambitious scheme this initial preview was of a somewhat low-key nature, and although the car's tarmac driver and co-driver (Cahal Curley and Austin Frazer) were treating the morning very much as a test session, back-up was merely a Marina with a spare set of tyres and a tool kit. Unfortunately the day was wet so the pair were unable to get to grips with the unfamiliar car as perhaps they would have liked but the sight was impressive enough nevertheless. Curley thought the car rather a handful as it stood on Monday but this was not too surprising in view of the fact that the Flag had had no chance to set the car up at all prior to the testing. It was driven from Turin and arrived in this country just eleven days ago in its original livery. After a week in the paint shop the final touches to the sign-writing were completed last Friday, but there was no chance to touch the existing mechanical set-up which included a very high axle ratio (the car was geared to do around 140 mph).

The car has been supplied by Lancia (Turin) who are, happily, very enthusiastic about the venture, although Lancia (GB) are apparently rather less than enamoured with the idea. The car will be entered on the Circuit of Ireland of course, and Curley will also drive it on the Manx and in Donegal. The Stratos is however also being entered for international stage events in this country (the Welsh, Scottish and RAC) when it will be driven by "mighty mouse" the brilliant Swede, Per Inge Walfridsson. Ron Pellatt will be looking after the car both on and between events. Ron is no stranger to complex machinery. Last year he was John Watson's F1 mechanic at Hexagon, and he is also well versed in the rallying game, having regularly serviced for Walfridsson in the past and having also built up World Cup Escorts in his time. He has recently spent two weeks in Turin watching and assisting as the Safari Stratos were built up from scratch, so he now knows the car very well. Pirelli tyres are being used but there seem to be handling problems which at present centre around the rear tyre widths, the exceptionally wide rears giving far too much understeer and then a very sudden transition. Chequered Flag will be working flat-out in the coming two weeks in conjunction with Curley to get the car set up properly for the car's first outing on the "Circuit."

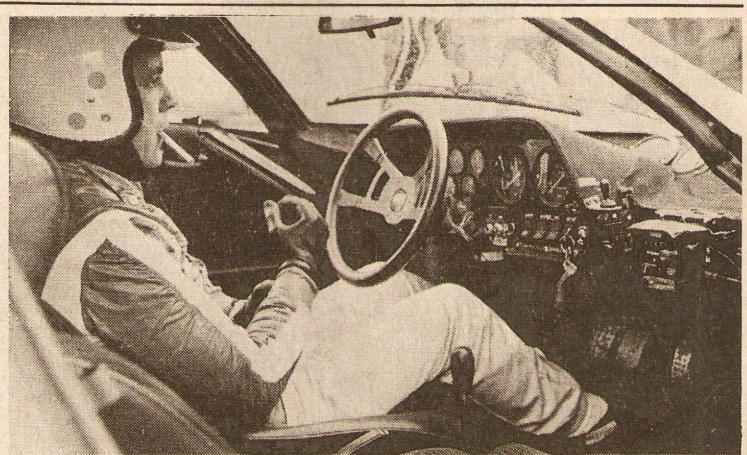
It is the Chequered Flag's first venture into rallying and Managing Director, Graham Warner, commented: "Motor racing has become so commercial that the private entrant can no longer compete on equal terms with the works teams. We have therefore discontinued our support of racing and have decided to support rallying instead. To this end we have chosen the very best car and drivers and are entering rallies to win. Obviously we will be under a great deal of pressure from the more experienced rally teams but we are not deterred." He went on to say that rallying was a sphere that the Chequered Flag could not now afford to ignore, such was its burgeoning popularity and appeal; adding, "We expect to support rallying for a long time to come." Encouraging words indeed, and a fitting fanfare for what promises to be one of the most exciting rally debuts for many years in the UK.

The 'Circuit' sensation

Sensational news this week from the hardworking Ulster Automobile Club is that after an absence of some four years, Roger Clark is back to contest the Benson and Hedges Circuit of Ireland which starts on Friday, 28th March. Roger is no stranger to the 'Circuit' however, having won this great event three times in succession in 1968, '69, and '70. This last-minute entry completes a works team of three Escorts which might still be able to undermine the Porsche domination of this event. Certainly if anyone can do that, it has got to be Roger. The Ford team also includes Billy Coleman and Nigel Rockey. Clark's car is a K-registration left hooker that has been lying around Boreham for some time now, having been used as a development hack. It is being suitably refurbished and fitted with a Brian Hart 2-litre engine. Clark's late entry comes as something of a surprise; apparently Ford will be contesting some European tarmac rallies later in the year with the new car and they are keen to carry out some practical testing with suspension settings, etc. Brian Nelson also has a surprise in store — a brand new BMW 2002 Tii in AutoExtra Parts colours. The car is a works-built 16-valve example, of which only two have ever been assembled, and respendent with aluminium struts, etc, it is being delivered this weekend. Despite both the car and the driver's great potential, Brian was heard to have expressed some concern over his start number — No 3 . . . one ahead of Roger Clark. Total mileage of the event is 1350 and the 61 special stages total 550 miles. The longest stage on the event is an interesting 29 miler. The top twelve are as follows: 1, Cahal Curley/Austin Frazer (Lancia Stratos); 2, Billy Coleman (Escort RS); 3, Brian Nelson/Drexel Gillespie (BMW 2002 Tii); 4, Roger Clark/Jim Porter (Escort RS); 5, Tony Pond/Mike Broad (Opel Ascona); 6, Nigel Rockey/Peter Scott (Escort RS); 7, Dessie McCartney/Terry Harryman (Porsche Carrera); 8, Adrian Boyd/Frank Main (Alpine); 9, David Agnew/Robert Harkness (Porsche Carrera); 10, Colin Malkin/Paul White (Chrysler Avenger); 11, Will Sparrow/Ron Crellin (Vauxhall Magnum); 12, Brian Evans/Roger Jones (Porsche Carrera). It is interesting to see that despite the apparent dominance of the Porsche Carrera in Irish tarmac rallying, there are only two of these cars in the top ten this year, which is all to the good as far as the continually increasing status of this spectacular rally goes; and reflects great credit on the efforts of Malcolm Neill and his team. Easter in Ireland is going to prove virtually irresistable this year. The first cars will reach Lough Key near Boyle at 23.05 hrs. and then go on to breakfast in Ennis at the West County Inn at 5.20 a.m. The rally arrives in Killarney at 12.55 a.m. on Saturday the 29th March. From here they will do the famous Sunday run and then at 2 p.m. on Monday, 31st March they start the homeward section of the Rally. They stop for supper at the Newpark Hotel in Kilkenny at 20.55 hrs. and then drive on through the night to finish at Larne for 11 a.m. Tuesday, 1st April. One of the last stages will be the spectator stage at the Road Transport Industry Training Board testing grounds at Nutts Corner. On Thursday, 27th March, the day before the rally, scrutineering takes place at R. Kennedy & Co., the main Ford dealers on the Ballykeel Road, Ballymena. Then at 8 p.m. the same day the Mid Antrim Motor Club and the U.A.C. are running a Rally Forum in the Adair Arms Hotel.



Clark – surprise entry.



Curley has a quiet smoke between laps at Chobham.

Moroccan adventure

The regulations will be available soon for the 18th Rally of Morocco which is due to be held between June 24th/29th. This is a World Championship qualifier after a rest of two years in which it has been run as an ordinary rally attracting mainly French teams. Certainly Alpine Renault will be back in force to compete this time and it looks as if both Fiat and Lancia will be there. Efforts will be made to make the event attractive to foreign private entries and anyone interested should contact Promocourse in Paris at 74 rue Lemercier, 75017 Paris. What will lie in store for them promises to be one of the toughest events close to Europe since since the old Liege bit the dust in 1964. The total distance of the event is just over 4000 kms and the total length of the special stages is 1962 kms with one stage of 786 kms. That means that a single stage is as long as the entire length of stages on the RAC Rally. Between the stages the tarmac sections are usually enough to permit the sort of service that one gets used to on British rallies, while the nature of the event suits a strongly built rally car rather than a powerful semi-racer. Because it is World Championship however all cars must comply with Appendix J and fall within Groups 1, 2, 3 or 4.

As challenge to two drivers and a car, the Moroccan is without peer and to anyone that doesn't mind the heat, it is the chance to do a World Championship event where, if you finish at all, you will probably be in the first six as that is probably how many cars will finish. To forestall queries, there are opportunities to service in the middle of the longer stages and you are not expected to carry a tank which will propel you 400 stage miles.

Warmbold's 1975 plans

Achim Warmbold's plans this season involve both World Championship rounds and his home German national series. He is going to contest the remainder of the latter with a works-supplied Alpine A310 which at present is alleged to have a 8-valve engine installed. However for the next round, the Metz Rally, which is on the same weekend as the Granite City, he will most likely be using the ex-Therier 16-valve 200 bhp machine. Sponsorship for this programme comes from Renault (Germany) who are nevertheless devoting most of their energies to the Renault 5 championship; and KWS, a German tuning firm.

Warmbold will be contesting both the Acropolis and the Portuguese Rallies in his own superb 240 bhp BMW in which he has already won the Sachs Winterrallye this year. Sponsorship for this venture will be coming from KWS. Co-driver will be John Davenport except where the latter's plans with Thomas Motors and Billy Coleman intervene.

Stuart Turner on Monte Carlo

Stuart Turner continues to be the most active man behind rallying in this country. Shocked by the indifference to the Monte Carlo Rally shown this January, he decided to have a meeting with a few jouralists and team managers to see whether an autopsy was necesseary or if there was life still in the body. The opinion of this Seminar was that the Monte Carlo Rally still means a great deal not only within the sport but also to a much wider public and is thus deserving of as much help as we can give it. Several suggestions were made concerning the route, the timing, the handling of practice and publicity in general which will eventually be forwarded to the club in Monaco so that they can see what would make the rally more attractive to British competitors, both works and private teams.

One point that was unanimous was that the whole rally should be considerably shorter than it was this year and there were strong points in favour of returning to the idea of a converging point away from Monaco such as Chambery where all the technical scrutineering and signing on could take place after the competitors had completed an untimed run down from the major starting points. Such a decision might hit at the revenues of the Monte Carlo hoteliers but it would keep the expenses within bounds for the average competitor. In any case, it was felt that the organisers should view the rally as a publicity stunt to bring trade into Monaco throughout the year rather than as a profit-making excercise.

At the meeting, considerable interest was shown in trying to get together a package of incentives to try and persuade more British competitors to try their hand at this the most prestigious of motor car rallies.

Brian Nelson's new car

Brian Nelson's new car for the Circuit of Ireland is the identical twin of Achim Warmbold's BMW and features 16-valves and twin overhead camshafts. The engine is dry sumped, and induction is by fuel injection. On each side of the radiator there are oil coolers for differential and engine. The all-up weight is around 980 kgs which makes it highly competitive in view of its 240 bhp power output and fully adjustable suspension. Tony Hennin of AutoExtra has apparently found a sponsor for the car which he has gone off to fetch from the works in Munich. Brian is not entirely happy about the prospect of starting No. 3 on the Circuit, and not only because Roger Clark is starting behind him! He has strained his shoulder and it is giving trouble at present; and in addition he has yet to drive the 'new' car which does not arrive until the weekend. The car itself was actually used by Warmbold on the 1000 Lakes last year and has not yet been flung around in anger since, merely sitting around at the works in pristine condition. Only two of these fine cars have ever been built.

Brian Nelson — misgivings . . .



Top names for Granite forum

On the eve of the Granite City Rally (RAC national and round four of the Gaelic Oil/*The Scotsman* Championship) the *"Press and Journal"* will be holding a rally forum in conjunction with the Aberdeen and District MC. Big names assembled for the talk-in are to be Brian Culcheth, Colin Malkin, Andy Dawson and Andrew Cowan. In charge of the four drivers will be Scotland's rally entrepreneur, Ross Finlay.

Films to be screened will include Ford's highly acclaimed "Rally Driving" and Leyland ST's "The Culcheth Job." A number of competing cars will be on display, including Roger Clark's new shelled Escort. Tickets will be obtainable (price 50p) from March 10th from: The Press and Journal Office, 54A Union Street, Aberdeen, or by post (with enclosed SAE) from: Ken McEwen, The Press and Journal, PO Box 43, Aberdeen, AB9 8AF. The entire proceeds will be going to the rally-fund.

ECR positions

Current positions in the ECR after the Lyon Charbonnieres rally last weekend are as follows: Maurizio Verini leads the field with 140 points, ahead of Simo Lampinen 120; Stig Blomqvist 80, Jari Vilkas 68, Kyosti Hamalainen 64, Fulvio Bacheli 60, Amilcare Ballestrieri 48, Juan Carlos Pradera 45, Pentti Airikkala 44, and Jean Louis Clarr 40. The next round of the championship is the Tour di Giraglia which is being held on March 15/16 and has a co-efficient of one.

● Bradys, the enthusiastic Opel dealers of Barrow-in-Furness, are at present hard at work building up a G2 Ascona for Geoff Birkett/Dave Orrick to contest the *MN* series this year. The shell is right-hand-drive and many of the bits have come from Steinmetz. The car will use a 'club' engine similar to the reliable unit that powered Tony Pond last year. The crew are currently lying second in the Opel Dealers Cup. The G1 car which has been heavily campaigned in the past by Bradys, is now "rather tatty" and will serve primarily as a spares hack. DOT are co-operating closely with the venture.

Supermarket sponsorship

Gateway Supermarkets are sponsoring Nigel Rockey's entry on the South West Stages this weekend as a one-off event. If however the association proves to be satisfactory, the supermarket chain, who recently bought out S and H Pink Stamps, will very likely sponsor him for the rest of the RAC Championship rounds this year. After weeks in the doldrums, this is indeed good news for the talented Bristol man who has had so many first class drives of late.

Knockhill post for James Rae

Twice Scottish Rally Champion and 1974 Kleber/Wheelbase scholar, James Rae, has just been appointed to Knockhill Motor Sport complex, near Dunfermline in Fife. Formerly handling FAVO sales for Ford Rallye Sport Dealers, Frews of Perth, Rae will be related to sales and promotion at Knockhill. It is also likely that James Rae will be closely involved with the proposed rally school and rally car test facilities; plans for which are currently being finalised.

This year there are 27 events scheduled for the new circuit and the programme will commence with a rallycross meeting for Sunday, April 6, to be organised by the 750 Motor Club.

The new development at Knockhill is at the embryonic stage of a five year programme — a scheme which will include an international class hotel, a clubhouse and leisure centre. Forms of motor sport including motor cycle racing, circuit racing, stock cars, rallycross and both rally and racing schools will all be fully catered for and Knockhill will also be designed to accommodate many other sports; including equestrian events. Conference facilities will also be provided and no doubt rally finishes and motor club forums will latch-on quickly.

● Chris Sclater will be competing on the Firestone which starts in Bilbao on March 21. He is taking over the twin cam Violet as usual and co-driver is Martin Holmes. The latter is having a busy time just now and he will be rushing off to Ireland as soon as the Firestone is over to direct Marek Gierowski around the 'Circuit.' Meanwhile it is hoped that Chris Sclater will be able to find the necessary financial support to compete in the Welsh during the early part of May.

● Nutsford MC have now decided officially to withdraw from organising the Plains Rally this year. This decision of course throws into jeopardy one of the most popular of the road events in the calendar. Nutsford have reluctantly taken this decision in view of that prevailing legal fiasco, and public hazard, the 50 mph limit. They are simply not happy at the prospect of running a potentially illegal event, and feel that perhaps the RAC are vacillating somewhat in their attitude towards these sort of rallies.

Moss plans

Robert Moss Ltd., of Kidlington, Oxford, have announced their 1975 rally programme. Their itinerary consists of European and British internationals and selected day special stage events. This year will be the third successive year of Team Robert Moss sponsorship for the rally team master-minded by rally driver/motoring journalist, Richard Wooldridge. One of this country's leading plastic injection moulders, Team Robert Moss first became involved in motor sport with single seaters in 1972; since then their rally involvement has produced a top ten international placing, an international class and team win, plus several class, team, and top ten positions on national and restricted rallies.

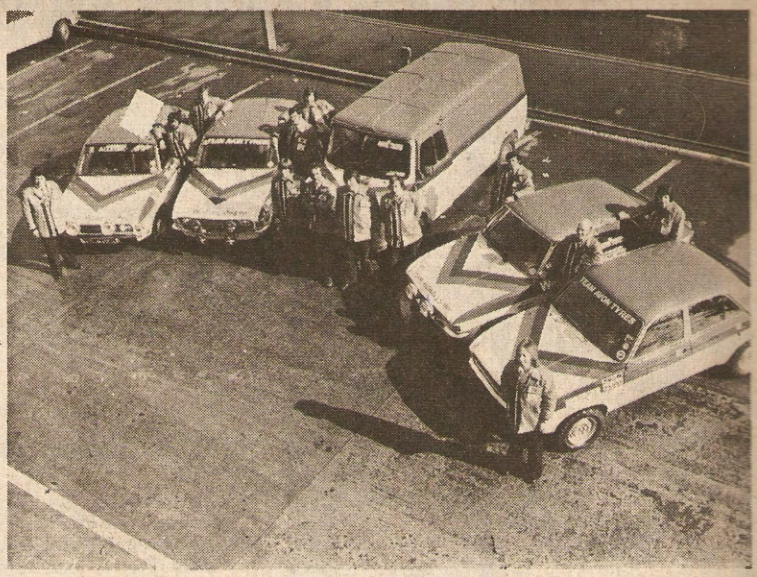
As before the team will consist of John Jago, Duncan Spence, Mick Hogan, Colin Green, and Richard Wooldridge. The cars are unchanged with Wooldridge's TC Escort and Jago's 1300 GT.

● French drivers will have an English crew to grapple with on the Circuit of the Ardennes this weekend, in the shape of David Bates and Malcolm Winter, both of Middlesex County MC. The Ardennes will consist of four laps of a 75-mile circuit. The English crew will be driving a group one Vauxhall Firenza. The form book shows them to have finished third in the up-to-one-litre group one category on the last "Welsh." The Circuit of the Ardennes will be the crew's first venture to an overseas rally.

A Goodyear tyre bonus

Goodyear have announced a series of bonuses in the form of free tyres for successful drivers in this season's major national rally championships — providing they gain their success on Goodyear tyres of course. In the RAC Championship there is a bonus of ten tyres for the winner of each of the ten events, plus five tyres for each class winner. In the Castrol/**Autosport** Championship there are 15 tyres for the overall winner of the series, ten for the driver in second place and five for the third. There are similar awards in the *MN* Series — 15 tyres for the overall winner, ten for the second and five for the third. And in addition there is a special bonus of ten tyres for the highest placed Mini running on Goodyear tyres. Dunlop are offering a similar deal to Mini pilots. For the Scottish Championship there are ten tyres for the winner, six for the second and four for the third. Harry Gee, Goodyear rally tyre specialist commented: "We hope these bonuses will give drivers a little extra encouragement which is certainly needed in these days of ever-increasing costs. And we hope, of course, that it will encourage them to use Goodyear tyres in the first place."

● Terry Nicholas and regular co-driver Rich Winter will be concentrating on stage events this year rather than the *MN* series with their 1700 cc TC Escort. Support for the venture comes from Carlton JCB Ltd of Alveston near Bristol.



Resplendent in Western Mail livery, the team lines up.

Howells Allegros into action

The Welsh national newspaper the *Western Mail* announced its further involvement in rallying at a press reception held last week in Cardiff. This occasion was hosted by Howells Garage, the Leyland main dealers who have no less than 19 branches in South Wales, and they will be co-sponsoring a three car team of Austin Allegros. Star of the show is none other than the ever-faithful BL man, Pat Ryan, who will be driving one of the cars, the works-built example that Russell Brookes made famous on the Tour of Dean. The Western Mail have bought this 1300cc car and Pat is going to use this on a variety of events, taking in the Castrol/Autosport series, the Welsh and BTRDA championships and three *MN* rounds. The left hand seat will be occupied by Roger Smith on stage rallies, but on the road events Dave Richards will be taking over the maps. The two other cars that go to make up the team are a 1750 Sport version belonging to Howells which will be driven by Terry Donovan/Dave Ross on Welsh stage events and a Howells-supported 1500 variant for Doug Dawe. All the three cars are painted in the Western Mail colours of red, white, and purple, and there is sponsorship from Avon tyres and Castrol. Howells are to be appointed ST agents later this month and will continue to be doing plenty of development work on the Allegro as they feel that there is a lot of potential which still remains unexplored within the mysterious confines of the "Alligator." They hope to have G2 homologation available in time for the Welsh. The *Western Mail* have been taking great interest in motor sport recently and it was the success of the weekly motoring columns every Saturday and Monday which originally led to their sponsorship of the Welsh Rally this year; and latterly, their involvement with a rally team. If this venture proves to be a success, next year could lead to even greater participation. The first event for the team will be the South West stages this weekend. All the preparation on the car is being carried out at the Newport branch of Howells, and all necessary maintenance will be handled by themselves. Latest development work has centred around the differential, which has now been substantially strengthened, so it will be the drive-shafts which now give up first. Present at the reception on Friday were Roger Willis of Castrol and Alan Blake of Avon among other notables. The team will officially be known as Western Mail Team Howells

Henry Liddon's wanderings

The peripatetic Henry Liddon has just returned to this country following a lengthy globe trotting adventure. He has been in Iceland for some time looking at the possibilities of running rallies up there. He viewed part of the south western area of the island from the air and a few kilometres of the gravel roads in a Ford Ranger. He added: "We have laid plans for a very small event in May and a slightly larger one in the Autumn when all of the country is accessible. As there are only under 100 kilometres of asphalt roads in the whole country, the possibilities are enormous." Apparently the main road which goes right the way around the island is itself 1500 kilometres long. Henry completed the road book for the Acropolis (to be held at the end of May) before Christmas, and there are some new stages in the route including a 20-kilometre section running from Lidorikion back towards Amfissa which has never been used before, and is at present blocked by snow.

Liddon's Renault exploring some routes near Amfissa.



The Ranger in typical Icelandic conditions.



PRIVATE EAR



NICK BRITTAN

A great confrontation

Picture, if you will, the scene in the fashionable and dimly lit dining room of the Kyalami Ranch on the evening after the South African Grand Prix. The Ranch with its floodlit pool, tennis courts and helicopter pad hosts most of drivers and teams at GP time. It provides a lush setting within exhaust note of the circuit. Saturday night is a black tie affair and is the time when drivers relax and enjoy themselves after the rigours of the race.

Scantily clad ladies perform an acceptable cabaret. One well endowed lady had attracted the attention of a well known driver. As she flitted past his table he made her a not unreasonable proposition. She smiled. Next time round he palmed her his room key. She smiled again and tucked it into what passed for a bra. He smiled.

Her perambulations took her past another table in another dimly lit corner where she was propositioned by yet another tired and somewhat emotional leading driver. What was she doing after the show, he asked. She smiled and issued a knowing wink.

His smile turned to what can only be described as an outright leer when she removed the key from her bra and, blowing him a kiss, dropped it into his lap.

History does not reveal the dialogue that passed at the moment of the great confrontation when the key holder met the resident of the room in the romantic small hours of the morning.

Jackie Stewart and the diamonds . . .

When Jackie Stewart walked into Johannesburg's Jan Smuts airport he must have thought he was in the middle of a film set devised by his fellow ex-patriate alp squatter Alistair Maclean. Up humped two large gents in plain clothes introducing themselves as coming from John Vorster Square, which is the polite euphemism for the illicit diamond buying squad. Could Mr Stewart please satisfy them that none of the 27 diamonds in Helen's necklace had been obtained here in Seth Effrika. The notorious necklace was the one which Jackie had gifted his wife when he retired. Difficult to describe as being within the bounds of good taste, it contained 99 pearls (one for each GP), 27 diamonds (one for each win) and a replica of the lad's helmet.

Rumour had it, according to the JVS men, that the diamonds had been obtained in South Africa and there was no paper transaction to prove it.

Now, if at this point, it had been left to Alistair Maclean to finish the story there would, most certainly, have been a punch-up, a car chase and an ugly torture scene in a grimy prison cell.

No no. Enter J. Stewart who, according to Roman Polanski, could charm the knickers off a nun. Not only does he convince the two gents from JVS that he is innocent of any allegations but he treats them to a nice friendly chat about his wife's necklace, the beauty of South Africa, the efficiency of their squad and motor racing in general.

Exit stage left two bemused cops whose only comment was that it was one of the most pleasant and enjoyable assignments that they had ever carried out.

Now I happen to know that all the diamonds were obtained through the normal channels in England. Jackie knew that too. He could have been difficult with the Seth Afro fuzz, safe in the knowledge that he was clean. An object lesson, for those who care to profit from it, on what made Stewart the success he is. Like he says, if you're talking to people it costs no more to be nice to them.

No smokes without fire

There are always two sides to every story particularly when it's a story of how a driver lost his sponsorship. Try this one for size.

