A Haymarket publication

MIKE HAILWOOD'S RETIREMENT STORY - SPA 24 HRS

AUTOSPORT

George Hill defends Castrol|Autosport lead

July 31, Vol 60 No 5

AUTOSPORT

BRITAIN'S MOTOR SPORTING WEEKLY

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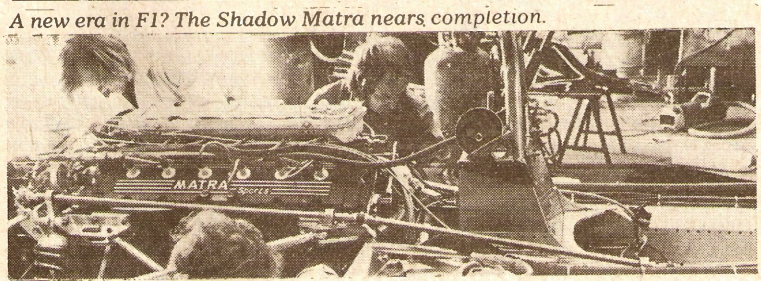

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EDITORIAL

Time to diet

As each week goes by the state of the 'bread and butter' formulae in racing becomes more and more perilous. By bread and butter we mean everything between Formula 1 and the club formulae. This is not a thing we like to say but surely we've been hiding the real truth for too long.

How much longer can Formula 5000, Formula 3, Formula Atlantic and the rest of them carry on as 'star' attractions? With so much money being poured into Formula One there just is not the money available to support all these different formulae anymore. Because there are so many of them, what money is left over divides itself up so that nobody really gets what they require. The time has come when there must be some weeding out among the classes of racing or a cut back in meetings. At the moment the public are being sold second rate shows more often than not. It just cannot be allowed to continue. Grids of 15 cars with less than half of them finishing, as is currently happening in a number of Formulae which are being promoted as top of the bill, just is not good enough.

Promoters in this country complain that when it comes to a bank holiday weekend there are not enough classes of racing to cover all the meetings, but for the rest of the time there are too many for everyone to get a fair crack at the whip. Has not the time come for bigger meetings less often and not increasing numbers of Formulae for more small meetings?

If we were to cut the number of championships rounds of Formulae like F5000, Atlantic and F3 to say, a maximum of ten rounds and link them in with various other championships for these classes in Europe, America and South Africa would they not be stronger? Competitors always want more prize money which, of course, is becoming more and more difficult to find. If the current amount of money can be retained but spread over fewer rounds, the competitors must regard this as an increase.

Similarly if the promoters cut down their meetings accordingly and worked together to put on 'minor' internationals with F5000, Atlantic, F3 and saloon cars on the bill they may have a saleable package. At the moment not one of these classes of racing can stand on its own and pull in the people. Let's face it, nobody wants to see three out of eight F5000 cars finishing on the same lap covered by over half a minute and the rest of the five finishers anything up to seven laps behind.

The competitors complain that they are spending upwards of £50,000 a car in F5000 yet they get meetings which are no more than just national 'clubbies'. But until there is either a reduction in the number of Formulae, which hopefully would bolster those that are left, or the 'star' formulae are packaged together into one circus show which performs, at most, ten times during the year, we can see no improvement.

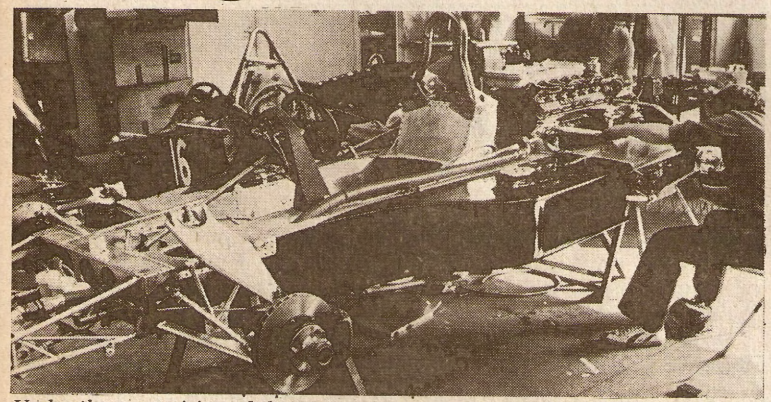
At one stage, not too long ago, there were cries that there was not enough top class racing in this country — it then came about, but surely now is the time for a diet. At one stage motor sport could afford to expand and the public could afford to support it. At the moment neither party can afford it. The reins must be pulled in and a much tighter programme evolved to give spectator, promoter and competitor a better deal.

our cover picture

George Hill's Vauxhall Magnum Coupe currently leads the Castrol/AUTOSPORT Rally championship but following last weekend's ETC Stages Rally this was narrowed by Tony Fowkes. Our report starts on page 40.

Photo: Hugh Bishop

The Shadow-Matra V12 begins testing at Silverstone



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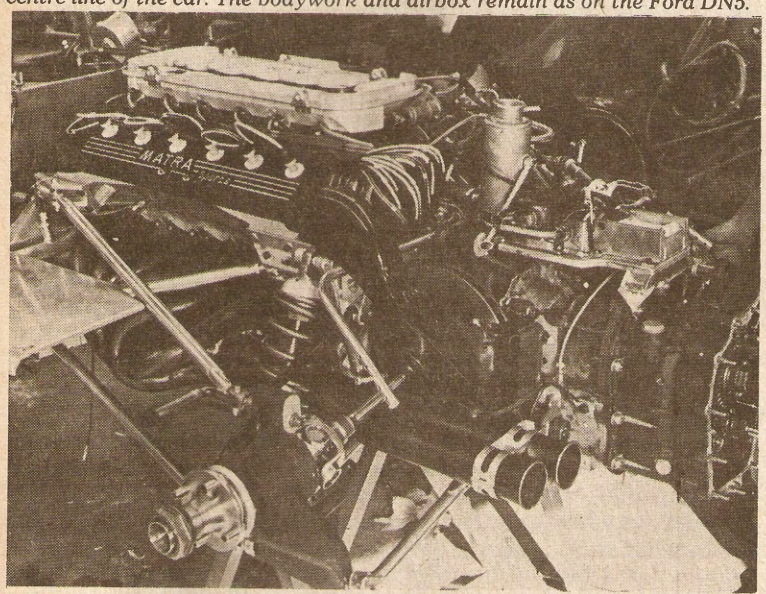

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Stanley BRM stay put

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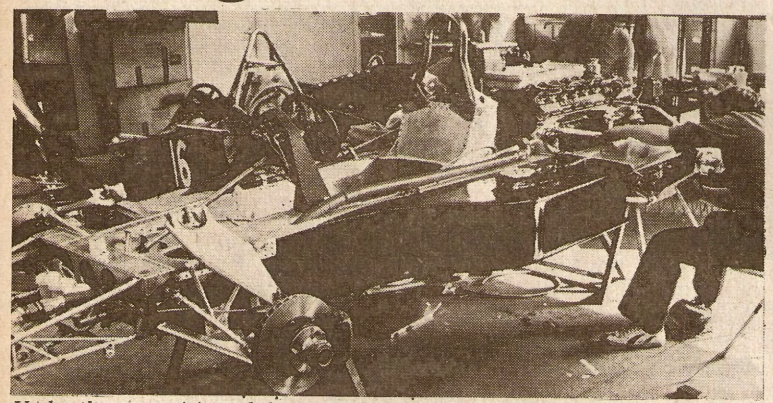

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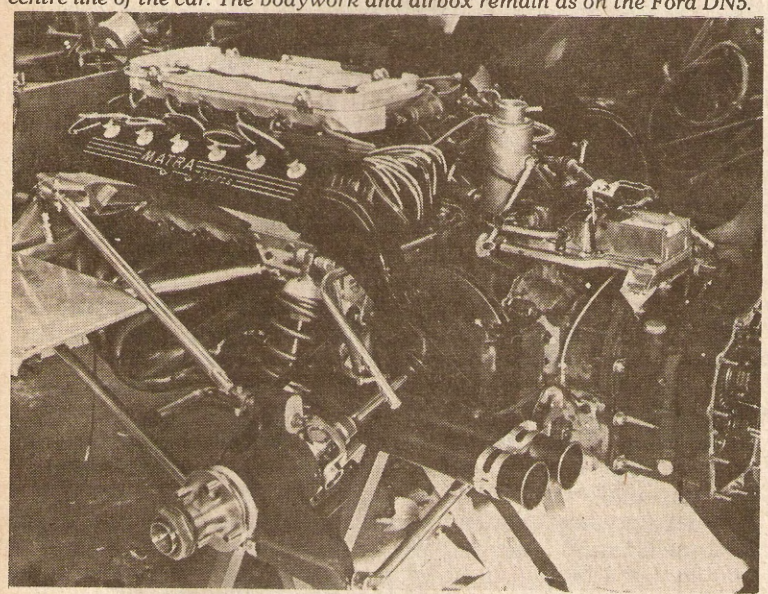

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So easy for Andretti

As Brian Redman struggled to finish, his Carl Haas/Jim Hall Lola T332 beset with gearbox problems, it was left to Mario Andretti and the Viceroy T332 to totally dominate this, the 4th round of the American F5000 series which took place at Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin, last Sunday. Andretti was the fastest qualifier, improving by almost 3n his time from last year! Redman was 0.25s slower ahead of the impressive Bernie Swanson (Lola T332) and Jackie Oliver's UOP Shadow DN6.

Andretti won his heat pretty easily with Eppie Wietzes pulling his modified Lola T400 through to second ahead of Warwick Brown's Talon and David Hobbs, who had spun the Carl Hogan Lola T332 to last on lap 2. Running second for much of the heat was Swanson but he slipped back to 5th with brake problems.

The second heat started with Oliver taking the lead but Redman eventually thrust past on lap 5. He then pulled away until a rear upright had the centre pull out on lap 11 and the T332 slithered to its first DNF in 37 starts through mechanical failure.

Thus Oliver cruised onward to win by 17s from Elliott Forbes-Robinson in Francisco Mir's Lola T332 while John Gunn's well driven Lola T332 just held off Jon Woodner's Talon which had spun early on due to a brake problem.

With Redman's car fixed, the series leader and reigning champion was well down the grid for the final but that was okay as far as Andretti was concerned. He pulled away from Oliver at around 1s per lap to win by 16.6s. Oliver was a lonely second ahead of Wietzes who was only briefly headed by Redman as he stormed up through the field. Brian then encountered tyre vibrations and lost 2nd gear. He then picked up a flat tyre and pitted to have it changed. The Lola rejoined without losing a lap but then Brian lost 4th gear as well. He did however take an ailing Brown before the end and only just failed to grab 7th spot from Graham McRae's Lola T332 at the flag.

Of the others, Swanson was well up to start with, Hobbs picked up a puncture and Woodner dropped a valve while Vern Schuppan didn't start the final in the works Eagle after an upright broke in the heat.

Fourth was Forbes-Robinson, also without 2nd gear, but well ahead of Al Unser who brought the second Viceroy car up through the field having broken a rocker in the heat.

Brise's catch fence theory

Predictably, our report in last week's issue about the incident concerning Tony Brise and his crash helmet (see elsewhere) caused a certain amount of comment but one issue which also came up, primarily because of the photograph we published, was the reaction of the wooden catch fencing stakes under impact. We have heard, albeit from unconfirmed reports, that the stake which flew into the crowd at Woodcote following Jean-Pierre Jarier's off-road excursion struck a woman spectator on the forehead. It's ironic that a chicane was installed to try and *reduce* the risk of injury to viewing spectators by slowing the cars down through Woodcote. However, one can argue that if a car had hit it at a higher speed, then the injuries to spectators could have been greater.

Because of the personal injuries he sustained in his accident, Tony Brise has given much thought to a different way of installing the fencing. In fact Tony admitted that the idea came from his father, but he intends to bring the matter up at the next GPDA meeting.

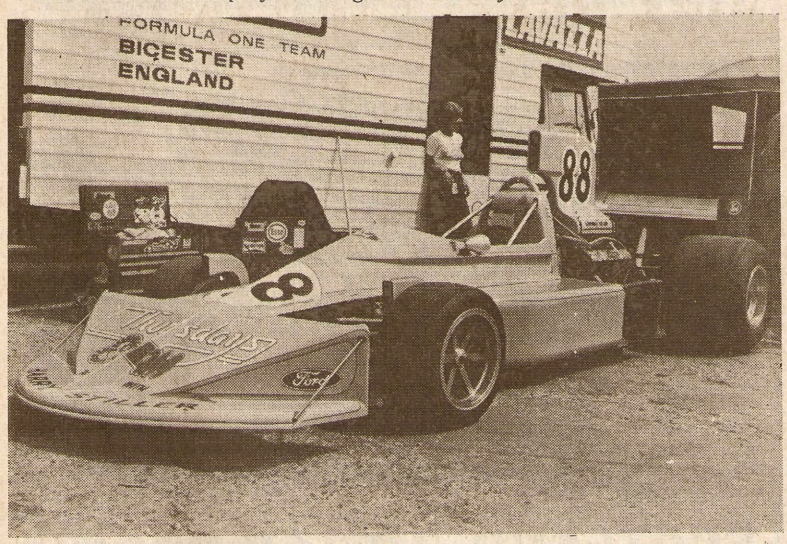
Basically Tony feels that the current fencing is too high. The errant car strikes it, the stakes are pulled from the ground, and the wire itself is liable to wrap itself over the car and the driver into a cocoon. If a car were to catch fire, there would be little chance for the trapped driver. Using wood for the stakes is always a potential danger as they gather weight while travelling through the air and, apart from splintering, can cause nasty injuries. Then, of course, there are the metal staples which must fly around. These, afterall are what hold the wire mesh on to the stake in the first place.

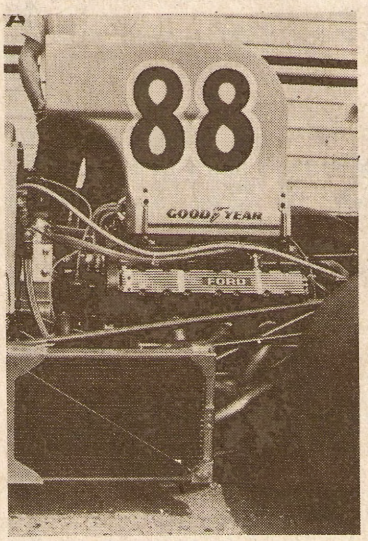
The Brise theory is to properly install the wire fencing into the ground. This is done by digging a low trench and laying a steel Bowden cable along the bottom between two blocks at either end. The fencing would then be attached to the cable by a corkscrew type pin which, so Brise's father tells us, was used to secure barbed wire fences during the last war. It's cheap and inexpensive.

Instead of wooden stakes or even plastic drain piping, which is used at certain circuits in Holland and France, fibreglass tubing would be far more suitable. This could be manufactured to any given thickness so that as a car struck it, the gelocoat would shatter, but still hold enough elasticity to remain as a locating point should another car hit it again. The overall height of the fencing needn't be higher than the wheels as this is, afterall, what the fencing is trying to arrest.

There were, of course, other small points in connection with the above suggestion, although these were merely measures to accommodate any problems that circuit owners might throw up in defence of their current, inadequate system.

The Ford V6-engined F5000 RAM/Thursdays March 751 made its debut at Snetterton last weekend driven by Alan Jones. The car also displays an allegiance to Harry Stiller.





This superb poster commemorating Mike Hailwood's fantastic achievements is available from Motormedia Publications, The Studio, Claremont Ave., Esher, Surrey.

Amon for US

Chris Amon is expected to fly across to the United States in the next few months to contest the final three rounds of the USAC/SCCA F5000 series. The car he will be using is one of Jack McCormack's works Talon MR1As, similar to the machine he's attempted to run this year in the European F500 series.

McCormack originally wanted to run Amon in the States all season, but became committed in running Tasman champion Warwick Brown. However, McCormack we hear is a little disillusioned by Brown's performances and would like the opportunity of running the eternally unlucky Amon at the Long Beach, Laguna Seca and Riverside races. The car will be backed by Norris Industries.

Brambilla tests F2 V6

Despite being involved in the incident which eliminated both the works F2 Elf Marches at Enna last weekend, works March F1 team leader Vittorio Brambilla was due back in Britain earlier this week, not to receive a lecture, but to test the new Renault V6-engined F2 car at Silverstone.

The engine, contrary to earlier stories, is only slightly heavier than the existing BMW unit (10)lbs approx). It's much wider but a lot shorter and thus a 5in adaptor plate between the engine and the gearbox is employed.

Broad watches

Ralph Broad was an interested, but totally uninvolved spectator at Spa at the weekend. But things might have been different for it was said that Broad had been approached by British Leyland to run a pair of cars at the circuit.

Broad was said to have come back to BL with a proposition to build the cars to Formula Francorchamps specifications in which form, he reckoned, they could have been race winners. Drivers were all fixed up, including name drivers, but Leyland were not able to meet the cost, especially as their Belgium counterparts only fixed up sponsorship at the last minute. Broad was unwilling to commit his G1 cars to the race, so the whole British and some Belgian responsibility rested with Bill Shaw.

F2 for Alex?

Alex Dias Ribeiro, the controversial works March F3 driver, is returning nome to Brazil after the Knockhill F3 race this weekend in an attempt to move into Formula 2.

The genial and diminutive Ribeiro, who is already sponsored by Rastro perfumes, Hollywood cigarettes and Mangels steel, hopes to drum up some additional support so that he can compete in the final F2 races this season. He will not give up F3, as he can still win the BP series, but obviously this move into F2 is the basis for his plans next year.

Mass or Pace in Germany?

Although neither of the Ferraris failed to finish in the points at the British Grand Prix, it wouldn't be surprising to see a total reversal of fate at this weekend's German Grand Prix held, as always, around the daunting, but incredibly satisfying Nurburgring.

The Ferraris of Clay Regazzoni and Niki Lauda dominated last year's event but it was significant that Lauda made that much publicised mistake behind the pits when he tangled with Jody Scheckter. From that point onward, Lauda began to lose his grip on the World title. It's ironic that he's in a similar position this year.

However, superstition aside, there can be no doubt that both the Italian machines will be howling around close to that magic sub-7 min mark.

Chasing hard will no doubt be Scheckter in the lead Elf Tyrrell, assisted by Patrick Depailler. Then of course the Texaco/Marlboro McLaren team must be in good spirits, especially following Emerson Fittipaldi's well calculated win at Silverstone while Jochen Mass, on home ground, just has to be excellent value, especially at the odds offered against him. Jochen has got to be more than just an outside bet.

Martini-Brabham will no doubt continue to mount up the championship points and both Carlos Pace, (who will have a replacement chassis to one destroyed at Silverstone) and Reutemann, run exceedingly well around this Eifel circuit.

John Player-Team Lotus will have a change in drivers (see *Pit and Paddock)* as John Watson joins Ronnie Peterson to drive a pair of type 72s, the Ulsterman being released from Team Surtees who aren't going. Also not going are Stanley-BRM. Ensign and the Copersucar teams are going, both running one car apiece for Gijs van Lennep and Wilson Fittipaldi while the Penske and Vel's Parnelli teams are also running their usual one car set up for Mark Donohue and Mario Andretti, the former having spent all of this week at the track trying to learn it in a road car. He's a complete stranger you see which, when you compare his odds to that of Mass, seems rather strange.

Hesketh will be at full strength, despite the Silverstone incidents, and James Hunt will have his regular 308s to choose from, plus his brand new C-type which has performed well in testing. Harald Ertl will drive the ex-Stiller 308.

The March team are three fold, as at Silverstone, with Hans Stuck, a local hero, partnering Vittorio Brambilla and Lella Lombardi. Frank Williams is back to two cars but there's a change with Ian Ashley partnering Jacques Laffite, UOP Shadow could well have their Matra-engined car for Jean-Pierre Jarier, otherwise it will be a pair of regular Ford-propelled DN5s for Jarier and Tom Pryce and finally, there are a pair of Embassy Hills for Tony Brise and Alan Jones.

The race will be held over 14 laps, or 319.69 kms. with official practice on Friday and Saturday. The race itself starts at 1.30 pm on Sunday and the results should be on the radio by around 3.30 pm. Otherwise we suggest you listen to Sunday Sport at 7 pm for a fuller report of what happened.

Thruxton test

There will be a general practice day at Thruxton on Friday, August 15, the first since the 12 days a year usage ban was imposed, over two years ago.

The track will be open to Formula 2, Formula 5000, Formula Atlantic and Formula 3 cars exclusively.

The four hour session, from 1 pm until 5 pm, will give F5000 and F3 drivers a chance to set their cars up prior to the BARC meeting at the circuit two days later.

The cost will be £15 per car, and the circuit owner stresses that no engines may be run immediately prior to the start or after 5 pm to comply with local planning laws.

● Missing after the John Player Grand Prix at Silverstone a fortnight ago were 73 JPS flags, 63 JP banners, 1½ miles of bunting, the JP Guests and Staff toilet signs(!), 30 flagpoles from behind the main grandstands, 6 Elf banners, plus 1 Duckhams, 10 RAC, 1 Midland Bank, 1 First National City Bank and 13 *Daily Express* hoardings.

● Ensign's new sponsor is rumoured to be Ricard, the *anis* drink.

● The German GP organisers have apparently refused to accept the Maki on the grounds that Hiroshi Fushida isn't experienced enough to race an F1 car at the 'Ring.' That's a moot point according to some observers.

Evel Knievel the sponsor

Evel Knievel, the man who needs no introduction, has moved into motor racing sponsorship. He has backed Francisco Mir's F5000 team to the tune of $250,000 and the contract will last for three years. The deal came about when Knievel took his Ferrari Boxer to Mir's Californian Ferrari dealership to be serviced. He saw the impressive racing set up and wanted to become involved.

Within several days, a deal was drawn up and Knievel brought along substantial support from Ideal Toys (who make models of him and his stunt motor bike), Harley-Davidson (quite naturally) and Chuckles Candy Bars (can't see the connection here though?).

The car was driven by Elliott Forbes-Robinson into 4th place at Elkhart Lake last weekend where Knievel was in attendance. Consequently the crowd around the Mir pit was rather more than large.

Forbes-Robinson will continue to drive the T332 in the remaining F5000 races although he is committed to drive his *Penthouse* Lola at the Trois Rivieres Atlantic race in Canada come the next F5000 round, so the Mir team are intending to organise "a top name driver" for this Road Atlanta event.

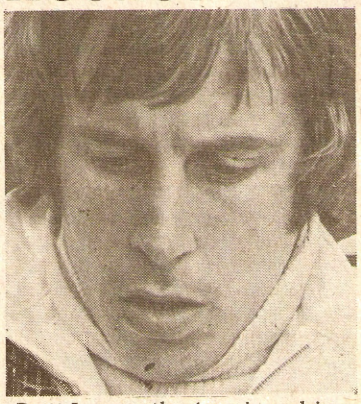
Chaparral F1 near?

Chapparal designer Jim Hall admitted at Elkhart Lake last weekend that he was really quite interested in Formula 1 racing and that's one reason why Hall spent most of his time closely scrutinising the Grand Prix cars at the recent John Player Grand Prix.

Was there a chance that Chapparal would construct an F1 car? "Well," said Hall, "you always want to participate with a first class programme in a first class series and it kinda seems like F5000 isn't really getting off the ground."

Hall's other aim at Silverstone was to see if any Grand Prix drivers were interested in racing a F5000 car at the Long Beach race. Nothing definite was fixed up by Jody Scheckter and Niki Lauda are two names the organisers have expressed interest in acquiring.

Lunger for Hesketh?



Brett Lunger, the American driver who's made his mark in racing over the past few years driving Formula 5000, is contemplating a move into Formula 1. Stories are gathering strength that Lunger has approached Hesketh/Ippokampos Racing to run in the second works Hesketh on a regular basis. Team manager Bubbles Horsley had "no comment" to make on Tuesday afternoon.

Camaro is dead?

Although there appears to be some confusion as to whether the saloon car regulations for the National Championship have been decided for next year (some think it will definitely be to European G2, while a Race Committee member said he thought they might stay the same) it appears that even the Camaro drivers are coming round to the idea of the big cars being banned. Richard Lloyd, along with Rob Potter, who prepares his Simoniz car, has been a staunch bit car supporter, told us on Sunday that he thought that the British Grand Prix supporting race had been the final nail in the coffin "and I think that most of the other Camaro users realise now that it does spoil the race as a spectacle."

Lyons on Hunt

Recently published is the first of a series of booklets giving in depth profiles of Formula One drivers. The first one is given over to James Hunt and is written by AUTOSPORT'S leading contributor Pete Lyons, described by Hunt in the introduction as "The best writer in the motor sport business."

Lyons has really excelled himself in this book, which provides a fascinating look into the development of James Hunt, the Grand Prix winner and public figure and of course the growth of Hesketh Racing around him. For the first time a writer has got "inside" James Hunt and found the character that has motivated him through hard times to reach the top. Well illustrated the book costs just 95p and is published by Augustus Books, 21 Conduit Street, London W1R 9TB.

BP F3 is close

Louisville, Kentucky, to many is renowned as the home of Muhammed Ali but there could well be a new name on the up in this vicinity of the United States if Danny Sullivan's recent performances in the BP Super Visco Formula 3 championship are anything to go by. Since the works Modus F3 team swtiched to a Novamotor-prepared Toyota engine, their young American driver has won two of the last three BP qualifiers in resounding style, the second of which was at Oulton Park last Saturday.

This latest win, his third this season, moves him right into the championship reckoning, expecially as series leader Gunnar Nilsson failed to start his works March and Patrick Neve was busy racing an Opel at Spa.

Leading BP Super Visco F3 championship positions after 11 rounds are: 1, Gunnar Nilsson (March-Toyota 753), 44 points; 2, Patrick Neve (Safir-Ford RJO3), 33; 3, Danny Sullivan (Modus-Toyota and Ford M1), 32; 4, Alex Ribeiro (March-Toyota 753), 18; 5, Ingo Hoffman (March-Toyota 753), 16; 6, Richard Hawkins (March-Toyota 743), 14 pts, etc.

BRIEFLY...

● The Hesketh Formula 1 team undertook some back to back tests with their new and older F1 cars at Goodwood during the middle of last week. The circuit seems to be running a little slower these days but the new 308C performed well and ended up quicker.

● Elf and Jacques Laffite are known to be joining forces in a very big way next year, big enough for Formula 1 and it's not with Frank Williams we hear.

● Ladbrokes odds for this weekend's forthcoming German Grand Prix are, Lauda, 5-2; Fittipaldi, 4-1; Regazzoni and Scheckter, 7-1; Hunt and Pace, 10-1; Pryce and Reutemann, 14-1; Andretti and Depailler, 20-1; Donohue amd Mass, 25-1; Brise, Brambilla and Jarier, 33-1 and 50-1 bar.

● The Kyalami 9 hours, for so long a traditional South African sports car race, will now become a 1,000 kms event for G2, G1 and SA spec touring cars sponsored by Wynns additives.

The third Avon Motor Tour of Britain

Starting on Friday is that most enjoyable of events, the Avon/*Motor* Tour of Britain. Once again, it winds its way around Britain, visiting special stages and racing circuits throughout the three days of its duration, with the cars racing against one another at tracks such as Cadwell Park, Silverstone, the night racing at Snetterton, Mallory Park, and Oulton Park, interspersed with special stages miles in some East Anglian forests, airfield circuits and of course, that infamous lump of Breconshire. There are special spectator stages this year, with commentary, as well as the secret ones.

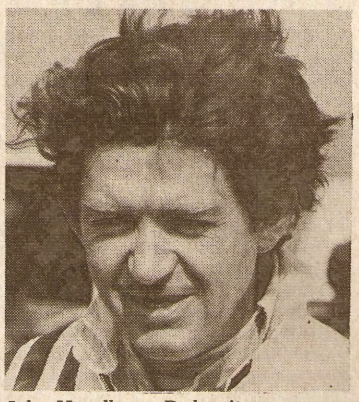
This year the entry lacks the participation of the Grand Prix drivers of the past two years but the entry is still filled with successful British racing and rally drivers who should have a good battle for overall honours and the seven different classes.

It's unlikely that the winner will come from the over 3000 cc class, where there are just three entries, but Tony Lanfranchi in his Hemicuda with Peter Bryant navigating over the narrow special stages will be hoping for good results in the races. Brian Pepper/Jim Marsden in the General Relays Camaro and Ian Bracey/Brian Chick in the Boss Mustang complete the big class.

More hope for overall victory comes in the 2501 cc to 3000 cc class where John Cooper's BMW Si and a Mercedes-Benz 280E challenge six Capris. From this class, Gordon Spice must be quite a favourite sharing the driving with Stan Robinson of Wisharts Garage, Crook, sporting Woolworth sponsorship. Spice came very near to winning the event two years ago. Against him, he'll have John Cooper/Martin Holmes in the BMW, (Cooper crashed last year at Castle Combe), Stuart Rolt/Edward Charlton (Capri) and Rod Birley in his 'do-anything' version among others.

The 2001 cc to 2500cc class has another really interesting scrap incorporating the likes of Gerry Marshall, Will Sparrow, Barrie Williams, Tim Stock, Wendy Markey and Barry Andrews. Marshall and Sparrow are both in Vauxhalls (SMT-Marshalls Chunky Chicken and Rylands) with Mike Broad and Rodney Spokes navigating for them respectively, the former of course, coming second last year in an RS2000. Williams teams up with Mini pilot Peter Jopp in an Arian Mazda RX3 as does Wendy Markey with Francis Cobb in their Peter Russek example. Tim Stock has another Vauxhall Magnum and sports car specialist, John Sheldon a Mazda. Journalist and broadcaster Richard Hudson-Evans navigates Barry Andrews in another Mazda.

The 1601 cc to 2000 cc class has a massive entry, with a lot of real favourites involved. Take John Handley, Brian Culcheth (Unipart), Tony Drummond and Bob Saunders, all in Dolomite Sprints, and mix in the likes of Tom Walkinshaw, Colin Vandervell (Team Avon Tyres), Alec Poole (Derek McMahon, navigating) Russell Brookes (Andrews Heat Hire), Tony Pond, Chris Wathen (Vospers of Plymouth), HRH Prince Michael of Kent, Rosemary Smith, Graham Hollis, David Da Costa, Rod Badham, Peter Hanson, and add a sprinkling of BMW 2002 Tiis, one for former Norwegian national rally champion Valter Jensen, and you have the guts of this ultra competitive class. It's anybody's guess as to who is going to come out on top, but the real favourites are Walkinshaw, Poole, Hanson and Handley in the racing world, while Culcheth, Drummond, Brookes and Pond will all be trying hard to despose them. Then of course there's Vandervell who has experience in both racing and rallying.



John Handley – Dolomite

Bernard Unett – Avenger

Tom Walkinshaw – RS2000

Barrie Williams – Mazda

Tony Lanfranchi – Hemicuda

Gerry Marshall – Vauxhall

The 1301 cc to 1600 cc class is dominated by Hillman Avenger GTs and in these cars, there should be quite a battle. Bernard Unett has Neil Wilson navigating in the first of three Avengers in the Halsfield team. But one of his main rivals should be that quick Irish rally man, Adrian Boyd, running in the same team and with Frank Main navigating as usual. There's a fair sprinkling of lady drivers and co-drivers, and the third Avenger in the Halesfield team is for that busiest of lady drivers, Jennifer Birrell, driving in her fourth event in three weeks, including the British GP G1 event, the Spa 24 hours and a G1 race Ingliston. She is taking Halesfield MD's daughter, Virginia Hall-Leeke on the tour with her.

But there's more to come from this class, for Andy Dawson is fielding the Triple C Avenger with his wife co-driving this Kleber sponsored car, and Derek Wileman has his Harrington Motors example. There's variety in the class from Maggie Anderson co-driven by fellow lady racer Susan Tucker-Peake in the Renault Elf Racing Renault 17TS, and well known Datsun man, Norman Dickson from Perth fields a Datsun 160J SSS. Finally Bill Sydenham is reputed to have found quite a lot of extra speed from his Lotus Cortina and he'll be out in that.

There's more talent in the 1001 cc to 1300 cc class, and we don't mean Tony Dron but his co-driver, who is a mouth watering *Penthouse* Pet called Madeleine and he'll be out to prove that he can do it in Strand Glass' Fiat 128 Coupe. Fellow journalist Gordon Bruce has hill-climber Peter Voigt crewing his Woolworths sponsored Escort Sport, and that "Together we chose a Honda" pair, Mr and Mrs Danny Alderton will be in the Civic that Francoise doesn't use for shopping.

There's quite a lot of variety in this class from cars and drivers, and among the rest are Tony Stubbs (Lada 1200), Catchpole man Barry Foley (Chevette), Jon Dooley and Leo Bertorelli (Alfasuds), autotester Phil Darbyshire (Mini 1275 GT), Formula Ford men Doug Wood and Wil Arif (Honda Civic) and others in Simca Rallye 1 and a Datsun Cherry.

The smallest class, up to 1000 cc, has four Renault 5 TLs up against a Sunbeam Imp driven by Richard Piper. Like fellow South East Londoner Tony Dron, who navvies occasionally for Piper's father, the Imp driver has come up with a dishy co-driver in the form of actress Leena Skoog. The Renault 5s are driven by Jeff Williamson, David Dickson, Keith Collier and Gethin Jones, the latter entered by Renault Elf Racing.

Avon Motor Tour of Britain — Timetable

Friday, Aug. 1	
08.00	First car leaves Great Barr Post House, subsequent cars at 1 min. intervals
09.35	First car arrives at Silverstone
10.15-12.20	Silverstone races (4 x 15 lap races)
12.05	Secret Special Stage in Northamptonshire
13.00	Spectator Special Stage, Stapleford Park near Melton Mowbray, Leics.
14.10	Secret Special Stage in Nottinghamshire
15.30	First car arrives at Cadwell Park
16.10-18.30	Cadwell Park races (4 x 8 lap races)
20.25	Secret Special Stage in Norfolk
21.45	First car arrives at Snetterton for night racing
22.30-02.00	Snetterton night races (4 x 20 lap races)
Saturday, Aug. 2	
03.30	Secret Special Stage in Northamptonshire
05.45	Secret Special Stage in Staffordshire
06.20	First car arrives for Breakfast Halt at Great Barr Post House
08.00	Re-start from Birmingham
08.35	Spectator Special Stage at Weston Park, near Telford, Salop.
09.40	Special Stage near Bridgnorth, Salop.
09.45	Special Stage, Salop.
10.55	Special Stage Loton Park hillclimb
12.35	Cars arrive at Oulton Park
14.00-17.00	Oulton Park races (4 x 20 lap races)
17.15	First car arrives at Birmingham for overnight halt
Sunday, Aug. 3	
07.30	Re-start from Great Barr Post House
10.30	Special Stage Breconshire (1)
10.35	Special Stage Breconshire (2)
11.30	Spectator Special Stage, Builth Wells Showground
14.45	First car arrives at Mallory Park, Avon Tyres day
15.30-17.35	Mallory Park races (5 x 20 lap races)
17.45	Finish at Great Barr Post House

All your weekend sport

Once again, the start is at the Great Barr, Birmingham Post House just off the M6 at the M5 end on Friday at 8 am whence the cars travel straight to Silverstone for four fifteen lap races on the Northamptonshire circuit. After a "secret" special stage, there's one for spectators at Stapleford Park, Melton Mowbray at 1 pm. From there, the cars wind their way, with more secret stages, to Cadwell Park where the first race is at 4.10 pm. After more special stages, there's the traditional night races at Snetterton where the cars this year will be doing 20 lap races rather than the previous 30 minute sessions. After more secret stages in Northamptonshire and Staffordshire, the cars should start arriving at the Great Barr Post House for the breakfast halt at 6.20 am on the Saturday morning.

At 8.35, the Tour cars should start the spectator special stage at Weston Park near Telford in Shropshire, and from there, the cars do two more stages in the county before heading for the Loton Park hillclimb for another stage at 10.55 am. Once again, the cars will use the hillclimb course plus some loose and this Hagley and District organised hill course should be over 2 miles in length.

From there, the cars go up to Oulton Park where there are four 20 lap races starting at 2 pm and after these races, the cars go back to Birmingham for the much deserved night rest.

It all starts again when the cars leave Birmingham for the final day at 7.30 am and head straight into Wales for two stages in Breconshire. From there, there's lots of entertainment laid on at the Builth Wells showground for spectators. This starts at 11.30 am and hopefully, there'll still be quite a full entry when they arrive.

Then the circus winds back past Birmingham to Mallory Park for another series of five 20 lap races incorporated in the Avon Tyres Day event at the Leicester circuit and then the survivors drive back to the Great Barr Post House again where they'll no doubt celebrate in the normal way on this friendly event.

● Throughout the three days, well known British commentator, Norman Greenway will be following the event commentating at the races and the occasional stage as only he knows how. In this way, he'll be able to keep all spectators well informed as to their antics so far, and keep spectators up to date.

A great attraction at Great Barr will be the Playboy bunnies who'll be seeing off Stuart Rolt and Edward Charlton in their Brutus Jeans sponsored Ford Capri.

SILVERSTONE

The only major race meeting in Britain this weekend is the Brush Fusegear Trophy meeting at Silverstone on Sunday featuring, naturally, the eighth round of the Brush Fusegear Formula Ford Championship. Over 70 entries have been accepted for the two heats which will determine the runners in the final. Geoff Lees currently leads the series with 43 points with Matthew Argenti and Jim Walsh second and third on 35 and 27 respectively. These three will undoubtedly be the leading runners in what promises to be a thrilling series of races.

Also on the bill is a round of the Southern Organs Formula Atlantic Championship. Grand Prix meeting winner Ted Wentz will be looking for further success in his Wella Lola, although Richard Morgan, Alo Lawler and Ray Mallock should provide some stiff opposition.

Lap records can be expected in both these classes if the conditions are right while Geoff Friswell is more than likely to break the Clubmen's time in the Tricentrol championship qualifier. Opposition comes from Frank Sytner, Peter Cooke and John and Vernon Davies.

The Esso Uniflo Special Saloon race completes the seven race programme and it should see the debut of Tony Hazlewood's exciting new 7-litre Jaguar XJ8. Other entries include Ian Richardson's Corvair, David Howes' AMC Javelin, Tony Strawson's Capri and Colin Hawker's VW.

Racing starts at 3 pm.

KNOCKHILL

Once again Knockhill gets a black mark for not providing any information about their major race meetings, but it is safe to assume that their televised BP Super Visco Static F3 championship race will attract all the leading runners. Following two runaway wins out of the last three races the American Danny Sullivan is tipped as the man most likely to make serious inroads into the works March domination on the championship races. Sullivan, of course, drives the works Modus and following the recent acquisition of a Toyota engine is showing all those skills that marked him as a man to be watched a couple of years ago. He's yet to beat Gunnar Nilsson and Alex Ribeiro in a straight fight — this could be it. For those who can't get to Knockhill watch BBC TV Grandstand on Saturday, if there's a jockey strike (let's hope there is), the race will be shown nationwide in between England's cricket team receiving the last rites.

As well as these three drivers Belgian Patrick Neve will be there to try to improve his strong position while leading privateers like Richard Hawkins, Herve Regout, Pierre Dieudonne, Ingo Hoffman, Rupert Keegan and Bob Arnott will also be there.

The meeting will have a full supporting cast of races for saloons and *libre* cars this part of the meeting taking place on Sunday.

MALLORY PARK

The Tour of Britain cars visit Mallory Park on Sunday afternoon, arriving at around 3 pm and beforehand the BRSCC Midland Centre are running a five race meeting for Modsports, Formula Fords and *Libre* cars, which should be over in time for the arrival of the Tour cars, which will then take part in five races.

The race meeting starts at 11.45 am.

CROFT

The Nottingham Sports CC are in charge at Croft on Sunday for a six race programme. Rounds of the Northern Clubmen's Champagne, Monoposto, F750, Alan Pond Special Saloon and Northern Sports/Players No 6 Modsports Championships are the main attractions while a non-championship FF event completes the bill. All the usual championship contenders are entered and a good day's racing is probable.

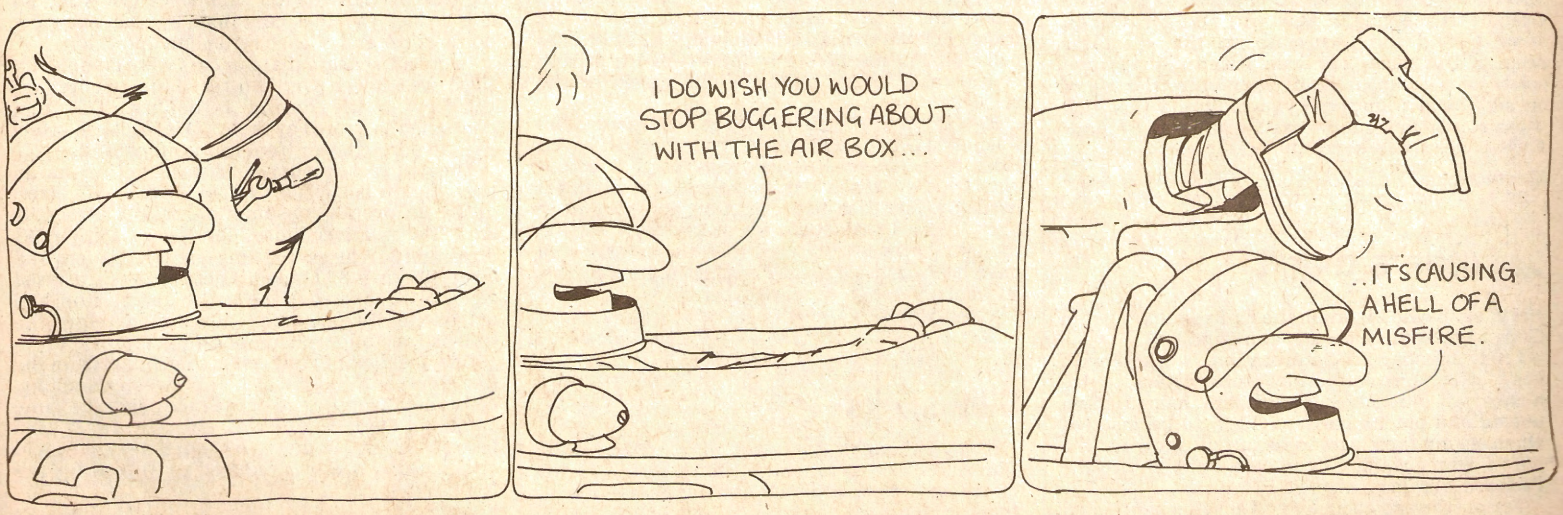
Racing starts at 2.40 pm.

LYDDEN

There are nine races on the TEAC programme at Lydden on Sunday with Mini Sevens, Formula Fords, Special Saloons, Clubmen's and F1300s providing a varied programme. Among the leading entries are John Corbishley, Paul Sleeman, Terry Harmer, John Pope, John Homewood, Terry Attoe, John Heitman and Bob Deverell.

CATCHPOLE

By Barry Foley



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Thanks

As you know, I was one of the unlucky ones in the Grand Prix crash on July 19, but now that I am back home again after a spell in hospital, I feel I must lose no time in writing my sincere thanks to everybody concerned for the great kindness shown me after the accident.

Without exception everybody there, track officials, doctors, nurses and staff at the hospital, and dozens of other people mostly complete strangers to me, could not have been kinder not only to me, but also to my wife, and although it will be some time yet before I am properly out and about again, I must express my deep gratitude to them all for their generous help. Nothing was too much trouble for them, and I shall never forget their humanity.

HORNCHURCH, ESSEX — HOWARD TILDEN
(Course Marshal)

More thanks

The South Midland Region of the BMRMC would like to thank all those Formula I drivers and Team Managers who turned up at Silverstone on July 15 1975 to make our Formula I Forum so enjoyable for the GP Marshals and members of Silverstone Club.

The response to our invitation was very pleasing indeed. From the drivers we had Vittorio Brambilla, Tony Brise, Mark Donohue, James Hunt, John Watson and Mike Wilds and from the "Management Benches," we had Lord Hesketh (BMRMC President), Phil Kerr, Max Moseley and Denis Hulme (GPDA President).

We are very grateful indeed for the time taken by these people to attend. We know that at least one of the drivers turned down another very lucrative engagement elsewhere to come to our marshals' evening.

Jody Scheckter was very sorry not to be able to attend but he returned from Canada only that evening and Jackie Stewart was in mid-flight at the time!

On a personal basis we would like to thank our own Ray Darvill who did so much to organise the evening for us; Keith Douglas (BMRMC Vice President) who chaired the meeting for us and last but not least our thanks go to Jimmy Brown and George Smith of Silverstone Circuits Ltd who provided us with accommodation and all facilities.

GEORGE COPELAND
(Chairman, British Motor Racing Marshals Club. South Midland Region)

COLLINGTREE, NORTHANTS

We tried . . .

While I have every sympathy with the complaint of your correspondent Mr M. Howard (24 July), the Martini Brabham Team did make an effort to overcome one of the shortcomings of the new Silverstone pit complex. On all three days of the Grand Prix meeting, a Martini Brabham was on show behind the pits close to the spectator railings. This racing car was taken to Silverstone solely for this purpose and necessitated the use of an additional transporter. I would add that this was a completely unprompted gesture by Bernard Ecclestone, the owner of the team.

MARTINI RACING, LONDON SW1 — DAVID YORKE

. . . others didn't

Never again will I work in the F1 Paddock. The tin Gods who visit us annually can go to hell.

From Tuesday to Saturday we worked with very little sleep directing transporters, auto-homes, etc into their places and helped them unload and put up barriers. Then to be insulted when asking for T cars to be put on show for the public, who once more had been conned into the Paddock, was just to much.

For me the end came when I asked a gentleman in the Embassy Paddock for his F1 pass and was told to "F.O." as he was a friend of the team. I then told him what we had been doing since Tuesday and as marshals we received no money and that we do this for the love of the sport (!) In front of Graham Hill and most of his team, who remained silent this so called gentleman replied what a stupid bunch of . . . we must be.

Thank you gentlemen, I shall go back to flag marshaling at Brands. Perhaps next year you would do better to employ Securicor.

K. B. STANFORD
HAMPTON HILL, MIDDX. — *(F1 Paddock Marshal)*

Good TV

Being unable, through slight illness, to make the trip to Silverstone, I was forced to watch the John Player Grand Prix on television.

I couldn't have been more pleasantly surprised! Right from the start of Jackie Stewart's preview to the last live broadcast when we learned of the place results I thought the entire presentation was first-class.

It is some while since I saw television coverage of an important British race as I've usually been at the meeting concerned, but I have distant memories of Raymond Baxter following the leader round endless laps, oblivious to the real action going on behind, and John Bolster in the pits extracting expletives from drivers of broken-down cars.

It's all changed. The camera positions are both more plentiful and better arranged, the commentating team of Murray Walker, Jackie Stewart and Barrie Gill knew what they were about and complimented each other (rather than trying to out-do each other as circuit commentators are prone to do) and the BBC were generous in their time allowance.

Much of the credit must go to producer Richard Tilling who I know has done a lot of behind-the-scenes work to get motor racing on the box. Tilling has the job of co-ordinating everything and he did it superbly. It seemed difficult to believe it was a live broadcast – it seemed more like a carefully-edited film!

