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GEORGE HILL CLINCHES CASTROL/AUTOSPORT TITLE

AUTOSPORT

Final BP F3 championship race at Thruxton



AUTOSPORT

BRITAIN'S MOTOR SPORTING WEEKLY

October 30, Vol 61 No 5

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EDITORIAL

Give it a chance

Indylantic is a new name to the sport this week. It's not a new formula, it's a new idea in motor racing promotion based around a tried and nearly very successful category, Formula Atlantic.

For a long time now race promoters and others — and AUTOSPORT — have complained strongly about the almost point-blank refusal of competitors to involve themselves in any sort of self promotion and so help motor sport as a whole and ultimately themselves in particular.

And earlier this year we were very critical of an organisation known as Formula Atlantic International which, like other mismanaged and amateur small-time associations, was making unrealistic demands on organisers and was not prepared to give anything in return. Formula Atlantic came very close to being dropped from the British racing calendar because of it, but luckily common sense prevailed just in time. Showing that their lesson was well learned the same outfit is now involved in a creditable idea for next year's championship which was announced last week.

First of all, plans have been drawn up to turn the class of racing into entertainment. Instead of the statutory practice session, with times being announced half an hour later, each driver will be given three laps, one warm-up, one timed and one cool-off, in which to set his grid position time. The commentary will be linked to the timekeepers and, hopefully, by the time the cool-off lap is completed the driver's time will be known. This means that spectators will be able to follow practice properly and get the chance to see the drivers really at work. No excuses for mechanical failure or weather conditions will be taken as an excuse for a slow time.

In the race itself, if there is an accident the pace-car system will be used to slow cars down and the laps completed behind the car will not be counted. As soon as the track is clear the race will be on again and, more than likely, all the cars will be bunched together for the restart.

None of these ideas is new — they apply in America the entire time. The crowds there are enormous. Here, at the moment, they are terrible. This is a brave attempt to inject some new life into racing and give the spectator a better deal than the one to which he has become so boringly accustomed.

Another novelty for this country is that the prize money will be a percentage of the nett gate receipts for the meeting. This means that it really will be directly in the competitors' own interests to promote themselves and their class of racing. It's totally in their interests. If there is no crowd because of lack of promotion or competitors not making themselves available for promotion, then there is no financial return. It is up to the drivers themselves now to make the effort.

It must be possible to get the crowds back. After some very poor attendances at motor race meetings at Brands Hatch recently, last Sunday's motorcycle meeting netted, we hear, the largest return of any MCD meeting this year. Practice day alone drew more people than the previous weekend's big car meeting which featured the final rounds of the 1975 British Saloon, F5000 and Atlantic championships. That is a very poor reflection on the current state of motor racing.

Everybody has got to pull together to help solve this problem, which is now becoming acute. Indylantic is a brave new idea and one which deserves to succeed. And it's only one project: more are needed. Ideas like these must be given the fullest support by all of us.

our cover picture

The BP Super Visco F3 Championship came to a successful conclusion at Thruxton last Sunday. Our report starts on page 26. Photo: David Winter

Ferrari for F2

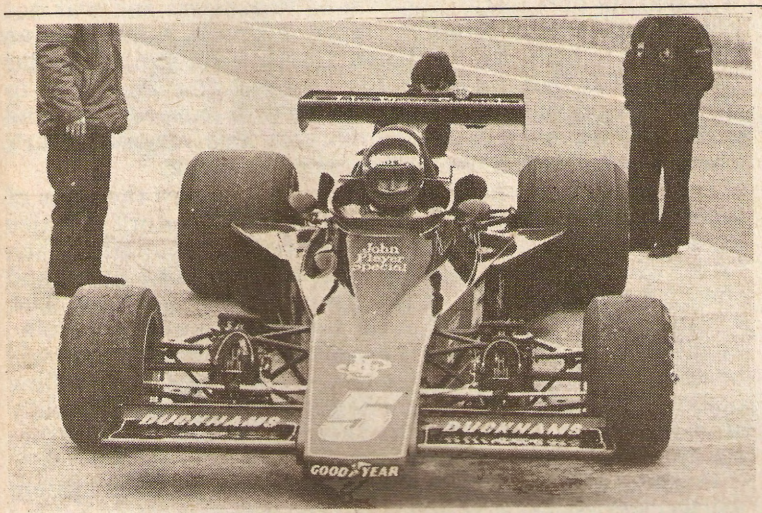
Ferrari return fo Formula 2! This was the sensational news that leaked out at Ferrari's annual press conference last week and simultaneously the rumours of British involvement began to grow.

Fiat, the holding company of Ferrari and Lancia, have apparently decided that it is not a good idea for Renault to dominate all the European formulae and thus Ferrari were commissioned to produce an engine which will probably run as a Fiat.

It is not yet clear whether it is an in line six or a V6 layout — the former being the most likely as information suggests that it is basically half of the current Ferrari F1 engine suitably bored and stroked up to 2-litres. Five engines have been built so far and apparently test bed reports show that 315 bhp is available at the flywheel and that it revs to 11,500 although optimum power is delivered at 10,500 rpm.

Mauro Forghieri, the Ferrari designer was in England for the Motor Show recently and talked to a number of English manufacturers with a view to making it a commercial proposition.

John Reid of Holbay and Tom Wheatcroft have both been mentioned in connection with the project. Reid said on Monday that he was going to Italy this week to finalize a development project on the engine and that he hoped to make an official announcement within the next few weeks. Wheatcroft wasn't prepared to commit himself too far on the subject although he did say that some drawings were on their way to him so that his designer, Mike Pilbeam, could study the possibilities of building a car to accept the engine.



Ronnie Peterson drove the new Lotus 77 at Silverstone last week. Note the wide front track arrangement.

Ronnie tries the new 77

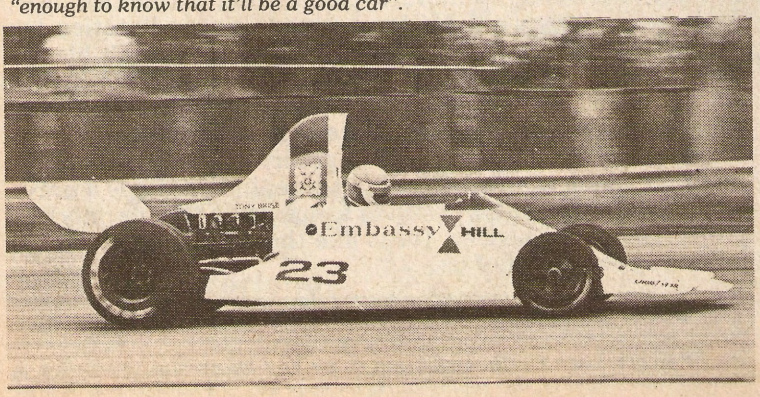
Ronnie Peterson and Jim Crawford gave the new Lotus 77 its first airing outside of the team's Hethel test track when they appeared in it at Silverstone during the middle of last week.

Peterson gave the car a whirl for most of the day before departing for Switzerland on business. In the Swede's characteristic style, the new car leapt and twitched its way around Silverstone's Grand Prix circuit, looking most spectacular but not terribly quick. Peterson's times remained in the mid 22s.

The car was being tried with a wide front track arrangement but judging by the physical effort put in by both Peterson and Crawford, it looks as if Lotus will have a lot more sorting to do before they take two cars out to the Argentinian GP.

Team manager Peter Warr was unavailable for comment as he is away on holiday.

After we went to press last week, Tony Brise gave the new Hill GH2 F1 a whirl at Silverstone. Prior to leaving for the States, Tony did about a dozen laps, "enough to know that it'll be a good car".



Exciting new plans for Formula Atlantics

'This is a turning point in National motor racing' said John Webb last week at the announcement of Indylantic. What is Indylantic? It's the brainchild of three Formula Atlantic competitors, Peter Wardle, Nick May and Steve Prior, who have got together to form Formula Atlantic Promotions Ltd in association with MCD.

As the name suggests, the racing will be run along Indianapolis lines, with commentary-linked qualifying, using cars conforming to current Formula Atlantic regulations. But the main point behind the new approach is the self-promotion element, something that has been sadly lacking in British racing for a long time. In simple terms the prize fund for the competitors will come from a percentage of the gate money.

It is hoped that each of the races will have a separate sponsor, but it is up to the competitors themselves, through Formula Atlantic Promotions, to generate publicity and bring the crowds in. Details of the promotion methods and race day events are still to be announced, but ideas include a Concours d'Elegance, driver projection and involvement with spectators, pre-race promotion, linked advertising and so on.

The prize money scale will be a share of the nett gate receipts on the following scale:

Ten per cent will be put aside to go towards an end-of-season championship fund, which will be distributed to the first ten in the final championship fund (25% for first, 17½%, 15%, 12½% 10%, 7½%, 5%, 3¾%, 2½% and 1¼%). Of the remaining 90% of gate receipts, up to 86.25% of the remainder will be divided up between the first 40 competitors (the full percentage will always be distributed, assuming a full quota of drivers).

Payment will be made on condition that the minimum qualification requirements are fulfilled and that the competitors take the starter's flag in the final, or achieve the minimum level of qualification requirements as reserves. Trade bonuses are being negotiated by the organisers for main race finishers.

It has been calculated that, if there were 5,000 people in attendance, each competitor in the final would receive £202.50, and approximately £900 if there were 25,000 spectators and 25 starters. Forty starters for the same gate would reduce the figure to £750.

The races themselves will consist of an unofficial, untimed setting-up session of at least half an hour for everyone. followed by individually Indy-style timed qualification. Each car will complete a minimum of one warm-up lap, one flying timed lap and a cooling down lap. The grid position will be determined by the one flying lap.

The fastest 15 drivers will be placed in time order on the grid for the A final. The next 20 will be placed in time order for the B final and the remainder as reserves for the B final. A standard 110% rule will be applied at the organiser's discretion and no mechanical excuses will be accepted for poor times. Should track conditions vary during timed qualifying then the 110% rule will not apply, but no consideration will be taken of variations due to changing conditions, and times will be taken regardless of the official qualifying time. Drivers will be sent out based upon reversing the finishing order of the previous Indylantic meeting in order to maximise the entertainment value to the spectators. While this is taking place, the commentary will be angled towards the competitor on the track so that each man will receive about three minutes of air time, which should be attractive to sponsors.

The B final will consist of a minimum length of 30 miles and the A final a minimum of 50 miles. The first five finishers of the B final will be placed in finishing order on the back of the A final grid. The organisers reserve the right to combine these races into one, or alter the number of drivers qualifying to race within the maximum number of starters permitted by the RAC track licence.

In the event of any race incident, a pace car will come out onto the track in front of the race leader, accompanied by the display of stationary yellow flags at every marshal's post, and the competitors must form up in race order until the incident has been cleared. Under no circumstances, unless the track has been blocked, will the race be stopped.

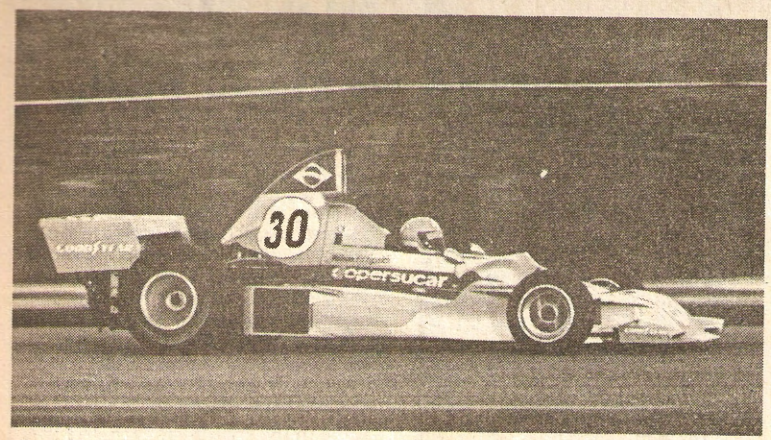
As soon as the incident has been cleared, the pace car will return to the enclosure and a green flag will be shown at the start line to allow the race to continue and simultaneously the yellow will be withdraw. The laps behind the pace car will not be counted towards the race distance. Any car leaving the pits during the paced laps must rejoin at the rear of the field. The pit marshals will not allow anyone to leave the pit road between the exhibition of the green flag and the last car passing the restart point.

Championship points will be awarded down to 20th place in the A final, subject to every driver completing 90% of the distance. The points will be 25 for first and then 22-20-18-16-15-14-13- .... 1. An additional point will be awarded for the fastest lap and a further point if it is a record. The fastest official qualifying lap will also qualify for an extra point.

Ten rounds are planned for the series, seven at MCD circuits and others at Silverstone and Thruxton.

John Webb was particularly enthusiastic about the idea: 'unlike F5000, the Atlantic people have asked the circuits about their racing, they're realists and aware of spectators. This is one of the greatest realisations in recent years. Instead of saying "can we make life difficult for you," I thank the Atlantic competitors for being realistic, and saying "can we chance our arm with yours".'

All interested drivers, sponsors and entrants are invited to a meeting at London's Astor Club, off Berkeley Square on November 8 at 5.30 where full details of the next three season's Indylantic will be given.



Ingo Hoffman at the wheel of the Copersucar F1 at Silverstone on Monday.

Hoffman tests the Copersucar

Brazilian Formula 3 driver Ingo Hoffman, the new protege of the Fittipaldi brothers, was given his first taste of a Formula 1 car at Silverstone on Monday in readiness for his expected F1 debut at the Argentinian Grand Prix in January.

Hoffman, who raced successfully in FSV back in Brazil before coming over here this year to take in an F3 season, has been driving Tony Dean's Chevron in recent F5000 races in an attempt to get use to the greater power offered by an F1 car.

The car Hoffman was driving was Wilson Fittipaldi's Copersucar, not the most competitive F1 car of late but the first all Brazilian F1, a fact which many people tend to overlook.

Hoffman spent all day at Silverstone's Grand Prix, ending up by recording a fine 1m 21.9s, an effort which impressed a lot of people. This is considerably quicker than Arturo Merzario managed with the car and just 0.3s slower than Wilson's best effort in qualifying for the British GP.

Ingo Hoffman – fine time.



Wheatcroft tempts Nilsson

Among the many offers that Gunnar Nilsson has received for next year in recent weeks was one from Tom Wheatcroft for Formula 2. Nilsson spent all last Thursday up at Donington and came away impressed. 'It's a fantastic set-up and Tom is so straight and honest it's unbelievable' he said.

Wheatcroft too was impressed. 'He's obviously a good driver but he's also intelligent and determined. He knows what he wants. I laid my cards on the table. I'm not ready to go into Formula 1 yet but I said I'd help him all I could to get him a drive if he wanted to do F1 as well. Obviously he's got a lot of offers and he will take the best one, but I'd like to run him.

The big payout: Sports Editor Chris Witty (right) attempts to buy an F2 drive from Tom Wheatcroft for next year. A more likely candidate, we feel, is Gunnar Nilsson (centre) while Eddie Cheever looks on longingly. Actually it was a lost bet on Witty's behalf.



Another Parnelli 1-2

The Vel's Parnelli Formula 5000 team did it again at Riverside last weekend when they steamrollered the opposition to score their second consecutive one-two in the final F5000 race of the year. Once again it was Mario Andretti who took the chequered flag, leading home team-mate Al Unser. However, it was the controversy surrounding Tony Brise that attracted the most interest, certainly as far as British racegoers are concerned.

At the start of the final, the pace car completed not one, but *two*, pace laps. In earlier American F5000 races, these extra pace laps have counted as race miles, even though they are held under a yellow caution flag. The reason is simply because the F5000 cars haven't enough fuel tankage to last much more than 100 miles.

While the Viceroy/Hilton Lola T332s of Andretti and Unser rumbled home easy winners, Brise was holding on to a third place and looking set to clinch his British Tarmac Championship. Then, as at Laguna Seca, the Theodore Lola T332 coughed and died on the last lap, dropping Brise to sixth in the results. The team then lodged a protest saying that the race should have been stopped the previous lap. It was turned down and they then appealed to the SCCA/USAC officials. Our American reporter reckons "they've got a good chance because this type of incident has happened before."

Assuming that Brise dropped to sixth, into third place came Brian Redman driving the Carl Haas/Jim Hall Lola T400, having damaged his regular championship winning T332 yet again in practice.

Next up was John Cannon who drove an excellent race in his Ray Wardell-run March 75A who finished on the same lap as the leaders. However, Cannon may drop down to sixth if Brise's appeal is upheld. Why? On that controversial "last" lap, Danny Ongais in the Interscope Lola T400 was chasing Redman, having driven an excellent race, only to be knocked off by a wayward Benny Scott in his Lola T332. This dropped Ongais to seventh and elevated John Morton's Lola T400/332 into fifth place, also on the same lap as the leaders. Therefore the results of Riverside, except the first two placings, are provisional.

Full report next week.

Brambilla's Lancia F2 V6

Lancia are also looking into the possibilities of Formula 2 next year. Former racing driver Ernesto Brambilla, brother of March F1 driver Vittorio, is currently working on a Lancia V6 engine at the factory with a view to putting it in a March chassis for his brother to race next year.

This engine is basically the Ferrari Dino 264 engine, which, it will be remembered, was tried by the Brambilla brothers without too much success back in 1972. However, reports suggest that with the full backing of Lancia, who use the same engine in 2.4 litre form in the Stratos, early bench tests show a promising power output.

Laffite's off

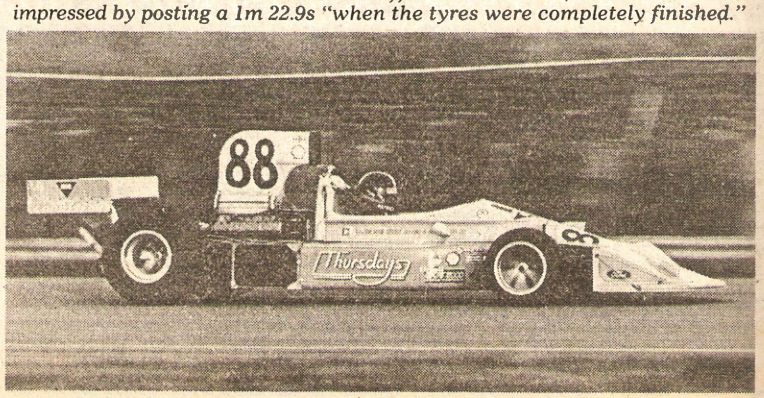
European Formula 2 Champion Jacques Laffite departed for the Far East this week to take part in next Monday's Grand Prix of Japan at the Suzuki circuit.

Laffite will be driving a Mitsubishi-powered March 752 and is the only European attending the event. He will obviously be hoping for better luck than fellow countryman Jean-Pierre Jabouille who only completed one lap in a sports car race there a couple of weeks ago, the race being stopped because of bad weather. Jabouille was driving an Alpine Renault sports car, two of which had been bought by a local car dealer.

● The Formula Vee Association are holding an open day at Donington this Friday. Anyone who is interested in Super Vees are cordially invited to attend.

RAM test new drivers

John MacDonald allowed Damien Magee, Patrick Neve (below) and Andy Sutcliffe to try Alan Jones's RAM/Thursdays F5000 March-Ford V6 at Silverstone on Monday. MacDonald reckoned Magee needed the chance to prove himself in a competitive car and he obliged with an impressive 1m 22.1s, 0.3s slower than Jones's best. Sutcliffe did 1m 23.1s, while Neve also impressed by posting a 1m 22.9s "when the tyres were completely finished."



IROC 2: Easy for Unser

The second and third rounds of the IROC Camaro series took place at Riverside over last weekend, dovetailing with the final round of the American F5000 Championship. The two races were both over 30 laps and held separately on the Saturday and Sunday. Each was dominated by the American drivers, some of whom used bruising tactics on the European Grand Prix contingent to good effect.

Returning to the race track since his USAC shunt at Michigan which caused him to miss the first IROC round, Bobby Unser was back with a vengeance. For the Saturday race, he put his Camaro on the pole and led from start to finish, eventually winning by 3.9s.

Saturday's event was "a real wild 'un" according to reports. From the off, Jody Scheckter burst through from the second row and began to chase Unser who then had a moment on the dirt at the Esses trying to stay in front. Scheckter then picked up a puncture and lost two laps. James Hunt also ran second early on, having started from alongside Unser on the front row. He was forced to quit when the gearbox broke.

Of the other Grand Prix drivers, Emerson Fittipaldi spun on the first lap in conjunction with Bobby Allison, who later retired. Emerson slowly began to haul back the 15s or so that he'd lost, eventually getting back into the picture when a yellow flag caution period took effect and this closed up the field.

Michigan winner David Pearson and Al Unser had also quit the race at this stage, both with distributor problems while Brian Redman eventually crashed into the wall at Turn 9 having been involved in a barging match with Richard Petty. Redman's Camaro started to suffer from a sticking throttle and then he eventually had a flat tyre which caused the shunt.



A. J. Foyt – bog chop and IROC lead.

All this allowed the field to close up on Unser who now had Mario Andretti, A. J. Foyt and Fittipaldi right behind.

Andretti dropped away from this bunch when Scheckter, who had been running in company with them although two laps down, lost it and took off Mario with him. Both rejoined, although out of touch.

Then on the very last lap, Fittipaldi tried a big outbraking effort on Foyt, almost getting through before AJ gave him a huge chop. The Brazilian's Camaro promptly spun like a top, restarting behind Andretti, and Foyt was heard to comment afterwards; "I guess I taught that little . . . a lesson." Benny Parsons was fifth, albeit out of touch although the only other runner to cover the full distance. Petty was next up, a lap down with Scheckter a further lap adrift.

IROC 3: Easy for Allison

By virtue of being the first retirement in Sautrday's race, it was Hunt who started from the pole the following day in Bobby Unser's winning car with Allison alongside.

James led for six laps before Allison used his NASCAR experience to muscle through. His lead taken, Hunt then promptly spun to the back of the field, although still in touch.

Allison, like Bobby U., had it all his won way from then onward, although his final winning margin was a mere 0.5s.

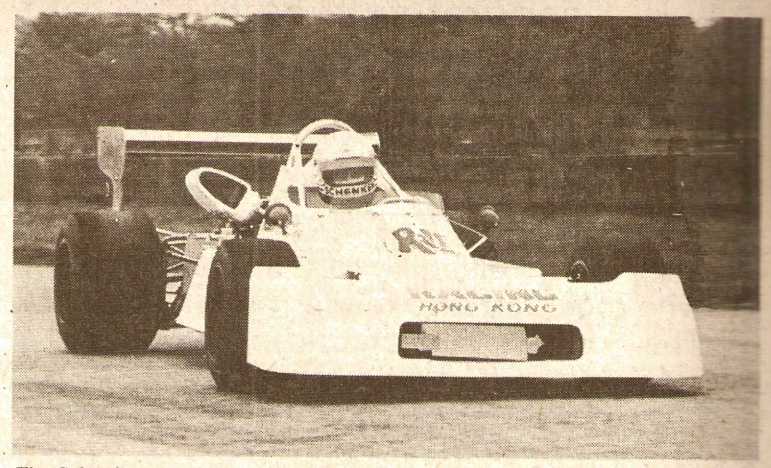
Scheckter again got his Camaro into second place but once more suffered a puncture, eventually finishing 10th after a pit stop. As for Fittipaldi, he was busily working his way through the field before being eased out at the infamous Turn 9. Exit one Brazilian. Petty also was claimed by the wall at Turn 9 — Redman's revenge? Despite this, it was a much cleaner race than the previous day.

Allison hung on to beat Al Unser, who had started from the second row while Foyt, all the way from the back row, was an extremely close third. Then came Andretti, Bobby U., Hunt, Redman and Pearson in a pretty close bunch followed by Parsons who once again completed the distance but was out of contention.

The first nine drivers in the IROC points standings now go forward to the final at Daytona next February. Those who didn't make it were Petty (again), Scheckter and Hunt. At this stage, it looks as if the battle for the title rests between Foyt and Allison with Andretti the outsider.

Michelin's F2 decision

Michelin's decision whether they will come into Formula 2 next year rests largely on a test programme which the French company will conduct in December. They hope to employ the Elf 2J and championship winning Martini Mk16 to carry out the tests, either at Paul Ricard or the Michelin test track near Clermont Ferrand.



Tim Schenken tests the Hart-powered F2 Ralt at Goodwood last week prior to delivery to Teddy Yip and Vern Schuppan.

Schenken tests new F2 Ralt

Ron Tauranac's Ralt concern have completed and already tested their 1976 Formula 2 car. Furthering their policy of exploiting the RT1 chassis as originally conceived for multi-formula use, the new car underwent its first preliminary tests at Goodwood last week in the hands of Tim Schenken.

The car utilises the newly developed Hart 420R 2-litre engine and apart from detail development-changes, the chassis remains the same as the current F3, raced so successfully by the Perkins brothers, and the Formula Atlantic.

The first car of this model was ordered by Teddy Yip for Australian Vern Schuppan to drive in the forthcoming Japanese Grand Prix.

BMW's flat 8 F1 for 1977

Nineteen seventy seven is the target set by BMW for their entry into the world of Grand Prix racing. Although their racing budget for next season hasn't been finalised as yet and team manager Jochen Neerpasch is away in South Africa this week for the Kyalami 1000Kms touring car race on Sunday, it is reliably rumoured that a budget has been approved for the company to move into Formula 1.