Jean-Pierre Jaussaud, after two first class showings in Canadian Formula Atlantic races, sorted himself a deal to run in this year's championship series with generous sponsorship from Gitanes, the French fag concern.

Everyone in Canada agreed that he was hot favourite to win the series, the right amount of talent, a good car and a professional team set-up. And being a French man in French-speaking Canada was another plus factor.

Then came the crunch. According to J-PJ the sponsors had the championship rules rewritten when they heard of his proposed assault. Cars sponsored by fag companies were specifically excluded. And who were the sponsors?

A certain Mr John Player of Canada Ltd.

Will some black and gold person come forward and tell me that it's not true.

$64,000 question

What was it that took BMW into their $250,000 saloon car racing programme in America? Why spend so much money on such a comparatively unimportant series? Reason: because a market survey, carried out straight through honest middle America, revealed that 64%of the people thought BMW stood for British Motor Works.

Can you imagine the wrath and the hair tearing that went on down in Bavaria. When they calmed down it became obvious that a major image rebuilding operation was called for to conwince the Janks that BMWs come from Chermany.

So off they went and hired nice Teutonic drivers like Ronnie Peterson and Sam Posey (!). The mechanics drew the line at Jochen Neerpasch's proposal to kit them all out in lederhosen and seven dwarf tyroleon hats.

How mid-Ohio will react to the accompanying Ooompah, Ooompah band we have yet to see.

Jochen's biggest problem in presenting a nice German image for BMW is himself. His English is Oxford-perfect and his sartorial style is pure trendy home counties. Now if he were to expose his hairy knees, wear a little hat with a feather in it, hold a cigar in one hand and foaming tankard in the other . . .

A rude awakening

Financial trips down memory lane at Kyalami included Stirling Moss remembering how it used to be when he drove for Aston Martin in the world championship winning sportscars, for an annual retainer of £50. He recalled that Mercedes were a mite more generous and not only did he receive a handsome fee but also a road car for his personal use. But it didn't stop there. Mercedes allowed a further $1 a day for the purpose of keeping the car washed and looking smart.

Ronnie Peterson, in his turn, recalled that, back in 1968, he was retained by the Italian Tecno firm for a full month testing and developing their new range of karts and engines. For this he received board and lodging, "a real junky hotel," and the princely sum of £40 for the month. He says that didn't bother him at the time because in those days, like all good socialist Swedes he believed, "that it was sort of rude to earn money." My, don't times change.

Tyre psychology

Back in 1968 when Rod Laver was performing on tennis' hallowed half acre at Wimbledon he got all in a twitch over the tension of the strings in his racquet. Tennis men don't have chief mechanics but in those days Rod has the equivalent in Bob Howe of Dunlop.

Howe, seeing the problem, removed the offending racquet and made a great fuss about rushing off to get it re-strung to the correct tension. He returned and with pride handed Laver the racquet with which he went on to win the tournament.

Only later did he reveal that he'd spent the hour drinking a quiet jar at the bar for he knew full well that the tension was dead right and it was Laver's tension that needed adjustment.

Much the same happened at Kyalami. Ace driver insisted that he needed different tyres on which to record his demon time. Off came the wheels and away they went for refitting. Back they came half an hour later and out he went all smiles to improve by over half a second. What he didn't know was that only the chalk markings on the sidewalls had been changed. I'd tell you the name of the driver but for the fact that the head mec concerned wishes to use the same ploy again at other events this year.

A recommendation

The piece of paper that James Hunt is keen to purchase from March is the team manager's report from a Formula 3 race back in 1973. The March F3 team in those days consisted of James Hunt and one Brendan McInerney – better known as the cousin of the former Irish Hurling Champion. Team manager in those halcyon days was good Ol' Doc Postlethwaite now the *eminence grise* at Hesketh.

In the column headed "major recommendations" the good doctor had inscribed the now immortal words . . . "seek two new drivers." Max Mosley says the document is priceless. By which, I suppose he means he wants money for it.

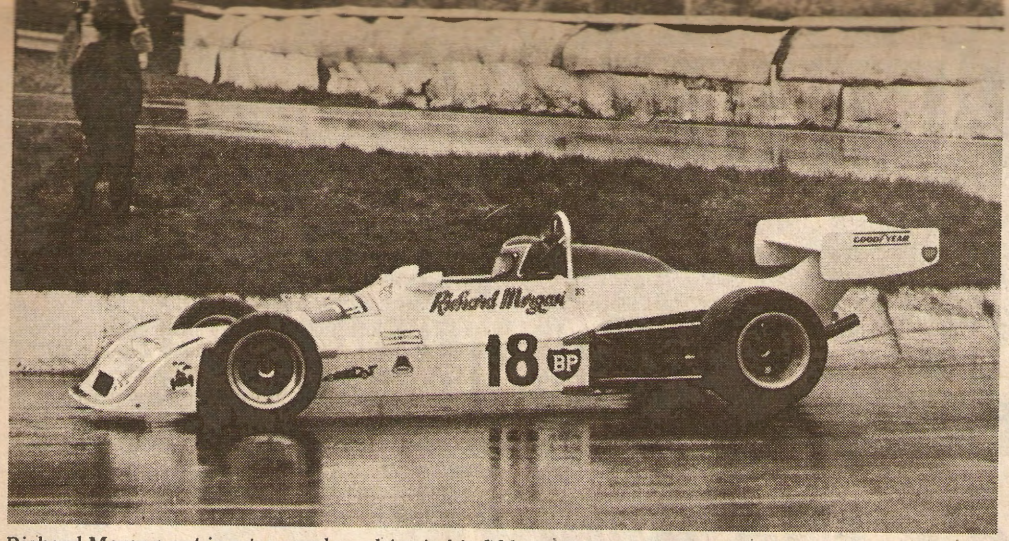
A proposition for James Hunt . . .



Quotes of the week

Former Tyrrell man **Jo Ramirez,** now team manager of the less than successful Fittipaldi Copersucar team, looking unhappy standing minding his charge at the draughty end of the grid. How is it working for the new Brazilian team? "We got all the coffee we need and more sugar than we know what to do with."

Billy Coleman to John Davenport: "You mustn't say anything to me when we're on the special stages. It upsets my concentration. If you've got anything to say you must warn me in advance." Billy Coleman is Irish.



Richard Morgan put in a tremendous drive in his fifth Atlantic race to head the Chevron 1-2-3.

MALLORY PARK

Richard comes of age

By IAN TITCHMARSH Photographs by DAVID WINTER

Last Sunday the first round of the 1975 John Player Formula Atlantic Championship was won in totally convincing fashion by the new Chevron B29s with the rest nowhere. In a race of changing fortunes led initially by the works Modus of Tony Brise, first Jim Crawford and then Richard Morgan led with Tom Wheatcroft's new protégé crossing the line first at the end, nearly half a minute in front after Crawford first spun and then had his engine lapse on to three cylinders for the last two laps. Steve Choularton in the second of the SDC Racing Chevrons was third, catching Crawford as the flag came out to mark the end of 40 laps of wet and cold racing which Crawford reckoned was far worse than last year's sodden affair in which he finished a close second to the ultimate champion, John Nicholson.

The BARC were in charge as usual for the first "international" of the year at the Leicestershire circuit and coped manfully with the foul conditions and the amazingly large crowd stayed gallantly to the end until a very tedious Formula Ford 2000 race sent them back to their cars and home

FORMULA ATLANTIC ENTRY AND PRACTICE

Pride of place in the entry list belonged not unnaturally, to the 1974 John Player Champion John Nicholson who has handed over his Lyncar to ex-McLaren F1 mechanic Phil Sharp and taken on Alan McCall's Tui BH1 "to see how things go". If they go well, one suspects Nicholson will stay with the series; otherwise he may explore pastures new. The Tui looked to be in the same form as when last run at the 1973 British GP meeting for David Oxton and Jim Murdoch.

Some all-nighters at the mill produced a rebuilt B29 Chevron for Jim Crawford based on the original prototype taken to the States for "customer evaluation", the car running with one of the rebuilt Brian Hart engines from last year's SDC Marches. Despite the shocking conditions: "I should have brought my boat; you can see the waves on the river at Gerards," Crawford was a second quicker than anyone else at 1 m 1.4 s compared with the Atlantic record of 42.8 s. Sharing the front row with Crawford was last year's FF champion Richard Morgan in the Donington Park Collection-Wheatcroft Racing B29 with Nicholson engine. After his fine second place to Brise at Brands the previous week, Morgan was continuing to make a good impression in only his fourth Atlantic event although, as Crawford commented: "He's had more Formula Ford wins than I've had races."

Tony Brise was only 0.2 s slower than Morgan in the revised Modus M3 which carries most of the suspension from last year's car but has new bulkheads and sleeker bodywork creating a much more workmanlike impression. The engine is a Nicholson at the moment, Holbay BDAs having been discarded. Despite never having sat in the car before unofficial practice on Saturday afternoon, Steve Choularton was soon into the swing of his new Chevron B29 and was able to take the outside berth on the second row of the two-by-two grid with no problems in a time of 1 m 3.2 s.

Johnny Nick shared the fouth row with Val Musetti who now has his March looking very 74B although it is basically the ex-Stan Matthews 73B. He was using a David Wood-prepared engine for a time of 1 m 4.6 s, the same as Nicholson's.

Nick May's ex-Nigel Clarkson Lola T360 entered by Strakers of Wimbledon, another car with a Nicholson engine, was going well to share the fourth row with Australian Formula 5000 driver Bobby Muir who has raced extensively in his own country and the States but has only been seen in England before in an uncompetitive F3 March 713M in 1971 on a couple of occasions. Since then Muir has gone on to greater things and his experience showed in the basically two-year-old Birrana 273 entered by the smartly turned out *équipe* of Bob and Marj Brown. Eventually there will be a second car for Dean Hosking but Muir was alone at Mallory, powered by a Hart engine.

Also Lawler, despite some lurid experiences in Formula Ford, seems to have taken to more powerful single-seaters well and his smartly turned out Chevron B29 was well in contention, 0.2 s slower than Muir at 1 m 6.4 s for the inside of the fifth row. Lawler is another Nicholson customer. Former Super Vee and Clubmen's Formula drive Derek Cook should have shared that row but he fell foul of the river at the entry to Gerards and bent the front of his March 75B against the bank.

Ray Mallock was another with a new March but his was complete with all the F2 equipment including deformable structures and had hardly turned a wheel before the meeting, and none at all in the wet. He was therefore untypically far back and hoping for a drier race. As in the past Ray was using one of John Dunn's Swindon Racing Engines. Also on the sixth row was Peter Williams out for another season in his Coin Monthly-sponsored Chevron B27 with Nicholson engine. Completing the grid were Phil Sharp in the ex-Nicholson Lyncar-Nicholson; Peter (sorry, Pete) Wardle supervising from the back in his three-year-old Surtees TS15 now trying a Swindon engine to make it go faster; former FSV man Peter Munro in the ex-Derek Cook Chevron B27 with an engine built by Dave Whitehurst, Alan Smith's former right-hand man; Cyd Williams, back in favour with Graham Eden and the latter's Brabham BT40 althouhg uncertain of it in its front-radiatored form in the wet; and with a 10 s penalty after an all-night engine-changing session, Ted Wentz in Wella for Men's new Lola T360B-Swindon. An attempt by Wardle to have the race called off came to nothing so the cars lined up as described to race for 40 rather than the slated 50 laps.

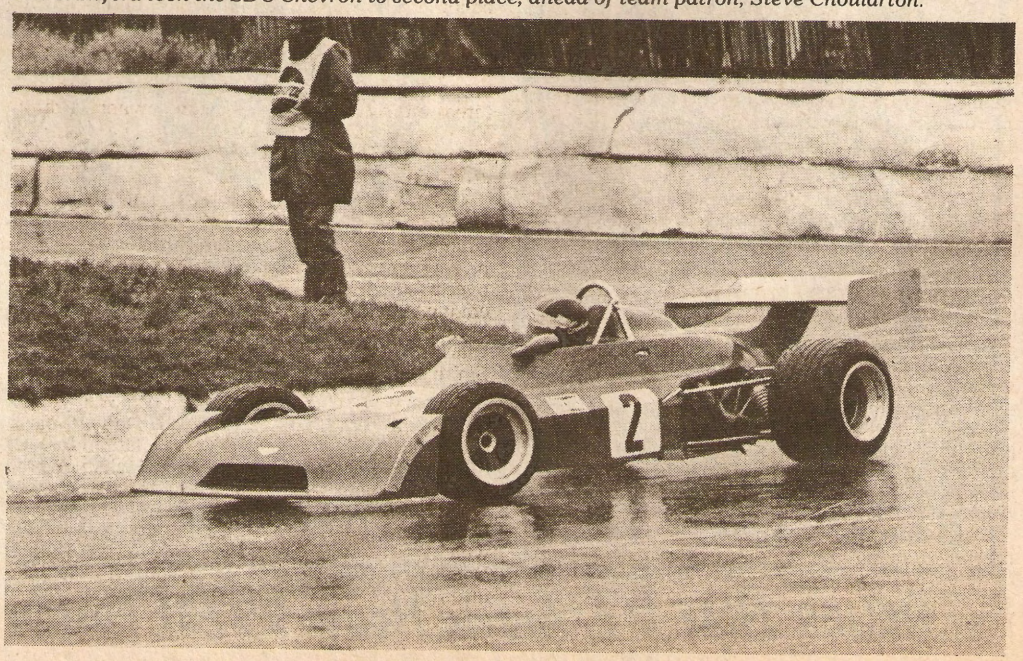
RACE

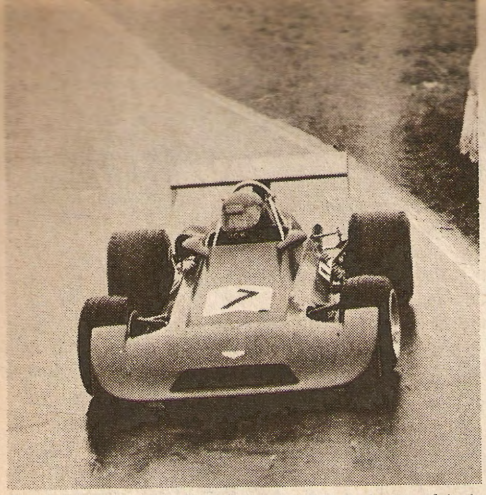
The incessant rain seemed to be easing as the preceding touring car race came to an end but it greeted the Atlantics on the grid with renewed nastiness to ensure they would have an unpleasant time. Tony Brise is an acknowledged master of such conditions and charged round Gerards in the lead leaving Crawford blinded by the Modus's spray and Morgan recovering from a slow start. At the completion of the first lap it was already beginning to look like Brise's race with Crawford and Morgan close enough to profit if he made a mistake and the rest doing the best they could, but lagging. Nicholson was fourth but had Choularton right behind him while Lawler was a strong sixth and going well for an underrated driver. Mallock had brought his "new" March up to seventh ahead of Muir and Mussetti while the rest came past in the order P. Williams, May, Wardle, C. Williams, Sharp, Wentz after his delayed start, and Munro after the first of four spins at the hairpin.

The Eden Brabham soon lapsed on to less than four cylinders and set a trend which was to be followed by more than half the field before the race was over. After three pit stops Cyd plodded on to finish ninth but failed to complete enough laps to be classified. Mallock was the next to be waterlogged, calling it a day on lap nine, after dropping several places. Wardle had already given up by then but few people noticed because Crawford had now decided to see if anything could be done about Brise's ever increasing lead.

From the fifth lap, therefore, there were not

Jim Crawford took the SDC Chevron to second place, ahead of team patron, Steve Choularton.





Don't be fooled by Dick Mallock's helmet, this is Steve Choularton taking his new Chevron to third in the Atlantic race.

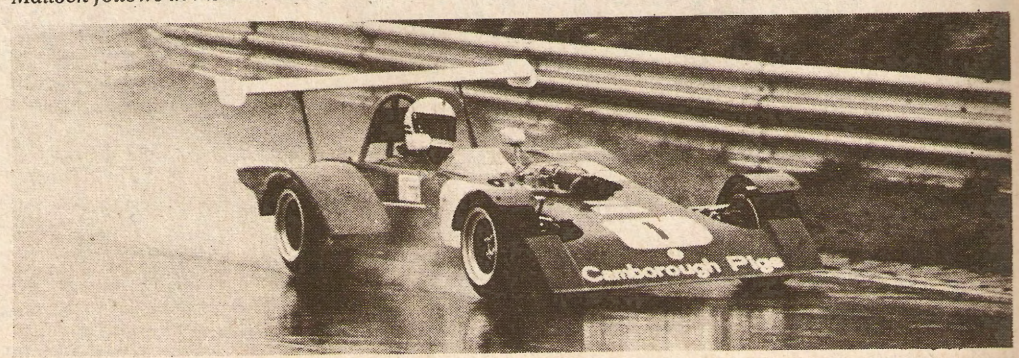


Tony Brise was the initial Atlantic leader in the Modus, but spun off in the treacherous conditions. Ray Mallock follows in his new March.

one but two cars being driven in anger on the treacherous surface while Morgan was also beginning to tread with increasing confidence, Nicholson, Choularton and Lawler had all closed up to fight over fourth position by lap 10 but then things began to go wrong and spoil what could have been a good race. On the 11th lap, just as Crawford was closing in on Brise, he had a moment at Gerards which lost him more ground than he ever seemed likely to regain but without losing his second place to Morgan. Two laps later, as May retired his drowned Lola, Lawler discovered one of the Gerards rivers and slid in to the bank with little damage at the time but ending a promising drive by the Irishman. His undamaged car did not stay that way for long though for on his 17th lap Brise found the Modus refusing to do anything he wanted it to at precisely the same spot, and he skated out of the race into collision with the Chevron.

No sooner had this been digested, with Crawford now leading quite comfortably from Morgan, than Nicholson was in trouble with a wet engine and he had to give up his efforts to keep Choularton behind, pulling the Tui into the pits and retirement, a few laps later and leaving only the three Chevrons on the same lap. The Lyncar had also gone by then with wet electrics. At half distance, therefore, we had Crawford in the lead from Morgan with Choularton third and Nicholson about to retire from fourth. Leading the lapped was Musetti driving a tidy race in his March and keeping clear of Muir and Wentz while Munro, Peter Williams and Cyd Williams were all further laps behind.

And that was it. Nothing seemed likely to upset the status quo for the rest of the race, and nothing did with one vital exception. On lap 23 Morgan was suddenly very much closer to the leader after Crawford had another moment at Gerards. Could the ever-improving Morgan mount a successful challenge for the remaining 15 laps? He didn't have to. As the two leaders passed the pits for the 25th time Jim was put off line by a back marker and instantly started spinning down the track. Richard just managed to squeeze between the spinning Chevron and the barrier and then nearly lost it as he resumed the racing line while the SDC Chevron ended up still pointing the right way and on the track. There was little chance of retaking the lead by then so Morgan ran out a worthy winner with Crawford just keeping second from his mate on the last lap when the engine almost died. Musetti was another fortunate finisher in fourth place for his clutch packed up as he drove in to the paddock.



Creighton Brown followed up his two seconds at Thruxton with a fine win at Mallory Park in the new Mallock U2 Mk 17. Below, the FF2000 season got off to a mediocre start in the soaking conditions.



SUPPORTING RACES

The first round of the MCD Clubmen's Formula Championship, sponsored this year by Lec Refrigeration instead of ShellSport, had a healthy entry but mainly in the non-FF class. However, it was one of the FFs which provided the surprise of practice when Nick Adams put his Team Camborough U2 Mk 14 on the front row alongside team patron Creighton Brown in his new Mk 17 and Noel Stanbury's Zerostat Gryphon.

Alas for Adams, he had to be push-started after the rest had left led by Stanbury who only lasted two laps before spinning on the puddles at Gerards and sinking undamaged into the mud. This left Brown with a comfortable win over Vernon Davies in the mysteriously misfiring Hustler SS4, although the loss of power meant little in the conditions where driving skill could make up the difference. Another to show his ability was Frank Sytner who started from the back row after qualifying in another car when his transporter broke down on the way to the circuit. Commentated on by the car's African owner, Frank brought the ex-Sytner/Cook U2 Mk 11B/14 up to third by the end, failing to catch Davies by very little.

Martin Mansell drove a good race in his old U2 to take fourth. Despite his late start, Adams was coping with the rest when the throttle stuck and he spun at the Esses; his U2's nose was then run over by another car at the hairpin; and finally the engine lapsed on to only one cylinder, cutting out as he crossed the line last but third in class to Peter Clark's Centaur Mk 14B and Chris Greville-Smith's Phantom.

It's early days in the Formula Ford 2000 yet so judgement had better be reserved. Only 10 cars started this first Allied Polymer championship round and the positions only changed when one of them hit trouble. Ian Taylor led all the way in the works Dulon MP16 from a closely-following Damien Magee in the Anglo-Scottish Palliser which had the wrong gearing, said the Ulsterman. Derek Lawrence brought his untried Crossle 31F into third as Syd Fox fell back with his Hawke's engine icing up. It was *that* cold, and everyone was glad when it was all over. It can only improve.

RESULTS

John Player Formula Atlantic International Championship, round 1
Mallory Park, March 9
40 laps, 54 miles

1, Richard Morgan (Chevron-Nicholson B29 BDA), 40 m 6.0 s, 80.80 mph.
2, Jim Crawford (Chevron-Hart B29 BDA), 40 m 35.6 s.
3, Steve Choularton (Chevron-Hart B29 BDA), 40 m 37.4 s.
4, Val Musetti (March-Wood 73B/74B BDA), 38 laps.
5, Bobby Muir (Birrana-Hart 273 BDA), 37 laps; 6, Ted Wentz (Lola-Swindon T360B BDA), 36 laps; not classified: Peter Munro (Chevron-Whitehurst B27 BDA), 35 laps; Peter Williams (Chevron-Nicholson B27 BDA), 35 laps; Cyd Williams (Brabham-Eden BT40 BDA), 32 laps.

Fastest lap: Tony Brise (Modus-Nicholson M3 BDA), 55.4 s, 87.73 mph.

Lec Refrigeration Clubmen's Formula Championship round (15 laps): 1, Creighton Brown (1.6 U2-Close Mk 17), 16 m 6.0 s, 75.47 mph; 2, Vernon Davies (1.6 Hustler-Davron SS4), 16m 45.0 s; 3, Frank Sytner (1.6 U2-Davron Mk IIB/14), 14m 48.4 s; 4, Martin Mansell (1.6 U2-Piper Mk IIB), 16 m 52.6 s; 5, Martin White (1.6 U2-Swindon Mk 14), 14 laps; 6, Steve Russell (1.6 U2-Davron Mk 15), 14 laps.

Class A, fully modified engines: 1, Brown, 75.47 mph; 2, Davies; 3, Sytner. **Fastest lap:** Noel Stanbury (1.6 Gryphon-Swindon C4A/75), 56.6 s, 86.88 mph.

Class B, FF engines: 1, Peter Clark (Centaur-Davron Mk 14B), 68.40 mph; 2, Chris Greville-Smith (Phantom-RE P74/75); 3, Nick Adams (U2-Holbay Mk 14). **Fastest lap:** Adams, 1 m 4.6 s, 75.23 mph.

Allied Polymer Formula Ford 2000 Championship round (20 laps): 1, Ian Taylor (Dulon-Holbay MP16), 19 m 12.8 s, 84.32 mph; 2, Damien Magee (Palliser-Minister P742), 19m 17.0 s; 3, Derek Lawrence (Crossle-Titan 31F), 19 m 31.4 s; 4, Donald Macleod (Van Diemen-Scholar RF75), 20m 5.0 s; 5, Jeremy Rossiter (Reynard-Piper 75SF), 19 laps; 6, Roger Orgee (Royale-Vengantune RP22), 18 laps. **Fastest lap:** Taylor and Magee, 56.8 s, 85.57 mph **(new record).**



Despite Richard Lloyd's 7.4 litre engine, the Simoniz car couldn't pull clear of Graham's 5.7 litre Brut car.

MALLORY PARK

Same conditions—different result

By BOB CONSTANDUROS

"The conditions may be the same, but the result will be different" said Richard Lloyd to Stuart Graham on Sunday morning at Mallory Park, for the opening round of the RAC/Southern Organs national touring car championship. Last year, true, it was the opening round of the championship, true it was lousy and wet, and true, Stuart Graham won. Except this year, with 7.4 litres of power under the Think Automotive/Simoniz Racing's Camaro bonnet, Lloyd had an advantage that the Nantwich driver couldn't overcome.

The race was divided into two, with the upper two classes contesting one 25 lapper, and the others, another 25 lapper. While Lloyd just held Graham at bay, Gordon Spice held off Holman Blackburn's challenge, for a poorly supported 2501 cc to 4000 cc class. In the second, less exciting race, Andy Rouse continued his winning ways, and took the 1501 cc to 2500 cc class from teamate Roger Bell while Win Percy, the former Datsun 240Z driver, changed rising sun marque to vanquish sick and healthy Avengers for the small class points in his first outing in the championship.