The edited highlights shown later in the evening allowed us to see some of the race we had missed earlier and this, combined with the live broadcasts earlier, convinced me that by staying at home I had seen more action than anyone actually at the circuit.

BOSTON, LINCS — MIKE KETTLEWELL

Brise's helmet

Much publicity has been given to the fact that Tony Brise had his helmet pulled off his head in his accident at the British Grand Prix.

An original design feature of the Griffin Grand Prix and Clubman helmet is the frangible bolt used to hold on the chin strap. It is designed to shear at a loading of about 400 lbs (as against the 200 lb shear strength demanded by BS 2495).

I have now had an opportunity to inspect Tony Brise's helmet which is currently at BSI for a full report and I have ascertained that it was the frangible bolts that failed, allowing the helmet to come off but not before it had saved Brise from considerable injury in the initial stages of the accident.

Ray Brimble (Team Manager – Graham Hill Racing) is convinced that the frangible bolt saved Brise from the severe neck injuries that would have been sustained had the helmet stayed on his head. The fact that he is even now suffering from neck injuries that could be worse than at first thought, bears out the view that his life may well have been saved by the designed failure of this particular part.

STAINES, MIDDX — D. W. SPICE
(Gordon Spice Ltd)

Silly slicks

I always thought they were crazy, and Club Corner on GP day proved it. Slick tyres are the most impractical, artificial and dangerous invention the racing car has known. How on earth they were ever allowed defeats me almost as much as how they are *still* allowed. How many drivers can say they have never gone off the road because of the totally uncontrollable effect of unexpected water on their flat rollers? That feeling of utter helplessness and awful inevitability – you could almost see it on James's face as he was slithered towards his crunch.

What is needed now is a rule banning slick tyres from 1977 (next year would be too soon to be fair on club drivers). The argument which says you can't do that because the cars won't go fast is irrelevant. The disadvantage would be the same for all and it's winning that counts, not just speed. The stipulation should be that all tyres must have grooves of certain dimensions, and as in Formula Ford may not be run with less than a certain depth of tread. Actual measurements would, obviously, have to be worked out between the FIA, constructors and tyre makers.

Motor racing is supposed to be for *cars*. Agreed, modern single-seaters don't look much like the average road car, but to the mind of the average spectator they should be capable of being driven during a spot of rain. The British GP showed that they can't. They have to try to make it back to the pits for different tyres, and some don't.

For God's sake let's ban the things before someone else gets killed.

LONDON SW1 — MARK LITCHFIELD

Renault complaint

It is with sheer frustration that I write this letter of complaint.

As a former Renault 5 competitor and now a sponsor, I am sick of reading your so called reports on the Renault 5 racing. These are not a mirror of events as they are supposed to be, but a biased opinion and an obvious dislike of this formula.

As I said previously, I am a sponsor and, as such, constantly requested to advertise in your magazine, which I do. Is this your reward to your advertisers to utterly decry the products they sell? I do not see this as a fair deal and am thoroughly sick of Mr Titchmarsh's personal opinion; lets have some reporting.

Perhaps your Mr Titchmarsh would like to put his opinions where his mouth is and compete in one of these 5 Challenge races and let's see how good he is.

K. HARDING
HARDINGS AUTOS, BIRKENHEAD, MERSIDE

Le Mans facts

While appreciating the interest you have shown in the fuel consumption of the various competing cars at Le Mans this year, in your issue of July 10th, I regret that the figures issued by the organising club, the ACO, are incorrect, at least in the case of the two Gulf cars, since the ACO did not deduct the fuel contained in the overflow bottle at the end of each refuelling operation.

In order to ensure that our cars were completely filled, we allowed over 12 litres of fuel to enter the overflow bottle during refuelling. The fuel consumed as quoted by the ACO includes that fuel used to purge the air from the car fuel tanks.

The nett fuel consumed, after deducting that in the overflow bottle, for Car No 11 was 1,577 litres, giving an overall consumption of 34.8 litres/100 kms. The relative figures for No 10 were 1,561 litres, and 35.8 litres/100 kms (for UK readers 34.8 litres/100 km is 8.11 mpg!). These figures are based on distance covered to the last refuelling stop, and not overall race distance, and are therefore the true and accurate consumption figures.

One final point of interest is that, apart from the first stop, car No 11 ran 21 laps between refuelling, consumption at the end of the race being the same as at the start. No 10 was able to run 22 laps between stops, but due to a slight deterioration in consumption this was reduced to 21 laps for the last 8 hours.

SLOUGH, BUCKS. — J. H. HORSMAN
(Managing Director, Gulf Racing Research)

TERRY OGILVIE-HARDY

Terry Ogilvie-Hardy has been a well known personality on the racing scene for many years, first as a driver and then as constructor of his own racing cars under the name of Project X. More recently he has been very much involved in driver safety through his Griffin Helmet concern. His company has been involved in a great deal of pioneering work in the crash helmet business and last year, in conjunction with Graviner, the Fire Extinguisher company, Griffin Helmets won a special award for their work in furthering the cause of motor racing safety.

Following the rather sensational news that Tony Brise's Griffin helmet came off in his accident at Silverstone in the British Grand Prix, we asked Mr Ogilvie-Hardy to explain the position regarding the specification that helmets, Griffin in particular, are manufactured to.

The neck does not appear to react to impact in the same manner as other body regions in that some low speed impacts produce injury as severe or more severe than high speed impacts. The human neck contains vital nerve, vascular, and respiratory structures which are particularly unprotected (Snyder-70).

In order to protect this vulnerable part of the body in an accident a particular design feature of the Griffin Grand Prix helmet, as stated in all our literature, is the frangible rivet for attaching the helmet straps. The shear strength of this fixing is well in excess of the requirements deemed to be necessary by any helmet standards authority in the world. I would like to quote from a report of tests carried out by the British Standards Institute (BSI) and endorsed by the Road Research Laboratories:

"The BSI test rig was set up to test the strap attachment to 300 lbs pull. This is 50% in excess of the specification test requirement (ie 200 lbs) which all Griffin helmets consistently pass. However, to find out the shear strength of this component BSI took at random an FF2 Griffin Grand Prix helmet and subjected it to a stress factor of 325 lbs (the maximum the test equipment could achieve). The strap nor its components or the hanger or shear pins failed at this load. The same helmet was then tested without being removed from the rig to a further 325 lbs pull. Again neither the strap or its fixing failed. The same test was carried out again to the same helmet and again the components did not fail."

A meeting with BSI on June 19 this year advocated the continued use of this frangible fixing arrangement.

The Tony Brise helmet has been inspected by BSI and there is ample evidence to show that it was subjected to several massive blows and that the helmet stayed in place and saved him from injury until the loads had become so high as to be excessive and beyond human tolerance levels.

Tony Brise has a stiff neck injury. Can anyone be categoric that his neck injury would not have been much worse, or even fatal had not the helmet design allowed the strap hanger to shear?

In Section 5 paragraph 6 of BS 2495 it states:

"The helmet is so constructed that the energy of a severe blow is absorbed in the partial destruction of the shell and/or protective padding material."

All standards carry a statement to this effect and most helmets also.

It is frequently commented upon when a helmet splits, yet it is expected in the design criteria that this is precisely what should happen. The helmet becomes a deformable structure, The science of helmet design is to produce a light-weight, ergonomically protective shell around the head of a human being which can undergo violent change in milliseconds from massive impact without transmitting the forces involved to the wearer. Ideally a helmet that is going to be involved in an accident at 30 mph should be six feet in diameter!

BS 2495 calls for the highest single impact of any standard in the world (ie 150 ft/lbs). Each test helmet being subjected to two blows and neither of the maximum values transmitted shall exceed a force of 5000 lbs.

Prior to the shock absorbsion test three helmets from each batch of six (which are taken at random from the Manufacturer's premises from production runs which are held in bond until the results of the tests are known) are conditioned as follows:

17. (i) One helmet shall be placed in an oven, as described in Appendix G, the temperature of which is thermostatically controlled between 115°F and 125°F for a continuous period of at least two hours but not exceeding two hours 20 minutes.

The helmets shall then be subjected, with an exposure delay of not more than 90 seconds, to the test specified in Clause 18 followed by the tests specified in Clauses 19 and 20 within 10 minutes.

(ii) The second helmet shall be placed in a refrigerator, as described in Appendix G, the temperature of which is thermostatically controlled between 27°F and 37°F for a continuous period of at least two hours but not exceeding two hours 20 minutes.

The helmet shall then be subjected, with an exposure delay of not more than 180 seconds, to the test specified in Clause 18, followed by the tests specified in Clauses 19 and 20 within 10 minutes.

(iii) The third helmet shall be placed crown uppermost under a nozzle spraying water at room temperature to flow over the whole of the outer surface of the helmet for a period of seven hours within a minimum flow rate of 15 gallons (68 litres) per hour.

The helmet shall then be subjected to the test specified in Clause 18 followed by the tests specified in Clauses 19 and 20 whilst in its wetted condition, ie impacted with a striker weighing 10 lbs falling freely from a height of 15 feet.

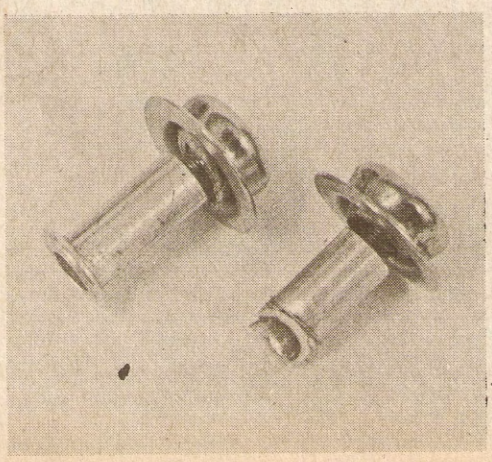
One helmet is also tested at ambient temperature as well as a helmet being subjected to a penetration test and the test to test the strap fixing and a test for rigidity of shell.

Every respect of the helmet specification, including materials and their suitability, is clearly defined along with precise specifications for the test equipment and test procedures. A high speed photographic record from the oscillagraph results must be kept.

Before a batch of helmets can leave the premises with BSI approval these tests must have been carried out. If a failure in any test occurs to any helmet the *production batch* from which the test samples were taken at random is failed. This ensures that the continuous testing which are mandatory controls completely the quality of a BSI approved product. Unless the laboratory tests prove that your production meets the requisite standard in every respect the products cannot leave the premises of the manufacturer.

A minimum of eight unannounced visits per year are made by a BSI Inspector, who has complete access to all of your production facility and records, to check that your methods of manufacture meet the standard requirements. This ensures rigid quality assurance control.

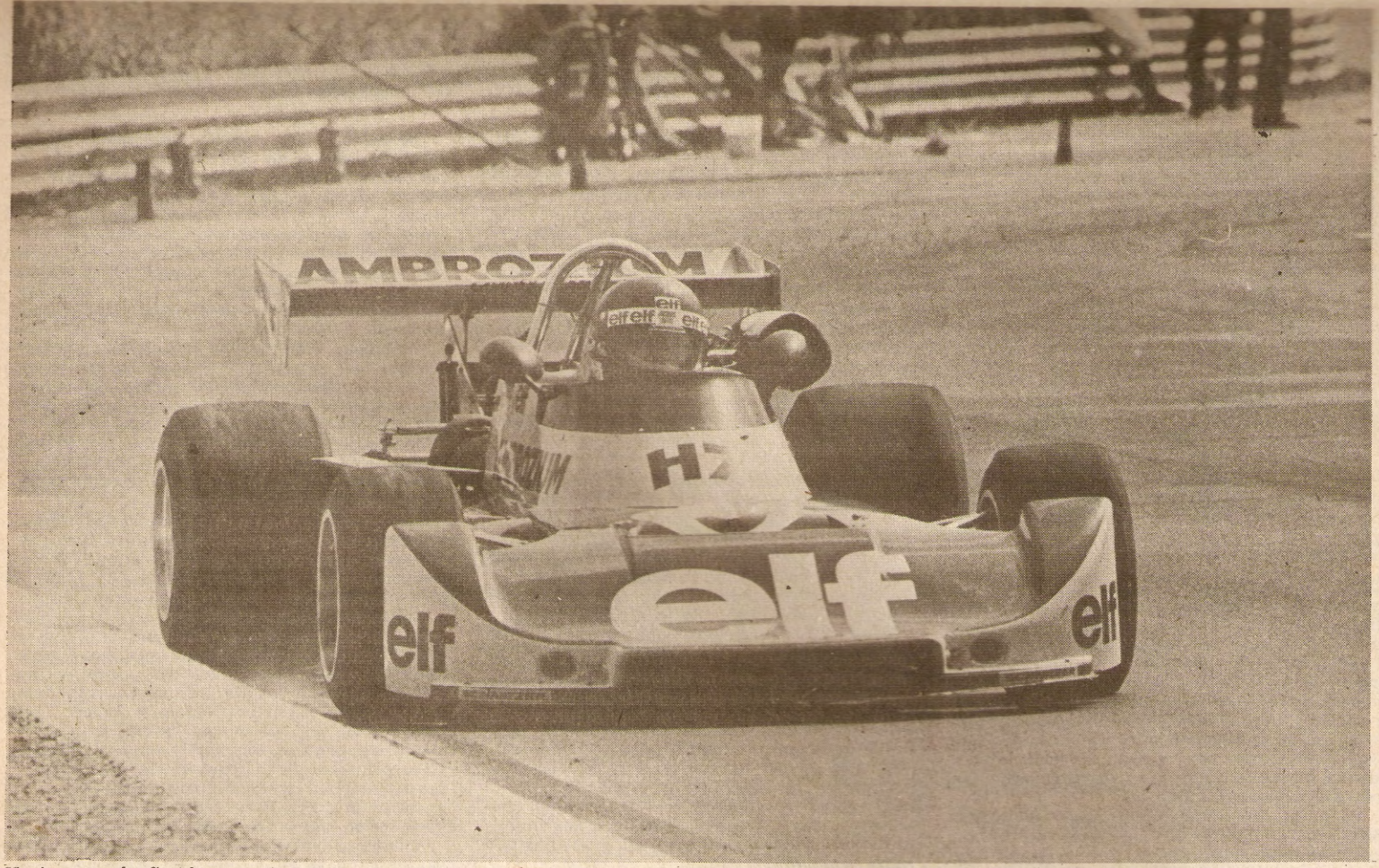
Above is Tony Brise's Griffin helmet which came off at Silverstone when one of the frangible bolts (below) broke and let the strap come off.



When a F1 car goes out of control at 150 mph the potential energy which must be dissipated totals 1,713,373 joules. The equivalent of dropping the car from a height of 720 feet. When contact is made with other objects the speed which is the product of energy is converted into forces producing an extremely hostile environment.

Despite very sophisticated features being incorporated into our safety helmets which take advantage of the latest developments that can be technically and ergonomically achieved, there is a limit to the protection offered. Emotional remarks from the unqualified, who have no special or scientific knowledge of this very involved subject and who are ignorant of the latest developments, achieve nothing.

To concentrate solely on the performance of the personal safety equipment of the driver is to view the accident from the wrong end. More work needs to be done in the area of primary safety, but that's another subject.



Having won the first heat easily, it was a case of "fingers crossed" for Jacques Laffite in the second that the Martini just held on to win yet another F2 race.

ENNA

Laffite just holds on

Story and photos by JEFF HUTCHINSON

Jacques Laffite scored an "only just" victory over Gerard Larrousse at the revised Autodromo de Pergusa circuit when, after winning the first of the two 30 lap heats by a comfortable margin, he was able to nurse a sick engine in the second part of to third place, to take overall victory cby a scant five seconds from second part winner Larrousse.

Larrousse's fine drive in the old Elf and Laffite's gently-gently race in the second heat provided an exciting climax to a race which was almost deadly dull.

Five of the top runners including the two front row works Marches of Patrick Tambay and Michel Leclere were effectively eliminated in a stupid first lap first corner shunt triggered off by Vittorio Brambilla in his Project 3 entered March. Tambay, Brambilla, and Maurizio Flammini were out on the spot, while Leclere and the new Elf 2 of Jean-Pierre Jabouille were effectively eliminated as a result of the multi-car tangle.

Laffite's victory would probably have not been possible had he been pressured all the way by these other cars, for his Schnitzer engine was smoking badly and had used a lot of oil after the first part, and under pressure would probably have not lasted the second part.

The usual slippery surface problems at this track provided more than enough action for the Sicilian crowd, most of the competitors spinning at one stage or another. Third overall was Gabriele Serblin's March despite several spins, while Francia finished a fine fourth overall having taken second place in the first part. His main trouble was a painful wrist, still not fully recovered from his Rouen shunt.

Francia's team-mate Duilio Truffo put the second Osella in the points with fifth place while sixth overall was the March of Alessandro Pesenti-Rossi. There were 15 classified finishers out of the 25 starters.

ENTRY and PRACTICE

From Mugello the F2 circus stayed in Italy, although their drive from Florence to Sicily took them another 1000 kilometres South, from green hills to the stark, savage, burnt brown rocky slopes where life is spelt existence.

Animals, crops and even their farmers have to struggle to survive, making the best of their land eroded by wind and sun, but rarely rain. The last few miles from the cool inviting blue sea, which has to be crossed from the tip of Italy to Sicily, to the centre of Sicily and the Lake Pergusa circuit are like driving into an oven. The temperature soars and the cool wind is shielded by the ranges of volcanic mountains. Last May, for the 1000 kilometre sports car race, the temperature was just about bearable, but in mid-July it's impossible, the scorching sun having dried the lake, which almost completely fills the circuit infield, to three-quarters of its normal size. The drying algae around its edge also makes it stink.

The lake was not the only thing to have changed since May, so had the circuit itself. Instead of the oval shape with a chicane on each straight, there was now a nice new loop extending out into the what used to be the car park just after the start-line and the main entrance. A few hundred yards after the start the field have to funnel in to a second gear S-bend then on to a fast dog-leg right hander which tightens up to another S-bend where it re-joins the old circuit after by-passing about half of the original top loop.

It was a well-built extension which proved to be popular with both the drivers and spectators alike.

The long drive and the nature of the circuit itself does not normally attract a strong entry for this race, while the demolition derby of Mugello two weeks earlier was expected to reduce the entry even further. But such is the professionalism and commitment to sponsors of the top teams these days that only a few of the regular runners failed to show up. A few were in unfamiliar cars, but the organisers were in the rare position of having too many cars for the number of places on the grid. Of the 29 arrivals only the fastest 25 would get to race.

The first day's practice provided its usual list of complaints from the drivers and hand waving from the organisers as practice was started then stopped and then re-started and stopped again and finally run for a final hour later on in the evening. The track was too slippery with a generous coating of dust and the chicanes were breaking up said the drivers, both of which were perfectly true and are normal occurences at this track. Everybody sits around a while, realises that things are not going to change and then gets on with the job.

Slowly the cars cleared the dust, while the cooler weather helped alleviate the track problems at the chicanes. Times started to creep down until by the end of the first day it was Patrick Tambay's works March which had set the fastest lap of 1m 38.22s, only 0.18s faster than Vittorio Brambilla in his similar Project 3 Racing March-BMW 752.

Also sharing times under 1m 39.0s were Jean-Pierre Jabouille and Gerard Larrousse in their Schnitzer powered Elf 2s, Laffite in his familiar Schnitzer powered Martini and Leclere in the second works March. Since Mugello, both Leclere and Jabouille had a change of car, Leclere getting the March "T" prototype chassis after his own was bent in Mugello while Jabouille got a brand new Elf for which Larrousse has been waiting all season. Jabouille's 75 car was bent at Mugello, so with no time to repair it before this race he took over the Larrousse chassis which, conveniently, was just about finished for this race. This left poor Gerard with the old 74 chassis, although he seemed just as content. The new car was virtually the same as the first 74 Elf but for a stronger rear cross-member and a couple of extra strengthening tubes in the spaceframe chassis. "All the suspension is exactly the same," said Jabouille.

After another one hour session during the heat of the day on Saturday it was obviously going to be the final late evening session when the track was at its cleanest, the temperature its coolest and drivers could run the softer G50 compound tyres, that the quick times would be set.

A strong wind had sprung up the second day, so the first session was also taken up re-arranging gear ratios to compensate. As the sun sank low in the sky the battle for the all important good grid position at this track was on.

Again it was Tambay who set the pace and by the time the chequered flag was hung out it was still Tambay fastest of all. "Everything is perfect, I only hope it stays that way for the race," said the

wide smiling Frenchman when it was all over. Few of the others could say the same however. Tambay's team-mate made it an Elf-March front row when Leclere, aided by a fresh engine fitted overnight, was only .11s of a second slower than Tambay's pole-winning time of 1m 35.66s. Leclere was one of the many drivers to visit the rough dirt edges of the new track extension, but like the rest suffered little damage. He was more upset than most however, for he was putting together a series of fast laps right at the end when another car went off in front of him and forced him off as well, which just damaged the front lip of the March and slowed him slightly.

Only 100th of a second behind Leclere was the Jabouille Elf 2 which was also in trouble shortly before the end while trying to get a quick lap. "I was just about to get a good tow and put in a fast lap when the engine suddenly lost 500 revs, so I switched off and came back to the pits," where Schnitzer diagnosed a bent valve and called a halt. His recent series of blow-ups seemed to have been cured however and he was relieved to have found Jabouille's problem nothing too serious. "We had a bad batch of big-end bolts but after the last two days practice it seems that everything is okay now," said Josef Schnitzer, now smoking his pipe instead of chewing it.

Just inside the 1m 35.0s club was Brambilla's March with a best of 1m 35.9s to share the second row of the grid. He too was in trouble before the end of practice when he was forced to park his car at the far chicane with broken front suspension. "I just clipped the kerb and broke a bolt in the front suspension," said Vittorio, who had been working himself up to a pole winning time for his home crowd.

Laffite set a 1m 36.0s dead happy with his car, which like the rest he had been forced to bounce over the kerbs to set a quick time. In the morning he had a nasty moment when he braked for the chicane just before the pits, but caught the edge of the throttle at the same time. He tried to get into the corner instead of going up the slip road, but ended up going up the slip road anyway, his car having bounced sideways over the kerb and landed heavily back on all four wheels. Fortunately the damage was limited to fibreglass and not metal. After that, the mechanic cut away the brake side of the wide throttle pedal.

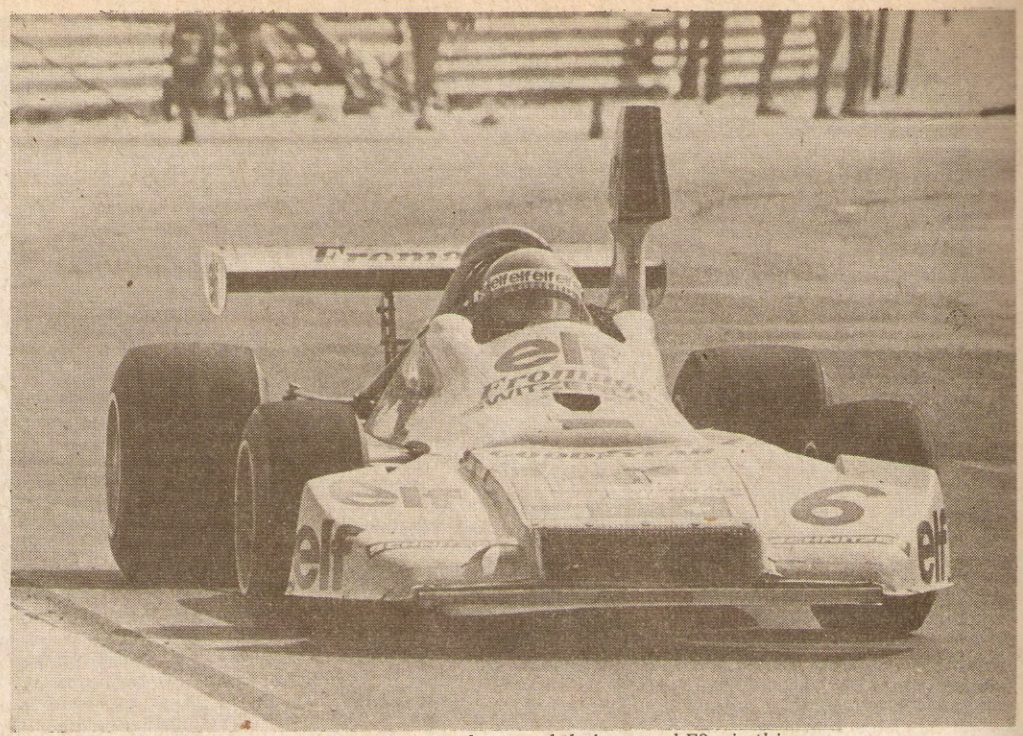
Sixth quickest with a best time of 1m 36.65s was Austrian Hans Binder, his time very creditable, for most of his practice was spent in the pits. He managed only a few laps of the final session before a wrong slotted gear stripped four teeth off second in his BMW powered March 752. By the time his mechanics got the box together again he had only half a dozen laps right at the end of practice, his car still fitted with the harder G54 tyres as they had no time to fit the softer ones with their gearbox dramas.

Heading the fourth row of the grid with a best of 1m 36.77s was the first of the two works Osella entries for Giorgio Francia and Duilio Truffo. Francia performed a lurid spin into the dirt shortly before the end, but without any damage to the chassis. His team-mate Truffo was wearing a long face, for he was starting the race way back in twentieth place. His engine had blown up shortly after the start of the first session on Saturday and a fresh one was still not installed by the time the final session had finished some 3½ hours later.

Sharing, the fourth row of the grid was an F2 newcomer, but a familiar face, that of none other than sports car ace Herbert Muller. Driving a brand new March 752 powered by a Heidegger prepared BMW engine, little Herbie was racing under the sponsorship of Artos, a drink marketed by his Martini International sponsors. It was his first time in a single seater since 1963. "Then it was at Pau in the French Grand Prix with a Lotus-Climax 24," said Herbert showing his age.

Although it has been such a long time since he has been able to watch his front wheels go round he took to his new mount with ease. "It's running quite good," was all Muller would say after practice was all over, not showing much excitement considering his fine first outing in the car. His years of sports car racing have tempered his enthusiasm, but sharpened his skills, for his eighth fastest time was also one of the most tidy drives, Muller throwing his car around, but always within the limits of the track. Enna is renowned for its high retirement rate after drivers go kerb-bouncing in the race, just the sort of thing Muller would be the least likely to do which could see him right up the front at the finish.

Ninth quickest was Harald Ertl in his familiar Chevron BMW B29, repaired after its minor damage in Mugello. Ertl was all set for a higher placing on the grid when he tailed Tambay's March for several laps. "Just as I was about to set my fastest time with a good tow down the straight the car ran out of petrol at the chicane" his best time being 1m 37.69s up to that point which ended his practice.



Gerard Larrousse and the old Alpine A367 nearly scored their second F2 win this year.

Tenth quickest was the March BMW of Lamberto Leoni, his best of 1m 37.77s pushing the March 752-BMW of Alberto Colombo down to the sixth row with a best of 1m 37.85s. Cosimo Turizio (March-BMW 742), Gabriele Serblin (March BMW 752), and Giancarlo Martini (March-BMW 742) filled the next places, Turizio setting a 1m 38.38s to head Serblin with a best of 1m 38.43s, Serblin looking the quicker of the three, but ending his practice prematurely when he broke a front suspension bolt and punctured a rear tyre at the same place as Brambilla. Martini's best was a 1m 38.46s.

Heading the eighth row was the first of the two Bang & Olufson Marches for Claude Bourgoignie and Bernard De Dryver, Bourgoignie setting the fastest time although after bending his usual 752 chassis he was forced to drive the team's spare old 742. After sorting it out on the first day he was starting to go well the second day when he blew the engine. Fortunately the team were able to find a spare with BMW Motorsport who had arrived on Thursday by private Fokker (this one a Friendship) with no less than 14 engines rebuilt for the teams. De Dryver was also in trouble with his fresh engine, a head gasket blew the first day then it was leaking oil from the alternator on Saturday. By the end of practice it was running okay, but De Dryver was well down on the grid with a best time of only 1m 40.22s which put him in 22nd position.

Sharing the eighth row with Bourgoignie was Larrousse. Not a very happy man after his engine had cut out mysteriously two laps into the final session. "That cost me the race," said a disappointed Gerard, "now I have to start right down the grid."

Mugello winner Maurizio Flammini was well down the grid with a best of 1m 38.69s in his March 752 to head the ninth row of the grid which was being shared by the March 742 BMW of "Gianfranco" on 1m 38.9s. Italian Carlo Giorgio put his Hart powered March 742 on the tenth row of the grid alongside Truffo's Osella while heading the eleventh row was the March-Hart powered 742 of Max Bonnin who recorded a best of 1m 40.10s.

Next to Bonnin was the B&O car of de Dryver while heading the twelfth row was the ROC-Chevron B29 of Christian Ethuin. Ethuin was finding his ROC Simca-Chrysler outlegged by the BMW engines despite some hairy driving to try and match their times. His team mate Xavier Lapeyere was one of the unlucky four not to qualify for this race.

Alessandro Pesenti-Rossi took the 24th place on the grid with his March BMW 742 while the last place on the grid went to Sandro Cinotti who just scraped in the second of the two Project 3 entries with a best of 1m 40.86s, most of his practice spent spinning and then limping back to the pits with a bent nose section having damaged several throughout the weekend.

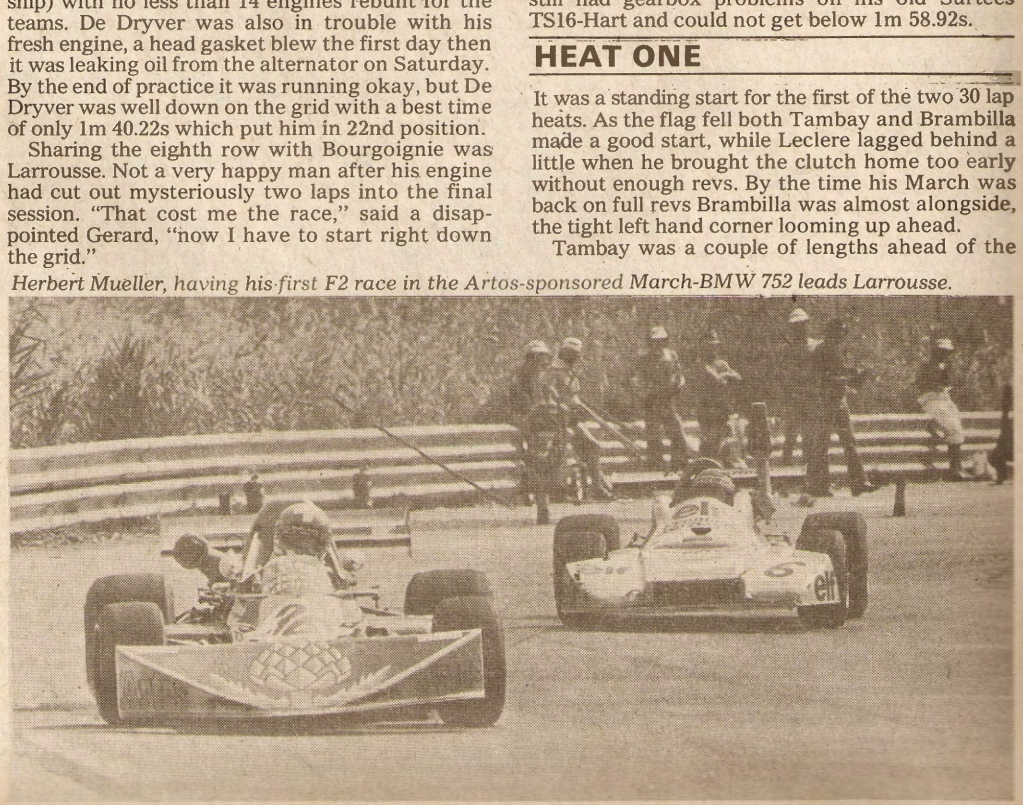
Non-qualifiers besides Lapeyere were Gimax (March 742 BMW), Luis De Almenara's March 732-Hart and Yugoslavian Francy Jerancic who still had gearbox problems on his old Surtees TS16-Hart and could not get below 1m 58.92s.

HEAT ONE

It was a standing start for the first of the two 30 lap heats. As the flag fell both Tambay and Brambilla made a good start, while Leclere lagged behind a little when he brought the clutch home too early without enough revs. By the time his March was back on full revs Brambilla was almost alongside, the tight left hand corner looming up ahead.

Tambay was a couple of lengths ahead of the

Herbert Mueller, having his first F2 race in the Artos-sponsored March-BMW 752 leads Larrousse.



second works March which still had Brambilla alongside playing a game of "chicken" in to the first corner. Something had to give and an instant later it did. Brambilla tried to brake on the dusty inside line and immediately his March went into a half spin, bounced over the inside of the corner and side-swiped Tambay as he was half way around.

The leading March spun to a dusty halt on the outside of the corner while behind it was chaos. Flammini appeared from the dust parked alongside Tambay with the front suspension of his car badly twisted, while Jabouille spun and limped off with a broken rear wing. This cost him three laps in the pits and effectively lost him the race, although his engine was destined to seize up before the end anyway. Brambilla managed to limp back to the pits with the side of his March well bent about and was posted as another instant retirement, while as a result of the first corner melée Leclere was also to retire with a seized engine caused by a split in the oil tank after being nudged from behind.

Five of the front runners out of the 25 starters were effectively out of the race before the first 500 yards! Tambay was quite naturally fuming, while Brambilla said, "Yes it was my fault, but if Leclere had not edged me out on to the dirt it would not have happened...." Also out of the running before the end of the first lap was Bourgoignie who found himself up to sixth place after escaping the carnage only to have his engine keep cutting dead along the back straight because of a faulty master switch which lost him several laps in the pits.

At the end of the first lap the field was well spread out, Serblin holding the lead with Francia, Turizio and Laffite in close company. Ertl came next, but at the start of the second lap he had the throttle stick partially open as he came in to the fateful first corner once more. "I got a bit out of line and then the car just slid over the kerbs," said Ertl who finished the lap with the nose hanging off and then lost the entire cockpit section which blew off on the straight leaving Ertl to start the third lap almost a lap down sitting in just the bare tub.

At the start of lap three Laffite had moved in to third place ahead of Turizio, then the next time around he was pushing Francia for second place. Lap five saw him take second place and then by lap nine he was through into the lead. Serblin held bravely on to Laffite, these front two cars pulling slowly ahead of Turizio who had managed to get ahead of Francia. His third place only lasted until half distance however, for he was forced into the pits when he stripped second gear.

Leclere had been really flying after his first lap drama and had set fastest lap during a great drive to catch this leading bunch, only to have his motor seize after ten laps. With Leclere and Turizio out and Francia falling even further back, still troubled by his weak wrist following his Rouen accident, only Serblin was left to challenge Laffite's lead. He hung on around 4s behind until two-thirds distance and then a spin on the ever more slippery track lost him all chance to catch the flying Laffite who did not put a wheel wrong.

Hero of the race was Gerard Larrousse, who after starting almost from the back from the first lap shunt, rapidly picked his way through the rest of the field until the closing stages of the race he was right behind Serblin and Francia, even though Larrousse had himself spun four times during his fierce drive. He looked all set to pass Francia, but in the meantime Serblin fell back to third place as a rear tyre was gradually going flat in the closing laps. He weaved around to try and hold off Larrousse, who finally got by on the last lap, but by this time Francia was far enough ahead to hold off the Elf, although by a scant half a second at the finish.

Laffite crossed the line with a comfortable 17 second margin of victory, although at the end of the race he looked far from happy, for his engine had used almost all its oil, was blowing smoke and there was no time to change it. Serblin managed to limp home a distant fourth with Martini even further back in fifth place having moved up a place at the expense of Pesenti-Rossi, who was also passed by Truffo when Rossi spun on the penultimate lap. Truffo was right behind Martini where he had been the whole race despite sitting in petrol for most of it. Pesenti-Rossi took seventh spot while "Gianfranco" and Cinotti were the only other drivers to finish on the same lap as Laffite.

HEAT TWO

The cars lined up in the finishing order of the first part for the second part, which was less Brambilla, Flammini, Jabouille and Tambay. Tambay's car had been repaired in time for the second part, but the organisers refused to let him start after his mechanics had pushed the car back to the pits while the first part was still going on. Leclere's men managed to get a fresh engine in the second March before the second part, so at least they had one car on the grid.

Laffite, not wanting to put any more strain on his already tired engine than he had to, made a delicate start and found himself overwhelmed by Serblin, Francia, and Martini in to the first corner, which this time fortunately went without incident as all the field got through safely. Next time around Ertl did an exact re-play of his second lap crash in the first heat when he shunted the nose borrowed from the ROC team, and this time pitted to have the top taken off before it blew off. A couple of laps later he was black flagged for no mirrors however, so once again the Austrian found himself two laps behind after another fresh nose/body panel was fitted.

By lap three it was still Serblin ahead, but now Larrousse had put himself in second place with Martini third, Francia fourth and Laffite fifth, this leading group having opened out a gap to Truffo, "Gianfranco" and Leclere who was rocketing through from the back of the grid.

It took Larrousse until lap six to get by Serblin who by this time was also under pressure from Leclere who had gone by Francia, Laffite and then Martini. Lap seven saw Leclere take the lead, which suited Larrousse fine, for with Leclere giving him a tow he was able to pull out an even bigger lead over Laffite who was now the only other driver between him and victory. Francia had dropped way down to ninth place and was no longer a threat to the Elf in the overall placings.

Serblin spun trying to avoid being taken by Leclere, so that by the end of the first ten laps Leclere had a five second lead over Larrousse with Martini a similar way behind being closely tailed by Laffite who was taking no chances, but did not have much margin to play with if he was to hang on to his overall lead. Lap 16 saw Martini go off and damage the nose at the entrance to the new loop, so that by the time a new one was fitted he was also out of the running.

Although out of the running for any good overall placing Leclere had this second part in his pocket until he spun at the final chicane on lap 19 and handed Larrousse the lead once more. Laffite did not manage to take second place and kept his third spot, while fourth was a close battle between Serblin and Truffo; Serblin having managed to re-take Truffo after his early spin, although the little Osella driver would not let him get away.

Muller was holding a steady seventh place ahead of Turizio, but on the same lap as Leclere's spin he also went off, for good, when he spun at the exit for the new loop. "I was too busy watching my temperature gauge which had been at 160 degrees since the start," said an honest Muller. "I got off line, it was my fault. I enjoyed the racing but not the track conditions though."

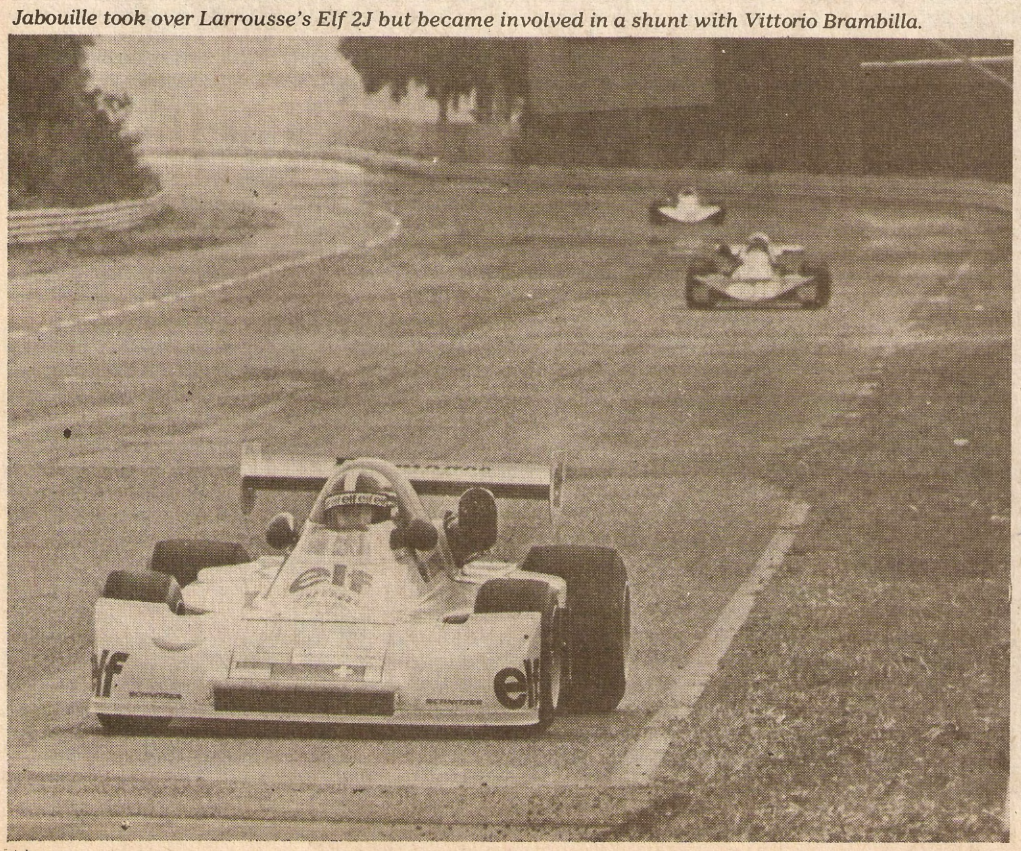
Leclere's progress back up to Larrousse was not so quick as it had been before. "The geometry was all wrong after I bounced over the kerb," he explained, although he did manage to catch Larrousse again before the finish only to spin once more at the first corner. He came in second to the Elf, just four seconds behind, although the most important gap was that between Larrousse and Laffite which as the flag came out was 12.6s, all Laffite needed for a comfortable overall win. His prudence had paid off, for his engine lasted "only just" said Laffite, but enough to give him yet another victory and an almost certain victory in this year's F2 Championship.

Truffo finally managed a distant fourth place after Serblin spun, again in the closing laps, although he managed to retain fifth place close enough to Truffo to take third place overall in the final classification. Francia managed to come in seventh in the second part and thus earned a well deserved fourth overall, while Truffo was fifth overall to make it a good day for the Osella team. Sixth in the second part was Pesenti-Rossi after another steady drive and he picked up the final sixth placing overall, the last driver to complete the full 60 laps of both parts.

Hans Binder, who had been running well in the first part until his gearbox broke nine laps from the end, was also going well in the second part until he crashed three laps before the end when he spun under braking for the chicane.

Shortly before this he had been lapping the old March 732 of Max Bonnin when according to Bonnin he cut in too quick going past the pits and clipped Bonnin's front wheel. The Frenchman turned sharp into the barrier and was lucky to step out of his wrecked car almost unharmed, for there were bits and pieces everywhere. "It's the end of racing for me," said the upset Bonnin who has no money to rebuild the car.

Jabouille took over Larrousse's Elf 2J but became involved in a shunt with Vittorio Brambilla.



GP Mediterraneo di F2
Enna, Sicily, July 27. 2 x 30 lap heats

1, Jacques Laffite (Martini-Schnitzer BMW Mk14), 1h 39m 58.3s, 178.242 kph;
2, Gerard Larrouse (Elf 2-Schnitzer BMW), 1h 40m 3.3s;
3, Gabriele Serblin (March-BMW 752), 1h 41m 23.2s;
4, Giorgio Francia (Osella-BMW SA2), 1h 41m 44.7s;
5, Duilio Truffo (Osella-BMW SA2), 1h 41m 56.3s;
6, Alessandro Pesenti Rossi (March-BMW 742), 1h 42m 32.1s;
7, Giancarlo Martini (March-BMW 752), 59 laps; 8, "Gianfranco" (March-BMW 742), 58 laps; 9, Bernard de Dryver (March-BMW 752), 58 laps; 10, Carlo Giorgio (March-Hart 742), 58 laps. **Fastest Lap:** Michel Leclere (March-BMW 752), 1m 36.4s, 184.854 kph.

Heat 1 (30 laps): 1, Laffite, 50m 27.5s, 176.581 kph; 2, Francia, 50m 44.6s; 3, Larrousse, 50m 45.1s; 4, Serblin, 50m 51.7s; 5, Martini, 51m 73.4s; 6, Truffo, 51m 43.8s. **Fastest lap:** Leclere, 1m 37.9s, 182.022 kph.

Heat 2 (30 laps): 1, Larrousse, 49m 18.2s, 180.718 kph; 2, Leclere, 49m 22.4s; 3, Laffite, 49m 30.8s; 4, Truffo, 50m 28.5s; 5, Serblin, 50m 16.2s; 6, Rossi, 50m 44.4s. **Fastest lap:** Leclere 1m 36.0s, 184.854 kph.

1000 Lakes shock — Fiat out

Mikkola and Alen bound by contracts

Tough problems for two Finns; Mikkola (left) and Alen.

In a remarkable about face for which the Italians are famous, we have just heard from the depths of South Africa, where the Total Rally is now taking place, that Fiat, who had indicated throughout the entire season their intention to go to the 1000 Lakes, have at the 11th hour decided not to go after all. Although their venerable Fiat 124 Arbarth Spyder might not be considered as an outright rally winner on an event such as the 1000 Lakes; in the hands of their two resident Finns, Hannu Mikkola and Markku Alen, anything is possible, especially as both are in such fine form at present. The reason for Fiat's non-appearance can thus only be related to economics and we must therefore assume that their next event will be the San Remo in October.

All this leaves the two Finnish aces in something of a quandary. Alen is the worst off, for his contact will not allow him to compete in a World Championship rally in any other make of car, which effectively leaves him without a drive in his home event. Mikkola is marginally better off as he is allowed to compete in these events in other cars provided that they are not directly opposing the position of the factory in the championship. He could thus theoretically drive something like a Ford, a Toyota or a Datsun . . . time will tell.

Revitalising Tony Pond's old and happy association with Norman Reeves garage is this RS2000, lent to him for the Tour of Britain by a friend and prepared with help from Boreham, Racing Services, Tyre Services GB and Reeves themselves.

A great drive on the ETC Stages from newcomer David Lang; a 2½ minute off during the afternoon dropped him from fifth overall to 13th at the finish.

Tarmac tests for Escort 2

Ford works cars will definitely be going to the Tour de Corse if the projected tarmac test programme is successful. There will be two cars for Roger Clark and Timo Makinen running under the Ford France banner. The testing programme began this week and with the services of Tom Walkinshaw, Gilbert Staepelaere and Roger Clark available there seems little doubt that the programme will be a success. Roger's entry on the Manx is another facet of the tarmac development and it seems that following the Escort 2's rather inauspicious tarmac debut on the Criterium d'Antibes, there is some serious rethinking going on at Boreham just now.

Tour of Britain: owners get good deal from drivers

As we went to press the principal rallying contenders for the Avon Motor Tour of Britain were making their final adjustments to the cars. Down at Uxbridge Tony Pond had just fitted his Racing Services prepared engine to the RS2000 which he has borrowed from a friend in order to compete in the event. Ford have been very helpful with the project and there is also financial support from Tyre Services GB, (a Goodyear retail outlet) while Norman Reeves, who helped put Tony on the map as a rally driver, are chipping in with parts supplies and are undertaking all the servicing arrangements during the event. The engine came off the brake at Racing Services last Saturday afternoon when it was reportedly giving 146 bhp, and Tony, who paid a brief visit to Silverstone on Sunday to size the place up, was hoping to go testing yesterday.