We have already mentioned the possibility of such a move and that BMW have an F1 engine currently on the stocks. BMW representatives at recent F2 meetings have never denied their interest to participate in F1, only that it would take them a little while to get there.

The engine they are supposed to have developed is a flat-8 3-litre designed by chief development engineer Paul Rosche.

CSI shunning F1CA?

The first of several explosive confrontations between the F1CA and the CSI was due to take place in Paris at 6.00 pm on Tuesday of this week. We heard that the meeting may have been cancelled at the last minute.

We also hear that all circuit inspections to have been undertaken by the CSI have been cancelled and that the general CSI meeting scheduled for November 3 has also been cancelled.

We're sure that the GPDA can't be very happy about the circuit inspections being put off, although for what reason, we are unsure at the time of writing.

Parsons' US F5000 drive

Dick Parsons, the highly promising young British Formula 3 driver, made his Formula 5000 debut last weekend – at Riverside!

Parsons apparently flew straight over to the States after his abortive outing in Tony Brise's Atlantic Modus at Thruxton a couple of weeks ago to tie up a deal with Chuck Jones and Roy Winkelmann, the former F2 entrant of Jochen Rindt, to run the Norris Industries Talon usually pedalled by the injured Chris Amon.

Jack McCormack, patron of the Talon team, ran the car for Parsons at the weekend with backing from Mister Marty, the clothing concern who were involved with Dan Gurney's F5000 team last year.

Parsons was able to test the Talon MR1A beforehand and impressed a number of people according to reports. He qualified in the middle of the field for the Riverside F5000 race and was running well in his heat, ahead of Warwick Brown's similar car so we hear, until gear selection problems forced a spin. He was unable to start the final after the engine blew and the team were unable to change it in time. This was strictly a one-off outing. although one can't help being impressed by a young British driver's tenacity in finding such a drive.

● The International Race Tire Service, the firm which operate Goodyear's customer/liaison service have recently moved to much larger and more spacious premises. From now on you can contact either Keith Greene, Jean Mosnier or Stuart Barron on West Drayton 40771/2/3. Their new address is IRTS, High Road, Cowley-Peachey, West Drayton, Middlesex.

Will Brabham go Alfa?

The Martini Brabham-Alfa BT45 was officially announced in front of the Italian press at Alfa's Balocco test track last Sunday. Both Carlos Pace and Carlos Reutemann did a few demonstration laps in the car but it was not due to run in anger until this week.

The car underwent shakedown tests at Silverstone last week and designer Gordon Murray reported that other than small problems with the oil and fuel plumbing systems there appeared to be no real troubles. After the launch on Sunday the team were planning a full day at the test track on Monday and then three days at Paul Ricard. A final decision on whether to concentrate on the project would then be taken. The critical point is fuel consumption. If it is better than 5 mpg then work will go ahead, but if it drops below that further work will have to be done on the engine before Brabham fully commit themselves. Bernie Ecclestone sounded confident though: 'We hope the BT44B is now obsolete and this will be our car for next season.' There is no chance of the Alfa flat 12 engined cars running in a separate team or both types of car being taken to the circuits. 'It would be too much' said Murray, 'must think of all the spares we'd have to take for a start. If this car works it will be the team car'.

Murray has designed an extra three gallons fuel capacity into the car and although it hasn't been properly weighed yet it is probably well over the weight limit. If the consumption tests show that more capacity is needed the project will be delayed while a lightweight version of the engine is finished, according to an Alfa spokesman at the weekend. Further backing for the project comes from Fina who will supply the lubricants as they did for the Brabham team this year.

Carlos Reutemann giving the Brabham-Alfa a run in Italy at the weekend.



Germans look to 1976

Reports from Germany suggest that the major manufacturers are suddenly starting to think seriously about the World Championship for Makes (Silhouette) for next year. Porsche are said to be planning a two car team to run on behalf of the factory by Herbert Mueller with Martini backing and Jochen Mass and Rolf Stommelen as the main drivers of the Carreras.

Ford Cologne are working on two Capris which they will run from their works with Zakspeed Escort driver Klaus Ludwig as one driver and a Grand Prix star like Ronnie Peterson or Emerson Fittipaldi joining him. Niki Lauda has already declined the offer because of the Fiat connections with Ferrari. Willy Kauhsen, who ran this year's winning Alfa Romeo team, is also planning a two car team for Derek Bell and Jacques Laffite but he won't make a decision on which car to use until after the Kyalami race this weekend. Alfa Romeo have not made up their minds, according to a spokesman last Sunday, whether they will build a car for the series, but if they do it will almost certainly be run by Autodelta and not an outside team.

Alfa form DT in GB

Announced this week is the formation of Alfa Romeo Dealer Team. Alfa Romeo (Great Britain) Ltd have decided that any backing available from them for racing and rallying during the 1976 season will be channelled through the Dealer Team.

The team's main aim will be to win the RAC Touring Car Championship with the Alfasud Ti. A limited rally programme will also be undertaken for development purposes (see *Special Stage*).

The Alfa Romeo Dealer Team will be managed by Michael Lindsay who, for the past two years, has been involved in the running of Squadra Alfa, from whose successful beginnings the Dealer Team originates, and the Alfa side of Macinnes Amcron Racing Team. Drivers for next year have yet to be decided and a test session will be arranged in the near future. No outside sponsors have been secured at this stage but an announcement is expected in due course.

Further information from Michael Lindsay on 01-928 3021/2 (daytime) or Cambridge 891219 (evenings).

Grob testing

Ian Grob, who this season has centred his racing activities in sports cars sharing his KVG Chevron B31 with John Hine, is anxious to move up into Formula 2 for next year.

Twenty three year old Grob, who raced an FF Elden under the KVG banner a couple of years ago, was given a run in Brian Henton's F2 March-Ford 752 at Silverstone last Monday week. Reports say he was quite impressive and liked the car.

Grob then tried Tony Brise's Formula Atlantic Modus up at Snetterton late last week and again impressed with some very capable lap times.

At this stage it is not known whether Grob wants to run a single or two car team in F2 next year, once again under the KVG banner. It is assumed that the team would use the Brian Hart 420R 2-litre alloy block engine.

Two car BL team

As we announced last week, Leyland Cars officially announced their two car Triumph Dolomite Sprint team for next year, naming their successful 1975 ace Andy Rouse as one driver, but being non-committal about the second man. He will probably be announced at a further meeting in January, when Leyland are expected to announce their G2 plans, if any.

At the same announcement, Ralph Broad said that he expects to get more power from the Triumph Dolomite Sprint, despite his quote that he's reached the peak of development from the 2 litre engine. He added that it was highly unlikely that the second driver in the team would be a journalist.

Young Americans

Don Nichols, patron of AVS Shadow Cars, told our reporter at Riverside last weekend that he was "thinking" of running a third works Formula 1 Shadow at selected Grands Prix races next season. He mentioned two drivers in particular, both young Americans currently competing in Formula 3 at the moment — Danny Sullivan and Eddie Cheever.

We spoke to Cheever about this on Monday night: "It's the first I've heard about it. The only offer I've ever had for F1 was by Hesketh who asked whether I would be interested in driving the second car at the American Grand Prix and you saw what happened."

St Jovite GP

The Canadian Grand Prix, the event which caused such a furore recently between its organisers and the Formula 1 Constructors Association, looks like taking place again next year, although not necessarily at Mosport.

Apparently a syndicate formed between the Trois Rivieres and Mont Tremblant organisers have asked the local government to provide the finance to bring the St Jovite circuit up to the safety standards required to stage a Grand Prix.

Hope is high at present as the circuit's landscape, scenic though it is, could withstand the required run of areas. The last time the Grand Prix was held there was in 1970.

BRIEFLY . . . .

● Works Modus F3 driver Danny Sullivan has received additional sponsorship from Zeppelin Jeans whose insignia he carried at Thruxton last Sunday. Zeppelin are produced at Brixen in Italy's South Tirol and are soon to be distributed in this country under the Schnitz Trading Company. Owned by Paulo Caldonazzi, a motor racing fanatic, this is the company's first venture into motor sport.

● British-domiciled New Zealander Richard Hawkins, who has been racing his ex-Ippokampos Ratcliffe Springs sponsored March 743 all season in F3, tried Patrick Neve's F3 Safir at Silverstone last Monday. Hawkins told us at Thruxton the previous day that: "I'd like to run in a works team next year."

● Following his rumoured split with Richard Oaten, Ian Ashley flew over to the Riverside F5000 race last weekend to see if he could arrange a deal for next year's American series.

● Marc Sourd, driving his regular Antar-backed Martini, won the final Formula Super Renault race of the year at the Jarama circuit, Madrid, on October 19. As a reminder, Rene Arnoux is the new champion, a title he clinched at Nogaro several weeks earlier.

● Jorg Obermoser has commissioned Modus to design him a new rear end arrangement so that he can fit a 3-litre Cosworth DFV to his current ToJ sports car. The wealthy German intends to compete in the World Sports Car Championship.

Patrick Neve, the Belgian F3 driver, is strongly tipped to be leaving the Safir team to join Modus, with BP backing, for F3 next year.



● Vittorio Brambilla carried out further tests of the Renault V6 powered March F2 car at Snetterton last Thursday. Although the team was reluctant to hang out lap times, private watches had the Italian lapping around the 60s mark which compares well with the outright lap record currently held by Teddy Pilette's VDS Lola T400 at 60s dead. Brambilla's test ended when the Renault engine expired.

● Another driver to be given a whirl in Tony Brise's Formula Atlantic Modus at Snetterton on Thursday was American Ted Wentz who, having hopped out of the development Lola, was also very impressed with Jo Marquart's chassis.

● Winner of the Volant Elf award at the Paul Ricard circuit last Sunday was 20-year-old Alain Prost, the reigning European kart champion. According to Martini F2 team manager Hughes de Chaunac, "he's very quick."

All your weekend sport

BRANDS HATCH

The final championship meeting of the year takes place at Brands Hatch this Sunday and the programme promises to make it one of the best of 1975. Two of the championships are still very much from over — double points scoring making them even more exciting, although in fact, so narrow are the current margins at the top end of the tables that normal point scoring would still have left them wide open. The two titles in question are the National Organs FF and the Simoniz Special Saloon.

The Formula Ford title is the real cliff hanger. Geoff Lees has already won two FF titles this year and Sunday is marked down in his diary as the day he'll win the Formula's Triple Crown. Currently, though, he is only joint leader on points, South African Kenny Gray having scored the same number. In fact, Gray has scored more but as only the best of 15 count he has already had to drop his lowest scores. Lees has not yet competed in the maximum scoring rounds and so he is, perhaps, in the stronger position. Basically, if neither driver finishes Lees will win the title by virtue of a greater number of wins. If Lees finishes anywhere ahead of Gray he will still win but if Gray finishes in front the situation becomes a little more complicated. If it's a Gray-Lees 1-2, it's Gray's title; a Gray-Lees, 2-3 gives it to Gray; a Gray-Lees 3-4 and any lower permutations give it to Lees. Summing up, Lees has five chances of winning and Gray just two.

Both men will, obviously, be trying their utmost for this, the major FF title of the year. But they certainly won't have it all their own way as names like Rad Dougall, Tiff Needell, Rob Wicken, Mike Blanchet, Rod Bremner, Matthew Argenti, Bernard Vermilio, Rick Morris and Phil Dowsett are also entered.

The Simoniz Special Saloon series also lies between two people — local hero Nick Whiting and Essex doctor David Enderby. If Whiting finishes second or lower in his class and Enderby wins the title goes to the 850 Mini driver. There's just 5 points in it at the moment but with 18 points for a win it could go either way. Whiting's work in the *Kent Messenger* Escort will be made a little more difficult with the entry of Martin Birrane's Capri and Colin Hawker's DFVW.

Five Chevrolet Camaros, eight Ford Capris, five Vauxhall Magnums, nine Mazda RX3s, four Simca Rallyes, three Mini GTs, one Marina, one Lada, one Honda Civic and one Sunbeam Imp Sport is the tally of entries for the final round of the year's most successfuly championship, the Radio 1 Production Saloon. Among all the usual star names from this class of racing will be DJs Emperor Rosko and Dave Lee Travis who'll be making their first ever Rotary club appearances.

When all these championship lads are out at play the real battle of nerves will be brewing in the Paddock (Bar, did we hear someone say?). Brewing up (over a brew) throughout the year has been an almightly battle of words and liquid. One reliable newspaper reported

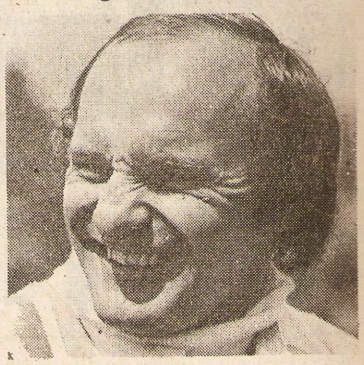
Alan Jones – on our side.



recently that civil war was possible midway between Notting Hill Gate and Bayswater such was the rivalry. The battle, of course, is between motor sport's two most famous hostelries in London: The Windsor Castle in Camden Hill Road (*our* pub) and the Victoria in Bayswater (the home of ageing and out of work racers). John Webb and Shellsport have bravely agreed to put chariots at our disposal for two hand-picked teams to wage war. The two publicans, probably never hoping to see any of us again, have generously donated two trophies. One will go to the overall winner, the other to the victorious team. If AUTOSPORT doesn't come out next week there'll be two good reasons, the most likely being that our team, the Windsor, annihilated the opposition and became paralytic afterwards; the other (most unlikely) reason is that we got beaten and drowned our sorrows at the end (no really we'll be on sale as always). Our old friends from Inver House are putting up lots of their lovely Scotch for our carefully selected heroes to bring home too — this is going to be a real tough one with so much at stake.

The whole thing came about when a certain Mr Lanfranchi made a none too secret spying trip (actually they'd run out of water at the other place) to the Windsor earlier this year and couldn't keep his mouth shut. The Landlord, the long suffering Tony Owen threw down the challenge and after a couple more (bottles) of Scotch he accepted the challenge. Editor Phillips was sitting quietly in a corner sipping his orange juice at the time and crept round the back for an Alka Seltzer to recover from this commitment. He never really did actually as he's going to see the sun in Italy this Sunday so confident is he of his team's chances of success without his presence. Sports Editor Witty will take over the captaincy and interviewed on Match of the Minute recently said: "I'm really chuffed. I never expected to be selected for England. After my last sensational win I thought my chances had gone for ever. I'm going to open a boutique to celebrate Brian." Opposing captain Lanfranchi, representing the veteran section said (sweat pouring off his brow under the hot TV lights at the weigh-in): "This is my last chance to be noticed by LBC. I'm forsaking the Annual Holland Park Geriatrics Wheelchair outing to the holy waters at Lourdes for this event. It could be the biggest break of my career. If I finish in the first 14 I'll turn professional."

Each team consists of seven cars and drivers divided into seven categories: Grand Prix drivers, lady drivers, Journalists, Saloon drivers, Rally drivers, pub regulars and veterans. Although the Windsor team is playing its cards close to its chest and may shuffle the pack at the last minute (so versatile are their members) their line up at the time of going to press was: Alan Jones, Divina Galica, Chris Witty, Tony Dron, Tony Pond and Mike Wooley. The Victoria nominated Mike Hailwood (possibly his last racing appearance in this country), Ann Moore, Gerry Marshall, Jock Robertson, Barry Williams, Keith Greene and Tony Lanfranchi. Eyebrows were raised at some of the nominations. Marshall, a journalist? we asked. A three line PS on the bottom of his AUTOSPORT ads surely doesn't qualify him and he doesn't work for *Motor* or *Triple C* anymmore. "He's a freelance," came the captain's curt reply, "for the Marshall Wingfield Slowboat." Circula-



Mike Hailwood – comeback.

tion of one (Mrs Marshall) and express to the waste paper bin we discovered. No worry we'll stay legal and still win.

The opposite numbers of each team will line up together on the 2-2 grid in the captain's batting order, birds first obviously. As well as trying to win outright each person will score two points for their team — the loser scores one.

Watch these columns next week for a full, unbiased, victorious (pun definitely not intended) report.

Racing starts at 2.15 pm.

BRIGHTON RUN

The annual Brighton Run, sponsored this year by Renault, leaves Hyde Park at eight o'clock on Sunday morning on the 74-mile trek to the Brighton seafront.

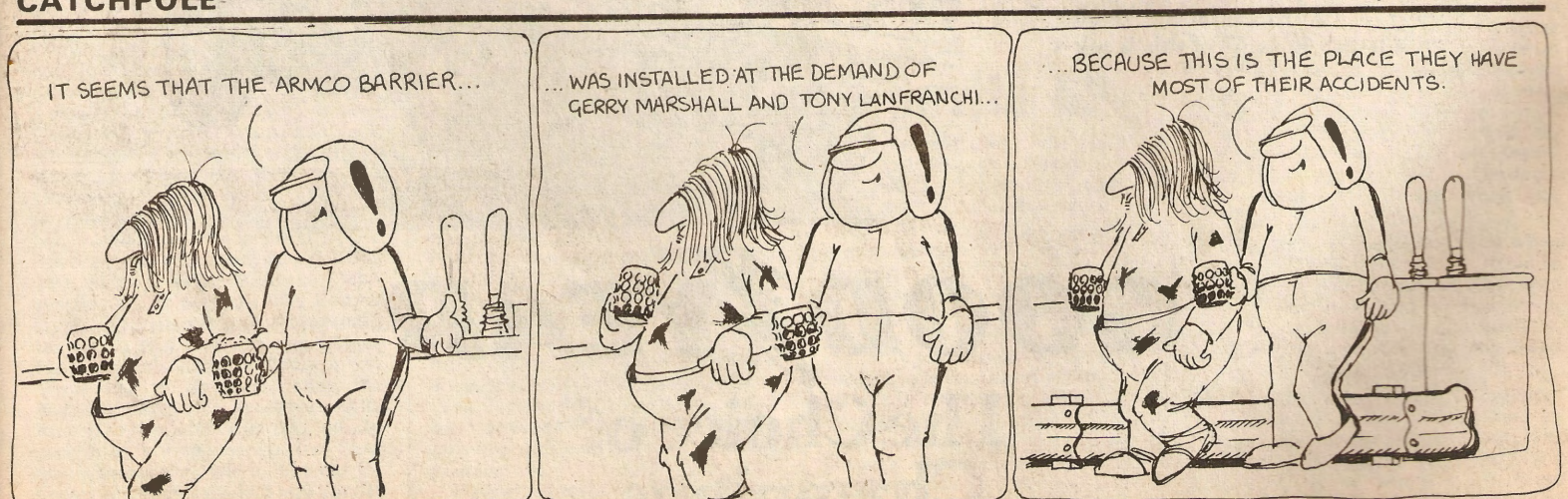
The entry is large and varied as usual with over two hundred pre-1904 veteran cars on the list and AUTOSPORT will be represented as usual by Technical Editor John Bolster in his trusty Panhard.

A plea from competitors, if you are joining the many thousands on the route, remember these cars don't stop as well as yours and they object to being slowed down on hills.

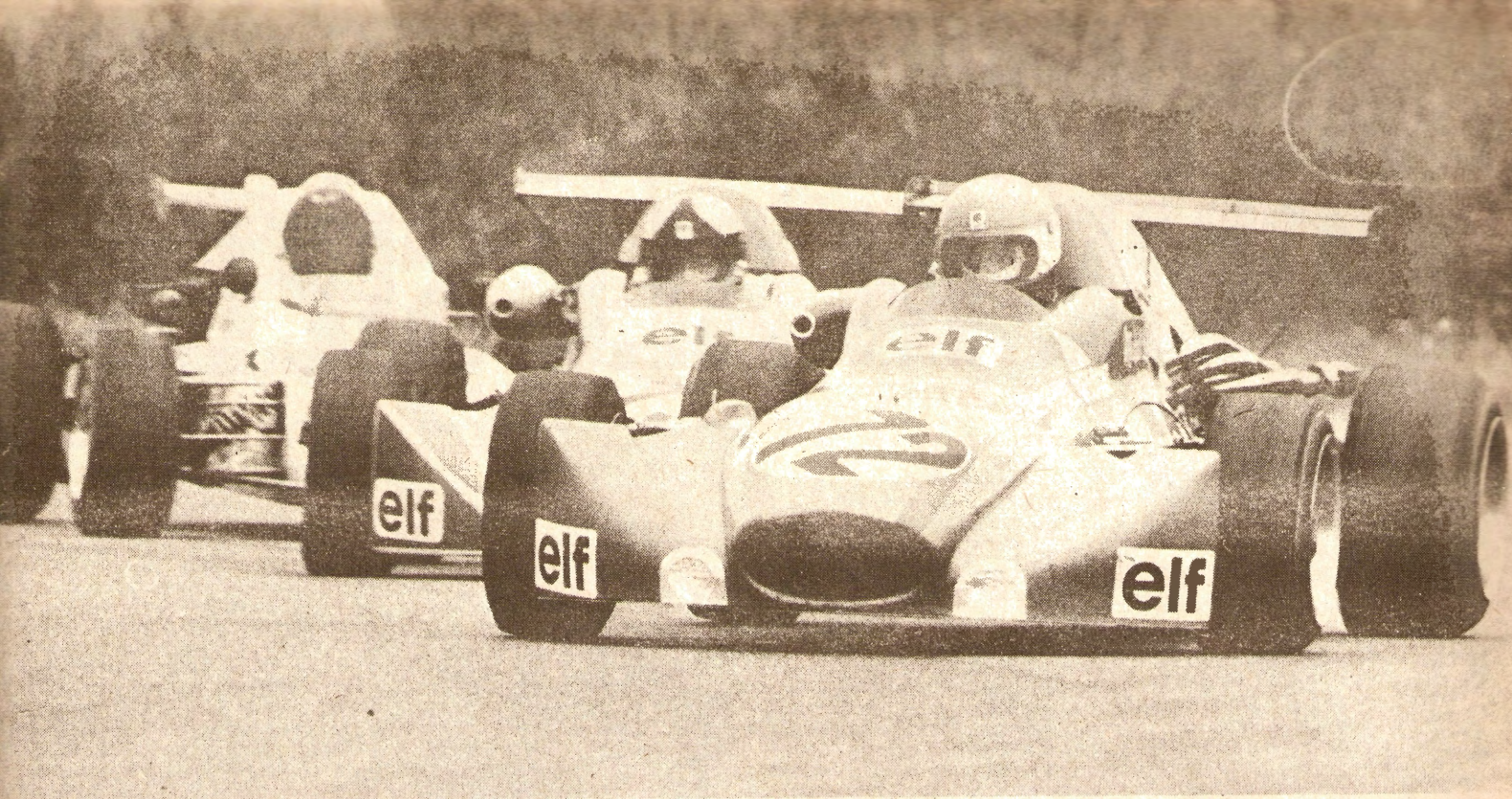
- The race meeting scheduled for Aintree this weekend has been cancelled.
- An error crept into our Motor Show report and an advertisment last week regarding the weight of the new Lotus Eclat. It should have read 400lbs lighter not as stated.

CATCHPOLE

By Barry Foley



© Autosport 1975



Michel Leclère in his works F3 Alpine-Renault heading team-mate Alain Serpaggi and Rikki von Opel's Ensign at Thruxton in 1972.

Leclère—a perfectionist

CHRIS WITTY outlines the career of MICHEL LECLERE

La Marseillaise blared out over the public address system, certainly not for the first time in Formula 2 this year; Jacques Laffite had seen to that. But for Michel Leclère, receiving the winner's garland at Rouen earlier this year, it was a particularly gratifying accolade. He'd won his first race, a victory that had eluded him with infuriating regularity all season, after early retirements had cost him all chances of beating Laffite for the much prized European F2 Championship.

From then onwards fate took a hand. Michel suddenly became the man to beat, and his works-maintained Elf-sponsored March at last began to justify its potential, which the combination had threatened to do all year. At last the abilities of this quiet Frenchman, the style and skill which he had shown consistently during his earlier days in Formula 3, began to take on a new meaning — not that regular followers of his career would have expected otherwise. In Leclère, France had produced yet another excellent prospect, an ideal race driver, a driver who would benefit from his own intellect, a grafter and, above all, a very capable and level-headed race winner.

Michel Leclère has a lot of qualities that make him an ideal addition to any race team for, despite his relative lack of top-class competition experience, he possesses a remarkably analytical brain. His cool, calm character is reflected clearly on the race track; he must be regarded as a thinker, not a charger.



Michel Leclère never set the world on fire when he drove Formula 3 in 1971 and 1972 for the works Alpine Renault *équipe*, but he won enough races in a style that made everything look so easy that it seemed almost out of place in the cut and thrust world of this junior formula. He did enough in those two years to impress, and surprisingly was regarded by AUTOSPORT as the best driver of the formula in 1972, ahead of such notables as Tony Brise and fellow countryman Jacques Laffite.