ENTRY & PRACTICE

It was said by a hopeful driver in this year's series that the only cars to turn up to Mallory Park, the first event in the series, were those who had definite sponsorship. The entry was therefore thin. Working down the classes, there were nine present out of 12 entries for the over 4000 cc class, four out of eight for the 2501 cc to 4000 cc class, six out of eight for the 2500 cc class, and seven out of nine for the up to 1600 cc class. But not all of those were to race.

On pole for the first race was Richard Lloyd in Rob Potter's 7.4 litre Camaro entered by Think Automotive/Simoniz Racing, on 1m 28s. The car was essentially the same as last year, but the 7.4 engine had been rebuilt by Roy Fewkes since its Snetterton cooking and was reckoned to push out about 430 bhp as against 375 of the 5.7 engine, although one must take into account some weight differential. Practice was spent getting used to driving the car as the extra power required a different technique.

Stuart Graham had an entirely new car, except that he used it on the road last year, with 5.7 litre power. Brut, for whom he races again this year, only decided in January to go into G1 again this year, so that car had been somewhat rushed, and Stuart himself admitted to not exactly having his heart in it. Even so, despite complaining of being overgeared and set up for the dry, plus a battery that wasn't being charged and thus misfiring the engine, Stuart set exactly the same time as Lloyd, but later than the former pop music manager.

Third on the grid, with the ex-Graham Camaro, and earning the distinction of damaging his Organ before anyone else, was Tony Shaw in the National Organs sponsored car. Shaw went off at the Esses damaging the front end, but not before setting a 1m 3.4s.

Next, all on 1m 3.8s, were Tony Fall (2.8 Opel Commodore), Gordon Spice (3.0 Ford Capri II), and Holman Blackburn (3.0 Ford Capri). Fall, the first to set the time, had had the front end straightened following last year's end of season shunt, followed by a *Motor* road test, an oil change and then our to the track. Fall is still waiting for his new car as the engine has been held up in Germany and thus was using his Tour of Britain engine from last year in the 1hd car.

Spice, in Stan Robinson's Wishart Garage Capri 11 had had a troubled day on the Saturday at Brands practising on the wet. After just 1¼ laps, the slightly sensitive, but homologated (so they tell me) cam went flat, and the car disappeared for an engine change, reappearing at the end of the day. No one really knew, they said, whether this RS (Racing Services) mill had that cam in or not, but it was obviously healthy, and Gordon was getting into the swing of things with gusto as usual.

Blackburn still has his two original Capris for sale, and while awaiting his Hermetite Capri II II had one of his original cars on hand, keeping up his record of events started in the G1 series.

Seventh on the grid was Tony Lanfranchi's Hemicuda, not providing the driver any problems for his 1m 5s, followed by John Olding's MacMillan publishing sponsored Camaro on 1m 5.6s. Vince Woodman, who had swopped his 7.4 mill for a 5.7 at Ralph Broad's the previous day following a piston failure, recorded a 1m 6s, although they had a starting problem. Next up was Stuart Rolt, still in a Capri, but the ex-works Walkinshaw car, hoping to keep it in pristine condition, despite a spin during practice, from which he could not restart.

Malcolm Wayne came on 1m 9.4s in his Camaro to complete the grid with Jon Fletcher's similar car on 1m 16.8s. However, Fletcher's practice was abbreviated by an excursion at Gerards which damaged the rear bodywork and a rear spring. He elected not to start, and Brian Pepper and Nigel Stovin-Bradford (Camaros), one TBN (Camaro), Terry Watts, Bill Gubelmann (Capris), Rex Greenslade and Mike Woolley (Opel Commodores) signified something by not turning up.

One race later came 25 laps for the other two classes. Heading this grid was an entirely new Dolomite Team from last year, with new cars, new testing times, and new sponsorship from Piranha ignition. Heading the line up was one of the two old things about the team, Andy Rouse, the other old memory of last year being Ralph Broad still doing preparation. "Light years" had been gained in the handling department thanks to three sunny days of testing down at Goodwood. This, says Broad, has brought the cars to their ultimate, and one slightly gathers that Mr Broad will now be roaming pastures new in the development of the Dolomite. "We'll let the lads get on with it now," said Broad "And wait for them to catch up."

Rouse recorded a 1m 2.8s (the same as Lloyd and Graham) in his Dolomite and John Hine, in a Shellsport car, was alongside having set his time before than Roger Bell's second Piranha car on 1m 3.4s (good enough for third on the Camaro grid). Barrie Williams in the Japanese Airlines/Castrol Mazda came next on 1m 4s, complaining of the car cutting out, carburation being blamed. This was last year's *Penthouse* car.

Next up on 1m 5s came Tom Walkinshaw, having another outing in the Alan Foster London Sports Car Centre's RS2000 Escort. First up to 1600 cc car was not unexpectedly, Bernard Unett's Hillman Avenger GT on 1m 5.4s, now in Halesfield's hands. It was an entirely new car, not unexpectedly considering the last Brands round in October, although the engine was salvaged from the mess and installed in this car. Excellent team work was provided by Jennifer Birrell, with her car from last year, looked after by Halesfield too, on 1m 6.4s, just one second slower than the class maestro. Mrs Birrell's car had the works suspension since her unhappy outing at Brands in



Despite a race-long carburation problem Barrie Williams was never far from the action, chasing Bell's Dolomite.

October.

Third in class was David Vizard's Avenger on 1m 7.8s. Win Percy in the Samuri Mo Co's Toyota Celica had worn out some old wet Michelins, and was let down by Dunlop for any wets, having been impressing all and sundry during dry testing. However, some sort of wets were arranged for the race. Tony Dron was turning the wheels of his *Penthouse* Alfa in anger for the first time, it having been finished the night before, for a 1m 12.4s, complaining of handling problems. Team mate Stan Clark had a drastic misfire, and didn't go out for the race, having set 1m 15.4s. The car wouldn't start.

Allan Wilkinson didn't turn up for the race at all in his RS 2000, Jon Mowatt's BMW 2002Tii didn't appear, while Brian Muir's Arian prepared and entered Mazda arrived too late for practice and wouldn't start anyway. Bill Sydenham was too busy showing off his fiancé to race, and TBN in the second Toyota Celica obviously hadn't got the money together and never revealed himself.

RACES

The first of the two races probably held in wetter conditions, was the larger classed event. From pole position, Richard Lloyd got the jump on Graham's Camaro, but the better starts came from Fall in the Opel and Spice's Capri. However, at Gerards, Graham drove for a 4ft gap at Tony Fall's expense. That was the established order for the first lap, and as they shot across the line, it was Lloyd, Graham, Fall, Spice, Blackburn just holding off Woodman, then the others, headed by Lanfranchi. The leading two were obviously in a class of their own, lapping within 1.5s of one another, then came the next four bunched: Fall, Spice, Blackburn and Woodman. Then, as Graham closed up on lap four, the Opel started to slide down the four car battle. Spice and Blackburn overtook on one lap, then Woodman. However, the latter was being dropped as Blackburn seriously challenged Spice, the Capri II, in this case, handling better through the corners. Then Lanfranchi took the Opel, and at about the time that Blackburn spun at Gerards on lap eight, the Fall car was caught by Olding and Stuart Rolt. Rejoining behind Woodman, the gap up to Spice that Blackburn had to make up was 12.5s, but as with the leader, Spice's Capri didn't sound too healthy although this had little effect on the final order.

The gap between the two Capris came down to 9.5s, but while the two leaders were suddenly very close after Lloyd was baulked by Wayne, this gap was to remain stationary. Rolt was now in last position, for by this time Fall had retired, the head gasket, which was suspect anyway, having blown, "we've mixed the oil and the water." Rolt then spun at Gerards once again, and failed to restart.

The leading two were flying at this stage, the gap varying from 0.9s to 1.4s, but never over that figure. On lap 20, they only had Spice to lap having lapped the rest, and by lap 23, they were the only two on the same lap. Spice and Blackburn kept up the chase as best as they knew how, just 0.8s separating the first two. There was 6.6s between Spice and Blackburn in the second class, while Woodman dropped back with a broken exhaust manifold. Lanfranchi, Olding, West and Wayne made up the rest.

The second race, for the smaller two classes, featured a flag to flag win by an untroubled Andy Rouse in the Piranha Dolomite. In true style, following an initial challenge from John Hine, the second Bell car got through to second on lap one with Barry Williams next, then Hine followed by Unett, already slightly away from the others. Rouse just drew away from the field, but Bell wasn't so lucky, having Williams and Hine rather too close for comfort.

Percy, meanwhile, was challenging Jennifer B for her second in class position behind Unett, and after four laps, he left the Scottish lady to the clutches of fellow countryman Tom Walkinshaw. As the leader pulled out to about 3.3s on lap seven, Williams, finding the car cutting out and jerking back in again found himself challenged by Hine, but kept his head in front.

Meanwhile though, Unett had suffered a broken rocker, and plummetted to next to last in the race, leaving the small class to Percy. Things seemed static about then, for no one was making that much on any one else. Rouse was out in front, then Bell, Williams, and Hine, bunched together, then Percy, Walkinshaw, Birrell, and then Unett, still to be overtaken by the lapped Dron. This latter event took place to obscene gestures from team mate Clark on lap 11, and Unett still kept going to gain a couple of points, with his ailing engine. Then Williams got it into his head to have a go at Bell, and down came the gap to next to nothing on lap 18. But each time Williams closed up, on the straights, he would loose out on the corners. The engine was cutting out through the corners, and after several attempts, resolved himself to third in class. The problem was still in the carburation. Win Percy was demoted one place overall by Walkinshaw, but after Mrs Birrell had had a spin, his class place was secure, his job well done on his first RAC G1 outing. Just to let Barrie Williams away, Hine had a spin out of Gerards on lap 24, and that's how they finished, Rouse having maintained a 2 second lead on Bell, then a second away was Williams, 10s to Hine, 27s to Walkinshaw and then1.4s to Percy, Jennifer B being lapped.

RAC/Southern Organs Touring Car championship
Races A and B, 25 laps, Mallory Park, March 9

Race A, over 4000 cc, and 2501 to 4000 cc: 1 Richard Lloyd (7.4 Chevrolet Camaro), 25m 36s, 79.10 mph; 2, Stuart Graham (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro), 25m 36.8s; 3, Gordon Spice (3.0 Capri GTII), 24 laps; 4, Holman Blackburn (3.0 Ford Capri), 24 laps; 5, Vince Woodman (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro), 24 laps; 6, Tony Lanfranchi (6.9 Chrysler Hemicuda), 24 laps.

Over 4000 cc class: 1, Lloyd, 79.10 mph; 2, Graham; 3, Woodman; 4, Lanfranchi. **Fastest lap:** Graham, 59.4s, 81.82 mph.

2501 cc to 4000 cc class: 1, Spice, 75.63 mph; 2, Blackburn, no other finishers. **Fastest lap:** Blackburn, 1m 2.4s, 77.89 mph.

Race B, 1601 cc to 2500 cc and up to 1600 cc, overall and 1601 cc to 2500 cc class: 1, Andy Rouse (2.0 Triumph Dolomite Sprint), 25m 50.6s, 78.36 mph; 2, Roger Bell (2.0 Triumph Dolomite Sprint), 25m 52.6s; 3, Barrie Williams (2.3 Mazda RX3), 25m 53.6s; 4, John Hine (2.0 Triumph Dolomite Sprint), 26m 30.4s; 5, Tom Walkinshaw (2.0 Ford Escort RS 2000), 26m 30.4s; 6, Win Percy (1.6 Toyota Celica GT), 26m 31.8s. **Fastest lap:** Hine and Williams, 1m 1s, 79.67 mph.

Up to 1600 cc class: 1, Percy, 76.33 mph; 2, Jennifer Birrell (1.6 Hillman Avenger GT); 3, Tony Dron (1.6 Alfa Romeo GT); 4, Bernard Unett (1.6 Hillman Avenger GT). **Fastest lap:** Percy, 1m 2.6s, 77.63 mph.

Ill-equipped with the wrong tyres Percy nevertheless put in a superb class-winning performance.



INTERVIEW

Peter Gaydon—the organisation man

by IAN PHILLIPS

Peter Gaydon, as head of Motor Race Consultants, is one of the leading figures in the administration and organisation of motor sport, from a competitor's point of view, in this country. In the past few years the services of MRC have enabled many drivers from this country to compete in races, ranging from F1 to special saloons, all over Europe and get a square deal from organisers.

Recently MRC was appointed to look after the interests of Formula 5000 with a special view to promoting it in Europe. Peter Gaydon, himself a former driver, spoke to us last week about this and other spheres in which MRC are involved.

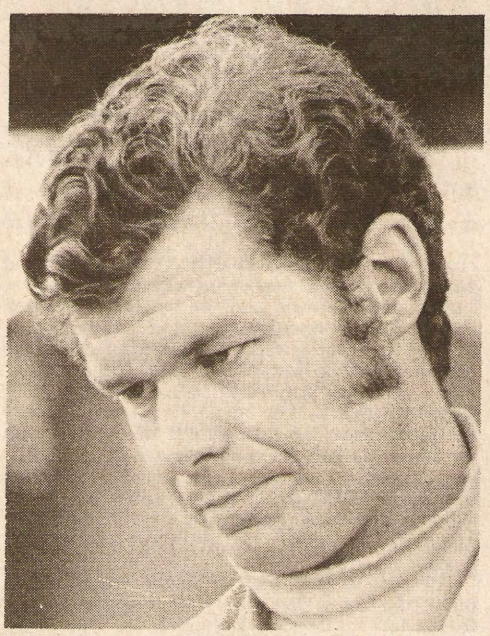
First of all can you describe the main functions of Motor Race Consultants?
Our main business is to look after the interests of competitors from a management/clerical point of view. The administration of a team now requires a certain amount of communication with organisers, travel agents, hotels and so on — we do that for teams at a very modest cost; modest when you consider the cost of employing a secretary to do that work. We're certainly much cheaper for the teams in terms of time.

We provide a service which takes a competitor from his garage to the circuit and back again, including his transportation (we do cut price deals with our travel agent on ferries, air fares etc.), to the meeting itself, negotiations of start money, obtaining visas, RAC permits, road permits and all the documents required. Then we bring them back, hopefully better off.

How did your recent appointment as secretary of F5000 come about?
Formula 5000 Europe, in the form of its Chairman Graham White, approached us with the idea of us taking over the administration of F5000 in Europe.

We were immediately interested.

It was to be on a commercial basis, we are after all a commercial house. We quoted for them and our quotation was accepted as from their Annual General Meeting on February 14.



Peter Gaydon — MRC supremo

What do you think will be gained by MRC handling the administration?
In the past F5000 Europe has been run by a committee, all of whom have very extensive interests in motor racing, and equally they have all had jobs either in motor racing or within motor sport. But they haven't been involved with administration or motor sport on a 100% basis.

I think it was felt that F5000 was at a stage when it needed a professional, well organised body to look after its interests and to take over the development of the Formula on a professional basis. They approached us feeling that we would be able to provide that for them.

What do you think you will be able to do for F5000?
I think largely the improvement of the Formula as an internationally organised form of racing. In the past F5000 has generally been regarded a National Formula in this country, which has just the occasional sortie into Europe.

I think in 1976 the Formula will provide, for the competitor and the organiser, the most attractive form of racing at a reasonable cost, and I include all formulae when I make that statement.

You don't see any improvement in 1975?
I'm very much hopeful that we'll be able to add to the present schedule three European rounds with the top prize money scale. It will depend on the ability of the organisers we are approaching to host such a race as we are proposing and the availability of financial support from those organisers to do so. That situation depends on FIA recognition of dates and sponsorship money for them.

At your adoption meeting you mentioned that the F2 Association in conjunction with MRC had been instrumental in raising prize money from £16,000 to £27,000 per race. Do you see this as an objective in F5000?
Before I agree with those figures I must point out that £27,000 is the top figure than an F2 organiser might have to pay at the present time. We improved the money scale from 1973 to '74 by about 40%. We have increased the travel expenses for 1975 by 25%.

When you talk of negotiation with organisers in regard to prize money scales you have to bear in mind two things: first is how much they want the Formula and, second, is how much can they afford. When you go into negotiation you bear those things in mind.

Formula 5000 has, as its base, £15,000 for the most expensive race. There must be potential there for an increase; a substantial increase for competitors. I think this is the commercial basis on which we've taken over the administration.

It appears to me that the current money which is available in the Formula is such that no more than two or three really professional teams can afford to take part — do you think the current financial structure restricts the progress of the Formula?
No I wouldn't agree with that. I think that F5000 is divided, as far as races are concerned, into two separate categories, the £4500 races and the £9000 races.

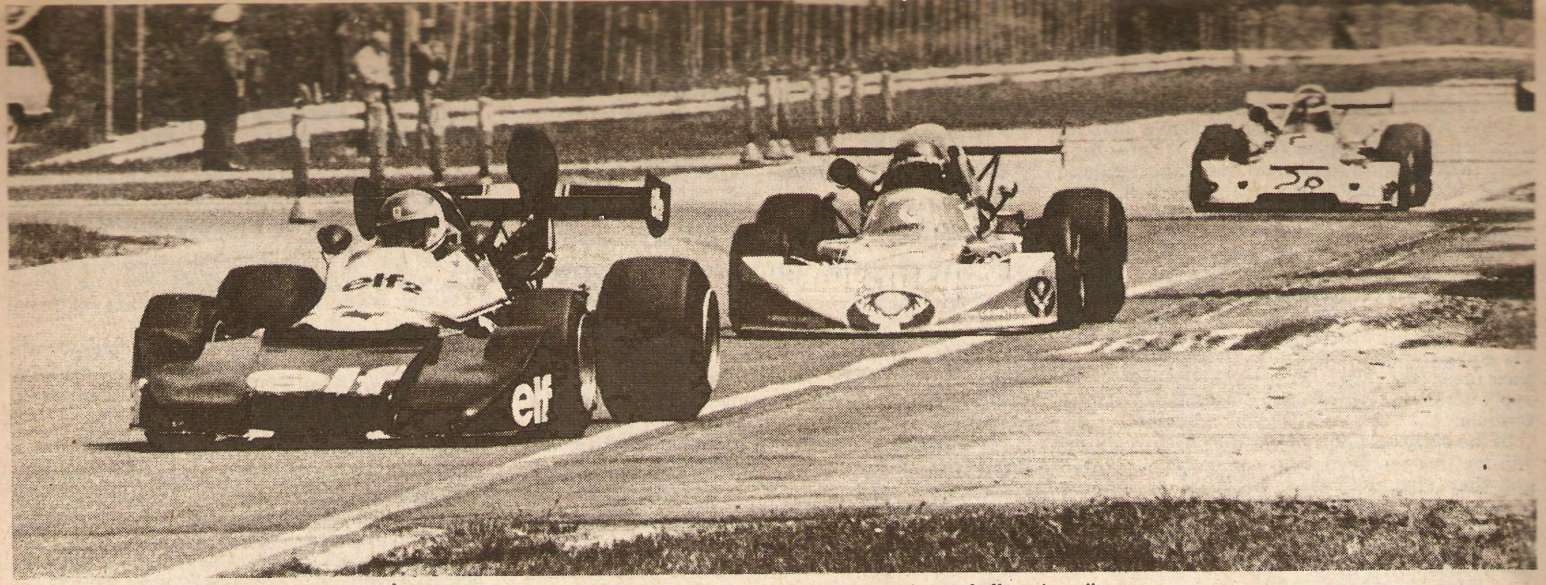
I think the £9000 races are well funded and the others are insufficient.

What I'd like to see is the adoption of the higher scale for all F5000 races in this country and to increase that, if possible, in agreement with the promoters in this country in accordance with their crowd return expectancy for the events.

The foreign races have a travel fund which brings up the total available to £15,000, which is

MCR enter Formula cars at home and abroad; here an early F3 grid gets away at Brands Hatch.





"Its vitally important that in early stage of his career, a driver can match himself against the best of all nations."

not very much considering what they are getting.

In an F5000 package now there are eight or nine drivers who have competed in the world championship races with cars that, as far as straight line speed is concerned, are faster than F1 cars. They are not quite so stable in the corners so they make much more of a spectacle and a challenge for the competitor. I think it is a very attractive and acceptable package. I would like to see that improved. It's only going to improve in Europe if we can attract European drivers.

This year we've got the opportunity of four cars being available for hire by European drivers. So if we go to a European organser for a budget of £X,000 we can say, you can have the circus at its normal fee, plus the availability of these four cars for your local heroes.

If F5000 does make it into Europe in a big way, surely it will be at the expense of another Formula?
Yes, I would think that's probably the case. In the past both I and my company have been very much supporters of the theory of drivers progressing from F3 to F2 and F1.

It is logical, or has been in the past, that if a driver wishes to succeed in motor racing F1 is the ultimate goal. For him to take part in a nursery formula then progress into a really competitive European Formula, then go into F1. In the past F2 has supplied this intermediary stepping stone between F3 and F1.

"I think spectators round the world are going to get very bored with nothing but single seaters and saloons. They need the variety of sports car racing."

Our interest in F5000 is kindled by the fact in 1976 the CSI have adopted a free engine policy in F2, which will bring in such engines as the Alpine V6. These are rumoured to cost more than a DFV in terms of overhauls. This is going to take the cost of competing in F2 beyond the means of the privateer. It will also mean that only a few factory teams will be able to compete. Basically it's going to be a Formula for the rich. This is no good. It doesn't allow the scope for the talented driver who has no financial support.

Really our interest in F5000 stems from the fact that it offers the competitors a stepping stone at a far more economical price and this, I feel, is tremendously important.

If you had asked me the same question two years ago, I'd have said that F2 was the only way for a single seater driver to go. In 1976 he won't be able to afford to go F2. So where else does he go?

In F5000, with the quality of drivers that are contesting the championship this year and probably will next year, an up and coming driver can gain his experience against them and be successful.

You don't see a future for F2 beyond this year?
I will answer that another way. At the beginning of 1974 I, on behalf of the drivers, Max Mosely, on behalf of the Constructors, and Emile Bezing of Hockenheim, representing the organisors, went to the CSI and asked if we could have grade A drivers in the F2 championship because we need the participation of graded drivers to make the championship worthwhile and competitive. The CSI refused.

". . . F2 was the only way for a single-seater driver to go. In 1976 he won't be able to afford to . . ."

I feel that the CSI has ruined F2 by not appreciating what is necessary to make the Formula attractive. F5000, I feel can be attractive because it's not hide bound by the conventions of the governing body.

Do you think there is room for both F2 and F5000?
As it is at the moment we've got a lot of international intermediary formulae and, if you ask me as a purist what I'd like to see, I'd like all the formulae to go into the melting pot and be squeezed together and for just one to come out. Then you will have one junior formula, one intermediary formula and F1. However in practice that's not going to happen.

It is a question of who is the strongest. In terms of cost F5000 will come out strongest. You can buy a Chevrolet engine for £5500 and, although the BMW will cost a similar amount this year, try being competitive with one next year.

There has been talk of inexperienced drivers being banned from F5000, do you think this should apply to all formulae?
Yes I do. I think there should be a ladder system whereby you have to compete to a certain degree of success in a formula before you move up to the next one. You can't go out and fight Joe Bugner without first having a lot of intermediary fights to prove you are capable. In the same way there should be a degree of evolution for a driver before he can move to a higher formula.

How do you see the F5000 Championship being ideally constituted, half in England and half in Europe, perhaps knocking out what I consider to be silly races, the three at Mallory Park for instance?
I think if you're just going to have eight races in this country I would add the stipulation that they are the eight races which are a commercial success to the organisers, who can, therefore, afford to pay the competitor the top rate. If that means three races at Mallory Park, so be it. It's tough on the competitor — if he doesn't like racing at Mallory Park it's too bad.

Occasionally we can't always do what we want. You have to accept the commercial reasons behind a promotor saying, 'Well I can get a better crowd at this particular circuit so I wish to hold the race here.'

MRC are heavily involved with the organisation of races of all types in Europe, how do you see the climate there at the moment?
I'm very sorry to see a conspiracy against sports car racing. It appears to me that in 1976 the emphasis will be on single seaters and saloon cars from Silhouettes to G1.

I think there is a place for sports cars in Europe. It is a very great pity the governing body have not given more emphasis to sports cars in 1976. There are a tremendous number of private entries all over Europe who race 2-litre sports cars particularly, very happily and competitively and provide worthwhile racing and interest to spectators.

I think spectators round the world are going to get very bored with nothing but single seaters and saloons. They need the variety of sports car racing. I think it's a great shame that the governing body is conspiring against it. When I say conspiring, I understand that in 1976 organisers will be offered the option of either silhouette saloons downwards or sports cars for the world championship events. I don't think that this is right at all. I think we should have either a sports prototype race, in which you include GTs, or you have a touring car race and I don't feel that the long distance classics should be for touring cars.