Both Russell Brookes and John Handley are carrying out similar deals with their cars, Russell's belongs to Tony Cox, a past competitions foreman at Rover, and now managing director of his own Datsun/BMW dealership in Birmingham. Sponsorship as usual comes from *Birmingham Post* and Andrews Heat. Handley is using his '74 race car which is being completely reprepared at Aldon Automotive especially for the Tour before being given back to Robert Ward in Ireland. It seems that owners of RS2000s and Dolomites are thus getting very good deals indeed, assuming of course that there is not too much body damage.

The BTRDA are entering a three car team consisting of Will Sparrow/Rodney Spokes in the Rylands Magnum coupé; Gerry Marshall/Mike Broad in the SMT/Marshalls Chunky Chicken Magnum, and Russell Brookes/John Brown in the Andrews Heat/*Birmingham Post* RS2000.

Manx news-'Flag plans

Late entries for the Manx close on the 31st July and as we closed for press around 100 entries had been received. Most of the regular RAC contenders have put in their entries but the organisers are still hoping to hear from British Leyland. Chrysler are not going as the 2-litre is not homologated in G2 which leaves Colin Malkin without a ride. The Stratos is at present entered by the

Walfridsson — on the Burmah.

Chequered Flag; however it now seems unlikely that the car will go as it conflicts with the testing programme with Walfriddson which the company have planned in Sweden. Curley is thus most likely to be seen on the event back in his favourite car, a Porsche. The Chequered Flag meanwhile have been receiving tempting offers to compete in the 1000 Lakes from Turin with either Mikkola or Alen at the wheel (Volvo being unlikely to appreciate Walfriddson competing in Scandinavia in a Lancia) but again Graham

Curley — a Porsche on the Manx?

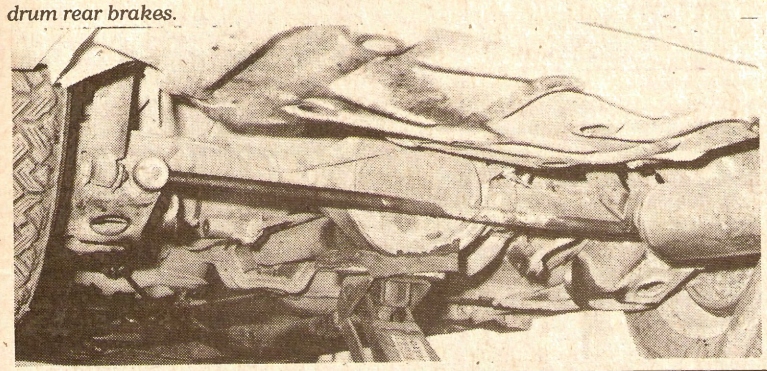
Warner has decided that the rally would conflict too much with their development programme. It seems that Walfriddson will do the RAC in the Stratos as he has had a verbal OK from Volvo; and a written one will most likely confirm this shortly. The Flag will also be competing on the Burmah with Per and John Jensen at the end of August, again as part of their testing programme prior to the RAC. Should Walfridsson not be able to do the RAC for them, then the factory are likely to step in with added mechanics and works service, plus one of those two Finns again, to drive it.

A low key introduction for the Kadett

The first public showing of the works prepared Opel Kadett happened without pomp or drama at the Portuguese where Walter Rohrl used one as a T-car. It is hoped that it will be homologated in Group 2 from October 1 in time for the San Remo. At the time this picture was taken the car was fitted with a 160 bhp non crossflow 2-litre engine but much more interesting things are planned before its official competition debut.

The Kadett is some 150kgs lighter than the Ascona and is expected to weigh in at around 900kgs in rally form.

A look underneath reveals that the development version at least, still uses drum rear brakes.



● Regulations are now available for the Derw Woollen Mills Cilwendeg Rally, the fifth round of the *Motoring News* rally championship and a qualifying event for the Welsh rally championship and the BTRDA Silver Star series. The event starts from the public car park, Newcastle Emlyn (145/306406) at 22.30 hrs on Saturday September 6 and the finish is at the Emlyn Arms Hotel at approximately 5.30 am on the Sunday. There are about 190 miles in the total route. Secretary of the Rally is Megan Lewis, Rhydonnen, Pentrecwrt, Llandysul, Dyfed SA44 5DG. Tel: 055-932 3219.

● Following Mike Marshall's runaway win in the Heatway over the 5th July weekend in his Motocraft supported Escort 2 (he finished 12.96 minutes ahead of steve Millen in an old type Escort RS) a story carried in the *Auckland Star's 8 o'clock* newspaper stated that rally director Murray Thompson was planning to run next year's event also as an international run entirely in the south Island of New Zealand and that the following year New Zealand would host a World Championship round in the North Island.

● Robin Langford, the proprietor of Langrop Engineering, the Fiat dealer, who is currently campaigning a Fiat 124 Special T in BTRDA and *Triple C* rounds with increasing success, is hoping to have a 131 running in Group one for the RAC rally in November.

● A fine performance on the Arkell came from Chris Bruce/Peter Carracher in their 2-litre supercharged Escort. The crew started at number 149 and were originally a reserve entry, but they finished a most creditable 11th overall, despite clipping a tree on the second to last stage and losing some time. A report of the rally appears on page 49.

Rylands trophy

The Ryland garage group are presenting a trophy and a case of wine to the crew who put up the most outstanding performance during the Tour of Britain. The lucky winners will be selected by a panel of motoring journalists and the award will be presented immediately after the event. Rylands will also be providing a courtesy car service at the Great Barr Birmingham Post House for the use of competitors, and in their Ryland livery there should not be too much trouble in spotting them.

Datsun puzzle

The Datsun Violet Twincam which Shekhar Mehta drove on the Portuguese Rally was a brand new fuel-injected example from the factory, and although Harry Kallstrom was going to drive it and had in fact packed his bags for the trip to Portugal, he was instructed by the factory at the last minute to proceed to South Africa for the Total — meanwhile 'back in the jungle' arrangements were made for Mehta to drive the car. This machine is now destined for the RAC in November but no one yet seems certain as to who will drive it.

The Portuguese Entroposto inspired 240/260Z situation is a very healthy one and the car that Cortes drove into fifth place on the rally is in fact the one that Ingvar Carlsson drove there last year; Figueiredo's was of '72 vintage. The third car, driven by Magre into 10th overall had a little modified 260 engine fitted into the old 240 shell. Magre is an accomplished racing driver out there and he is a development engineer for Entroposto, the local Datsun dealers, but this was in fact his first rally!

Championship standings

At the halfway point in the Castrol AUTOSPORT championship, the points tables are as below. Due to lack of space we have only included scores down to 10 points, but anyone wishing to know their position or indeed with any queries on the championship should contact Ian Parry at Burmah Castrol Competition Department, Swindon 30151. Next week we intend to publish a table showing where and when the contenders scored their points. Remaining rounds include the Burmah, the Marina Holidays Rally of the Forest, the Manx, the Aberystwyth/Castrol Stages; the Cheltenham Festival and the Tour of Eppynt.

Drivers (overall)

G. Hill 69; T. Fowkes 54; R. James 46; T. Drummond 35; R. Iliffe 33; B. Bean and P. Appleby 31; R. Brookes and L. Richards 29; C. Holker and M. Rawson 28; P. Martin and M. Davidson 23; P. Dale 22; I. Lawless 20; A. Dawson 19; R. Mullenger 17; A. Boyd 16; D. Agnew 13; G. Beever 12.

Co-drivers (overall).

P. Short 69; B. Harris 54; D. Richards 38; D. McMahon 33; A. Greenwood and K. O'Dell 31; B. Tilley 30; J. Brown and J. Tew 29; F. Gallagher and T. Weaver 23; P. Scott 18; J. Coulthard and D. Rogers 17; A. Dixon, F. Main and A. Richards 16; D. Whitley 14; R. Harkness 13.

Group one drivers:

P. Appleby 68; I Lawless 44; H. Innurieta and C. Field 32; T. Walton 29; T. Baines 27; B. Banning and R. Badham 25; R. Brookes, R. Eyre Maunsell and P. Kitching 15; M. Bowcett 14; R. Close, K. Glynn and P. Thompson 13; D. Johnson 12; P. Reynolds; G. Lobb 10.

Group one co-drivers:

K. O'Dell 68; M. Whale 32; K. Carter 29; A. Walker 27; B. Fowkes Underwood 25; J. Brown, J. Wylie and N. Wilson 15; A. Knight 14; C. Wilson 13; M. Mernon 12; D. Thomas 10.

Lady drivers:

J. Denton 25; J. Robinson 18; J. Neate 12; S. Lawson 9.

Lady co-drivers:

D. Rogers 27; R. Clinton 21; F. Brake 12; G. Olsen 9.

A Challenging situation

Porteous and Clark close on points

GAELIC
THE SCOTSMAN
RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Although Alistair Brearley (Opel Ascona) and Dominic Buckley (Escort TC) were first and second on the recent Border Counties Uniflo rally in Scotland, they are registered in the main Gaelic/*Scotsman* championship so did not score any points towards the championship. The leading "Challengers" on the rally were George Porteous (Escort TC) Gavin Wilkie (Escort TC), John Easson (Escort TC), Alistair Mackay (Vauxhall Viva GT) and Des McNelis (Escort GT). The Challengers points table now reads: George Porteous 27 points; Tom Clark (Escort TC) 26; Alistair Mackay 24; Dugie Hume (RS2000) and Bill Birnie (Escort TC) 23.

Clark was the leader after the Scottish Rally although all his points had been scored in a Cooper S; he retired on the Scottish with his TC and broke a half shaft at the start of the Elibank stage on the Border Counties and finished out of the points. Birnie shunted his car on a non-championship event, the Arbroath Stages, and did not compete on the Border Counties.

There are three more Challengers events to come; the Rippin Saltire on September 20; the Bowmaker Autumn Stages on September 28 and the Border on October 25. In the main championship the rallies still to count are the Burmah, the Rippin Saltire and the Border.

● European example of the increasingly popular concept of the one venue stage rally is the Janner Rally which is being run by Harald Gottlieb in Austria between the 8th-10th January (ECR coefficient one). The format of the event has been deliberately designed to keep costs down and it is based on one town. The three or four stages surrounding it are to be used twice and the necessary mileage is made up by a road section incorporating a passage control. There are limitations being put on the number of studs which can be used (most probably this will comply with the local road laws) and there is no entry fee for British drivers. The regulations are also printed in English. Seems like a good time for a skiing/rallying holiday.

Porsches 1,2,3 in Wicklow

David Agnew won the Gulf sponsored Circuit of Wicklow in his Porsche Carrera last weekend. This one day event, run by the Motor Enthusiasts Club who also ran the Dublin Grand Prix when it started, comprised 14 stages, six of which were forests and the first two of which were held over the famous Sally Gap. In total there were about 80 stage miles and Agnew was chased home by Noel Smith/Mike Corbett in another Carrera; there being some 19 seconds separating the two crews. Jimmy Stewart completed the 1-2-3 for Porsche while Kevin McKinstry was fourth ahead of Roger Cree's Mini. The eighth stage had to be cancelled on the first run through when a Mini lost a wheel and the car blocked the stage. Other dramas befell the Belfast crew of John Kingham/-Brendon Mongomery who rolled their Escort TC on the first stage.

David Agnew – a 19 second win.

First stages for Chester..

On Saturday, September 27 Chester Motor Club are to run their first Special-Stage Rally, run in the forests of North East Wales.

The organising team have decided against the use of farm tracks and other similar private roads and have negotiated with the Forestry Commission for the use of almost 40 miles of special stages, linked by only 130 road miles. Only one stage has been used previously, the remainder being completely new to rallying.

Sponsored by Mike Hinde, former National Production Car Trial Champion and International Rally driver, who has a Peugeot dealership in Dyserth, near Rhyl, the Rally will start and finish in Ruthin, with scrutineering on the preceeding Friday evening or on the morning of the event at the preference of individual competitors.

The Rally is a qualifying round for the Welsh Association of Motor Clubs Stage Rally Championship. Regulations are available from Mike Neal, 66 The Oval, Wolverham, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire.

and for Green Belt MCs

The East Anglian Stages Rally is the name of another new event that will be run on Sunday, September 14 by the Green Belt Motor Club. This is the first stage rally to be organised by the Enfield-based Club which is best known for its "Mad Hatter" Road Rally.

The Leyton accessory shop "Opposite Lock" will be sponsoring this event which will contain 12 stages totalling about 25 miles. The event will start from Kitchen Bros garage in Diss and finish at Ipswich. The road distance to be covered will be about 120 miles.

Sump guards will be advisable but not essential while maps nos 144, 155, 156 and 169 (metric) will definitely be required to locate the stages. The entry fee is £8.00 and the closing date for entries is Monday, September 8.

The invited clubs for this closed co-promoted rally are Cambridge CC, Chelmsford MC, South Bucks MC, Sporting CC of Norfolk and West Suffolk MC. Further information, regulations and entry forms can be obtained from: Darryl E. Collins, 18 Old Park Road, London, N13. Telephone: (01) 886 9126 (evenings) or Luton (0582) 21122, ext 7166 (day).

● The '75/'76 edition of the IRDC Rally Drivers Club Yearbook has just been published and aside from the very useful directory at the back, there are features penned by many exciting international personalities of the rallying world. If you are a member of this revered organisation then of course you will get your copy free, but the book, which shows a marked improvement in layout this year, is on sale to non-members at £2 per copy. You can get yours now from Duncan Spence, Haddon House, Dorchester on Thames, Oxford OX9 83Z.

● Due to an unfortunate and temporary breakdown in international postal services, the photographs which appeared with the Portuguese Rally report were credited to Hugh Bishop. They were in fact taken by Colin Taylor Productions.

● Regulations for the AP Stages are now available. This ACSMC and LCAMC event will have a total mileage of around 160 including some 35 miles of stages on tar, broken concrete and private tracks. Further details from Secretary of the Meeting John Perry, 21 Meadoway, Steeple Claydon, Buckingham, MK18 2PA.

● Another event run in Ireland last weekend was a closed to club navigation affair of 85 miles duration run by the Augher MC. It was won by Wesley Turkington/Bob McCutcheon in their RS2000. Early leaders Frank Burns/Derek Smith (Mexico) ran out of steering and visited the ditch around half-way, effectively putting them out of the running.

Welsh Border MC – ETC Stages

Special Stage times . . . .

Brogyntyn SS1
1, =T. Pond, L. Richards and I. Lawless (cleaned); 3, D. Lang 1; 4, L. Watkins 2; 5, D. Roderick 4.

Foel Dynas SS2
1, T. Fowkes 12; 2, G. Hill 19; 3, L. Richards 20; 4, D. Roderick 25; 5, D. Thompson 27.

Dyfnant SS3
1, T Pond 24; 2, R. Badham 28; 3, T. Fowkes 29; 4, L. Richards 40; 5, G. Hill 47.

Pennal SS4
1, T. Fowkes 26; 2, T. Pond 31; 3, D. Roderick 40; 4, G. Hill 42; 5, A. Allard and D. Lang 45.

Ceri SS5
1, =T. Fowkes and T. Pond 30; 3, L. Richards 35; 4, D. Lang 39; 5, G. Hill 41.

Radnor SS6
1, T. Pond 23; 2, T. Fowles 29; 3, L. Richards 42; 4, =D. Roderick and A. Allard 46; 5, D. Thompson 49.

Kerry SS7
1, T. Fowkes 25; 2, L. Richards 33; 3, T. Pond 38; 4, =D. Roderick and G. Hill 41.

Moel Haford Owen SS8
1, T. Pond 38; 2, T. Fowkes 43; 3, D. Roderick 45; 4, L. Richards 46; 5, G. Hill 50.

Blaenglyn SS9
Scrubbed.

Dyfnant 2 SS10
1, T. Fowkes 33; 2, T. Pond 37; 3, L. Richards 56; 4, D. Lang 57; 5, D. Thompson 58.

Aberhirnant SS11
1, T. Pond 38; 2, T. Fowkes 43; 3, D. Roderick 45; 4, D. Lang 26; 5, G. Hill 28.

Porlington SS12
1, T. Pond 3; 2, L. Richards 5; 3, D. Roderick 6; 4, T. Fowkes 7; 5, D. Lang 11.

Robert James is now lying third in the Castrol/AUTOSPORT championship and though hampered by a misfire and a broken manifold on his new 1800 BDA, he finished a strong seventh.

No prizes for offering alternative captions to this priceless photograph of two well known broadcasters caught almost in the act. 'Hot Lips' on the left is of course George Hill; and beside him Phil Short. The pair were featuring on the local Piccadilly radio station.

by John Davenport

" . . . like a very lame duck, we staggered into the air, clearing the palm trees on the far side of the Oasis by a couple of yards . . ."

Ireland to Morocco . .

Just the next morning after the finish of Donegal — and wearing heads that would surely have been declared overweight had they been part of the baggage, we flew back from Shannon to Heathrow where my successful driver Achim made a connection to Germany and I met up with Hugh Bishop to go straight down to Casablanca for a little thing called the Moroccan Rally. The first part of this saga was a tale of late planes, missing hire cars and a painful case of dysentery laboriously acquired at a restaurant in Mohammedia the following day. Gradually things sorted themselves out and Hugh was dispatched to the desert with Morris Seldon from *Motoring News* while I took the passenger seat in a Fiat 127 with Gerry Phillips. We stuck to main roads and main controls but still seemed to do a lot of motoring so on the third day we took up the option of going flying with Danielle Audetto in the Fiat supervisory aircraft. The pilot was a 24-year-old whiskyphile called Christian and I can only assume that he got the name when his flying instructor turned religious.

We flew to Agadir over the High Atlas where it was apparent that the non-turbocharged Piper was not designed for such altitude, especially when Audetto wanted to go down to look at the cars and then skip up a few thousand feet to call the service cars on the radio. Still, all went well until we landed at Agadir where our pilot got into an argument with some plain clothes police and within seconds was being hustled off to the local nick for a touch of the third degree as he had apparently been rude to them before. Audetto immediately got on a phone and started trying to get this pilot out of jail or another one sent down from Casa. Eventually he was successful in the former task and a slightly ruffled Christian arrived to fly us off over the long 800 kilometre stage. I must confess that I slept quite a lot of the night as things happen slowly when you are patrolling at ten thousand feet, but shortly before dawn I was rudely wakened by frantic radio activity; it appeared that Markku Alen and Ilkka Kivimaki had ripped their sump out in a river bed and wanted aid. It didn't help much that their radio loudspeaker connection had come off at the same time and it took us hours to get in proper contact with them and find out where they were. By that time we had a signal from Bjorn Waldegaard and Claes Andersson that they too were in similar problems and for the best part of three hours, Audetto struggled to get the helicopter to Alen and the ground service in a Fiat four wheel drive to Waldegaard. Both cars were irreparable so a rendezvous was made at Tata oasis, a place well known to all rallyists that have done Morocco. Our only problem was getting our pilot to agree to descend.

Having had a right barney with the police, he felt that it was not a good idea to deviate from his flight schedule and land at Tata as they were just likely to make life even more unpleasant for him when he got back. Eventually we got clearance from Agadir to land and he proceeded with caution to set us down. We were first there and while the others arrived we set off to buy water, bread and tins of sardines from the local shop and then consumed them sitting on the side of the municipal swimming pool which looked as if it were now a breeding ground for alligators. A sardine head discreetly inserted into the water vanished but whether it sank or was eaten was impossible to discern in the heavily clouded waters. When it was time to leave, we had to break the news to Christian that we were taking an extra passenger as Markku and Ilkka were joining the Piper while Gerry, Bjorn and Claes went in the helicopter. He went spare and said that we would never take off, a value judgement in which I shared as the heat of the day was starting to thin the air while a wind had sprung up and was blowing down the strip in the worst possible direction for take-off. Eventually, it was decided to hazard the chance and, like a very lame duck, we staggered into the air, clearing the palm trees on the far side of the oasis by a couple of yards and causing Christian to nearly bend the joystick in two. We were all visibly shaken by our near miss and it wasn't helped by the helicopter pilot saying when we met him in Agadir that he had been praying for us. To my certain knowledge that made six prayers and one plane going upward from the oasis that morning.

Portugal to Germany. .

If things had gone well, I would have had 48 hours at home before leaving for the Portugese Rally. As it was, I had 36 and on the first of July, I met Achim again at Lisbon airport. It looked very much as it had done two years ago when I was last there except that familiar places had disappeared under a barrage of posters and painted signs referring to one political party or another. There was little sign however of the army and the only time we saw them was when we were stopped at a couple of the road blocks set up during the search for the escaped secret police-men. Nothing could have been more friendly and informal despite the sten guns, and usually when we showed them the Rally of Portugal/Port Wine road book they waved us on our way without further formality. We were one of the first crews to go practising as we had once again a German championship event to do back in the homeland with the KWS Renault Alpine 310 just before the Portuguese Rally.

This was the first time that the rally had been held in mid-summer and it was immediately clear that two things were different. Firstly, the roads themselves were much rougher than before and I can only attribute this to the fact that at a time of insurrection, no one is keen to go out and repair holes in remote country roads; and of the government sponsored services, which were likely to be the first ones to go to the wall in an economic crisis as people cannot eat forest roads. Secondly there had been no rain for some considerable period and while this is doubtless an attraction to the holidaymaker, to the rally driver it spells dust and yet more dust. You can have seen from the report of the rally last week that it was this very dust that practically decided the rally rather than the rough roads, but during the recce it was only a minor hazard and a nuisance. The rough roads worried us more and we took it pretty steady with our BMW to finish the job in six and a half days with 12 hours driving every day.

When we had finished, there was hardly time to put the notes in order and get the dirty underpants rinsed out before we were on a plane to Germany and heading for a rendevous with our Alpine 310. The Vorderpfalz Rally is an ingenious one night affair devised by Wulf Biebinger and Gerd Raschig who are themselves rally competitors of long standing. As a result, the rally is straightforward to an extent not found often in other German events. 90 per cent of the stages are on asphalt and are open for recce with the blessing of the organisers who supply a nice little map showing you where to go. In addition there were two dirt stages right at the end of the rally and they even released details of those just one day before the start so that no one could claim that local knowledge had helped anyone who might know those roads. Add a short tarmac stage right in the heart of Ludwigshaven and a couple of laps of a speedway dirt track and that was the Vorderpfalz Rally. It is the sort of event that should attract a much larger foreign entry as it is so easy to recce that it makes it very cheap, despite the present exchange rate between the D-mark and the pound. We recced for two days in a hired BMW and then went to check over out the steed which the Alpine mechanics had brought down from Dieppe on a trailer. The engine had been overhauled at Gordini since its Hessen win and we were looking forward to giving the Porsches another dose of the same medicine as we now had the very latest Michelin wet Formula 2 tyres as well as the 'snake slicks' that we had used before.

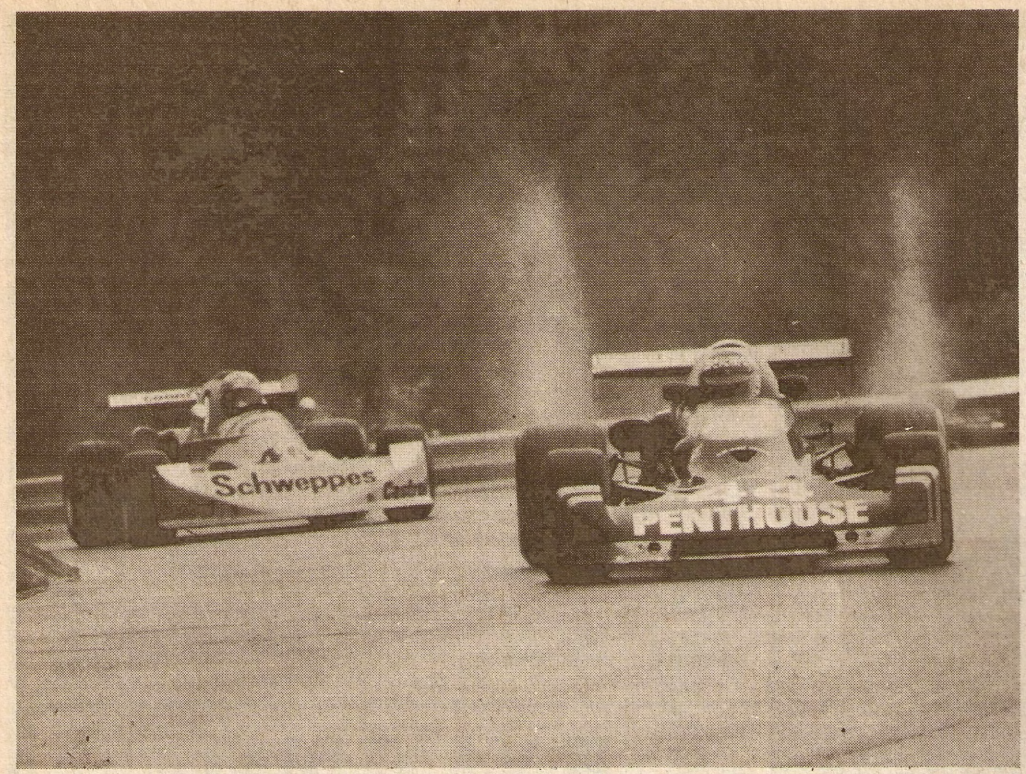
With such a big build-up something was bound to go wrong and sure enough it did. Within a quarter of an hour of the start, we were out; on the first test right there in Ludvigshaven as Achim changed from fifth to fourth for a very fast left, the engine decided to plough its own furrow and broke its connection from the flywheel. We coasted to a halt over the finish line and still did fifth fastest time but the only future plans we had involved a route straight back to the hotel. Our KWS service barge was nearest, with sponsors Wolff and Kech at the wheel, but the first ones to reach us were the two birds driving the Toyota service barge for Harold Demuth. It was them who towed us to the hotel, but as Mr Demuth was still going strongly we couldn't persuade them to stay longer. Eventually the French mechanics arrived and were terribly apologetic about the whole thing as apparently the engines arrive from Gordini with the flywheel and clutch assembly already bolted up ready for the engine to be dropped into the car, 'so you see Monsieur, it could not have been our fault. . . .'

England to Africa

We were a bit short of tyres for the BMW in Portugal as the racers sent up by Pirelli (Italy) to Pirelli (Germany) seemed to have gone missing; so we got out the faithful 15in that we had used in Donegal and used those for the tests round Sintra that made up the first part of the rally. Consequently we didn't do too well in comparision with the Fiats on their slicks while the dust on the two stages that formed that first loop had to be seen to be believed. I understand that similar conditions prevailed on the Jim Clark Rally where cars were waiting up to five minutes to try and get a clear run so anyone who was there will understand what this lot was like. Our only problem was that because of the road timing with a time control before each stage, we had to go in at two minute intervals, unless like Alen you managed to 'arrange' something. For him it paid off and we inherited third place when Rohrl had has steering problem and Paganelli disappeared, so we were very happy with the prospect of being in the first three at the finish as we set off north for the majority of the rally.

For the third lap, Cesar Torres had increased the gap between the cars to three minutes but we never had a chance to find out if that was an improvement because we retired before it got dark on Senhora da Graca. The inner drive shaft coupling just broke up and we coasted to a halt. As soon as we stopped we abandoned the car and climbed up a rock wall to sit well above the dust and watch the rest of the cars as there seemed to be no way of getting out. Eventually some farmers turned up to look at us and the car and there were so many of them that we got the idea of persuading them to push us to the top on the next hill from where we could coast to a junction that would take us off the stage. They were dead keen, at least to start with, and gave us almost a kilometre of uphill pushing from where we were able to freewheel another five kilometres to the junction. There Achim found a bloke with a BMW and shot off to find the mechanics from KWS who were waiting at the end of the stage; but by the time he got there, they had left for the start of the stage to drive through and find us. They took the fully laden Peugeot 504 estate all the way through the test which was almost as incredible a feat as us going through flat out, and says a lot for the strength of the French car. By midnight we had been towed into Vila Real and having got ourselves outside a couple of beers and a ham sandwich, fell into bed.

The next morning, the boys changed the shaft in about 10 minutes and then we washed both cars and set out for the long drive south. It took six hours so we missed the finish and the antics up at the Estoril Autodrome but we were so tired and fed up with rallying that we didn't really care too much. In five weeks, I had covered four rallies and competed in three; it was going to be nice to have a week's rest before going to South Africa. . . .



Spray plumes from Elliott Forbes-Robinson's slick tyres in the wet. Bertil Roos follows.

MOSPORT

E F-R prefers Canada dry

Back in 1973, the Canadian Grand Prix at Mosport began what has been a rash of wet-dry Grands Prix, and when the Player's Challenge Series arrived at Mosport on July 20, the wet-dry syndrome attacked the Canadian Formula Atlantic contingent, but Elliott Forbes-Robinson in the Bill Scott Racing *Penthouse* Lola-T360 proved the master of the situation, gambling that conditions would allow him to stay on dry tyres when rain came a third of the way into one race.

ENTRY AND PRACTICE

After a bright, hot day for the first qualifying session, the second morning dawned wet. The organizers had scheduled both qualifying sessions before noon, which seemed rather unnecessary for there was time in the late afternoon to run a qualifying race as well as a qualifying session, should the size of the entry have warranted this scheduling addition. Thus with hard rain in the morning, all qualifying was futile, except in the dying moments of the final session, shortly after noon, at which point the track had dried in many places. The result of the strange scheduling was a grid based almost entirely on the times recorded in a half-hour session on the opening day of practice.

Back at the front, after a couple of races in the doldrums was the works March 75B of Bertil Roos. With the braking dramas of the last few races finally sorted out, his new knowledge showed as he lapped in 1m 21.09s. This was 0.777 seconds under the lap record he had established last year in Fred Opert's Chevron B27. Beside Roos was arch-rival Bill Brack. The driver of the STP Chevron B29 needs to win at least one of the two remaining races if he hopes to win his third straight Canadian title. He did very few laps but still recorded 1m 21.25s.

Fresh from his St Jovite win, Elliott Forbes-Robinson put the *Penthouse* Lola-BSR T360 in third on 1m 21.40s. Beside him in his most impressive performance of the year was the Samsonite Chevron B29 of Canadian Peter Ferguson. Very happy with the work of mechanic David MacMillan, Peter lapped at 1m 21.43s.

Of the "Europeans," Vern Schuppan was overjoyed to finally be getting a glimpse of the front of a Player's grid and before he ran out of petrol, he had worked away steadily with the Rapid Movements March 722/73B, finally recording a 1m 21.48s. This was 0.125s ahead of the Skiroule March 75B of Gilles Villeneuve. Beside Villeneuve was Damien Magee, who was getting down to the job of trying to make the Tui-BH2 work around Mosport's hills and dales. With John Nicholson at Silverstone, Allan McCall had two cars for Magee, one set to dry specs and the other for wet, that Damien played with on the second day of practice. But he found that the car worked best on hard settings, and did a best of 1m 21.86s, on the opening day.

The final five positions on the grid were filled by a qualifying race, won by Bill O'Connor's Lola-Smith T360 despite having an engine that was running far from right. He had broken the jackshaft in the weekend's first engine, in practice before official timed qualifying on the opening day, and hence had no dry laps at all.

Dave Walker failed to finish the qualifying race, ending a weekend of woe for the Australian. He had missed the opening day's practice after his car was not ready, as the last touches were being put on following his St. Jovite shunt. On the second day he did not have any dry laps, being forced to learn the circuit as he was lapping in the wet. Starting halfway down the 11 car grid, he was late out, having tried to switch cars for the race, planning to use Robert Joubert's as Walker's own car still had the mysterious misfire from St. Jovite. In the end he ran his own car, but had on it a wheel the team suspected was porous. But a pre-race check showed it had lost no air in the previous three hours. Walker got up to second in the race, before the left rear wheel, the one under investigation, did begin to lose air. The tyre finally went flat slowly losing air, and for the second time this year Walker came into the pits on the rim. But on this occasion it was after only ten laps, and he was done for the weekend.

RACE

Fog, fog, fog and even more fog greeted everyone on race morning. But slicks were the order of the day and with the Canadian flag displayed from the starting tower the field was off, led by Roos, with Forbes-Robinson keeping Brack to the outside where the STP driver had to tip toe gingerly on the outside of the still damp first corner. But Brack had moved into second by the end of the opening tour, with EF-R tucked behind, then Ferguson, Schuppan, Bruce Jensen (Chevron B29), Magee, Villeneuve, Cliff Hansen (March 75B), Bobby Dennett (Chevron B29) coming around in one long stream.

The leading bunch had experienced few changes in the next few laps with Jensen and Magee trading places. Villeneuve had initially dropped back, bothered by a fouled plug which he had discovered in the warm up but that cleared itself up and he was back running well by the fifth lap when he had moved to ninth behind Dennett.

By one quarter distance various groups had begun to form as Bertil was still in command with Brack second and Forbes-Robinson back in third, after having demoted Brack for one lap. These three were covered by two seconds, but then there was a 6.4 second gap to Magee who had risen to fourth in the Tui. Tom Klausler, from his low grid placing, had moved up two more places while Bobby Rahal, also starting a long way down, was into 22nd spot and charging as hard as he could. While all this was going on Hector Rebaque, who had taken a gamble and decided to start the race on rain tyres, was way back.

On lap 11, EF-R moved past Brack, and as he and Roos battled for first, Brack was being reeled in by Magee. The left front tyre on the STP Chevron, which had blistered in the warm up was doing it again and he would soon be stopping; although for wet tyres as it now began to rain.

There had been sprinkles of rain around the circuit, but as the cars started lap 16, so did the rain. Doug Crosty led the team in putting wets on Brack's Chevron, but the stop took over two minutes and he lost a lap and a half. But, if it kept on raining he might be able to make all of that up, and then some, for EF-R and Roos seemed to be showing no signs of coming in for new rubber.

The next few laps were a shambles as drivers went in and out changing tyres, but those who stayed on the track benefited and by half distance some sort of order had returned.

Forbes-Robinson had taken the lead from a slowing Roos two laps earlier, while Craig Hill (March 75B) was now up to third, ahead of Howdy Holmes (Lola T360), Tim Coconis (Lotus 69) and Tom Pumpelly (March 75B). All of these drivers had decided to try and race on slicks. Then came Brack, who had restarted 16th and was, four laps later, already up to seventh, benefiting both from the wet tyres, and his early stop.

Forbes-Robinson was doing an excellent job of controlling his Lola under far from ideal conditions, but Roos was in more trouble, finding the car a bit of a handful. But Brack was really going, and by 30 laps had found himself in third and closing on the Swede. He unlapped himself from Forbes Robinson on lap 31 and then the chase was on, even though Brack didn't know it as his crew was unaware of his position.

Pumpelly had moved into fourth place ahead of the Hill-Holmes battle, which saw the two white cars never more than four seconds apart. Dennett, like Brack was finding the slogging a lot easier with rain tyres and followed Holmes, ahead of Coconis, Rebaque and Villeneuve who had a long stop which dropped him to 19th on lap 17.

Brack was past Bertil on the 36th lap, but he had just too far to go to catch EF-R before the finish, even though the *Penthouse* car had a couple of quick spins in the wet. By the chequered flag the track was beginning to dry, and Brack was only able to narrow the gap by a little bit with each lap. The 10 to 15 seconds he had been chopping off EF-R's lead earlier in the race were a thing of the past. Forbes-Robinson was a tired but delighted victor, exclaiming, "The engine ran really well in the wet, and I was able to use full throttle up the back straight."

Roos was third with Pumpelly a strong fourth in his best finish in three series races. Dennett came to fifth ahead of Rebaque with Hill and Holmes only just over a second apart at the finish.

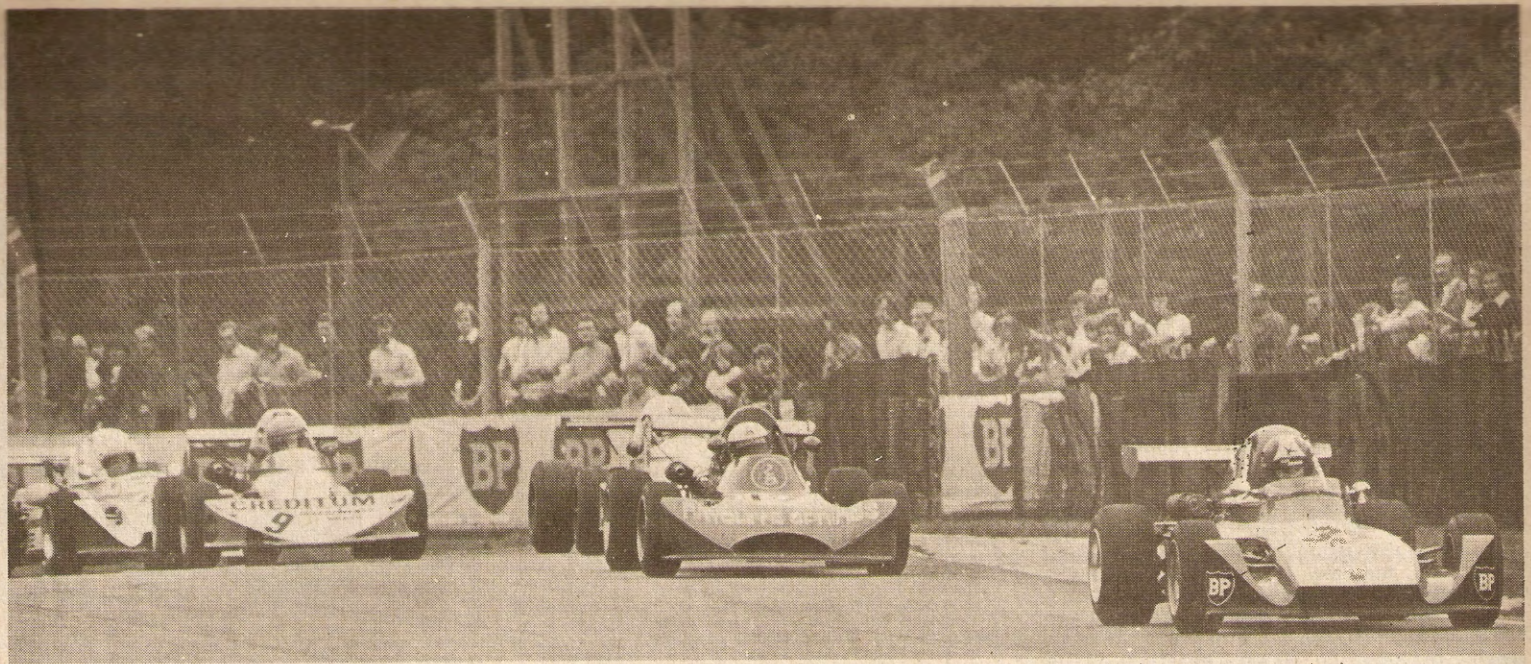
Villeneuve and Klausler were next but both were dropped in the standings with penalties. Villeneuve lost two laps for having too many people over the wall in the tyre change and then getting a push start, which left him in 17th while Klausler lost one lap for too many men over the wall and was given tenth behind Juan Cochesa.

Damien Magee finally finished 13th after a tyre change while Vern Schuppan had an unhappy race, pitting initially on lap three with a broken throttle cable on his March and then having to make another stop when the rains came. He was finally placed 20th, just ahead of Rahal.

CHRIS WADDELL

Players Atlantic Series
Mosport Park, Canada, July 20
41 laps — 100.8 miles
Player's Challenge — round 5

1. Elliott Forbes-Robinson (Lola-BSR Ford T360) 1 hr 10m 24.22s.
2. Bill Brack, (Chevron-Hart Ford B29) 1hr 10m 48.6s.
3. Bertil Roos, (March-Hart Ford 75B);
4. Tom Pumpelly, (March-Cosworth Ford 75B);
5. Bobby Dennett, (Chevron-Hart Ford B29), 40 laps;
6. Hector Rebaque, (Chevron-Hart Ford B29);
7. Craig Hill, (March-Hart Ford 75B); 8. Howdy Holmes, (Lola-BSR Ford T360); 9. Juan Cochesa, (Chevron-Hart Ford B29); 10. Tom Klausler, (Lola-Whitehurst Ford T360), 39 laps.



Danny Sullivan puts the works Molus into an immediate lead from Richard Hawkins, Pierre Dieudonne, Ingo Hoffman and Eddie Cheever.

OULTON PARK

Sullivan's Modus vivendi

It never happened! The Great Confrontation, otherwise known as the 11th round of the 1975 BP Super Visco Formula 3 Championship or Gunnar v Alex, was a one car race as Danny Sullivan scorched to victory and left the two March heroes struggling to leave the grid. After the superb race at the British GP meeting it was a great anti-climax. Indeed most of the BARC NW Centre's meeting was a rather quiet affair with few incidents and not too much in the way of close racing either. It was noticeable that only the Formula Ford final had a full grid, after two heats, suggesting that the new short circuit is not attracting the competitors. Certainly the crowd looked small.

The FF heats for the BAF championship round were very lopsided, all the fast runners being in the second except Geoff Lees and Lou de Marco. Lees was using the ex-Peter White Royale RP21 incorporating several mods for next year but the sum total didn't work and after four and a half laps of trailing de Marco's Hawke with an engine which was cutting out badly from fuel surge on corners, Lees' throttle cable snapped and that was that. Former Moskvich pedaller Eric Horsfield suggested talent by finishing second in his Alexis. The second heat was considerably better even if Jim Walsh's Hawke did lead all the way. His first threat came from Tiff Needell in Chris Hiatt-Baker's Crossle 25F (the owner having taken up hang gliding) but the former Elden driver flew over the kerb down at the Folly and his climb back through the field ended when damage from the incident overheated the engine. David MacPherson's Dulon MP17 took up the challenge for two laps before doing the same thing, but not so seriously, and he almost dead-heated for third at the end with the Hawke of Rick Morris. Walsh's final challenger was Canadian Rod Bremner whose Crossle 25F was only 0.2s behind at the line.

The final was again led all the way by Walsh at the head of a four car train comprising himself, Bremner, Morris and MacPherson whose Dulon acquired a shredded nose during some very close racing. At the end of it all Walsh was still in front by the same margin as before from Bremner who forced his way past Morris on the last lap. The Hawke driver was only half a length behind the Canadian with MacPherson looking vainly for a gap in their wake. De Marco spent most of the race trying to work out how to pass Peter Harrington's improving Merlyn Mk29 which he managed with two laps left to secure fifth.

The Formula 1300 race was one of the best of the day although not for championship leaders Brian Cocks and Phil Lloyd. Cocks retired his Elva on the first lap with an oiled-up plug while Lloyd struggled on without third gear for an eventual seventh place in his Nomad behind all the action.

In the thick of it was Bob Davis in his self-made special chased by Paul Webb's Delapena, Andrew Jeans in an oldish U2 and Bob "Davrian" Jarvis in Bill Cooper's rear-engined Aquila which boasts a mere 1000 cc. Despite the lack of cubic capacity Jarvis gave the Aquila all he's got, leaping from fourth to first in four laps, helped by Davis missing the occasional gear. However, when the gears were there it was evident that Davis had the faster car, he retook the lead on lap six and then kept the experienced Jarvis at bay until the last lap when he spun at Old Hall. Jarvis spun too and it was Davis who was on his way again first as Jeans and Webb closed in. They finished the lap with Davis still ahead while Jarvis, despite a slipping clutch, was just able to stay in front of Jeans and Webb.

From the vast entry at Silverstone the previous weekend only 15 F3s presented themselves at Oulton, indicative of the problems of running expensive machinery on crazily priced tyres, which only last one meeting at £240 a set, for a first prize of £100 and no starting money. BP realise the problem and, after coming to the rescue of the Formula in this country this year hope to help even more in 1976. For their first appearance on the Noddy circuit the F3s had only the Formula Atlantic and circuit record of 57.0s to aim for. Not surprisingly no one managed that but the closest was New Zealander Richard Hawkins in the FS Ratcliffe March 743 at 59.4s, just 0.4s faster than Danny Sullivan's works Modus M1, both cars Novamotor/Toyota powered as was Gunnar Nilsson who equalled the Kentucky Kid's time in his works March 753. Right behind was the Swede's *eminence grise*, Brazilian wild man Alex Ribeiro on exactly one minute in the second works March. There seemed to be plenty of appropriately painted nose cones in the transporter! Belgian B&O man Pierre Dieudonné continued to impress with his BMW GmbH-engined March 753 for a time of 60.2s, equalled by Brazilian Ingo Hoffman in his March-Toyota 753 and American teenager Eddie Cheever having his second outing in a new Modus M1, the first of the Ford-powered cars, courtesy of Neil Brown. How times have changed! Bob Arnott and Rupert Keegan both recorded 60.4s in their March 743s (Ford and Toyota powered respectively) and the last one in the ball park at 60.6s was Herve Regout in the second B&O 753-BMW.

With such close times it looked promising but it all fell apart as the cars prepared to go off on their pace lap. For some inexplicable reason Nilsson's fire extinguisher went off; "I never touched it, honestly!" and he was wheeled to one side. Ribeiro had already had a plug change on the grid and when the cars completed their pace lap he found his clutch slipping and sat on the grid flapping his arms in the air while the other 13 went on their way. After a silent prayer he set off half a lap behind and, although the clutch eventually started gripping properly, he only passed one car throughout the race to finish eighth, all the stragglers having retired together with Cheever who was fifth on the first lap, fourth on the second and then the oil pressure took a dive. Clearly a man to watch.

At the front it was Sullivan all the way. At first Hawkins hung on but: "We broke the golden rule and changed the car between practice and the race to try and reduce the understeer and we went much too far." It was soon apparent that Hawkins would only manage a strong second as Sullivan kept the pressure on all the way to take fastest lap and a stylish win. A real F3 dice of the hairiest kind

Tim Dodwell (centre) holds off the challenges of Peter Jopp (left) and Neil Hepburn.

went on for third between Dieudonné and Hoffman, the Brazilian sitting mere millimetres behind the Belgian who hung the tail of the hi-fi March further and further out. With three laps left Hoffman took a deep breath and forced open a gap on the inside at Old Hall to earn his third place. Arnott was the best of the English drivers in his shoe-string March from Keegan and Regout. Pete Clark's Wisharts Modus was the only other finisher behind Ribeiro.

The programme was completed by two saloon car races for BARC championships. The Britax Production Saloon round had its usual brace of Camaros. Derrick Brunt led for 10 laps and set fastest lap only to be caught and passed by John Brindley who stayed ahead thereafter despite rapidly disappearing brakes. Phil Dowsett, from pole position, kept his Ford Capri in third overall to win the next class, his closest rival being John Markey giving the Arian Mazda RX2 a promising second race until the brake fluid boiled causing a spin at Lodge and eventual retirement. So moving into fourth came the smaller Mazda RX3 of Jock Robertson who was way ahead of his class opposition. In the cheapest category Tony Stubbs kept the Lada 1200 in front of Simon Kirkby's Simca Rallye throughout but the Mini 1275GTs of Tim Dodwell and Peter Jopp provided one of the race's better battles over third in that class.