But when you meet and talk to him, you can understand just why. He laughs, "I must improve my English, it is still not very good." Good enough, though. A tall, well-built figure, Leclère is what you would call a dedicated race driver, a young man who is dedicated to his profession as long as he feels he is destined to follow that particular course. Michel admits that if he felt he weren't achieving his aim in motor sport, he could find another sphere and channel his efforts with the same physical and mental effort. He is very much a realist. He knows what he has to do to succeed, and really admits that he feels motor racing is what he's cut out to do.

Leclère's deep, heavily-accented voice copes remarkably well with the English tongue, his short, easily constructed sentences punctuated with longer, more racing-orientated words. You can grasp his meaning without necessarily hearing him finish the sentence, for he has an ability to explain his ideas by relating to other instances.

Born 28 years ago not far from Paris, Michel is yet another race driver who took up the sport comparatively late in life. He was 22 years old before he took to the race tracks of France in the Renault R8 Challenge, their version of our Mexico series. Leclère bought an R8 which his elder brother prepared. "He was a good technician rather than an engineer." At that time Michel had left his studies and, through some friends at Renault, managed to get himself a job at Alpine's Paris headquarters selling A110 Berlinettes. It was a position that he was to hold until he went into Formula 2.

The escapades with the Renault R8 saw him win a preliminary series and then progress to the Coupes Nationales, in which he came second. Those early days saw a style of driving totally opposite to the Leclère of today. "I was a little untidy at the beginning," he ruefully admits, although "I think my style became smoother every year from then onward."

Michel Leclère – "level headed race winner".



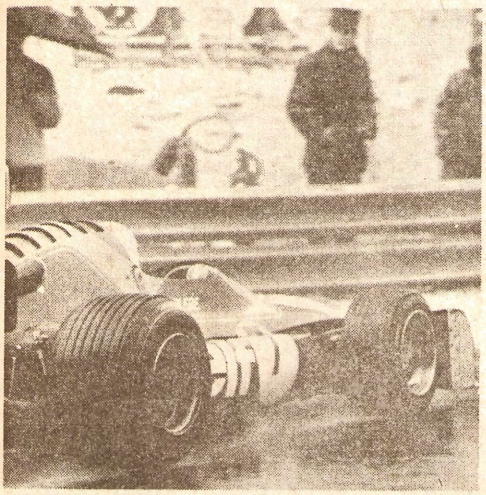
Taking the engine from his R8, Michel then bought an Alpine Formula France (as it was then) chassis and embarked on his single seater career in 1970. In that first year he came sixth overall in the national series, scoring a win at Magny-Cours with a couple of good placings elsewhere. The series changed its name to Formule Renault the following year, and Leclère still retained his Alpine. It was a better year, good enough to see him end up as the overall champion after winning something like "five or six races" at the various French circuits.

The next logical step would surely be Formula 3, something which the French have seen fit to disregard these days. As you well know, the French opted to replace it with Formule Super Renault, amid great arm-bending from interal circles, but it has proved to be extremely expensive, certainly as much as Formula 3 in comparison. Leclère emphasises the "big change since my day. I think I spent all season, including buying the car, about 60,000 francs. Now it's nearer 300,000 francs for Super Renault."

The success of winning the Renault championship saw him invited to join the Alpine Renault F3

team, joining Alain Serpaggi. "For me it was a good opportunity" reflected Michel. The cars they used were the same tubular A364 design raced previously by Patrick Depailler and Jean-Pierre Jabouille. It would be Leclère's first experience of racing tyres, but "I was always anxious to learn."

Although he won his first event for the team at Nogaro, it was a French championship race from which, Michel says, all the leading runners had dropped out. But he continued the same way throughout the season, eventually winning the French Championship at his first attempt, but "to succeed after Depailler and Jabouille was difficult." Michel explained that, although the Alpine won him races with its Dudot-prepared Renault pushrod engine, it was "not excatly a good car; just a little better than the others." This was not an excuse because he doesn't make excuses. It's not in his character. He reckoned the car's aerodynamics assisted it greatly, but "the handling was really bad." This became evident when Jacques Coulon eventually got it all together in his Martini. It was round about the middle of the year that Coulon managed to fathom out the tweak that turned the car from a front runner into a race winner. It was simply "downforce," an asset which the car lacked until then. But as Michel explained, it proved difficult trying to convince the Alpine engineers what their car, which was still winning races, lacked.



Splashing through the rain at Pau last year in his F2 Alpine. In conditions like these, Leclère excels.

Leclère first impressed me at Rouen that year, his first season of F3. True, it was his home circuit, but you can't really call a public road circuit a home track. Still, he simply ran away and hid from everyone else, and the English contingent were left nattering about the Renault engine and how it just wasn't possible to be so much quicker than the Fords. "It was not too bad," said Michel, "although it had less power at lower revs, lacked torque and didn't rev terribly well!" Oh Yeah!

Another impressive performance from Leclère, thereby underlining his superb ability to balance a car, was at the final Brands Hatch meeting of that year, an event won by Coulon but in which the late Roger Williamson and Leclère proved to be heroes with their dry slick tyres on a rain-splattered track.



Preparing for his F1 debut with Ken Tyrrell at this year's American Grand Prix.

His forays to England left him with a good reputation, and of his British-based opponents Michel reckoned, "English drivers were always trying very hard, and to overtake them was very difficult, that's the reason why I think international Formula 3 racing *is* necessary. No, I don't agree with Super Renault. I think it's a mistake, a mistake for the young French drivers, but I suppose for Renault it's a good thing, it's good publicity." Many Frenchmen are beginning to share Leclère's views, and one prominent French racegoer told me he couldn't see the formula lasting further than another two years.

Having won the French series with a total of six wins, Michel naturally hoped for the move upward into Formula 2. But the offer never came.It was quite simple. There were no places available in any of the French teams, or rather Elf had Depailler and Jabouille neatly tied up in the Alpine F2 team run by Britain's John Coombs. So it was back to another season of F3, once again with the Alpine Renault *équipe*. It would naturally be a difficult year for him, especially as he was the reigning champion and "I felt obliged to win everything."

André de Cortanze produced a new tubular chassis over the winter, but without revising the suspension geometry, This, according to Michel, was the biggest problem with the car. But, despite Michel's pleas, his requests went unheeded, probably because Alpine were too occupied with their F2 programme and possibly because they regarded Leclère and Serpaggi as being too inexperienced. It cost them the chance of winning another French title for, after Laffite ran away with the events during the first half of the season, the Alpines sorted themselves out and Leclère cleaned up from then onward. "It's funny, but it's very similar to this year in F2," chuckled Michel.

Leclère's F2 *début* came at the end of 1973 at Albi. He was given an exploratory outing in the Coombs Alpine usually pedalled by Jabouille. "He was a very good teacher with a lot of experience," reflects Michel. The result was remarkably similar to Michel's F1 *début* with the Elf Tyrrell team at the American GP a few weeks ago.

The following year saw him make the move into F2, and he now became an Elf-contracted driver. He was teamed up with Serpaggi in the second of a two-car team (the other was for Jabouille and Patrick Tambay) and managed by Hughes de Chaunac, who this year managed Laffite's all-conquering effort and who looks likely to be reunited with Leclère again next year.

Last year was "a season to see, not for results," according to Elf's competitions director Francois Guiter, but "we had some good results early in the season, even though the car wasn't really that good. Not being an engineer, I always found it difficult to keep up with Jabouille's ideas from which Tambay was benefiting," Michel explained. But the biggest problem was their new set-up, new to the formula. "We had a lot to learn."

A one-off drive in Depailler's vacant works March car at a Hockenheim race didn't go as well as expected, for Leclère found it difficult to communicate with the March personnel. This later worried him, especially when he found himself destined, courtesy of Elf, for the works March team this year with Tambay.

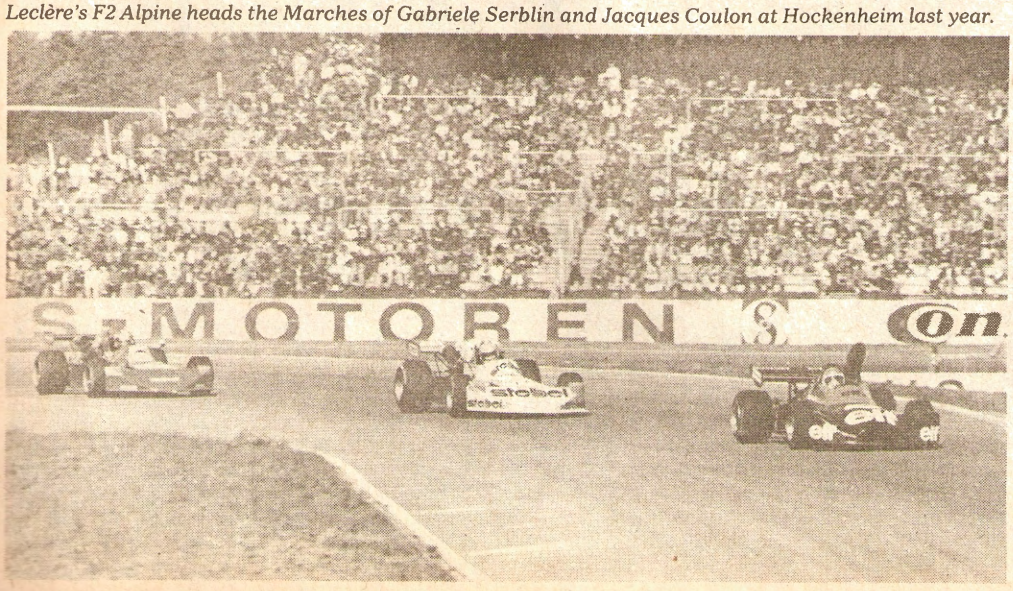
Asking him whether he thought he improved as a race driver, like Depailler, once he'd driven for an English team, Michel reckoned he had probably improved, but "not neccessarily in the driving." He thought it was because he had now become a fully professional driver, in his attitude and make-up. "I have conducted my season with more of a positive approach and greater application than before. This year I have really arrived at the crossroads in my career." He knows what he wants and what it takes to succeed. "If you want to win in competition you must have the best; the best car, the best tyre, and the best engine, even if you are the best driver."

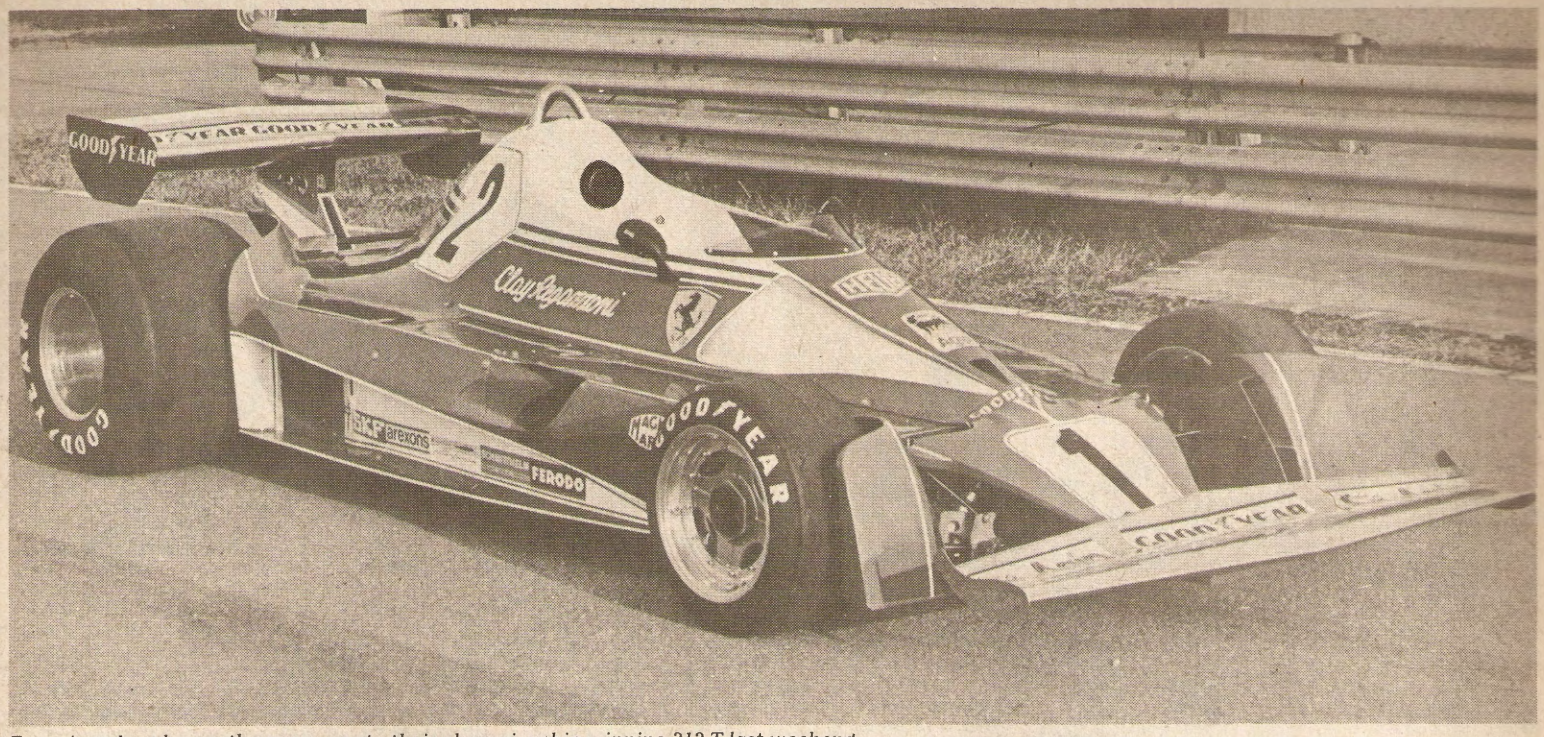
Reflecting upon his season this year, which is too recent to recount, Michel reckons his most satisfying win was at Rouen "as it was my first in F2, although it was far easier than Silverstone and so, for that reason, sentiment aside, Silverstone has to have been the best."

It was his F2 result at Silverstone that probably did the trick in influencing the powers-that-be to allow him to have a one-off drive in the third works F1 Tyrrell in America. "Although Ken Tyrrell offered me the chance to try the car before the race, I was committed to an F2 race at Nogaro, so I couldn't." Although driving any third car in a team isn't exactly the *valhalla* of any aspiring Grand Prix driver, Michel says it was "good experience." Relating it to his F2, "the power is not difficult, the problem is to exploit it, to be able to employ the power properly. That is what takes getting used to."

Leclère's Grand Prix future however, like that of so many French drivers these days, looks like having to wait a little longer. Maybe it will never happen, but Michel is philosophical about the whole thing. It goes back to what we were saying earlier about being a realist. Despite his success, Michel Leclère certainly hasn't got his head in the clouds.

Leclère's F2 Alpine heads the Marches of Gabriele Serblin and Jacques Coulon at Hockenheim last year.





Ferrari produced a worthy successor to their championship winning 312 T last weekend.

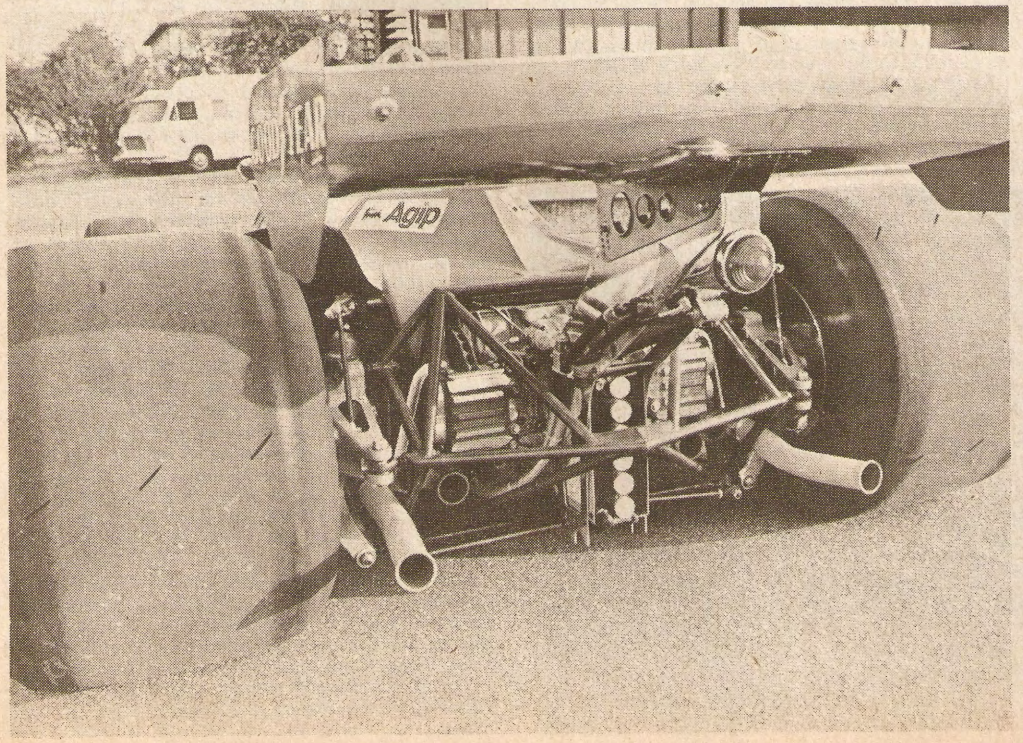
All new Ferrari 312 T2

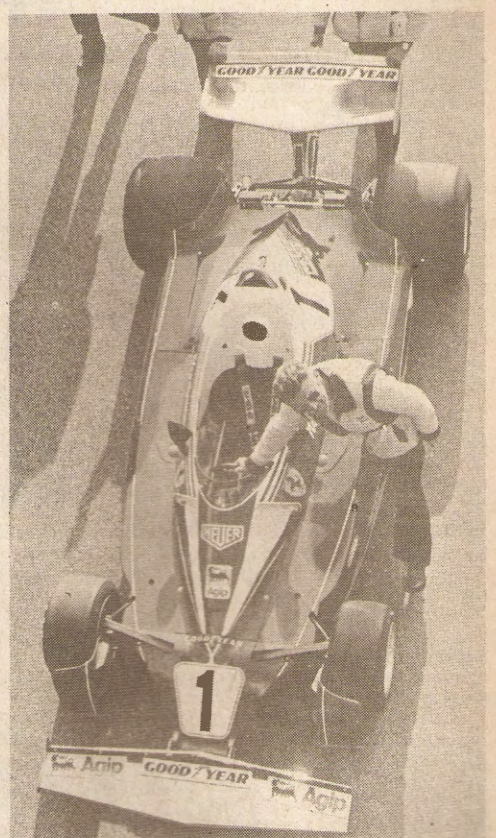
After Ferrari had dominated the 1975 World Championship almost from the word go with their new type 312 T chassis, nobody expected their 1976 version was to be much different. But when the latest 312 T2 was rolled onto the Fiorano test track for the first time last Saturday, the gathered press were in for almost as big a surprise as they'd had at the unveiling of the Tyrrell Project 34.

In content the new Ferrari 312 T2 is almost completely new. "About the only things we can use from this year are the hubs and the steering wheel," said Niki Lauda's chief mechanic Emano Cuoghi, who helped to build the latest brainchild of designer Mauro Forghieri, who has made some radical changes to this direct descendant of the 312 B3.

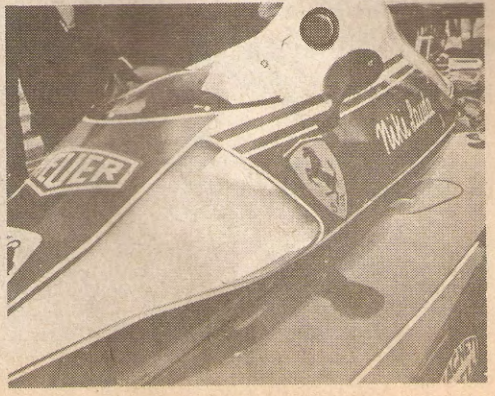
The most immediate visual difference is that it is a much smaller, more compact car, thanks to considerable reduction in both the front and rear track, while the 1976 regulations have done away with the familiar large airbox and the rear wing is lowered and moved in closer. The highest point of the car is the top of the roll-over bar (102 cms), which sticks up through a slot in the new body top section. This tapers down to a slippery pear shape, ending just in front of the rear wing mounting. Two long ducts, beginning just above the driver's feet and ending on either side just below the windscreen, channel the necessary air through the double-skinned cockpit side and to the engine inlet trumpets – a new idea which has already been tested on one of last year's chassis (as shown in our exclusive pictures last week) and, so far, seems to work. Whether it will cope with South American temperature has yet to be verified.

The new rear end features de Dion suspension although a conventional independent set-up can be fitted within an hour.





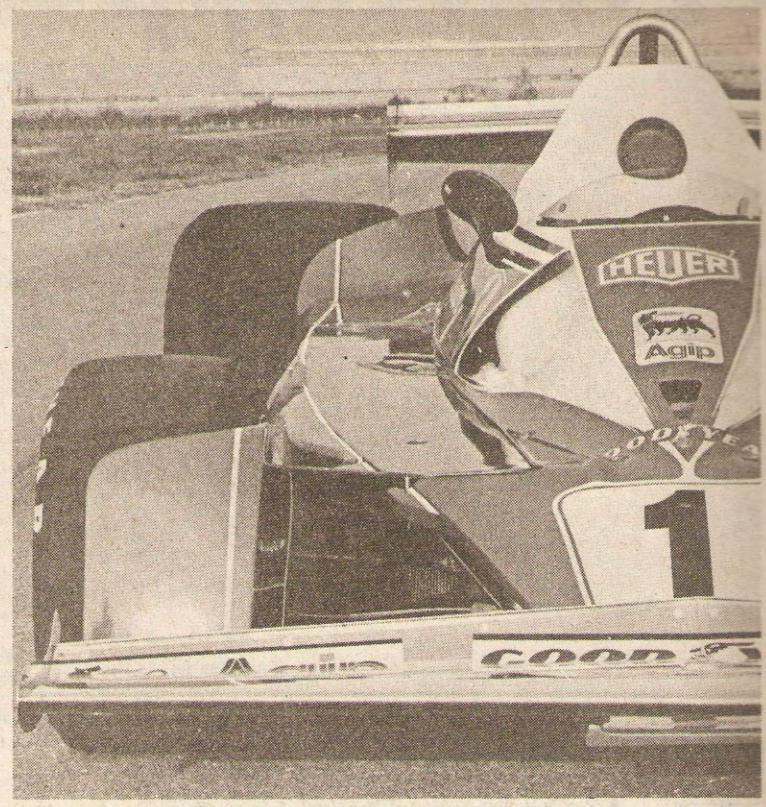
Sleek lines on new Ferrari 312 T2 (above). Cold air is ducted to the engine via scoops ahead of the cockpit.



Grand Prix challengers for 1976

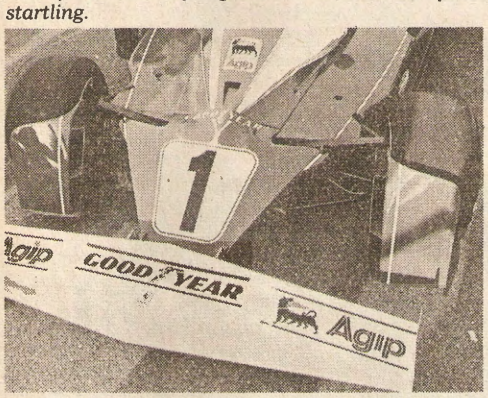


Clay Regazzoni looks suitably happy with his new F1 car.



Note the "mudguards" ahead of the front wheels incorporating air scoops to the brakes.

New front end styling on the 312 T2 is quite startling.



The small tapered nose section carries a full-width front wing like this year's model, but behind the wing the large cumbersome looking front brake duct has been replaced by a pair of moulded wind deflectors covering almost the entire frontal area of the two front tyres. Integrated with these "spats" are the brake ducts for the two outboard front brakes, mounted similarly to last year's car. The water and oil radiators remain in the same position with ducting for these along each of the side panels as before.

De Dion rear suspension

The most essential change on the T2 chassis is a completely new De Dion rear suspension layout giving one of the automobile's original suspension systems a new lease of life in racing. The overall rear track is also reduced by 10 cms over this year's chassis, and to compensate for the revised rear suspension the front track has been reduced by a similar amount. Although the basic front suspension layout is similar to last year, the geometry has been considerably altered.

"We do not yet know if the De Dion suspension will be used next year," said Clay Regazzoni. "It has been adopted to make the car easier to drive and put the power down better." One of the major problems for all F1 cars this year has been keeping enough rubber on the road in the corners to make full use of the power. With this system the rear wheels will stay flat on the track and, hopefully, overcome the problem. A circuit like Monaco should prove ideal for such a layout.

Like the new Lotus, a feature of the new Ferrari is a highly revisable suspension layout. Forghieri proudly claims that if different circuits call for drastic changes the entire rear suspension could be swapped back to conventional independent 312 T type in just 60 minutes, the familiar transverse gearbox casing having been cast with alternative pick-up points should the need arise. Similarly the front suspension and overall wheelbase, which in current form is 3 cms longer than in '75 spec, can be altered just as easily by varying the angle of the two top rocker arms. Normally they are angled back from the chassis but, as at Monaco this year, they can be moved forward to a 90 degree angle with the chassis.