Have the CSI made their mistake in the writing of the regulations?
No, I think the idea of 5-litre stock blocks and 2- and 3-litre racing engines is good. There are plenty of them around. I think that's absolutely right and the right way to go.

I think that where they've made the mistake is putting the emphasis on the silhouette formula. I don't mean this as me, or my company, being against silhouette racing, I personally find the prospect very exciting, but to be competitive in that class of racing is going to require tremendous investment. We had figures of £15-£20,000 talked of for a competitive G2 car for the ETC last year. That is nonsense money for people thinking of going motor racing. If you're talking about a silhouette car in 1976 from Ford, BMW or General Motors, you are talking at least £25,000.

". . . the CSI have ruined F2 by not appreciating what is necessary to make the Formula attractive. F5000 can be attractive because it's not hide-bound by the conventions of the governing body."

What competitors are going to be able to buy a competitive car for £25,000 to race in Touring car events where the appearance money is not really satisfactory?

At the present time we have got 2- and 3-litre sports cars which can be bought as a rolling chassis for between £6,500, for a 2-litre, and eight to ten thousand pounds for a 3-litre. It makes much more economic sense.

The governing body of motor sport, both nationally and internationally, has got to understand that this constant change of formulae is bad for the sport. It requires continual financial investment by the companies making racing cars and the result of that investment means that the end products are going to be expensive. This takes the international categories out of the reach of a

great many people and the international fields are going to become extremely thin.

There are rumours of many European organisers not being able to afford to run their traditional races this year among the various formulae, is any formula going to suffer more than another?

I think it's a fact of life that when a club or organising circuit applies for a date or dates for a year, they apply for more than they expect to hold simply because they expect to be cut down by the governing body and because they will not have enough sponsorship money available.

You'll always get organisers overbidding for what they are able to obtain.

However, I do think that there is a situation on the continent where a lot of the organisors or circuits, who are operating on a once a year basis, are going to find it difficult to find money to run their races this year. I think though that this will apply across the board, not to any one particular formula.

In the early part of the year the later organisers will see that major races are not well supported and they obviously won't be keen on running these events. This is where I see F5000 slotting in.

Being pesimistic for a moment, do you ever see a point where motor racing will price itself out of existence.

"I think in 1976 the Formula (5000) will provide, for the competitor and the organiser, the most attractive form of racing at a reasonable cost, and I include all formulae when I make that statement."

Very definitely yes. At the present time you've got F1 which is financially viable for the competitor, driver and organiser. It's a delight; it's a perfect formula; it's intensively competitive and everybody views it as such.

All formulae that fall between F1 and club racing, where drivers drive for the pure enjoyment of driving a racing car on a circuit, are going to be squeezed.

I think in the future we'll have the effect of a dumbell where, at one end, we've got F1 and, maybe, one other formula that succeeds in that area, and at the other end national formulae.

If you look at the escalation of costs of running a competitive formula car over the past three or four years, it's been so great that fewer and fewer people are able to participate.

Do you think that companies such as MRC, whose basic aim in one sphere is to get as much money for competitors as possible, are, perhaps, detrimental to the sport in the current climate?

No, because I think what we obtain for the competitors is just a drop in the ocean of their expense.

"It's only going to improve in Europe, if we can attract European drivers. This year we've got the opportunity of four cars being available for hire by European drivers."

The increase in costs of the constructors, which I'm afraid are a fact of life, of cars, engines and all ancillary equipment, due to the constant change in regulations, mean a vast increase in overall cost to the competitor. The amount we negotiate on their behalf is only a fraction of the overall increase they have to bear. We don't need formulae being changged willy-nilly.

MRC have played a fairly major part in the Formula 3 revival movement, do you consider it necessary?

I suppose I'm heavily biased in favour of F3 because I had three very enjoyable years of racing in the category. However, I do believe there has to be a junior international formula. None of the Formula Ford, Formula Renault, Formula Atlantic, Formula SEAT, Formula SuperVee and so on provide a truly international formula.

We want an international formula at the bottom of the ladder where Britons can compete against Italians, Spaniards, Swedes, French — everybody. It's vitally important that, in an early stage of a driver's career, he can match himself against the best of all the other nations.

Whether you say that F3 is the right category is quite another matter. Personally I would consider that the Formula Atlantic regulations would be very much more suitable for F3 than the present regulations. They would provide a very useful stepping stone between FF and the other national formulae and the F5000/F2 intermediary step.

"Formula 5000 has, as its base, £15,000 for the most expensive race. There must be potential there for an increase; a substantial increase for competitors."

I think you've got to have a strong national category in each of the different countries. I would like to see the drivers wanting to move out of the national formulae into the international junior class which should be F3, whatever the regulations are. Then they should move onto the next grade where the talent spotters look at the likely lads and pick out the F1 potential. It seems to me to be logical.

It's no good having five or six different formulae and expect anyone to be able to assess talent properly.

Do you think the F3 revival will succeeed?

Yes I do. We know of 30 drivers who have got cars to race in this country and we know of a few more who are hoping to do it. There are very strong contingents in Italy, Scandinavia and Germany and I very much hope it will be a bumper year.

If you look back we've had some fantastic years of F3, and the formula has, in the past, thrown up all the best drivers. Just look at the World Championship table and practically every driver started in F3, I think Carlos Reutemann is the only exception.

If a client came to you and said, "I want to race internationally and make money," is there anything he can do?

It rather distresses me when people say they want to go racing internationally and make money. I think it is reasonable if a driver is good, good enough to be hired by a team to drive, he should make money because he's providing a professional service to his team and sponsor.

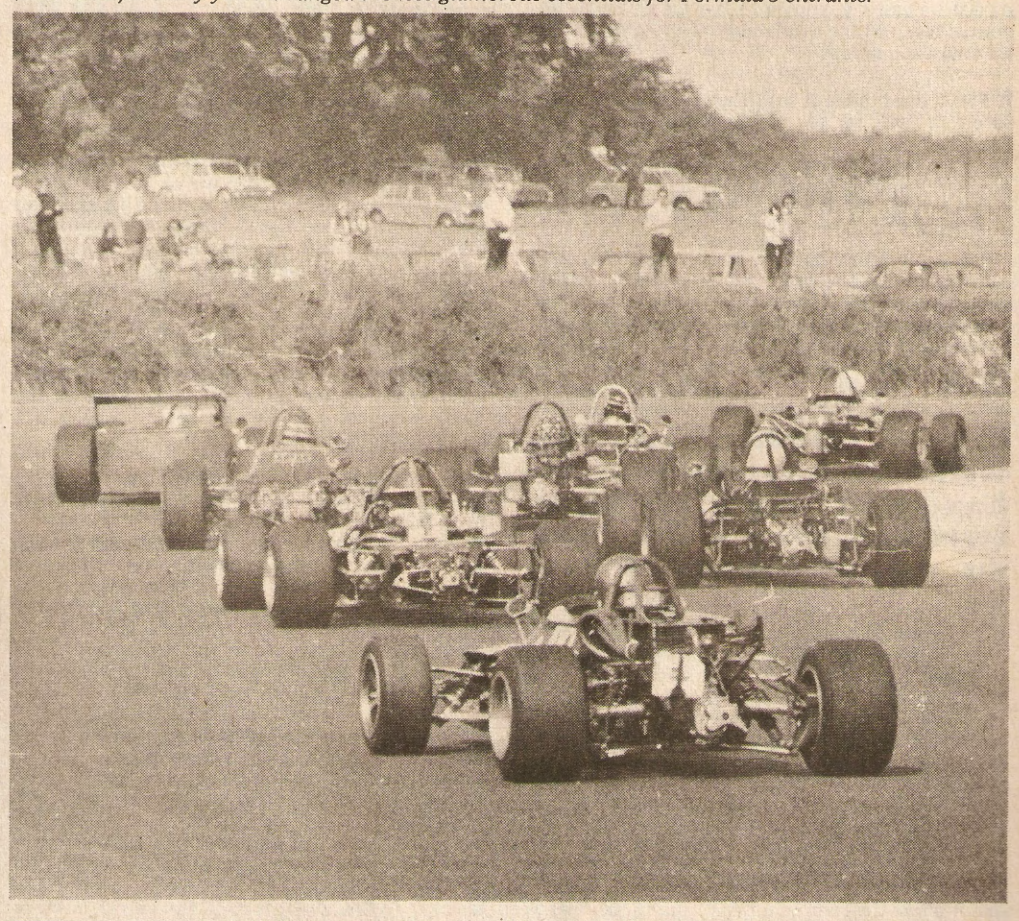
However, the average driver, who may not have the skills to earn himself a car on merit, should not, in my opinion, receive any financial benefit at all.

I feel very strongly about this. There are a great many drivers who feel they are owed a living out of motor racing when, in fact, they are really not that good.

We get, in this office, a lot of telephone calls from drivers who don't even have restricted licences, who say they want a sponsor to go motor racing. This is nonsense. The man who is sponsored should be capable and be deserving in ability of sponsorship. If a man is a good enough salesman and gets himself a sponsor, all credit to him. But, speaking as a purist, I don't think it is right that the average driver should consider that he should make a living out of motor racing. He's got to be good to do it. And if he's good he deserves every penny he makes and I include the World Champion. If he makes hundreds of thousands of pounds, good luck to him, he deserves it.

"The governing body of motor sport, both nationally and internationally, has got to understand that this constant change of formulae is bad for the sport."

MRC have for many years arranged the less glamorous essentials for Formula 3 entrants.



This Week's Centre Spread

The First National City Banks Penske-Ford PC1 made its appearance in Formula One racing last year at the Canadian Grand Prix last year, and after two North American outings, became a regular contender this year. With Mark Donohue in the driver's seat, the First National City Bank sponsored Penske has shown its teeth by twice being placed just outside the top six, in seventh and eighth positions, in the three Grands Prix run so far this year. Donohue will again be in the driving seat this weekend at the Race of Champions at Brands Hatch on Sunday. The F1 car comes from the famous Roger Penske stable, and will be based in Poole, Dorset, for its forthcoming European Grand Prix season.


GOODYEAR
FIRST NATIONAL CITY
28
SUNOCO


FIRST NATIONAL CITY
TRAVELERS CHECKS PENSKE
28
PENSKE



Brian Mills had no trouble at all winning the Modsports race in his E-type Jaguar.

SILVERSTONE

A wet MAC opening meeting

The 1975 Silverstone racing season kicked off, as is customary, with the MAC's meeting last Saturday. After a fine practice the racing, all bar the first one and a half races, was run in very wet conditions and it says much for the efficiency of the club that despite the weather and the problems of the building site in the paddock, that only one race had to be shortened. The experienced Tony Broster (Dulon MP15B) won probably the most exciting win in the changeable FF event while other victors were Graham Wenham (Mini 7), Tony Strawson (Capri), Brian Mills (E type), Alan Curnow (Mini Miglia) and Ken Silverstone's F3 Hawke DL15 in the *libre* thrash.

After a 20m high-speed trial the first serious race was for Mini 7s. Despite threatening skies it remained dry throughout and old hand Graham Wenham took his Micktuned car to an easy win, surprisingly setting a lap record on his way. Equally secure in second was Chris Tyrrell ahead of a huge bunch led by last year's winner Jim Mancey and Martin Goodall. Right down the field there was plenty of close racing (too close at times!)

A good field of FF's were next out and Mike King (Lola T342) led off pole and seemed to have the race sewn up until the rain came at mid-distance and caught him out at Becketts. This allowed Tony Broster into the lead, being challenged closely by David Barkas (Royale RP16), Lee Wroe-Johnson (Rostron CT75) and King. As the track got more slippery Broster won (despite Barkas leading on one lap) with King recapturing second at the last minute from Barkas and Wroe-Johnson.

By the time the Special Saloons came out it was pouring with rain. From pole Tony Strawson's heavily spoilered Capri rumbled away as fellow front row man Nigel Clarke stalled his Ford powered Mini. Steve Phillips (1.6 Escort) chased Strawson but was no match for the big car and Strawson pulled away to score yet another win. Meanwhile Clarke was carving back through the field, incredibly capturing second place from Phillips on the last lap. Jack Davies (Cooper S) was next up from 1 litre class winner Jon Adlard (Mini), the similar car of Steve Morton and 850 class winner Mike Kirby (Imp) who was lapped.

It was raining even more heavily by the time the Modsports cars lined up. The experience of Brian Mills showed for he took his Jaguar E away to a good win, but behind him was the action. Robin Gray (Morgan +8) held second early on until challenged by inspired newcomer Graeme Dodd (a man to watch in his ex-Stallwood 1.3 Midget) who had a lurid slide on lap one. Dodd pressed Gray, getting past on the last lap as Gray had a moment. Fourth was 3-litre class winner Colin Blower (prodsports TVR 3000) from, embarrassingly enough, one Peter Richings, who made full use of his demon Goodyear wets to win the small class in his Midget after a lousy start with inoperative wipers. Rod Gretton (prodsports V12E type) was unlucky to lose fifth as his hairy drive culminated in a lurid spin approaching Becketts on the last lap. He recovered to finish sixth. Down the field there were numerous spins, most prolific being Mike Donovan, who indulged in two harmless ones in his "for sale" Midget.

The second Mini formula race, for Miglias, saw yet another clear winner as Alan Curnow took his Longman engined car away to an easy win from John Hazell's Boobspeed car in an unchallenged second. Third place saw the first battle with Oselli man Phil Spurling holding off a challenge from Steve Harris (fourth) and John Bradburn's Aldon car, which spun into retirement on the last lap. The only other unlapped car was Russell Dell's Ripspeed Mini in fifth.

The Fairley Steels *Formule Libre* had been scheduled for fifteen laps but as conditions were so bad the wise decision to reduce to ten was made. Ken Silverstone led off pole in his F3 Hawke-Brown DL15 and was never challenged for Ken Hensley (FF 2000 Dulon-Holbay M16) was well down and concentrating on keeping Allan Clennell's FF 1600 Hawke DL11 at bay, which he managed by 2.8s. David Hupsmith (Lotus 61B) was fourth and the last unlapped runner, the remaining few being a motley selection of widely spaced, bedraggled FFs.

PETER RICHINGS

Mini Seven (10 laps): 1, Graham Wenham, 12m 57.2s, 74.48 mph; 2, Chris Tyrrell, 13m 4.2s; 3, Jim Mancey, 13m 7.6s; 4, Martin Goodall, 13m 8.4s; 5, Bob Addison, 13m 9.0s; 6, Graham Woskett, 13m 9.4s. **Fastest lap:** Wenham, 1m 16.8s, 75.37 mph **(record).**

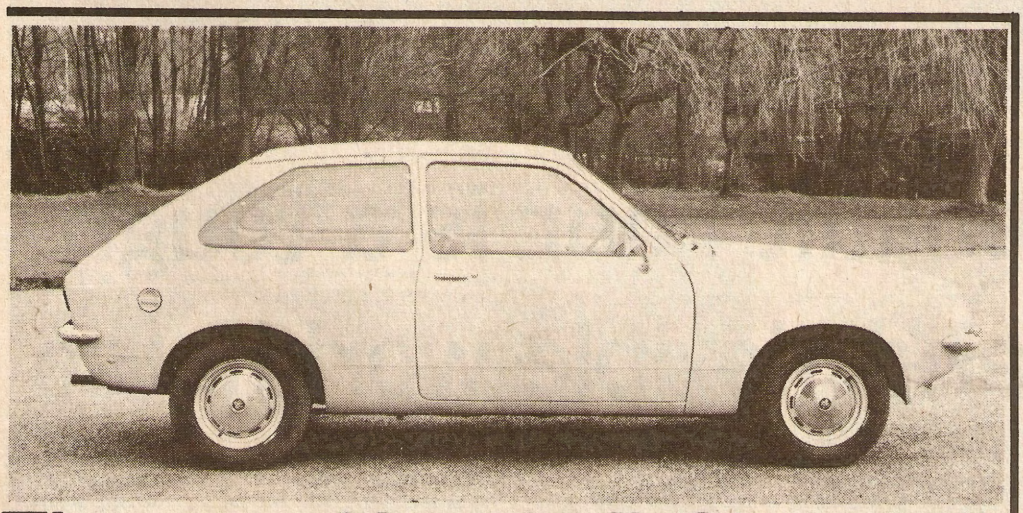
Formula Ford (10 laps): 1, Tony Broster (Dulon-Newbridge MP15B), 11m 38.0s, 82.93 mph; 2, Mike King (Lola-Close T342), 11m 38.6s; 3, David Barkas (Royale-RE RP16), 11m 38.8s; 4, Lee Wroe-Johnson (Rostron-Minister CT75), 11m 39.2s; 5, Richard Wills (MRE-Oselli 73F), 11m 40.6s; 6, Peter Williams (Hawke-Rowland DL11), 11m 44.8s. **Fastest lap:** Wally Liles (Lola T204), King and Wroe-Johnson, 1m 6.6s, 86.91 mph.

Special Saloons (10 laps). Overall: 1, Tony Strawson (4.7 Ford Capri), 13m 1.4s, 74.08 mph; 2, Nigel Clarke (1.3 Mini Ford), 13m 23.2s; 3, Steve Phillips (1.6 Ford Escort), 13m 27.2s; 4, Jack Davies (1.3 Cooper S), 13m 45.0s. **Over 1300 cc:** 1, Strawson; 2, Phillips. No other finishers. **Fastest lap:** Strawson, 1m 16.2s, 75.97 mph. **1001-1300 cc:** 1, Clarke, 72.07 mph; 2, Davies; 3, Andrew Rollason (1.3 Ford Escort). **Fastest lap:** Clarke, 1m 15.6s, 76.57 mph. **851-1000 cc:** 1, Jon Adlard (1.0 Mini), 69.83 mph; 2, Steve Morton (1.0 Cooper); 3, Alan Hunt (1.0 Cooper S). **Fastest lap:** Adlard, 1m 20.8s, 71.64 mph. **Up to 850 cc:** 1, Mike Kirby (Imp), 66.41 mph; 2, S. Williams (Imp); 3, Mark Pendleton (Mini). **Fastest lap:** Kirby, 1m 25.6s, 67.62 mph.

Modified Sports Cars (10 laps). Overall: 1, Brian Mills (3.8 Jaguar E), 13m 37.2s, 70.83 mph; 2, Graeme Dodd (1.3 MG Midget), 13m 43.8s; 3, Robin Gray (3.5 Morgan +8), 13m 48.8s; 4, Colin Blower (3.0 TVR 3000M), 14m 10.4s. **Over 3000 cc:** 1, Mills; 2, Gray; 3, Rod Gretton (5.3 Jaguar V12E). **Fastest lap:** Mills, 1m 19.8s, 72.54 mph. **2001-3000 cc:** 1, Blower, 68.07 mph. No other starters. **Fastest lap:** Blower, 1m 22.8s, 69.91 mph. **1151-2000 cc:** 1, Dodd, 70.26 mph; 2, Roy Kersnberg (1.6 Lotus Elan); 3, David Comley (1.6 MGA). **Fastest lap:** Dodd, 1m 18.6s, 73.65 mph. **Up to 1150 cc:** 1, Peter Richings (1.1 MG Midget), 66.0 mph; 2, Mike Donovan (1.1 MG Midget). No other finishers. **Fastest lap:** Richings, 1m 24.4s, 68.58 mph.

Mini Miglia (10 laps): 1, Alan Curnow, 13m 19.2s, 72.43 mph; 2, John Hazell, 13m 31.8s; 3, Phil Spurling, 13m 45.8s; 4, Steve Harris, 13m 47.6s; 5, Russell Dell, 14m 10.4s; 6, Peter Morris, 9 laps. **Fastest lap:** Curnow, 1m 18.4s, 73.84 mph.

Fairley Steels Formule Libre (10 laps): 1, Ken Silverstone (2.0 Hawke-Brown DL15), 13m 22.6s, 72.12 mph; 2, Ken Hensley (2.0 Dulon-Holbay MP16), 14m 2.6s; 3, Alan Clennell (Hawke DL11), 14m 5.4s; 4, David Hupsmith (Lotus 61B), 14m 22.9s; 5, David Toye (Alexis Mk. 24), 9 laps; 6, Phil Silverstone (Hawke DL12), 9 laps. **Fastest lap:** K. Silverstone, 1m 17.4s, 74.78 mph.



The new Vauxhall Chevette

The long-awaited Vauxhall small car proves to be a 2-door saloon with an upwards opening tail gate, of a shape slightly reminiscent of the Renault 5. It is about 7½ins shorter and 3ins narrower than the Viva, the overall length and width being 12ft 11.3ins and 5ft 2.2ins respectively. The wheelbase is 7ft 10.2ins and the track 4ft 3.2ins, the weight being 16cwt 73lbs.

The engine is the 1256cc Viva unit, with the 4-speed gearbox from that car. The two-piece propeller shaft has its rear section in a short torque tube and the rear axle is also on trailing arms and a Panhard rod. There are anti-roll bars both for the front wishbone suspension and the rear axle, with coil springs all round. The steering is by rack and pinion and the disc/drum brakes have dual circuits. Some of the chassis components are shared with the Opel Kadett, the suspension design being identical.

Radial 155 SR13 tyres are fitted, in conjunction with a 4.11 to 1 axle ratio. A 90 mph maximum and a 0-60 mph time of 15.25s are claimed, which no doubt we shall be checking in due course when the new car is submitted for road test. As *un chevet* means a bolster in French, presumably a Chevette is a little bolster, but it wasn't named after me!

JOHN BOLSTER

by John Bolster



The ride does not seem soft and the angle of roll is not as noticeable as the photograph would suggest.

Improved Renault Four is a tough economical and flexible workhorse

The Renault 4 has for many years been a favourite among low-priced vehicles in England. Although I owned one of the first Fours imported, there have been numerous improvements since then and it seemed sensible to put the latest version through its paces for our series of economy car tests. Though the Renault 5 has perhaps stolen some of its thunder, the older car costs considerably less and has a lot more carrying space for prams, kitchen sinks, or racing engines.

At first, people thought the Four was ugly, but it's so functional that it has become an accepted part of the landscape. It has a sensibly high ground clearance which can be adjusted to one's taste, the lamps also having levers to level them in accordance with the load. The interior looks less spartan but I'm sorry that the old ham-mock-type front rear seat has gone, though the rather upright replacements are quite comfortable. The convenient walking stick gearlever still projects through the dashboard but the 3-bearing long-stroke engine now has a chain instead of timing gears.

Compared with most other small engines, this one has phenomenal low-speed torque. The car will come down to a brisk walking pace on top gear and then accelerate quite strongly away with astonishing smoothness. It will also climb hills in top that bring bigger cars down to third. The Renault is economical on fuel if this flexibility is exploited, but becomes more thirsty when the gearbox is used. The engine is not particularly refined by modern standards, or perhaps the body panels do not carry a great deal of damping material. The exhaust system of the test car vibrated at certain speeds and rattled over bumps, but maybe it needed attention.

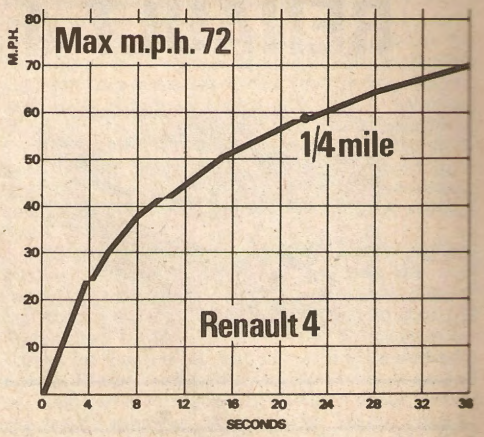
Evidently the torsion bar suspension has been stiffened up a little, as the ride does not seem quite so soft and the angle of roll is not so noticeable. The little machine still corners absurdly fast and gives the driver a wonderful sense of control. It is so narrow that it can be driven almost like a bicycle through traffic, which is fun if perhaps not very good manners. The steering is just right and the high driving position gives an excellent view.

Though the location of the gearlever is unusual, its gate pattern is orthodox. The clutch pedal is rather heavy to hold down, a fault more often found in large cars. The drum-type brakes, as I know from experience, never seem to require adjustment or relining, which saves a lot of money compared with most discs. They demand fairly heavy pressure for a panic stop but are more than adequate for the speed and weight of the car. The parking brake is too heavy for a woman driver to use safely — it needs greater leverage.

The ventilation system gives plenty of cool breathing air for the most tropical of conditions. However, the heater is barely powerful enough for comfort on a cold winter's morning. Sliding windows are fitted which are better for draught-free ventilation than the more fashion-



The Four is an ideal utility car that can solve the transportation problems of any family.



able winding ones.

It is impossible to avoid comparing the Renault 4 with the Citroen 2CV and though they are both utility cars, the difference is fascinating. The Renault feels livelier and more responsive, but the performance figures are in fact very similar. Where the Citroen scores is in quiet running and lack of vibration at high revs, the flat-twin being altogether smoother than the four-cylinder engine; on the other hand, the much smaller twin requires more gearchanging and has nothing like the torque of the long-stroke four. Being French, they both ride comfortably over appalling roads.