Once again it was the Brook Hire boys Dave Millington and Tony Sugden who kept a Northern Special Saloon race interesting, this one a Forward Trust round. It could have been a put up job as the cars frequently changed places but the sweat on the drivers' brows afterwards told a different story. Millington's Firenza won after getting the better of some rather hectic lappery of back markers, one white Mini in particular giving the normally placid Sugden in his Escort a big fright down the Avenue. Winner at the last meeting Mike Newman had to be content with third this time in his Viva GT while Phil Winter won his class and was the only other unlapped car in his Cooper S. Robin Farquhar's Motospeed Cooper S had passed Winter with ease on the second lap and might well have given the championship leader a rare beating had a water hose not failed: "Serve me right for not changing it!"

IAN TITCHMARSH

Formula Ford 1600, Heat 1 (6 laps): 1, Lou de Marco (Hawke-Holbay DL12), 7m 6.0s, 83.86 mph; 2, Eric Horsfield (Alexis-Scholar Mk 23B), 7m 9.0s; 3, Frank Potts (Hawke-WRA DL11), 7m 13.4s. **Fastest lap:** de Marco, 1m 9.4s, 85.80 mph.

Formula Ford 1600, Heat 2 (6 laps): 1, Jim Walsh (Hawke-Sscholar DL12), 7m 1.8s, 84.69 mph; 2, Rod Bremner (Crosslé-Rowland 25F), 7m 2.0s; 3, Rick Morris (Hawke-Scholar DL12), 7m 3.4s. **Fastest lap:** David MacPherson (Dulon-Minister MP17), 1m 8.4s, 87.05 mph.

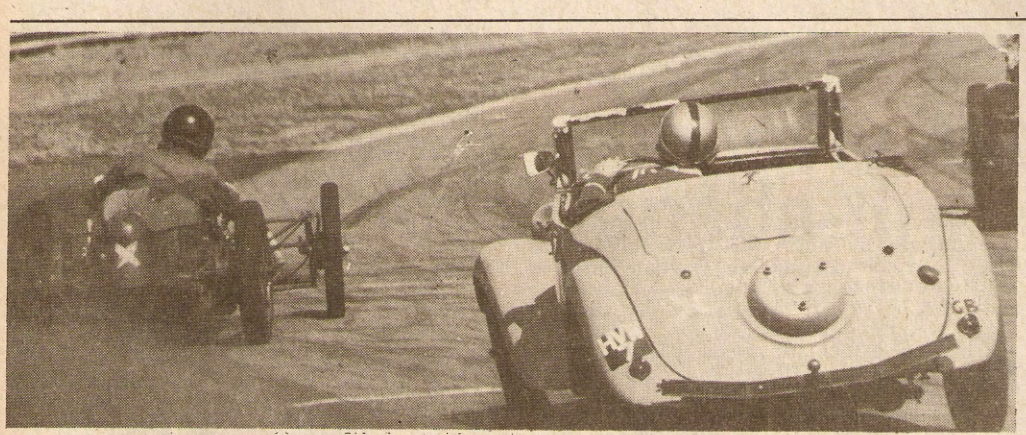
Formula 1300 National Championship round (15 laps): 1, Bob Davis (1.3 Davis-Ford), 17m 49.4s, 83.51 mph; 2, Bob Jarvis (1.0 Aquila-Ford), 17m 52.0 s; 3, Andrew Jeans (1.3 Mallock U2-Ford Mk 8B), 17m 53.2s; 4, Paul Webb (1.3 Delepena-Ford), 17m 55.0s; 5, Vic Waterhouse (1.2 Mallock Us-Ford Mk 14), 17m 59.0s; 6, Jim Ravenscroft (1.3 Messer-Ford Mk 2A), 18m 0.4s. **Fastest lap:** Davis, 1m 8.6s, 86.90 mph **(record)**.

BP Super Visco Formula 3 Championship round (20 laps): 1, Danny Sullivan (Modus-Toyota/Novamotor M1), 20m 6.0s, 98.74 mph; 2, Richard Hawkins (March-Toyota/Novamotor 743), 20m 11.2s; 3, Ingo Hoffman (March-Toyota/Novamotor 753), 20m 18.8s; 4, Pierre Dieudonné (March-BMW) 20m 20.0s; 5, Bob Arnott (March-Ford/Brown 743 t/c), 20m 26.4s; 6, Rupert Keegan (March-Toyota/Novamotor 743), 20m 28.4s. **Fastest lap:** Sullivan, 59.8s, 99.57 mph **(record)**.

Britax Production Saloon Car Championship round (15 laps): 1, John Brindley (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28), 20m 9.8s, 73.82 mph; 2, Derrick Brunt (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28), 20m 13.6s; 3, Phil Dowsett (3.0 Ford Capri 3000GT), 20m 26.4s; 4, Jock Robertson (2.0 Mazda RX3 Coupe), 20m 42.6s. **Over £2,300 class:** 1, Brindley, 73.82 mph; 2, Brunt; only starters. **Fastest lap:** Brunt, 1m 18.6s, 75.76 mph **(equals record)**. **£1,700 to £2,299 class:** 1, Dowsett, 72.82 mph; 2, Neil McGrath (3.0 Ford Capri 3000GT); 3, Gerry Marshall (2.3 Vauxhall Magnum Coupe). **Fastest lap:** Dowsett, 1m 20.4s, 74.06 mph **(record)**. **£1,300 to £1,699 class:** 1, Robertson, 71.87 mph; 2, Peter Slade (2.0 Mazda RX3 Coupe); 3, Bill Sydenham (2.0 Mazda RX3 Coupe). **Fastest lap:** Robertson, 1m 21.6s, 72.97 mph. **Up to £1,299 class:** 1, Tony Stubbs (1.2 Lada 1200), 67.09 mph; 2, Simon Kirkby (1.3 Simca Rallye 1); 3, Tim Dodwell (1.3 Mini Clubman 1275GT). **Fastest lap:** Stubbs and Kirkby, 1m 27.4s, 68.13 mph **(record)**.

British Air Ferries Formula Ford 1600 Championship round (10 laps): 1, Jim Walsh (Hawke-Scholar DL12), 11 m 35.6 s, 85.60 mph; 2, Rod Bremner (Crossle-Rowland 25F), 11 m 35.8 s; 3, Rick Morris (Hawke-Scholar DL12), 11 m 35.8 s; 4, David MacPherson (Dulon-Minister MP17), 11 m 36.4 s; 5, Lou de Marco (Hawke-Holbay DL12), 11 m 41.6 s; 6, Peter Harrington (Merlyn-Scholar Mk29), 11 m 41.8 s. **Fastest lap:** Walsh, 1 m 8.2 s, 87.31 mph.

Forward Trust Special Saloon Car Championship round (15 laps): 1, Dave Millington (2.3 Vauxhall Firenza t/c), 17 m 23.4 s; 85.60 mph; 2, Tony Sugden (1.8 Ford Escort BDE), 17 m 23.8 s; 3, Mike Newman (2.3 Vauxhall Viva GT t/c), 17 m 47.6 s; 4, Phil Winter (1.3 Mini-Cooper S), 18 m 32.2 s. **Over 1300 cc class:** 1, Millington, 85.60 mph; 2, Sugden; 3, Newman. **Fastest lap:** Millington, 1 m 7.4 s, 88.34 mph. **1001 to 1300 cc class:** 1, Winter, 80.30 mph; 2, John Myerscough (1.3 Ford Escort TC); 3, Norman Hinds (1.3 Mini-Cooper S). **Fastest lap:** Winter, 1 m 13.0 s, 81.57 mph. **851 to 1000 cc class:** 1, Peter Cartlidge (1.0 Austin A40-Ford), 77.31 mph; 2, Fred Smith (1.0 Mini-Cooper S); only finishers. **Fastest lap:** Cartlidge, 1 m 14.8 s, 79.60 mph. **Up to 850 cc class:** 1, Roger Gill (848) Hillman Imp), 77.64 mph; 2, Clifford Watts (848 Hillman Imp); 3, Francis Taylor (850 Mini). **Fastest lap:** Gill, 1 m 15.6 s, 78.76 mph.



Giles' GN Salome goes grass cutting keeping ahead of Sellers' blown Citroen.

SILVERSTONE

Lindsay's Hawthorn Trophy

The second of this year's VSCC Silverstone meetings was held on one of the hottest and stuffiest days of the year so far and this was possibly responsible for a fair attrition rate among the most delicate and exciting motors. If all the cars had proved reliable the racing would have been even closer than it was and the spectators were provided with some excellent entertainment even though some of the leading lights of the club fell by the wayside or were unable to run.

The meeting kicked off with a five lap scratch race which was only narrowly won by Steve Stephenson's Frazer Nash from the fleet Riley of David Ellison, which had led for most of the race. The following five lap handicap went to Colin Tieche's superb J4 MG ahead of the burly low-chassis Invicta of Pollock and the rapidly-closing Alvis of Dr Rhodes. Wicksteed's spiritedly-driven Alvis 12/50 was the hare for the hounds for a long time until it was engulfed by the pack on the third lap.

The opening lap of the Boulogne Trophy 10 lap scratch race for Vintage Racing cars belied a rapid thinning of the field. President Bernard Kain's T35B Bugatti led at first to have the lead wrested from him by Keith Schellenberg's Barnato-Hassan Spl outer-circuit Bentley but the weaving of this car under braking was almost unbelievable and presaged an early retirement to leave Kain firmly in charge again. Their entourage at first was made up of the two Bugattis of Ian Preston and Hamish Moffatt and the CoGNaC Spl of Ron Footitt, but Preston spun on the second lap at Becketts and Moffatt retired with no fuel-tank pressure. Footitt ran in an easy second but third place was hotly disputed between Harvey McWhir's monposto Frazer Nash Spl and David Llewellyn's 3/6½ Bentley, the latter getting to the flag before the chain-ganger. John Nutter's impressive Speed Six Bentley won a battle with the ex-Birkin blown Bentley of Rusty-Russ Turner for fifth place, a true battle of the giants.

The next five lap handicap went to Ian Maxwell's trim little Salmson, a rare and pretty car at VSCC events, followed by the redoubtable Wicksteed Alvis and Patrick Gardner's limit MG.

The Pre-war all-comers scratch race had an excellent entry, Cameron Millar's "new" 1938 2.9 blown 'CTF which won Indy in 1939 and 1940 sharing the limelight with the already-seen ex-Howe Bugatti T59. The latter led the race at first and was pressed hard by the remarkably swift but brittle blown SS100 of David Barber. Unhappily Neil Corner departed from the tarmac at speed at Copse and damaged the Bugatti on the fourth lap, the SS retired on the fifth and a very surprised Bill Morris in the ex-Bira Hanuman 11 ERA took over the lead followed by Geoffrey St. John's T51 twin-camshaft Bugatti, Patrick Marsh's ex-Billy Cotton ERA, Ron Footitt's AC-GN Spl, Chris Mann's well-driven ex-Scuderia Ferrari 2.6 Monza Alfa, and Guy Smith's immaculate Norris Spl. Millar's Maserati retired on the fifth lap together with several other prominente.

The five lap handicap which followed went to Conway (Jnr)'s green T37A Bugatti although the Tieche J4 was menacingly close at the flag. MacPherson's 'Nash made it home for third place ahead of a desperate squabble between Manson's Riley, Newton's HRG, Stirling's Nurburg Nash, Giles's JAP engined GN Salome and Dr Seller's extraordinary FWD Citroen. The finish was reminiscent of the best (worst?) finishes in a Formula Ford race, the track being far too narrow to cope with the ambitions of the aforementioned.

Neil Corner was too shaken to take his place on the grid in his 250F in the 15 lap Hawthorn Memorial Trophy race and Patrick Lindsay's 250F led all the way, haunted by the determined figure of Simon Phillips in his rapid Cooper Bristol, the latter with a remarkable refinement of line and style at Woodcote. Cameron Millar held third place in his blue 250F ahead of Alan Cottam's immaculate Connaught, the race being disappointing at the front although some excellent battles raged further down the field, notably between Frank Lockhart's Rover and Ray Fielding's A6GCM Maserati.

After a Bugatti parade, the eight lap Handicap race for the Fox and Nicholl Trophy was won by Chris Mann's Monza Alfa with a drive which netted him the Allied Polymer Driver of the Day award. Humphrey Collis's Alvis was second with Pollock's Invicta, Woodley's Alvis special and Symons' Speed 25 Alvis third and fourth, the latter having led for a long time, from the 1m 10s mark. Richard Pilkington won the next five lap handicap in his handsome, smoking, Lago Talbot from Robert Cooper's rapidly-closing Cooper Bristol and the Connaughts of Cottam and Walton.

The last race, a five lap Scratch race, was hotly contested by the first six and won by Guyatt's Talbot 105, tied for second place between the battling Lagonda 4½s of Barker and Brown with Hall's earlier Lagonda close behind followed by the cheeky Rileys of Barbet and Manson.

ROBIN REW

Scratch race (5 laps): overall: 1, W. Stephenson (1.5 Frazer Nash), 66.51 mph; 2, D. Ellison (1.5 Riley); 3, D. Elwell Smith (1.5 Aston Martin); 4, M. Allison (1.2S MG). **Up to 1100 cc:** P. Gardner (939 MG). **1101 to 2000 cc:** Stephenson. **Fastest lap,** Stephenson, 69.75 mph.

Handicap race(5 laps): 1, C. Tieche (746 MG), 7m 45.0s, 68.91 mph; 2, R. Pollock (4.5 Invicta), 7m 49.6s; 3, D. Rhodes (4.5 Alvis), 7m 50.4s; 4, C. Bird (3.5 Alvis), 7m 52.2s. **Fastest lap:** Rhodes, 1m 19.8s, 72.54 mph.

Scratch race for the Boulogne Trophy, Vintage Racing Cars (10 laps): overall: 1, B. Kain (2.3S Bugatti T35B), 12m 33.6s, 76.82 mph; 2, R. Footitt (2.0 Cognac Spl), 12m 40.6s; 3, D. Llewellyn (6.5 Bentley 3/6½), 13m 12.6s; 4, H. McWhir (2.0 Frazer Nash), 13m 13.6s. **1100 cc class:** J. B. K. Smith (1.1 Riley), 62.79 mph. **Fastest lap:** S. F. Bond (750 Austin Ulster), 64.90 mph. **1101-2000 cc class:** Footitt, 76.11 mph. **Fastest lap:** Footitt, 1m 15.0s, 77.18 mph. **2000 cc and over class:** Kain. **Fastest lap:** K. Shellenberg (8.0 Barnato Hassan Spl), 1m 13.2s, 79.08 mph.

Handicap race (5 laps): 1, I. S. Maxwell (1.1 Salmson), 8m 44.2s, 55.22 mph; 2, R. Wicksteed (1.5 Alvis 12/50), 8m 56.8s; 3, P. Gardner (940S MG), 9m 7.8s; 4, M. Daniel (1.5 BMW), 9m 9.8s. **Fastest lap:** not given.

All-Comers Scratch race (8 laps): 1, W. Morris (1.5S ERA), 10m 2.6s, 76.85 mph; 2, G. St. John (2.2S Bugatti T51), 10m 8s; 3, P. Marsh (1.5S ERA), 10m 8.4s; 4, R. Footitt (2.0 Cognac Spl), 10m 25.6s. **Fastest lap:** N. Corner (3.3S Bugatti T59), 1m 10.8s, 81.76 mph.

Handicap race (5 laps): 1, H. R. G. Conway (1.5S Bugatti T37A), 8m 15.6s, 64.23 mph; 2, C. Tieche (750S MG J4), 8m 15.8s; 3, R. Macpherson (1.5 Frazer Nash), 8m 20.6s; 4, T. Manson (1.5 Riley), 8m 22.0s. **Fastest lap:** Tieche, 1m 20.2s, 72.18 mph.

Scratch race for the Hawthorn Memorial Trophy for Historic racing cars (15 laps): 1, Hon. P. Lindsay (2.5 Maserati 250F), 17m 24.0s, 83.17 mph; 2, S. Phillips (2.0 Cooper Bristol), 17m 27.8s; 3, A. C. M. Millar (2.5 Maserati 250F), 17m 47.0s; 4, A. Cottam (2.0 Connaught), 17m 53.0s. **Fastest lap:** Lindsay, 1m 8.8s, 85.12 mph.

Handicap race for the Fox and Nicholl Trophy. Vintage and PVT cars over 3 litres or 2250 cc supercharged (8 laps): 1, C. Mann (2.6S Alfa Romeo), 11m 33.6s, 74.36 mph; 2, H. Collis (4.3 Alvis), 11m 48.6s; 3, R. Pollock (4.5 Invicta), 11m 52.2s; 4, P. Woodley (4.3 Alvis), 11m 53.6s. **Fastest lap:** Mann, 1m 15.6s, 76.57 mph.

Handicap race (5 laps): 1, R. Pilkington (4.5 Talbot), 7m 1.8s, 77.85 mph; 2, R. Cooper (2.0 Cooper Bristol), 7m 5.8s; 3, A. Cottam (2.0 Connaught), 7m 11.2s; 4, G. Walton (2.0 Connaught), 7m 11.4s. **Fastest lap:** Phillips, 1m 10.0s, 82.70 mph.

Scratch race (5 laps): 1, J. Guyatt (3.0 Talbot 105), 6m 56.2s, 69.54 mph; 2, A. Barker (4.5 Lagonda) and A. Brown (4.5 Lagonda), 7m 0s; 4, N. Hall (4.5 Lagonda), 7m 4s. **Fastest lap:** Barker, 1m 21.0s, 71.47 mph.

"Like a cat on wet lino."

Today I created motor racing history. I crashed my car, crossed the finishing line on foot to be greeted with the news that I'd been classified third in the British Grand Prix. Funny things happen to me at Silverstone.

If you think that's a bit peculiar let me assure you that it was a very peculiar motor race. On the 56th lap of what was going to be a 67-lap race I passed Carlos Pace to take second place in the race. Then the sky opened and rain just fell out. One second I was in control and the next I was a passenger in my own car.

The track was awash and I was on slick dry tyres. When the water gets between those tyres and the track you might just as well not be holding the steering wheel. There's nothing you can do.

I knew it was going to be an accident two hundred metres before the point of impact. There was no point going for the brakes so I teased the wheel trying to turn the car into a spin that I could control. Hopefully I could ease her over on to the grass. No way.

On we went. It was like one of those never-ending bad dreams. I was like a cat on wet lino. Then BANG. Tony Brise was already there and without bothering to announce myself I went straight into the British Embassy.

As I was unstrapping myself two more people came thudding in. They'd been caught in just the same way that I was.

"Tony Brise was already there and without bothering to announce myself I went straight into the British Embassy."

Suddenly I had visions of me, having survived the impact, getting out of the car and having my leg busted by another revolving car. I figured that the best place was right where I was with the strength of Derek Gardner's monocoque around me. So I snuggled down into the cockpit and hunched my shoulders and sure enough there was yet another bang. That one knocked me even further into the sleeper fence and I could feel my feet being pushed back towards me. I knew then that the monocoque was finished and the car was a write-off. But I was still in one piece and determined to stay that way. I looked out and saw a clear track and launched myself out of the car.

There were two five feet high catch fences between me and a safe place. No problem — straight over them in a cross between a Fosbury Flop and a cartwheel.

Then the long walk home. Meanwhile — as they say in the best cliff-hanging thrillers — there had been action back at the start line. Virtually as I'd stuffed it the officials stopped the race with the red flag. Now that means the finishing order is given as the order in which the cars crossed the line on the *previous* lap. At first I thought I'd been hard done by not being allowed to claim my second place from passing Pace. But than I figured that finishing third and in one piece without a car wasn't really such a bad deal.

The race started in the dry and I was running in fifth place when the first rainstorm came. I was first into the pits for a tyre swap. The boys turned me round in 40 seconds which was good enough to put me back into the running without losing too many places. By lap 29 I'd passed Emerson, Hunt and Pace and was in a comfortable lead with an 11 second cushion between the Elf-Tyrell and Niki Lauda's Ferrari in second place. I thought to myself for one brief moment, Christ my luck's changed. Here I am well equipped, running on wet tyres in the rain and leading the British Grand Prix.

Then damn it, the sun began to peep through. Never have I been so unhappy to see the sun shining. Back into the pits for another tyre swap.

That converted my lead into a sixth place but now with slick tyres on I was at least still in the hunt. Pretty soon I was fourth and the order was Hunt, Fittipaldi, Pace and me. James was having some sort of exhaust pipe trouble and Emerson and Pace got past him and then so did I. There I was being third with ten laps to go. Then I got past Carlos and into second and then . . . when the flag came out I believe there were only four cars actually running.

While Tyrrell designer Derek Gardner attempts to make a point, Jody seems interested in other things.

You know Emerson is just plain uncanny. The torrential downpour that hit Stowe and Club corners happened micro seconds after he'd passed through. Brise was only thirty metres behind him and he copped it. Then me, then the rest of the gang. Emerson carried on around, into the pits to get some wet tyres, and off out again. Just like there was nothing wrong. Someone up There is on his side I'm sure of it.

The pre-race pit stop challenge was a real good show. It happened after Friday practice and there were more people in the grandstand to watch it than there had been at the International Trophy race watching the race.

The deal started at Monaco when Emerson knocked Roger Hill, my chief mechanic, over in the middle of our pit stop. The outcome was a friendly argument between Ken and Teddy Meyer and the inevitable happened — a wager to determine who could do the fastest pit stop to swap four wheels. The next thing I heard was that I got a call early in the week to come down to the factory for some important testing. It turned out to be practice for the pit stop. By this time Elf had organised the whole thing to be televised and it was a real big deal.

On the day Emerson and I did a racing start and drove round one lap into a marked out area at the start. And then the boys really flew into action. I was looking across and I could see that the McLaren boys were just about keeping pace with us. Then came the pre-arranged signal from Ken and I slipped the clutch and floored the throttle and left in a cloud of blue smoke. Our time was

"Then came the pre-arranged signal from Ken and I slipped the clutch and floored the throttle. . ."

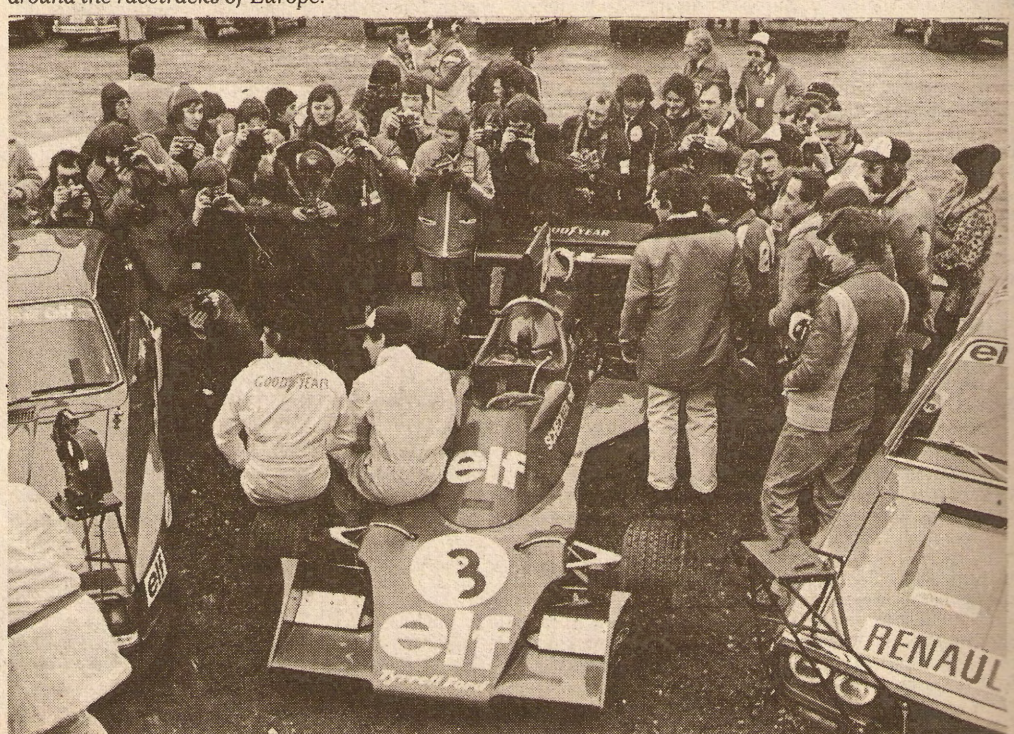
12.8 seconds for a four-wheel swap. We'd won. The purse was £600 which was a neat £100 apiece for the six mechanics. The six beaming, smiling mechanics who then went on their rounds to collect all the various side bets they'd had on themselves.

Both teams had their own little sneaky tweaks. McLaren produced an Indy-type wheel with the locking nuts already in place. But Ken had gone one better than that. We had two air guns for each wheel. One to take the nuts off and the other to put them on. The tweak was that the new nuts were already taped into the guns. It's a hell of a lot easier to locate an already spinning nut on to an axle than it is to jam a gun on to a nut and get it started.

Somebody did suggest that in view of the victory in the pit stop contest and my performance later in the meeting that Elf Team Tyrrell should be sub-titled "The Wheel Tappers and Shunters".

The next stop is Germany and I'm off there now to do a couple of days with Elf with my special camera car taking journalists around the 'Ring for rides. At 22 kms a lap you don't get many laps into a day. Showing journalists around the 'Ring is good fun and of course the benefit for me is more time familiarising myself with those bends and turns and dips and bumps that call for over 150 gear changes a lap.

Jody and Jackie Stewart pose for the press alongside the Elf Cabs in which they transport the jouranlists around the racetracks of Europe.



In statistical terms Hailwoods biggest four wheel success was winning the F2 championship in 1972 in the works Surtees TS10, seen in action at Albi.

Mike the Bike calls it a day

MIKE HAILWOOD, one of the most popular figures motor sport has ever known, recalls to EOIN YOUNG his long career on two and four wheels which he has just decided to give up.

To say that Stanley Michael Hailwood, MBE,GM, was irate was to severely understate the case. He was furious to the point where the worst expletives he could rain on the French desk clerk seemed totally inadequate to the situation. It was midnight in the lobby of the best hotel in Bandol and Mike had arrived back to find that his bed had been removed from the room he was sharing with McLaren designer, Gordon Coppuck. The matter was eventually resolved to Mike's entire satisfaction. He emptied a vase of flowers over the head of the night manager and spent what was left of the night before the French Grand Prix this year on Les Leston's boat.

If there was a problem with his career it was that there was always too much Mike Hawthorn in Mike Hailwood; too many parties, too much life to be lived to worry about the finer points of physical fitness or psychological preparation for the razor-edged reactions demanded by his chosen profession. Someone once persuaded him to lay off the booze before motorbike races and purely as an experiment Mike went along with it; he found that he didn't ride any faster but that he didn't have to stick his neck out as far to go the same speed. That point proved, Mike went back to being "Mike the Bike", living in the style to which he had become happily accustomed.

A year after Mike's crash late in the 1974 German Grand Prix at the Nurburgring when his Yardley-McLaren landed awkwardly off a jump and slewed into the guardrail tearing its front off, I sat with Mike in the lounge of his home at Holyport, Berkshire, and we talked about the career that had given him up. He would never race again but he was reluctant to come right out and say the words. "I don't think I *can't* race again . . . I'm sure I *could* race again but the urge isn't upon me any more. I'd like to have another go in a racing car just to say I've done it and can still do it, not fast or anything, just a drive round, but as far as racing is concerned I'm really not interested at all now. It's all over. The fire has gone out." And that was as near as we got to talking about retirement for Mike who, at 35, is hanging up a helmet that has served him well on two wheels and four and moving to South Africa with his wife and two young children to start a new life. "I might get involved in a small finance company . . . I don't really want to work hard, I just want something to do and bring in a bit of poppy so we can live comfortably . . . I don't want to become a millionaire or anything daft like that."

Hailwood's home is the centre section of a rambling country house once owned by the Duke and Duchess of Milford Haven where the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh did their courting. One of the four bedrooms is still called "Philip's room." The dining hall towers up beyond minstrel's galleries. Under the stairs is the racing Honda 500/4 Mike rode to win the TT in 1966 and 1967, immaculately restored as a gleaming piece of mechanical modern art. The lounge is a big high-ceilinged comfortable room with a bar, a hi-fi set, a Lowrey electronic organ just shipped in from South Africa and about to be shipped back again, and a guitar sprawled across a settee.

Music is one of Mike's main enjoyments. His greatest scholastic achievement was learning to play all the instruments in the school band. Among the photographs under glass on the bar counter is one of Mike with Chris Barber and his band. It brough back memories of Mike at his Heston apartment on a rare quiet night putting on a Barber trad jazz record and joining in on his clarinet. Music for Chopin's Nocturnes was propped rather incongruously alongside "The 50 Great Songs of Lennon and McCartney" on the organ in typical Hailwood fashion: Different,

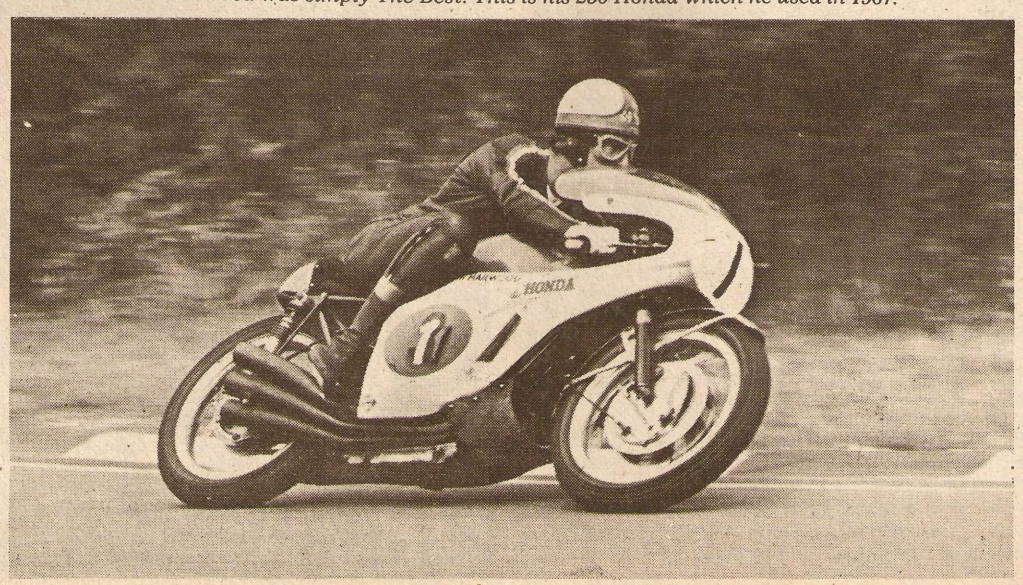
The Punch like profile that made Mike so popular to motor sport fans throughout the world.

nonconforming, individual, a loner who has only just come to terms with the idea of being married. There is an oil painting of him driving the Yardley-McLaren, the framed citation of his MBE signed by the Queen, and a framed letter from Oscar Wilde to a friend. The Hailwood family home had once been owned by Wilde and Mike's father had bought the letter to preserve the link with the house.

It first dawned on Mike that he might never race again when the orthopaedic surgeon in Johannesburg told him last December that his foot needed another operation. "I thought 'There's no way . . . if I have the operation in February and it takes three months for the plaster to come off and another three months before it's right, it's going to be August or September and it'll be over again for another year," and I thought then that I might as well knock it all on the head. But, you know, I held out hopes that things might come out right and I had the operation. I thought things might be better because the doctor said they would be and I suppose they are . . . but only minimally . . . I'm sure I *could* drive a racing car again, you can adapt to anything, can't you? But the urge isn't there. You think, well, this time it was my legs, next time it might be my neck. I had a lot of crashes on bikes but I never really hurt myself, well, the usual broken collarbones, ankles, fingers and silly things, but it's not just a thing about getting hurt again . . . it never bothered me before and it doesn't bother me now, but I've got responsibilities now and I feel it's time to settle down." He laughs as he talks about his responsibilities, family life with Pauline, baby David just over a year old, and Michele who is 4, but the mere fact he acknowledges these responsibilities shows a change in Mike's manner. A settling-down, as he says.

When Mike raced motorcycles he was quite simply The Best. He was Jackie Stewart and Jim Clark and Stirling Moss rolled into one and mounted on a motorcycle. He was perfection and when he raced he looked like a leatherclad part of the machine. He won nine world championships

On a motorbike Hailwood was simply The Best. This is his 250 Honda which he used in 1967.



and 12 TT races round the daunting 37¾-mile Isle of Man track. The last time he raced on 'the Island' was in 1967 when he won the 250, 350 and 500 TTs on Hondas and set lap records in each class. His outright lap record at 108.77 mph stood until it was bettered in the 1975 TT by Mick Grant on a 750cc Kawasaki. I asked him why he thought he had been so good on bikes. The question almost embarrassed him. "I don't know that I really was so good . . . I was lucky in that I always had good machinery and I used to cram a lot more races into a year than most people so I got a lot of experience. I used to race everything and anything. I had a lot of experience on machines with different characteristics and I suppose it all added up . . . experience more than anything really." There were always rumours that Mike would be lured back on to two wheels but he says he never really gave offers serious consideration.

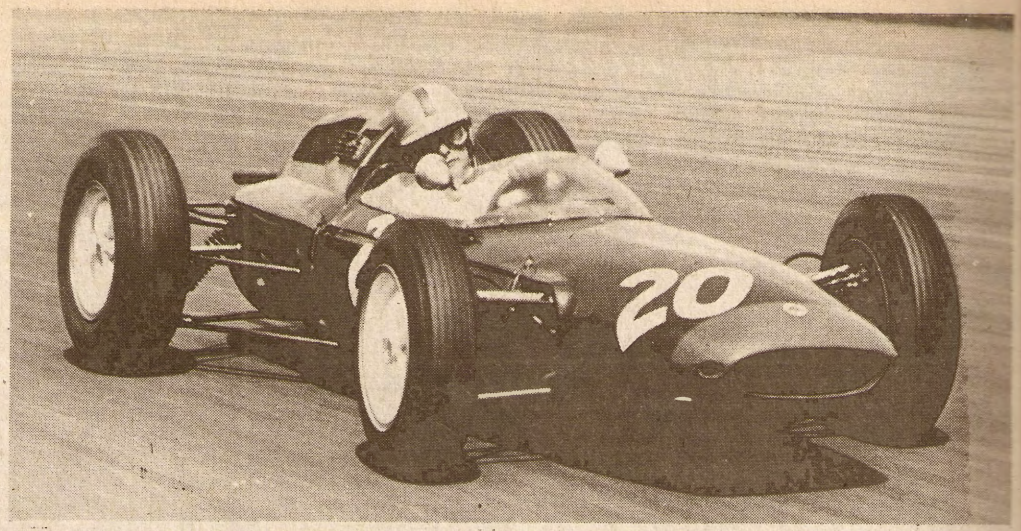
"I went round on the back of that big new Honda with Geoff Duke at the Isle of Man this year and I really got a bit frightened at times even though he wasn't going fast, but it's always different when you're on the pillion and not in control. Then down at Villefranche Jochen (Mass) loaned me his 900cc Kawasaki and I was running it round the roads down there thinking 'Christ, did I do this? I must have been bloody mad!' I don't really think I could do it again . . . probably in the back of my mind it has put me off . . . being hurt . . . obviously it does . . ."

Hailwood changed from bikes to cars on two occasions. In 1963 he bought a Formula Junior Brabham and in 1964 he drove a Lotus Formula 1 car for Reg Parnell but the cars weren't competitive and he went back to bikes again. The second switch came in 1968. "It was early in the year and I was called over to Japan by Honda for the usual test sessions with the new bikes as we thought but we were taken to the Hilton Hotel in Tokyo and told that Honda were pulling out of racing!" The other teams had already signed their riders but Honda treated Mike well, paying him his 1968 contract fee and more besides, as well as a couple of racing bikes "to play with in the international races." With the rest of the year free he decided to go back to cars and raced with the Gulf team in long-distance sports car events and later in Formula 5000. He never went back to bikes. "At that time I'd done all there was to do on bikes, won more world championships, more TTs and more GPs than anyone else and I was a bit fed up with the situation where you were *expected* to win every time. If you didn't win they said you were finished and if you did win you were a nasty fellow . . . it was all a bit of a bore really, you couldn't do anything right. I'd also just lost the world championship for the second time through no fault of my own and I was a bit peeved about that so it seemed like a good time to try something else . . ."

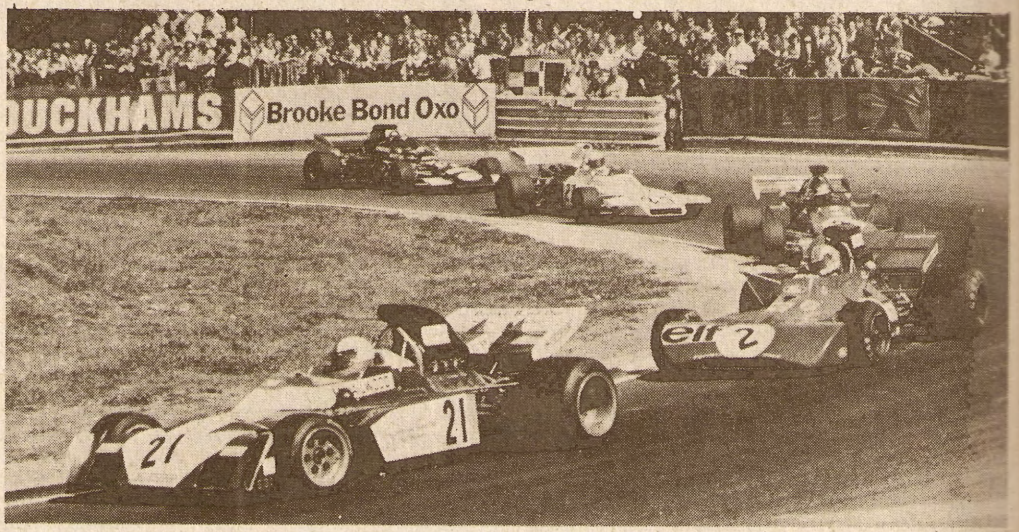
Mike once said that he had a great relationship with John Surtees when he was driving for him – Mike ignored John and John ignored Mike. Was it like that? "We really worked together quite well because he could understand what I was trying to say and occasionally we'd get it all together and it went bloody well but in 1973 I scarcely finished one race. We were still good friends but I just didn't have any faith left in him as a designer. It was a disastrous year. We still get on well together . . . I know he's a difficult bloke to get on with but I'd like to think that I changed him a bit . . . he seemed to mellow a lot while I was there. We used to get pissed occasionally and he didn't mind if I had a few drinks, in fact he and Rob Walker used to encourage it!"

The 1972 season saw Hailwood rise in the estimations of the pundits as he won the European Formula 2 Championship for Surtees and came close to winning two GPs. Mike was at his best on fast circuits like Kyalami and Monza and in the 1972 South African Grand Prix Mike started from the second row of the grid in the TS9B and by lap 28 was closing to pass Jackie Stewart's Tyrrell for the lead when the Surtees front suspension broke. At Monza in the Italian GP Mike lost his air box early in the race, robbing the Surtees of power but he still finished second to Fittipaldi. The year before at Monza he finished 4th in that glorious chase across the line with cars spread all over the road separated by fractions of a stopwatch tick.

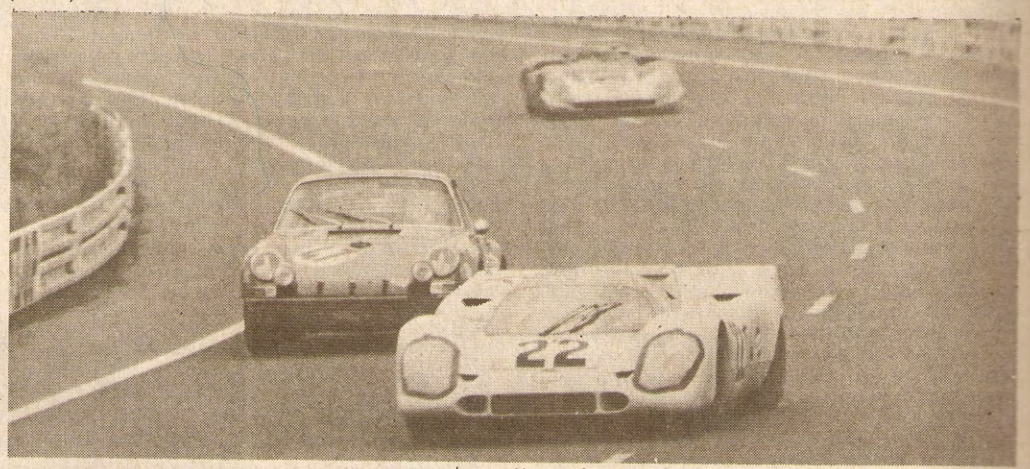
Why was he so quick on fast circuits when the same flair seemed to be lacking on medium-pace tracks? "I always found fast corners much easier than slow corners. I was hopeless at Jarama and places like that. I just couldn't get the car sorted out." Was it perhaps a case of fast tracks requiring as much courage as skill, I wondered aloud? Mike didn't think so. "It was probably more a question of ultra-fine balance on fast corners, something you needed more on a bike, but on slow corners it



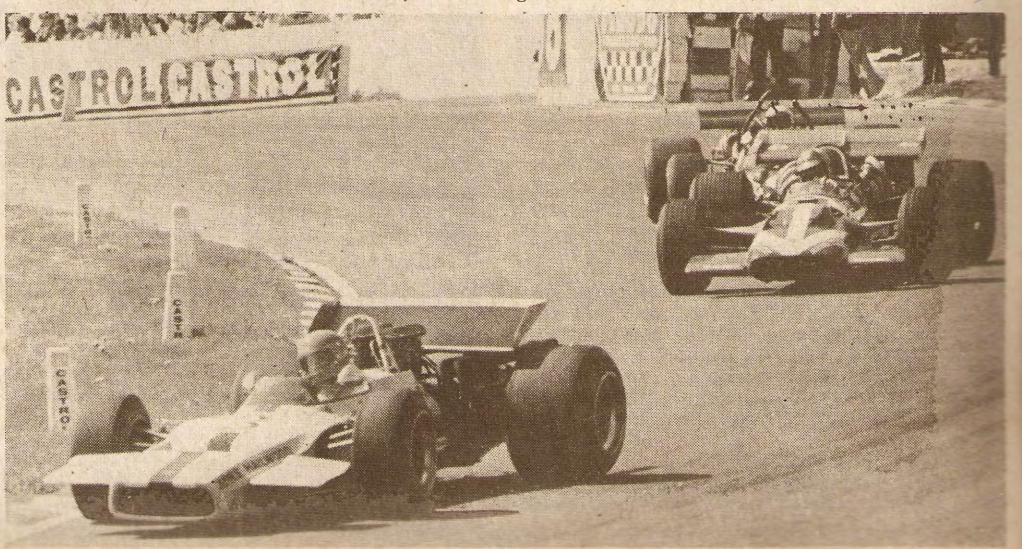
Hailwood's first, unsuccessful, F1 season was in a Reg Parnell Lotus in 1964.

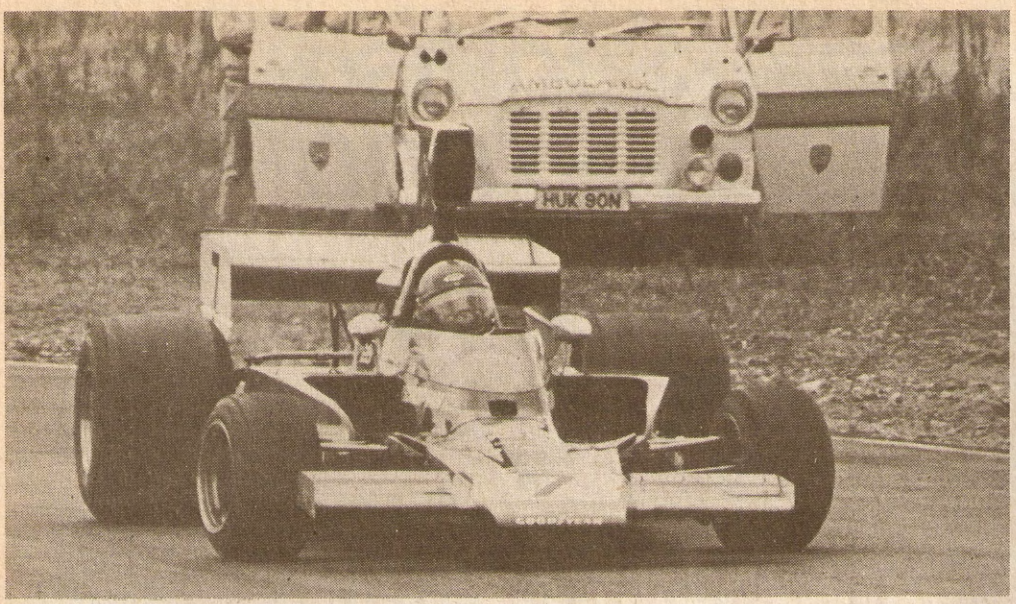


1972 was so nearly the year of Mike Hailwood in F1 but luck was not smiling on him and the Brooke Bond Surtees (above). In 1970 he shared a Gulf Porsche 917 with David Hobbs at Le Mans but Mike crashed it (below).



In the early days of F5000 Mike was one of the leading runners in the Lola T192.





Bob Evans showing his class in his very convincing victory.

SNETTERTON

Evans returns and wins

By IAN PHILLIPS **Photos by MIKE DIXON**

It was the welcome return of a forgotten hero last Sunday at Snetterton when last year's F5000 Champion Bob Evans accepted a last minute drive and, following all the disappointments of the BRM F1 team this year, he showed that he he had lost none of old style and totally annihilated the opposition. Not only was it good to see Evans back in the winners circle, but also Sid Taylor, whose Lola-T332 it was, who has also had a lean season so far.

After a two month break since the last Shellsport Championship round it was hoped that the series may have picked itself up from the rather low level that it reached in May. Unfortunately this was not to be. Although the times were very close in practice the race, other than a few brief laps in the middle, was really pretty ordinary. Only two other cars finished on the same lap as Evans while the other five finishers were anything between one and seven laps behind.

Quite where F5000 misses out is difficult to pinpoint but other than the winning team there didn't seem to be a single person be it sponsor, entrant or driver who had a good word to say for it on Sunday.

ENTRY and PRACTICE

A few of the 18 cars that turned up for official practice made use of the Saturday afternoon that was given over to them for some pre-race testing but nothing really startling happened. The really quick people were fractionally under the minute mark but generally times were in the 60s bracket.

Sunday was hot and sticky as the drivers, most of whom were unhappy at the dinstinctly 'clubbie' status of the meeting and the circuit, prepared for their 45 minutes of official practice. At the end of it Teddy Pilette was credited with a 60.0 s in the Belgian Racing Team VDS Lola T400. Teddy was obviously delighted but nobody else, not even his team, actually clocked him at that. Although the VDS team have carried out a good deal of testing during the lay off there actually wasn't much new about their 400s. 'Just some new springs and rear wing' said Pilette. Also, if other drivers are anything to go by, he had the hottest thing in Moteurs Morand by the speed he was going down the straight. Second fastest, and only .2 s further back, was the man regarded as pole 'winner', Bob Evans. The reigning champion was back at the wheel of a T332 Lola for the first time since winning the championship at the end of last year. With Vern Schuppan in the US of A Sid Taylor urgently needed a driver and on Wednesday night acquired Bob's services for his car. Although Sid's operation is of a shoestring nature (the team hasn't won a race since Brian Redman went to America early last year) the car was, as always, immaculate and Evans was delighted with the way it was going.