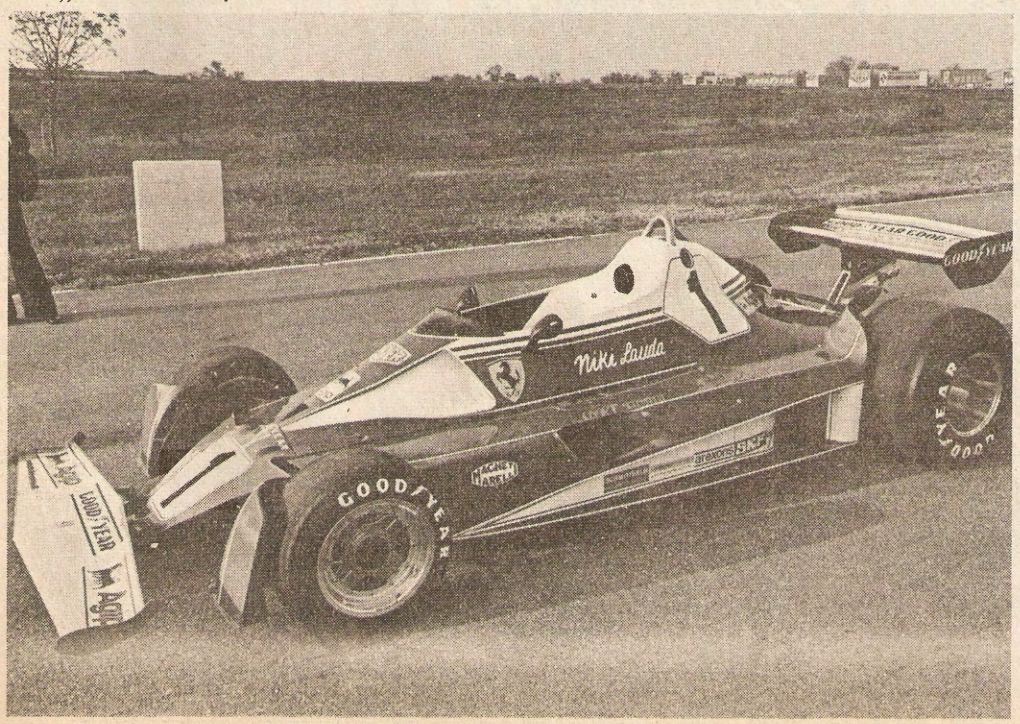
The monocoque chassis is considerably stronger and lighter than its predecessor. Instead of steel bracing inside, the new chassis is all aluminium, and the three fuel cells have been moved even closer into the centre of the car to improve weight distribution — a point which Forghieri considers very important as fuel loads change in the race. The overall weight of the car is claimed to be 575 kgs, which is the minimum limit. This year's was around 590 kgs.

Power figures from the familiar flat-12 engine are given as 500 bhp at 12,200 rpm, "the same as at Watkins Glen," said Lauda.

Testing of the new car will begin immediately at Fiorano and whether it is run in South America depends on the results. With an already proven engine and transmission and now with improved aerodynamics and, hopefully, improved suspension, it looks as though Ferrari are set to stay one jump ahead of the opposition in 1976.

JEFF HUTCHINSON

The new car has been designed with the new F1 regulations very much in mind, although they don't come into effect until next April.



Dimensions: Front track: 140.5 cms. **Rear track:** 143 cms. **Overall length:** 431.6 cms. **Overall width including wheels:** 193 cms. **Overall height:** 102 cms. **Wheelbase:** 256 cms. **Weight:** 575 kgs.



Luca Montezemolo discusses tactics with Niki Lauda, Ferrari's World Champion.

INTERVIEW

Montezemolo—Ferrari saviour

By EOIN YOUNG

Silent movies missed out on Luca Montezemolo, a striking young Roman who speaks as much with an everchanging variety of facial expressions as with words. He is an intelligent, ambitious, intense individual consumed by a burning enthusiasm for whatever he happens to be doing at any given instant. The intensity seems to be permanently switched on. At the age of 25, having graduated from law schools in Rome and New York, he joined Ferrari as right hand man to the Commendatore, an occupation that must enjoy similar career potential to the man who puts his head in the lion's mouth at the circus. Montezemolo has made it a success. He almost pleads that Niki Lauda didn't win the World Championship for Ferrari after eleven arid summers simply because he, Luca Montezemolo, was manager of the team. "I think for me it was a big success but I would not presume to think that these results happened only because I was there. I think that I was lucky to be in Ferrari in this moment so good for us . . . I worked hard and I am happy that I was able to be the right hand of Mr Ferrari, really to give him a help . . . of this I am happy . . ." He gives you to understand that the potential for success was always with Ferrari, what it required was the hand of calculated reason on the tiller, applying some sort of logic into track situations that often seemed to dissolve into hysteria.

This is not to say that Montezemolo cannot rise to the occasion himself, fired by Latin emotions, as in the pit lane at Watkins Glen when he endeavoured to fell the Clerk of the Course who was remonstrating with Reggazzoni. Mere mention of this incident (which took place the day after our interview) brings off a torrent of remorse, but it was pleasant to show that our young lawyer was a human and not simply a computerised management marvel as indicated by his record. He left Rome University with a Masters Degree in Law, and went to Columbia University in New York for further studies before joining Ferrari in July 1973, halfway through a season when fourth place was something of a triumph over non finishing for a beleaguered Ferrari team who really had their backs to the wall. In a way this situation was probably good for young Montezemolo because the only way out was up; if he failed it wouldn't be noticed in the general despondency down Maranello way. If he succeeded it would be regarded as little short of a miracle. It has been.

In two years Montezemolo has become something of a Czar in Italian motorsport, his obvious flair for management at Ferrari prompting Fiat to put him in charge of all the company's competition involvement both in racing and in rallying. In an ironic way his meteoric rise has cost him his place with Ferrari since his special talents are required higher up the Fiat ladder and he is now trying to arrange a position which will enable him to maintain at least some of his responsibilities with the Ferrari Grand Prix team in addition to other work with Fiat.

Born on August 31, 1947, he inherited the family title of Marchese. His father works in a Rome company as a specialist in agricultural development. Between races Luca still makes family visits to Rome but he also maintains apartments in Turin and in Modena. He is engaged and is to be married in December.

In 1968 while he was at University in Rome he started rallying with a Fiat 124 and in 1970 he was a member of the official Lancia rally team. When he finished University he was offered a fulltime position as a driver with Lancia on the rally team, but he felt his future lay in other directions and he headed for New York to further his studies. His one brush with success was winning the Group I section of the Marathon de la Route at the Nurburgring in 1970 with a Fiat 125.

So how does a young Roman lawyer make contact with Enzo Ferrari in the first place? The way Luca tells the story he was home in Italy on a week's holiday and just happened to pay a call on Mr Ferrari. "He told me that the Ferrari situation was very tough at that time, that he was very worried because he was out of the job for a long time because he was sick and the situation was very, very bad. He needed someone to help him in the management at Ferrari, to be manager, to work in the organisation of the team . . . a young man with a good preparation, someone who was already started and has a little management experience to be his right hand and I was very happy because I didn't want to be a lawyer all day long in my office, so I appreciated his offer and as soon as I finished university in New York I joined Ferrari." He was 25.

Recipe for success

Montezemolo's particular brand of management with Ferrari has been to delegate strict areas of operation for each member of the organisation, as a failing in the past has been a tendency for some of the leading actors on the Ferrari stage to try and steal lines. "From the first moment I arrived in Ferrari I think that to win races are necessary: One, organisation and when I say this I mean human relationships in the team. Everybody has to know what is the area in which they have to work . . . they have not to interfere in other areas. Two, good exterior image, by which I mean a good relationship outside the team, with the Press. More than good public relations, a good relationship with everything outside; the Press, the race organisers, the trade, the Formula I Association', the C.S.I. . . .

Three, good drivers and when when I say that I don't mean only good drivers I mean good *men* because I think that today there are many good drivers but the important thing is to have good people as drivers, drivers who really want to work hard on the development of a car, in the testing and everything. Four, very good technical and human relationships with the tyre company, I mean Goodyear. This is very important today. Very, very, very important. Five, hard work day by day-test a lot, go to the tracks to test before the race . . . these for me are the five points very, very important to be successful." The Montezemolo recipe for Grand Prix success is delivered across

"I am team manager and they have to do what I want, it's good to have a very friendly relationship, a very open relationship . . . but until a certain point . ."







a table at the Glen Motor Inn, punctuated by waitresses wanting to know if we're ready to order yet. The interruptions don't break the Montezemolo concentration on his subject.

We veer into the field of professionalism and talk about whether racing is more of a business now than a sport and perhaps his background as a businessman and lawyer may have influenced his success in the new commercialised area of motorsport. He didn't think it had become a profession rather than a sport, although he did agree you had to have a professional approach to succeed these days. "Today it is necessary to have a professional mentality in our sport and this is the same in other sports — the football, the tennis are completely different from, let me tell you, ten years ago. But it is still a sport because we race to win and because after the victory we want to cry or to be happy . . . there is a big competition, there is still a sport, but to win is necessary a professional mentality and a professional organisation in motor racing as in other sports today. If you have a football team and you make the matches with just the . . . the . . gentleman mentality, you never win because you need a good team, you need a good organisation and you need a good relationship with the sportive power . . ."

If being the voice of Ferrari at Grand Prix tracks sounds a daunting, prospect, the job of keeping both Niki Lauda and Clay Regazzoni pointed in the right direction is really no less fearsome to the outsider. Place yourself in Montezemolo's position — how would you reckon to handle the aggression of Regazzoni, or the temperament of Lauda, individually difficult tasks, compounded by having to balance these diametrically opposed personalities and yoke them together in a sort of harmony in one of the world's most turbulent and dangerous professions where something approaching an atmosphere of calm is essential and in-team rivalries can literally be fatal?

The fact that his drivers are so different to each other is one of the reasons that Montezemolo likes them. "I think Clay was necessary to Ferrari because when Clay arrived back we needed someone with good experience and someone who was good with the team . . . someone who had a good relationship with the mechanics and that sort of thing. This is why we asked Clay to come back after one year with BRM. To talk about Niki is for me quite difficult because I have with Niki a special relationship. I pushed Mr Ferrari to have Niki in the team and of course now that Niki got these results for me is big satisfaction. But I think he was able to win the championship also in 1974 if he was a little bit more expert. You have to remember that last year he drove a Ferrari for the first time and for the first time he drove a very competitive car. He drove before for BRM but if he arrived fifth at the end of the race it was a big success. It is completely different to start in a race to win it, than to arrive fifth. My relationship with Niki is perfect because we are very close friends, but Clay and Niki don't forget in any moment that I am team manager and they have to do what I want. It's good to have a very friendly relationship, a very open relationship . . . but until a certain point . . ."

That 'certain point' happened after the Monaco Grand Prix in 1974 when the Ferrari duo had started off the front row of the grid and then proceeded to race each other into the ground! Regazzoni spun but gathered it up to finish fourth while Lauda retired with ignition problems.

"I tell you frankly at Monte Carlo we had a big fight after the race . . . BIG . . . but when we opened the door to go out of the hotel room everything was solved and from that moment I don't have one little problem. Sometimes people wrote that there were problems between Clay and Niki but that was never true . . . the Italian press sometimes needed to find some problem with Ferrari but it has been so good that it is difficult to find something scandalistic . . ."

Puppet?

The Italian press has always been capable of wielding enormous power on the Ferrari team from outside the walls of the factory, and I wondered how they had accepted the young newcomer on the Ferrari scene. Did they regard him as the saviour of Ferrari fortunes or as an opportunist who arrived when the Ferrari star was ascending and went along for the ride to the top?

"I have a very good relationship with all the press because from the very first moment when I started working with Ferrari I thought it was important to put the journalist in the best condition to do his job . . . but if I do everything for you, I need something back from you. In other words, if I tell you everything you need to know you cannot write bullshits about me because next time I don't talk any more. The press with Ferrari and with me was really very kind and objective and I think the Italian press this year gave us a big help to win . . ."

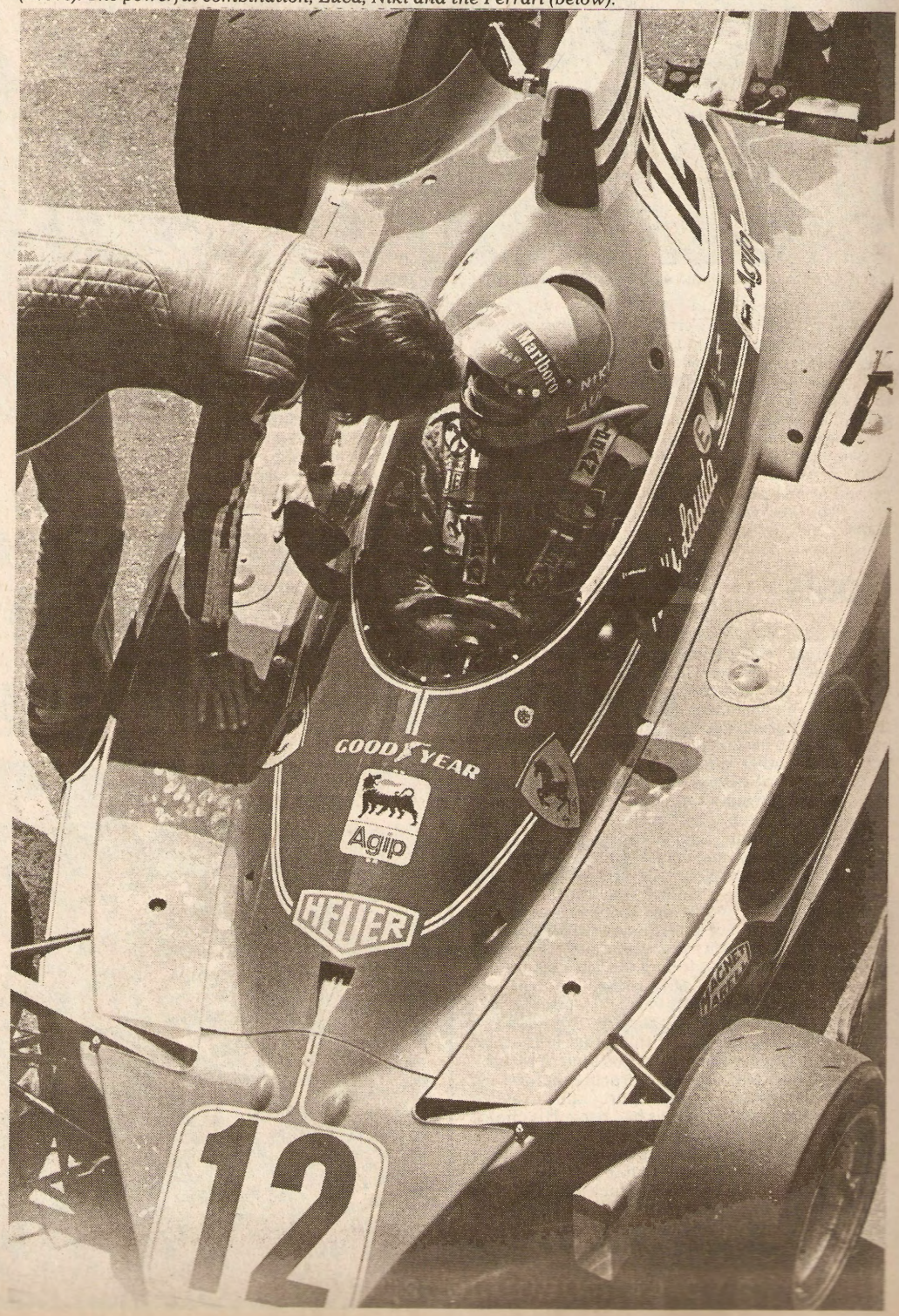
How does the liaison with Ferrari work when the team is at a race track? Is Luca the dynamo of a manager that we see at work, or is he a puppet manipulated by telephone wires connected to Maranello? Montezemolo stresses the fact that Mr Ferrari gave him an excellent grounding in team control, presumably to the point where both men think the same in given situations.

"I got a big experience from him and he gave me a lot of responsibility — this is what is most important. You ask me about tactics. I was always free to decide and he always told me 'Luca, what you think, you do,' and for me that's all right. For me this is very good from a human point of view. He gave to me the possibility to take the season really to make the big experience because many times I was alone to make important decisions."

His situation for 1976 is a little uncertain but he hopes to work things out to his satisfaction (See *Pit and Paddock*). "I have to talk with Mr Ferrari to find a good solution where I can stay with one foot in Ferrari and the other foot in Fiat . . . in other words I can take care of Ferrari too next



"You need a good relationship with the sportive power . . ." Luca talks to CSI secretary Claude Le Guezec (above). The powerful combination, Luca, Niki and the Ferrari (below).





Luca, Niki and Clay listen to Ferrari designer Mauro Forghieri.

year but not so much as in these last two years because I think today Ferrari has good organisation, good engineers, good drivers (it's unusual for Ferrari to have both drivers for a third season), good cars and doesn't need any more . . ." and then he adds a little confusedly, "Of course it's necessary all the time to be there and watch that everything is under control . . . but not so much as two years ago when I arrived in Ferrari – they didn't arrive first in one race, they didn't arrive second in one race; didn't take one pole position . . . so this was a different situation from today . . ."

Goals

From January 1975, Montezemolo has been overall supervisor of Fiat competition. Fiat and Lancia have their own separate rally organisations but Luca oversees both programmes in addition to management at Ferrari. "For the first time the Fiat group decided to have a racing policy because in the past, Fiat and Lancia were running against each other in rallies all over the world and they spent a lot of money and sometimes got a little less in results for this reason. It was necessary to make a policy to decide areas of competition for Fiat, Lancia and Ferrari, to have better organisation and spend less money. At the start of this year we gave Lancia the World Rally Championship as a goal and Fiat the European Championship . . . we divided and we made all the effort in two different directions without making them war against each other and this year we had good results with Fiat winning the European Rally Championship, Lancia 99% certain to win the World Championship and Ferrari the Formula 1 championships . . . for a group like Fiat, this is a fantastic success and I don't think that in the past a car group can have achieved this kind of result."

We all had our heroes in racing before we became enmeshed in the sport and I asked Montezemolo who his heroes had been. His choice was interesting. "I thought, of course, that Clark was a fantastic driver, that Stewart was very good too, and the third driver that I like very much was Chris Amon . . . he was very unlucky in his career but he was a very, very good driver." I followed this by switching to the future and talking about drivers. If he was in a position where, say, Niki and Clay had announced their retirement and wouldn't be available next season, who would he sign to take their place? He gave the matter careful consideration. "Today . . . two names . . . Niki and Clay are not available . . . Fittipaldi and Tony Brise – one expert, good test driver and the other young . . . the same choice we have with Ferrari two years ago."

Ferrari's World Championship domination this season was a tribute to the tremendous amount of testing and development that went into the 312T with its transverse transmission, a car entirely built by Ferrari, a mechanical creation owing little to outside influences compared with the majority of teams who rely on over-the-counter supplies of engines from Cosworth and transmissions from the Hewland. "I think if you compete in the World Championship for constructors you should have to be a constructor and from my point of view the English teams are not really constructors because they are not really car factories. We build our own cars, we sell our own cars. The Ferrari is a factory produced car. We really race for technical development of our cars and what we find in the race from the technical point of view, we put in the production cars. I don't know what McLaren or Brabham do or why they do it. Do they race just for the success? Just for the money? We make the races also for other reasons . . ."

So the Marchese Luca Montezemolo emerges from 1975 as the golden boy at Ferrari, the man who put the championship package together, and who put Ferrari back on top. But he didn't do it on his own, and perhaps that is the secret of his success. A good manager is the man who knows how to manage, how to delegate duties in the right areas with the right people doing the jobs. There were plenty of clever people at Ferrari before Montezemolo came along; it just happened that Montezemolo was the management Whiz Kid who spotted the problem of overlapping responsibilities that frictioned into in-team problems, and these were sorted out. At last the technicians and engineers, the drivers and the mechanics, had a clear goal and clearly defined paths to follow to reach that goal. Montezemolo didn't do it – he showed the others how to get the job done . . .

The team meet royalty at Silverstone earlier this year.





Practice makes perfect for Antonio Zanini – winning by more than four minutes from Claude Haldi's Carrera.

SPANISH RALLY

Zanini..out of the carnage

By MARTIN HOLMES **Photographs by HUGH BISHOP**

In the middle of last Saturday night, smiles of relief eventually appeared on the faces of the organisers of the Spanish Rally. Still there was no news about the fate of General Franco. The first editions of the Sunday papers merely stated that the condition of the Dictator was grave. It seemed that he would still be alive for the next few hours, and therefore the rally could run its full course. It did, and Antonio Zanini scored another important Spanish success with his SEAT 1430/1800, albeit only after his teammate Salvador Canellas had trouble. On the Sherry, Salvador had a puncture, this time he had transmission trouble and then went off, ultimately to finish fourth. Second after a steady run which he tackled absolutely without practice was the Swiss Claude Haldi with a Carrera 3-litre and third, the remaining works FASA Renault Alpine driven by Lucas Sainz. As a challenging two-night ECR event the Spanish had proved well worthy of its status, even with coefficient four, but as an end-of-season also-ran the rally proved poor in entry quality.

The SEATS and the Alpines were the major contestants to field teams. Two SEATS completed, since their recent homologation, with 16 valve heads and bigger differentials, versus four standard 1800cc Alpines. As a buffer between this confrontation were the Lancia Stratos of de Bagration and the Porsche Carrera of Haldi, with two BMW's of Escuderia Orense for Reverter (Group 2) and Fernandez (Group 1); a series of private SEATs, a couple of works Chrysler Simcas for Onoro (Group 2) and Ortiz (Group 1), a BMW Group 1 for the leader of the Spanish championship Etchebers and a hot little Datsun 120Y for the Portuguese driver Cortes, which he hopes to use next month on the RAC.

The entry was poor, but everything else was good. The two-night route used asphalt stages for the first night and loose stages for the second: the emphasis in stage distance being heavily on the loose sections, whilst as a vicious little incentive the number of starters for the second night was a harsh thirty. Only 65 entries were permitted to start (nearly 100 entries being received in all, the rest being rejected through lack of previous form) and the effect on these starters was electric. The drivers tackled the early tarmac tests as if their very lives depended on them, so much so that there was an extraordinary series of accidents. Cars off to the left, cars off to the right, cars on their roofs, cars head-on in the rocks that lined the roads. There were no reports of injury from these episodes, but that must have been by luck rather than design.

Scrutineering was on the morning of the start, last Friday. Already news of non-starters had began to depress the organisers who had begun to wonder if they would see non-Spanish entries at all. Borges had entered a Porsche from Portugal, but there was no sign of him. Altneheimer, the German champion, had entered another Porsche, but had gone away to compete on the Tour d'Europe instead. Lexama, the Spanish Escorteer who had rolled Coleman's old Mark 1 at the end of the Portuguese apparently had not received the repaired car back, whilst the two David Sutton Cars entries for Sclater and Jill Robinson were known not to be going after all. The only other foreign entry came from Germany, in the form of an Opel Ascona of Wener Schweizer and Bernard Ostmann. Both Cortes and Haldi admitted a little reticently that they had done no training at all, whilst Schweizer had only managed a couple of days. Zanini on the other hand has long become a legend for training. Some drivers are happy with a half dozen runs over each test, but Zanini drives over and over each test, almost with the energy of an automation. Few people think he has got the sheer talent of Canellas yet, but few doubt that his determination will carry him there before long.

With Madrid, the base town for this event, lying around 900 metres above Sea Level, the mountains are not very much higher. The first test lay an hour's drive away in the mountains to the north-west of the town, and was over a short road that reached 1700 metres altitude. Each half of the rally started at 8pm and finished at 11 the next morning, so the only daylight stages were three or four each morning. The night was almost clear, and the thought uppermost in the minds of the drivers was that of possible elimination for the second night. Every sudden curve was to bear the legacy of some heart-stopping moment. Two fast rights – over brows carried broken windscreen glass the next morning, together with the inevitable collection of twisted chrome in the bushes. Two SEATs, at least, never managed more than a couple of kilometres into the test. Towards the end, another two kilometres further on, a gravelly hairpin collected some more cars. Trabadi (SEAT) and Cortes both went sailing off into the countryside and only regained the road through the help of ecstatic spectators. The Stratos began as it intended to continue, in the lead, three

Claude Haldi was rewarded with second place in this rally of attrition after a softly-softly drive.



seconds ahead of Zanini, whilst Canellas was eight seconds behind, although he had taken an escape road and had to back up to the road at one point. The official speed of the Stratos was 94.2 kph.