Having owned a Renault 4, I can say that it is remarkably accessible and easy to service. In a world where rising costs will force most of us to do our own running repairs, that is an important attribute; this is a much easier car to work on than the rear-engined Renaults were. Though simple and economical, the machine is well engineered for a long life and the rapid replacement of wearing parts.

People buy cars like this for two reasons. One is that they can carry bulky and quite heavy loads, with no fear of damaging delicate fabrics, and veneers, yet the passenger accommodation is comfortable. In this respect, the Renault 4 earns very high marks indeed. The other reason for the purchase of such a vehicle is petrol economy and here the advantages are not so great. If the car is driven on average roads with some respect for the 50 mph limit, it will achieve 40 mpg or more, which is satisfactory. However, if there is much driving on motorways at 70 mph, the consumption will fall towards 30 mpg, which can be equalled or even bettered by some bigger-engined cars.

One can say, therefore, that the Four is an ideal utility car that can solve the transportation problems of any family. As an economy proposition, it is also a success as long as the driver does not have a heavy right foot. Perhaps there's a bit of a hair shirt complex in its design, for there is surely no need to have a heavy clutch, or a hand brake requiring great strength, in a car of this power and weight. Nevertheless, the little machine is enjoyable to drive, has excellent roadholding, and possesses many practical features that will appeal to its owner.

The car is well finished and the latest colour chart offers some new shades that suit the extrovert personality of this hardworking little vehicle. For the lazy driver who can't afford an automatic, the flexible Renault 4 is the next best thing.

SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA

Car Tested: Renault 4 5-door saloon, price £1088 including car tax and VAT.

Engine: Four clylinders 58 x 80mm (845cc). Compression ratio 8 to 1. 34 bhp at 5000 rpm. Pushrod-operated overhead-valves. Solex downdraught carburettor.

Transmission: Single dry plate clutch. 4 speed synchromesh gearbox with dashboard control, ratios 1.03, 1.46, 2.24 and 3.67 to 1. Spiral level final drive, ratio 4.125 to 1. Constant-speed driveshafts to front hubs.

Chassis: Combined steel body and chassis. Independent suspension of all four wheels by torsion bars, with wishbones in front and trailing arms behind. Rack and pinion steering. Drum brakes with limiting valve at rear. Bolt-on disc wheels, fitted 135 SR13 tyres.

Equipment: 12-volt lighting and starting. Speedometer. Fuel gauge. Heating, demisting and ventilatin system. Windscreen wipers and washers. Flashing direction indicators.

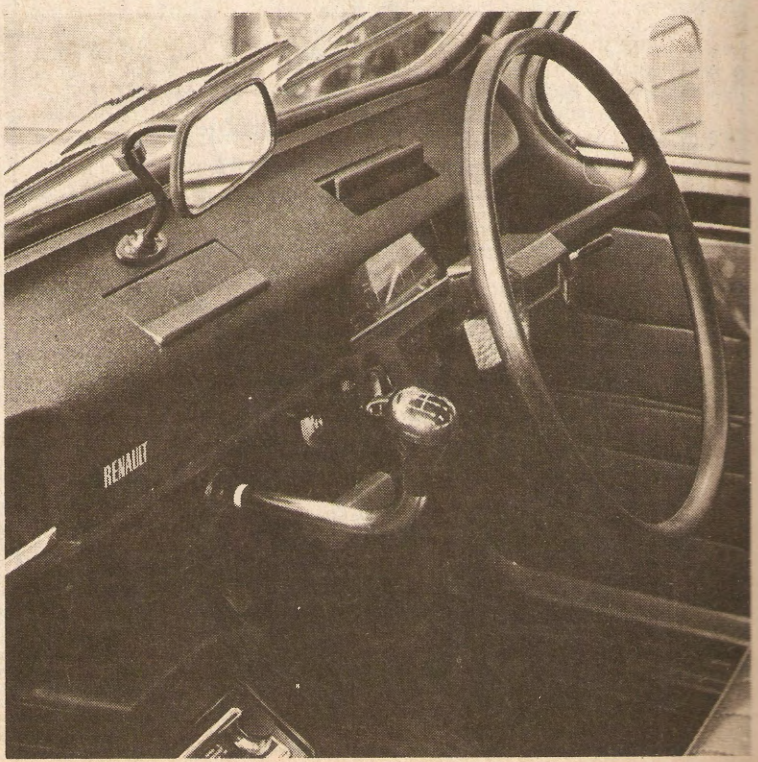
Dimensions: Wheelbase, right 8ft, left 7ft 10½ins. Overall length 12ft 1in. Width 4ft 10½ins. Weight 13cwt 86lbs.

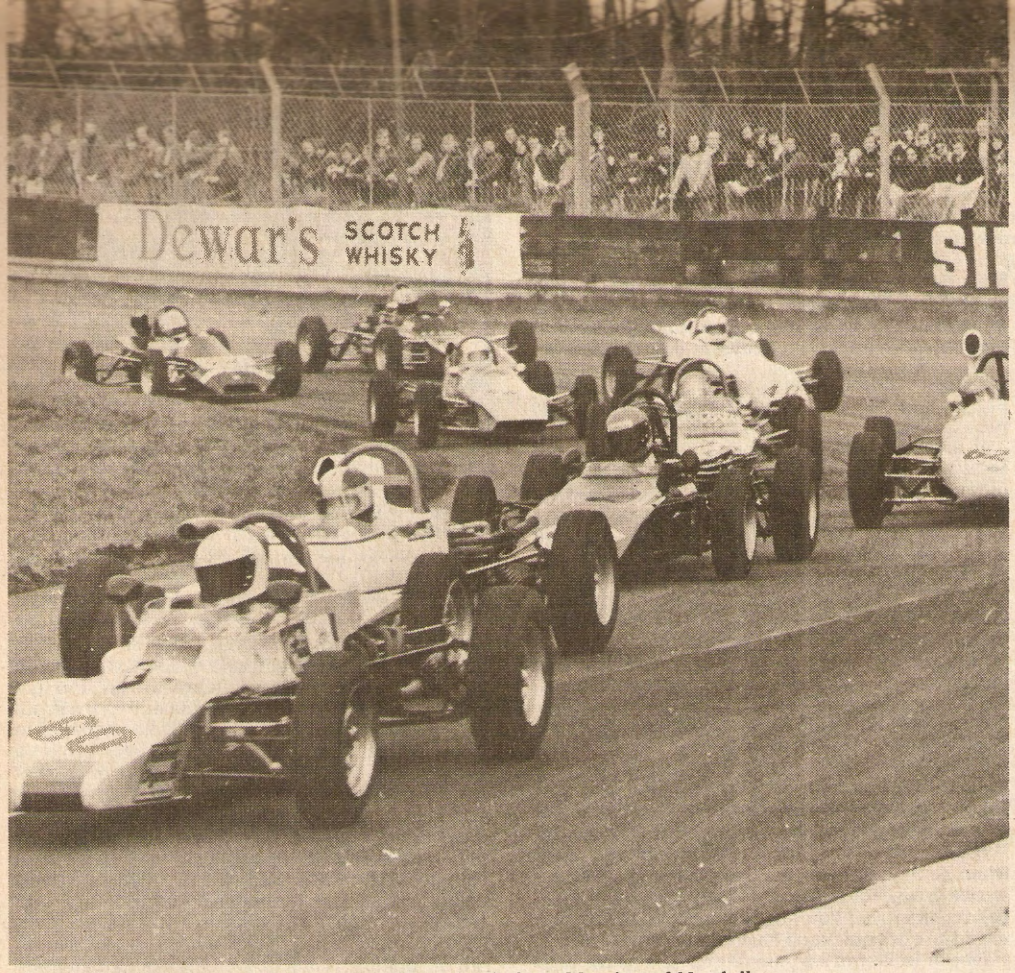
Performance: Maximum speed 72 mph. Speeds in gears: Third 59 mph, second 42 mph, first 24 mph. Standing quarter-mile 22s. Acceleration: 0-30 mph 5.5s. 0-50 mph 15.1s, 0-60 mph 23.1s.

Fuel consumption: 32 to 42 mpg.

Below left, the Four has a lot of carrying space. Below right, the new interior has a less spartan look.







Close action in the second FF heat. Geoff Lees leads from Morris and Needell.

OULTON PARK

Richard Bond ends an era

Last Saturday at Oulton Park saw the end of an era. After 20 years the country's premier road racing circuit is to be reduced to just another track with a mile lopped off its length and most of the remaining trees cut down. Spectator facilities have been considerably improved with raised banks all round the infield but the new corner is hardly in the same category as the old Knickerbrook. It was fitting that the last race on the long circuit should be for Historic Sports Cars many of which have featured in Oulton Park's history and that the winner, after an exciting battle with Colin Crabbe's glorious Ferrari Testa Rossa, should be local man Richard Bond in a Lola T70 Mk 3B of the type which won the 1969 TT in the hands of Trevor Taylor. The Mid-Cheshire MRC, one of the circuit's first organising clubs, were in charge of a six race programme run on a sunny afternoon in front of a very large crowd most of whom, we will no doubt be told, were attracted by Radio One.

Two Formula Ford 1600 heats produced 16 starters each, chasing National Organs points. South African Kenny Gray took his new Van Diemen straight into the lead of the first and stayed there throughout despite constant harassment from Jim Walsh's Hawke DL12. John Bright's old Merlyn Mk II/11A lasted only a lap in third place before spinning off on the marbles at Cascades, taking Chris Finnegan's Van Diemen with him, which left David MacPherson's Dulon MP15 to hold off Richard Dutton's Titan Mk 6, the latter struggling to see through a visor made muddy in Bright's accident.

The second heat lined up without front row man Matthew Argenti whose new Van Diemen suffered a broken cam follower on the warming up lap. It was a close affair between four cars, initially headed by Geoff Lees in his new Royale RP21 from Tiff Needell's old Elden ("It must be sold to pay for the new one"), Phil Dowsett's Crossle 25F and the Hawke DL12 of Rick Morris. Lees was gradually elbowed to the back of the bunch which was led over the line at the end by Needell from Morris and Dowsett, all of whom were given the same time.

The final soon saw the demise of Walsh when the electrodes of two new Motocraft plugs broke on the first lap leaving Gray in the lead from Needell, Lees, Morris and Dowsett. Lees worked his way to the front by lap three with Gray and Needell struggling to stay in his tow. The Elden driver could only keep up until half distance when he fell back into the clutches of Morris and Dowsett, leaving Gray on his own to tackle Lees. A last lap bid at Knickerbrook sent the South African spinning into the barriers and left Lees with a secure win from the almost level Needell and Morris. FF veteran John Stevens brought the Ronnie Scott Club Dulon MP15B into fifth, behind Dowsett by 0.4s and ahead of Mike Blanchet's old Lotus 61M by 0.8s. On the new Dunlop racing tyres Lees equalled the old Torino record of Derek Lawrence and Richard Morgan.

Pride of place in the programme was given to the second round of the Radio One Production Saloon Car championship, announced (to himself until the microphones started working) by one Paul Burnett who walked around with a picture of but a little lacking in the luxury class while squeals of protest could be heard elsewhere than from the tyres in connection with one of Mazdas. The two Camaros present dominated proceedings with Bob Ridgard leading John Brindley by a small but comfortable margin until the latter's car had a wheel centre work loose just before the end, dropping him down the field. Ivan Dutton had his Mk 1 Capri working well this week and pleased his Century Oils sponsors with a convincing second and class win over Gerry Marshall's Vauxhall Magnum. As at Brands the over-publicised Mike Smith was shown the way round by the little known Marc Smith in the battle of the teenagers until the latter's Capri snapped its accelerator cable with 1½ laps left and cost him a worthy fourth overall.

Jock Robertson gave the Marshall Wingfield Mazda RX3 its first class win despite the new found speed of Wendy Markey's outwardly similar car, the Avenger GTs being so outpaced that Bill Sydenham threw his into the Knickerbrook barrier on the first lap, happily with little damage. Simon Watson's diminutive Sunbeam Imp, the smallest car in the race, had the legs of the rest of the least expensive class (it's no longer cheap!) until the fan belt fell off; then Danny Alderton spun his Honda Civic ungallantly in front of Divina Galica's Shellsport Mexico causing both to retire; the Lada of Tony Stubbs picked up a puncture and we were left with Simon Kirkby whirling a Simca Rallye around in the style that's been growing on him for the last two or three years.

The first round of the Simoniz Special Saloon Championship could have done with a little more polish in the smaller classes but there was nothing tarnished about the battle for the lead between Nick Whiting's new Escort FVC, Tony Sugden's Escort BDG and Dave Millington's Firenza. The two Brook Hire cars of Sugden and Millington chased Whiting and each other furiously until Millington had a moment at Cascades and lost a little ground with two laps left. By then Whiting was in trouble with oil pouring out of his gearbox which was sticking in fourth at times, allowing Sugden to close right up. The last lap was terrific with the All Car Equipe/*Kent Messenger* car under increasing pressure, crossing the line with only inches to spare.

To complete the excitement, which should bring the large crowd back for more, Colin Crabbe treated us to one of his best driving displays since he manhandled his W125 Mercedes around a few years ago. Driving the Ferrari TR which won the 1960 Le Mans driven by Olivier Gendebien and Paul Frère, but with a different engine specification, Crabbe streaked round the circuit at fearsome speeds while Richard Bond took things more gently in his latest pride and joy, a Lola T70 lately used by a psychiatrist as a road car but formerly driven by Ronnie Peterson for Picko Troberg. The Lola's brakes still needed some sorting so that Crabbe was even able to pass under braking for Knickerbrook, the Ferrari being phenomenally fast along Top Straight, but in the end order was restored and the Lola crossed the line exactly one second ahead. "I've never driven so hard since my Ford GT40 days" said an elated Crabbe afterwards. The only competitive GT40 in the race, that of John cooper, sadly broke its diff as it set off from the front row at the start.

IAN TITCHMARSH

Formula Ford 1600, Heat 1 (5 laps): 1, Kenny Gray (Van Diemen-Scholar RF75), 8 m 54.4 s, 92.99 mph; 2, Jim Walsh (Hawke-Close DL12), 8 m 55.2 s; 3, David MacPherson (Dulon-Close MP15), 9 m 19.2 s. **Fastest lap:** Gray and Walsh, 1 m 45.4 s, 94.30 mph.

Formula Ford 1600, Heat 2 (5 laps): 1, Tiff Needell (Elden-Scholar PH10C), 8 m 57.2 s, 92.51 mph; 2, Rick Morris (Hawke-Scholar DL12), 8 m 57.2 s; 3, Phil Dowsett (Crossle-Minister 25F), 8 m 57.2 s. **Fastest lap:** Needell, 1 m 45.2 s, 94.48 mph.

National Organs Formula Ford 1600 Championship round (10 laps): 1, Geoff Lees (Royale-Titan RP21), 17 m 35.8 s, 94.14 mph; 2, Tiff Needell (Elden-Scholar PH10C), 17 m 42.8 s; 3, Rick Morris (Hawke-Scholar DL12), 8 m 57.2 s; 3, Phil Dowsett (Crossle-Minister 25F), 17 m 48.0 s; 5, John Stevens (Dulon-Rowland MP15B) 17 m 48.4 s; 6, Mike Blanchet (Lotus-Minister 61M), 17 m 49.2 s. **Fastest lap:** Lees, 1 m 44.0 s, 95.57 mph **(equals record).**

BBC Radio One Production Saloon Car Championship round (15 laps): 1, Bob Ridgard (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28), 29 m 52.6 s, 83.17 mph; 2, Ivan Dutton (3.0 Ford Capri Mk 1), 31 m 31.0 s; 3, Gerry Marshall (2.3 Vauxhall Magnum Coupé), 31 m 41.2 s; 4, Mike Smith (3.0 Ford Capri Mk 2), 31 m 56.4 s.

Over £2,300 class: 1, Ridgard, 83.17 mph; 2, John Brindley (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28); 3, Jon Dooley (1.8 Alfa Romeo Alfetta). **Fastest lap:** Ridgard, 1 m 56.0 s, 85.69 mph **(record).**

£1,700 to £2,299 class: 1, Dutton, 78.84 mph; 2, Marshall; 3, Smith. **Fastest lap:** Dutton, 2 m 4.2 s, 80.03 mph **(record).**

£1,300 to £1,699 class: 1, Jock Robertson (2.0 Mazda RX3 Coupé), 77.50 mph; 2, Wendy Markey (2.0 Mazda RX3 Coupé); 3, "Jean-Pierre Aux" (2.0 Mazda RX3 Coupé). **Fastest lap:** Mrs Markey, 2 m 6.4 s, 78.64 mph **(record).**

Up to £1,299 class: 1, Simon Kirkby (1.3 Simca Rallye 1), 70.68 mph; 2, Tim Dodwell (1.3 Mini-Clubman GT); 3, Neil Hepburn (1.3 Simca Rallye 1). **Fastest lap:** Simon Watson (0.9 Sunbeam Imp Sport), 2 m 16.0 s, 73.09 mph **(record).**

Simoniz Special Saloon Car Championship round (10 laps): 1, Nick Whiting (2.0 Ford Escort FVC), 17 m 21.2 s, 95.46 mph; 2, Tony Sugden (1.8 Ford Escort BDG), 17 m 21.4 s, 3, Dave Millington (2.3 Vauxhall Firenza t/c), 17 m 25.2 s; 4, Gerry Gough (1.3 Mini-Cooper S), 9 laps.

Over 1300 cc class: 1, Whiting, 95.46 mph; 2, Sugden; 3, Millington. **Fastest lap:** Sugden, 1 m 42.4 s, 97.07 mph.

1001 to 1300 cc class: 1, Gough, 85.0 mph; 2, Susan Tucker-Peake (1.3 Ford Escort GT); 3, Edward Taylor (1.3 Mini-Cooper S). **Fastest lap:** Gough, 1 m 55.0 s, 86.43 mph.

851 to 1000 cc class: 1, Peter Cartlidge (1.0 Austin A40-Ford), 83.04 mph; 2, George Hard (1.0 Mini-Cooper S); 3, Mike Beckett (1.0 Ford Anglia). **Fastest lap:** Cartlidge, 1 m 56.6 s, 85.25 mph.

Up to 850 cc class: 1, David Enderby (850 Mini), 81.06 mph; 2, Brendan Chappel (848 Mini-Cooper S); 3, Reg Ward (848 Mini). **Fastest lap:** Enderby, 2 m 1.2 s, 82.01 mph.

Historic Sports Cars (10 laps): 1, Richard Bond (5.0 Lola-Traco/Chevrolet T70 Mk 3B GT), 18 m 20.2 s, 90.34 mph; 2, Colin Crabbe (3.3 Ferrari Testa Rossa), 18 m 21.2 s; 3, Richard Thwaites (2.0 Elva-BMW Mk 7S), 18 m 40.0 s.

Historic Front-engined Sports-Racing Cars class: 1, Jeffrey Johnstone (1.2 Lotus-Climax Eleven Le Mans), 82.80 mph; 2, Terry Harrison (1.1 Lotus-Climax Eleven Le Mans); 3, Simon Phillips (2.0 Frazer Nash Le Mans Replica). **Fastest lap:** Johnstone, 1 m 57.6 s, 84.52 mph **(record).**

Front-engined GT class: 1, Brewster Righter (4.7 AC Cobra Mk 2), 77.93 mph; only starter. **Fastest lap:** Righter, 2 m 5.4 s, 79.26 mph.

Post Historic Sports-Racing Cars class: 1, Crabbe, 90.22 mph; 2, Thwaites; 3, Brian Baker (1.6 Lotus-Ford 23B t/c). **Fastest lap:** Crabbe, 1 m 48.0 s, 92.03 mph **(record).**

Ford GT40 class: 1, Steven Smith (4.7 Ford GT40), 77.86 mph; only finisher. **Fastest lap:** Smith, 2 m 4.0 s, 80.16 mph.

A driving ambition for F1

Tasman champion WARWICK BROWN talks to EOIN YOUNG.

New Tasman Champion Warwick Brown is a determined Australian combination of a Denny Hulme and a Graham McRae, a bear with a big mouth. He came up the hard way with a navvy's shovel in his mouth instead of a silver spoon. Denny Hulme drove gravel lorries for his father's firm and Brown dug ditches pick-to-pick with the labourers working for his father's construction company. He seems to have McRae's talent for pace but none of McRae's engineering abilities. The other Cassius comparison comes orally. McRae will admit he has talked himself out of as many deals as he has talked himself into and Brown may suffer the same problem that anyone does who believes in his own ability and broadcasts it.

"Some people think I'm cocky and maybe I am but if I don't believe I've got what it takes, how can I convince anyone else?" That's a basic sort of belief that may or may not be correct when you're trying to work out the right way to approach the lower rungs of the Formula 1 ladder. As far as Brown is concerned, his only future is a drive in Formula 1 and he is using Formula 5000 as a means to a Grand Prix end. Formula 1 is where it's at. "I want to drive Formula 1 . . . I've told everybody I want to drive Formula 1 and I've just got to get a break into it somehow . . . just a chance. There is absolutely no future for me in Australian racing. Perhaps there would be financially if I wanted to do an Allan Moffat and drive touring cars but that would bore me to tears. I want to drive Formula 1 . . ."

"I've told everybody I want to drive Formula 1 and I've just got to get a break into it somehow . . . just a chance. There is absolutely no future for me in Australian racing."

Brown may believe in telling people but he also believes in showing them. He's been doing it in the Peter Stuyvesant Tasman series, winning the New Zealand Grand Prix at Pukekohe and on his home track at Oran Park near Sydney to move him into contention for the championship. His sights are now set on the 1975 SCCA F5000 series in the States and he's using Jody Scheckter's advance out of 5-litre cars as a goal. "I'll never be able to afford to pay for a ride in Formula 1 so the only chance I'll ever have is perhaps to do a Jody Scheckter . . . the guy obviously had heaps of talent and somebody saw it, so the only thing I can do is go to places where I can be seen and hope to try and do the same thing. At 25 I'm young as racing drivers go, I think I've got a fair bit of experience behind me but I've just got to get to the States and hope to God that somebody sees me. . . ."

If ambition and basic ability count, Warwick Brown should make it. There are, of course, differing views on Brown's ability when you walk down a Tasman pit lane. Brown rates Max Stewart as his toughest opposition Down Under but the lofty Jolly Green Giant is unusually chilly on charity when discussing this newcomer on what looked like being his preserve. "When they asked Lella Lombardi what she thought of Warwick in the States, she said he was dangerous," says Stewart, answering the question obliquely and implying firm agreement with the tiny Tigress. Chris Amon has watched Brown from fairly close quarters this time on the Stuyvesant series. "Sure he's hairy, he puts wheels in the dirt and stuff like that, but I've never seen him lose it. He's got very good car control," says Amon, the man who has been seriously regarding the 1975 Tasman series as a comeback platform to international racing. "People used to say that Jochen Rindt was hairy when he first started out," muses Amon, "but he settled down. It's like golf . . . you usually hit the ball further if you don't try so hard. Maybe Brown would be even quicker if he didn't try so hard . . ."

Brown walks with a gangly gait of a boxer who has had his balance broken. His ambitious career plans came close to termination with his own demise two years ago when a front tyre went down on the first fast corner under the Dunlop Bridge at Surfers Paradise and he crashed heavily. The surgeon wanted to amputate a leg but Brown's mother refused permission.

It was his first full shot at the Tasman series in 1973 with a secondhand Lola T300. "I was getting the feel of the car at Levin and Pukekohe and we went to Wigram where I finished second to McRae and took the lap record. At Teretonga it rained and at Surfers I crashed. Halfway through the corner a tyre went down. I went to turn the wheel and there was just nothing . . . just like there was oil on the road. It was probably a little bit of inexperience on my part not to pick it. I'm sure I'd pick it if it happened now . . . I'm very conscious of tyres now. I skated about 70 or 80 feet, hit a bank, went up and over it and ended up a hundred feet away. The car never touched the ground in a hundred feet and I finished upside down in a drain with my legs around my ears. I broke both legs in three places, tore my left ankle off, broke a vertebra and got burns on my back from the hot water and all that stuff. It was BAD. Did you ever see photos of the car?" He tucks into a veal escalope with apparent relish while recounting his personal score of damage as we talk in a Christchurch motel restaurant. "The car was missing from the dashboard forward. My legs were just hanging by the meat. After the accident they said they were going to knock the left leg off but my mother, thank heavens, stuck to it and said don't touch it. They said I'd never walk again and after about three weeks they said I might walk in about two years — perhaps. That's two years ago in about two weeks, so I'm laughing." He grins with the unabashed glee of someone who has come back from the Other Side. You or I wouldn't dare such a bald tempt of fate.



Spoils of victory, '74 style. Congratulations after the Adelaide final round from girlfriend Sue.