Next up was Richard Scott driving for Evans' old team, Alan McKechnie, in the Durex Lola T400. Well it's still referred to as a 400 but the non-rising rate suspension all round looked distinctly similar to T332 spec. Scott managed 60.4 s before spinning off at the new Esses and showering the car in dust. There was a slight worry before the race that a stone may have been digested by the engine but happily this proved not to be the case. Ian Ashley equalled this time in the Shellsport/Richard Oaten T330 which, despite its age, is still very competitive. However its rear suspension doesn't get the rear wheels, and consequently the power, on the road as well as the later models and the wheelspin and jammed second gear problems were making life a little difficult for the series leader.

The Lec team have put in a lot of miles in their V6 Ford powered Chevron in testing and now have three engines at their disposal. And they needed them. Two blow ups before official practice left them with just a saloon car mill but nevertheless David Purley went well to post a 61 s dead, knowing that the car was capable of a good deal more. Gordon Spice's Reed Racing T332 was looking really immaculate and going just as it looked to equal Purley's time while Peter Gethin was another to stop the official clocks at 61.0 s, although the team had him a little quicker. However, they were too busy ordering lunch to complain about it! Peter didn't really feel that much progress had been made on making the car go any quicker although he said it felt safer to drive fast.

'I was standing in the garage on Friday afternoon and saw this hunk of iron sitting there, and thought, oh well, I can't sell it so I might as well race it and try and win some money', was Tom Belso's answer to our rather surprised look when we saw his Lola T330, totally unsponsored, in the Paddock. He was trying as hard as ever and despite the engine not pulling very well got down to 61.8s. Guy Edwards was none too happy with his engine either in the Encyclopaedia Britannica Lola T332, 'It's handling beautifully but just won't go'.

Dutchman Boy Hayje was again looking very competent in Toine Hezemans' ex-Hesketh March with Ford V6 power. He managed a 62 s despite some engine problems and really looked to be the last of the really competitive runners. Brian McGuire and Mick Hill both managed to do 63.0 s in their respective Lola T332 and March 74As neither having any specific complaints. Patrick Sumner made a reappearance in his still surprisingly smart looking Trojan T101 now running under the Sumner AeroBonner banner. He did 64.6s.

The smartest and newest car at the circuit was the March 75A Ford V6 of the RAM/Thursdays team with Embassy-Hill F1 star Alan Jones at the wheel. The car, which is based on the wide track F1 March, did one lap at Silverstone on Thursday before ariving at Snetterton for unofficial practice on Saturday. In just twelve laps, 'when I wasn't even comfortable and was just running it in', Jones did a 60.4 s before the first of a series of engine mishaps occurred — a plug blew out. With the aid of a helicoil a new one was put in for official practice but this blew out after just one lap at 66.2s. Having no spare engine, John Macdonald's patient crew tried once more to replace it but after the rather excessive three warm-up laps it blew again and was unfortunately a non-starter.

Despite only managing one timed lap Jones wasn't the slowest. John Turner (Lola T330/67.0s), Brian Robinson (McLaren M19/67.6 s), Chris Featherstone (McRae GM1/68.8 s) and Dennis Leech (Chevron B24/69.2s) were all behind him.

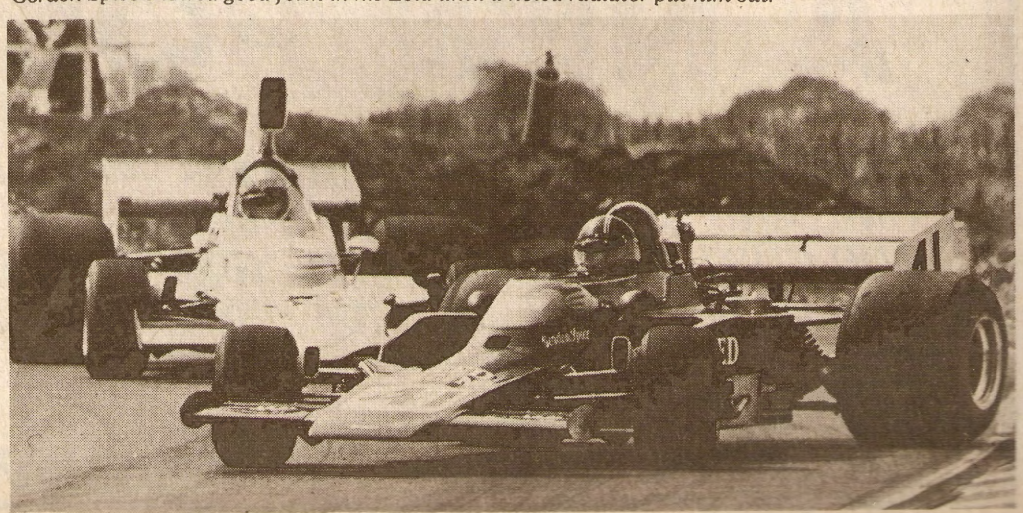
The race was scheduled in the regulations to be 50 laps or 100 miles, but when, after at least six months since notification, the competitors realised that they were only being paid for a short (75 mile) race they of course complained and asked for 35 laps only. John Webb intervened and said 40 laps which was accepted. His reason for doing this, he said, being that the current fragile state of F5000 cars which couldn't guarantee too many finishers. After a two months lay off this really is not a very healthy state of affairs. The drivers, not unnaturally, want bigger meetings to play at and to do away with short mickey mouse circuits, but on the other hand one can see the promoter's point of view that until the cars are reliable they daren't put on anything too grand.

RACE

Three warming up laps were allowed for the cars before they formed up on the grid, followed by yet another before they were actually flagged away. Turner didn't come out at all, Jones' engine failed again, Edwards went into the pits when the fuel pressure gauge broke and spewed over him and Hayje's engine died on the grid. Edwards came round and parked behind him, not seeing the waved hand, and got away late as Hayje was pushed in vain.

Evans made one of those starts everyone dreams about, the wheel spin being just perfect,

Gordon Spice showed good form in his Lola until a holed radiator put him out.



and virtually before poleman Pilette had moved Evans had slotted in front of him. From then on he led with ease and never looked like being beaten. Bob just drove with the neat and precise style, never looking extended, which brought him so much success last year.

At the end of the first lap Ashley, Pilette, Spice, Gethin, Scott, McGuire, Belso, Sumner, Hill, Robinson, Leech, Edwards and Featherstone followed. Purley was the first retirement having pulled off at Riches with a broken water pipe and a shower of very hot water.

Pilette took second down the back straight on lap two and he, Ashley and hard charging Spice looked set for battle. However, as Evans set a new record on the second lap the rest began to spread out. Gethin and Scott caught Spice, whose gear lever had broken, on lap three and Peter went past. That was the only significant place change in the first ten laps. Belso ran alone behind Scott and after five laps Edwards was by all the stragglers and behind him. By lap ten Robinson and Sumner had retired while Hill had made his first pit stop; one lap later Leech went off at Sear spilling oil and Featherstone was soon in the pits. At least all the front runners were still going.

Ashley started to close on Pilette on lap 12 and Gethin, in turn, looked to be getting closer to him leaving behind Scott, who had passed Spice. Pilette was in fact in big handling and braking problems. By lap 20 Ashley and Gethin were right with him and for the next five laps we had a taste of what F5000 ought to be about as Ashley made a big effort to get in front. However all was not well with Ashley either as he had a slow puncture in his right rear. This caused him to make a mistake at Russell on lap 25 and Gethin got by, then he spun it completely two laps later and slightly damaged the wing but nevertheless carried on. Gethin couldn't do much about Pilette 'I was trying my hardest but it's just not a quick car', but he didn't have to worry. On lap 31 the right hand radius arm finally gave way after baulking against the exhaust and the rear suspension collapsed. Ashley, but this time, had made a pit stop to investigate his puncture while Spice pulled off having just passed Ashley, with a holed radiator caused by a rock thrown up by Ashley. All this elevated Scott to third place, despite slowing more and more with brake problems. Evans' advantage at the end, despite a split exhaust, was 11s while Gethin had 24s over Scott, these three being the only runners to go the full distance.

Edwards, despite his early dramas and a pit stop with a puncture, finished fourth with Ashley, who made another stop with fuel starvation, fifth and McGuire, who soldiered on throughout but not too quickly, sixth. Hill and Featherstone completed the finishers many, many laps behind.

Not very inspiring, let's hope Mallory is better in two weeks' time.

SUPPORTING RACES

The meeting kicked off with a round of the Allied Polymer Group FF2000 championship. Although the grids are still a bit thin, 13 started this one, the racing is good and the cars quite impressive — it deserves another chance. Making a demon start in this round was Adrian Reynard from the third row of the grid and at the end of the first lap his Spax/Triple C Reynard led the field from Sid Fox, Derek Lawrence and Ian Taylor. Fox had it next time from Lawrence and Taylor who were all pressing hard. Reynard was dropping down the field his nose cone having touched a front tyre and given him 'strange vibrations'. Lawrence (Crossle) took the lead into Riches on the fourth lap and went on to score a fairly easy win. Fox' challenge ended on lap seven when he pitted with overheating, a substituted rad after a practice failure not coping with the job. The battle then was really on between Taylor's Dulon and Bernard Vermilio's Merlyn. The two never actually changed places for any length of time but Vermillio's effort was well worth watching although he nearly lost it all at Russell on the last lap. Richard Dutton (Crossle) and Frank Bradley (Elden) were next while Reynard, having satisfied himself that all was okay, put his boot in again and recovered to take sixth on the same time as Bradley.

It appeared at one time that Jock Robertson was going to walk away with the small class Radio 1 saloon race and although he led from start to finish he had, in the last two laps, to contend with mighty pressure from Tony Lanfranchi's DJM Records Mazda. Tone had been letting it all hang out in superb style round Coram in the early laps before putting in some quick ones; he caught right up with Jock on the penultimate lap but not even his well tried tricks could upset the confident youngster in Gerry Marshall's car.

Race debutant Mick Leary spins as Peter Slade and Cozy Powell take avoiding action.

Jean-Pierre Aux finally took third place having, 'ow you say, anticipated ze start very nicely from the third row and always been in contention. Cozy Powell had been right there all the time too and took a well earned fourth, .2s in front of Peter Slade. Mick Leary, having his first car race, showed well before a spin but still finished sixth. The other rotarians all spun at some stage. Simon Watson walked away with the small class although Peter Jopp told us he was the star finishing third behind Neville Knight. After all these years and he still thinks he's going to make it.

In the big class race Brian Rice appeared to be walking away with it until he ran out of brakes on his Camaro which allowed Bob Ridgard and John Brindley to almost catch him on the line after a race long tandem performance. Roger Payne took an easy third after Derrick Brunt spun, and Phil Dowsett an easy fourth after Ivan Dutton did the same. The dice of the day though was between the two Radio stations represented: Noel Edmonds' 247 Capri and Gerry Marshall's 261 Vauxhall. Noel, after a troubled practice, really got the bit between his teeth and was motoring well but halfway through the race found the not inconsiderable shape of one G. Marshall filling his mirrors and more. The battle of Radio 1 and LBC was going to be settled here and now. Quite honestly nobody gave Noel too much of a chance despite Gerry's lack of ccs — if Gerry Marshall's leaning on you, be it physically or in a car, let's face it you don't have much of a chance. But Noel was having none of it — he clouted Gerry first just to show he was in business! Now, that you certainly don't get away with. But retailiation meant nothing, the Castrol Capri ('We're not worried bout the shell') kept on going. The banging went on, down the straights, round the corners, everywhere. But it was Noel who held it to the end in a superb race and took second in the class.

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Snetterton's second only Shellsport Escort race was an all lady affair. Four cars made this exciting with Divina Galica finally taking the honours. She took the lead from Susan Tucker Peake at Riches on the first lap. It looked over but after four laps they were right together and Susan, in fact, led briefly on lap eight before Divi took charge again. Lorina Boughton made a superb start and took third place although Wendy Markey kept her under considerable pressure throughout.

The Speed Merchants/*Classic Car* championship race rounded off the racing as the first, very welcome, cooling breeze, reached the circuit. Willie Green in JCB250 set off from pole as if he intended to lap the field in the 10 laps in Antony Bamford's Ferrari 250 LM. But, having demonstrated the car's speed, he eased off to let team mate Frank Sytner bring the JCB Lightweight E type get within striking distance. Sytner, Brian Classic (Iso) and Brian Ham's Lister got involved in a first lap mix up at Riches caused when Richard Twaites' Elva broke its throttle cable in the middle of the corner. With Green and Sytner powersliding out of Russell, Classic and Ham took it more steadily but still well ahead of Brian Baker's Lotus 23B. Ian Hilton's splendid AC Cobra was next up once John Webb's Elan quit with a broken driveshaft.

Shellsport European F5000 championship
Snetterton, July 27. 40 laps 75 miles

1, Bob Evans (Lola-Whitehurst T332), 41 m 30.8s, 110.83 mph.
2, Peter Gethin (Lola-Morand T400), 41m 41.5s.
3, Richard Scott (Lola-Whitehurst T400), 42m 5.2s.
4, Guy Edwards (Lola-Whitehurst T332), 39 laps.
5, Ian Ashley (Lola-Fewkes T332), 38.
6, Brian McGuire (Lola-RES T332), 38.
7, Mick Hill (March-Hill 74A), 33; 8, Chris Featherstone (McRae-Morand GM1), 33.

Fastest lap: Evans, 1m 1.2s, 112.76 mph **(outright record).**

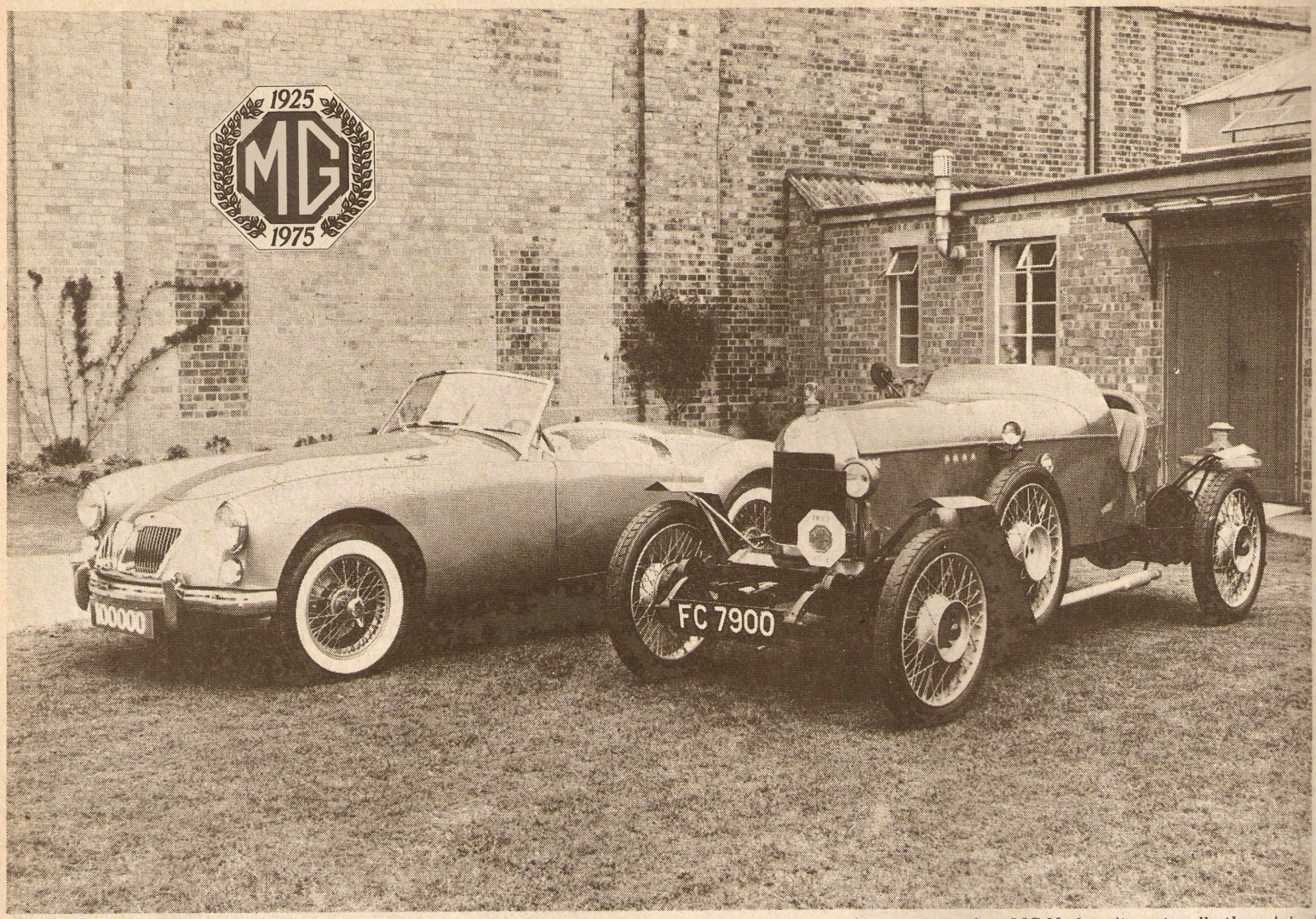
Allied Polymer Group FF2000 Championship race for the Anglia TV Trophy (15 laps): 1, Derek Lawrence (Crossle-Titan 31F), 17m 47.2s, 96.99 mph; 2, Ian Taylor (Dulon-Holbay MP16), 17m 49.8s; 3, Bernard Vermilio (Merlyn-Scholar Mk 28), 17m 50.0s; 4, Richard Dutton (Crossle-Brown 31F), 18m, 9.0s; 5, Frank Bradley (Elden-Brown), 18m 19.6s; 6, Adrian Reynard (Reynard-Oselli 75SF), 18m 19.6s. **Fastest lap:** Lawrence, 1m 9.6s, 99.15 mph.

BBC Radio 1 Production Saloon Car Championship round, £1300 to £1,699 and up to £1,299. (10 laps). Overall and £1,300 - £1,699; 1, Jock Robertson (2.0 Mazda RX3), 14m 58.2s; 2, Tony Lanfranchi (2.0 Mazda RX3), 14m 58.8s; 3, Jean-Pierre Aux (2.0 Mazda RX3), 15m 24.0s; 4, Cozy Powell (2.0 Mazda RX3), 15m 24.4s; 5, Peter Slade (2.0 Mazda RX3), 15m 24.6s; 6, Mick Leary (2.0 Mazda RX3), 15m 41.2s. Fastest lap: Robertson, 1m 28.4s, 78.07 mph **(record). Up to £1,299:** 1, Simon-Watson (875 Sunbeam Imp Sport); 2, Neville Knight (1.3 Simca Rallye 1); 2, Peter Jopp (1.3 BLMC Mini GT). **Fastest lap:** Watson, 1m 34.2s, 73.26 mph **(record).**

BBC Radio Production Saloon Car championship round, over £2,300 and £1,700 to £2,299 (10 laps). Overall and over £2,300: 1, Brian Rice (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28), 14m 17.0s, 80.53 mph; 2, Bob Ridgard (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28), 14m 17.6s; 3, John Brindley (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28), 14m 17.6s; 4, Roger Payne (5.7 Chevrolet Camro Z28), 14m 28.6s. **Fastest lap:** Rice, 1m 23.8s, 82.35 mph **(record). £1,700-£2,300:** 1, Phil Dowsett (3.0 Ford Capri), 77.87 mph; 2, Noel Edmonds (3.0 Ford Capri); 3, Gerry Marshall (2.3 Vauxhall Magnum). **Fastest lap:** Ian Dutton (3.0 Ford Capri), 1m 27.0s, 79.32 mph **(record).**

Shellsport Escort Ladies Celebrity race (10 laps): 1, Divina Galica, 16m 33.8s, 69.44 mph; 2, Susan Tucker Peake, 16m 35.0s; 3, Lorina Boughton, 16m 36.4s; 4, Wendy Markey, 16m 37.0s. **Fastest lap:** Galica, 1m 37.8s, 70.56 mph **(record).**

Speed Merchants/Classic car championship race, front engined GT cars up to 2000 cc, Front engined GT cars over 2000 cc, Sports racers up to 2000 cc, Sports racers over 2000 cc and Others (10 laps). Overall: 1, Willie Green (3.3 Ferrari 250 LM), 13m 29.0s; 2, Frank Sytner (3.8 Jaguar LWT E), 13m 30.2s; 3, Brian Classic (5.3 Iso Griffo Le Mans Bizzarini), 13m 36.4s; 4, David Ham (3.8 Lister Jaguar), 13m 38.32. **Front-engined GT cars up to 2000 cc:** 1, Bill Nicholson (1.8 MGB) 76.47 mph; 2, David Pratley (2.0 Marcos Volvo GT); 3, Ken Eady (1.6 Lotus Elan). Fastest lap: John Webb (1.5 Lotus Elan S1), 1m 22.8s, 83.35 mph **(record). Front engined GT cars over 2000 cc:** 1, Sytner, 85.18 mph; 2, Classic; 3, Ian Hilton (5.0 AC Cobra). **Fastest lap:** Sytner, 1m 19.0s, 87.36 mph **(record). Sports racing cars up to 2000 cc:** 1, Brian Baker (1.6 Lotus 23B), 82.27 mph; 2, Alan Brownlee (1.6 Lotus 23B); 3, Mike Ostroumoff (1.3 Lola Mk 1) **Fastest lap:** Brownlee, 1m 20.6s, 85.62 mph **(record). Sports racing cars over 2000 cc:** 1, Willie Green, 85.31 mph. **No other finishers. Fastest lap:** Green, 1m 17.8s, 88.70 mph **(record). Others:** 1, Ham, 84.35 mph; 2, Mark Finburgh (4.7 Ford GT40). No other starters. **Fastest lap:** Ham, 1m 19.6s, 86.70 mph **(record).**

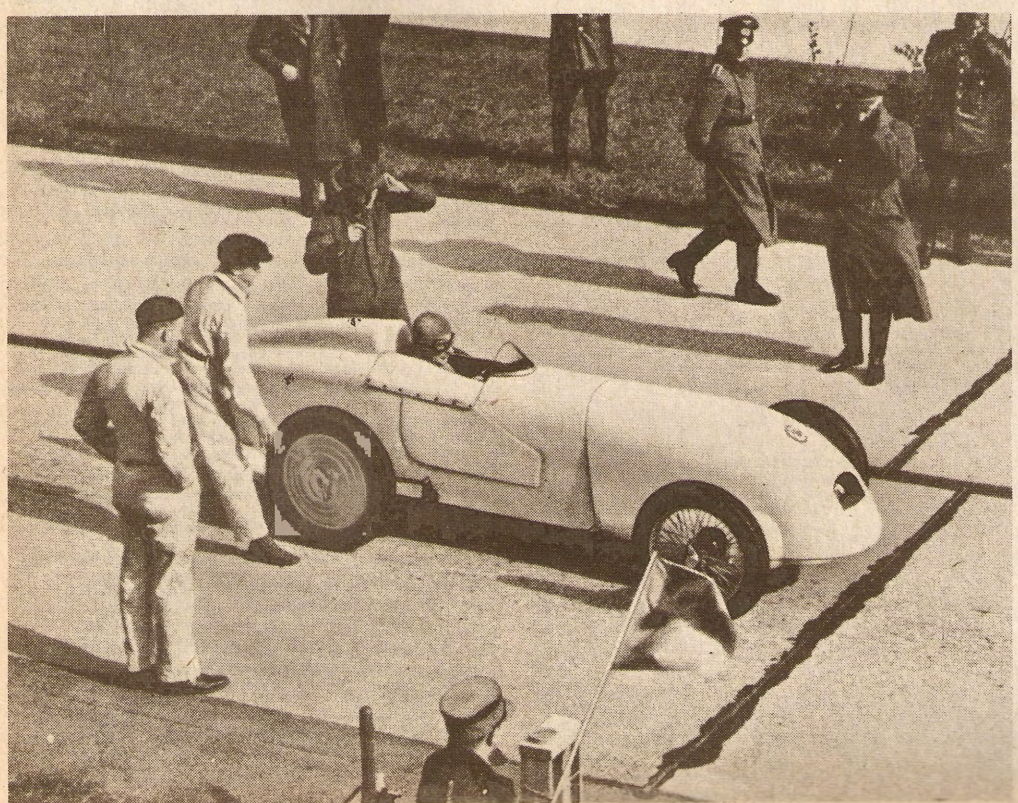


The MGA (left) was the first production sports car of its type to achieve 100,000 units. Alongside stands the immaculate MG No.1, quite naturally the original.

Fifty years on for MG

JOHN BOLSTER takes a retrospective look at the marque's Golden Jubilee.

"You can do it in an MG" proclaim the lastest ads but we doubt whether they refer to world land speed records in which this marque participated with specially constructed cars.



To condense the MG story into an article as short as this would merely be to give a long list of models and dates. I make no excuse therefore, for picking and choosing, leaving out some cars which readers may consider worthy of mention.

The *marque* started in the Morris Garages at Oxford where Bill Morris had serviced the cars and motor bikes of the undergraduates and subsequently built some two-and-four-wheeled vehicles himself. In the nineteen-twenties, he had moved to more commodious premises at Cowley, where he blew Henry's Model T right off the road and put Herbert Austin firmly in his place. The old 'shop' was run by a young man called Cecil Kimber, who specialised in attractive bodies on Morris chassis and did a bit of trials driving on the side.

Kimber was a genius at building cheap but practical bodies with sporting lines, and their light weight improved the performance of the Morris Oxford chassis he used. His first production car was the 14/28 super sports, which had the immortal 'bullnose' radiator and the 75 x 102 mm (1802 cc) Hotchkiss engine; naturally, the name of the garage where it was assembled was shortened to MG, by which initials the car was called late in 1924. When the bullnose radiator was replaced by the flatnose, Kimber restyled his open two and four-seater to suit and even produced a sporting saloon, calling the car 14/40, though no Hotchkiss engine ever gave 40 bhp.

With prices starting at £350, the MG was for the man who couldn't quite find £500 for a 12/50 Alvis. The cars were pretty, the firm had to move to bigger buildings, and an up-market model was added, using an overhead-camshaft six-cylinder engine from the Morris Isis. Prices for the MG Six of 1928 started at £480 and it was called the 18/80, though once again it didn't give 80 bhp! Much more important in that year, however, was the announcement of the first MG Midget, the M-type, at £175 (yes, one seven five!).

When W. R. Morris bought Wolseley Motors, he found that they had an 847 cc overhead-camshaft engine all ready to go, and it formed the power unit of the new Morris Minor. Cecil Kimber was delighted with the little engine, which gave the light 2-seater MG Midget a useful performance and soon chased the popular Amilcars and Salmsons off the roads of Britain. When the

Midgets won the team prize in the tough and destructive Double-Twelve at Brooklands, the fantastic MG success story in racing had begun.

The next stage was to reduce a Midget to less than 750 cc and take away the many records held by the supercharged Austin Seven. H. N. Charles, by far the most brilliant engineer at the MG works, designed the chassis, while Ernest Eldridge evolved a supercharged version of the engine, still with a 2-bearing crankshaft. It is history that George Eyston was the first man to exceed 100 mph in a 750 cc car, an honour which Austins were hoping to achieve. Only a few years later, a 750 cc MG was timed at 140 mph.

PRODUCTION MGs

Let us return to production cars. In 1932, Kimber unveiled his J2 Midget, with twin carburettors, proper centre locking wheels, underslung chassis at the rear, and – most significant – a slab-tank, and spare wheel instead of a pointed tail. Sports cars had streamlined tails because Brooklands racers did but their effect was nil when mudguards and number plates spoilt the shape. The trim little Midget set a fashion that other manufacturers soon followed and it cost £199 10s.

As Wolseley were making the Hornet Special – an unbelievably ghastly pseudo-sports car – Cecil Kimber got to work on the 1271 cc six-cylinder engine. His first effort, the F-type Magna, was a rather dreadful car, but the L-type was much better. The Hornet engine was too whippy to stand much improvement, so MG designed the Magnette, which was far more heavily built and became one of the greatest engines of all time. In 1100 cc form, it won more races than I have room to mention and the MG took over where the Bentley had left off in maintaining British prestige.

In highly supercharged form, the Magnette engine was eventually developing just on 200 bhp per litre. One of its most memorable achievements was in Goldie Gardner's record breaking car, when it averaged over 200 mph for the short-distance records in the 1100 cc class. The mechanics then whipped off the head, stuffed a boring bar down the cylinders, slipped in some bigger pistons, and Goldie went straight back onto the road to take the 1500 cc records, again at over 200 mph.

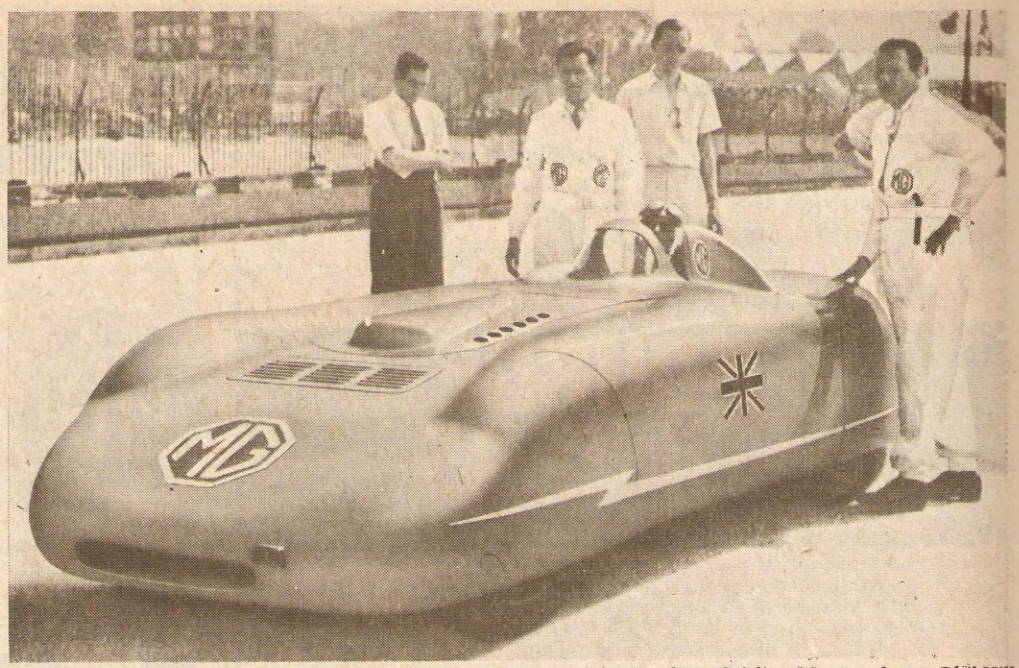
RACING MGs

The racing Midgets became so fast that the drivers couldn't keep them on the road. H. N. Charles designed the R-Type single-seater, with wishbones and torsion bars for all four wheels, which showed great promise and was to be followed by production cars with sophisticated suspension. Then the axe fell. Sir William Morris (later Lord Nuffield), detested racing and sports cars, so he issued a directive that the MG was to become a victim of badge-engineering, using pushrod engines from the Morris-Wolseley range instead of the famous overhead-camshaft units. Then Cecil Kimber was killed in a railway accident and the great days of MG seemed to be over.

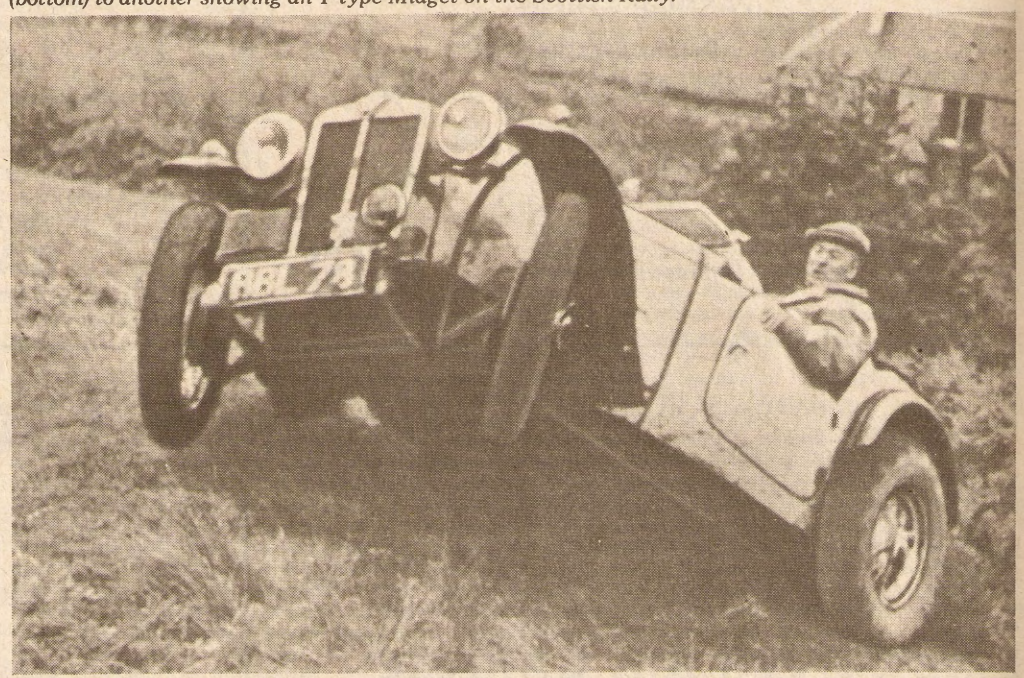
Nevertheless, the name became great again after the war. Real sports cars were built, races were won, and Phil Hill drove over the salt lake at Utah at over 250 mph. Above all, export records were broken when the country needed dollars, and many young men and women found out that open car motoring is the best there is.

The Midget became heavier and even had synchromesh and suspension that worked – the tough sports car drivers of the nineteen-thirties would have called it a "pansy-wagon" in the jargon of the day. The arrival of the Twin-Cam engine made many of us hope that the glorious days of the K3 Magnette were going to return, but it was not to be. The Twin-Cam proved unreliable in the hands of the public and was hurriedly phased out. Worse still, the octagon badge was tuck onto a Morris Oxford saloon, which was given the sacred name of Magnette. Let us not be too nostalgic, however, for though we pretend to yearn for a "real" Magnette, with friction-type shockers done up tight and different sparking plugs for town and country, how many of us would really buy one if we could?

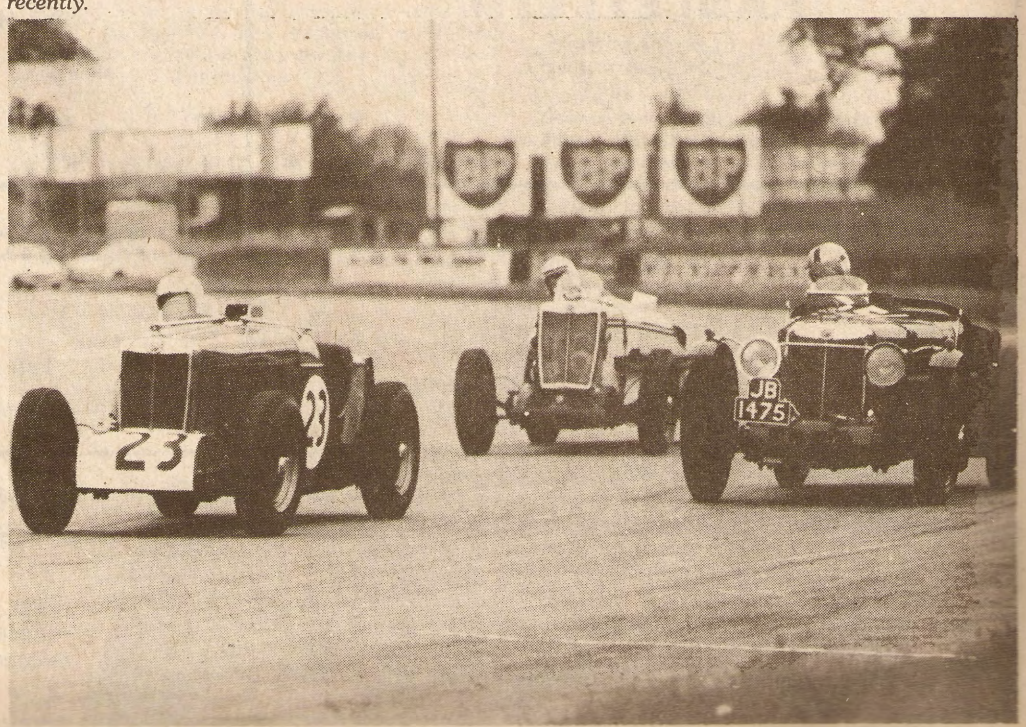
At present, the name of MG does not figure largely in the race reports, and that all-independently sprung super-car, which was to have been introduced in 1935, has still to make its appearance – let's hope its modern equivalent is just round the corner. Though these are not happy times for the sports car, it is far from dead, and there are people all over the world, speaking many languages, for whom "sports car" is spelt "MG".



MG success in breaking world records (top) came through Goldie Gardner, Stirling Moss and even Phil Hill. Gardner's record breaking car, with its supercharged 1100 cc Magnette engine, was capable of 200 mph while American Phil Hill later crossed the Utah salt flats in excess of 250 mph. From one MG extreme (bottom) to another showing an T-type Midget on the Scottish Rally.



MG enthusiasts entertain a PB, Magnette and K3 type thrash it out in a Triple 'M' race at Silverstone recently.



Weslake's stratified combustion

JOHN BOLSTER investigates the fuel saving properties of HARRY WESLAKE'S latest creation

The piston engine is only in its infancy and its design shows no sign of reaching finality. Protagonists of rotary engines belittle the reciprocating power unit, suggesting that it is merely a bad adaptation of nineteenth-century steam engine practice. Yet, the ancient principle remains obstinately with us and no other form of prime mover has so far approached it for real efficiency, which means the extraction of maximum power from every drop of fuel.

If car engines only ran at one speed, the design of combustion chambers would be relatively simple. These engines exist, notably in such stationary applications as driving electric generators, but no car travels for long at a constant speed. Even in racing, it is quite usual to sacrifice a few horsepower at peak revs for more torque in the accelerating range, with a consequent improvement in lap speed.

On the road, a much wider band of revolutions is used. Even a bad engine can give an acceptable performance if it is allowed to waste fuel at small throttle openings, but the car which gains a reputation for heavy petrol consumption remains in the showroom unsold. No car is driven flat-out for more than a tiny fraction of its working life and though a great improvement in fuel economy at full power is unlikely to be achieved, all existing cars are grossly inefficient when driven at normal traffic speeds. It is in this area that progress must be made, for the amount of money you spend on petrol is largely determined by the part-throttle efficiency of your engine.

The design of carburetters, induction pipes, and exhaust systems is so well understood that spectacular advances are unlikely. It is the combustion chamber itself that offers the greatest opportunity. The classic ideal, with a hemispherical head and inclined valves, it not necessarily the answer, and it is worth examining some of the earlier solutions. Before the war, there was a period when many manufacturers abandoned their overhead-valve engines and reverted to side-valves, or overhead-inlet and side-exhaust valves. Even firms with a racing background made the change, notably Mercedes-Benz and Lorraine-Dietrich, while W.O. Bentley's 4-litre was another example and Rolls-Royce and Rover were later to follow suit.

The attraction of the side combustion chamber was in the turbulence which it imparted to the gases. It reached a very high stage of efficiency as a result of Sir Harry Ricardo's work on combustion chamber design, which the Americans developed in producing some truly excellent engines that led the world for smoothness and flexibility. It was the trend towards short piston strokes and high compression ratios that caused the abandonment of the S.V. and Io.e. designs, but it is now recognised that their desirable features can be emulated in the necessarily more compact space in an O.H.V. head.

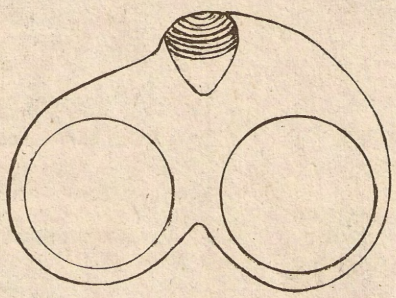
Knowing that Harry Weslake has designed many production heads in the past for various manufacturers, and that he has been working on something new, I made another pilgrimage to Rye. It is well known that many firms, notably Honda, have tackled the pollution problem with stratified-charge engines, but Harry Weslake reasoned that the principle was also applicable to fuel economy, particularly at light throttle openings.

The stratified-charge engine works on the principle of having a combustible mixture close to the sparking plug, where it can be ignited. The rest of the cylinder contains a weaker mixture, tapering off to almost pure air, but once the combustion has been initiated, the rest has got to burn. As only a part of the cylinder head contains a normal fuel-air mixture, the saving in petrol is obvious, and likewise the products of combustion contain far less noxious material. What is even more important is the influence on detonation.

Incipient detonation is the curse of the petrol engine and restricts the H.U.C.R. (highest useful compression ratio). It will be realised that a pressure wave passes across the head, away from the sparking plug and ahead of the flame. With a homogeneous mixture, the rising pressure can reach a stage where the part of the charge remote from the point of firing will ignite by compression-ignition, but at such a high momentary compression that detonation instead of propellant burning takes place. Detonation causes dangerously high local temperatures and shock loading. Engines that detonate feel rough and tend to have a short life.

The stratified-charge engine cannot detonate, because the part of the combustion chamber remote from the plug does not contain enough fuel for the process; in other words, you can't explode plain air. Such engines can demonstrably have their compression ratio raised without becoming rough, also accepting more ignition advance. It is highly desirable to have a high compression ratio for part-throttle economy, because the spark takes place early under these conditions. Consequently, the piston is not yet at the top of the stroke and the compression ratio is perhaps 4 to 1 instead of 9 to 1.

Some stratified-charge engines have a layered charge by using two inlet valves, as on early gas engines. The Weslake system, which is the subject of patents, is to do the job by centrifugal force. If the charge is given a rapid swirl, the fuel will go to the outside, where the plug is situated. Distances and plug position are vital, but the effect is achieved without employing an extra inlet valve. The answer is the cardioid or heart-shaped combustion chamber, with an inlet valve that is masked for about the first ⅛in of its lift, to give high gas velocity on opening and closing. In addition to a cast-in shroud round the inlet valve, there is a bulge between the plug and the exhaust valve. The path of the gases is known and the curious-looking combustion chamber shape directs the swirl in the desired direction. Harry Weslake already had much of the necessary technique at his finger tips when he started this project, because he had designed multi-fuel engines, largely for military purposes, which relied broadly on similar principles.



The Weslake heart-shaped combustion chamber. In this view, the inlet valve is on the right and the threaded hole for the sparking plug is at the top.

A 65 mpg Mini Tested

Its all very well to talk about the things that happen inside the combustion chamber, but these events occupy such an unimaginably short space of time that the human brain can scarcely comprehend them. I therefore jumped at the opportunity when Harry Weslake offered to let me test a car myself, that had stratified-charge combustion chambers. Nothing was changed except the cylinder head, the standard pistons being retained. The ignition was slightly more advanced than usual, but the distributor was straight off the shelf and unmodified, while the carburetter had only undergone the usual timing for slow running and clean pick-up.

Personally, I am not very interested in consumption figures taken at constant speeds because its seldom possible to keep up a steady pace on the road. However, so many claims of this nature are being published that I give here the result of tests on the car I tried:

MINI 1000

	mph	60	50	40	30
Standard	mpg	39	46.5	53.5	61
Weslake	mpg	51.9	59.4	67.4	75.9

Its well known that there is a lot of power lost in the multitude of pinions in the Mini transmission, but this disadvantage applied equally to the unmodified car and the Weslake version.

When I tested the car, I decided to use it as a typical Mini driver would. I stuck to the speed limits religiously and did not use a motorway, which in any case do not abound in that part of Sussex. I drove through Rye, where road repairs were causing chaos, and also had to wait at a level crossing, but most of the roads on my morning route were flat. Lunch *chez* Weslake was quite a lengthy repast and I emerged to find the engine cold. However, starting on a weak mixture is one of the claimed economy features, so I did not use the choke.

Another even more chaotic crossing of Rye was followed by a pleasant wander round the country lanes, including some steep little hills and sharp bends. The car was definitely livelier than a standard Mini and would pick-up briskly and cleanly from lower speeds in top gear. I had no opportunity to time the maximum speed but the machine seemed at least as fast as a standard vehicle. My conclusion was that there were no disadvantages of any kind and that most owners would greatly prefer to have a Mini with a Weslake head, because of its improved acceleration and reduced gearchanging.

The fuel consumption of my stop-go jaunt round the county of Sussex worked out at 65.13 mpg. Our petrol imports could be greatly reduced if there were many such cars around. In the past, one has tended to think that there was little point in trying to get more than 40 mpg, but with petrol at its present price, the 60 mpg car is a far better proposition than the 40 mpg version. I would very much like to try the car over longer distances and at higher speeds, but it would certainly appear that this is one of the few modifications that really do save petrol. I've tried most of the bolt-on goodies, but none of them give a worthwhile saving, so this test made a pleasant change, for there is a substantial improvement in economy.

At the time of my visit, certain negotiations were in progress, but all I can say is that this head will become available, either as an accessory or on a production car. I am grateful to Harry Weslake for letting me test it at this early stage and it proves that the advantages of the stratified-charge principle are available without complicated, multi-valve heads and unusual piston shapes. It also indicates that improved fuel economy need not be obtained at the expense of performance.

Harry Weslake (left) discusses a point with Technical Editor John Bolster.

Only 24 hours to go, and already there's hectic race into Eau Rouge at the start. From left to right, the leading bunch read Tricot (Opel), Blackburn and Walkinshaw

SPA 24 HOURS

A walk in the Black Forest

By BOB CONSTANDUROS **Photos by JBA PHOTOGRAPHIC**

They say that the Spa 24 hours is a hard race: it is hard on cars, it is hard on drivers, it demands courage, and sometimes, it is hard emotionally on those who compete. Last weekend, it was all those things. The fact that the winning car had to pass its own teamate's wrecked car, that of Alain Peltier/Marc Demol, which had crashed heavily and been involved in another of the almost infamous Spa tragedies, was one of those hard cases. But for the second year running it was a Luigi BMW, this time driven by local BMW dealer Jean Xhenceval and Brussels drinks manufacturer Hughes de Fierlandt which won the classic race, with scarcely a problem. Peltier and Demol had led until the crash, on Saturday evening and then their teammates simply inherited the lead until the end — and never lost it. Although there was a strong challenge from Britain's Ford Capris and a six strong team from BP Belgium in the form of G1 and G1¾ Opels, it was another BMW that came second, this one a G1 silenced version for "Pedro," a fruit importer from Belgium and Yvette Fontaine, the well known Ford works driver. Holman Blackburn and Mike Crabtree flew the flag for Britain and Hermetite by coming third after various problems. Their teammates John Fitzpatrick and Tom Walkinshaw had blown up early on Sunday while lying a very close second. Sadly, the Triumph Dolomite Sprints showed none of their previous form, and there was only one very lame car at the end. But once again, Alfa Romeos ran really reliably, and two took fourth and fifth, the Kings Cup and the 2 litre class. In the night, a tragic accident involving four cars claimed the life of the quiet Dutchman Wim Boshuis as he climbed out of his crashed G1 Opel. Later, when the leading BMW car driven by Peltier came across some of the wreckage, that too crashed very hard into the Armco, claiming the life of a young spectator. But the show went on as always, and once again, there was no doubt as to the impression given by the superb preparation of both the leading BMWs which simply ran and ran and ran.