With such drama, surely the second stage would be less hectic? No — the rally was a "race" in more senses than one, and anyway the honour of those top thirty places at the end of the night mattered more than anything else. Halfway through the second stage, a long downhill stretch was punctuated by a sharpish-right at a bridge Hernandez's Colt Lancer was so far off the road at the right-hander that you could not see it from the road, at night. "You know," said the rather sad driver, "I was just getting the hang of the car. Andrew Cowan told me I must buy a Colt, it was so strong. And if you see the car it is not damaged at all." Why could he not back up to the road again: the car was balanced precariously on the edge of a drop into a stream. One breath too many and it would plunge over the edge. He, however, made more of the rally than Pradera. The dapper Alpinist had rolled when the little yellow FASA car had spun all of a sudden, zooming off the road. Second round to the Stratos, at 103.12 kph. The pace was hotting up. By the fifth stage the speed was up to 107.2 kph. On every single stage that yellow-and-green sports car was the quickest, until stage ten. Bagration, like Pradera, found the car was completely out of control as he braked for a bend. "Jorge fought the car one way then the other," his co-driver explained, "but once that car lets go there is nothing you can do." Straight on into the bank was the only place to go, the wheel on the drivers side was nearly off. The Lancia challenge was over. The second works Alpine to crash had its moment on the next test, but after this the "crazy" element wore out and the rally took on a more serious tone.

Canellas was leading Zanini by 24 seconds midway through the night, and was steadily drawing away. Sainz in the final Alpine was next best driver, ahead of a private SEAT (Rosende) and then Haldi. The Swiss was visibly pottering round the route, determined not to get excited or place a wheel recklessly in any direction. His irritating sense was paying off. Sixth, halfway through the night was to turn into fourth at the end of the first half, whilst during the second night he was to jump two more places. Why do so few Carrer "pilotes" get into their cars and really *drive*? Canellas was practically a whole minute ahead of Zanini and in view of the pole position that he commanded at the re-start and the dust that the loose surfaced stages would surely the rally was as good as his?

Once upon a time, the Spanish were supposed to be good at nothing, rallywise, save for conducting powerful cars up hills. Nowadays their loose surfaced sport is becoming quite excellent and the rivalry between the SEAT men showed this dearly. With the absence of practice now much less of an obstacle to good times, Haldi was able to try harder; but despite his power only on a handful of occasions could he split the times of the terrible Barcelona twins. Sainz also tried hard, but the SEATs gradually drew further and further ahead, until Canellas broke a driveshaft and lost vital road time replacing it. Nine minutes, 4½ minutes' worth of penalty, had put him back behind Haldi, whilst on the next test he went off and lost abother six minutes, which dropped him further back still. Zanini, the man who had expected right from the start to lose this event now found himself in the lead again. Haldi was the only menace he now had to consider, since Sainz had electrical and then overheating trouble and was having to ease his car so that one out of the four Alpines might actually complete the course.

The dust was a menace without a doubt. Oliveras went off the road. Seeing the wreckage afterwards made one wonder how anyone could go off on an apparently straight piece of track. Actually it was just after a slight right hander, but with the whole scenery blanked by an impenetrable wall of dust that curve seemed like a hairpin. The SEAT plunged off the road and was badly damaged. Zanini made this the chance to ease the pressure and allow the others to take their chances.

During the second part of the last night there were no more dramas with only the discovery by the organisers that they had wrongly calculated road penalties in the first half to break the rhythm. And still no more bad news about Franco. Maybe the rally would go through safely till the morning. So it did. Zanini showed once again that he has now acquired the maturity of being a victor. Winning a small International like the Sherry is one thing, winning a coefficient four ECR Rally is a far higher honour, something he can now share with Lampinen, Verini and Pinto. Maybe one day folk outside Spain will also be able to see something of the magic of this man, hopefully whilst SEAT are still rallying these incredible square little cars that hurtle round bends like slot-cars. The ECR is now practically over for the year, with only the St Amand to round off the season.



The quickest SEAT driver, Canellas, lost the lead with an excursion and had to settle for fourth place.

RESULTS

1. Zanini/Adam (SEAT 1430/1800) 3h 17m 22s;
2. Haldi/Ballesteros (Porsche Carrera 3.0) 2h 21m 28s;
3. L. Sainz/J. Zorita (Renault Alpine 1800), 3h 24m 52s;
4. S. Canellas/D. Ferrater (SEAT 1430/1800) 3h 26m 09s;
5. M. Etchebers/M. Christine Etchebers (BMW 2002 tii) 3h 30m 54s;
6. C. Trabado/J. L. Serrano (SEAT 1430/1800) 3h 33m 54s;
7. Ortiz/J. Cabal (Simca 1200 Special) 3h 35m 14s; 8. F Damento/E. Gasco (SEAT 1430/1800) 3h 41m 31s; 9, Caba/M Galofre (Alfa Romeo 2000 GTV) 3h 45m 06s; 10, W. Schweizer/B Ostmann (Opel Ascona) 3h 46m 00s.

See over page for driver-synopsis

A touch of terminal understeer, almost afflicts the seventh-place Simca of Ortiz and Cabal.



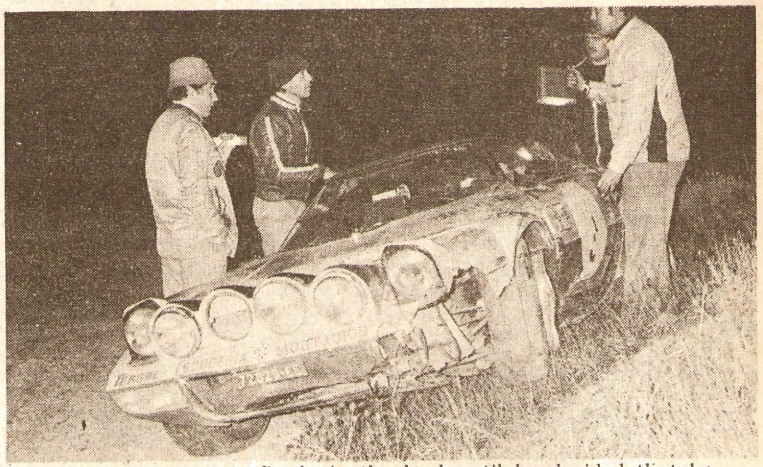




First stage action from Cortes as he grapples to no avail with terminal understeer . . . he was soon off again but retired in the second half with engine maladies.



Delicately balanced – Hernandez planted his Colt Lancer most precariously. He bought the car on Andrew Cowan's recommendation that the Colt could take a great deal of punishment.



Bagration's Stratos was firmly in the lead until he decided that he was completely out of control and slid the Italian supercar into a bank.



Spectators help Trabado's SEAT back to the road after a quick trip down an escarpment on the first stage. Trobado finished sixth.

Principal drivers—how they fared

Jorge de Bagration/Ignacion Lewin (Lancia Stratos) Crashed when lost control braking for right hander on stage 10 while leading Canellas by 40s. Had been limiting engine to 7500 rpm. Left front wheel pushed back. Wants more power as engine is 50 bhp less than Porsches and 100kg heavier. Has previously won two rallies this year in Spain. Fastest on every stage until retirement: One stage officially given third but claimed this to be an error.

Antonio Zanini/Eduardo Adam (SEAT) Slower of the two works cars this time: both fitted with 16 valve heads giving 200 bhp and bigger diffs. ZF gearboxes not yet homologated. Inherited lead when Canellas incurred road penalty after changing half shaft. No fastest times at all first half, only four on second.

Juan Carlos Pradera/Juan Petisco (Renault Alpine) Works FASA car, 1800 engine, went off at left hander second stage when lost control braking. Left rear tyre found to be flat after accident, in which car rolled. Third fastest stage one.

Claude Haldi/Jorge Ballestreros (Porsche Carrera RSR) Driver had no training but used local co-driver. Impressed by smoothness of the loose stages, and found the loose stages less troublesome than asphalt with regard to his lack of knowledge of the route. Four fastest times, two first half, two second: suffered from dust on second half.

Salvador Canellas/Daniel Ferrater (SEAT) Inherited lead when de Bagration went off and held this until transmission trouble. Later went off for nearly six minutes; thought he would be forced to retire but when urged by spectators found his car was not seriously damaged. Same specification as car of Zanini. 14 fastest times, ten second fastest.

Estanislao Reverter/Antonio Doural (BMW 2002 tii Group 2) Persistent misfire early in rally, eventually retired due to fuel pump failure. Best stage, 4th fastest.

Lucas Sainz/Jose Szorita (Renault Alpine) Works FASA entry; suffered troubles because car too low for even asphalt sections. Car was raised on its suspension and then later had alternator fail second night: two stages with hardly any lights. Finally overheating trouble on last two stages of rally: water went up to 130°C. One fastest, in second half.

Jose Ignacio Sunsundegui/Jose Lagginaga (Renault Alpine) Works FASA entry, but all-blue, French registered car. Head gasket failure first stage.

Carlos Onoro/Jose Calle (Simca 1000 Special Group 2). Incredibly fast but notoriously fragile car, which develops alleged 120 bhp. Gearbox broke stage 4, but already had achieved one fourth fastest. Works entry.

Jose Martinez de la Riva/Antonio Molina. (Renault Alpine). Works FASA entry, suffered clutch trouble which untimately kept his car jammed in top approaching downhill corner on stage II. Crashed. Best time, 8th fastest.

Pedro Cortes, (Datsun 120Y). No training, went off for two minutes on first stage, suffered trouble with Group 2 engine and ultimately stopped in second half with suspected valve failure. One-fifth fastest time.

Marc Etchebers/Marie Christine. Etchebers (BMW 2002 tii). Best Group 1 after remarkable battle with Benigno Fernande in identical car, who subsequently retired in second half with injection trouble. Leader of Spanish Championship although lives in France near Bayonne. One fourth best time.

Eugenio Ortiz/Jesus Cabal. (Simca 1200 Special). Works entry, finished second best Group 1 only three minutes behind Etchebers. Only trouble affected carburretor in first half. Enjoyed second half with loose surfaces more.

ECR points: Round 30, one more round (Criterium Sy Amand les Eaux) to follow (points do not include disputed Sachs Baltic): 1 Verini 390, Bachheli 198, 3 Jaroszewicz, 4 147, 4 Ballestrieri 138, 5 Coleman 138, 6 Nicolas 128, 7 equal Lampinen and Clark 120, 9 Zanini 116, 10 Haldi 100.

Jesus Christ, Superstar!

Swedish sensation Gunnar Nilsson proved that he is fallible and a mere mortal after all at Thruxton last weekend when he quite simply "blew" the final round of the BP Super Visco F3 Championship. Having annexed pole position, the Swede took his works March into an immediate lead only to run wide and allow his team-mate Alex Ribeiro to the fore. Nilsson having recovered, chased hard to gain the lead but lost control out around the back of the circuit and spun. He restarted, but was out of contention by then.

Thus Ribeiro came home to yet another Thruxton F3 victory, although the little Brazilian's exceptionally smooth and rapid drive was overshadowed for most of the race by the dice between Stephen South's March and Danny Sullivan's Modus, the latter getting by on the penultimate lap and making a great last minute effort to catch the works March, equalling the lap record in the process.

It was a race that had several interesting permutations and one which produced an entertaining encounter among the leading protagonists of Formula 3 in this, the final round of the BP Super Visco Championship. It is the strength of this championship and the parties involved that has brought the formula firmly back on its feet this year.

Although this was classed by the BARC as the "championship finals" meeting, the Thruxton circuit has just one more event to put on, this being the BBC televised meeting next month which just happens to cater for the F3 brigade as well. If they can repeat last Sunday's showing then it could be quite a race.

ENTRY AND PRACTICE

Although Gunnar Nilsson had already won the championship, the popular Swede was present to do battle in his regular works March-Toyota. It promised to be an interesting confrontation seeing the much sought after Swede back in such a restricted racing class after the pleasures of sampling Grand Prix power units over the past couple of weeks.

Supporting Nilsson, as ever, was Brazilian Alex Ribeiro; both their works Marches unchanged, save that Alex was running with next year's single pillar rear wing support and both retained their buff nose cones (without the extended lip), which first appeared at the last Silverstone race. This was a tweak for extra straight line speed although it tended to make the cars understeer a little more in slower corners.

Ribeiro was in a strong position to take the runner-up spot in the BP series from Danny Sullivan's works Modus and he had to win to really seal it. Could there be any team tactics worked out to help Alex and hinder Sullivan?

Unlike earlier in the year, the F3s are now given two half hour practice sessions and the two works Marches dominated both. Nilsson was fastest in the first, although his eventual pole winning time of 1m 15.6s, the quickest ever by an F3 at Thruxton was a little suspect to say the least. He was slower in the second session, recording 1m 16.6s.

Team-mate Ribeiro also looked fast and predictably, was . A 16.8s early on was reduced to a 16.4s and Alex, appreciably fastest on an experimental tyre compound set up, took up his place next to Nilsson on the front rank.

Accompanying them was none other than "Super Rupe" Keegan who ceases to amaze all and sundry, firstly with the birds he pulls, and secondly, with his unique driving style. Rupert was on a par with Eddie Cheever and Ingo Hoffman in the early session on 1m 17.6s, knocking a further 0.8s off later on as his BAF March 743 really flew, especially down the straights with his particularly potent Toyota engine.

Keegan's time was also equalled by Stephen South, Cheever and Sullivan, the latter trying to squeeze in a quickie at the end which he reckoned eclipsed his official time but the flag had already signalled the end of the session.

As for South, once again in John Stokes' ex-Alderton March, he continued to show the form which he has displayed virtually all season and, with no disrespect to his previous car (the neat one-off Ray), South seems to be coping with the March particularly well.

Cheever was also well up in his Shand-Mills-sponsored Modus, the young American now being looked after by Ron Dennis with Jimmy Tulley, Vittorio Brambilla's regular F2 mechanic, preparing the car.

First of the non-Toyota powered cars was Belgian Patrick Neve, as usual in the Holbay Ford powered Shellsport Safir. Patrick's time of 1m 17.0s was a disappointment for the team as he's gone a lot faster previously. He holds the lap record at 1m 16.4s. Niggling little problems weren't helping matters and Neve looked to be working hard around the flat out sweeps. Several other drivers were in a similar position and it was particularly interesting watching the different chassis coping with the undulations and bumps which make this part of the track so breathtaking for the driver but which, unfortunately, is totally unseen by the spectator.

The car that looked the best, although this wasn't reflected in lap times, was Larry Perkins' Ralt RT1 (1m 17.2s). Unlike his brother Terry, who was trying M & H tyres, Larry had engine problems throughout and his newly rebuilt Nova Ford just wasn't pulling well enough. Terry on the other hand fell off near the end of the first session and deranged the steering rack, consequently he missed the chance of experimenting with the harder compound M & H rubber later on and improving on his 1m 18.2s.

Between the two Aussies were Chris Barnett's regular March-Toyota (1m 17.4s), Hoffman and Bob Arnott's Swansong March 743 (1m 17.8s). Hoffman didn't come out for the second practice and eventually scratched having had engine problems while Arnott misread the practice schedule!

Unusually far down were the two B & O March-BMWs of Herve Regout (1m 18.2s) and Pierre Dieudonné (1m 18.6s), both with problems as had Richard Hawkins who split them in his Ratcliffe Springs March 743 (1m 18.4s).

The rest of the times were Graham Hamilton (March 753/1m 19.4s), Ken Silverstone (March 743/1m 21.2s), John Lain (GRD 373/1m 21.6s), Mike Wrigley (March 733/1m 23.2s), Giordano Regazzoni (March 753/1m 24.2s), Len Smith (GRD 373/1m 24.8s), and Gary Anderson (Anson/qualified).

RACE

Anyone of three drivers could finish second in the championships for besides the big needle match between Sullivan and Ribiero, Neve was also in with a chance.

As already mentioned, this race was going to be won on tyres and quite simply the works March team held the perfect ace hand. Regular followers of F3 will no doubt be aware of the violent wear rate of the current G53 Goodyear tyre, a compound that superceded the slightly harder mix G52 which the company produced earlier this year.

Well March had got hold of a couple of sets and fitted one left rear G52 to Ribeiro's car as, being a clockwise circuit, this was where all the weight bias was transmitted. Nilsson was given a G52 for the same corner and an even earlier much harder G44 compound for the left front. The rest of their tyres were G53s. Sullivan's works Modus ran a similar set-up to Ribeiro.

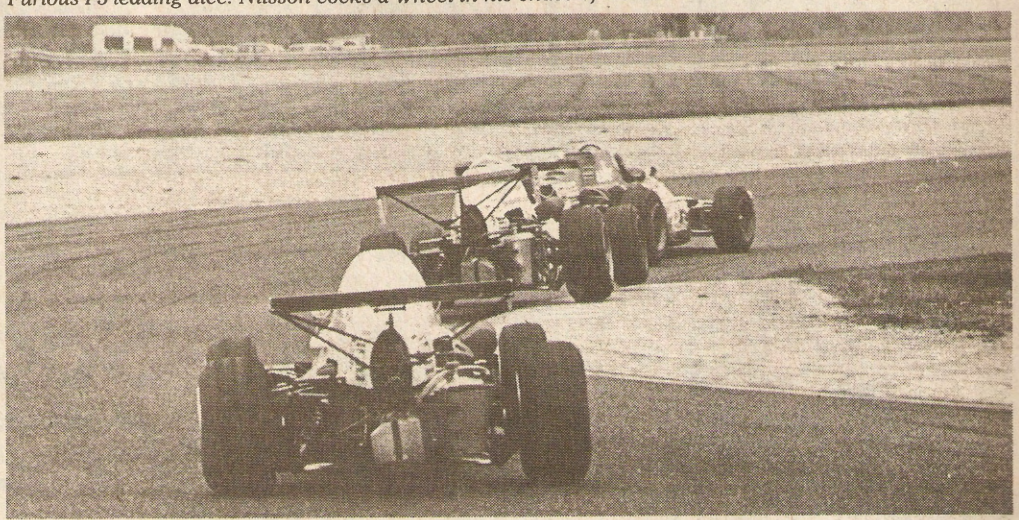
Nilsson executed yet another of his superb starts to thrust ahead of the pack and bore up toward the Complex. Keegan also made a good getaway and slipped ahead of Ribeiro while Cheever, from the second rank, boiled his clutch and had to cool it, the young American taking the opportunity of making life difficult for those behind as they tried to pass.

South braked late for Campbell and knocked Keegan a little while Ribeiro had dived in tight to the inside, desperate to gain the place "otherwise Gunnar would have disappeared." There was much bumping and boring on that first lap! On completion the order read Nilsson, Ribeiro, South, Keegan, Sullivan, Larry P., Regout (a superb start), Neve, Barnett, Cheever, Dieudonné, Arnott, Hawkins, Terry P., and the rest. Phew!

On the second lap Nilsson forfeited his lead when he locked up the left front wheel entering the Complex and the close following Ribeiro gratefully accepted the open door. South and Keegan were now locked in combat (not a sight for those with a nervous disposition) while Sullivan watched . . . for the moment.

Larry P, and Regout were reputed to have had an unrehearsed rim grinding match from which the Belgian came off worse, dropping a couple of places before spinning completely out of contention at the chicane a couple of laps later. Neve then closed in on the Ralt, succeeding in passing it just before half distance but was losing ground to the leading quartet, Keegan having departed the scene in yet another spectacular manner. He lost control in South's turbulance at the tricky hump that is appropriately called Church Corner. The BAF March vanished from view in an instant, gyrating while flat out in top gear across the grass before stopping a yard short of the trees! "I screamed s-s-s-h-h-e-e-e-e-e-t-t all the way," he said afterwards.

Furious F3 leading dice: Nilsson cocks a wheel in his chase of Ribeiro while South tries to hang on.



Sullivan, who was following, said afterwards he expected to be met with yellow flags the next lap but not so. Rupert was back in the pits having yet another nosecone fitted, plus a fresh tyre, before rejoining the fray in his customary fashion. Oh Rupert, what an amusing rock-ape you are!

With Keegan gone, Sullivan closed in on South who had the two works Marches just in front. It looked as if Nilsson was protecting Ribeiro's championship chances from the ever growing Modus, but the Swede said afterwards that he was getting ready for a big effort to overtake his team-mate when he dropped the lot where Keegan had left the scene. Nilsson's car, again disturbed by the air turbulance from a leading car, looped round, but the Swede slammed on everything and stopped it quickly and rejoined, albeit eighth. He retook Arnott, who has had better races, but wasn't able to get on terms with the Neve, Larry P., Barnett trio by the end.

With Nilsson gone, Sullivan saw his chance and tried desperately to find a way around South, without immediate success. He eventually did it with a heart-in-the-mouth manoeuvre around the back on the penultimate lap. South immediately dropped away for like Sullivan, he found it difficult to stay too close because of the turbulance which affects the cars so noticeably around the flat out sweeps.

With a clear road to his adversary, Sullivan really piled everything into that final lap but Ribeiro's lead was too great and Alex deservedly notched up his third BP win (and his third Thruxton F3 win) of the year. Sullivan, by virtue of recording the joint fastest lap, picked up that extra bonus point that kept him dead level with Ribeiro on points. So with each of them having won three races apiece in the series, they share the runner-up slot.

South was an excellent third, his best ever F3 result. with Neve quite a way back, although able to hold off Larry P and Barnett. Of the others, Cheever departed the scene in the rough on lap six trying to make up lost ground while team-mate Graham Hamilton also spun, twice, after a rear wing stay broke. Terry P. was also another to gyrate himself completely out of contention.

CHRIS WITTY

SUPPORTING RACES

You could say it was doubles day in the supporting races at Thruxton on Sunday. In plain language, that means that the two winners of championships still to be decided on that day added another win to their tally. Geoff Lees, with a little help from rival Rick Morris' clutch, added the BAF title to his Brush Fusegear FF title, and Jock Robertson has now won both the Radio One and Britax Production Saloon car championships. In the other races, Peter Cooke easily won the opening Clubmans eight lapper, and in the subsequent race, Rod Bremner used a new demon engine from Denny Rowland to pip both Tiff Needell and Lees. Gerry Marshall walked away from his rivals in the Forward Trust Special Saloon car event, and John Cooper's smokey Porsche held both John Pearson (XK120) and Richard Jenvey (Elan) at bay for eight laps. Finally, Brian Rice took first place in an exciting Britax Production Saloons qualifier. Even though the air was dank with mist, it was a fast day at Thruxton, for out of 15 potential new records in classes etc, only four weren't broken, a fitting end to the season.

With Peter Cooke practising for the final National Organs Clubmans round 1.6s quicker than his nearest rival, Creighton Brown, it wasn't surprising that he ultimately led the first lap, and all the subsequent ones. However, during that first lap Brown led up until the Complex but then found himself well demoted when both David Manley's U2 and Cooke's Harrison came charging by. Cooke ultimately took the lead round the back and proceeded to draw away into a ten second lead by the end. Manley led the pursuers, of whom Brown, Ruari Gillies' Gryphon, Frank Sytner's U2 and David Orbell's similar car were prominent, but slowly Manley drew away, leaving the rest to fight it out for third. Brown led at first, then Gillies, with Orbell coming through to demote Brown and Sytner. Brown ultimately settled his own destiny by going off briefly at the Complex and finishing sixth behind the others.

In the FF engined class, Arthur Mallock had practised one of his own creations easily quickest in the class, but was soon involved in a hectic class battle with Nick Adams' U2 and Chris Greville-Smith's Phantom. It really became hectic on lap five and two laps later, with Adams out front as he had been most of the time, the other two came into contact at the chicane when the constructor got a bit crossed up. So Adams won, Greville-Smith was second and Mallock third, all further spaced than they had been all race.

After a demon time of Phil Dowsett's had been discounted, the grid for the BAF final FF round read Rod Bremner, Tiff Needell, and Geoff Lees. For Lees, of course, this was another important one. He held a points lead of three over Rick Morris, but poor Morris only did three laps until his clutch went, and he was way back on row eleven, and it seemed his championship hopes had gone too. Jim Walsh was just in there with a chance too, but fairly remote.

At the start, Bremner outdragged Lees easily up to the Complex, where Needell just nipped inside the Canadian who was followed by Walsh. By the first time round, there was the usual demon outbraking manoeuvres taking place into the chicane with Needell just leading Bremner and Walsh, then Lees trying to shake off the likes of Dowsett and Derek Warwick. The next time round, the three were still together as they came up to the chicane; Walsh, in front of Needell, seemed to brake earlier and the Weybridge driver shunted into the back of him and spun him round, fairly gently into the Armco. So now they were two. No, Lees made the break and came up to join them. For three laps, Needell led up to the chicane from Lees and then Bremner, and once he had it all sorted out, Lees led into the chicane for the sixth time. But he was demoted to the back of the three next time round as Needell tried to put his seal on the position, only to be completely outdone by Bremner, who came through first on the last lap just holding the car on the track on the absolute balance point and nipping through to win from Needell and Lees.

These three completely outshadowed the rest, but Mike Blanchet managed to sort himself out of the next lot, leaving Dowsett to settle for fifth spot in front of Terry Richards and Lou de Marco with whom he'd been dicing. Incidently, a Crossle is the car to have: four finished in the first six.

Both Gerry Marshall in Baby Bertha and Jonathan Buncombe's interesting new 2.0 Imp device (see *Sports Extra)* were under the lap record in practice for the Forward Trust Special Saloon round, so an interesting race was hoped for. Tony Hazlewood's Jaguar XJ8 was an early departure without even taking the grid, with a suspected dropped valve. When they set off, it was Marshall from Buncombe, then Tony Sugden's 1.8 Escort and then the 1.3 version of Grahame Goode.