Mrs Brown inadvertently kept her son in racing, something she might not otherwise have been so anxious to do if circumstances had not been so drastic. "My father was very unsympathetic towards motor racing. He maintained that anybody who drove over 35 miles an hour should be put away."

"The car never touched the ground in a hundred feet and I finished upside down in a drain with my legs around my ears. I broke both legs in three places, tore my left ankle off, broke a vertebrae and got burns on my back from the hot water and all that stuff. It was bad."

In his early teens Brown went out to Warwick Farm to watch "Kevin Bartlett and all the local heroes" and when the international came round each year he would watch the way Jimmy Clark went about it. "Those fellows were just awe-inspiring to me and I used to go back to my father and say what a great thing it was but we used to have arguments because he thought even people who went to watch racing were idiots . . ."

Brown's father built a business with his bare hands, growing up as one of a family of twelve in Sydney, fighting in the Sydney stadium as a heavyweight when he was 17 to help with the housekeeping during the Depression. He started a road contracting business as a civil engineer with muscles and experience instead of college degrees. He wanted his son to do the same. Spending money on speed didn't seem to make sense. Young Warwick went to the fights with his father, trained with a welterweight champion when he was 9 or 10, won a few amateur fights at school and was boxing captain at Knox College. He was 16 years and 9 months when he left school for good. "I had my School Certificate but I couldn't stand the discipline. I used to get into all sorts of trouble so I got jack of it and told my Old Man I wanted out." He went straight to work for his

Spoils of victory, '75 style. Brown, the new Tasman champion, talks on the PA.



father as a labourer.

"I used to hop in the trenches with all these Italians and being the boss's son I had a reputation to live up to. He used to keep reminding me of it so I had to set the pace and I'll tell you that was really something, but I loved it in those days with a jack pick or a shovel."

When his father died, Brown was 19 and he felt himself free from his obligations to stay away from racing. Pat Burke, a young chartered accountant who lived across the road, would share the drive to the races at Bathurst twice a year and it was on one of these trips they decided to go halves on a car of their own with Brown as the driver. They considered a Formula Vee and a racing Elan but finally settled on a Formula 3 Brabham. "It all started off as a hobby really. The mineral boom had started in Australia and Patrick was very successful in that. We used to store the Brabham in his garage next to his Porsche and his BMW and I used to slip down and polish it every Wednesday night. I was second in my class in my first race and I was never beaten after that. I set the lap record in my class in my third race and started to get serious about it all." Next car was the ex-Niel Allen M4A McLaren Formula 2 car which he raced in 1971 and for 1972 Burke funded him into Niel Allen's spare M10B McLaren F5000 car which had been sold to Allan Hamilton. He finished every race in the Tasman series that season, was first Australian home in the Australian Grand Prix and had the McLaren running in a trim they eventually considered would have made it the fastest M10B in the world. "We had run that car within a second of what we've done with the T332 Lola. It was just quick. It had 15-inch wheels and all those no-noes but it used to go and it stopped like a demon." For the 1973 Tasman he bought Bobby Muir's Lola T300 which he eventually wrapped around his neck at Surfers Paradise. He was in hospital for three and a half months but he was back in the cockpit of a T332 Lola for the 1974 series and spent the full season learning about the new car and how to make it work. He finished seven of the eight races, scored points in six and won the last race at Adelaide.

During the 1974 summer he took the Lola to the States for three months and ran at Ontario, Laguna Seca and Riverside. At Ontario he was second to Lunger's Eagle in the heat and was third behind Andretti and Redman in the final when a tyre went down. "Riverside was a really good one because we had our act together by then and in the first heat I was second to Bobby Unser in the Indy Eagle and third in the final behind Andretti and Redman, 7s apart after 100 miles of racing which I thought wasn't a bad effort for a boy with one engine to match the resources they had."

Brown maintains that he has never received financial assistance from the family road-building business simply because his mother continues the parental disapproval. He is a director of the company but prefers to concentrate solely on his racing. Pat Burke continues to fund Brown's racing activities in Australasia presumably because of their early friendship and his consuming enthusiasm for motorsport. When they bought the Brabham it was a 50/50 deal, but now it is more of a 90/10 operation with Burke picking up the biggest end of the bill. Brown runs a company of his own which from time to time does a one-off road-building job to raise some readies. "The last job I did was in 1972 when I put a road into a coal mine and turned over about sixty thousand bucks, kept the change and went motor racing for the year. That was good but it's getting harder to do now."

Burke is a businessman and the F5000 team reflects his attention to detail. It's a professional operation. Peter Molloy looks after the engine side and car preparation on the Stuyvesant series, instilling Brown with the knowledge he has gathered over a lifetime in Down Under racing, very much like a trainer waiting in Brown's corner with words of encouragement and a rub-down between rounds.

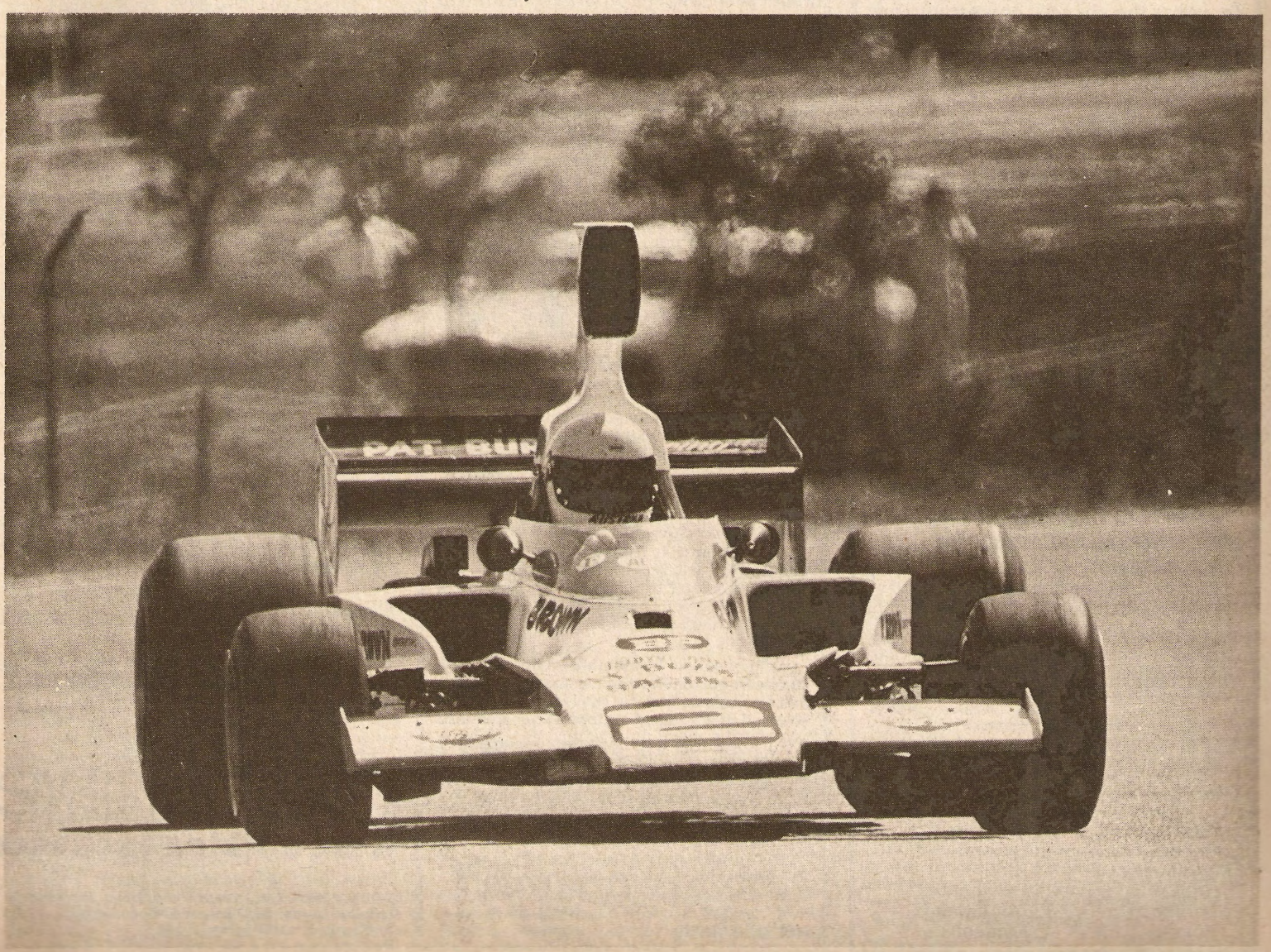
The 1975 Stuyvesant series is very much a launching pad for Brown who plans an immediate return to the States, this time funding his own team with the possibility of backing from Bacardi. There is also a chance that he will be offered a trial drive with the Fletcher Racing USAC team which could mean the chance of a number two drive at Indianapolis beside Jimmy Caruthers.

Does he think that Formula 5000 is really the place to be seen and seen to be successful? Brown admits that F5000 runs under something of a stigma when compared with Formula 1 and he recounts a chat with a fabricator in the McLaren Formula 1 workshops. "Those antiquated old jalopies you're driving round in," he said. "You're wasting your time. You've got no talent. You're just not in the same league as Formula 1." Brown gets serious now as he tries to justify his way of racing. "I think we *are* in the same league because at Riverside and Laguna Seca James Hunt was racing and James was the new boy in town as far as Formula 1 was concerned. He was rated as one of the best and he had a good car with all the resources of Dan Gurney behind him and yet I beat him fair and square at Riverside . . . no way in the world could he have run with Andretti and Redman. I think that's some indication and I think if some of those Formula 1 guys got out of the clouds and into some of these Formula 5000 cars they'd find it's not as easy as they probably think. . . ."

The 1975 Stuyvesant series was very much a local affair but Brown says an international flavour could be revived at a reasonable cost by bringing out someone like Eppie Wietzes and Bob Evans "and let the Australians and New Zealanders kick it around with them. They don't have to go for the superstars, those days have finished. Forget the guys who want telephone numbers to come out . . . half of them aren't as good as Wietzes and Evans anyway . . ."

As a dominant figure in the recent series, Brown sees the Tasman as one of the greatest tests of a team and a driver. "It's got eight races in eight weeks with 400 miles between races in two countries. Everything has got to be easier after that. If you can keep your act together for the whole series you've got to be a bit of a thinker and that's really what trips up these try-hards because they're quick one weekend and gone the next."

Brown's championship winning F5000 Lola at Sandown Park this year.



Correspondence

The editor is not bound to agree with readers' opinions

Abysmal Thruxton

I feel I must protest through your column about the abysmal administration at today's (March 2) BARC Thruxton meeting.

Scrutineering and signing on was farcical. Spectator facilities for competitors had been withdrawn, but more serious, the Clerk of the Course was guilty of grave misjudgement. I refer to his failure to stop the Formula Ford race in view of the impossible conditions.

I may be accused of sower grapes after aquaplaning off when leading on the last lap, but after two torrential downpours, the circuit was waterlogged after lap four, with a miniature "Thames" running across the main straight leading to the chicane. I eventually aquaplaned off on the last lap within sight of the chequered flag, joining several other drivers who had fallen foul of the same conditions.

I was fortunate to escape injury after hitting the marshalls' post, and am merely left with a bent car, but I do feel bitter that supposedly experienced officials cannot assess a potentially dangerous situation, and all the armour or catch fencing in the world cannot compensate for lack of common sense.

AYLESBURY, BUCKS — CHRIS WOODCOCK

Marshal shortage at Mallory Park

Having watched the weekend testing at Mallory on February 22, I feel I must object to the report on the testing that appeared in Sports Extra. I was there in company with a marshaling friend, who, I may say, also objected to the story.

The event that took place at Mallory was a general practice, which means that anybody who pays the entrance fee can track test their car, bike or sidecar. Even when I drove my elderly jalopy to the gate, I was asked for £5 as they thought I wanted to test the car!

The testing was organised by the circuit, not a car club as at Brands Hatch, and there were a minimal number of marshals, and just two St John Ambulance men braving the chilly weather. These men had the responsibility of manning the whole of the 1 mile club circuit. Furthermore, may I make the point that regulars who come to the general practice days are well aware that cars of all classes and formulae will be practising together.

In the report, it was stated that the whole day was a farce due to the track being slippery. But the Brands track was slippery too; was that a farce as well? If your observer had kept his eyes open, he would have seen that Mallory's lake was frozen, and that there was quite a lot of ground frost about.

If he'd kept his eyes fully open, he would have noticed that the afternoon sessions were split into two, because the marshals were not unnaturally wary of keeping control of around 35 to 40 cars. Especially as some drivers who should have known better took next to no notice of waved yellow flags.

So next time, please get the facts right. Your magazine is of a very high standard, so that each time it drops just a little, we all notice!.

HINKLEY, LEICS. — G. BOONIE

Thruxton lament

We are very sorry to learn that the Thruxton circuit is in danger. It seems that there is not enough armco to go all the way round the circuit for the FI Cars, so this is putting the Thruxton circuit in danger.

Why should the smaller classes of Motorsport suffer for FI? Why can't we just have Special Saloons, Super Saloons, Sports Cars, FF, F3 etc etc, why should these suffer?

It's best to have some racing than nothing at all. Thruxton is one of the fastest circuits and it is one of the safest. It is a very good circuit and you can see more or less all the way round it. So please all you saloon fans etc, let's try and get through to somebody that we would rather see some racing than none at all.

And also, will somebody please tell whoever it is to stop cutting the circuits about. Let's have them longer not shorter.

MARIO & EDMUND LINDSAY

HIGH WYCOMBE, BBUCKS

Thank you, marshals

The BARC would like to express its warm appreciation to those marshals who officiated at the International John Player Formula Atlantic race meeting at Mallory Park on Sunday. To stand out in the freezing rain for a whole day in the interests of the sport shows a true spirit of the British motor racing marshal. On behalf of the BARC, may I say "thank you."

THRUXTON, HAMPSHIRE — BILL PAUL *(Chairman, BARC)*

Another flop?

So good old Ford and MCD have come up with another flop. Just ten cars, boring racing, scarcely a place change — yes, it looks like being a good year for FF2000. I know that everyone will shriek "give it a chance," but then we didn't really need it in the first place did we?

I understand that many of the constructors have been totally unable to sell cars, and most of those currently running are works entered, so they can't be all that happy. There were whispers of bent engines at Mallory, and none of the reported hot shots came up with any excitement.

Perhaps all those involved will see the errors of their ways and get on with some real racing, in SuperVee or Formula 3. Instead of flogging their hearts out round all the same circuits as they bumped around in Formula Ford, they can get abroad and race against some new faces on new tracks. Perhaps British club racing is getting too stereotyped. We need those 'racing Romanies' of the late sixties who trailed their cars around the Continent to give it a little bit of character and boost.

All power to the elbows (or right feet) of those who seek something out of the ordinary, and probably get reasonable financial reward too for their efforts. Racing needs these dedicated professionals to supply our future drivers, not the weekenders of British club racing, who feel that racing owes them a living for their one or two days of enjoyment per week.

BIRMINGHAM — SID EVERARD

The "what about us" brigade

After all the bull and fanfares in AUTOSPORT and the rest of the press; after financial help, presumably, from the firms whose names appear on her car, Shell, All Car Equipe, Southern Organs, the fantastic newcomer, Divine Garlicky makes herself a laughing stock by stuffing it on the second lap of her first race. Great. Repairs to her Escort will probably cost as much as my entire 1974 Formula Ford season.

How much longer must the *real* enthusiasts in motor racing, the ones not born with silver spoons in their mouths, the ones who scrimp and scrape in order to go racing with no financial backing, the ones who get the odd two line mention when they've done particularly well in outclassed machinery, have to put up with all the bullshit ladled out on these wealthy (well Daddy anyway) newcomers who do a few races, find its not as easy as it looks – often damaging other people's cars in the process – and then disappear from view.

What's wrong with the British press and British teams? With one or two notable exceptions they seem to be interested solely in selling "works" drives to people, usually foreign, with fat cheque books, to the almost total exclusion of a number of talented British drivers who have gone as far as their own resources will take them.

If the state of the sport is such that this attitude is necessary, then it's high time that the constructors and FIA got off their butts and devised formulae that would allow the best drivers to progress instead of the wealthiest. Maybe then we might once again see British drivers back in British cars showing the rest of the world the way home.

NOTTINGHAM — RICHARD WILLERTON

Rally cross thanks

Through your columns, the Sporting CC of Norfolk and the West Suffolk MC would like to thank everyone who has helped them to make the recent Snetterton Winter Rallycross Series a success.

After the sport's rather disasterous start at the circuit, the Winters Series was a considerable gamble by the Clubs and their efforts have been supported wonderfully by both drivers and spectators. The latters' patience with the present rather inadequate rallycross facilities have proved what we have believed all along, that rallycross can be a useful addition to the Snetterton motorsport calender. To that end, we are already planning for more events next winter.

(for Sporting CC of Norfolk and West Suffolk MC) — MIKE DIXON

Marshall v. Whiting, a sad day . . .

The whole of the main grandstand and many more must have seen the very sad sight at the season's first meeting at Brands Hatch on March 2. I say sad because to see Gerry Marshall knock Nick Whiting off the track in the fashion that he did is very sad.

This sort of behaviour cannot be ignored as it has been in the past. Already we see in Rallycross the same tendencies found at the stock car race, surely it's not going to happen at our race meetings as well?

The damage to Nick Whiting's car could have been far worse; it's no longer sufficient to say "I made a mistake." I recall not so long ago Gerry, your advertisement had a go at Zekia Redjep, he's got nothing on you. We all heard your little quip about how you came third in the G1 race through "quality not quantity"; I suggest you never mind the quality but feel the width of other peoples' cars.

Yes, a sad day for all that's best in motor racing.

BEXLEY, KENT. — GEOFF CLEMENTS

. . . to remember Abbott.

Having been a spectator at the BRSCC meeting at Brands Hatch on March 2, once again we see Gerry Marshall win a motor race by blatant dirty driving, (remember Norman Abbott?) and seemingly get away with it.

Although we were spectating from the startline grandstand, and not at the spot where the incident occurred, it was obvious, when inspecting the cars concerned in the paddock, after the meeting, that Whiting had been pushed off.

At the presentation after the special saloon race not a popular victory, judging by the opinion of the crowd, we were informed by the commentator that this was Marshall's forty-fifth win.

One can only wonder, just how many of these forty-five wins were gained by these stock car tactics.

In closing I would venture to suggest that Mr Marshall's talent (?) would be put to better use in rallycross, where this behaviour is accepted, or even as a challenger for Barry Lee's crown, as World Hot Rod Champion.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS, KENT — CLIVE WILKIN



Verini at Magny Cours. The Italian team were somewhat lucky to inherit victory at the expense of Alpine and Alfa Romeo.

LYON-CHARBONNIERES

Verini victorious by default

by MARTIN HOLMES photographs by HUGH BISHOP

Maurizio Verini/Francesco Rossetti won the Lyon Charbonnieres Rally last weekend in their works Fiat 124 Abarth Rallye, with teammates Fulvio Baccheli/Bruno Scabini second, and fellow Italians Amilcare Ballestrieri/Enrico Gigli third in a works Alfetta GT, making a clean sweep for Italy on what is very much a French Rally. The Alpines, which after the Criterium Neige et Glace victory the weekend before, were highly favoured with their new 16-valve engines, failed; although both their entries (a full works car for Jean Luc Therier and an assisted entry for Jacques Henry) held the lead at various times. Also in the lead was the Alfetta GT of Jean Claude Andruet who went off the road, and consequently the victory for the Fiats was very much by default. The victory puts Verini in the lead of the European Championship with 140 points ahead of Lampinen who has 120.

The Lyon Charbonnieres is round five in this year's ECR, a series in which various rounds have different coefficients and consequently different importance. This one had coefficient four, the highest level, and was therefore a *must* for anyone seriously wishing to do well in the series. The Arctic was a "four," the other "fours" are the San Martino, the Alpenfahrt and the R.A.C.E. Spanish, from which you can see that there are not many high scoring rounds, and there are plenty of apparently important with lesser coefficients. Every year the Lyon Charbonnieres has had German connections, with some of the route in that country, and of course plenty of German involvement generally. This year, the excuse of the energy crisis kept the route within France, with an alternative starting point at Colmar near the German border, together with the name "Stuttgart" added to the official title of the rally to maintain old links. But in every other respect the rally was French.

The competitive sections comprised in the end eleven special stages; mostly they were duplicates of each other, something which aided recceing. There was also a 20-lap race at Magny-Cours. The first night was a 'drag' in many senses; the first half of the night being concentration runs from the starting points to Saulieu, near Dijon; and then apart from one 12 km test, a run through to the Magny Cours track. The day that followed was no better, much of it being spent hanging around waiting for the races to take place, and then just one test, which in fact was cut in length, before the cars reached Charbonnieres, which is a Spa town outside Lyon, and where the Casino, which sponsors the rally, is situated. From Charbonnieres for the second night, it was a real rally, with tests in the hills between Lyon and Chambery, and as dawn broke again there was just the final run back to Charbonnieres.

ENTRY

The French were confident after their success in the Neige et Glace, a non European championship event which nevertheless held great local importance. Both their cars (Henry's merely being works-assisted and still sponsored by Christine Laure, the French ladies' ready-to-wear company,) had 16-valve engines with Therier's A310 having fuel injection, giving 200 bhp. Henry's carburettor version gave 170. The latter's car was the A110 bis, an Alpine of normal shape save for the air dam structure at the front, but which has wishbone suspension at the rear. With more power than before, they reckoned they would have the legs of the Italians, and a defeat for the Italians after that "terrible" weekend when they won both the Swedish and the Costa Brava would be timely.

But what of the invaders from South of the Alps? Once again there were both Fiats and Alfa Romeos with which the Alpines had to contend, and it was difficult to know which team was to be feared the most. Fiats have the disorders of last year behind them; they are happy now and confident to boot, but the 124 Abarths are old and at the end of their development. This time there were three of these sports cars, two for the 'terrible' Italian twins, Verini and Baccheli, and one for that famous ex-racing cyclist Bernard Darniche. Autodelta provided a still greater threat, with two Alfetta GTs for Andruet and Ballestrieri, the former with a more powerful engine (though still with 2-valves per cylinder) and with revised rear suspension. Ballestrieri (who had not so much as finished an event since the 4 Regions last May) made do with his car in the same trim as on the Costa Brava, though both cars nowhave steel instead of aluminium sumps. They also entered an Alfasud G1 for Orlando dall'Av', which was singularly unexciting in appearance and which rolled after some poor performances except on the foggy stages.

The Fiat Polskis were there, with a 124 Abarth for Andrzej Jaroszewicz, the son of the Polish Prime Minister, who is rapidly becoming one of the characters of European rallying. For this event he had another 124, the idea being that cars are sent back to Warsaw after each event for rebuilding, although they are Italian built. The car he had this time was red and white, as opposed to the all-white car in Spain. It was fitted with a Colotti gearbox which Andrzej chose because the change was faster, although on the rally he found it much more difficult to use. Stawowiak kept the old red and white Polish-built 125P he used to come 12th on the Monte and which broke a half-shaft on the Costa Brava.

Other cars of importance were the Ascona of the 1974 ECR champion, Walter Rohrl, fitted with a works rather than Irmscher-built fuel-injected engine; BP Opel (Marseille) Asconas for Guy Chasseuil and Jean Louis Clarr (French G2 champion); and a G1 Commodore for Jean Claude Lefebvre. After a lot of last minute withdrawals 90 starters headed off in a cold night for Saulieu.

RALLY

What promised to be a dry event slowly turned into dampness as the night wore on and the cars converged at Brassy for the first of the tests. Here Therier, with Jean Jacques Lenne co-driving, was fastest in the A310, his only moment of glory, unless you include the first half lap of the race at Magny-Cours that followed at dawn, in which he led before he pulled off when the throttle connections broke. He fixed this, roared off into the race and managed to finish ninth, one lap down; but by the end of the race the engine sounded bad, the limited slip differential was apparently giving trouble, and the car was abandoned in parc fermé. Walter Rohrl did not even have the glory of leading the race before the end of his rally: all of a sudden a cloud of white smoke indicated the bursting of an oil pipe, and within a half-lap, the motor had seized. "Engine – out," said Rohrl with a descriptive sideways swing of the hand; "and you can say that always before we use Irmscher engine," his navigator Jochen Berger insisted that we knew. Before the cars were to arrive at Charbonnieres there was one daylight test that was cut to a fraction of its intended length. At Charbonnieres, before much actual rallying had taken place, the order was as follows: Andruet (Alfetta) 51m 04s; Henry (A110bis) 51m 07s. Baccheli (124 Abarth) 51m 52s; Darniche (124 Abarth) 51m 58s; Lefebvre (Commodore) 58m 08s. The Group 1 cars of Lefebvre, Beguin and Frequelin had the advantage of a good run at Magny-Cours, which the early runners because of the rain and Rohrl's burst oil pipe, did not have.