ENTRY AND PRACTICE

This year's Spa 24 hours was the fourth round of the Coupe de l'Avenir — the championship of the future and not surprisingly, attracted a predominantly Continental entry. Not surprisingly because the Formula for this championship is based around what the Belgians call Formula Francorchamps, which is generally described as Group 1¾, for air dams, larger carburetters, racing tyres, flared arches etc are allowed, although the

Below, the eventual second placed G1 BMW of "Pedro" an eventually blew up.

Vermeulen (Opel) and Peltier and Xhenceval (BMWs).

Fontaine comes up to lap the quick Wynns RS2000 which

regulations don't go quite as far as the old Group 2. Since last year, a rather pointed rule change had been made allowing differential coolers. This is pointed because in last year's event, considerable problems were experienced with the overheating diffs of the winning Luigi BMW driven by Alain Peltier and Jean Xhenceval and during the race, they were draining all the oil and refilling the diff with new oil. This year, then, they weren't going to have to go through such a procedure.

The circuit of Spa was still its old self, the circuit that sends many drivers into differing raptures, either over how unsafe it is, or what a superb circuit they find it. But their reasons are all the same: it's the long curves, the flat out blinds through the wooded hillsides of the Ardennes, and the swoops down from Les Combes through the houses to Burnenville. Although there are obviously corners, there are few that are particularly slow, only that at La Source above the pits where the cars slow from a four kilometre blast through the trees to a mere 35 mph, and the Malmedy 'traffic island' chicane after the cars have screamed down the hill from Les Combes, through the village and the long, long Burnenville righthander, still nearly flat out, and then ducking into the chicane. Then they set out down the Masta straight for the four kilometer blast to Stavelot, another long righthander, taken nearly flat out.

Naturally, all the Coupe de l'Avenir contenders were present among the 80 strong entry list, who were fighting for sixty places on the grid. Championship leader is a little Fiat which has sung round in previous races to win its class regularly, but second equal in the series, with 2 victories to its credit is the Hermetite Capri II team which includes one of last year's works cars. To the great delight of the British, it was this car which took pole position, although not without some problems. Practice was held in two sessions, a night session from seven in the evening to eleven on Thursday which started wet and a day session from three to six on Friday. One regulation, which was to have unfortunate consequences, was that a car and its drivers should do five laps in the night session to qualify.

But fortunately, this was one of the problems that the polewinning Capri II of Tom Walkinshaw/John Fitzpatrick was not to encounter. However, the team were trying some gearbox tweeks and these proved none too successful, for in the first practice, the car jumped out of third gear and overrevved, putting some 1200 revs more than reckoned on the clock. When Walkinshaw went out, the engine let go in a big way, breaking the crank in two places and cracking the block. A spare engine was fitted for the second session, but this time, the gearbox gave trouble. So that was changed but then the clutch packed up too and out came the gearbox for the second time. Still there was some time left and Fitzpatrick went out again (Walkinshaw had no wish to further his reputation for breaking things) and set the fastest time of practice, 4m 24.4s which compares well with his quickest time in the same car last year of 4m 27.9s but is fractionally slower than the pole time of 4m 23.2s last year set by a Mustang. The Hermetite team reckoned 15 to 16 laps per refuelling stop.

Just 0.4s slower than the Hermetite Capri was the first of the Luigi Racing 3.0 BMW CSis, that of Marc Demol and Alain Peltier with F3 driver Pierre Dieudonne nominated as reserve driver on his return from Oulton Park. This is in fact is Demol's car, a customer of Luigi's from nearby Liege and he had asked Peltier to drive it. Not surprisingly, and rather depressingly for Peltier, he was considerably quicker than the car's owner and despite his win last year, he had settled for a lower position this year. Both Luigi racing BMWs, the second driven by Jean Xhenceval/Hughes de Fierlandt, were developing around 250 bhp with Kugelfischer mechanical injection, Alpina parts and a new close ratio gearbox for third and fourth gears. Xhenceval/de Fierlandt shared this front row with a time of 4m 27.1s which was two seconds quicker than the fastest BMW last year. The BMWs reckoned they could do 12 to 13 laps before their refuelling stop.

The second row held the first of many Opel Commodores, the BP Belgium works run version of Rene Tricot and Dany Wauters, the latter actually owning the car, but the team had another five cars as well. This car, with injection, had a further 5 bhp than last year bringing it up to 208 bhp. Tricot, the quicker of the two, set a 4m 27.9s, some three seconds faster than the previous year. The Opels would pit about the same time as the Capris for fuel.

Sharing this row was the Levis Racing Opel of Huub Vermeulen/Fred Frankenhout who had considerable problems. Their 4m 32.7s was troubled by a loose electrical contact which couldn't be traced in the first session, and then they tried various axles in the second, finally plumping for a shorter version when the long one didn't work. Then the accelerator union broke, so they still hadn't gone as fast as they felt they could, despite the second row.

Heading the next row on 4m 34.7s was the second of the Hermetite Capri IIs, the new car that was to be built up as a RAC/Southern Organs G1 car, but after Walkinshaw's annihilation of one car at Monza, it was turned into a Francorchamps version, and very smart it looked. Holman Blackburn and Mike Crabtree had no problems for their time. Beside them was another of the Luigi Racing entered BMWs, this driven by Jean-Jacques Feider and Jean-Marie Detrin. In the second session, they had considerable problems getting third gear and the car was very bad in the handling department, but they still set a 4m 36.3s.

Sharing this third row should have been the second G1¾ Opel Commodore of Patrick Neve/Albert Vanierschoot, but after suspension sorting in the first session, the carburettered car blew up in the second, and was never seen again. Neve, the Belgian now living in England, who had decided on this race rather than race the Safir at Oulton so as to help out the financial problems of the Safir team, was seconded into the car placed higher up the grid to drive with Tricot and to keep Wauters happy, he was placed as reserve in one of the other G1 cars.

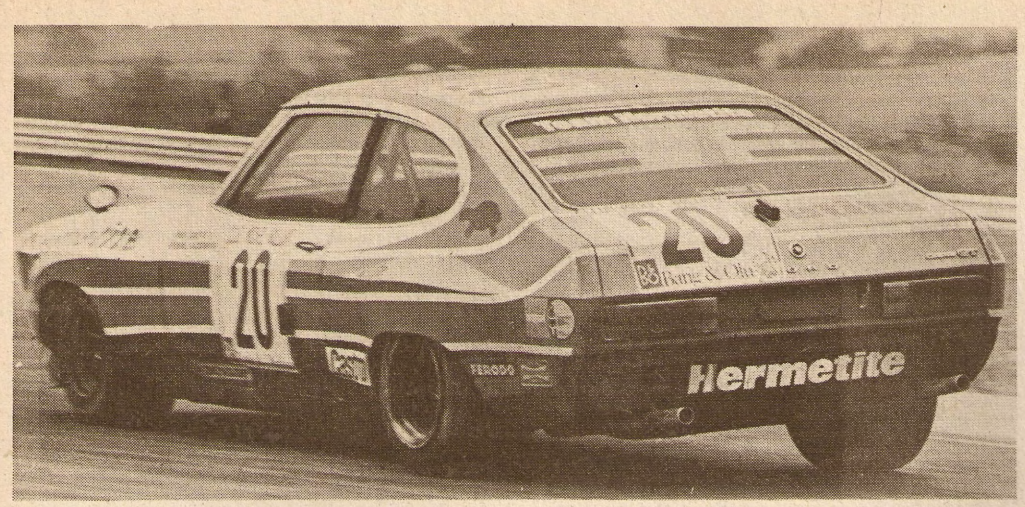
The next three cars on the grid were all very Group One, even down to silencers, and all Opels entered by BP Belgium for Flory Roothaert/Paul Calliauw, Jean Louis Ravenel/Gerard Forotti and Edgar Joossen/"Marco."

Next up, behind these trouble-free Opels, was the only big car in the race, the Chrysler Hemicuda of Jean-Charles Gorris/Olivier de Croy and Formula Vee driver Baudouin van der Rest. The 'Cuda was quite successful last year, but this year was entered on an extraordinary sponsorship system by 1000 Belgian franc per ticket with the car being raffled at the end of the race. Goris, a former journalist, was very mindful of starting for his many sponsors, and took things fairly easily for his 4m 42.6s.

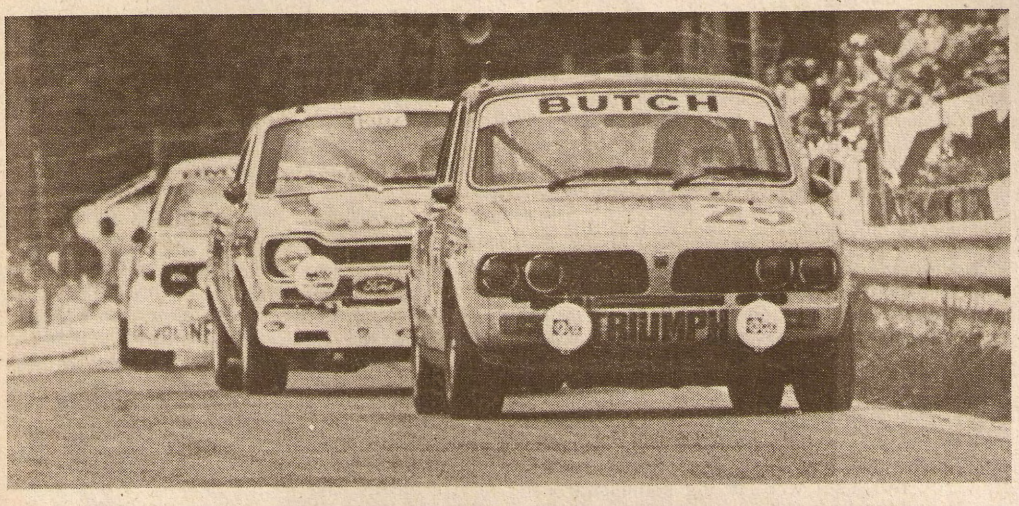
Thirteenth fastest was another G1 Commodore, that of Dutchman Wim Boshuis/Loek Vermeulen, running in brother Huub's Levis Racing team. They were followed by more G1 cars, another Commodore for Swiss Charly Guenin/Nicolas Buehrer and Jacqulin Melle Dantec, and yet another BP version for Marcel Guiot/Jean-Jacques Delhaes. After them came another G1 BMW 3.0 CSi for "Pedro"/Yvette Fontaine entered in Belgium.

Seventeenth fastest then was the first of the two-litre cars, happily the Triumph Dolomite Sprint of John Hine/Claude Dewael, one of five Sprints in the yellow Butch Tailors colours although this one was the only rhd car being the car dinged by Brian Muir at Mallory Park with a new body now. In fact, it was only accepted as a reserve so a special Weber carburettered engine was fitted to qualify it on Thursday, but it still did its fast lap of 4m 44.9s with the normal G1 engine as prepared by Don Moore, on Friday. Right beside it was a Wynn's sponsored Ford RS2000, also a reserve, for Belgians Andre Gavage/"Chavan" and Jose Dahmen which broke a crank in the first session, but soldiered on to do its five laps in the dark and then an old hack of 120,000 kms was fitted for it to do its time. A new engine with two 45 DCOEs was fitted for the race. Next came the Datsun 260Z of Hermes Delbar and Pierre Rubens, who campaigned a Mustang last year, and who had no problems apart from the fact that they'd have liked the now homologated 2.8 engine. Completing the fastest 20 was the second of the Dolomites, that of John Handley and Julian Vernaeve on 4m 47.7s, which was still quicker than last year's times by some five seconds thanks to new homologated Plus Packs.

The Dolomites were expected to have a big dice with the quartet of Alfa Romeo GTVs entered by Autodelta, but outdoing them for Alfa honours was the version entered by Roland Imbert for himself and "Steve." Then came the first of the Autodelta cars, that of Jean Claude Andruet/Spartaco Dini before the only Dolomite that gave trouble, that of Brian Muir/Rene Metge. A radiator hose came off during the night session and it cooked its engine. But it wasn't until after the engine was rebuilt during Thursday night, the car had set 23rd quickest time and done very reasonably that the team were informed that it hadn't done its five night laps and had to be



The Holman Blackburn/Mike Crabtree Hermetite Capri ran well in second place until an incident at the Malmedy chicane (below) dropped it to fifth, climbing back to third by the end. The Triumph Dolomite Sprints had an unhappy time, the example below being the only finisher driven by Christine Beckers/Marianne Hoepfner/Jennifer Birrell.



withdrawn. Muir was therefore seconded into the Hine/Dewael car. Behind these came another Hermetite entered car, the Capri GT of Franz Lubin and Raymond Raus.

Further interesting two-litre entries followed with an Opel Manta for rally stars Walter Rohrl/Rauno Aaltonen, "just for a testing exercise" before two more Autodelta Alfas for Mario Litrico/Walter Dona and "Pooky"/Umberto Grano. Further back, and in fact slower than the first of the up to 1600cc cars, an Avenger, were two more Dolomites, the first entered by Vic Elford's Belgian Giotti wheel distributor with Elford sharing the drive, and the second for the all-girl team of Christine Beckers/Marianne Hoepfner/Jennifer Birrell.

Just behind was the Ford RS2000 of Ken Coffey/Cyd Williams, but due to a mistake, they firstly had the wrong car, a standard RS2000 instead of what could have been their Twin Cam with the RS200 engine, and secondly they were placed as seventh reserve. Although they lined up on the grid, and were eleventh fastest in class, they were not to race. Back among the myriads of Audi 80s, Fiat 128s, Toyota Celicas, Datsuns, Sunbeam Avengers and the rest of the variety that makes this race somewhat different, was the Arian owned Mazda RX3 Coupe to be driven by Alois Mattijssen and Britain's David Palmer. On the first night, after very few laps, the engine lost compression altogether, so they called it a day and went home to fit a G1 engine while a 2.0 mill was ordered from England. Having practised with the car, the new engine was fitted only for the team to be informed that they hadn't done sufficient number of laps at night. After all their efforts, this came as a severe blow, and the team weren't at all happy with branches of the organisation. It was a pretty disappointing time for the English with three non-qualifiers one way or another.

RACE

Without any warm-up laps, the 60-strong grid formed up early under the sometimes sunny skies and at three o'clock, down came the flag and the 24 hours of Spa was under way. It was a pretty mad scramble into the first corner considering the length of the race, for coming up to join front row men was the Opel of Tricot and as four cars abreast scrambled through Eau Rouge, it was Tricot who led up the hill from Walkinshaw, Peltier, Xhenceval and Huub Vermeulen. With these three sorting themselves out, there was naturally a great deal of sorting out going on further back, and sadly, this claimed one of the Dolomites after less than half a lap. Going into Burnenville, the long right-hander, Roland Imbert took his Alfa past Joosen's Opel, upset the Opel's line which nudged the Alfa into the barrier. As it was skating along the Armco, it came out again and knocked off Hine's Dolomite and that was very definitely that, although both cars were not too badly damaged and the drivers unhurt.

As Joosen pitted for a check, Walkinshaw led lap one from Peltier, and Tricot, then Xhenceval and Vermeulen with some way behind, the Alfas of Ballot-Lena, and Andruet leading their two-litre class.

In that first hour, Peltier was to take the lead and pull away slowly from Walkinshaw, Vermeulen, Xhenceval and Tricot, with then a gap to Blackburn in the second Hermetite Capri, and after Feider's BMW, the whispering G1 cars of Roothaert and Ravenal, the BMW of "Pedro" and the Opel of Buehrer. Handley, for a while led the two-litre class, but he was closely followed by Rohrl in the Opel and works Alfas. At the front, Xhenceval made a point of making it a BMW 1-2 by taking Walkinshaw and Tricot although Tricot resisted for a while and so behind Peltier came these two having a battle around the circuit, then Vermeulen trying to keep in touch with Walkinshaw definitely taking it easy and slightly dropping back to team-mates Blackburn as the Scotsman ran in a new gearbox. Feider dropped back early in his BMW complaining of rear-end vibrations which necessitated a four-minute stop, while in the two-litre class, Rohrl was still challenging Ballot-Lena's Alfa, and as usual, the Autodelta cars were running very close to one another. Handley's Dolomite was in there too, but Elford was an early casualty with his Dolomite which suffered overheating and was retired after only three laps.

Before the hour-mark was up, Huub Vermeulen's jinx struck again for first of all, a gearbox seal went, which meant taking the box out, and later the accelerator linkage broke again. "But we'll keep going until all the wheels drop off," swore the Dutchman. At the end of the first hour, Tricot was in fact classified in the lead, even though he was still in the pits for his refuelling stop, with Peltier second, then the two Hermetite Capris, but by taking things easy, and the division of the times, they were classified a lap behind. The G1 Opels of the BP team for Ravenel and Roothaert followed, with Loek Vermeulen in the G1 Opel next. Down in 14th position, the Opel Manta led three works Alfas before Handley's Dolomite. Xhenceval's BMW was down in ninth position, having just made its first stop.

In the second hour, Loek Vermeulen/Wim Boshuis had trouble with valve springs which necessitated a long stop, especially with the other Opel in the pits at the same time. There was little drama during this second hour, with cars coming into the pits to refuel, but Peltier was capitalising on his position and pulling out quite a lead on the Opel of Tricot, then Blackburn's Capri as Walkinshaw had just pitted. Xhenceval was in fourth, in front of the other Capri with still the whispering G1 Opels in sixth and seventh, followed by two more BMWs in eighth and ninth. Neither the 260Z nor the 'Cuda were particularly high up, but ran just ahead of the three works Alfas, well in charge of the two-litre class, although there were still two Dolomites and the Manta around.

Goris was to depart from his sixteenth place in the Hemicuda to at least have it raffled one piece, even if it did retire with a broken chassis some time later after early steering complaints. The Levis G1¾ Opel still had problems, this time with a cracked injection trumpet, and after a good early showing, it was well back in last place. It was in this third hour that another fancied Opel was to drop out, for after 2.20 hours of racing, Neve now in the Opel shared with Tricot, simply had the big end go and a conrod came through the side of the engine. Exit a very fancied runner. Another good

The Alfa Romeo GTVs ran incredibly reliably in virtual G1 trim. Below, the Litrico/Dona version overtakes the doomed Datsun 260Z.

Opel was that of Wauters, a G1 version, but this dropped back from eleventh with thermostat problems. After almost exactly three hours, the similar Opel of Roothaert left the road going up the hill from Eau Rouge and although it wasn't a bad accident, it was enough to retire it from eighth position.

At this time then, the two BMWs of Peltier/Demol and Xhenceval/de Fierlandt were establishing their lead, while the two Hermetite Capris followed, one and two laps down on the leader respectively and then two more BMWs, those of Feider/Detrin and "Pedro"/Fontaine. In the two-litre class, Rohrl had had a broken throttle return spring which allowed the car to rev to 8,000 and after the spring was fixed, the Opel did one lap on three cylinders and pulled in to retire for good. However, Handley wasn't far behind the three Alfas.

The position at seven o'clock, then, was little different at the front, though Peltier/Demol and Xhenceval/de Fierlant had one lap over the two two Capris. As dusk began to fall, thing remained fairly static, with no problems at the front of the field, and Handley still following the hoard of Alfas in front of him, these being led still by Ballot-Lena/Beguin. But in the next hour, Beguin had a brief off and a shock absorber had to be changed which took eleven minutes. After their numerous problems. Frankenhout finally retired his Opel shared with Huub Vermeulen with a broken crank after everything else had given trouble, but the other Levis Open was in the first 20. At nine though, there was no change in the order, with the two Luigi BMWs leading.

The Swiss Opel though was another to hit crankshaft trouble in the hour up to ten o'clock, for as darkness fell, so another Commodore dropped out with the crank broken, so that at ten everyone from seventh downwards moved up again. Ballott-Lena wasn't one of those though, for he stopped out on the circuit when the Alfa cut out completely but then staggered back to the pits to retire from 16th position.

But just before ten occurred the incident that was to change the race and put a dampener on the proceedings. It was generally thought, although there were other theories, that one of two BMWs travelling up through the trees from Stavelot to La Source had its gearbox explode, and empty the contents of its oil. Wim Boshuis following hit the oil in his G1 Opel, spun round and hit the BMW. The Opel was then hit by another BMW and as Boshuis got out of his car, the Avenger of Freddy Grainal came into his door, instantly killing the Dutchman. BMW driver Jean Sauvage was unhurt, Grainal broke his left ankle and BMW driver Feider suffered concussion. In this rather remote part of the ciruit, it was not easy for things to be straightened out, and for nearly 15 laps, there was a chicane with bent and twisted cars over the track representing a state of carnage and another sad situation for the Spa circuit.

But more was to come. Wreckage on the circuit was possibly picked up by the winning car, and as it sped on its way to La Source, it was clear to the following Tom Walkinshaw that Peltier had considerable handling problems and for a couple of laps, Peltier was very ragged. Twice it left the road in a minor way, but on a left hander coming up to La Source hairpin, a kilometre after the other accident, the car left the road hard into the barrier which bent and broke hitting a cluster of marshals. One of their sons was killed and another broke his wrist. The BMW rolled on down the track for 100 yards and although Peltier was unhurt, it was a very sad moment for Belgian racing and Spa in particular, scene of many controversial accidents. Jennifer Birrell made a long stop about this time with fuel tank leakage and she dropped two laps.

At eleven then, with two BMWs missing from the top ten, it now read Xhencevel/de Fierlandt, Blackburn/Crabtree (temporarily), Walkinshaw/Fitzpatrick, "Pedro"/Fonataine, Andruet/Dini, "Pooky"/Grano, Joosen/"Marco", Handley/Vernaeve, Chamaillard/Artichan (Alfa), and Litrico/Dona. At midnight, the situation was no different. However, the Capri of Lubin/Raus was in considerable touble with overheating, and the head gasket was being tended to with Hermetite products to keep the water in. Thus it dropped rather heavily from 13th to 28th, ultimately to retire with a properly blown head gasket. Another with the same problem was the Opel of Guiot/Delhaes which had been quite steadily going round, but was delayed with a puncture in the accident then had trouble with the thermostat. Dona had some trouble with his back axle mounting in the Alfa after a spin on the accident oil.

Belgians don't seem to go to bed very early for there were still hundreds wandering around the circuit in the cool night when, after nearly 11 hours of racing, the news came through that Walkinshaw, on the same lap as the Xhenaval/de Fierlandt BMW had blown up coming up to the La Source hairpin and sadly, with a rod through the side, its race was run after such a careful and troublefree drive.

Thus at two, this left the Luigi BMW in the lead with three laps over the Blackburn/Crabtree Capri, then four laps to "Pedro" and Fontaine's silent Capri, which had Andruet and Dini on the same lap with team-mates "Pooky" and Grano a lap down with the silenced Opel of Joosen/Marco next up, also on the same lap. The Dolomite of Handley/Vernaeve was also on that lap in eighth before two more Alfas completing the top ten. A 1.6 Toyota, another silent GSE Opel and the girls' Dolomite followed.

The situation now remained static for a couple of hours as dawn broke over the slightly misty circuit with the sort of sky that threatened, but did not produce rain. The Blackburn Capri lost a lap while its braking lights were fixed but then suddenly there was one slow Dolomite crawling towards La Source. It couldn't quite make the downward slope, and without illegal outside assistance, the car failed to reach the pits. It was the ninth placed John Handley driven car and sadly, the driveshaft coupling had broken and Handley couldn't make the pit for a replacement. So then there was one Butch Dolomite, that of the girls, driven by Jennifer Birrell for much of the night as the other girls were not too keen on driving in the dark.

Before seven, the Opel of Guiot/Delhaes, which had been lying tenth stopped out on the circuit when the oil pump went so that at seven, the order lay with the Xhenceval/de Fierlandt BMW first, five laps ahead of the Blackburn/Crabtree Capri which was four laps ahead of the "Pedro"/Fontaine G1 BMW, a further two laps ahead of the leading Alfa of four, this driven by Andruet/Dini.

In the next hour, the Joosen/"Marco" Opel, another G1 BP version was another to go, cutting out totally and inexplicably on the circuit and thought to be for electrical reasons. Which just left one of the five-strong team that started still on circuit, that of Ravenel/Forotti in 12th position and having problems at this stage with overheating tyres. There was little change up to nine o'clock.

But in the hour from nine to ten in the morning, there was no shortage of action, at least from the British teams. Hermetite had trouble last year when leading the race at 9.30 am; this year it was 15 minutes earlier when Blackburn had a tyre deflate going into the Malmedy chicane and kinked the steering rack and front suspension. In the resulting two stops, the Capri dropped from second to fifth behind two of the Alfas and the G1 BMW, while the other drama occurred to the girls' Dolomite. With Marianne Hoepfner driving, the 2-litre engine dropped a valve but Bill Shaw decided to try and run with three cylinders. But before the 11th hour was up, the idea had had to be partially abandoned and the car lay idle in the pits to do just a very slow lap per hour in order to win the Coupes de Dames.

Another drama that virtually came to nothing was that which occurred to the leading BMW. Xhenceval was experiencing a rear end vibration and over the intercom, he asked the team to be ready to check and possibly replace the driveshaft and part of the rear suspension. But when he came in before eleven, it was only for five minutes to replace the accelerator pedal and a slightly buckled wheel which had been causing the vibration. His cushion to the second place man, now "Pedro"/Fontaine, was a massive 11 laps and five minutes dropped him just one lap. The two Autodelta Alfas were on 227 laps, two behind the G1 BMW with the Capri now a lap down in fifth. Two more Alfas followed before the first Toyota Celica, another Alfa and the Datsun 260Z still running strongly having climbed up for 37th after a 45 minutes stop to replace the fifth rear pinnion.

The main interest in the final hours, which are always more interesting for the finishers than those watching, was how many Alfas the Capri could pick off before the finish. As it happened, in those final four hours, first that of "Pooky"/Grano was overtaken and then that of the class leader Andruet/Dini. The Dolomite came out to do one lap per hour, just struggling up the hill in the final laps and slowly staggering around for each individual lap, having to do two on the last lap, decorated like a flower garden for some Belgian flower dealer. The Datsun 260Z was a late retirement with yet more gearbox trouble while another very late and sad retirement was the remaining G1 Opel which had a driveshaft break. Thus it was that during the final hours, the cars held their final position with the first car crossing, the class winning Alfa then two cars later, Jean Xhenceval welcoming his winning BMW, the only time so the commentators said, that a driver had won twice.

But it was equally commendable that the G1 BMW that finished second had been so incredibly relaible, with no problems. Third, having overtaken the two class leading Alfas that had also been so reliable, was the Hermetite Capri, with Holman Blackburn driving and Mike Crabtree in the pits as the car crossed the line. It wasn't their ambition realised, but they'd finished despite problems, and the Alfas had really shown their form from the second year running. It had been another classic Spa 24 hours, one that mixed tragedy with a type of racing that mixes much danger with the sport, with all risks being declared by history, being taken, and being sadly met.

In the opening laps, Tom Walkinshaw had quite a dice with Rene Tricot's Opel, here leading it and the version of Huub Vermeulen.

Coupe de l'Avenir, round 4
Spa 24 hours, Belgium.

1, Jean Xhenceval/Hughes de Fierlandt (3.0 BMW CSi), 300.9 laps, 177.05 kph;
2, "Pedro"/Yvette Fontaine (3.0 BMW CSi), 291.3 laps;
3, Holman Blackburn/Mike Crabtree (3.0 Ford Capri II), 288.4 laps;
4, Jean Claude Andruet/Spartaco Dini (2.0 Alfa Romeo 2000 GTV), 288 laps, 169.43 kph;
5, "Pooky"/Umberto Grano (2.0 Alfa Romeo 2000 GTV), 287.2 laps;
6, Jean Claude Chamaillard/Max Artichan (2.0 Alfa Romeo 2000 GTV), 283.9 laps; 7, Mario Litrico/Walter Dona (2.0 Alfa Romeo 2000 GTV), 282.3 laps; 8, Eric Mandron/Claude Crespin (2.0 Alfa Romeo 2000 GTV), 278.4 laps; 9, Emmanuel Remion/Edgar Gillessen (1.6 Toyota Celica), 275.7 laps, 162.19 kph; 10, Hans Nowak/Johann Abt (1.6 Audi 80 GT), 270.8 laps; 11, Alain Corbisier/Dany Swysen (3.0 Ford Capri II), 269.9 laps; 12, Jean Louis Hecq/Claude de Wilde (1.6 Audi 80 GT), 268.8 laps; 13, Andre Boschi/Jean Caufriez (1.6 Alfa Romeo 1600 GT), 261.9 laps; 14, Pierre Sougne/Eric Cuicci (2.0 Alfa Romeo 2000 GTV), 259.8 laps; 15, Bernard Justice/Gerard Pires/Eddy Vartan (1.0 Simca 1000), 253.7 laps, 149.266 kph.

23 finishers

Team Prize: Andruet/Dini, "Pooky"/Grano, Litrico/Dona.
Manufacturers Prize: 1, Audi NSU, 2, Fiat.

Tony Pond in full cry on the bump stops; he put in another outstanding drive to an eventual second place Note the flat rear tyre.

ETC GROUP STAGES **CASTROL/AUTOSPORT ROUND 6**

Eagles on the Border

by PETER NEWTON **photos by HUGH BISHOP**

Just after midnight; the crowded canteen's harsh neon lights flung the querulous bustling scene into sharp contrast; for the Opel equipe an almost bemused disarray, for the others, raised voices and cries of "Blue Book" and "flyers"; one man however lounged against the distempered wall in the corner, a wry smile on his face. For just over two hours Tony Pond had been the winner of the ETC Group Stages by just 21 seconds from Tony Fowkes after a titanic struggle that had raged seemingly across the length and breadth of Wales; now in the aftermath, a stage had been cancelled and the effect juxtaposed the two protaganists. Surveying the volotile scene and the fait accompli in the making, there was little to do save pack up, and be done with the canteen. "We *will* win something sometime," he said. After an exhibition of driving during the hot and dusty Saturday which had brought open cheers and looks of awed delight to the grimy faces of countless spectators, it was hard to disbelieve him.

That Fowkes and Pond totally dominated this event is completely irrefutable. The two men were in a class to themselves, and their best efforts matched each other so closely that it became immediately obvious that nothing but the best would do. Both men rose to the challenge in their respective inimitable styles;Fowkes, his burly frame apparentlydwarfing the cockpit, hurling the orange Escort through the forests; its raucous BDA building up to seemingly impossible revolutions; adrenalin, noise and fury personified. Pond, precise and fluid, making the most of the Ascona's advantages in traction and cornering power, seemingly slower yet more relaxed to the viewer. It was a fascinating duel, but the poignancy of the situation was somewhat dissipated as the hours passed, the road miles built up and the perspiring crews were subjected to the full force of that inscrutible animal, the weekend tourist. The sheer volume of traffic out in Wales on that fine Saturday afternoon, coupled with the interminable road sections, conspired to make the whole day a protracted and disjointed affair, necessitating an additional half an hour of lateness allowance at lunch, and detracting from the impression of quality and professionalism leant by the stages themselves.

For the others, Laurie Richards, after a break away from it all, finally broke through his seemingly insurmountable jinx; putting in a performance of which everyone knows he is capable, but which he so seldom gets the chance to demonstrate; and Dai Roderick kept it all together despite clutch bothers to finish a creditable fourth. Castrol/AUTOSPORT leader George Hill, much happier with the handling of the Martins Magnum after its Jeff Goodliff inspired attentions, was hampered by an obviously weak power unit, and was unable to find the sheer speed to make his presence emphatically felt. It was a long hard day, and with the bitterness and bickering which marked its finale, there were few who really felt like staying on to the close of proceedings.

Last year the Welsh Border Car Club were let down at the last minute by the Forestry Commission, who having set aside the necessary allocation to provide the projected event with a firm basis, were unable to come up with the mileage at the last minute. In deference to the club's disappointments, Castrol kept faith again this year; and so the event became a Castrol/AUTOSPORT round, even though the club had never actually organised a stage event before. In the introduction to the regulations a clause in the opening paragraph invited competitors to . . . "overlook any small errors and perhaps some rough edges." Rough edges there certainly were in abundance, but many of them stemmed from the fact that the club had received comparatively little co-operation to run the event. Principal "offenders" here were the Forestry Commission who came up with around 60 of the most widely scattered stage miles imaginable (Phil Short had a reading of 356 total miles on his Halda at the end of the day) and the one generalisation one might make is that the club perhaps played their hand too close to the chest in organizing the event, for despite almost a year of tireless effort, principally on the part of Jim Thompson, there was still much left to be desired and extra delegation of firm authority might just have avoided some of the pitfalls into which the rally fell; for it was generally agreed by competitors that the stages themselves were well chosen, arrowed and marshalled. It was however an unfortunate incident involving the lack of a time check sheet on stage 9, Blaenglyn, which provided an unsatisfactory note on which the rally was to close.

Inclusion in the Castrol/AUTOSPORT championship guaranteed the rally a first class entry, and as the championship is now quite delicately balanced, the situation promised to be most interesting. Tony Fowkes, rather more by accident than design, has recently found himself lying in a challenging position in the championship, so it was no surprise to see the formidable combination of himself, Bryan Harris and the orange Cables and Components car at number one. A surprise entry at two came from DOT who were originally said to be sending the development Turbo Kadett which has not been seen in action since its rather ineffectual Mintex Dales debut, but in the end, Tony Pond/David Richards turned up with the more venerable of the team's two crossflow Asconas. This car has seen plenty of action in its life, and in fact has recently been on the "loan-a-drive" circuit. The crew were not over optimistic of the car's ability to last the pace and expressed some doubt over the state of the gearbox. However it was clear that they were going to give everything they had to secure a win for the Shipley concern.

Castrol/AUTOSPORT leader George Hill made a return to the scene at three. Martins' involvement in stage rallying this season has been total, but George has been increasingly disenchanted with the handling of the Vauxhall. The situation reached crisis point in Donegal where the car refused to travel in straight lines and bump and axle steered viciously, making it all but impossible to set up for corners or utilize most of the power. Accordingly George resolved not to drive the Magnum again until there had been some radical improvements to the rear suspension geometry. The team have thus been very busy in recent weeks putting into practice the ideas of a certain Jeff Gooodliff (the man responsible for the British Vita Minis among other creations) and the Vauxhall's back axle now has longer and relocated upper and lower parallel arms; the upper ones are rose jointed at both ends, the longer lower pair, only at the front. The car also had a new engine (this a "small" valve type) and while testing had only been undertaken on the road, there was cautious optimism in the camp.

Jeff Churchill was back in action at four ahead of the Grainger/Hughes Escort, and a very interesting entry at six came from Piggy Thompson. Piggy has recently acquired Gerry Forde's Carrera RSR from Ireland and he scarcely got his hands on it before driving down to Oswestry for the start. The car is completely standard RSR, although it has been at Jack Tordoff's garage, getting the necessary protection to withstand forestry events in which Piggy intends to compete. Both he and Mike Greasley were more than a little apprehensive at the start and their adventures before lunch were to prove this feeling well founded.

Frank Pierson started at seven and he was followed by John Taylor who is rapidly making a name for himself in stage rallying. John was debuting the Haynes of Maidstone Escort 2, and

underneath its attractive exterior it was "95 per cent" new as well. Rob James, taking Reg Mullenger's place, was next up in the Carrefour Escort which now has an 1800 BDA built up by Nigel Rockey's engine man, following the mishap on the Festival Stages. He had been running it around on the road to loosen it up, but this was to be its first event. Completing the top ten was Laurie Richards who had sorry tale to recount even before the rally had actually begun. He had been putting in some hard graft on his car and was testing it on Friday when he found that fifth gear would not engage. The fault could not be rectified without stripping the gearbox, and it turned out that the retaining bolts had been machined too far, thus inhibiting the selectors.

The entry then gave promise of a hard fought day and lower down there were some hard triers ready to give the established stars something to think about. That man from "down under," David Lang, was back to try his luck at stage rallying again. This time his Escort wes equipped with an 1800 Terry Hoyle motor to help him do it. Mike Rawson also made a welcome return to the scene in the Whitehead powered Ascona, which he had painstakingly rebuilt after the Lakeland Stages accident. Unfortunately the LSD on the Opel had ceased to perform its prime function and Mike, having no spare, was forced to run it in that condition from the start. The Group 1 contingent only lacked Tony Baines to complete their ranks. Henry Inurrieta's new car will not be ready until the Burmah at the end of August so he was making do in a car borrowed from a certain Mr Collins whom he had met on the Sherry (Rally). Ian Lawless was also out again, this time in his newly reshelled RS 2000 ("it's my last one before I retire for business reasons") and other notable G1 contenders included Paul Appleby, Rod Badham, Chris Field and Bernard Banning among their number.

With scrutineering being carried out in just one session the previous evening, competitors were forced to spend the night in the vicinity of Oswestry. Those who did so rapidly realised that the facilities of this sleepy border town were no match for the demands thrown upon it by the influx of floods or rallymen and their respective entourages. Many were vainly searching for accommodation and were forced to find it many miles from the town. As there was also an overnight parc fermé, many of the less financially able were immediately plunged into trouble and the location of start, the ETC car park outside the town, was the focal point on which a continuous trail of overalled figures converged on Saturday morning. At 0801, it was already very warm as Tony Fowkes led the cars away for the first test at Brogyntyn Park.

The quality of the stages themselves left little to be desired and with classics like Radnor, Dyfnant, Coed-y-Brenin and Pennal on the agenda there was plenty to look forward to — it was merely getting there that proved to be the stumbling block. John Taylor however was not to have to worry about the "plot and bash" route for as early as the second stage he felt the motor beginning to go off. As he was nursing the car towards Dyfnant on the road, the engine suddenly tightened up and refused to rev; he switched off immediately, just as a camshaft seized, thus saving the unit from serious damage. Undaunted, he lost no time in rushing off to Cirencester where the engine was changed in readiness for the Arkell the following day. After three stages the pattern of the event had been firmly established. Pond and Fowkes "switched on" from the very first moment and the two of them were already drawing away from the rest of the field. The Opel had a puncture 200 yards into Foel Dynas, the first of three such occurences, and Tony was forced to drive five miles on the flat. He only lost 15 seconds in the process however and after the first Dyfnant Fowkes held a slender lead of six seconds over the Opel, with Laurie Richards hanging on grimly some eight seconds behind. The rest of the field were already beginning to feel the pace, and George Hill, in fourth place, was a further 11 seconds adrift. Traffic was already beginning to interrupt the rally schedule and indeed, if the regulations were to have been ruthlessly adhered to, then most competitors would have been OTL by approximately the fifth stage. Sensibly the organisers decided at the Knighton lunch halt to extend the lateness allowance by 30 minutes and run all the stages accordingly. Unfortunately when the leading crews checked into the car park at lunch there was no one there to tell them, so for many, the halt became nothing more than a "turn round." In addition there seemed to be some confusion over the *out* control, which was situated not at the halt itself but some way up the road on the way to the next stage, so there was precious little time to reflect on the events of the morning.

Retirements had been generally rare, but a sad demise was that of Jeff Churchill who parked the Escort off the track in the middle of Pennal and walked out of the stage. It was a hard day for service crews and many were unable to catch up their drivers in the heavy traffic congestion. Tony Pond had broken the torque tube on the Ascona but was temporarily unable to trace the whereabouts of his service crew to change it and was forced to press on from Knighton without help. Robert James had split the exhaust manifold across the branches and was looking for welding gear. He was another to suffer a flat tyre through the duration of Foel Dynas so that he was down in sixth place at lunch.

George Hill was finding his new engine an unwilling and dirty worker. Not only was it running rough and refusing to rev freely, but it was regurgitating oil from several seals in the process. George in fact had wet feet as a result of an oil pipe breakage at the union behind the gauge. The battle, however, was hotting up considerably and there were less than a handful of seconds separating the leaders at lunch. David Lang had been having a great rally; whether the 'kangaroo juice' in his tank was powering him to new heights is not certain but he was up to fifth overall by lunchtime. On Radnor, the first stage after the 'halt'; his enthusiasm temporarily got the better of him and after a long flat-out straight he went off on a left hander that looked open, but which abruptly tightened on him. He spend 2½ minutes in the ditch before the car was bodily lifted back on to the track by scores of eager hands, and though he continued strongly for the rest of the day, there was no hope of getting back on terms with the leaders. He was, however, happy with the car which "really flies" and very glad to finish, his two previous events in Britain having got him the distance of just three stages in total.

Piggy Thompson had a fraught morning getting acclimatised to the Carrera while Mike tuned the radio, and tried to concentrate on other things. As Piggy confessed later, "we had a bit of luck in the morning otherwise we'd have had a few big offs!" During the afternoon he really appeared to be getting the measure of the car and whenever he felt he was going too slowly in the quiet confines of the cockpit Mike would silently point to the Vdo instruments where the rock steady speedometer gave every indication of their commitment. Piggy is now a contented Porsche pilot, revelling in the delights of 17 mpg (after seven on his old Escort) and peace and quiet. "The potential is there, it just needs a very good man to extract it." He also spent the entire day on just one set of very ancient looking tyres, despite the polished flint surfaces of the stages which were tearing the rubber of others to shreds. Tony Pond in fact started the afternoon with another puncture, but it was a similar mishap which befell Fowkes on Blaenglyn (Coed-y-Brenin) which appeared to decide the issue, for Fowkes lost some 20 precious seconds to the flying Pond so that after nine stages, the Opel led by 19 seconds. There was surely no way that Fowkes was going to recoup the deficit and despite some really inspired driving on Dyfnant 2 he was only four seconds faster than the superbly controlled Opel. It was DOT's day, there for the taking and not even a third puncture could stop Tony Pond rounding off the evening with two more fastest times . . . .

Behind the leaders, Dai Roderick, Laurie Richards and George Hill were locked in another tense struggle for third place. Both Escort drivers suffered clutch bothers during the afternoon. Roderick had his unit expire at the start of Kerry; a pipe to the slave cylinder had sheared and he struggled on to Newtown before it was repaired by his service crew. Richards spent the afternoon with a highly erratic clutch that all but brought the car to the point of retirement, and only a coincidental and fortuitous meeting with the service barge helped him carry on to the end and a well deserved third place.

In Group 1, Ian Lawless had a very satisfactory day to get the better of Chris Field and Paul Appleby by a slender margin of six and 10 seconds respectively. The entire G1 contingent were plagued with punctures and Ian finished a stage with two flats on one occasion. Conscious of the fact that the down-on-power engine was prone to a diet of sparking plugs, he had them changed after Kerry and the engine promptly replied by going on to three cylinders, a condition it obstinately maintained to the end. For Rod Badham, some cruel luck just 200 yards from the end of the final stage, when he clipped a gate with the nearside rear three-quarter panel inflicting some rather lurid damage to the bodywork.

The vacillations that then followed the queries to times, principally on the critical ninth stage made for a sad ending to a very tense struggle in the forests. Most crews, while abhorring the tedious road mileage, were very happy with the stages, however the comment that "nobody seemed to know what was going on" was voiced more than once by principal co-drivers. Now, at the 11th hour, the stewards of the meeting decided to cancel the stage on the grounds that queries could not be checked thanks to the fact that the marshal concerned had not been keeping a check sheet. It was a fait accompli. Whether there was sufficient grounds here for cancellation is a moot point, for though a check sheet is hardly an official document, the stewards felt there were sufficient queries to warrant this harsh move. It was an unfortunate hour to witness and the prize giving in consequence seemed a drab, flaccid affair, while outside the situation was reached where officials who had lent their services to the event were being asked to pay £1 entrance fee to the presentation while they waited in the darkness to finish off work on behalf of the organisers.

Computerised results, when handled properly, are the best in the business; but there is nothing to beat sound teamwork and good public relations; it is perhaps these areas where the ETC Stages fell down most dramatically. The foundations for a first-class event are there, it is unfortunate that so much hard work by the organisers in the preparatory stages should be let down on the day by small but crucially significant features. One is left to hope that the event will be run in future with greater general cohesion, and of course co-operation from the Forestry Commission. The competitors must then automatically return. Meanwhile at least Tony Fowkes and Brian Harris, worthy winners indeed, were happy.

(For stage times see Special Stage)

Tony Fowkes, as expected, kept the pressure on all day, and was well rewarded in the end.

ETC Group Stages Rally

1, T. Fowkes/B. Harris (Escort RS) 250 penalties;
2, T. Pond/D. Richards (Opel Ascona) 259;
3, L. Richards/J. Tew (Escort RS) 347;
4, D. Roderick/M. Woodward (Escort RS) 401;
5, G. Hill/P. Short (Vauxhall Magnum) 416;
6, D. Thompson/M. Greasley (Porsche Carrera) 483; 7, R. James/B. Tilley (Escort RS) 520; 8, F. Pierson/J. Smith (Escort RS) 538; 9, M. Rawson/S. Davey (Opel Ascona) 543; 10, C. Holker/D. Kennedy (Escort RS).

Group 1

1. I. Lawless/J. O'Toole (RS2000), 12th overall, 577;
2. C. Field/D. Bunker (Chrysler Avenger), 14th overall, 583;
3. P. Appleby/K. O'Dell (RS2000), 15th overall, 587.

by John Bolster

"If it lacks superficial attraction, it makes up for it by its practical virtues."

Saab's safe and practical Combi

It's fun driving a car round Silverstone, but it is no substitute for a proper road test. At the recent Michelin Test Day, I drove the Saab Combi Coupé and was delighted with the way in which it handled. It was astonishingly fast through the corners, seemed exceptionally well-balanced, and was aided by a high third gear and pedals ideally placed for heel-and-toe. On modern, crowded roads, such attributes can seldom be exercised, more's the pity. I therefore decided to share my life with a Combi Coupe for a little while, so as to find out whether it remained firm at lower speeds or became just an ordinary car.

The last Saab which I tested for AUTOSPORT was the 99 EMS, with Bosch Jetronic fuel injection. The subject of the present test has a single Zenith Stromberg constant vacuum carburettor, with which the overhead-camshaft engine develops a highly creditable 100 bhp. Judging from the performance with a heavy and capacious body, all those quadrupeds were certainly in the stable. The injection job is worth an extra 10 bhp or 3 mph, which is about what would be expected, but it justifies itself by a useful torque increase in the middle ranges.