Marshall was really impressive as the car charged up to the chicane. The deep V8 roar seemed to go on for ever, and then suddenly down through the gears, swing right, then left and right again and then hard back on that very loud pedal. Except that on his first lap he spun. So now Buncombe nipped by, even though Marshall seemed to have had a mammoth lead. But Buncombe's lead was shortlived too. "He was trying to take Allard (the corner after the pits) flat out," said one of his mechanics explaining Buncombe's presence on the grass. So Marshall got by again, and Buncombe restarted way down the field. In fact there's little more to recount about the lead: Marshall just disappeared into the distance, winning this eight-lapper by 45.4s.

Into second place came Tony Sugden's Escort, which had a superb race long duel with Graham Goode's smaller car, although Goode never actually got by, lacking the legs on the long track. John Homewood, Jeff Ward (1.0 Imps) and Phil Winter's 1.3 Mini were scrapping merrily for the next place, when along came Buncombe again and took an unofficial fourth from them.

Ward had to take second in class to Homewood and Winter dropped behind fifth placed man Tony Mann (1.3 Anglia). Roger Gill kept up the small class Imp domination by being first 850 home having shaken off Reg Ward's Mini).

Although Richard Jenvey had clinched the Miller Modsports series, he was in the middle of the front row with rivals old and new on either side of him. John Cooper had the newer of the rivals, his ex-Alan Broad Swinford Motors/Mustow Green Garage Porsche 911, on pole, while the older of the rivals was John Pearson's venerable Victor Raysbrook Motors Jaguar XK120. It was the poleman who took the lead, closely followed by Pearson, Jenvey and John Evans (2.0 Elan) all dicing for second position. But by the end of the first lap, Evans had dropped a little, leaving Cooper to lead from Pearson and Jenvey, all close stuff. After a couple of laps, Pearson demonstrated how he was going to take the lead on the last lap at the chicane, and then proceeded to settle into second place. But he couldn't have reckoned on oil coming from a rocker gasket on the Porsche, for that made things rather smokey, slippery and invisible as far as the closely following Pearson was concerned, and both he and Jenvey slipped back a length or two after moments. So Cooper smoked home by 1.4s from Pearson and then a gap of 2.2s to Jenvey. Evans had a lonely time in fourth and Peter Lovett fought to the front of a bunch for fifth in his 3.0 Porsche 911. Simon Packford (1.0 Daviran Mk 7) and Ian Hall (1.1 Mini-Jem Mk 2) were in this bunch contesting the small class lead, but after Packford had led Hall for five of the six laps completed, the latter got involved with Guy Beddington's V12 Jaguar E and spun at around 110 mph (top speed). Fortunately the car was very little damaged and Hall continued to a distant second in class.

Even though Derrick Brunt swore he was taking things easy in his Camaro as it was as good as sold to Sweden, he put it on pole for the final race of the day, the Britax Production Saloon championship final. Brian Rice and Roger Payne were alongside and it was the latter who took the early lead. But Rice went by on lap two and the three Camaros circulated in close company with John Brindley's similar car. But only until lap four when Payne again had trouble with the half shaft and a wheel went bouncing for the second time in eight days. So Rice led Brunt and Brindley home, although Brunt closed towards the end.

Behind, of course, things were, as usual, very close. From the long train of rather weary sounding cars emerged Phil Dowsett, the only man who could topple Jock Robertson from his crown and he duly led his class. Behind him another group emerged, a sort of Marshall Wingfield party. Jock Robertson led the group in his class leading Mazda RX3 in Marshall Wingfield with Grand Prix Models livery; when he didn't lead them, Gerry himself did in the LBC 261/Sanyo Vauxhall Magnum. Bridesmaid to this lot were Stuart Patterson in his recently purchased (from Marshall Wingfield) Opel Commodore, and Melvyn Hodgson in his Retreat Records (unrelated) Capri. While the leading two were fairly definite, Hodgson made repeated efforts to get on terms with the others, putting his car into some superb slides which ultimately got the better of him and he left the others finish in the order Robertson, Patterson, Marshall.

Peter Jopp (*Evening Standard* 1.3 Mini 1275 GT) lost the small class lead early in the race to Tony Stubbs and although hard pressed by the BRSCC's president, Stubbs duly took the class win although a 3.0 BMW 3.0 Si got in the way sometimes. Jopie was left in the clutches of Neville Knight's Maystar car aerials Simca Rallye 1, which took second in class on the last lap with a very dubious "oops, I seem to have forgotten about the chicane" type manoeuvre.

BOB CONSTANDUROS

BP SUPER VISCO FORMULA 3
12 laps — 27.56 miles
championship — round 19

1, Alex Ribeiro (March-Novamotor Toyota 753), 15m 30.0s, 109.44 mph;
2, Danny Sullivan (Modus-Novamotor Toyota M1), 15m 31.6s;
3, Stephen South (March-Novamotor Toyota 753), 15m 33.0s;
4, Patrick Neve (Safir-Holbay Ford t/c RJ03), 15m 41.0s;
5, Larry Perkins (Ralt-Novamotor Ford t/c RT1), 15m 42.8s;
6, Chris Barnett (March-Novamotor Toyota 753), 15m 42.8s;
7, Gunnar Nilsson (March Novamotor Toyota 753), 15m 44.4s.
8, Bob Arnott (March-Brown Ford t/c 743), 15m 53.0s; 9, Richard Hawkins (March-Novamotor Toyota 743), 15m 56.2s; 10, Pierre Dieudonné (March-GmbH BMW 753), 16m 00.0s.
Fastest lap: Sullivan, South and Nilsson, 1m 16.4s, 111.02 mph **(equals record)**.

National Organs Clubmans championship final round, up to 1600cc full modified and Formula Ford engined (8 laps); 1600cc fully modified and overall: 1, Peter Cooke (Harrison-Cosworth/Cooke Mk 7), 10m 43.8s, 105.39 mph; 2, David Manley (Mallock U2-Swindon Mk 17), 10m 53s; 3, Ruari Gillies (Gryphon-Davron C4A), 10m 56.8s; 4, David Orbell (Stallwood U2-Holbay Mk 16), 10m 57.2s. **Fastest lap:** Cooke, 1m 18.8s, 107.63 mph. **Formula Ford engined:** 1, Nick Adams (Mallock U2-Holbay/Close Mk 14), 94.53 mph; 2, Chris Greville-Smith (Phantom-RE 75); 3, Arthur Mallock (Mallock U2-Holbay Mk 16E). Fastest lap: Adams, 1m 26.4s, 98.17 mph **(Record)**.

British Air Ferries Formula Ford championship final round (8 laps): 1, Rod Bremner (Crossle-Rowland 25F), 11m 46.8s, 96 mph; 2, Tiff Needell (Crossle-Scholar 25F), 11m 47.4s; 3, Geoff Lees (Royale-Minister RP21), 11m 47.8s; 4, Mike Blanchet (Crossle-Minister 30F), 11m 54.2s; 5, Phil Dowsett (Crossle-Minister 25F), 11m 56.4s; 6, Terry Richards (Mervyn-Rowland Mk 11A), 11m 57.2s. **Fastest lap:** Needell, 1m 27s, 97.49 mph.

Forward Trust Special Saloon car championship final round, up to 850 cc, 851 cc to 1000cc, 1001cc to 1300cc and over 1300 cc (8 laps): 1, Gerry Marshall (5.0 Vauxhall Firenza-Repco), 11m 15.4s, 100.46 mph; 2, Tony Sugden (1.8 Ford Escort), 12m 0.8s; 3, Grahame Goode (1.3 Ford Escort), 12m 1s; 4, John Homewood (1.0 Sunbeam Imp), 12m 23.2s. **Over 1300cc:** 1, Marshall, 100.46 mph; 2, Sugden; 3, John Morgan (3.8 Jaguar Mk 1). **Fastest lap:** Marshall, 1m 22s, 103.43 mph. **(Record). 1001 cc to 1300cc:** 1, Goode, 94.11 mph; 2, Tony Mann (1.3 Ford Anglia); 3, Phil Winter (1.3 Longman Mini). **Fastest lap:** Goode, 1m 28.2s, 96.16 mph. **851cc to 1000cc:** 1, Homewood, 91.30 mph; 2, Jeff Ward (1.0 Hillman Imp); 3, Pat Mannion (1.0 Hillman Imp). **Fastest lap:** Ward, 1m 30.8s, 93.41 mph **(Record). Up to 850cc:** 1, Roger Gill (Hillman Imp), 86.37 mph; 2, Roger Saunders (Mini); 3, Reg Ward (Morris Mini). **Fastest lap:** Saunders, 1m 36.4s, 87.98 mph **(Equals Record).**

Millar Modified Sports car championship final round, over 3000cc, 2001cc to 3000cc, 1151cc to 2000cc and up to 1150cc (8 laps): 1, John Cooper (2.8 Porsche 911), 11m 35s, 97.63 mph; 2, John Pearson (3.8 Jaguar XK120), 11m 36.4s; 3, Richard Jenvey (1.6 Lotus Elan), 11m 38.6s; 4, John Evans (2.0 Lotus Elan 75M), 11m 59.6s. **Over 3000cc:** 1, Pearson, 97.43 mph; 2, Guy Beddington (5.3 Jaguar E V12); no other finishers. **Fastest lap:** Pearson, 1m 25.4s, 99.32 mph **(Record). 2001 cc to 3000cc:** 1, Cooper, 97.63 mph; 2, Peter Lovett (3.0 Porsche 911); no other finishers. **Fastest lap :** Cooper, 1m 25.4s, 99.32 mph **(Record). 1151cc to 2000cc:** 1, Jenvey, 97.13 mph; 2, Evans; 3, Rob Haigh (1.9 MGA). **Fastest lap:** Jenvey, 1m 25.2s, 99.55 mph **(Record). Up to 1150cc:** 1, Simon Packford (1.0 Davrian Mk 7), 92.02 mph; 2, Ian Hall (1.1 Mini-Jem Mk 2); 3, Andrew Bailey (1.1 Austin Healey Sprite Mk 1). **Fastest lap:** Packford, 1m 29.8s, 94.45 mph.

Britax Production Saloon car championship final round, over £2300, £1700 to £2300, £1299 to £1700 and up to £1299 (8 laps): 1, Brian Rice (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro), 13m 6s, 86.33 mph; 2, Derrick Brunt (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro), 13m 7.2s; 3, John Brindley (5.7 Chevrolet Camaro), 13m 33s; 4, Phil Dowsett (3.0 Ford Capri GT), 13m 55s. **Over £2300:** 1, Rice, 86.33 mph; 2, Brunt; 3, Brindley. **Fastest lap:** Brunt, 1m 35.8s, 88.53 mph **(Record). £1700 to £2300:** 1, Dowsett, 81.26 mph; 2, Gerry Marshall (2.5 Vauxhall Magnum Coupe); 3, Rod Birley (3.0 Ford Capri GT). **Fastest lap:** Dowsett, 1m 42.2s, 82.99 mph **(Record). £1299 to £1700:** 1, Jock Robertson (2.0 Mazda RX 3), 80.87 mph; 2, Wendy Markey (2.0 Mazda RX 3); 3, John Markey (2.0 Mazda RX 3). **Fastest lap:** Robertson, 1m 43.2s, 82.19 mph **(Record). Up to £1299:** 1, Tony Stubbs (1.2 Lada 1200), 75.15 mph; 2, Neville Knight (1.3 Simca Rallye 1); 3, Peter Jopp (1.3 BLMC Mini GT). **Fastest lap:** Stubbs, 1m 50s, 77.11 mph **(Record).**

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PROFILE

Tony Fowkes—True Grit

By PETER NEWTON



On the face of it, north Ruislip has barely the remotest connections with the sport of rallying. The tow paths which run along the banks of the murky tranquil waters of the Grand Union Canal have little to offer the ardent rally man as he strolls along the grit strewn pathway, marvelling at the unflinching concentration of the ever optimistic anglers who crouch sphinx like at the water's edge . . . the passing of time seems to merge their stoic, motionless forms into the hinterland of housing estates and allotments. Yet this particular stretch of loose surface is probably the one that Tony Fowkes knows best, despite over seven years trekking the length and breadth of Britain's forests in a number of long serving products of the Ford Motor Company; for the chances are that many of the early morning anglers have been dimly aware of the approach of padding plimsoled feet out of the early morning mist as a tall balding figure approaches. For Tony Fowkes, physical fitness, if not an obsession, is certainly a necessary pre-requisite to his life style, a situation not normally associated with rally drivers; the very mention of such activity being enough to bring many to the verge of cardiac arrest; (with the notable exception of Markku Alen and other isolated cases), but it is something which Tony Makes no secret of enjoying, and like everything else on which he embarks, the job is always done to the best of his ability.

Nineteen seventy five has been Fowkes' most successful season in his extensive career and he has only last weekend narrowly missed taking his first major championship victory. Tony Fowkes is no stranger to rallying and the sight of him busily working away under the bonnet of his car during any available spare minute is as familiar to rallyists as the sight of the lights of Machynlleth on crisp dark nights in November. When we talked to Tony recently, it was certainly not with the idea of revealing his life story.

One senses that he has some difficulty in believing that it actually happened; and indeed it is hard to reconcile the current life style of the man – the sub aqua diving, the water skiing, the weight training, motor cycle scrambling and running, with his first employment on leaving school . . . the young Fowkes worked four excruciating years in an income tax office, counting the seconds of each wearisome day, trying not to watch the clock as its hands crawled laboriously round to 5.30pm. At 5.31 he was long gone, heading for the open spaces and the hills where he could get out the scrambling bike and make off into the untracked hill country. The white collar trap was never going to ensnare him and despite the inevitable social and domestic pressures which were brought to bear, the thin thread snapped one fine day in June, and he turned his back on Buckingham Palace Gardens for the last time, and with his parents' disgust to spur him on, lost no time in becoming a motorcycle mechanic before taking an apprenticeship in panel beating and setting up his own business in 1965. His first highly entertaining steps at rallying were still three years away. Local LCAMC events were the thing in those days and with Tony Russ, a friend from the Green Belt MC, in the left hand seat of Tony's Mk 1 Lotus Cortina, the pair got themselves thoroughly lost and investigated many of the lesser known banks and hedgerows of south east England in consequence. "We were fairly quick but we could never find our way around the route successfully, and I would say we went off on every rally, usually on a non-competitive part of the route when we were trying to find our way back to it."

It is totally within the Fowkes character that, far from being daunted by the shunts, he was actually encouraged by them, and would eagerly rush back to the workshop and get down to some feverish panel beating in order to be ready for the next jousting session which invariably followed at weekly intervals. It is the sort of attitude which typifies the man and goes a long way towards explaining his success. Fowkes is never a man to give up any project unless the circumstances are totally irretrievable, and he thrives on problems of endurance and stamina as well as merely of a mechanical nature.

His approach to the Eppynt Ranges provides further proof, if indeed any were necessary, of his remorseless pursuit of self discipline and the consistent determination to overcome or counterattack his weaknesses. All drivers have their personal likes and dislikes for certain parts of

The Fowkes/Harris team in typical pose on a special stage in the Yorkshire forests earlier this year. 1975 has been their most successful season to date.



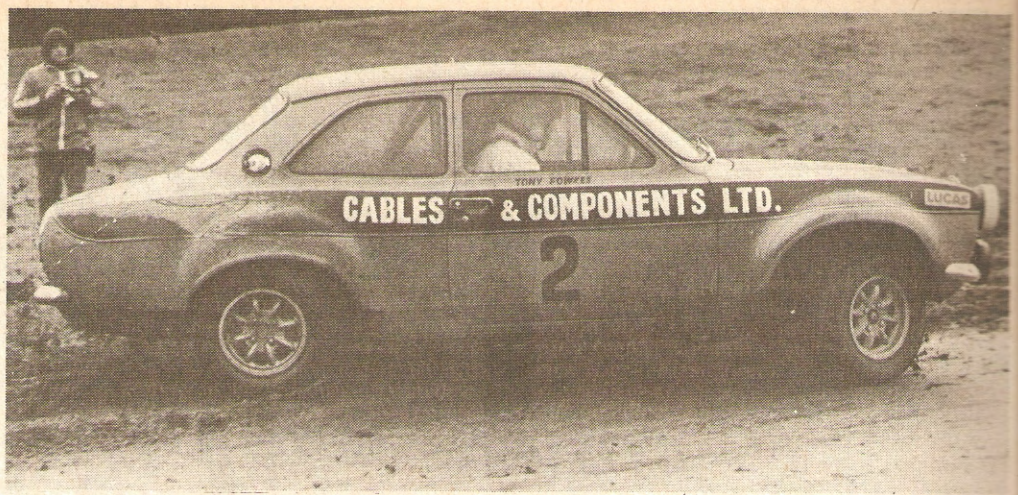
the countryside, but only a precious few build up the kind of reputation that Tony has acquired for his performances over the infamous Eppynt Ranges in South Wales. The bleak swooping terrain traversed dauntingly by minute ribbons of tarmac have been the undoing of many drivers; and the treacherously deceptive nature of the brows and corners has been responsible for tattered nerves and illusion-shattering on a grand scale. Fowkes, as Britain's premier 'clubman' still holds the honour of unofficial 'King of Eppynt.' Why is he so good across the military ranges; is it purely a question of repeated visits to the place and continual attempts to memorise the land? He

"The first time I went over Eppynt I was with a co-driver who, knew the roads fairly well and who told me to go flat out everywhere: I was scared out of my mind at the speeds we were going through the fog; I was a nervous wreck . . ."

smiles by way of answering the question and there is an almost theatrical pause before the words follow: "actually I don't go down there very often – I think you need to know the basic outline of the place, the brows, the naughty bends, and after that you can drive very fast indeed, but you must know the sequences of brows and bends. The reason I take a keen interest in Eppynt stems from the first time I tackled the place in 1969. I was with a co-driver (Peter O'Gorman) who knew the roads and who kept telling me to go flat out everywhere . . . I was scared to death – out of mind with the speeds we were doing through the fog(!) I was a nervous wreck at the end of the stage and resolved to come back some other day to see where we had been. I drive it now like I drive everything else, as I see it." Tony Drummond still delights in telling a story about last year's Tour of Eppynt when he was caught on a stage by Fowkes in thick fog. Trusting to follow him to the end and salvage some time Drummond pulled over – resolved to follow Fowkes' tail lights. They were swallowed up almost immediately in the swirling gloom and nothing Drummond could do was enough to keep them in sight.

Fowkes is as direct and straight with his answers as he is with any other daily occurence – some people have misconstrued this direct approach for bigheadedness in past – this merely because Tony is a person who will speak his mind when asked, and has never been remotely bothered by having independence thrust upon him. The Fowkes philosophy is a simple one to understand and his confidence comes from attributes that he has personally created. Physical fitness is to him a great psychological booster and his car is an object lesson in preparation. Blasting through a forest at dead of night after 30 hours without sleep is only half the fun for him, the other half will have been achieved through prior labours, and Tony thrives on hard work like others thrive on ego.

How does he feel about his driving in the past; which many, including himself, considered to be on the wild side, as compared with his efforts this season? "I've never been conscious of driving beyond my own limits this year – in the past I've nearly always been conscious of it. I used to have a number of accidents and I'd analyse every one . . . eventually I came to the conclusion that I was



Tony periodically sets staggering times on Eppynt ranges. He is pictured here on his way to victory on the '74 Tour of Eppynt.

going outside the realms of my ability and so this year we have eased up considerably. I really do feel that we have been slow this year." Slow or not the results have been spectacularly consistent, just as the car has been utterly reliable. Here lies perhaps the principal feature of the team's success. The Cables and Components car has had a 2-litre engine since November of '74. It has never been rebuilt since then ("although we have adjusted the tappets a few times!") and shows no signs of needing a rebuild now. The engine was originally built by Tony's brother, a chartered surveyor, who like Tony himself, is a self-taught mechanic of great skill. Never a man to skip on detail work, one might adjudge that even Tony became a trifle impatient eventually for the engine took six months to build up, his brother revelling in his work, playing with the compression ratio (11.4 to 1) and refusing to be hurried one iota. The last time it was on a rolling road there was 158bhp at the rear wheels. The rest of the car and crew are a match for the engine room.

Ever since 1972 when Bryan Harris brought Cables and Components sponsorship to Tony Fowkes' rallying, the attitudes within the team have leant as far as possible towards professionalism. Bryan is a master of paperwork and a glance

"I'm concerned that people such as Pond, Brookes, Rockey and Coleman can go that little bit quicker than me, its a problem that I'm sure can be overcome . . . I want to be one of the guys to beat Roger Clark."

through the rally files – the minutes taken at the team's regular meetings, the logging of all work carried out on the car, and the attention to detail which is faithfully recorded is a real eye-opener. Every rally entered is the subject of a ruthless post-mortem and the lessons learnt are filed and put into practise at the earliest opportunity. Every Tuesday of the year the team assemble at Fowkes' Park Royal premises and practise on the car; removing gearboxes, halfshafts and struts. It is known to the minute exactly how long each job takes under the most favourable conditions and service schedules are pre-prepared so no one has to be asked to carry out work at a service halt, it is underway almost before the wheels have stopped turning. Tony spent some time in the air cadets in the early days, and one of the few things he remembers from that time were the remarks that were drummed into the students on the subject of aircraft maintenance – at 15,000 feet there is very rarely a second chance to be had.

It is the bigger rallies that a still attract Tony, and it is these events which he feels favour him most. He is very concerned about the fact that he is slow to 'switch-on' at the start of a rally, and the longer it lasts the better he feels his chances to be. The hours put in on the weight training circuits of the South Ruislip Leisure Centre pay dividends in the fight against fatigue – he is just one among many drivers who welcomes the return of a tougher RAC Rally. "It's an event you can really get your teeth into . . ." however he is just as concerned over the danger of getting carried away in the heat of competition, and this year's plans have been shaped with the unfortunate roll on the opening rally of '75, the Tour of Dean, very much in mind. "We'd got ourselves to a really high peak of physical fitness and when you're very keyed up and tramping down a special stage you get to a peak maybe at the end of a long straight where the car is probably doing 100 mph, and because you're so fit and seemingly in control you leave your braking even later than you should, and perhaps your ability may not be keeping pace with your physical fitness. The Dean was one of those instances where the road had a slight bank on both sides and the back end just caught one of them. If it had been just a little lower and we'd been a little smoother the accident would never have happened. We were only interested in beating Airikkala, nothing else." With the money from Alan Harrow slightly cut back for the year, Tony resolved to embark on an undramatic 1975. "I think there have been just a couple of occasions this year when we have put in some quick times – we're going to start motoring again on the RAC though . . ." he adds with a smile.

Signing autographs on the first day of the '73 Scottish. It has never been one of his luckiest events.



Last day of the '73 RAC Rally and the hardworking team are busy with rapid servicing.





A very slippery corner on Bramham Park claims the Cables and Components car – '73 RAC.

With a new roof the car has remained unmarked all season. It still retains drum brakes at the rear a feature which Tony does not intend to change, feeling that the problems, expense and vulnerability of the disc rear brake to be not worth the trouble in the quest for reliable high performance. "Perhaps next year we will have them when some more development has been carried out but we run strictly to a budget and we spend money on the car where we consider we will get the ultimate benefit and we feel that spending £400 on the brakes would not make the car go significantly faster through the forest, we'd rather spend it on transmission and halfshafts."

One cannot help admitting the dedication and professionalism of this small tightly knit team, but there are some things still worrying. . .I'm concerned that people like Brookes, Rockey and Coleman are that bit faster, because we learnt to rally together . . ." he scratches his head, pondering over the problem . . . "there must be a reason, they're doing something different to myself, its a problem which I'm sure can be overcome . . ." His next remarks catch you slightly unawares for while acknowledging his determination, it is still easy to forget that Tony Fowkes has profound ambitions in rallying . . . "when you chase Roger Clark through a special stage you have got to beat a winning team, himself, Jim Porter and the top works car developed by the Ford Motor Company — if you can beat them on any occasion you have done really bloody well; I want to be one of the people to beat Roger Clark . . ." All this is said in his normal friendly tone of voice, and there is no trace of the emotion that must warrant such a remark. Fowkes wants to go much further in rallying that he has gone at present; he has given himself four more years to do it and there is little doubt that he has now found the temperament required.

"I feel that at the moment I'm very slow but in a couple of years I think I'll go really very very fast. I don't rate my stage times at all at present."

The chat shifts to the Scandinavian question . . . "they have got one superb quality which is lacking in some British drivers, and that is the ability to go on at all costs, and they have the determination to win when others tend to fall by the wayside; they just refuse to let anyone beat them and they're not influenced by thoughts of mechanical failures putting them out of several rallies to come . . . I hope on the RAC this year we will be in a similar position." Tony is now sitting on the edge of his chair, talking avidly of his experiences on past TAP rallies — the square rights and lefts in the road with nothing beyond them save shere 1,000 foot drops and hazy mountains several miles away across the purple valleys. Yet while he is talking there is that continual reminder of barely suppressed energy welling up inside him. He is one of those people who find it difficult to sit in one place for any length of time, even it it is to talk rallying and we've now kept him away from his work for nearly two hours; there is a battered Toyota and a Saab to fix, and then, after hours, he will be scratching away in the rally car. What does the future hold . . . "I think I'm getting better all the time and I'm sure that I can drive much much faster. I feel I'm very slow at the moment but that perhaps in a couple of years I'll go really bloody quickly — I'm convinced of it in my own mind . . . at the moment I don't rate my stage times at all; this is another reason why I don't want to spend too much money on the car at present — I just want to keep learning to drive better, neater. You've only got to check yourself against Roger or Hannu Mikkola to see that that you're some three seconds a stage mile adrift . . . I've got a long way to go but I think I can do it.