The second night was where the action occured. In the very first test, the leader of the rally, and the leaders of Groups 1 2 and 3 all retired through going off on a test that was both wet and in the higher stretches foggy. This left Henry in the lead which he retained until he too retired with engine failure late in the rally. Only then did Italian fortunes reach their full pitch, and this was only possible after Darniche, the French Fiat driver, had gone off. As much as there was action at the front, there was drama within the classes, which, in accordance with French tradition, are based on individual groups. In Group 3, Jean Pierre Rouget, the Group 2 hillclimb champion, was driving sedately in his RSR Carrera and only just keeping ahead of the young French driver Michel Mouton, a lady rapidly becoming established as a heroine. She won her Coupe on last year's Tour de France and the Tour de Corse, and on this event she was the best Alpine driver! In Group 2 the Alfetta GT of Ballestrieri was just ahead of Clarr's Ascona, while in Group 1 the Alfas of Beguin and Frequelin staved off Talenti's BMW 2002 tii. Chasseuil then retired the Ascona with an engine that sounded very bad. The little Simca Rallye 2s did well and were the only finishers in the depleted Group 1 class, apart from a Renault 5.

Whether the Fiat 124 Abarths have much of a future left ahead of them in competition is uncertain at the moment, but rallying is often a matter of management as much as speed, and at the moment they are certainly doing well in this aspect. Autodelta certainly must expect success soon; and obviously the Alpines have speed if little else. The next major event in which the leading teams expect to compete is the Firestone in two weeks time. There were 90 starters and 49 finishers.

1, Maurizio Verini/Francesco Rossetti (Fiat 124 Abarth Rally) 3h 05m 16s (time taken); 2, Fulvio Baccheli/Bruno Scabini (Fiat 124 Abarth Rally) 3h 06m 19s; 3, Amilcare Ballestrieri/Enrico Gigli (Alfetta GT) 3h 12m 11s (best G2); 4 Jean Louis Clarr/Jean Francois Fauchille (Opel Ascona) 3h 14m 47s; 5, Bernard Beguin/Jacques Andrevon (Alfa Romeo 2000 GTV) 3h 16m 33s (best G1); 6, Guy Frequelin/William Aidan (Alfa Romeo 2000 GTV) 3h 18m 03s; 7, Pierre Maublanc/Daniel Dreyfus (BMW 2002 Turbo) 3h 19m 00s; 8, Alexandre Talenti/Claude Carret (BMW 2002 tii) 3h 21m 27s; 9, Andrzej Jaroszewicz/Janusz Wojtyna (Fiat 124 Abarth Rally) 3h 24m 16s; 10, Jean Pierre Rouget/Christian Delfarrier (Porsch Carrera RSR), 3h 26m 01s (best G3) Coupe des dames: Michel Mouton/Francois Conconi Alpine 1600 G3 3h 27m 39.



Guy Chasseuil on the ragged edge – a stirring sight. Engine trouble later put him out.

Jean Pierre Rouget drove well within himself and the capability of his car to collect the Group 3 prize.



The big one at Brands— The Race of Champions

This weekend sees the first of Britain's major 1975 international meetings when the British Airways/*Daily Mail* Race of Champions takes place at Brands Hatch.

This meeting is, of course, the traditional opener to the European F1 season. They come to Brands after three Grands Prix, two in South America and one in South Africa, with still a great deal to do before they go to Spain and begin the long, hard trek round ten countries in seven months.

The British Racing and Sports Car Club have lined up some really first class combinations for this race; these include the reigning World Champion, the winners of two of the three GPs held so far this year, the man who held two pole positions in South America, last year's winner and the man regarded as the fastest racing driver in the world. All that adds up to a great deal of tense, exciting racing especially when you add half a dozen other F1 names and the very best of the Formula 5000 campaigners.

In addition to the main race on Sunday, there is the opening round of the Shellsport F5000 European Championship on Saturday, plus championship races for saloon cars, Formula Atlantic and FF2000 single seaters and the SPARKS Shellsport celebrity race, all of which support the main race on Sunday.

An intriguing aspect of the Formula 1 race will be to see if the cars can improve the outright lap record drastically now that the whole surface has been relaid and many of the notorious Brands bumps have been smoothed out.

FORMULA 1

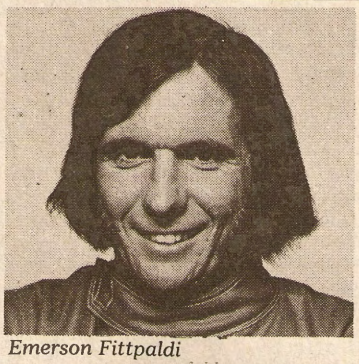
Heading the Formula one entry list is none other than the current World Champion, the 1975 championship table leader and Argentine GP winner, **Emerson Fittipaldi.** The Brazilian who, of course, first came to prominence at Brands Hatch just five short years ago, will be handling the latest Texaco Marlboro McLaren similar to the car which gave him the championship last year. Fittipaldi appears to be approaching his very best form this year and he will undoubtedly be a very hard man to beat.

His team-mate **Jochen Mass** from Germany is settling down with his new car very well, having finished the last two Grands Prix in the championship points. This race will be a good opportunity for him to consolidate the rapid progress he has made this year.

Probably the hot favourite for the race will be **Jody Scheckter** in the Elf Tyrrell. Scheckter, it will be remembered, won the British Grand Prix at Brands last year — last week he tasted his first victory since that day when he won for Ken Tyrrell in South Africa. In only his second full year of F1 Scheckter is being tipped by many to win the World Championship. If he continues to show good form at Brands the punters could be persuaded to put even more money on him.

Nobody will forget the fantastic manoeuvre which decided last year's race. It was when **Jacky Ickx** took his John Player Special round the *outside* of Niki Lauda's Ferrari at Paddock bend in the wet. Nothing much went right for Ickx after that race last year and this could be his opportunity to put himself back near the top of the tree. His team mate **Ronnie Peterson** has found himself struggling a little lately with the John Player Special but SuperSwede never gives up trying. Even if the car is uncompetitive you can be assured Ronnie will be the most exciting man on the circuit as he strives to make up for the deficiencies of the car.

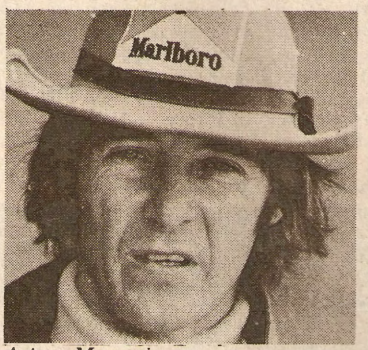

Jody Scheckter


Emerson Fittpaldi


Jean-Pierre Jarier


Ronnie Peterson


Jochen Mass



Arturo Merzario

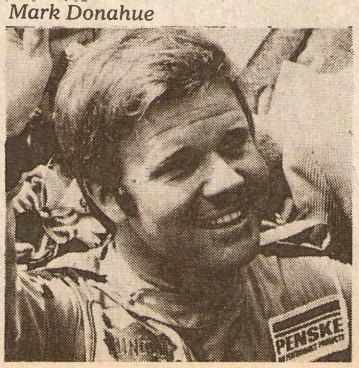

Lella Lombardi


Jacky Ickx

Tom Pryce



Mark Donahue



Frenchman **Jean-Pierre Jarier** astounded the F1 world when he put his UOP Shadow on pole position for both the Argentinian and Brazilian GPs in January. In Brazil he continued to walk away with the race until mechanical failure intervened, but he is still very much the man the other teams are watching closely. He will have one of the new Shadow DN5s at his disposal which should be well suited to the circuit. Jarier, of course, won the British Airways sports car race at Brands last year in sensational style. Watch out for a repeat performance.

In a second new Shadow will be Welshman **Tom Pryce,** who learnt his racing at Brands. This will be the first occasion that Pryce has driven F1 at the same circuit for the second time since moving into the top league. In the British Grand Prix last year he ran steadily in the top six, maybe this will be his chance to battle for the lead?

One car that will create a great deal of interest is the First National City Bank Travellers Checks Penske which will be driven by **Mark Donohue.** The names of Penske and Donohue are legends around the world after their total domination of racing in America during the past few years. They have not had an easy introduction into F1 but they are trying hard and a strong performance can be only just around the corner.

Regular race-goers at Brands will remember the tremendous impact that little Italian lady **Lella Lombardi** made last year in Formula 5000. Well this year she's moved in F1 with a works March. She practiced and qualified for her first ever GP in South Africa in an old car. At Brands, a circuit she knows well, and in a new car she's bound to show a good many boys the quick way round.

Frank Williams will be running two of his much modified cars for fiery Italian **Arturo Merzario** and F1 newcomer **Mario Casoni** from Italy. Little Art always tries very hard and goes well at Brands – he should give Frank a good result, while many interested eyes will be on Casoni.

Embassy Racing with Graham Hill will only have one car on parade for **Rolf Stommelen.** Graham wrote his car off in South Africa and it cannot be repaired in time. However Stommelen showed that the new Lola T371 was a very much improved car and that he is a competitive force.

New Zealander **John Nicholson,** well known for his Formula Atlantic successes and his expertise as an F1 engine builder, will be having his third ever F1 outing in the Pinch Lyncar, while Dutch man **Roelof Wunderink** will be having his first ever big time outing in Mo Nunn's Ensign backed by HB Alarm Systems.

An interesting entry is the Safir RF02 for Brands Hatch favourite **Tony Trimmer.** This is in fact the Token, used by Tom Pryce, David Purely and Ian Ashley last year, suitably updated. Tony has done most of the work on the car himself, and, if things go well, hopes to run it for the rest of the year. His last F1 race was at the same meeting two years ago when he finished an excellent fourth.

Late entries, confirmed at the beginning of this week, came from Team Surtees and Stanley-BRM.

Surtees will be running their Matchbox sponsored TS16 for Irishman **John Watson.** The arrival of Watson in the team has seen a general up swing in Surtees' fortunes this year, although they are still striving for a strong finish.

Stanley-BRM have two contracted drivers, both of who thought they would be at Brands. However, one of the entries was turned down and **Bob Evans** gets his second chance to see what he can do with the P201.

FORMULA 5000

The opening round of the Shellsport F5000 championship has an excellent 23 entries — a record for the first race of the year. Among these are no less than ten ex-F1 drivers: Brian Redman, Peter Gethin, Teddy Pilette, Ian Ashley, Vern Schuppan, Tom Belso, Guy Edwards, David Purley and Dave Walker.

The Championship has the makings of being the best ever with the racing being very, very close. The experience of these drivers will mean that their lap times should be very evenly matched with the F1 cars and those that are invited to compete in Sunday's race will certainly make the F1 boys work hard to uphold their honour.

Saturday's F5000 race has some interesting questions to be answered. Will the new Lola T400s of Gethin and Pilette prove to be yet another successful car from this Huntingdon concern or will the older, T332, models being used by top F5000 runners Schuppan, Edwards and Ashley still hold their own? Will the Ford V6 engine being used by Purley and Tom Walkinshaw match the Chevrolet V8s? Will Brian Rddman and Dave Walker continue with the Chevron where Vern Schuppan left off last October, winning? Will Chris Amon's Talon be as competitive as it was in the Tasman series?

Want to know the answers? Be at Brands at 1.30 pm on Saturday and watch them evolve.

SALOONS

The Southern Organs/RAC saloon car championship looks as though it will be as tense this year as it was last. There are no less than 12 thundering Chevrolet Camaro Z28s entered in the big class with just Tony Lanfranchi's Chrysler Hemi Cuda ranged against them. However, the big battle is bound to be between Stuart Graham's Faberge car and Richard Lloyd's Simoniz version. Round one went to Lloyd; round two, who knows?

It's all Opels and Capris in the next class with drivers like Tony Fall, Holman Blackburn, Stuart Rolt and Bill Gubelmann, while the third class will feature another battle between the Dolomites of Andy Rouse, Roger Bell and John Hine and the Mazda of Barrie Williams.

The smallest class went to Win Percy's Toyota at Mallory, but he'll have his work cut out to keep out last year's Champion Bernard Unett in the works Chrysler Avenger.

FORMULA ATLANTIC

There have been two Atlantic races so far this year and both have provided different winners. There is a very strong entry for this, the second round of the John Player Championship, but this year's winners look as though they will be any one of Jim Crawford, Richard Morgan or Tony Brise. Brise will probably have the edge on his home circuit, provided he can learn to keep the car pointing in a straight line.

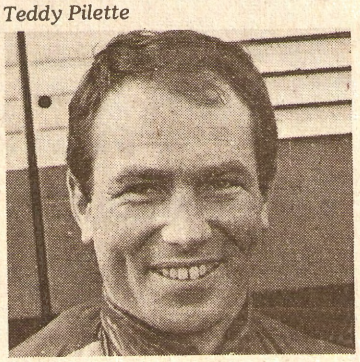


Peter Gethin



Ian Ashley

Teddy Pilette



Vern Schuppan



TIME TABLE

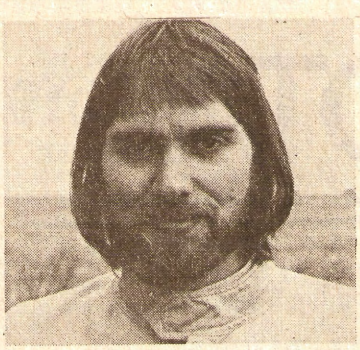
Friday, March 14
Practice
9.15-10.15 am ..... Formula Atlantic
11.00-1 pm ..... Formula One
2.30-4.30 pm ..... Formula 5000

Saturday, March 15
Practice
9.00-9.30 am ..... Formula 5000 (untimed)
10.00-11.15 am ..... Touring cars
11.45-12.45 pm ..... Formula Ford 2000
3.00-4.00 pm ..... Formula One
4.30-5.00 pm ..... Formula Atlantic
Race
1.30 pm ..... Shellsport European Formula 5000 round (35 laps)

Sunday, March 16
Practice
10.00-10.30 am ..... Formula One (untimed)
11.00-11.15 am ..... Shellsport Escorts (Club circuit)
Races
12 noon ..... John Player International Atlantic round (25 laps)
1.00 pm ..... Southern Organs National Touring Car round (20 laps)
1.45 pm ..... Evening News Parks Shellsport Escort race (10 laps)
2.30 pm ..... British Airways/Daily Mail Race of Champions (40 laps)
4.10 pm ..... Allied Polymer Ford 2000 round (15 laps)

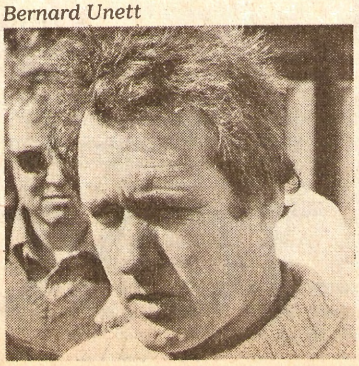


Jim Crawford



Richard Morgan

Bernard Unett



Stuart Graham



FF2000

This will be the second round of the new APG Formula Ford 2000 championship. The first proved to be very encouraging with some good, fast racing. Ian Taylor took the first round and ought to win the second although Damien Magee will undoubtedly prove tough opposition in the works Palliser.

SPARKS

The Sportsmans charity organisation will once again have the *Evening News* Shellsport Celebrity cars for this meeting. Among those entered are: Chay Blyth (yachtsman), Geoff Capes (shot putter), David Duckham and Barry John (rugby), Ivan Mauger (speedway), Ann Moore (show jumping), Tom Percival (power boats), Hugh Porter (cycling), Bob Wilson (football), and Lady Jane Wellesley (ex-girlfriend of Prince Charles).

SILVERSTONE

The first of the excellent BRDC championship meetings takes place at Silverstone this Sunday. As usual the club have attracted a huge entry of over 200 cars for this eight race meeting.

A number of championships will be having their first rounds, the most popular of which is likely to be the new Brush Fuegear FF. This will be contested over two heats and a final of fast and furious slipstream racing. Geoff Lees, Jim Walsh or Matthew Agrnenti are the most likely to emerge on top.

The third round of the BBC Radio 1 Production Saloon championship is also on the bill. This race will mark the first appearance this year of number one DJ Noel Edmonds with his new Castrol Capri. The opposition in this class though is very tough with the likes of Ivan Dutton and under 21 men Mike and Marc Smith also competing. Other names in this race will include John Brindley, Derrick Brunt and Brian Rice (Camaros), Jock Robertson, Wendy Markey and Cozy Powell (Mazdas), Gerry Marshall (Vauxhall) and Danny Alderton (Honda).

The Tricentrol Clubmen's Supersports championship has always been extremely popular and top names here include Creighton Brown, Geoff Friswell, Vernon Davies, Frank Sytner and Richard Creswell.

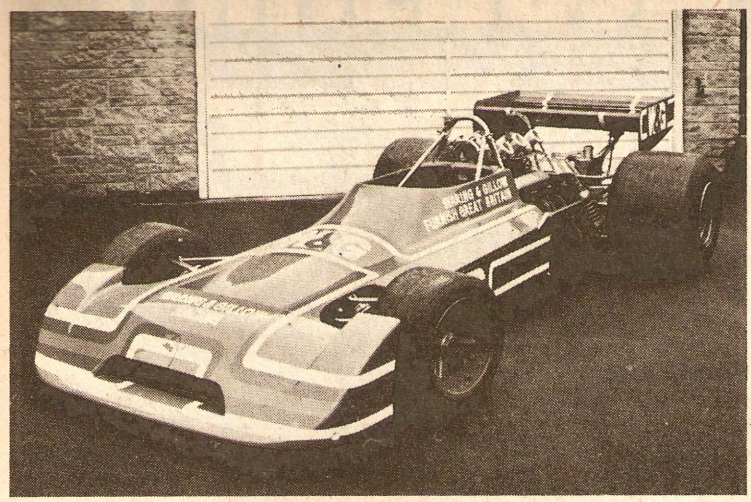
The Simoniz Special saloon race has all the usual exciting contenders, Nick Whiting, Gerry Marshall, Tony Strawson, Geoff Ward and Richard Long while the Jaybrand Racewear *Libre* event has a veritable *pot pourri* of machinery including F5000 and CanAm cars.

Practice begins at 11.45 and the racing at 3 pm.

CROFT

The BARC Northern Centre are in charge at Croft on Sunday. The regs were very late in being despatched and at the time of going to press no details of the meeting were available.

● Remember the clocks go forward on Saturday night so try not to be late to any of the above.



John Cussins will use this new Chevron B32 on the hills this year.

New Chevron for Cussins

John Cussins and Malcolm Dungworth, together with the Cussins' family firm of Waring and Gillow, are launching a serious attack on the RAC hill climb championship with a brand new Chevron and a Brabham BT 35X.

The Chevron is undoubtedly the most interesting car of the two, for it is a development of the B28, and will be the first of the new type number B32, to have 5 litre power, in this case, a 5.7 built up by Dave Whitehurst, Alan Smith's former right hand man. The 5.7 is a Chevrolet, and develops well over 500 bhp with a significant torque improvement over the normal F5000 engine. Cussins will be the driver of this car.

The Brabham will be powered by 5.0 Repco and will be driven by Malcolm Dungworth who will also act as team manager. Preparation of the cars will be in the hands of David Elliott.

Waring and Gillow are taking their involvement in the sport most seriously, and will be promoting through their stores throughout the country. All Waring and Gillow stores will be offering special discounts to members of motor sporting clubs, details of which should be available shortly.

Larkin's first big win

John Larkin, a Southerner now living in the Midlands, scored a surprised first ever BTD at a BT&RDA Autotest Championship when he took the Southsea MC event by just under a second last Sunday. From a field of 44, Larkin drove his Clubman GT round 12 tests in 460.5s to head Dick Squire (Sprite), on 461.3s. The event, held at the IBM factory at Havant, was reduced in the afternoon because of the cold and rain.

In the absence of Trevor Smith — on holiday — the event was wide open to several contenders but Larkin was alone if keeping a penalty off his score sheet and his consistency gave him the honours. Phil Darbyshire (Clubman GT), his main challenger in class B collected a line penalty on the fourth test to put himself out of the hunt while Squire and Denis Beare (Sprite) both went adrift early in the day and were left to scrap amongst themselves.

Darbyshire eventually won his class by the narrowest possible margin but only after Jonathan Mears had had his gear lever knob fall off on the last test and he fell to 0.2s behind.

There was another turn up in the conventional saloons where John Calton, on top form, beat Tony Hunt. Hunt led the all Mexico battle on the first tour of tests but dropped back after a penalty in the second run and this was all the encouragement that Calton needed and he held on to win by almost 10s. An excellent first big time event run by Dick Mullis gave him best Southsea member in his Sprite.

BTD: J. Larkin (Clubman GT), 460.5sec. **Class winners:** N. Yoward (Cooper), 493.0s; P. Darbyshire (Clubman GT), 467.8s; T. Mears (Countryman), 502.0s; J. Calton (Mexico), 500.2s; P. Neate (Saab), 574.6s; D. Squire (Sprite), 461.3s. **Best S'thsea:** D. Mullis (Sprite), 492.4s.



Gordon and Peggy Jackson debuted the new Harrison-built Ibex recently. It is hoped that the car will be a Kincraft beater – costing less than Jack Pearce's machines.

Briant marches on

Continuing to ride the crest of a wave in club rallying, Mick Briant and John McKerrell scored their third Welsh Rally Championship success in succession last weekend. This time it was the Three Spires Rally, run by Coventry & Warwickshire MC in the Welshpool-Newton area over an 180 mile route.

Briant and McKerrell, in their usual RS 2000, scored a five minute victory over Ted Cowell and Julian Chitty while Bob McKenzie and Brian Goff were third on 32m, also in RS 2000s.

The next three places were closely fought with Graham Evans/M. Tansley (RS 1600) on 33m beating Jeff James and Colin Francis (Escort TC) by a minute with Don Kettleborough and Mike Stones bringing the Allegro through to sixth on 35m.

The event had only 83 starters but some 60 got to the finish of an event in which one selective, of four miles, was included.

1, M. Briant/J. McKerrell (RS 2000), 25m; 2, T. Cowell/J. Chitty (RS 2000), 30m; 3, B. McKenzie/B. Goff (RS 2000), 32m; 4, G. Evans/M. Tansley (RS 1600), 33m; 5, J. James/C. Francis (Escort TC), 34m; 6, D. Kettleborough/M. Stones (Allegro), 35m. **Class winner:** J. Braid/D. Taylor (Cooper S), 56m. 'Novices: B. Houghton/N. Hughes (BMC 1300, 66m. **Best Coventry & Warwicks:** P. Ridgeway/R. Parrott (Hunter), 44m.

Still out of luck

Divina Galica, having totalled her Southern Organs/ShellSport Super Saloon Escort against the Brands banking ten days ago, didn't have much more luck at Oulton on Saturday. Driving a ShellSport Mexico in the Group One race, she was keeping out of harm's way, until Danny Alderton spun his Honda in front of her. Miss Galica then unfortunately brought her score up to two damaged motor cars in two weeks, although our reporter absolves her from blame.

● Well-known national production car trials experts Don Hobbs and Dave Slater, both from the Midlands, have joined forces to build the second Dingo — a new trials car. The car is almost identical to the one designed and built by Charles Lashford, mechanic to Tony Griffiths the Midland hill climber. Hobbs and Slater hope eventually to install a 2-litre Ford unit and will only do local events.

Historics for Europe

Europe has come alive to the idea of historic car racing, and this year sees races at a number of foreign circuits. Details of the organisers of the events may be found in the March issue of *Classic Car*, and the RAC will also be able to help out with an essential visa.

The various dates are: March 29/30, Le Croix en Ternois, Arras, France; April 26/27, Bugatti Circuit, Le Mans, France; May 24/25, Nogaro, France; July 26/27, Dijon, France; August 2/3, Hockenheim, Germany; August 9/10, Osterreichring, Austria; August 10, Zolder, Belgium; August 16/17, Nurburgring, Germany.

There's also a date at Paul Ricard still be to be decided upon, and a historic weekend scheduled for August 30/31 at Phoenix Park, Dublin.

● The practice drag day at Santa Pod was rained off this week, not unexpectedly, but it is fully expected that there will be a couple of the big dragsters at this Sunday's practice day at Long Marston.

Big fund for FF Mondello

The MGCC Mondello Park meeting in June which has in the past attracted a strong Special and Super Saloon entry, has this year been changed to a major Formula Ford date. The club is putting up £700 prize money, which must make the meeting one of the most financially attractive ever for FF in the British Isles, and anyone interested in trying for a share should contact Eddie Jordan at 29 Ailesbury Lawn, Dublin 14.