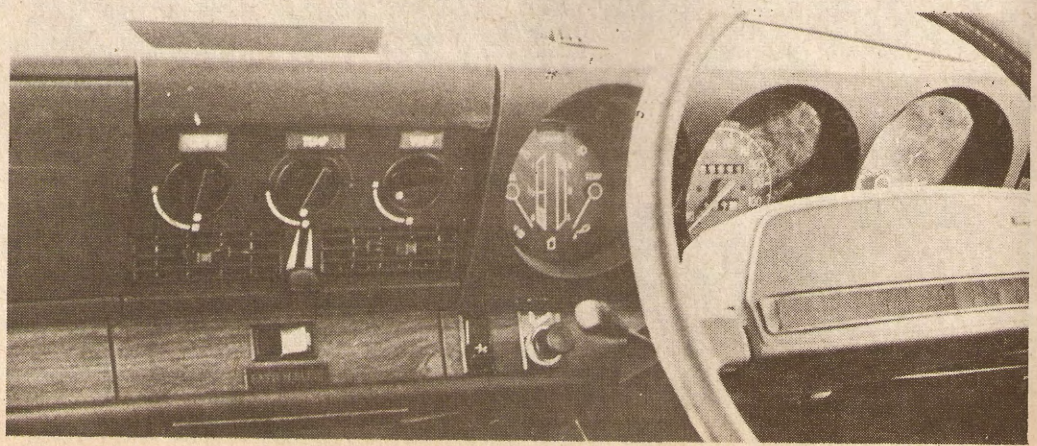
Nevertheless, the performance of the single-carburetter version is not all that far behind. As a road car, it does not have quite such vivid acceleration, but it still feels lively and responsive. It is appreciably more economical, but this is probably due to the extra performance with injection, which one is apt to use when it's there. Both engines are outstandingly flexible and will pick up from low speeds without rumbling in top gear. With a fairly large four-cylinder unit, it's almost impossible to avoid some body boom at certain speeds, but this effect is well suppressed in the Saab.

The engine was originally developed from that of the Triumph Dolomite, though it is now built in Sweden and has been strengthened in several areas. It drives the front wheels through a transmission of some complexity, which incorporates both a primary-drive gear train and a spiral bevel before the differential. In spite of all these whirling wheels, it is surprisingly silent, but the gearchange is not particularly light in action; sometimes the clutch pedal seems heavy to push down, but it varies curiously in this respect.

The steering has been altered in recent months. It is much lower geared (higher numerical ratio) than before, and the front-drive effects are far less pronounced. It is altogether lighter to handle, but demands a good deal of winding on very sharp corners. For a rear-drive car with a skittish live axle, one would call it too low geared, but this is not the case with a well-balanced front-drive machine, which never requires sudden corrections. It was certainly ideal for the Silverstone grand prix circuit.

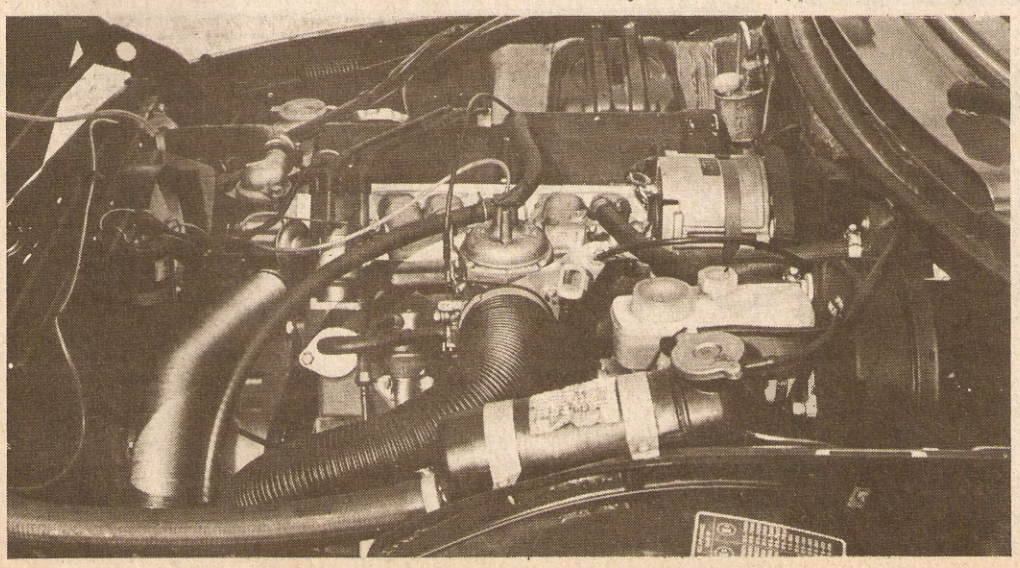
As well as the changes in steering geometry, there may have been some minor alterations in the suspension. On the other hand, the slightly softer ride may be due to a small increase in body weight. The Combi Coupé combines sports coupé and estate car functions, a form of coachwork that several manufacturers are attempting to produce nowadays. In some cases, the alleged estate has a laughably small luggage capacity, but when the rear seat is folded the interior space of the Combi becomes enormous. With the seat in its normal position, the car is a full 5-seater saloon, still with a lot of luggage space which is covered by a removable shelf.

Well instrumented, the Combi is especially superior in the heating and ventilation departments.



The opening tailgate and folded rear seat creates enormous interior carrying capacity (above). The head lamps are excellent and have their own wipers and washers (below).

The two litre overhead cam engine produces 100 bhp DIN and is good for 100 mph.



The people in the back have full head-room, because the sweeping tail does not commence its descent too early. The tail is fairly long, but this certainly has no adverse effect on the car's stability. The tail gate is of considerable size, because it reaches right down to floor level, thus avoiding an obstructive sill, but a pair of gas struts make opening easy. Curiously enough, some of the more truck-like estates offer less room than the Combi Coupé.

As this single-carburetter 2-litre will easily exceed 100 mph, the body shape must offer a reasonably low drag coefficient. The looks are functional rather than sporting, but the car appeals because it is utterly practical. The interior seems almost unnecessarily sombre, the dark green body of the test car being echoed in the superior trim and upholstery. It's all in jolly good taste, of course, but it could do with a little Gallic vulgarity to cheer us up. Perhaps the Swedes are rather serious people, for they evidently worry a lot about accidents and the Saab is just full of safety features. It tends to be heavy, because it is reinforced with so much good Swedish steel, while the ingenious bumpers help to minimise the results of its owner's jolly — sorry, I mean the crazy driving of those other rotters.

Much more important, however, is the stability during hard braking, especially on wet roads, and the excellence of the headlamps which have their own wipers and washers — how many accidents at night are caused by lamp glasses covered in road dirt and dead flies? The rigours of the Scandinavian climate have developed a really effective heating and ventilation system, which is easy to control. For the same reason, built-in heating of the driver's seat prevents frost-bite in a painful area.

The Saab Combi Coupé is a car of outstanding engineering excellence, constructed of the very finest materials. If it lacks superficial attraction, it makes up for it by its practical virtues. It costs a lot of money, but it is likely to be still as good as new when some of its competitors are decrepit, rusting heaps. All that may sound rather serious, but don't forget that it's a lot of fun to drive.

SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA

Car tested: Saab 99L Combi Coupe, price £2,930 including car tax and VAT.

Engine: Four-cylinder 90 x 78mm (1985cc). Compression ratio 9.2 to 1. 100 bhp DIN at 5200 rpm. Single chain-driven overhead-camshaft. Zenith Stromberg horizontal carburetter.

Transmission: Single dry plate clutch. Primary drive by helical gear train, ratio 1 to 1. 4-speed synchromesh gearbox with central remote control, ratios: 1.0, 1.39, 2.07, and 3.44 to 1. Spiral bevel final drive, ratio 3.89 to 1.

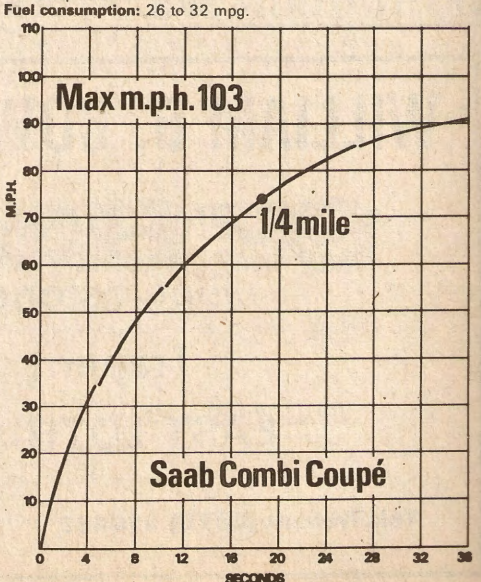
Chassis: Steel monocoque. Independent front suspension by wishbones and coil springs. Rack and pinion steering. Dead rear axle on Watt's linkages, coil springs, and Panhard rod. Servo-assisted disc brakes with twin diagonal circuits. Bolt-on steel wheels fitted Michelin ZX 165 SR15 tyres.

Equipment: 12-volt lighting and starting. Speedometer. Fuel and temperature gauges. Clock. Heating, demisting, and ventilation system with hot air and electric demisting of tailgate window, with thermostatically-controlled electric heating of driver's seat. 2-speed windscreen wipers and washers with headlight wipers and washers. Flashing direction indicators with hazard warning. Cigar lighter. Reversing lights.

Dimensions: Wheelbase 8ft 1.4in. 7 track 4ft 7.1in/4ft 7.6in. Overall length 14ft 6in. Width 5ft 6.5in. Weight 1 ton 2.5cwt.

Performance: Maximum speed 103 mph. Speeds in gears: Third 85 mph, second 56 mph, first 34mph. Standing quarter-mile 18.5s. Acceleration: 0-30mph 3.6s, 0-50mph 8.2s, 0-60mph 11.6s, 0-80mph 22s.

Fuel consumption: 26 to 32 mpg.



Willie Crawford drove with great determination in the later stages before the engine blew.

ARKELL RALLY

Strike one for Randolph

The third running of the Arkell's Cirencester Park Rally produced victory for a Welshman, to follow those by a Kenyan and a Scot in previous years. Randolph Whittall-Williams drove consistently well throughout the day to record his first ever rally win. An equally consistent drive by Robin Farrington gained second place 11 seconds behind, with the Samson brothers down from Scotland a further 11 seconds adrift in third.

With the natural advantages offered by Cirencester Park, the Arkell has got to be one of the best promoted events in the UK, and as such, it is massively over-subscribed. 150 hopefuls assembled for the first seven mile trip over the mixed surfaces of the Park. This first stage produces greater carnage than any other stage in any other rally. At least eight wrecks had to be removed before the rally returned for lunch, after tackling three stages out in the country — the bumpy Hailey Wood, Park Farm, and the dusty loose airfield at Down Ampney. The afternoon format was similar, with Hailey Wood and Down Ampney followed by Ebworth and Miserden Park before the final stage back to the paddock in Cirencester Park. A total of 40 stage miles with the battle expected to be among the first four seeds — all in Escorts. John Taylor in the Haynes Escort 2 had replaced the engine following its failure on the previous day's ETC Stages Rally, and had Charles Reynolds navigating. At two, Chris Wathen and Chris Gorman were in the Vospers Mk I Escort, followed by Willie Crawford and Dan O'Sullivan in the Lothian Sports Cars entry. Charles and Alec Samson had been persuaded out of Scotland to try their hand with their immaculate plain white Escort.

The *Triple C* and BTRDA contenders followed with David Stokes/Bill Andrews having worked mightily to repair the vehicle after its heavy shunt on the Lancia Pointer. The car could hardly have been called smart, but it was only Stokes' determination that got it re-prepared at all. Gordon Batchelor was at six, followed by John Simpson at seven, and Pip Dale's Vauxhall destined for an early retirement with a failing clutch at eight. The Evans brothers started at nine in their Pierstune 1700 Escort, and but for a moment's overexuberance in the second Cirencester Park stage, could well have won the event. Certainly Derek Evans is a hard charger, and like David Stokes for instance, would handsomely repay a good sponsor's investment.

The eventual winner, Randolph Whittal-Williams started at 14, second place man Robin Farrington at 25, while other notables were Terry Kaby at 16, Peter Bryant at 19 in the Imp, and Lancia Pointer winner Dick Rollett at 28, who disappeared with a broken differential after running strongly in the early stages.

Creating a lot of favourable comment was the second Escort 2 in the field, the F. English entry for Dave Jephcott. This Broadspeed prepared chassis was immaculate and even had that company's works manager, Dave Tate, in the navigator's seat. Sadly, the car's looks were not matched by the driving, Jephcott spinning wildly on the only two occasions that this correspondent saw him, and retiring eventually with a leg out of bed.

From the start, the sensation was Derek Evans who hurtled off into an immediate lead, taking fastest time on each of the first two stages, closely followed by a startled John Taylor. The other three potential front runners hit trouble or in Willie Crawford's case, a tree. This cost him 40 seconds or so, but had the result of increasing his determination in the later stages, further aided by some typical O'Sullivan psychological tweaks. Chris Wathen punctured on Hailey Wood, while Charles Samson was too cautious and was 40 seconds off the pace after just two stages. Whittal-Williams set the pace at Park Farm, equal with Crawford, but John Taylor was in a tigerish mood at the slippery airfield of Down Ampney, and wrested the lead from Derek Evans whose 1700 was hopelessly outpowered. And so back to Cirencester Park where the aggression in Taylor's arrival as first car was palpable. He didn't arrive into sight — he burst. There doesn't appear to be much style in John's driving, no controlled counterpoised setting up à la Clark, just late late braking, lots of lock inducing a moment of violent power whisks the tail round and he is gone. The various redundant co-drivers spectating at that point felt that it looked a bit fraught, and sure enough, off went the leader for a couple of minutes, the crowds also delaying Chris Wathen by waving him down to a crawl long before the scene. Willie Crawford took another fastest time, but RW-W was unspectacularly close behind with Charles Samson wakening up. Derek Evans clouted a tree and badly damaged his steering and his chances of victory. Gordon Batchelor comprehensively removed the stage arrowing here, but had already incurred a fail by arriving too late at a stage after transistor pack problems on the public road.

Could RW-W (we must invent a nickname!) and Robin Farrington maintain their lunch-time position, or would the Scotsmen in third and fourth places prevail? The penalties were 310, 320, 343 to Crawford, 347 to the Samsons. Hailey Wood saw Willie Crawford's response to be clearly fastest from the Samsons, but it was the end of the road for John Taylor who got it out of phase on the bumps and leaped into the shrubbery. Chris Wathen also lost out here with steering arm failure.

Back at Down Ampney, four seconds covered the top four, but the first entertainment was John Lyon spinning the Chequered Flag Stratos which was acting as course car. No marks to the individual who suggested that J.L. try the BSM Skid-Control course. The recalcitrant Lancia eventually expired with no clutch.

Up at Ebworth's twists and turns it was the Scots again, Crawford two ahead of Samson with Farrington five behind. The positions now were RW-W 503, Farrington 505, Crawford 514, Samson 526.

Miserden resolved it. First the Samsons spluttered out of the ford to lose vital seconds and then Willie Crawford's engine tinkled and seized before he coasted over the flying finish. Derek Evans made fastest from Rob Pendleton in the Lloyds of Stafford RS2000, while Robin Farrington dropped three to the leader.

The final run through the Park, and Charles Samson charged impressively to fastest time while RW-W gained a further cushion to record a fine victory. He had no greater problem than a broken throttle pedal, and was obviously delighted with his recently acquired Mike Phillips 1800 BDA. Robin Farrington's second place was the reward for a very consistent run while the Samsons rued their early caution in third. Derek Evans finally made fourth place despite his various misfortunes, with David Stokes, wrist still in plaster, fifth in his twin-cam. A word of praise also for Chris Bruce and Peter Carracher, who finished in 11th spot after starting second last at 149.

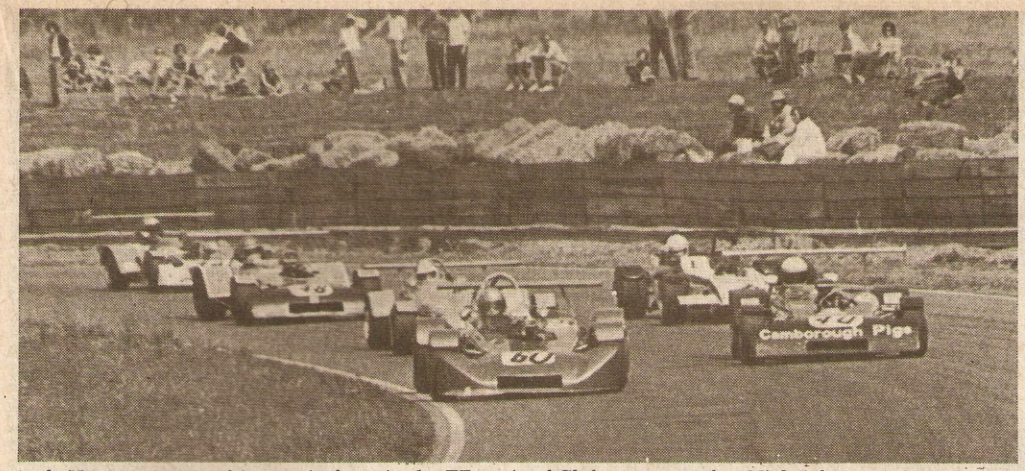
This was another eminently successful promotion by Cirencester Car Club, which ought to make Arkell's brewery very happy to have been associated with it.

GEORGE DEAN

1975 Arkell Rally

1, R. Whittal-Williams/R. Hemmings (Escort RS) 618; 2, R. Farrington/G. Hignett (Escort RS) 629; 3, C. Samson/A. Samson (Escort RS) 640; 4, D. Evans/T. Evans (Escort RS) 680; 5, D. Stokes/B. Andrews (Escort TC) 692; 6, M. Davidson/T. Weaver (Escort RS) 694; 7, M. Smith/K. Baud (Mexico) 704; 8. R. Pendleton/E. Cowell (RS2000) 728; 9, T. Kaby/B. Rainbow (Mini) 742; 10, J. Simpson/K. Baker (Escort RS) 745.

Ouch! David Stokes toucges down heavily. For him to get to the rally at all was an achievement in itself.



Andy Houston just got his nose in front in the FF engined Clubmans race, but Nick Adams, on his left, took him shortly afterwards to win.

MALLORY PARK

Lees takes over again

After a disappointing day at Oulton Park on Saturday, Geoff Lees spent all night working on his Royale's suspension and had his reward by winning on Sunday at Mallory Park and retrieving his British Air Ferries championship lead from Jim Walsh who finished a close second in his Hawke. The Formula Ford race had to be restarted after a second lap accident involving two back markers at Gerards, one of whom, Philip Green had to be cut from his car and taken to hospital with a back and leg injuries. Despite nearly an hour's delay, the cancellation of the final consolation race for FFs due to lack of runners saw the BARC bring the meeting to a close on schedule on a scorchingly hot afternoon.

Front suspension trouble in practice reduced Glenn Eagling to the only FF consolation race in his Van Diemen with bits borrowed from Rob Orford's similar car. He was in a class of his own, winning by nine seconds over the eight laps from David Hudspith's old Lotus 61. The next group disappeared at the Esses on the second lap when American Hawke driver Garrett Conklin spun and collected several others including the venerable but rapid Lotus 51 of Geoff Hoodless. John Kent's Tickled Trout Royale RP16 thus came third while Hoodless recovered well to take seventh.

The FF class of the National Organs Championship round raced for the John Edwards Memorial Trophy, was won last year by Team Camborough's Creighton Brown. This year's piglet Nick Adams kept it in the pig sty as it were by taking the lead at the Esses on the first lap and staying ahead throughout in his U2 Mk 14. Behind him initially was a rare old scrap in the best traditions of the class between the Gryphon of Andy Houston, Chris Greville-Smith's Phantom and Derek Bevans having one of his occasional outings in the family's aging DRW. First to go was Houston who rubbished his radiator at Gerards on lap five just after taking over second. Then, as Bevans thrust his DRW past the Phantom, Greville-Smith found himself coasting through the Esses with a broken throttle cable leaving the DRW on its own. Despite taking a second off the class record, however, Bevans could only close to within 0.8s of Adams after a tremendous final spurt.

With Peter White's Royale absent *sans* engine and Mike Young's Modus spinning into retirement at Gerards on the second lap, the way was clear for John Morrison to score yet another good win in his Supernova BH5 from the similar car of Simon Kirkby. A great start saw Morrison lead Kirkby and Young into Gerards for the first time but the Modus went round the outside of Kirkby at the Esses to take second before spinning next time at Gerards. This allowed Morrison a clear break and he was able to stroke it home comfortably but taking .2s off last month's record on his way. Third place featured a splendid tussle between Ronnie Grant's Taurus and Bruce Venn's Elden, these two forceful drivers right on the limit with Venn finding a way by to take the place at the hairpin on the penultimate lap. Fifth was Barrie Hopwood trailing a vast cloud of oil smoke behind his Royale for several laps while Mark Litchfield was an underpowered sixth in his Elden.

After reducing their numbers by four, for two more cars had crashed at the Esses on that hairy second lap, the Formula Ford leaders all lined up for a second try with Mike Blanchet determined to make a better start this time. He had taken the lead from Geoff Lees just before the race was stopped. On the restart it was Lees again but Blanchet forced his Crosslé alongside at the Esses by putting all four wheels on the grass and then the two cars touched at the hairpin. Blanchet ended his race in the barrier while Lees carried on with an extra large lead as the others, led by John Bright's new Royale RP21 and Jim Walsh's Hawke, were held up slightly. Not wanting to hinder the championship struggle Bright waved Walsh through at Gerards on the fourth lap and then sat on the tail of the Crompton Lighting Hawke as it closed on the leader. With a lap to go Walsh had caught right up again but lacked the last little bit to take him in front so it was Lees from Walsh and Bright in a very close finish. Tiff Needell's weekend of woe with the Chris Hiatt-Baker Crosslé was added to by another Dulon, this time the Ronnie Scott car of John Stevens which spun him round at the hairpin while he was challenging Rick Morris (Hawke) for fourth. Out of the confusion Morris emerged with his fourth place intact from the Crosslés of Rod Bremner and Chris Skellern while Stevens was seventh and Needell a disappointed 11th.

Determined to beat Jeff Ward's Imp if at all possible Richard Long made a storming start in his Anglia BDA and led for a lap before the low-line Imp took over and streaked away until the yellow flags came out at Gerards after Jon Adlard's third-placed Mini, under pressure from the 850 Mini-Imp of Geoff Gilkes, went off and rolled. Although Long was able to close up again it was really only "Rupert"-baiting and Ward won by several lengths. Gilkes inevitably won his class with third overall ahead of two more 1-litre Minis, driven by Roger Cole and David Edge, the Mini-Imp setting another class record.

Malcolm Jackson, a very underrated driver, really made Geoff Friswell work for his nine National Organs points and a new lap record in the second Clubmen's race. Jackson led for the first two laps while Friswell recovered from one of his less good starts but the Whizz was forcing his way alongside at Devils Elbow as they completed the second lap and stayed in front the rest of the way. Peter Lovett drove his best Clubmen's race yet, holding third place for four laps in the ex-Richard Cresswell Phantom, before succumbing to the pressure of the Gryphons of Ruari Gillies and Peter Deal, the latter just failing to pip Gillies on the last lap.

Formula 4 continues to improve its standard of preparation all the time but there were only 12 starters for this championship round. Although Ian Briggs put his March 733 in front for a lap, championship leader Fergus Tait took over at Gerards for the second time and was able to keep his Delta IRF4 ahead for the duration. The race split up into a series of duels without any places actually changing — John Brown's Delta holding off the GRD 372 of Dave Griffiths for third; John Finch's Ensign doing likewise to Jim Ward's old Lotus 41C for fifth and Glyn Read's Chevron B15 just taking seventh from Ian Wale's Tecno. Tait took two seconds off Nick Crossley's 1974 lap record.

The second of the Esso Uniflo special saloon races was also a little short of starters and there was no one in the same class as Tony Strawson's 7.2 Capri-Chevrolet. Geoff Wood tried hard in his improving Escort BDE but was hounded for a few laps by Peter Baldwin's 1300 Mini BDA until something went awry in the Mini's diff giving Baldwin some anxious moments. By then he had equalled the class record and was way ahead of his class opposition so he was able to ease off and still finish well ahead of the normal Cooper Ss of Gerry Gough and Clinton Bourke who engaged in one of the best dices of the day before Gough forced past for keeps.

IAN TITCHMARSH

Formula Ford 1600 (8 laps): 1, Glenn Eagling (Van Diemen-Scholar RF75), 7m 3.4s, 91.83 mph; 2, David Hudspith (Lotus-Scholar 61), 7m 12.6s; 3, John Kent (Royale-AVJ RP16), 7m 15.8s. **Fastest lap:** Eagling, 51.8s, 93.82 mph.

The John Edwards Memorial Trophy, National Organs Clubmen's Formula Championship round, Formula Ford engines (10 laps): 1, Nick Adams (Mallock U2-Holbay Mk 14), 8m 39.0s, 93.64 mph; 2, Derek Bevans (DRW-Bevans Mk 7CB), 8m 39.8s; 3, Nick Scott (Mallock U2-Close Mk 11B/14), 8m 45.6s; 4, David Campbell (Phantom-Campbell P75), 8m 46.4s; 5, Jeff Fisher (Mallock U2-Davron/Holbay Mk 16), 9m 12.2s; 6, Keith Money (Mallock U2-Davron Mk 14), 9m 12.8s. **Fastest lap:** Bevans, 50.2s, 96.81 mph (**record**).

Volkswagen (GB) Ltd Silver Cup Formula Super Vee Championship round (10 laps): 1, John Morrison (Supernova-Heidegger BH5), 8m 0.2s, 101.21 mph; 2, Simon Kirkby (Supernova-Heidegger BH5), 8m 3.8s; 3, Bruce Venn (Elden-Heidegger PH14), 8m 9.0s; 4, Ronnie Grant (Taurus-Rolt M24) 8m 9.6s; 5, Barry Hopwood (Royale-Heidegger RP18A), 8m 24.4s; 6, Mark Litchfield (Elden-Rolt PH14/19), 8m 32.0s. **Fastest lap:** Morrison, 46.2s, 105.19 mph (**record**).

British Air Ferries Formula Ford 1600 Championship round (10 laps): 1, Geoff Lees (Royale-Minister RP21A), 8m 45.0s, 92.57 mph; 2, Jim Walsh (Hawke-Scholar DL12), 8m 45.4s; 3, John Bright (Royale-Whitehurst RP21), 8m 46.0s; 4, Rick Morris (Hawke-Scholar DL12), 8m 47.6s; 5, Rod Bremner (Crosslé-Rowland 25F), 8m 48.6s; 6, Chris Skellern (Crosslé-Scholar 30F), 8m 49.4s. **Fastest lap:** Walsh, 51.2s, 94.92 mph.

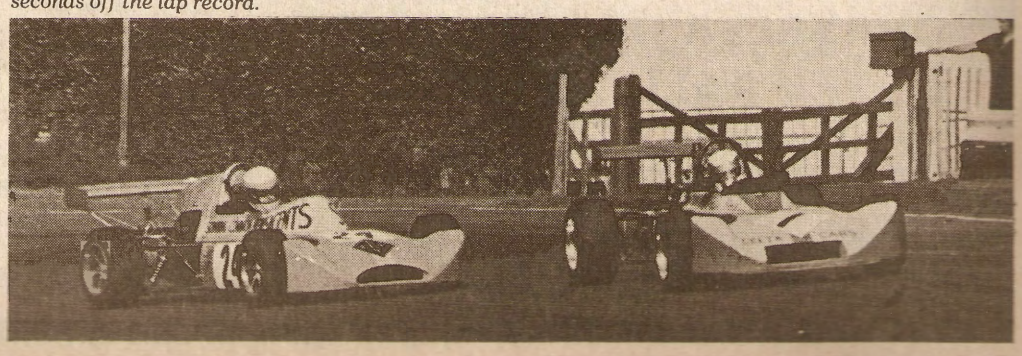
Esso Uniflo Special Saloon Car Championship round up to 1000 cc (10 laps): 1, Jeff Ward (1.0 Hillman Imp), 9m 29.6s, 85.32 mph; 2, Richard Long (1.0 Ford Anglia BDA), 9m 31.2s; 3, Geoff Gilkes (850 Mini Clubman-Imp), 9m 38.6s; 4, Roger Cole (1.0 Mini-Cooper S), 9m 40.4s. **851 to 1000 cc class:** 1, Ward, 85.32 mph; 2, Long; 3, Cole. **Fastest lap:** Ward, 53.4s, 91.01 mph. **Up to 850 cc class:** 1, Gilkes, 84.00 mph; 2, Mike Kirby (850 Hillman Imp); 3, Roger Springett (850 Hillman Imp). **Fastest lap:** Gilkes, 55.8s, 87.10 mph (**record**).

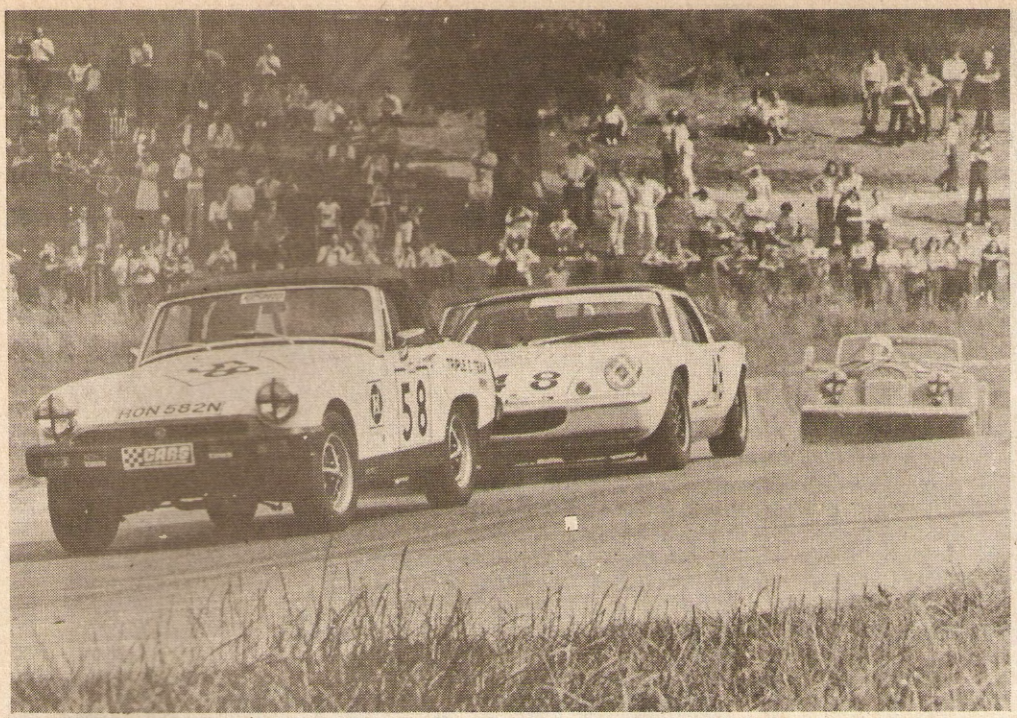
National Organs Clubmen's Formula Championship round, fully modified engines 1001 to 1600 cc (10 laps): 1, Geoff Friswell (Mallock U2 Hart Mk. 16), 7m 44.0s, 104.75 mph; 2, Malcolm Jackson (Mallock U2-Holbay Mk. 14) 7m 48.6s; 3, Ruari Gillies (Gryphon Holbay C4A), 7m 54.8s; 4, Peter Deal (Gryphon-Abbott/Cosworth C4A), 7m 55.8s; 5, Peter Lovett (Phanton-Swindon P73), 7m 57.4s; 6, Sid Marler (Gryphon-Davron C4A), 7m 59.6s. **Fastest lap:** Friswell, 45.6s, 106.58 mph (**record**).

National Formula 4 Championship round (10): 1, Fergus Tait (Delta-Delta IRF4), 8m 20.0s, 97.20 mph; 2, Ian Briggs (March-Cosworth 733), 8m 21.2s; 3, John Brown (Delta-Delta IRF4) 8m 32.8s; 4, Dave Griffiths (GRD-Holbay 372), 8m 34.2s; 5, John Finch (Ensign-Holbay LNF4), 8m 41.6s; 6, Jim Ward (Lotus-Holbay 41C), 8m 42.2s. **Fastest lap:** Tait, 48.6s, 100.000 mph (**record**).

Esso Uniflo Special Saloon Car Championship round over 1000 cc (10 laps): 1, Tony Strawson (7.2 Ford Capri-Chevrolet V8), 8m 41.0s, 93.28 mph; 2, Geoff Wood (1.9 Ford Escort BDE), 8m 46.0s; 3, Peter Baldwin (1.3 Mini-Clubman BDA), 9m 12.8s; 4, Gerry Gough (1.3 Mini-Cooper S), 9m 25.0s. **Over 1300 cc class:** 1, Strawson, 93.28 mph; 2, Wood; only finishers. **Fastest lap:** Strawson, 50.2s, 96.81 mph. **1001 to 1300 cc class:** 1, Baldwin, 87.92 mph; 2, Gough; 3, Clinton Bourke (1.3 Mini-Cooper S). **Fastest lap:** Baldwin, 51.8s, 93.82 mph (**equals record**).

Ian Briggs tries hard to stay with Fergus Tait's winning Delta in the F4 event, but Tait won well, taking two seconds off the lap record.





Didn't he do well? Young Terence Grimwood scored his second consecutive Prodsports win. Dave Allen's Europa follows.

CADWELL PARK

McGrath's winning return

As a welcome change from the usual Croft and Rufforth venues, the BRSCC Northern Centre moved down to Cadwell Park on Sunday to give many drivers their first taste of this superb circuit.

In addition to the normal fare, the Escort and Renault 5 circuses were also performing and when the programme was compiled a total of nine races were planned: in practice some accidents and other non-starters enabled the *Libre* and Clubmen to be amalgamated to leave eight races for the afternoon, which turned out to be just right.

First onto the circuit were the *Penthouse* Escorts and most of the usual competitors turned up although seven drivers had not raced at Cadwell before and two of these were in their first ever race. Neil McGrath originally led but had been passed by Gordon Bruce by the end of the first lap and was in third place as they started lap two.

When the leaders reached the Gooseneck on their third lap McGrath was back in the lead and Bruce was defending his second place from a determined onslaught by Graham Hollis, while in fourth place Tony Dron had Dennis Bradley to contend with. This state of affairs lasted until lap seven with McGrath extending his lead and Bruce and Hollis holding each other back in the fight for second place. But on the approach to the Mountain on that lap Hollis and Bruce were side by side at a point where there really is not room for that sort of thing and the ensuing tangle caused Bruce to roll and meant the retirement of both cars.

In the meantime McGrath had enough of a lead over Dron to win by seven seconds, in third place Stuart Thompson was only 0.4s behind Dron with Nick Weir coming home a lonely fourth.

A twelve lap Formula Ford race came next and on the front row of the grid was Kelvin Hesketh in the Crossle with Peter Harrington in his new Merlyn alongside. Hesketh's rest from racing has not affected his driving at all and once in the lead he won easily by nearly nineteen seconds from Mick Starkey (ATS Merlyn) despite a spirited climb through the field by the Merlyn driver who started from the third row. The combination of a new circuit and the hot weather unfortunately took its toll of cars and the twelve laps saw nine retirements, not the most stimulating FF race ever held. Hesketh set fastest lap and his runaway win caused a protest to be lodged against his engine; thus the results for the race are provisional pending examination of the disputed unit.

Again Chris Meek was fastest in practice for the Production Sports car event and won as he pleased in the 208 Europa, but this time he was followed home by another Europa (of Andy Roughton) by way of a change. On a circuit that suits a more nimble car, the Morgan +8s of John Britten and C. Hopkins came in third and fourth in front of the V12 E Types of Martin Dawson and Rod Gretton whose team mate Colin Blower (TVR) had to retire from third place on lap four. The winners of the smaller classes were Chris Alford (Morgan) and Terry Grimwood –proving that you can do it in an MG; the class winners also put up fastest laps in their classes.

Seemingly hundreds of Mini 7 cars invaded the track for their race which was around in the Troy Tires series and once again the car into the lead first won the race. This time it was Graham Wenham in the Micktuned car who made the running and set fastest lap although at one stage of the race he was visibly frustrated by a backmarker who did not move over quickly enough. In second and third places for the duration of the race were Terry Pudwell and Jim Mancey who finished over twelve seconds apart. The race was enlivened on the penultimate lap when ninth place man Bob Vamson misjudged the Mountain and ascended on the grass in a style which would put many trials cars to shame; unfortunately he dropped from ninth to twelfth place in the process.

The amalgamated *Libre* and Clubmans race also brought out a number of FFs as a consolation for not having qualified for the earlier event. Keeping up the pattern it was Richard Wallinger in an Atlantic GRD who led all the way round to win by 1m 07.8s from Les Aylott (Ardus) who inherited that position when Tim Wood (Magnum) ran out of petrol after eight laps. There was a protest mentioned about this as Tim put in just enough petrol for an eight lap event as the programme said it was; when the cars reached the grid however the drivers were informed that they would be doing ten laps. Naturally Tim could not manage that distance and keep up racing speeds. In the end he succumbed to the inevitable and retired; any thoughts of a protest were quickly dispelled though when his attention was called to the original regulations which gave the distance as ten laps, an eight lapper was to be substituted until the previous races were amalgamated.

John Muirhead (Mallock) took Class A of the Clubmans, Ken Shipley Class B, and John Scannell (Beattie) the FF division.

Event number six of the meeting was for Special Saloons with Nick Whiting in his Escort romping away to lead Paul Rhodes (Escort) by 26.8s at the end of the eight laps. In third place came the Mini of Geoff Byman who also won Class B, fourth place went to Steve Phillips (Escort) after a race long tussle with the Imp of M. Johnstone, Graeme Walkers Firenza and the 1000cc Mini of William Barrett who eventually came fifth.

In the small Class C victory went to the Mini of Roger Turner over the similar car of M. Edwards while the shuddering Datsun of Paul Jutson could only manage fifth in class and sixteenth overall.

Next out came a mixed field of MG T Types and Renault 5s but the classes were separate and the Renaults started behind the immaculate MGs.

In the MG race Gerry Brown led all the way being shadowed by David Clewley until the latter retired on lap seven, second place was then taken over by Ron Gammons who finished some 50s down on the winner. Lower in the order some very spirited but gentlemanly dicing went on but this class of racing does not attract the 'nerf and nudge' driving style which would damage these probably irreplacable vehicles.

The last comment does not of course apply to the Renault 5 races, and on this occasion, there were some laps at the Hairpin when bodily contact could be heard above the howl of tyres. Mick Hill was the winner after Neil McGrath had retired on lap one while in hot pursuit. Not a lot of place changes took place but many attempts were made in all the most unlikely places around the circuit. Mick Hill was the only Renault to be credited with eight laps, second placeman was Stuart McCrudden by 2.2s from Trevor Packham both on seven laps and fastest lap went jointly to Hill and McCrudden at 61.08 mph.

Finally, to round off the meeting we were again flooded with Minis, this time a combined Miglia and Mini 7 field with the 1300cc Mini of Ian Rogerson added as well. Alan Curnow started in second place behind the Ripspeed car of Russell Dell and waited for an opportunity to get past him. Curnow's chance to take over the lead came on lap four when the leader retired and then the rest of the race was Curnow all the way by over 13s from the next Miglia car – that of John Hazell. The interest however was centred upon the chase through the field by the 1300cc car of Ian Rogerson who had completed the first lap in ninth position. By lap four Rogerson was up into fourth place and second on lap six, but try as hard as he could he could not pass Curnow by the flag; only just not though as the timekeepers were unable to separate the two cars and gave them both the same time of 14m 57.0s. The Mini 7 class eventually went to Paul Ratcliffe after he managed to set fastest lap as well for the class.

PAUL BOOTHROYD

Penthouse Ford Escorts (8 Laps): 1, Neil McGrath, 15m 55.4s, 67.82 mph; 2, Tony Dron, 16m 02.4s; 3, Steve Thompson, 16m 02.8s; 4, Nick Weir, 16m 12.2s; 5, David Da Costa, 16m 19.2s; 6, Dennis Bradley, 16m 27.4s. **Fastest Lap:** McGrath, 1m 57.6s, 68.87 mph.

Tate Trophy Race for Formula Fords (12 Laps): 1, Kelvin Hesketh (Crossle), 21m 0.8s, 77.09 mph; 2, Mick Starkey (ATS Merlyn), 21m 19.4s; 3, Bruce MacMichael (Crossle), 21m 24.2s; 4, Michael Burdett (Ray 73), 21m 26.0s; 5, Frank Potts (Hawke), 21m 32.2s; 6, David Wigdor (Merlyn), 21m 34.0s. **Fastest Lap:** Hesketh, 1m 41.4s, 80.03 mph.

D. C. Cook and Direct Tapes Production Sports cars (8 Laps): overall and over £2,250: 1, Chris Meek (Europa), 15m 12.6s, 71.00 mph; 2, Andy Roughton (Europa), 15m 33.2s; 3, John Britten (Morgan), 16m 04.8s; 4, C. H. Hopkins (Morgan), 16m 09.8s. **Fastest Lap:** Meek, 1m 52.6s, 71.93 mph. **£1,400 to £2,250:** 1, Chris Alford (Morgan), 64.32 mph; 2, J. Targett (MG); 3, Gerald Vaughan (TR6). **Fastest Lap:** Alford, 2m 03.8s, 65.42 mph. **Up to £1,400:** 1, Terry Grimwood (MG), 61.73 mph; 2, Dave Karaskas (Austin Healey); 3, Philip Duckworth (MG). **Fastest Lap:** Grimwood, 2m 08.2s, 63.18 mph.

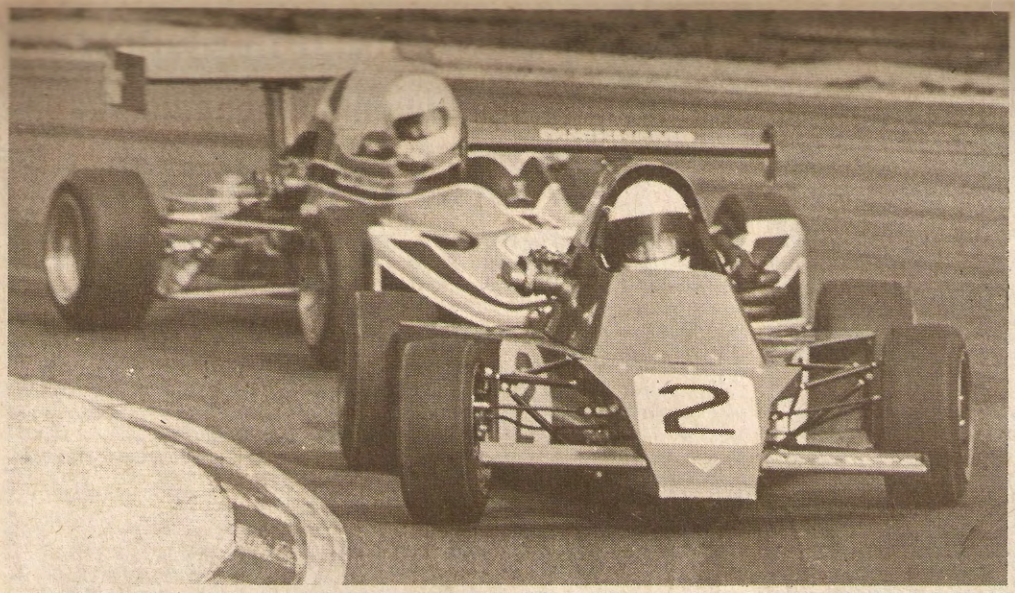
Troy Tire and Auto Mini 7 (8 Laps): 1, Graham Wenham, 16m 05.0s, 67.15 mph; 2, Terry Pudwell, 16m 10.6s; 3, Jim Mancey, 16m 22.2s; 4, John West, 16m 26.8s; 5, Jeremy Wheatley, 16m 48.6s; 6, Tim Cousins, 16m 53.8s. **Fastest Lap:** Wenham, 1m 58.8s, 68.18 mph.

BRSCC Northern Clubmans Championship, Formula Libre and FF (10 Laps): 1, Richard Wallinger (GRD), 16m 13.6s, 83.19 mph; 2, Les Aylot (Ardua), 17m 21.4s; 3, John Muirhead (Mallock), 17m 32.8s. **Formula Libre:** 1, Wallinger; 2, Aylot; 3, Richard Philip (Crossle). **Fastest Lap:** Wallinger, 1m 34.4s, 85.80 mph. **Clubmans, Class A:** 1, Muirhead, no speed given. No fastest lap given. **Class B:** 1, Ken Shipley (Mallock), 75.55 mph. **Fastest Lap:** Shipley, 1m 43.0s, 78.64 mph. **Formula Ford:** 1, John Scannell (Beattie), 71.27 mph; 2, Graham Hill (Royale); 3, H. Longhurst (Alexis). **Fastest Lap:** Scannell and Longhurst, 1m 50.2s, 73.50 mph.

BRSCC Northern Centre Special Saloons (8 Laps): 1, Nick Whiting (Escort), 13m 16.4s, 81.36 mph; 2, Paul Rhodes (Escort), 13m 43.2s; 3, Geoff Byman (GBD Mini), 14m 21.0s. **Over 1300cc:** 1, Whiting; 2, Rhodes; 3, Steve Phillips (Escort). **Fastest Lap:** Whiting, 1m 36.8s, 83.67 mph. **1000cc to 1300cc:** 1, Byman, 75.26 mph; 2, N. Johnstone (Imp); 3, Ian Rogerson (Mini). **Fastest Lap:** Byman, 1m 46.4s, 76.12 mph. **Up to 1000cc:** 1, William Barrett (BLMC), 73.85 mph; 2, Roger Turner (Austin Mini C); 3, M. Edwards (Mini). **Fastest Lap:** Barrett, 1m 47.2s, 75.55 mph.

MG T Types and Renault 5 Elf Challenge round (8 Laps): MGs: 1, G. Brown, 16m 03.4s, 67.26 mph; 2, R. Gammons, 16m 53.2s; 3, N. Taylor, 16m 58.8s; 4, J. A. B. Naylor, 17m 15.8s; 5, H. Whitehouse, 18m 06.4s. **Fastest Lap:** Brown, 1m 58.0s, 68.64 mph. **Renault 5:** 1, Mick Hill, 18m 15.2s, 59.16 mph; 2, Stuart McCrudden, 7 laps; 3, Trevor Packham, 7 laps; 4, David Taylor 7 laps; 5, Keith Collier, 7 laps. **Fastest Lap:** McCrudden and Hill, 2m 12.6s, 61.08 mph.

Mini Miglia and Mini 7 (8 Laps): 1, Alan Curnow, 14m 57.0s, 72.24 mph; 2, Ian Rogerson, 14m 57.0s; 3, John Hazel, 15m 10.2s; 4, A. J. Smith, 15m 20.6s; 5, Phil Spurling, 15m 28.0s; 6, Derek May, 15m 34.0s. **Fastest Lap:** Russell Dell (Miglia), 1m 49.4s, 74.04 mph.



David Coombs, leading here, had a fair old ding dong with Alan Baillie for Varley Monoposto honours but Baillie threw it all away on the last lap, allowing Coombs to win easily.

BRANDS HATCH

FF winners lose battles

Kenny Gray took time off from the national Formula Ford championship rat race for one of his occasional dabbles in the Brands Hatch Townsend Thoresen series on Sunday — and won the race to take a single-point lead in the series. This was the most noteworthy performance in an entertaining day's racing backed by Gandy Ltd, the Allied Polymer Group subsidiary, which presented the awards for two other Formula Ford races and a Modsports event. The weather was sweltering and the racing keen, and Rochester MC kept things moving without too many problems. Another win was scored by John Homewood (Imp), who is making the *Kent Messenger* saloon car series his own once more, but the two Gandy Formula Ford races were marred by controversy, with the first man past the flag losing his place on each occasion in subsequent verbal battles. Fred Sigafoos (Jamun) and Ted Whitbourn (Merlyn) were the moral victors, but neither took a trophy home.