Tony is nothing if not a realist, he is not one of those rare breed of 'natural' drivers — but he works ceaselessly at it. The notion of him attempting to deceive himself is inconceivable; and he has clearly learnt greatly from this year; he has learnt how to drive slowly, how to win sprint events by pacing himself. He has given himself three more years to make it to the top of the tree and if he doesn't make it, it certainly will not be for want of trying. Fowkes is one of stage rallying's stalwart characters, he is a "black and/or white' person — things are either right or that are not and he will be doing everything he can to make them so. This season he has been far and away the quickest driver in the Castrol/AUTOSPORT championshipship; a situation he had not intended becoming involved with at the beginning of the year, yet one which will hopefully be some solace for a position of second overall and the sheer hard work he puts into the sport he revels in. His ambition in three years time is to become a team manager — "I'm not ready for it at the moment because I'm still expanding the business and there is also the family to think about:" (he has two young children) but I think I could be good at the team manager job." If he is successful in his aims, then it might just be on account of that characteristic with which he honoured the Scandinavians — determination.. Meanwhile there is this year's RAC Rally to look forward to; and his two greatest fans, Floss and Gerry Stack (a retired couple from York who faithfully follow the fortunes of the Cables and Components team and throw their doors open to them every time they pass throught the city), are undoubtedly getting every bit as excited about the prospects as Tony is himself.

"When you get yourself very keyed up, you can get to a sort of peak at the end of a long straight where you're maybe doing 100 mph; and because you're so fit and seemingly in control you leave your braking especially late . . perhaps one's ability may not be keeping up with the physical fitness. . ."



The ill-fated Tour of Dean earlier this year.

An enduring partnership . . .



by John Bolster



The Imp shape is still quite acceptable for the '70s with a large glass area.

..second flight of the Phoenix

The Imp, in basic Hillman form or in twin-carburettor Sunbeam Sport guise, has had a remarkably long production run. Its rear-engined configuration is no longer fashionable, though its light-alloy overhead-camshaft power unit, derived from the famous Coventry-Climax design, is still bang up to date. After a distinguished history in rallies and races, including three successive victories in 1970, '71 and '72 by Bill McGovern in the British Saloon Car Championships, the Imp has again become highly relevant as oil prices go up and up.

Once again, the Imp is proving highly competitive, but this time its fuel economy that counts. Modern economy events are conducted at brisk average speeds and, under these conditions, the Sport uses even less fuel than the basic Hillman. It is, indeed, the only car that is consistently in the same bracket as the *deux chevaux* Citröen, though its 875cc engine is considerably larger than that of the 602cc twin-cylinder machine.

The Sunbeam Sport is therefore a most topical subject for a road test, though it was far back in the mists of time when Gregor Grant and I shared one at the inaugural presentation of the model. The design is far too well known for a detailed analysis to be necessary. Unusual geometry is employed for the independent suspension of all four wheels, with swing axles in front and trailing arms behind, give or take a few degrees. The engine extends fore and aft behind the rear hubs, lying almost on its side to keep the height down. The transmission is through an all-indirect synchromesh gearbox with a hypoid level for the differential. This layout permits what is almost an estate body to be provided, with a rear seat that folds down to give a flat floor. The large, electrically-heated rear window can be locked in the open position, which permitted my wife to carry a 12ft tree for the garden.

Drum brakes are still fitted, though there is a servo on this more expensive model, plus four headlamps, extra instruments, and wall-to-wall carpeting. Reclining front seats are standard and the rear seats are surprisingly roomy; there's a useful space for luggage behind them but the lockable front boot is largely occupied by the petrol tank and the spare wheel. The finish is good and the interior treatment quite attractive, though the large, thin-rimmed steering wheel is now unfashionable.

On cold mornings, the engine starts instantly, though the choke must be released gradually during the warm-up. Remarkable flexibility is a feature, the car running easily at 10 mph in top gear, without the slightest sign of rumble when picking up from low speeds; this encourages economical driving in towns. Nevertheless, there is not much torque at low speeds and when sudden acceleration is required below 30 mph, it's no good dropping down only to third, for second is the gear you need. The transmission is quiet, though not totally silent, on all four gears, the gearchange being superb. Instantaneous up-changes can be made on full throttle, though this sprint-driving technique should really be reserved for special occasions. I didn't use it when obtaining the acceleration figures, as I regard such abnormal driving as cheating!

If the engine lacks low-speed torque, its power production at the top end is never in doubt, this Sport version being very much faster than the standard Imp. Secretly, I thought the claimed 90 mph was going it bit, but I was able to maintain this speed over quite a long stretch of road – incidentally, the speedometer was remarkably accurate. However, the last few miles take some getting and 85 mph is more often seen. A useful 70 mph comes up in third gear, an oil radiator making continuous high revs safe.

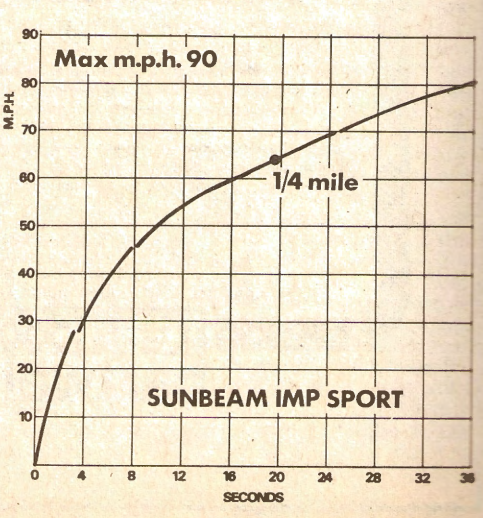
The engine buzzed happily at such speeds, but it is not excessively noisy. There's some road roar on certain surfaces and a bit of wind noise, the body panels tending to boom during hard driving. However, the test car was much quieter than a "cooking" Imp I tried not long ago, perhaps thanks to all that carpeting. Unfortunately, the ventilation leaves a lot to be desired and the demisting is ineffective, though the heater works quite well and its blower is quiet.

The handling is typical of rear-engined cars, tending towards under-steering, particularly on wet roads. However, on a long curve the rear weight bias eventually takes over, causing the back tyres to break away. As we have seen on the circuits, the Imp has useful cornering power and can be pushed through the curves quite effectively. The brakes stand up well to hard driving but they are perhaps rather over-servoed for town work. The ride is on the hard side and the suspension is obviously busy on bad roads, but the usual pitching, from which rear-engined cars tend to suffer, is not in evidence. Considering the short wheelbase, the ride is quite reasonable.

Plenty of glass area and quite a high seat ensure a good all-round view for the driver. The steering is light and the car is easy to park, though the turning circle is not particularly small for such a short vehicle. The Imp has always been a popular car with women and it's certainly ideal for shopping, while the wide doors and fairly high roof give ease of entry for the aged and plenty of headroom for exceptionally tall people.

The Sunbeam Imp Sport may be on the expensive side, but it shares with the cheaper Hillman models the generous new Chrysler guarantee. An unlimited mileage is allowed in its 12-month span, even covering the replacement of clutch or brake linings which have worn out through fair wear and tear. The very high-mileage driver will certainly be sitting pretty and this most comprehensive warranty is backed up by a free breakdown service. A car should not give trouble in its first year, but if it does, the owner is protected from unexpected repair charges, which it may not be convenient to pay. It's really an additional insurance policy against mechanical breakdowns and if you have bad luck, that nice Mr Chrysler will pick up the bill.

Car tested: Sunbeam Imp Sport two-door saloon, price £1,587 including car tax and VAT.
Engine: Four cylinders, 68mm x 60.4mm (875cc). Compression ratio 10 to 1. 50 bhp DIN at 5800 rpm. Single overhead camshaft. Two horizontal Zenith-Stromberg carburettors.
Transmission: Single dry plate clutch. Four-speed synchromesh gearbox with central remote control, ratios 0.852, 1.174, 1.833 and 3.417 to 1. Hypoid final drive, ratio 4.857 to 1.
Chassis: Combined steel body and chassis. Independent suspension of all four wheels by swing axles in front and trailing arms behind with coil springs and telescopic dampers. Rack and pinion steering. Servo-assisted drum brakes. Bolt-on disc wheels, fitted 155-12 tubeless radial tyres.
Equipment: 12-volt lighting and starting. Speedometer. Oil pressure, water temperature and fuel gauges. Voltmeter. Heating, demisting and ventilation system with heated rear window. Windscreen wipers and washers. Flashing direction indicators.
Dimensions: Wheelbase 6ft 10in. Track 4ft 2.4in/4ft. Overall length 11ft 9.25in. Width 4ft 6in. Weight 14cwt.
Performance: Maximum speed 90 mph. Speeds in gears: third 70 mph, second 46 mph, first 27 mph. Standing quarter-mile 19.8s. Acceleration: 0.30 mph 4.0s, 0-50 mph 10.4s, 0-60 mph 16.5s, 0-70 mph 24.4s.
Fuel consumption: 35 to 45 mpg.





Roy James

'Undoubtedly the most interesting entry was the Lotus of Brian Hart, in which was concealed a new experimental Cosworth engine, which foreshadows the coming Formula 2. This car was fastest in practice and was perhaps expected to run away with the race, but Melvyn Long and Roy James, in Lotus and Brabham Juniors respectively, had other ideas on the subject. For the whole 15 laps these three were seldom more than inches apart and, as far as one could see, a great deal of place changing went on in the region of the Esses every time round. Scored from a position on Coram Curve, the lap chart shows that for five laps the order was Hart-Long-James; then suddenly on lap six James was in front, where he steadfastly remained with an exhibition of really cool, polished driving under intense pressure until, on the final round, Brian Hart pulled out all the stops and just got to the line first. Roy James was credited with the same race time as the winner . . . '

That extract was taken from an AUTOSPORT Snetterton report in July, 1963. During the early part of that year motor racing had started to take note of Cockney Roy James and his Formula Junior Brabham and, in fact, up until the end of August that year James had no less than six pictures in AUTOSPORT — the sort of coverage the top F3 or Atlantic hotshot gets these days. James was a coming man, he was in his first season of motor racing, he was also broke. After practising for the TT meeting at Goodwood in August, 1973, James wasn't heard of again in motor racing until just a few weeks ago. The intervening 12 years were spent paying penance for his part in the Great Train Robbery; but whatever else has happened in those years James hasn't given up hope that one day he might make it as a racing driver. He was a coming man of just 25 years old then who, by all accounts, had a big future in racing. I spoke to him a couple of weeks ago and saw in him a determination rare among British drivers to work hard and succeed in racing. There's no sitting at home waiting for a phone call asking him to test an F1 car or the like, the odds are stacked against him in the conventional way; but here is a man that has a burning ambition, and he's going to work hard to make sure he achieves it — an attitude that would benefit a good many of today's young heroes.

James' comeback received an unexpected setback when he had an unfortunate accident testing at Silverstone a few weeks ago when he broke his leg — although in his early career he'd got a reputation for being hairy, he'd never hurt himself but this hasn't put him off: "If anything it's made me even more determined to go out and prove I can do it."

As a young apprentice silversmith at Harrods in the early 1960s James was interested in motor cycles but couldn't afford anything more than a few practice laps at best or spectating as a general rule at Brands Hatch. He was introduced to karting though by some friends in 1960 and eventually made the British team. 'I went reasonably well and had a very happy time in karts. After using F4 250cc karts with gears, cars had to be the next step. I went down to Brands on Boxing Day 1962 and saw Denny Hulme drive the new Formula Junior Brabham and win. I set my heart on that car. With the help of the late Jamie Scott-Douglas and the BRSCC's Nick Syrett I bought Denny's car.

'Jack Brabham and Ron Tauranac were just starting in business then and they weren't inclined to let just anybody buy one of their cars — they got the impression I'd been racing for a long time. My first ever race was at Oulton Park and I led the race and then wrote the car off at Knickerbrook. Everyone was upset, especially the officials, they seemed to think I'd been learning on the public highway — all my schooling came from karting.'

The next race was a televised meeting at Goodwood. James was on the front row after practice which brought a severe reprimand from the officiating Tony Brooks. 'He threw a real tantrum, said I was going too quickly too soon, I'd got to take my time. I really flew at the start and led the first two laps. Then I had a big shunt with John Dunn's similar car and wrecked mine. The RAC took my licence away and I got a letter from Graham Macbeth of the BARC telling me that my services were no longer required. I took the car back to Brabham and Jack was very upset and tried to buy the car back from me. He said I was doing the company a dis-service as I'd spoilt the chances of an impressive Brabham 1-2. He refused to repair it and told me to do saloons or sports cars.

'But that was no good for me, I felt I had to stay in single seaters to get anywhere. Scott-Douglas stepped in and helped me get it repaired and my licence back and I went back to Brands — I led and then smashed again. Nick (Syrett) said I was okay but just overdoing it a bit. I then went to a BARC meeting at Aintree and before practice Graham Macbeth said 'go slow'. Anyway I won the race and from then on stayed on the road generally and won races and set lap records including two in a day at Cadwell Park.

'Up until that time I'd been running an ordinary engine but I decided that it was time to go international so I got a brand new Holbay tweaked Cosworth, which John Reid lent me. Jack Brabham took me down to Goodwood with Hulme and Frank Gardener and started to school me — he'd forgotten about buying the car back by then. The TT meeting was coming up and that was going to be the big one. Unfortunately I had problems in the first day's practice and then the next day the thing blew up with the police . . . '

The amazing thing about Roy is that he remembers that practice day as if it were yesterday. 'I had ignition trouble with the new motor and spun twice the next day. I knew I was going to get down to the 1m 25s mark with Hulme and Arundell.' I checked the grid for that meeting and the front row read Hulme and Arundell, 1m 25.4s, Attwood 1m 25.8s.

'It was all looking good for the following year too, Jack got me a contract with Esso . . . '

A great deal happened in racing between 1964 and 1975 and through magazines and TV Roy kept in touch. 'Stewart must have been the best; he was a true professional but Jochen Rindt was my type of driver. He had real tiger. Watching him on TV I saw him driving *my* race. I felt a real affinity with him.

'When I was away I prepared for the miracle day when somebody would say "go home". I dedicated myself to keeping fit and being ready to step in a car again if the miracle should ever happen. When it did happen it was just as I'd planned. It was just as if the 12 years had never happened. I got into a road car and immediately was as quick as anybody. I was alert and had no worries — I knew I could have another crack at racing.

'All I want is a fair chance. I believe I can be very competitive. I've got no time to waste — if I thought I wasn't going to be competitive then I wouldn't bother. I'm not interested in coming second. I'll accept second if it means winning a championship, but I feel I can win so I want to race.'

It didn't take long for Roy to get behind the wheel of a car when David Mills of Planners International arranged for him to drive Ted Wentz's Wella Lola. But there was a problem. Ted is over six foot tall and Roy is just 5ft 3in. He was never comfortable in the car and racing is a different game now: 'As well as slicks and wings and the obvious changes there are things like footrests and so on. It's all very sophisticated now'.

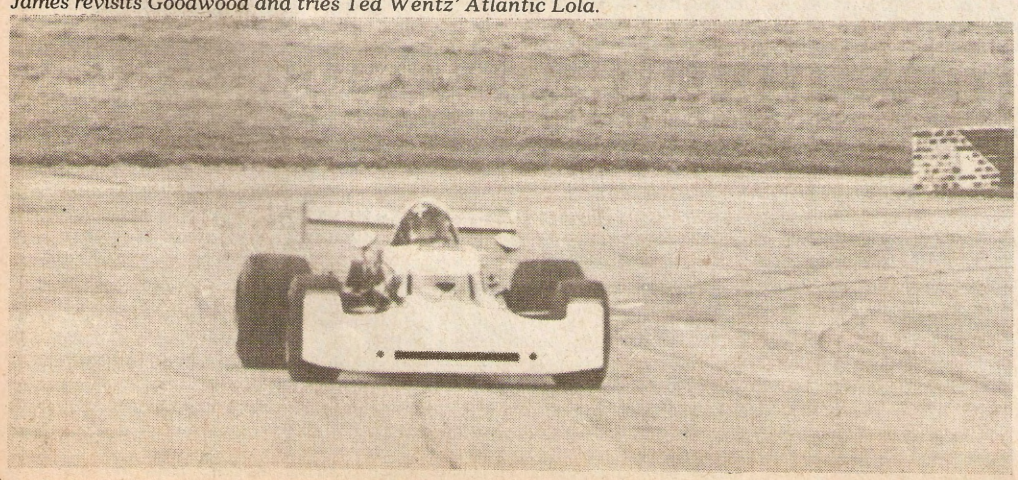
His early laps were plagued by ignition problems but Roy reckons this was useful as it slowed him down and gave him time to learn about what was going on. It was damp that afternoon at Silverstone when they got the car going right, then disaster: "I went through Abbey with 9200 rpm on the clock, I checked the instruments, got a wheel off the track and then corrected. I hit the Armco rather hard and destroyed the car. Obviously I was very upset about the incident but the times were coming down nicely and I'd have had a decent position on the grid for the British Grand Prix Atlantic race. After 12 years it felt good and I was elated. I can't wait to have a go again. Time is not on my side. I can't afford to miss a day."

Prior to the unfortunate day with the Lola Roy had driven the Thursdays/RAM F500 March at Goodwood. 'It was like another world initially but after a few laps it felt pretty normal.' A lot of motor racing people have tried to help Roy since he has been back. "David Mills manages all my affairs and has been really good. After the accident when there was nothing left of the car he said not to worry, he'd find another for me — that was marvellous. John Macdonald of RAM has been really good too and Bernie Ecclestone, Max Moseley, Ron Tauranac, John Webb, Mike Erle and John Olding — they've really been very kind in offering me cars. While I was away a lot of my rivals from the FJ days helped a lot too, especially Peter and Shirley Proctor and Rod Banting.

'Motor racing has been really good to accept me back and I'm really grateful. I'm starting up in the Silversmith's business again, and I want to get back into racing as a pure professional. I'm not going to play at it. I'm not a mincer — winning is what it's all about. Nothing is going to stop me this time. I want to get into Formula One within two years — but if I feel I can't cope I won't take the offers just for the sake of it. I want to win and I know I can win. I've waited a long time for this opportunity and I'm not going to miss it for anything.

IAN PHILLIPS

James revisits Goodwood and tries Ted Wentz' Atlantic Lola.





Nigel Rockley on Crychan 2. In all he set 12 out of 14 possible fastest times on his way to a convincing victory in the Pink Stamps Escort.

CASTROL/AUTOSPORT ROUND 11 CHELTENHAM FESTIVAL

Nigel's revival, George's title

Story and photographs by PETER NEWTON

"However much you plan things, you can still be caught out in this game . . ." deep in the bowels of the Glen Usk Hotel, Llandrindod Wells, Tony Fowkes was musing over a day during which he lost the Castrol championship, a day which had seen the Cables and Components Escort just one second ahead of Nigel Rockey at lunchtime after an exciting morning's duel; but of the car's imminent demise Fowkes was almost certain. He had felt the engine begin to go rough on him during the final stage before the halt in Halfway forest, and now vast amounts of water were being consumed, though there were no visible leaks in the cooling system. There remained the slender hope that it might not get any worse for a while, but as Tony drove west towards Brechfa for the afternoon's run, the engine boiled. It had consumed 10 pints of water in 15 road miles and was now flat and all but useless. He disappeared into a farmyard in search of a bucket and tap, but with the RAC Rally round the corner he was not prepared to go on and risk irreparable damage to the precious alloy block of the BDA.

Thus the afternoon scene was left entirely to Nigel Rockey who put in an impressive performance throughout the day. After weeks of ill luck, Nigel seems to have recovered his winning form at just the right moment, and he drove with great panache, setting the large crowds alight on the one advertised spectator stage, Halfway forest, and carrying out some useful tyre testing on behalf of Goodyear. None of this should detract from a tremendous performance from young Graham Elsmore who chased hard all day, finishing just over a minute in arrears after losing out somewhat in the afternoon. Graham heavily underlined the fact that the recent Wydean victory was no backyard success, and he had had the sense to handcut his Avon tyres which he was certain was a useful aid to the self-clearing problem inherent with this tread pattern. His performance took many people by surprise, not least a troubled Laurie Richards who finished a subdued third after an unhappy day spent coping with an unco-operative differential, staving off a migraine, and begging for tyres.

With all the stages being used at least twice, the top surface of the forest roads was soon cast aside revealing the hard bedrock beneath which was then polished repeatedly by the passing of cars. The result was that as the day wore on, so the stages became more and more slippery, despite one of the finest autumn days of warm sunshine in recent memory. Grip was at a premium and the plethora of twisted, bent motor cars at the end of the day indicated how much onus was being put on the skill of the driver.

This year for the first time, the Cheltenham MC moved their rally to Wales and based it on the nostalgic old Spa town of Llandrindod Wells. It was a move that was universally welcomed by competitors, but not one suspects by everyone, for a crisis stared the organisers in the face at the very foot of Esgair Dafydd. The first two stages had been arrowed and set-up the previous evening, the forest gates had then been locked and left for the night. Those first at the scene on Saturday morning were just a little put out to discover that every arrow, stake, and board had been removed under cover of darkness. There was no alternative but to re-arrow the two stages, both the Esgair Dafydd "Tarren" hillclimb loop, and Crychan forest; the latter not rallied for at least four years. A delay of nearly an hour was thus inevitable, but the day proved a triumph for a timing innovation instigated by Clerk of the Course, Tony McMahon. Target timing, similar to that which is used with success in Europe, was employed, along with digital read-out stage finish clocks to eliminate watch reading errors, and the former factor was largely responsible for giving the organisers the necessary control over the course of the event to accommodate such problems as occurred and in fact there was not a single timing query all day. Tony McMahon likes to run his rally 'by committee' rather than with high-handed arbitrary decree, and the result in this case is an all pervasive atmosphere of amiable ambiance and joviality which reflects well on the Cheltenham MC and goes a long way towards explaining the popularity of the event. Results were also commendably quick in appearing.

It is not often that the two leading cars at a stage rally are non-starters, but that is what happened in Llandrindod. Colin Malkin was due to start at number one in Del Lines' Berni Inns Porsche Carrera; but on the previous Tuesday, a mechanic, who was reportedly "bedding in the brakes," hit a tree at very high speed, the car ending up "about six foot high and two feet long" putting the unfortunate driver in hospital and the car out of action for many weeks. Del, who had been in Rhodesia, was given the news as he alighted from the plane at Heathrow . . . and no one was more upset than Colin Malkin. However he has been promised a ride as soon as the car is restored to its former health. Billy Coleman's car, Thomas Motors Escort 2, was without transmission as both gearboxes were still at Terry Samuels' workshops . . . however co-driver Dan O'Sullivan found a vacant seat with Willie Crawford at 12. Thus it was Tony Fowkes who led the field away on Saturday morning. Nigel Rockey started behind him, tyre testing for Goodyear and putting in some RAC practice. George Hill's Martins Vauxhall was next away. The rear roll centre had been further lowered and the springs changed yet again on the advice of the factory. A pre-rally engine mishap had resulted in a lightning three day rebuild at Blydensteins, and the team had future DTV rally boss Gerry Johnstone along to see how things worked in the field. Laurie Richards arrived with 10 new tyres for his Lloyds of Stafford RS. He too was involved in a Goodyear test session and was thus in possession of narrow section "Hakkas" which are highly effective under certain conditions but which wear notoriously quickly. Laurie had just two left by the lunch halt, and had it not been for the generosity of Nigel Rockey, he would have been forced to retire. As it was he struggled on with part-worn Ultragrips during the afternoon. He was not at all happy with his performance or that of the car which appeared to have a rather unusual rear ride height. In addition

the differential did not seem to be limiting the slip — all this and a migraine too. . . .

Tyres or lack of them, were definitely a problem, and for Willie Crawford, who brought just three spares with him, it made the difference of more than one place in the final results, as during the afternoon he was sliding about on the tattered remnants of the morning's activities.

Ronnie McCartney brought his Porsche back for another go over Welsh forests in preparation for the RAC. The car was now equipped with an LSD but was still geared to pull 150 mph in top! Nevertheless Ronnie gave his customary demonstration of how a Porsche should be driven on the loose and the car was slung around with almost uncanny control. To bolster the Irish ranks, Paul Martin had returned with his faithful twin cam Escort to have another go. Nigel Mills was with him again and the pair were progressing with great gusto (although the driver, modest to a fault, denied it vociferously) lying in the top ten after three stages despite a puncture and a broken spring on successive tests before Paul stumbled upon a horrific accident which had befallen Paul Appleby. The Irishman naturally stopped to aid the badly injured Keith O'Dell and went OTL as a result.