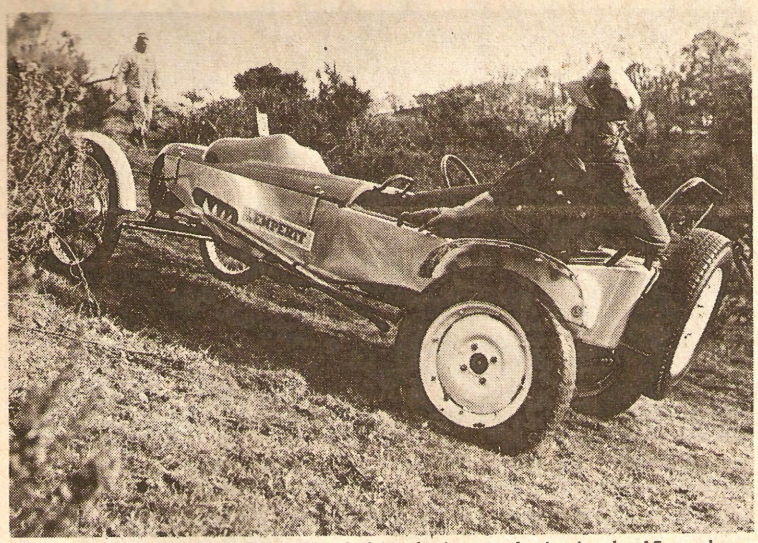
● The practice day to be held at Mallory Park this coming Saturday has been cancelled.

F4 sales

Delta Cars have sold two of their Formula 4 cars so far this year, and Delta director Fergus Tait will be racing the prototype. The car has undergone considerable testing at Goodwood, to the satisfaction of the directors and production of the first two chassis is well under way.

The first two customers are, as already announced John Brown of John Brown wheels, and John Waldron who has been racing a FF Dulon. Both cars will run under the John Brown wheels banner and seriously contest the F4 championship in 1975.

Further orders for cars are now being negotiated for delivery during April, and it is hoped to make a further announcement later.



Jack Pearce was back on top in Yorkshire, losing, and winning by 15 marks.

Sun shines on Pearce

While much of the remainder of the country shivered and got soaked to the skin, fine weather prevailed for most of the day up in the north when some 20 competitors turned up for the Yorkshire SCC's 4/44 Trophy Trial run at Cromwell Woods.

A well organised event saw the club arrange eight sections, each tackled four times and with plenty of space on each, it was a driver's ability which won or lost him the day. Winner, for the sixth time in the RAC championship series, was Midlander Jack Pearce who dropped only 15 marks in his Kincraft to be exactly half the score of the runner-up.

Pearce spreadeagled the field by dropping only eight marks on the two morning rounds of eight hills to lead by seven marks. Main interest was the struggle for supremacy between the Fack brothers John and Julian, both of whom have now got their Impunity cars competitive. Julian led John by a mark at the break but in the end John turned the tables to the tune of three marks taking second on 30 marks. Fourth spot went to Tony Harrison, who was embarrassed a little by the extra power which Pearce has found for him, for his Kincraft dropped some unnecessary marks.

1, J. Pearce (Kincraft), 15 marks; 2, John Fack (Impunity), 30 marks; 3, Julian Fack (Impunity), 33 marks; 4, A. Harrison (Kincraft), 41 marks; 5, R. Alexander (Cannon), 54 marks; 6, R. Needham (Cannon), 73 marks. **RAC Championship:** 1, Pearce, 11.7 pts; 2, John Fack, 83pts; 3, L. Hurt (Ford Special), 60 marks.

Cooke drops only 2 m

Defying superstition, Alec Cooke took No 13 starting number and went out and won last weekend's Amoco sponsored Deerstalker Rally run by Tylers Green MC over a 140 mile route. Driving the Avenger Tiger belonging to his navigator Jon Armstrong, they dropped only two minutes on an event which attracted 59 starters of whom more than 50 got safely home.

Three of the top 10 seeds spoiled their chances when they failed to observe road work traffic lights and were docked a fail apiece — one of the crews caught would have finished second overall.

Run mainly on tarmac which was especially fortunate in view of the recent weather, the pressure was on from the start and although three crews managed to stay clean for a few controls the tightness of the route caused penalties to accumulate at a fair rate. Cooke/Armstrong eventually came home three minutes to the good on Gerry Clark and Lenny Davis (Mini Traveller) on five minutes with Nick Linford/Andrew Thorburn (Escort TC), third on same time but beaten on furthest cleanest.

1, A. Cooke/J. Armstrong (Avenger Tiger), 2m; 2, G. Clark/L. Davis (Mini Traveller), 5m; 3, N. Linford/A. Thorburn (Escort TC), 5m; 4, S. Morgan/D. Booth (RS 2000), 6m; 5, K. Farrar/R. Hill (Mexico), 7m; 6, K. Bennett/D. Smith (Mexico), 8m. **Novice:** B. Rossiter/C. Davies (Mini), 24m. **Best Tylers Green:** M. Sims/T. Hardware (RS 1600), 1F 24m.

● The BRSCC are currently offering a Superpass to all its members at £12, allowing free general admission and paddock transfers to all BRSCC meetings at MCD circuits. They are available from headquarters.

New face at the BWRDC

After twelve years at the helm of the British Women Racing Drivers Club, Mary Wheeler, former TVR driver and founder of the club, has "given way for younger blood" and resigned her twelve year old vigil as chairman.

Her successor is Datsun driver Judy Andreason, while other new committee members include Wendy Markey, Sylvia Rouse and Georgie Shaw. Juliette Slaughter is the committee's press officer, who is spearheading the promotional drive to rebuild the image of the club as a force to be reckoned with "though at the same time, not take ourselves too seriously."

The club are also on an all out drive for new members, and the ladies are looking forward to their MCD races at Brands, Mallory and Snetterton. A regular newsheet and some stylish club clothing are also planned.

Drag for Europe

The drag racing promotional group of Clive Lanson Enterprises is to go International this year under the name of European Dragways, promoting drag racing in the UK as well as in Europe. The new body's major object is to extend the sphere and influence of drag racing at Club, National and International level, developing new and improved facilities for competitors and spectators alike. Promotions by European Dragways this year will include events in both Sweden and Germany. They also intend to act as watchdogs on the sport, keeping an eye on legislation in case this should have an adverse effect on racing in both the UK and Europe.

It is also proposed to form a European Dragways Supporters Club to look after the interests of fans throughout Europe and the UK. Equally, the club will help to improve the standards and image of the sport in the public's eyes. The Supporters Club is not seeking RAC recognition, preferring to leave organisation to the organising clubs.

● Current leaders of the Welsh Rally Championship, Mick Briant and John McKerrell, are among several well known crews who are all seeded near the top on this weekend's Birmingham University Mermaid Rally which starts and finishes at Llandrindrod Wells. Also running are John Pugh/John Williams (Mexico), Pat Jerome/Lee Vincent (Midget), Alan Hemmings/Dave Kirkham (RS 2000), Alan and Lyn Jenkins (RS1600) while Bob Jeffs/Don Davidson will be out in a Withers Avenger Tiger.

● A number of the prodsports competitors are toying with up-dating their Midgets by fitting the current 1500 engine, and thus equipped, they hope to step up into the over £1400 class to beat the current competitors.

Standard tyres beat T and Cs

Returning to their usual site at Afonwen, near Mold, Liverpool MC attracted 26 starters for their production car trial last Sunday, and the star of the day was one of the club's own members, Barry Parker, who took outright victory dropping only 23 marks on the 30 sections. Driving a Cooper S running on ordinary tyres, he inherited the lead two hills from the finish when previous leader Bob Owen ran into trouble with his Dellow and dropped a maximum on one section.

Best of the town and country entries was Mrs Margaret James, also in a Cooper S, who dropped 68 marks and beat her husband Ken who had an identical score but lost out on the first section of the trial.

Overall: B. Parker (Cooper S), 23 marks and Mrs M. James (Cooper S), 68 marks.
Class winners: R. Lewis (Escort), 117 marks; P. Oldfield (Midget), 155 marks; S. Lawton (Mini), 35 marks; K. James (Cooper S), 68 marks; K. Jones (Imp, 55 marks; D. Mitchell (Landrover), 57 marks. **Novice:** R. Rothwell (Maxi), 113 marks. **Ladies:** Miss M. Banks (Cooper), 87 marks.

● Among the clubmen's entries at Mallory Park on Sunday was Ken Hensley, the Uriah Heap pop group organist. Hensley already drives a FF2000 Hawke, but forsook it to try Clubmen's, hiring the ex-Vernon Davies U2 Mk 14 to finish ninth.

Wells and Cork dominate

The Sheffield crew of Bob Wells and Simon Cork scored a deserved victory on the Thompson Trophy Rally, run by the Lindholme MSC over a 140 mile route last Saturday night. In their Bentleys sponsored Magnum Coupe they dropped 106.4 penalties to beat the Barnsley pair of Phil Moulson and Peter Halkyard (Simca Rallye), by a fair margin, the latter being on 118.2 penalties.

Wells and Cork led the event, which included one five selective, most of the time and they dropped only eight minutes on the road and were also fastest on the selective. Moulson/Halkyard were on nine minutes lateness on the road and were nine seconds slower on the selective.

With penalties being incurred at a rate of 10 per minute on the road, there was a fight for the next three places, only 16 penalties separating them. Last of the trio and best of the fair proportion of novices among the full entry of 60, were Dave Pope and Adrian Gregory in a Mexico on 206.6 penalties. They had a three minute margin over their rivals and novices were seventh and eight overall.

1, B. Wells/S. Cork (Magnum Coupe), 106.4 penalties; 2, P. Moulson/P. Halkyard (Simca Rallye), 118.2 penalties; 3, R. Needham/I. Mugglestone (Avenger), 178.2 penalties; 4, A. Blair/M. Randall (Escort TC), 191.2 penalties; 5, C. Rowley/J. Burton (Mexico), 200.4 penalties; 6, D. Pope/A. Gregory (Mexico), 206.6 penalties.

LCC's rally promotion

In an effort to attract new members, the London Car Club are running a series of five 12 car rallies, basically designed for novices. There will be awards for first, second and third places on each event, and a small championship with the winning driver and navigator taking awards. The first event is this coming weekend, and interested parties should contact Terry Robinson, 14, Bansbury Park, Islington, N1, or 01-607 5964. The club also has a new venue for their Noggin and Natters, on the second and fourth Thursdays in the month, at the Hendon Way Hotel, Hendon Central, in the saloon bar.

Next event that the LCC will be running is the Jacobean trial on March 23 taking in both the RAC and Semperit/BTRDA championships, at Waterhall Farm, Hertford, MR 160/299096.

Bean takes another win

Winners, when the event was last run two years ago, Bob Bean and Alan Greenwood, scored a comfortable one and a half minute win on last Saturday night's running of the Mini Miglia organised once again by Knowldale CC. This was the fourth time this Group I event only had been run and fine weather over the entire 267 mile route from Rochdale to Waddington saw 46 of the original 61 crews complete the distance.

Bean and Greenwood took their Mexico to success dropping 29m 32s and they beat Geoff Birkett and Dave Orrick (Ascona) who were on 31m 8s.

Third, and making a brief return to the sport, were Chris Knowles-Fitton and Chris Nash who turned up with a Commodore to drop 32m 2s. Fourth, but some way back, were Phil Davis and Don Davidson in a Colt 1600 and a fine scrap for fifth and sixth spots between D. Calvert/J. Morton and V. Girardier/J. Couthard resulted in the former crew (in a Ford Taunus) winning the scrap by 10s over the Dolomite Sprint of the latter crew.

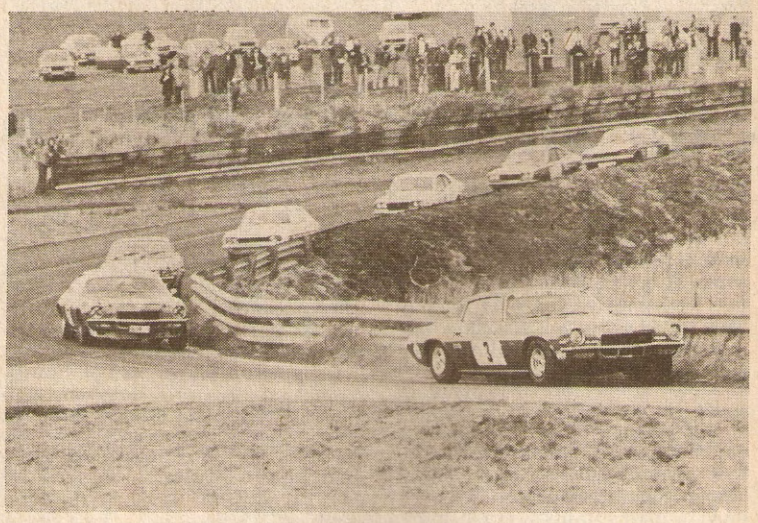
1, B. Bean/A. Greenwood (Mexico), 29m 32s; 2, G. Birkett/D. Orrick (Ascona), 31m 8s; 3, C. Knowles-Fitton/C. Nash (Commodore), 32m 2s; 4, P. David/D. Davidson (Colt), 36m 56s; 5, D. Calvert/J. Morton (Taunus), 39.0s; 6, V. Girardier/J. Couthard (Dolomite Sprint), 39m 10s. **Class winners:** R. Farringdon/A. Charassa (RS 1600), 43m 0s; J. Midgley/P. Whittaker (Toyota), 41m 40s; T. Roberts/I. Grindrod (Mini), 58m 49s; **Best Knowldale:** M. Dawson/K. Wood (RS 2000), 40m 29s.

Bob Bean and Alan Greenwood took their Mexico to a comfortable victory at the weekend.





Oulton action: Nick Whiting is closely challenged by Tony Sugden. Below, John Brindley pulls out a little from Bob Ridgard's Camaro.



Accident imminent: Danny Alderton leads Divina Galica. The former was to spin and collect the snow bird.



Rallycross promotion offer

International rallycross gained quite a lot of respect and a certain amount of disrespect last year, but one man who firmly believes in the sport is Selwyn Morgan, the man behind the Stormont sponsorship tie-up for Rod Chapman. He has recently made representations to a couple of international companies, and would be happy to pass on his researches to any other marketing, advertising of publicity men. He can be contacted at Carter Matanle Southern Ltd, 8 Mount Ephraim Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

● Among the rumours and gossip circulating are Liam Churchill's redoubled efforts to take on the Funny Car class with a really serious effort this year. After first running his Capri bodied car in '73 with some success, he sold the car to Peter Bennet, and bought it back late last year when the bug bit again. Now he has a 3/8 stroker 392 for the car and a new body, both lighter and lower, and hopes to be chasing hard on the heels of Priddle, Herridge, Haywood and others.

Martini's £500 award

Martini have generously donated £500 to the Aston Martin Owners Club as an award fund for this coming season. The club are dividing up the money to give awards at certain meetings, including the AMOC Curborough sprints, the Wiscombe Hillclimb, the VSCC Silverstone meeting on April 19, the 750 MC Six hour relay, the AMOC North Weald sprints on June 21, the AMOC St John Horsfall trophy meeting, and the AMOC Donington meeting on October 13.

Briokay clothing

Briokay, the Gloucestershire clothing manufacturers, are offering 7½ oz Nomex at a reputed £5-£10 cheaper than anyone else. Their one or two piece overalls are offered at £23 plus £1.84 VAT. Briokay overalls are manufactured by Brian Cocks, the F1300 competitor, and the company also manufacture rally jackets and mechanics overalls.

Da Costa's RS 2000

Production Power of Brighton will be running an RS2000 in the Radio One championship and on the Avon *Motor* Tour of Britain for David Da Costa, the former Mexico driver.

Da Costa has secured sponsorship from the Valley Printing Company of Bingley Yorks who produce plastic stickers and signs, in conjunction with Reeds, the Rallyesport Ford agents in Torquay.

● Reliant have agreed to sponsor the Reliant 750 Formula championship run by 750 MC. Their engines, of course, power all the runners in this successful championship, now running into its 26th year.

Baby Bertha

Having dispelled thoughts of retirement from his mind, Gerry Marshall hopes to continue with the DTV Firenza in Special Saloon racing and the ex-Rex Greenslade, Hamilton Motors-entered Magnum in the BBC Radio One series.

An exciting prospect due out in a few weeks time is a V8 Firenza built from the remains of the Ventora which Gerry crashed in the wet at Silverstone last August. "Baby Bertha" is solely a DTV effort on a limited budget but will be powered by the Repco V8 from the Ventora.

● Team *Kent Messenger* will be racing with Nick Whiting in his Super Saloon during the coming year. For 1975, Whiting has a superb new Escort with 1970 FVC power and is carrying the *Kent Messenger* banner throughout the country.

Marler's award continues

Sid Marler, that perennial and ever popular Clubmen's SuperSports driver, announced this week that his company, Marler-Haley Expo Systems are sponsoring a new series of awards for drivers in Class B of the four major SuperSports championships.

The points system will be 4-2-1 for the first three Class B cars at each round of the LEC, National Organs, Tricentrol and Pole Position championships. The Marler-Haley trophies, with accompanying cheques, will be awarded to the top four point-scorers at the end of the season.

The Marler-Haley awards first appeared last year covering the Shell championship and were instrumental in promoting the rapid growth of the new FF engined B Formula. After a close contest, Alex Ferrada took first place in the tables, and was presented with his trophy at the popular Supersports dinner dance in November.



Sid Marler (left) presents Alex Ferrada with his '74 award.

RAC formulae discussions

The RAC is organising a series of open days when changes to existing formulae may be discussed. Any one wishing to change the state of their formulae, whether individual competitor, constructor, organiser or representative of one of the associations, may put forward his plea, and then there are a number of dates and times when the proposals put forward will be discussed.

All amendments should be received by the RAC for June 1, and then the following formulae will be discussed. Modsports and production saloons are to be dealt with on June 26, the former in the morning, the latter in the afternoon) on July 27 Formulae Ford 2000 (morning) and 1600 (afternoon, will be discussed, and on Monday, June 30, prodsports (morning) and special saloons (afternoon) will be reviewed.

Mixed feelings

Formula Ford 2000 took off for a mediocre start at Mallory Park, not in the least helped by the appalling conditions. There were ten starters, of which only two were from the same stable: MRE. The pace in the race was fast and furious, but the cars were somewhat spaced out. Winner of the case of vino from the McKechnie Wine Co was Ian Taylor, whose Dulon showed more speed than it has in testing, while Damien Magee kept up the chase throughout, but didn't seem to make any impression.

Syd Fox, in the new Hawke, was well in contention until the engine went drastically off, while Derek Lawrence and Don MacLeod kept up the chase. Jeremy Rossiter (Reynard), Roger Orgee (Royale), Chris Pryer and David Cole (MREs), were the other finishers, while the one retirement was Phil Clacher's Alpine which spun at Landing Stage.

Arif sorted

It seems that Wil Arif has got his FF2000 problems sorted out. He's also come to an agreement with Southern Organs so that his plans are now going full ahead.

If Damien Magee didn't have any problems at Mallory, it was expected that the whole Palliser equipe would go hard at building Arif a new car for this week at Brands Hatch, and as the Palliser finished second without major problems, it can be assumed that Arif will have his Palliser. With the new FF2000, he expects to bring a new engine tuner into the Formula.

Impish GI success

Virtually continuing last season as he starts this, is Simon Watson, who races the L and G Group One Imp. Despite various happenings over the winter, when his car was written off, the smallest car in production saloon racing is going as well as ever.

At Brands Hatch ten days ago, Watson finished third in class, and at Oulton Park he was leading the class until mechanical bother intervened. However, the spectacular Imp still set a new lap record, despite the fact that it gives away a minimum of 294 cc to its up to £1,299 competitors.

Onsala back "Plum"

Onsala Developments, are to enter Alan "Plum" Tyndall in both Northern and Southern Irish Group One events during the coming season. He will drive the ex-SMT Vauxhall Magnum which was campaigned by Jennifer Birrell and Andrew Cowan in 1974, and Tyndall hopes to bring the car across for some of the events in this year's series. Last year, Tyndall was the reigning Irish G1 champion. Onsala Developments are importers of luxury Scandinavian homes throughout Ireland.

BRIEFLY...

● Jon Dooley's Alfetta, in which he is contesting the Radio One G1 championship, will receive additional backing to that from Macinnes Amcron. It comes from High Liner seafoods, Kaiser photographic equipment and *Camera User* magazine. The car has had a total rebuild since last year.

● A brace of gentlemen have written in noting that in the lap record survey, some records had been wrongly attributed. Eric Horsfield noted that he recorded a 1 m 26.0 s in his Moskvich at Silverstone, against the published record going to Alan Greenhalgh on 1 m 26.2 s. Jock Robertson lays claim to the Mallory £1,250 to £1,599 class production saloon record with a 60s dead at 81 mph, against the published record to Derrick Brunt.

● Truck Developments Co Ltd, who are to sponsor Mike Ford in a new FF Lola this year, have also signed up Barry Lee for the Speedworth world championship hot rod series. It is also hoped that Lee will contest a number of rallies and also the Avon/*Motor* Tour of Britain in a brand new Escort.

● John Blackwell will be running the works development Ray this year, basically running the same car as he did during the latter part of last year, but since updated. He will be contesting the Brush Fusegear and BAF championships, with power from a Minister mill.

● Although by no means regarded as official, the new FF lap record for Brands (the cars now running on racing tyres) is held by Rick Morris.

● Scotland's newest circuit, Knockhill, is busy recruiting a marshalling team in preparation for their first race meeting. A total of around 200 volunteers are required, both experienced and novices.

Registration forms and further details from Knockhill Circuit Office, Saline, Fyfe (Tel: Dunfermline 23337).

● The West Essex Car Club have asked us to amend their statement about the Alan Pond Group's Mini Miglia sponsorship, as they got the dates wrong. The Lydden date is not August 17, but October 12.

● Cozy Powell, the pop drummer, still does not seem to be having much luck in the BBC Radio One production saloon car championship. His Hitachi Mazda did a fore and aft at Old Hall on Saturday's Oulton meeting, and the car duly retired.

● Noel Edmonds is hoping that his Capri will be ready for this Sunday's Radio One event at Silverstone. So far he has missed both the opening two rounds of the championship as his Castrol-sponsored Capri II still has to be finished.

● David Heale, the 1973 Vandervell Novice award winner is teaming up with John Skinner and his Chequers Garage in South Oxfordshire for their coming Formula Ford season. They will both be running their Dulons again, using Oselli prepared engines. Skinner has rebuilt both cars over the winter, and offers this service to other competitors. They should contact him at Didcot 2263.

● Jeff and Tony Mann, who last year drove a 1700 cc Anglia to second place in the MCD Special Saloon series, have bought the ex-John Robinson 1300 cc BDA to put into the car, which has also had the new Chas Beattie suspension drafted onto it. They will contest the Simoniz championship.

● Julian Fack has had an excellent response to his production trials car idea of producing Impunities in number, and has taken five immediate orders. However, in fairness, he feels that he needs another five before he can go to Bill Stone and have the jigs made up. So anybody for trialling?

● A commentators nightmare will be entering Formula Ford this month at the wheel of a new MRE 75F, to be run as a semi-works car. The Brazilian tongue twister is Henrique Camaro Lima Barbosa de Oliveira, who hails from Rio de Janeiro where he has raced saloons. His first race is expected to be Easter Monday Thruxton.

● Susan Tucker-Peake was out at Oulton Park over the weekend contesting the first round of the Simoniz special saloon car championship in her downdraught 1300 Escort. Susan hopes to vanquish at least some of the Minis in the subsequent rounds, and hopes to have a BDA engine later in the year.

● Contrary to another report that has appeared, modsports will be catered for at all Aintreee meetings this year. The circuit club recognise the "Spridget class" and will therefore run races in the following classes: up to 1150 cc, 1151 cc to 1300 cc, 1301 cc to 2000 cc and over 2000 cc.

● Friar Street Insurance Brokers of Worcester seem good people to have as sponsors in Formula Ford, and they will be supporting Chris Skellern in a Crossle-Rowland 30F during the coming season. As well as the insurance company in Worcester, he will be racing with JS Racing, the family motor cycle business, who are the largest Honda dealers in England.

● Anthony Hutton, well known classic and historic car racer, and who last year ran an ex-Wyer Gulf Mirage, in the Tricentrol Sports/GT Championship, will this season drive a Porsche 917 in Gulf colours for a private owner, who bought the car from Porsche.

● Another novice contender for the Vandervell award at Silverstone is 23-year-old Stephen Walker who has gone into partnership with saloon car driver Barry Collinson to form a new team. Walker will drive a Lotus 61 with a new mill from Cheshire Engine Components and support from Valvoline oils.

● Shenstone & District CC are co-promoting their first sprint of the season at Curborough with MAC. Date is March 23.

● Well known Mini man, and former F3 driver Richard Longman will be going into Mini Miglia this season as a tuner of the Wessex Kentred supported Mini of Mike and Alan Curnow. Longman will do the engine and gearbox, and Wessex Kentred, Salisbury's largest independent tyre and battery company, will be doing the bodysheel, suspension and wheels.

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