The day's drama started before the opening race, which was for the 20 quickest cars out of a bulging entry list for two Gandy Formula Ford events. Brian Songhurst had to make a hurried exit from his Royale when it caught fire on the warm-up lap, and he was lucky to have nothing worse than a singed elbow to show for the experience. From pole position John Poxon (Crossle) had a lap in the lead before giving way to Fred Sigafoos, who for this occasion swapped his Jamun for the one normally driven by team-mate Rob Newall. The Newall car was more than a match for Poxon on the corners but the Crossle was much faster on the straight bits, with the result that Sigafoos had to adopt some rather dodgy tactics to stay in front. Poxon protested and Sigafoos was disqualified, but his tactics would have looked completely normal had this been a National Organs round with a bit more at stake. Third on the road and second in the results went to Henrique Camara of Brazil in his MRE, which was on its own for much of the race.

Two races later came the Formula Ford consolation event for those not quick enough for race one. No consolation, though, for Ted Whitbourn, who was way back after a troubled practice and looked a strong favourite if things were going as they should. Sure enough, Whitbourn was second to pole man Tony Pollock's Dulon after a lap and in front at Kidney on lap two, but he could not make up for a ten second penalty for moving up alongside Pete Tinworth's non-starting Titan on the grid, apparently after misinterpreting a grid marshal's signal. He was placed third in the results with Mike Ford (TDC Lola) the winner after passing Pollock on lap seven.

Final event of the day was the Townsend Thoresen qualifier, which was free of official controversy but full of drama, thanks to five cars which clashed at Bottom Bend on the opening lap and two hopefuls who collided before they'd properly left the grid. Victory went to Kenny Gray's Van Dieman, but not without plenty of opposition from Rob Newall, going as never before in the Sigafoos Jamun. Newall looked set to challenge on lap eight out of ten but dropped out of touch before the end, allowing Gray to double his points score and take the series lead from Rob Wicken, who did not appear. Mike Wallaker took a well-earned third in his self-designed Jomic from the Royale of Don Gray and Mike Thompson's Rostron, these five cars forming a group which detached itself from the rest right from the start.

The only saloon event of the day was for the *Kent Messenger* one litre challenge. John Homewood was back in action after missing a round with his Imp, and came through after a poor start to take the almost inevitable win plus a new lap record. Second, third and fourth places also went to Imps, with Richard Oliver taking second after a period of glory in the lead, Ray Calcutt third and Mike Chapple fourth after a stern tussle with the Minis of Steve Hall and Terry Attoe. The Imp domination was a reflection of practice, which saw eight Imps among the first ten grid places.

One of those hair-raising 250 cc kart races went to Don Farthing (Zip-Merlin) at 82.18 mph, then came a round of the Reliant 750 Formula National Championship. John Giles raced off to lead for a lap and a bit in his JGS, then had a classic Bottom Bend accident which eliminated Tim Green and Rodney Hill in the two fastest cars in practice. This gave a healthy lead to Kim Perry, who leads the championship and wasn't about to throw away an opportunity like this to consolidate his position. On the way to a comfortable victory he lopped a startling 3.4 s off the lap record.

Longest car race of the day — and one of the most exciting — was the Gandy Friction Trophy Race for Modsports cars. Ian Clark (Lotus Elan) was the surprise winner from fifth place on the grid, but it was no fluke. Edward Reeve (supercharged Midget) was in front for most of the first lap and Tony Dunderdale's pole position Turner got in front for a few seconds when Clark was boxed in behind a backmarker, but for the rest of the time the black Lotus was ahead with the other two snapping at its heels. Reeve eventually went off course at Paddock in his enthusiasm and Dunderdale was outpowered after getting almost alongside on the final corner. Roger Gamble took third place with the demise of Reeve, and John Wilmshurst was fourth, but the lead battle overshadowed the rest.

There was action aplenty, too, in the Varley Batteries Monoposto race. Four cars practised inside the lap record, with David Coombs (Manta) fastest of all, but the Modsports cars left a lot of oil about and the best race times were only equal to the record. Alan Baillie (Viking) forced his way past Coombs at Clearways on the second lap and lost the lead again in nearly the same spot when a backmarker edged him off course, but as the last lap started the two cars were right together. Baillie made his bid with a much too fast approach to Paddock which took him into the lead for a second or two until the car got away from him coming out of the bend, and Coombs shot through again to take a comfortable victory. Jim Yardley's Beagle then became second, but was nearly caught by Trevor Scarratt (Brabham), who earlier scrapped with Nigel Howard Jones' RTW and the Revoray of Ray Thomas.

BRIAN PHILLIPS

Gandy Brakes Formula Ford Trophy Race (10 laps): 1, John Poxon (Crossle-Minister 25F), 9 m 01.0 s, 82.51 mph; 2, Henrique Camara (MRE-Rowland 75F), 9 m 06.8 s; 3, John Lewis (Hawke-ZIP DL71) 9 m 07.4 s; 4, Geoff Illes (Merlyn-Minister Mk20A), 9 m 13.8 s; 5, David Buttigieg (Dulon-Newbridge MP17), 9 m 14.0 s; 6, Thiago Assis (Dulon-Woodcock MP15C), 9 m 16.6 s. **Fastest lap:** Fred Sigafoos (Jamun-ADA) and Robert Coates (Hawke-Minister DL11), 53.0 s, 84.23 mph.

Kent Messenger 1 litre Saloon Car Race (10 laps): 1, John Homewood (1.0 Sunbeam Imp), 9 m 16.0 s, 80.29 mph; 2, Richard Oliver (1.0 Chrysler Imp), 9 m 20.8 s; 3, Ray Calcutt (1.0 Hillman Imp), 9 m 22.8 s; 4, Mike Chapple (1.0 Hillman Imp), 9 m 33.8 s; 5, Stephen Hall (1.0 Mini Cooper S), 9 m 34.2 s; 6, Terry Attoe (1.0 Mini Cooper S), 9 m 38.4 s. **Fastest lap:** Homewood, 53.2 s, 83.91 mph **(record).**

Gandy Brakes Formula Ford Trophy Race (10 laps): 1, Mike Ford (Lola-Holbay T342), 9 m 14.0 s, 80.58 mph; 2, Tony Pollock (Dulon-Rowland MP15), 9 m 14.8 s; 3, Ted Whitbourn (Merlyn-Minister Mk11A), 9 m 21.0 s; 4, Michael Walker (Van Diemen-Scholar RF75), 9 m 21.0 s; 5, Mark Davies (Nike-Ford MkIV), 9 m 22.4 s; 6, Paul Wooteen (Dulon-Rowland MP15), 9 m 24.8 s. **Fastest lap:** Whitbourn, 53.2 s, 83.91 mph.

Reliant Formula 750 National Championship Race (10 laps): 1, Kim Perry (DNC MkIII), 9 m 53.8 s, 75.18 mph; 2, Rob Wells (Trick), 9 m 59.2 s; 3, Lyn Evans (Centaur MkII), 10 m 04.2 s; 4, Chris Hague (Wessex DNC Special), 10 m 07.4 s; 5, John Village (Village V2), 10 m 08.2 s; 6, Tony Tobias (DNC Mk5), 10 m 15.8 s. **Fastest lap:** Perry, 57.4 s, 77.77 mph **(record).**

Gandy Friction Trophy Modsports Race (12 laps): Overall and 1151-2000 cc: 1, Ian Clark (1.6 Lotus Elan), 11 m 13.0 s, 79.60 mph; 2, Tony Dunderdale (1.6 Turner-Ford), 11 m 14.2 s; 3, Roger Gamble (1.3 MG Midget s/c), 11 m 20.0 s; 4, John Wilmshurst (1.3 Vickers Sprite), 11 m 28.4 s; 5, David Strange (1.3 MG Midget) 11 m 29.0 s; 6, Tony Claydon (1.9 Lotus Elan), 11 m 29.2 s. **Fastest lap:** Clark, 54.8 s, 81.46 mph.

Up to 1150 cc: 1, Paul Bernal-Ryan (1.1 MG Midget), 11 m 41.4 s, 70.01 mph. No other finishers. **Fastest lap** Peter Denham (1.1 Lenham Le Mans), 57.6 s, 77.50 mph.

Varley Batteries National Monoposto Championship Race (10 laps): 1, David Coombs (1.6 Manta-Renault), 8 m 38.2 s, 86.14 mph; 2, Jim Yardley (1.6 Beagle Mk3), 8 m 48.6 s; 3, Trevor Scarratt (Brabham-Ford BT21), 8 m 49.2 s; 4, Ray Thomas (Revoray Mk2), 8 m 50.4 s; 5, Nigel Howard-Jones (1.6 RTW), 8 m 53.0 s; 6, Geoff Toms (1.6 Fubar T1), 9 m 19.0 s. **Fastest lap:** Coombs and Alan Baillie (1.6 Viking) 50.6 s, 88.22 mph.

Townsend Thoresen Formula Ford Challenge Race (10 laps): 1, Kenny Gray (Van Diemen-Scholar RF75), 8 m 56.4 s, 83.22 mph; 2, Rob Newall (Jamun-Minister T3C), 8 m 57.0 s; 3, Mike Wallaker (Jomic-Rowland), 9 m 01.2 s; 4, Don Gray (Royale-Minister RP16A), 9 m 01.2 s; 5, Mike Thompson (Rostron-ASP), 9 m 02.0 s; 6, Geoff Smailes (Royale-Scholar RP21), 9 m 06.6 s. **Fastest lap:** Kenny Gray and Newall, 52.8 s, 84.55 mph.

Brian Prebble got the jump on the rest in the Kent Messenger round, but John Homewood came through for another win.

Needell in; Fox out

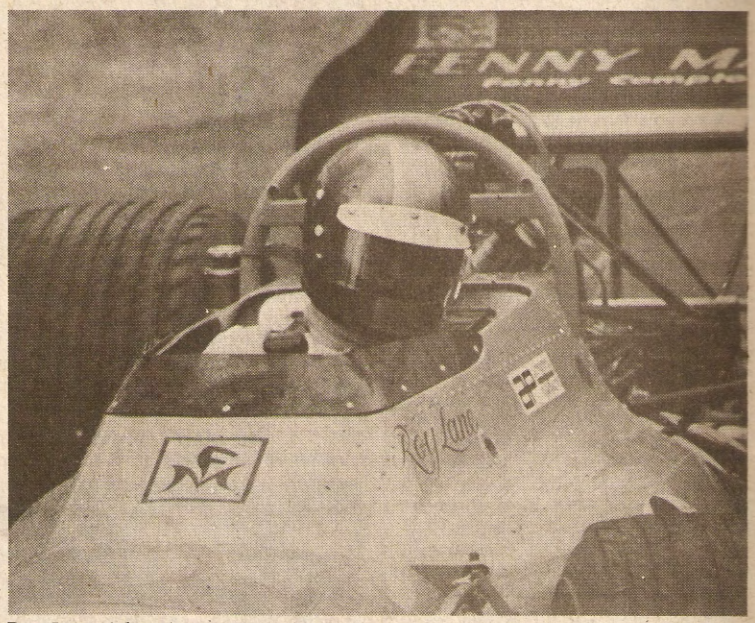
Despite lying first for much of the FF2000 race at Snetterton on Sunday, it seems that Syd Fox no longer has a seat in the works/R A McKinstry Hawke DL14. David Lazenby of Hawke told us on Monday that Fox was no longer required to drive the car, and that Tiff Needell would drive in as many rounds as his Formula Ford commitments would allow.

Tiff Needell – FF 2000

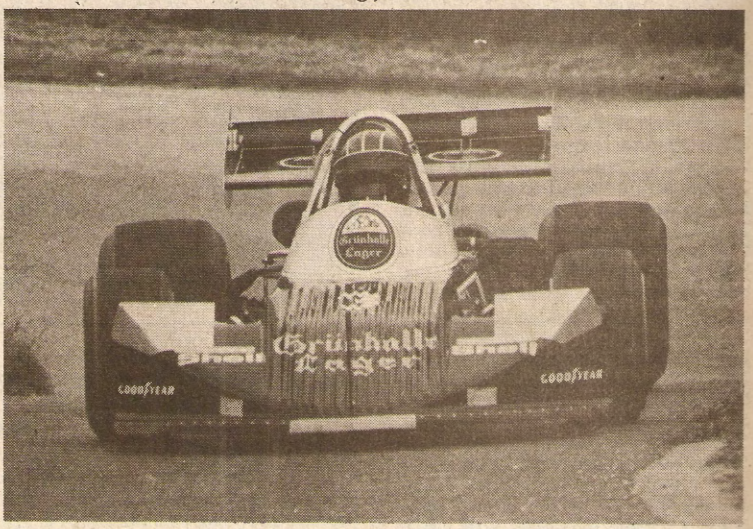
For close followers of the sport, it would seem strange that McKinstry and Fox should split after such a long and successful partnership. Last year, after several seasons in Formula Ford, including the Sunbeam Electric winning season and an abortive attempt at Formula Atlantic, Syd won the BOC Formula Ford championship. For 1975, he had the works Hawke drive fixed up, but it appears that a rift in interests between Fox and Lazenby has precipated his departure. McKinstry has little say in the matter as the car is basically owned by Hawke.

Needell is a choice of driver many would agree with, if not necessarily for his Formula Ford performances this year. In the past Needell has put in many good drives in his ageing and under financed Elden, but driving the works development model so far this year, the young Weybridge civil engineer has disappointed somewhat in comparison to relatively new and less experienced drivers. However, Needell recently broke his ties with Elden and bought a Crossle, in which he has little time to shine yet. He's still eager to continue in Formula Ford, although the FF2000 will be his first venture into "International" events and racing tyres.

Lane's Channel Island double



Roy Lane (above) was followed home in both the Channel Island hill climb rounds by Chris Cramer (below). In the first, at Bouley Bay a week ago, Cramer was pipped by 0.2s although Lane failed to beat Cramer's hill record by 0.17s. Alister Douglas-Osborn was third. At Val des Terres on Saturday, the story was the same, Lane winning from Cramer.



Touring Britain for Shelter

Goodmays Motors of Chadwell Heath in Essex, themselves a regular entrant in the Elf Renault 5 Challenge, are running a car on the Tour of Britain this weekend for David Dickson, one of the youngest competitors in the event, and David Pring.

The car has been donated by Goodmays to Shelter in aid of the homeless. Individuals are being encouraged to sponsor the car at 1p per 10-mile units. That's £1 for the whole 1,000-mile event. There are hopes to raise something in the region of £10,000.

Stratos stars at Goodwood

Star of the show at the Circle CC and Lancia MC's sprint at Goodwood on August 17 is the Chequered Flag Lancia Stratos. But there are other attractions at the Goodwood circuit, for the bar will be open all day, and there is a dinner dance the night before. Sponsorship has been obtained from various Lancia dealers throughout England, and there are various classes for single seaters as well as other classes. Regs may be obtained for the event from Barry Crowe on Newbury 46109. However, don't forget that a certain amount of silencing is required at the airfield circuit.

Don't worry Valli, even if you had a bit of a torrid time at Cadwell Park last Sunday during the prodsports event (below), your presence in the paddock was enough to delight many.

New venue

Morecambe CC are holding their Guardian autocross, due to take place on August 10, at a brand new venue in Head Dyke Lane, Pilling, near Garstang. It is reputed to be very smooth, and the club are currently accepting entries for all the usual classes plus the popular and entertaining rally car class. Regs may be obtained from Mike Griffiths at Rydal, Carr Bank, Milnthorpe, Cumbria. Tel: Arnside 761799.

● The Northern Clubmans Champagne championship organisers are holding a meeting on August 8 at Whitley Hall restaurant, Grenoside near Sheffield to generally talk over the series and discuss 1976. Peter Evans, or secretary of the meeting Chris Hart will discuss and disclose the regulations for next year and various ideas may be suggested. The meeting starts at 7.30/8 pm.

Jones finds ToBsponsor

Gethin Jones, who ran a competition in AUTOSPORT to find a co-driver for the Avon/*Motor* Tour of Britain, sadly has a meagre 19 entries, one of whom never even bothered to send in his entry fee.

But another of the competitors offered sponsorship from the Mount Sorrel Hotel, Barry and further support has come from Motorway Remould tyres, so the competition has been declared null and void. Jones will send back all £1 entry fees if required; otherwise he will donate all the money to the Roger Williamson Fund.

Jones, in his Renault 5, will be the only competitor on the event actually running on remoulds.

Stone rolls quickest

With the current cost of running big fuel burning cars, it was not surprising that the Sunday 'Pod event only attracted two blown fuel dragsters, Crane and Hayward and the fuel altered of Dave Stone to run Phil Elson's funny car. A four car Pro Comp entry was the other high spot of the meeting, with Gerry Andrews favourite in the Stones blown Chevy rail. Martin Rowat was the first to qualify in the class with a best ever 8.2s from his incredible rear engined 350 Chev, while Mike Hall followed this with a respectable 8.17s at 165 mph. Neither of the other two cars actually qualified as the BDR&HRA told them they had an automatic entry in view of the small crowd and thus prize money.

Racing started with the first run between Hayward and Crane, and an impressive sight they made as they did simultaneous burn-outs, Hayward reversing back under his own power, Crane being pulled back by crew members. There was little in it at the start but soon Crane's big Milodon motor started to show its muscle and it began to look as if the long tear-down that the car had gone through had turned up something, for at the top end Crane went through the traps at 216 mph, his fastest this year, with an e.t. of 6.3s. Hayward was quicker too with a 6.9s at 211 mph, but as the cars cleared the lights, Crane's disappeared in a cloud of smoke that had the crash truck out — but it turned out to be excessive oil from the breathers hitting the exhaust, and no damage was done.

Shortly after this Dave Stone and Phil Elson had their first match, with Elson making a good start in his Capri funny only to have Stone haul him in with his big Chevy altered *en route* to his quickest ever run at 7.59s to 8.84s. As Stone rolled to a stop, the torsion bar clamping bolts both pulled the threads out of their nuts allowing the front suspension to collapse, but no great damage was done and the team set to work installing larger and stronger bolts.

Teammate Gerry Andrews then had an easy first round win in the Pro Comp car hitting a 7.49s at 195 mph as Martin Rowat broke on the line. Pat Cuss absolutely went to sleep against Mike Hall who took the second run 8.1s to 9.0 from Cuss's injected dragster.

It was all Andrews in the final though, for although Hall made another good start, the tremendous power of the 427 Chevy was too much for his 392 Chrysler as Andrews hit a 7.3s/184 mph to 8.1s at 163 mph.

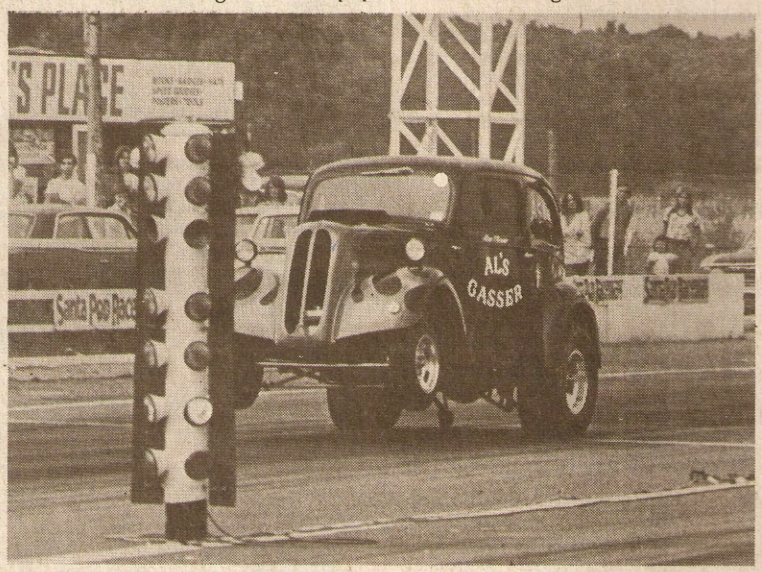
Meanwhile Crane and Hayward had been out again, with Crane holding on to some pretty alarming slides in the mid range as he gradually pulled away from Hayward with another good run of 6.4s/218 mph to 6.8s/213 mph to win the match.

With the suspension repaired, Dave Stone readied for his second run against Phil Elson, and caused the first surprise by red lighting. A second later came the next shock, for the altered was headed straight for the pit-lane fence. A moment later as the driver wrestled with the wheel it hit, sliding along for some distance before stopping as the engine died. The steering box had broken leaving Stone powerless to control the beast, but luckily the car only suffered some scuffing along the wheels and tyres.

As Elson had also red-lit, that was it for the two cars, with Stone winning by one run.

But perhaps the biggest news of the day came in Middle Comp, when after showing promise on the way to the final, Sue Coles finally beat Bob Messent fair and square with her small-block Chevy altered, winning with a 10.68s/133 mph to 10.725 for the Jag/Minivan "Stripteaser."

Al O'Connor enjoyed himself by pulling big wheelies all day to beat John Kirk's TVR three straight with his popular 283 Chev/Anglia



Two in four . . . .

Only two drivers have maximum points in the BTRDA Autocross Championship as the two abreast series moves into the final quarter.

The heavy increase in costs has meant that fewer competitors have attended every round and only Martin Barnard, the Datsun man and Dick Keen, the 1300 Escort driver, have collected the necessary five wins to gain automatic qualification for the final.

The two divisions of Class S are led by John Granville in his Audi with 30pts and Barnard on 45pts. In Class A Nick Garner heads the lists with 36pts from Derek Cleaver and Derek Piggott on 25 and 22pts respectively. Behind Keen in the 1300 front engined rwd class is Bob Merridale on 24pts with Clive Trueman on 14pts.

The sports cars are currently led by Rob Gibson in his Sprite with 33pts with Paul Northall (GT6) and Roger Burn (Clan) on 28pts and 27pts. Tony King (Imp) is set fair at the head of the rear engined class with 39pts with Terry Westley (VW) on 28pts leading Anne Harris, who shares King's Imp, on 21pts.

Bruce Male and Roger Brunt head Class E in their Minis each with 31pts with Frank Morris down the field on 18pts. The big Escort class is the current property of Dimi Mavropoulos (Escort), but he'll miss several rounds because of business. Current champion George Warren is on 29pts and Nobby Cresswell and Dave Fuell are both within striking distance.

Leading hope for honours from the South West Dave Baskerville leads the big Mini class with 24pts from former champion Terry Smith on 23pts and the specials are headed by Nick Seymour (Volnik) with 36pts and Mike Turpin (Turpin Special) on 27pts.

Escort carnage

The last two rounds of the *Penthouse* Escort Challenge has resulted in a panel beater's nightmare. Following the start line shunt at Oulton Park a couple of weeks ago which involved a number of cars, it was write-off time at Cadwell on Sunday. The unfortunate victim was *Motor* magazine's Gordon Bruce in his Toric-sponsored Escort Sport who, having led for several laps, was striving to hold his second place against Oulton winner Graham Hollis.

Contact was made between the two at the bottom of the Mountain and Bruce's Sport made a vain effort to link up with the Apollo/Soyuz astronauts. The resulting acrobatics reduced his pristine machine to virtual scrap, although there was a certain amount of anxiety among fellow competitors afterwards who spent much time peering at pieces of twisted metal.

Bruce was shaken but not visibly stirred afterwards but it looks as if he'll be on the sidelines for the next few rounds which is a pity as he, and fellow journalist Tony Dron, have really got the new style Sport up among the fastest Mexicos these days.

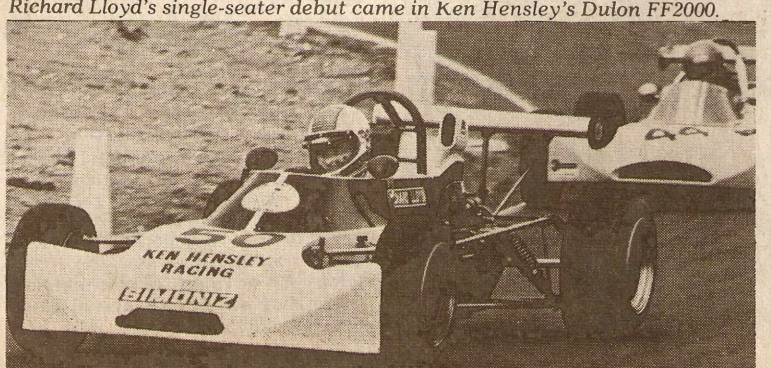
Surprising debut

Making his single-seater debut last weekend at Snetterton, after a surprisingly long time in racing, was none other than Richard Lloyd. All his previous experience has been in Modsports, sports cars and of course, most recently, big saloons.

Lloyd was driving Ken Hensley's FF2000 Dulon in the Allied Polymer Group Championship round. He only managed six laps of practice before the exhaust broke, "but I wasn't the slowest", had added quickly. In the race he went quite well moving up to eighth place. He was initially docked a minute for jumping the start but this was later withdrawn.

Other than just wanting to race a single seater Richard's ulterior motive in arranging the drive was to try to score more points in the Tarmac British Racing Championship. Currently he lies second behind Stuart Graham (188 pts) and Tony with a total of 178 pts. However Lloyd did say that he thought Brise had really got the title sewn up.

Richard Lloyd's single-seater debut came in Ken Hensley's Dulon FF2000.



. . . . and Barnard set for double

Martin Barnard is heading for a double. Already on a maximum in the two abreast series the Midlander is also one of two drivers on a full total in the four abreast championship prior to the Weymouth event last weekend.

Along with Rob Gibson (Sprite) he has 36pts from four meetings Among these are the Merridale brothers Bob and Tony both with three successes in their Escorts while Nick Seymour (Volnik) and Mike Turpin (Turpin Special), are also handily placed in their class.

Nick Garner (Mini), also has three successes and is perhaps the most serious threat to the present leaders.

Positions: Class S: Barnard, 36pts, G. Harper (Honda Civic), 6pts; **Class A:** Garner, 27pts, D. Cleaver, 18pts, D. Piggott, 8pts. **Class B:** B. Merridale, 27pts; C. Trueman, 13pts. **Class C:** Gibson, 36pts; R. Burn, 8pts, R. Easton, 8pts. **Class D:** T. Owen, 20pts, P. Harrold, 18pts, T. Westley, 15pts. **Class E:** F. Morris, 21pts; B. Male, 19pts; R. Brunt, 18pts. **Class F:** T. Merridale, 27pts, D. Fuell, 19pts; G. Warren, 10pts. **Class G:** D. Baskerville, 18pts, T. Smith, 6pts, R. McDonald, 6pts. **Class H:** N. Seymour, 30pts; M. Turpin, 24pts; N. Bradshaw, 6pts.

Volnik powers through the dust of autocross. Last weekend, driver Nick Seymour easily beat arch rival Mike Turpin.

Slaughterer Brunt

Perhaps the biggest surprise at last Sunday's round of the BTRDA Four abreast autocross championship was the comprehensive defeat of Mike Turpin by his old rival, Nick Seymour. Previously this year, the pair have taken it in turn to win by and large, with a narrow margin on each occasion. But Seymour really handed out a thrashing at the Woolbridge Club's dust bedevilled event at Ridgeway near Weymouth, winning by some 23 seconds on the aggregate of two best runs. This win has given Seymour a nine point lead in the class with one round to run before the final in September.

Current joint favourites to get to the final with maximum scores Messrs Barnard and Gibson, again had comfortable wins. Barnard's Datsun 240Z had little opposition in the standard car class and Gibson weighed in with his fifth win with his Sprite beating Ron Easton's TVR by some eleven seconds.

A. Taylor and Clive Holland both recorded identical aggregate times in the 870 cc Mini class, Taylor getting the maximum points thanks to a faster individual run. Bob Merridale had a bad day with his Escort finishing fourth but fortunately this did not dent his class championship hopes as nearest challenger Clive Truman was absent without an engine. David Powie was the local winner in his Anglia beating John Dale's Escort by eight seconds.

Terry Westley collected a good class win with his VW and has moved into second place in the rear engined class, Terry Owen (Imp) being a long way behind.

The most spectacular driver of the day was Roger Brunt. The Bath butcher walked all over his class opposition and was fifth overall with his one litre Mini. Contender Bruce Male was over six seconds adrift in the one sided battle and Brunt's win puts him to the top of the class. Despite a poor first run — he collected some penalties — Tony Merridale ran out an easy winner of the big Escort class, his nearest challenger Dave Fuell running into carburation problems. David Baskerville turned in another neat performance for his third win in the big Mini class beating David Harris by five seconds and this pair left Nick Jesty wondering where they had gone.

BTD: N. Seymour (Volnik), 253.5s.
Class winners: M. Barnard (Datsun 240Z), 294.7s; A. Taylor (Mini), 298.1s; D. Powie (Anglia), 298.2s; R. Gibson (Sprite), 269.8s; T. Westley (VW), 300.2s; R. Brunt (Mini), 277.3s; T. Merridale (Escort), 265.8s; D. Baskerville (Mini), 275.1s; M. Turpin (Turpin Special), 276.3s; B. Bazley (Firenza), 299.8s. **Best Woolbridge:** R. MacDonald (Mini), 280.9s.

Metra clean

Run on part of Rod Chapman's land at Partridge Lane, Wadhurst, Sussex CC's production car trial last Sunday attracted 28 competitors. Mike Stinton, in his Metra 950 Trials Formula car which only took five weeks to build, was the only one to clean all 21 sections.

In the classes, G. Lindley beat A. Terry by a couple of marks to take the Mini class, Peter Higgins walked off with the front engined rwd class in his Mexico for the day's biggest class win and J. Hardey (Sprite) and D. Greenslade (VW) both had identical class winning scores and identical margins over the respective runners-up.

Class winners: G. Lindley (Mini), 5 marks lost; P. Higgins (Mexico), 9 marks; J. Hardey (Sprite), 11 marks; D. Greenslade (VW), 11 marks; M. Stinton (Metra), 0 marks.

● Neil McGrath's comeback in the *Penthouse* Escort Challenge, which resulted in a win at Cadwell last Sunday, was attributed to a car he's purchased from Derek Speight. Hope he paints it!

On again

Nearly 90 competitors will be at Dodington Park on Saturday for the re-arranged White Horse MC round of the BTRDA Autocross Championship. Rained off in April when the course was waterlogged, the event has a much better chance of success on Saturday with the start being put back to 3 pm after practice in the morning.

Most of the championship contenders will be present as for the following day when the 'circus' moves to the Forest of Dean event.

● Regs are now available for the Southsea MC's autocross at Horndean off the A3 on August 17. The kidney shaped course will be approximately 1,500 yards in length, and will give some 10 miles of competitive motoring during the day. The event is a round of the ACSMC championship and regs may be obtained from clerk of the course, Damian Byrne at Petersfield 4767. There'll be a class for rally cars and production saloons, taxed and insured.

Irwin annihilates

The BTRDA autotest championship travelled to Scotland for the only round north of the border last Sunday and Ken Irwin took his 1275 GT to BTD at the Scottish Sporting Car Club's Red Hackle event.

He had a comprehensive win finishing some 20 seconds ahead of class winner Alan Murray who, in turn, was miles ahead of Dave Robertson.

In the saloon class, the battle was between Gordon Aird in his Datsun Cherry and the Mexico of John Calton. At lunch, Calton led by ten seconds but Aird quickly wiped off the deficit in the early part of the afternoon and went on to win by 15 seconds.

An incorrect performance on the first test left Trevor Smith (Midget) with an almost impossible task in the sports car class. Some spirited driving, however, during the rest of the day eventually brought him into second spot five seconds behind Dick Squire's Sprite and almost four seconds ahead of Harold Hagan, across from Ireland for the weekend.

BTD: K. Irwin (1275 GT), 632.9s.
Class winners: G. Aird (Datsun Cherry), 805.7s; R. Squire (Sprite), 690.4s; A. Murray (Mini), 653.3.

Lyall betters Betteridge

A first run of 86.5s — a tenth quicker than Peter Vaughan — was good enough to give Terry Smith BTD last Sunday at the sun drenched Sixty & Worcs autocross at Spetchley near Droitwich.

About 60 entries had three timed runs over a fast course which rapidly became something of a dustbowl but there was only one accident and that was not serious.

Best of the other class battles was among the amalgamation of sports, rear engined and big Escorts where Alister Lyall's Escort finished a tenth quicker than the VW of Brian Betteridge. With his VW repaired following his motorway pileup the previous week, Betteridge was set to take the class on his second run but he spoilt it by spinning. George Warren turned up with a rally engine in his third string Escort and was plagued with misfiring.

BTD: T. Smith (Mini), 86.5s.
Class winners: P. Wilson (Mini), 92.7s; M. Davies (Anglia), 98.3s; J. Lancaster (Mini), 92.1s; P. Vaughan (Mini), 86.6s; C. Beechey (Midget), 99.4s; K. Cotterell (Anglia), 99.6s; A. Lyall (Escort), 91.1s.

● The results of the bargain basement class of the BBC Radio One production saloon car championship race at Snetterton last Sunday are currently provisional as runaway winner Simon Watson had his L&G Fire Protection backed Imp sealed afterwards for a complete check.

● John Withers, formerly Alan Baillie Monoposto mechanic, has found himself time to construct his own car based on Baillie's Viking '74 chassis. Withers calls the car a JLW and it is clothed in ex-March bodywork. The engine is in near Formula Ford tune.

Busy Lowe

Alex Lowe, proprietor of Valiant Motor Engineers at Crosby in Liverpool, is a man who likes to have racing cars around him. He's currently lying fourth in the Formula Vee championship with his seven year old, five times shunted Valiant Vee and is sixth in the F4 championship. The latter result is following the shunting of their B15 at Castle Combe a few weeks ago. But Lowe reappeared at Mallory on Sunday with a Chevron B20, although obviously had problems and was the last qualifier.

Alex Lowe – FV and F4

Meanwhile, Valiant have no less than three chassis up at the Chevron works being modified and updated: one for each of F4, Monoposto and *libre*. Meanwhile, another project is on the go, a monocoque Vee being built from an ex-David Purley B27 with ex-Crawford bodywork and various other bits from various people. "It has to be a winner" says Lowe. Incidentally, Lowe carries Elf stickers and must be one of the very few, if only single seaters carrying stickers for the French company in this country.

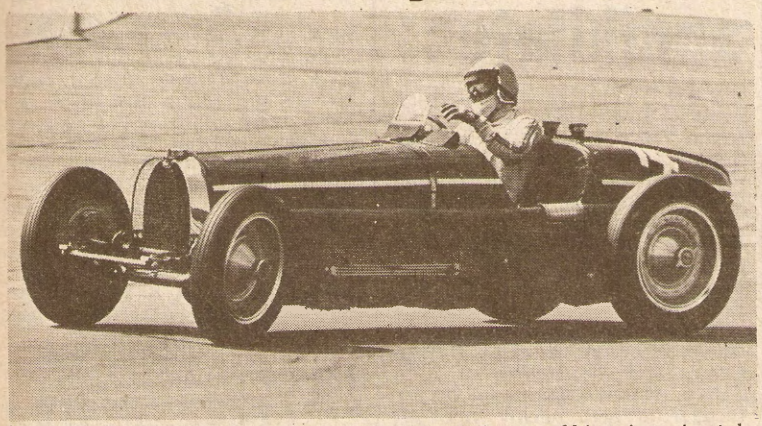
A1 deal for A40

Remember Doc Shepherd, Jonathan Williams and Frank Williams in A40s in the early '60s? Well, believe it or not, there's one that's still racing. At least, it looks like an A40.

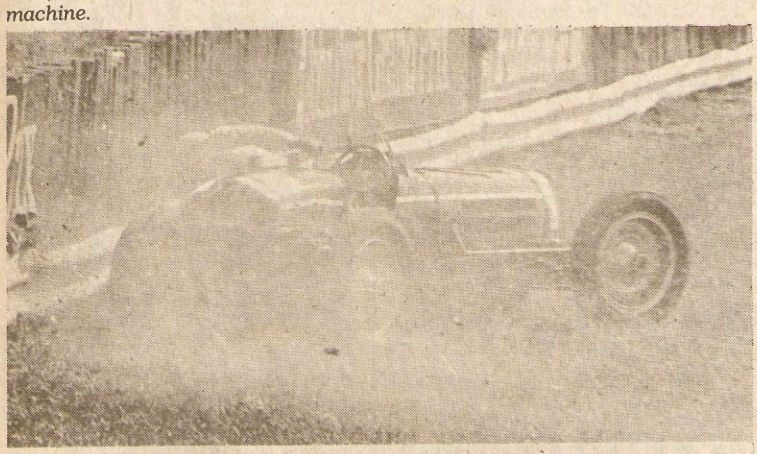
Peter Cartlidge, driver of the most unusual Austin A40-Holbay special saloon built by Dave Horns and Jack Pollard, has succeeded in joining up with the LEP Group of Companies in a sponsorship deal which, while limited in 1975, will take on a comprehensive look for 1976.

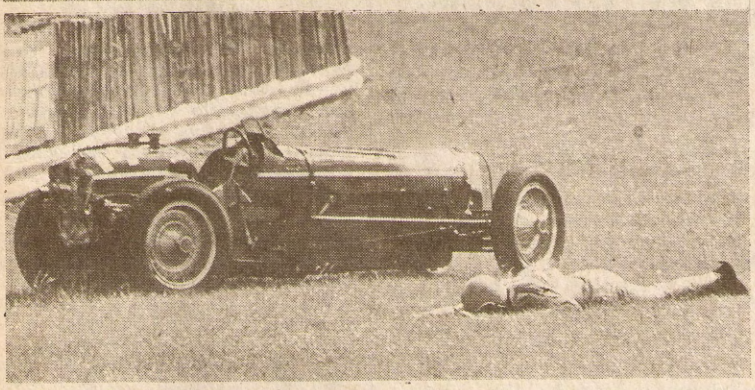
The LEP Group of companies are engaged in International freight forwarding and ancillary services and will use sponsorship to promote them. During the winter break, the car will be further lightened and the Holbay engine attended to so that in 1976, the car will embark on a serious championship trail.

Corner's nasty shunt



Neil Corner ably demonstrated the risks the gentlemen of historic racing take driving their machines. Corner crashed his Bugatti at Copse and was thrown out of the car. However, apart from bruises and slight concussion, Corner was unhurt and soon down at the Green Man rueing the damage to his gorgeous machine.





Laley from the back

Seeded at No 56, the Pickering crew of J. Laley and D. I'del were surprise winners of last Saturday's Calderford Trophy Rally run by Wakefield & Dist MC beating such well known campaigners as Dennis Pelling and Geoff Birkett in a very close finish.

Starting and finishing at the Selby Fork Hotel, the rally used much of the well known North Yorkshire territory. The first half was all time controls and the second half was devoted to mainly the five stages which totalled some 13 miles.

Laley and I'del won the rally in their Escort on the furthest cleanest ruling for at the end of the night, in which fog was a problem on Sutton Bank, they had dropped 221s.

This was equalled by Pelling and Ron Shipp in their Escort but after a protest had been rejected by the stewards they were left in second place just two seconds ahead of Birkett and Dave Orrick in the Ascona.

Only five seconds separated the first and second semi-experts, B. Svenson and M. Thompson winning the class in their Escort on 321 seconds ahead of R. Brighouse and S. Roach in an Imp. The top novice crew were R. K. and G. A. Smart in an Avenger on 406s with D. Gibson and J. Robinson second in an Escort on 432s.

Opel dealer debuts in Kadett

Eric Broughton and Son Ltd are entering the rally field for the first time this year with a G1 Opel 1.2 Opel Kadett. The firm are Opel main dealers in Newark, Notts. They will be undertaking a series of events counting towards the East Midland Rally championship together with selected national and UK international events which offer good potential for a class win.

The crew will consist of driver Alan Porter from Mansfield who has had two seasons and some good results in the East Midlands area, and joining him will be John Taylor. Taylor is from Castle Donington and has co-driven successfully at home and abroad for several years. He's also chairman of the East Midlands Association of Motor Clubs.

The company are particularly keen to do well in the recently announced Opel Dealers' Cup which offers an ex-works competition car as first prize.

Royale sell Dunlops

Royale Racing have been appointed official stockists of Dunlop racing tyres as from now. Formula Ford tyres will be carried in stock, while all other sizes for FF2000, Super Vee, and saloon cars are available to order.

Recommended Dunlop prices will apply to all tyres supplied, and Royale have a fitting and balancing service at a meagre extra cost if it is required. Deliveries to circuits can be arranged if 24 hours notice is given while normal business hours for purchasing and fitting tyres are 9 am to 6.30 pm Monday to Friday and 9 am to 1.30 pm on Saturday.

● **Varley Monopoto championship:** 1, Alan Baillie, 97; 2, Trevor Scarratt, 87; 3, Paul Maxwell, 75; 4, Nigel Howard-Jones, 63; 5, Jim Yardley, 54; 6, John Lancaster.

● Phil Green, who was injured in the Formula Ford race at Mallory Park on Sunday, was said to be fairly satisfactory by representatives of Leicester Royal Infirmary on Monday. Green, who went under the back of another car at Gerards is now in the Langham Ward of the hospital.

More Juniors

Quite a few Formula Juniors are being prepared for next year's season, among them the ex-Mike Parkes Gemini Mk 3A which Mike Wetherill, a Monoposto man, has bought, Wetherill already races in historic events in a Lotus 15. The Lola Mk 5A formerly used by Trevor Scarratt is another car on the stocks at the moment.

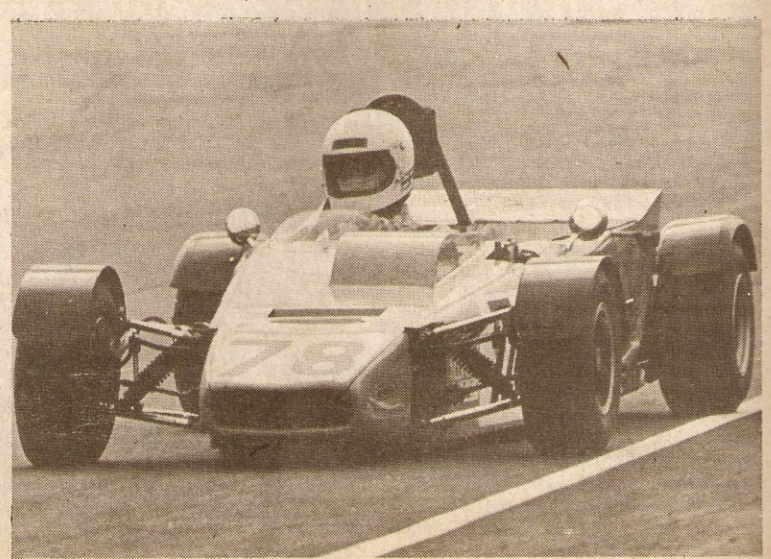
● Regs should be out within a week for the Castrol '75, the championship rally run by Wolverhampton and South Staffs CC. Starting and finishing in Aberystwyth the rally promises to be very compact and the organisers are hoping that almost 50 per cent of the 200 mile route will be in the forests.

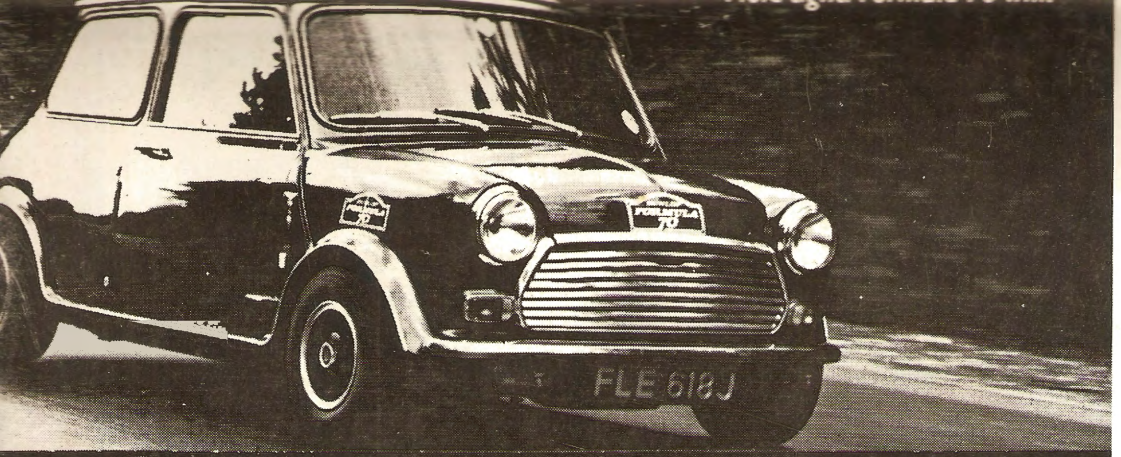
Aintree's sprint

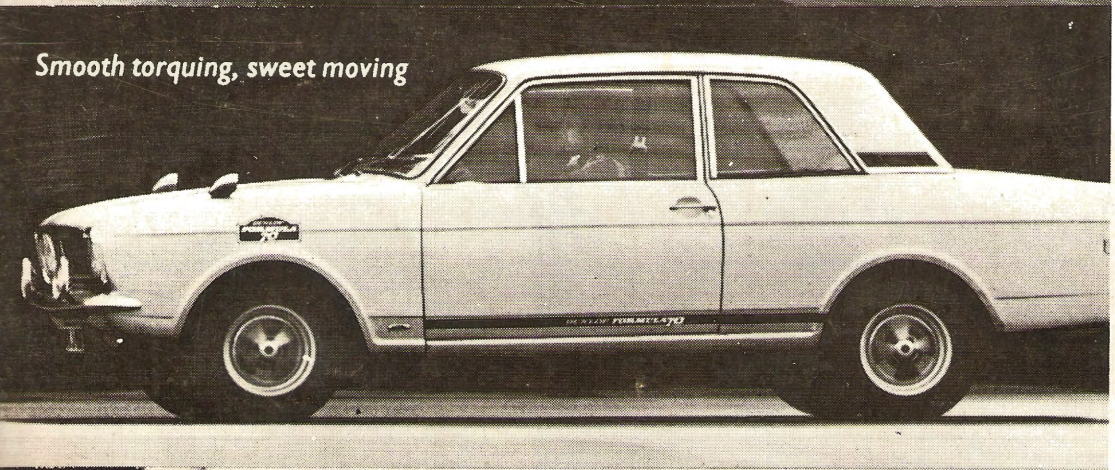
The Longton and District Car club have sorted out their problems with the owners of Aintree (it had just been, or was about to be sold at the time of the meeting, hence the cancellation) and it will now be run on August 2. There are 80 entries for the Longton sprint championship round and the first run starts at 1 pm. There are already 26 single seaters and 30 saloons entered.

● John Bright's Formula Ford Whitehurst engine, sealed at Oulton Park recently after coming fourth in the National Organs round, was found legal last week after a check by the scrutineers. Bright now has the engine fitted into a new Royale RP21 which he bought recently.

Enfield, Middx F750 driver Kim Perry further extended his lead in the Reliant F750 Championship with an easy win at Brands Hatch on Sunday.







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