Chris Wathen started at 14 in a Group one RS2000 that was "falling to bits around me" by lunchtime. He had had a fire, broken the throttle spring and exhaust system early on. Bob James retired at lunch having melted the rear brake calipers after seven miles on a flat tyre in Crychan 2. With a dented wing to add to its Wyedean mishap, the venerable Carrefour car looked a little tired and in need of major surgery, however, a Mk 2 is just around the corner. Brian Evans had Dunlop's John Horton sitting with him in the Porsche. They were tyre testing for the RAC, Dunlop having just produced an 'M and S' Mk 2 in Porsche sizes. Brian had three slight offs in exactly the same place in Crychan on his way to ninth overall. He ended the day convinced that the old SP44 winter tyre was still the best for the German car. Talented Australian, David Lang, was back, this time with Kevin Gormley, and under the wing of David Sutton as usual. Neither had a great day, however, for Jill Robinson's hitherto ultra-reliable G2 RS2000 blew up in the biggest possible way in Halfway 2 – the crew just managing to coast to the finish of the stage with engine internals left dancing in their wake – the car's first non-finish in 18 months. Crychan 2 was also the scene of David Lang's swansong, for after a very dramatic morning the back end clipped a rock bank, spinning the car across the track and up the verge at an oblique angle. The Escort came to rest on its roof across the middle of the track in a pool of oil. Although it was not blocking the stage, it was adjudged to present a serious hazard to competitors so the stage was temporarily stopped (facilitated by short wave radio contact between marshals) while the sadly modified car number 17 was removed.



Laurie Richards had a troubled day with tyre and differential trouble.

Saturday dawned misty and cold, the white chill patches lingering in the valleys and on the hillsides as the sky turned pink in the east. With the coming of the sun however the temperature rose rapidly and although the imposing heights of Esgair Dafydd were wreathed in mist for the passing of the first cars, it soon cleared to reveal one of the most idyllic days of the year, the autumn spectrum providing a splendid sight in the bright, glistening light.

From the start the rally developed, as expected, into an esoteric battle between Tony Fowkes and Nigel Rockey; although Graham Elsmore was hanging onto the leaders remarkably well. George Hill's Magnum is a very tired motorcar these days; as soon as he got it onto the loose the brake balance shifted to the front and nothing would persuade it to revert to the rear. In desperation Mike – Oldham's "Mick Jones" – disconnected the front servo for the duration of two stages, but this merely resulted in George boiling the fluid and finishing the second of these two tests with the rear linings on fire. The Vauxhall was also suffering a severe engine imbalance which George surmised might be due to incorrect clutch assembly. Two propshafts were changed in an effort to cure this malady, and, resigned to a lowly placing, the team arrived at the lunch halt in seventh place, their championship hopes all but evaporated. Then they discovered the Fowkes headgasket, and Phil Short started doing his sums . . . the Vauxhall had to finish ninth or better to clinch the championship. In the event they easily achieved this objective despite a slight off in Halfway which cost them 20 seconds and bent the steering rack.

A frustrating rally also for George Hill who nevertheless clinched the championship with fifth overall.



Meanwhile early retirements and offs were commonplace. Just a few miles of Crychan 1 sufficed to sideline the luckless Donald Heggie who had the pipe to the oil pressure gauge break, allowing the oil to escape in clouds of white smoke. He was again experiencing trouble with the exhaust manifold to boot, and in attempting to remedy the troubles the crew went OTL. Gordon Batchelor was another early casualty. As he charged over Crychan, a stone caught under the camshaft belt, tearing it and causing the timing to slip. Gordon struggled through halfway, the engine understandably very sick, and just as he trickled into his service point, the belt snapped, the dreaded light came on and all the valves bent themselves in an instant . . . Gordon returned home to watch "Grandstand." After the first visit to the Crychan/Halfway complex, the cars headed southwest for Brechfa. It was here that the horrific accident befell Paul Appleby. Perhaps he was trying a little too hard with Ian Lawless pressing strongly in the championship . . . in any case the treacherous surface claimed the RS2000 about 1½ miles in on a tightening righthander after a long descent. The car hit a tree on the outside of the bend — the initial impact being taken by the screen pillar on the co-driver's side. Poor Keith had his arm up on the roll-over-bar-mounted grab handle, and as the windscreen and pillar came in, so his arm was savagely mauled by glass and metal. It was very badly broken in three places and severely cut as well. A deeply shocked Paul rushed back up the stage and flagged down the next car — it was Paul Martin. The latter picked up a marshal near the end of the stage and rushed to phone an ambulance. He then characteristically returned to the scene to give what comfort he could to Keith O'Dell's agonizing wait. A doctor was on the stage, and great credit is due to the ambulance men who arrived exactly 15 minutes after they had been summoned, having driven at 11/10s from Carmarthen. Keith is now apparently comfortable but will be kept under observation for at least two weeks.

The stage was subsequently scrubbed in view of the lateness with which the rally was already running, however it was too late to save Paul Martin from exclusion. In a laudable gesture, the organisers returned his entry fee as some recompense for his efforts.

Brechfa 2, the very next test, was the scene of both controversy and comic opera. Nigel Rockey went the wrong way at a junction due to a poorly placed arrow and an open alternative road. Having realized his mistake too late to return, he continued and was allowed a re-run of the stage. Laurie Richards and Jeff Churchill also followed, but realized their error and turned back onto the

stage. Some might say that the test should have been summarily cancelled but when the final results were analysed, it was found that the scrubbing of the test would not have altered any of the top positions. Having consulted all the leading placemen in typical diplomatic style, Tony McMahon resolved to retain it and everyone was happy. Much much later, Jeff Churchill admitted to meeting a cow on this stage. ("No one will believe me . . . they'll say I've been overdoing things! . . . "). Apparently, stationary Escort and indignant cow came face to face for some moments before the entrenched animal finally allowed Jeff through. Later he found a deep hole in Halfway in which to go off. The car finished up about 12 feet down a bank and Jeff was thinking in terms of a winch when an enthusiastic private army descended on the Escort and manhandled it up the seemingly impossible slope and back onto the track. He had lost just 2½ minutes . . .

Another to suffer among the pines of Halfway was Ian Lawless. He had Group one in his pocket, and hours afterwards he could not offer any explanation as to why he went off on a left hand bend — "it was a 'nothing' corner" — he was thoroughly disgusted with himself for throwing away a golden G1 chance and the result is that he goes into the final round, the Tour of Eppynt, still behind Appleby on points. The time spent in the undergrowth was costly in that about six minutes were lost in extrication, and with some body damage and only a fraction of throttle left, he was forced to crawl through the following stage before his service point. To further compound his dejection, some lower species of rodent(s) as well as some Bilsteins inside—putting his eagerly awaited chance of doing the RAC in jeopardy. Animals, perhaps of the same ilk, struck again at David Lang, removing his helmet and a minilite wheel from the battered interior of the Escort overnight, and an extraordinary mindless theft of some decorative dolls from a glass case in the hotel served to heighten the lingering feelings of bitterness and frustration instilled by the Lawless/Lang incidents. Lawless' off left the Group one scene to the Avengers which have been trying to get on terms all year. Chris Field in the Coventry Evening Telegraph car took the prize, and Chris Benyon, making a return to rallying in the ex-Vandervell (Sutton) Tour of Britain RS2000, took second ahead of Tim Walton.



Contrast in cornering styles – above: David Lang in uninhibited style on Crychan 2 . . . .

took command. Of 15 powder extinguishers aimed at the heart of the searing blaze, Geoff reckoned that just five worked according to how their makers had intended. The engine was constructed entirely of magnesium alloy and the only way to quell a magnesium fire is to deny it the oxygen necessary for combustion. Four firetenders were emptied in a vain attempt to keep the blaze under control, but under a pall of acrid black smoke, the HyBlock Porsche, silhouetted starkly in the leaping flames, was a total loss—Geoff was forced to watch as over £5,000 worth of car disappeared — he salvaged just a spot light and an indicator lens . . .

So a rally of considerable drama was over. Many competitors were forced to tackle the fearsome heights of Esgair Dafydd in darkness, and indeed it was twilight by the time Nigel Rockey arrived. The championship had been decided in most unlikely fashion (Fowkes did say that a change of headgasket had been on the agenda, but that the team had hoped it would last as the engine was to be rebuilt in any case for the Lombard RAC. Had they not entered the Lindisfarne . . . more conjecture. Even more unlikely in view of DTV's experience this season, reliability won the day for George Hill — he has never won a round all season.

Commiserations are due to Jill Robinson who, thanks to an engine blow-up, has almost certainly lost the ladies championship to Jayne Neate, as neither plan to contest the Tour of Eppynt. Thus it merely remains to congratulate Tony McMahon and the Cheltenham MC for a thoroughly professional event, but one whose relaxed style and pleasant atmosphere make it possible for even the most haggard, gnarled cynics to get quite enthusiastic about it all.



. . . while Graham Elsmore – second fastest here – takes a more subdued line, on his way to second overall.

The final drama was reserved for Geoff Keet who has just acquired and painstakingly restored the very powerful Bernard Rodemark rallycross Carrera. The superbly finished black Porsche had suffered a small fire during the morning and the car's Fire-eater system had already been in use, although it was re-primed by the afternoon session. The Porsche landed heavily after the notorious yump in Crychan 3 and Geoff thinks that the touch-down impact split the bag petrol tank. As the crew made their way back towards Esgair Dafydd for the final two stages, they smelt the familiar odour of petrol fumes and hurriedly pulled into a lay-by to investigate. As Geoff went to open the engine cover, he was thrown back by the blast as the petrol ignited and in seconds the whole car was ablaze. It seems likely that the fuel rolled back along the undertray and reached the competition exhaust plumbing. As a number of competitors stopped to assist so the flames rapidly

1, N. Rockey/D. Tucker (Escort RS) 82.17;
2, G. Elsmore/S. Harrold (Escort RS) 83.33;
3, L. Richards/J. Tew (Escort RS) 84.53;
4, R. McCartney?R. Neely (Porsche Carrera) 85.15;
5, G. Hill/P. Short (Vauxhall Magnum) 86.18;
6, W. Crawford/D. O'Sullivan (Escort RS) 86.21;
7, R. Iliffe/M. Broad (Escort RS) 87.00; 8, J. Churchill/R. Jones (Escort RS) 88.08; 9, D. Evans/J. Horton (Porsche Carrera) 88.34; 10, D. Evans/T. Evans (Mexico).

Group one

1, C. Field/K. Reid (Chrysler Avenger) 90.49; 2, C. Beynon/A. Brick (RS2000) 90.59; 3, T. Walton/K. Carter (Chrysler Avenger) 91.03.

Special Stage times

SS1 Esgair Dafydd 1
1, Rockey 3.40; 2, Fowkes 3.41; 3, Batchelor 3.42; 4=James, Elsmore and Lang 3.48.

SS2 Crychan 1
1, Rockey 9.57; 2, Elsmore 10.02; 3, Fowkes 10.06; 4, Richards 10.07; 5, Crawford 10.10.

SS3 Halfway 1
1, Elsmore 3.15; 2=Fowkes and Rockey 3.17; 4=Riochards and Churchill 3.18.

SS4 Brechfa West 1
1, Rockey 16.54; 2, Fowkes 17.04; 3, Elsmore 17.05; 4, Richards 17.20; 5, Crawford 17.26.

SS5 Brechfa East 1
1, Fowkes 9.01; 2, Lang 9.09; 3, Elsmore 9.13; 4, McCartney 9.15; 5, Rockey 9.22.

SS6 Crychan 2
1, Rockey 9.58; 2, Fowkes 10.06; 3, Elsmore 10.11; 4, Richards 10.14; 5, Hill 10.16.

SS7 Halfway 2
1=Rockey and Elsmore 3.19; 3, Fowkes 3.21; 4=Crawford and Lang 3.24.

SS8 Brechfa West 2
1, Rockey 6.21; 2, Elsmore 6.33; 3, Richards 6.38; 4=Hill, Churchill and McCartney 6.40.

SS9 Brechfa West 3
1, Rockey 6.22; 2, Elsmore 6.33; 3=Richards and McCartney 6.36; 5, Churchill 6.38.

SS10 Brechfa East 2
1, Rockey 9.16; 2, Elsmore 9.21; 3, McCartney 9.27; 4, Hill 9.33; 5, Richards 9.37.

SS11 Halfway 3
1=Rockey and Richards 3.25; 3, Elsmore 3.26; 4, McCartney 3.32; 5, Evans 3.33.

SS12 Crychan 3
1, Rockey 10.19; 2, Richards 10.31; 3, Elsmore 10.32; 4, Hill 10.50; 5, Crawford 10.54.

SS13 Esgair Dafydd 2
1, Rockey 3.30; 2=Elsmore and McCartney 3.41; 4, Richards 3.43; 5, Churchill 3.47.

SS14 Esgair Dafydd 3
1, Rockey 3.31; 2, Elsmore 3.39; 3, Evans 3.42; 4, McCartney 3.43; 5, Churchill 3.46.



Bill Taylor ended a troubled season with an excursion during the afternoon.

BORDER RALLY

Bordering on the sensational

Held over a shortened route in the Keilder forest complex on Saturday 25th October, 1975, this the final round of the *Scotsman*/Gaelic Oil Scottish Rally Championship, produced a dramatic 11th hour win in the Championship for the Samson Bros. when their main rival Murray Grierson, had steering problems and a subsequent "off" on the penultimate stage of the Rally. The event was narrowly won by Timo Makinen/Henry Liddon by eight seconds from Drew Gallacher/Ian Muir who made a sensational re-appearance to rallying.

The Border Rally organised by the Berwick and District Motor Club, started from Hawick, at the very civilised hour of 10.30 am. Watched by a sizeable crowd, the field was headed by Arthur Jasper/Bill Crabb in their Escort RS 1600, at two should have been Andrew Cowan/Hugh McNeil, but Andrew was still returning from Australia after his fourth successive win in the Southern Cross Rally and at three were Murray Grierson/Roger Anderson (Escort RS1600) who were making a determined bid to win the *Scotsman*-Gaelic Championship.

Starting at four and making his first rallying appearance since the 1973 RAC Rally was Drew Gallacher/Ian Muir and at five came Charles and Alec Samson, also chasing vital championship points. Bill Taylor/Ian McIver started next, whilst at seven were Alastair Brierley/Mike Smith breaking the Escort monotony with an Opel Ascona. Tucked away at start number 15 was August's "Ford Rally Man of the Month". 19-year-old Malcolm Wilson with John Davies, who was to have another good event, finishing in fourth position.

Among the 113 entries was a surprise last minute entry from the Ford Motor Company and starting appropriately at 13 were Timo Makinen/Henry Liddon in their ill-fated Tour de France and San Remo tarmac Escort RS1800. The entry was made to test near-racing suspension and near-racing tyres under forest and RAC Rally conditions. The low-key appearance of representative's from Lockheed, Dunlop and the Ford Motor Company, indeed a very affable Stuart Turner himself, was a welcome indication of the determination to keep the Escort competitive in the future.

Scrutineering was efficiently carried out from 8.30 am and although there was a slight hold-up for the early numbers with the non-appearance of the road-books, the rally cars got under way from Hawick in dry but dull conditions and a 23 mile main road run, with ample time, brought competitors to the first special stage in the vast Keilder forest.

Starting from Deadwater this 4½ mile stage was extremely slippery and most Competitors had a few "moments". Fastest time in 5m 17s was Bill Taylor followed by Timo Makinen 5m 19s.

Drew Gallacher — a brilliant return to stages.



Dynamic Duo — Alec and Charles Samson.



Grierson 5m 23s and Wilson 5m 26s. Perhaps luckily for Makinen, Drew Gallacher was to take a few stages to settle down after nearly two years out of competition. The stage ended back on the main road near Keilder village, with considerable service activity, but then owing to the large amount of work in this area, in connection with the eventual flooding of the valley and dam construction, the organisers were forced to abandon the more normal stages to the south of Keilder village and therefore stages two, three, four and five were virtually without service and were held in a continuous loop, further south of Keilder village, ending near Falstone where an early lunch was taken.

There were four course opening cars which was indeed fortunate as on stage four Clerk of the Course, Willie Fairbairn, broke down and he was forced to walk eight miles out of the forest! Whilst on this same stage Drew Gallagher was suffering a mysterious misfire.

At the lunch halt, Makinen was just leading by two seconds from Grierson, who in turn was leading his *Scotsman*/Gaelic Oil rival Charles Samson by 13s, whilst Drew Gallacher was only another eight seconds in arrears and really getting back in the swing of stage rallying.

The next 5 stages used the forests to the north of Falstone with the final stage ending just before the Ford at Bryness in Redesdale forest. Most cars had undertaken considerable service during the halt, but probably the notable exceptions to this were the Samson Bros. Escort which was running faultlessly and needed little attention. However, Ford now put Makinen on to some experimental near-racing tyres for the afternoon stages!

On the first stage after lunch, which started from Falstone, Bill Taylor's rally finished with an excursion, whilst Alistair Findlay who had been going well, went off three corners from the start of the stage, but was pushed back on to the road by spectators.

Arthur Jasper who had been having a troublesome rally, was climbing steadily up the field, but had been suffering from consistent brake problems.

Stage seven was rough, and with his low profile experimental tyres with a pressure of only 20 psi, Makinen was having considerable difficulty with the car bottoming; but the drama of the rally was to come on the penultimate stage — nine — which started just off the Pennine Way near Rooekedge with a delay of some 15 minutes because of a locked gate – during this time, drivers compared their performances and it was found that Charles Samson had been catching Grierson and was now only four seconds behind. As their results of this Rally would also determine the Scottish Rally Championship with its attendant monetary rewards, there was great pressure on these two drivers for the remaining two stages, however, all was resolved when Grierson's steering joint broke and he left the road for a few vital minutes.

All the attention had been focused on these two Championship contenders, but it was Drew Gallacher who had been quickest throughout the afternoon stages. Alastair Brierley was most unfortunate to go off on a bad left hand corner between the flying finish and the stop lines at the end of the ninth stage. He recorded a time on stage ten, but unfortunately was OTL at the finish. The final stage finishing downhill to the watersplash at Bryness was watched by a large number of spectators including Stuart Turner who was perhaps observing the very quick Scottish drivers in action on the tricky downhill parts of this stage! However, the bad hairpin right saw many near misses. Gordon Armstrong rolled his Escort entering it, but luckily stayed on the road and eventually finished the stage, whilst Alec Cannon broke his transmission three corners from the end also managing to reach the downhill finish of the rally.

The final control was some 200 yards from the end of the last special stage before reaching the main road at Bryness, where refreshments and service were available. Results appeared in the early evening and prizes were given by Mrs Skilton on behalf of the ever-generous sponsors, Lombard North Central.

A particularly warm reception was given to Charles Samson who, at 26 years of age, becomes the new Scottish Rally Champion in his Clarke and Simpson prepared Ford Escort. He has won this Championship in his first year with a truly competitive car and continues the tradition of Scotland's fast-driving farmers!

HENRY LIDDON

1. T. Makinen/H. Liddon, 547m 36s; 2. D. Gallacher/I. Muir, 47m 44s; 3. C. Samson/A. Samson, 48m 4s; 4. M. Wilson/J. Davies, 48m 44s; 5. A. Jasper/B. Crabb, 49m 46s; 6. D. Buckley/R. Smart, 49m 42s.

A weekend of championship deciders

Suddenly almost all the championships have been settled. George Hill and Phil Short have won the Castrol AUTOSPORT championship with an ageing Vauxhall which despite the experiences of others proved generally very reliable and a credit both to George's careful handling of the car and to Martins preparation even though the team never won an event outright.

Castrol/AUTOSPORT

Tony Fowkes has been easily the quickest man in the championship, but he opted to contest the rounds just too late to give himself the one round leeway which was required in the end. He is, however, in an uncatchable second place. Laurie Richards, despite a very changeable season is now in third place although he can be caught as a result of a last round re-shuffle. By contrast to the relative stability in the overall results, in Group one the situation is very much in a state of flux. Paul Appleby's consistent form has taken a bit of a knock lately, but Ian Lawless, despite some good results, has been unable to take full advantage of the situation, all of which leaves him three points adrift with just one round remaining. Neither however are safe from the Avenger driver Chris Field who has an outside chance of winning should there be an upset of form on the Tour of Eppynt. With some steady results throughout recent events, Tim Walton has also moved into a useful fourth place in the Group. Keith O'Dell has secured the G1 co-drivers section just as Dilys Rogers is secure in the Lady co-drivers group.

It now appears that neither the principal lady drivers, Jill Robinson or Jayne Neate, are going to contest the Tour of Eppynt which thus leaves the ultra reliable Jayne with the laurels after a season of runner-up positions to Jill. Last weekend's engine failure on the Cheltenham Festival has thus cost Jill the championship.

BTRDA Gold Star

Meanwhile, a tremendous last-ditch effort from David Stokes has won him the BTRDA championship after a mid-season car and tyre switch appeared to have put him out of contention. It is a win that David certainly deserves and it is to be hoped that both he and Randolph Whittal-Williams will contest the Castrol/AUTOSPORT championship next year. In the same breath one must mention the great efforts of Terry Kaby/Brian Rainbow in their Dunham and Haines supported Mini-Cooper S in winning the *Cars and Car Conversions* championship.

Gaelic/"Scotsman"

All three championships have been almost as close as it is possible but none have been as close as the Gaelic/*The Scotsman* championship which was decided on the penultimate stage of the final round of the championship, the Border, this weekend when the fast improving Samson brothers clinched the title after Murray Grierson had incurred a maximum. From all this tense activity, it is not difficult to see that despite the increasingly prohibitive nature of the sport in terms of cost, the competitive elements are flourishing like never before — this in direct proportion to media interest which, although still lamentably sparce, shows signs of awakening from apathy and lethargy and realising the immense public interest and promotability of the sport.

CASTROL/AUTOSPORT POINTS TO DATE

Castrol SPECIAL STAGE CHAMPIONSHIP 1975 WITH AUTOSPORT

DRIVERS-OVERALL

	MINTEX DALES	TAVERN RALLY	TOUR OF LINCS	WELSH	DONEGAL	ETC STAGES	BURMAH	MARINA HOLS	CASTROL MANX	CASTROL '75	CHELTENHAM FESTIVAL	TOTAL
G. Hill	15	19	19	—	—	16	—	16	12	19	16	132
T. Fowkes	17	—	—	17	—	20	15	18	—	19	—	107
L. Richards	10	1	—	—	—	18	—	20	—	—	18	67
R. James	—	16	16	—	—	14	—	—	—	16	—	62
T. Drummond	12	—	—	9	14	—	11	—	—	10	—	56
A. Dawson	7	—	—	12	—	—	17	—	—	17	—	53
R. Brookes	13	—	—	16	—	—	19	—	—	—	—	48
R. Iliffe	11	—	18	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	14	47
I. Lawless	—	—	11	—	—	9	—	15	—	15	11	43
P. Martin	—	10	13	—	—	—	—	4	—	13	—	40

CO-DRIVERS OVERALL

P. Short	15	19	19	—	—	16	—	16	12	19	16	132
B. Harris	17	—	—	17	—	20	15	18	12	19	16	107
J. Tew	10	1	—	—	—	18	—	20	—	—	18	67
D. Richards	7	—	—	12	—	19	—	—	—	18	—	56
J. Brown	13	—	—	16	—	—	19	—	—	—	—	48
B. Tilley	—	16	—	—	—	14	—	—	—	16	—	46
T. McMahon	11	—	18	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	33
A. Greenwood	18	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	31
K. O'Dell	5	12	4	—	4	6	—	—	—	—	—	31
R. Jones	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13	—	—	13	26

GROUP ONE DRIVERS

P. Appleby	14	15	14	—	12	13	11	—	—	9	—	88
I. Lawless	4	14	11	—	—	15	—	15	—	15	11	85
C. Field	—	10	—	8	—	14	13	10	—	12	15	82
T. Walton	3	12	8	—	—	6	10	10	9	10	13	71
B. Banning	—	—	3	11	—	11	—	7	—	14	5	51

GROUP ONE CO-DRIVERS

K O'Dell	14	15	14	—	12	13	11	—	—	9	—	88
K. Carter	3	12	8	—	—	6	10	—	9	10	13	71
K. Reid	—	10	—	—	—	—	13	10	—	12	15	68
D. Thomas	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14	11	12	47
N. Wilson	—	—	—	15	—	—	6	—	15	—	9	45

LADY DRIVERS

J. Neate	—	—	6	—	—	6	6	6	—	9	9	42
J. Robinson	—	—	9	—	—	9	9	9	—	—	—	36
J. Denton	—	6	4	9	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	25
S. Lawson	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	12

LADY CO-DRIVERS

D. Rogers	—	9	9	—	—	9	9	9	—	—	—	45
V. Guest	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9	9	24
R. Clinton	—	6	—	9	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	21

Another outright win for Cyril Bolton last weekend on the Devil's Own — report appears in "Sports Extra" on page 52.



Criterium is cancelled

Latest news from France is that the Criterium St Amand, the 'mini Tour de France,' held in the northern part of the country along the Belgian border over the first weekend in November has been cancelled following objections made by local residents to the noise which would have resulted from the use of one of the circuits that the organisers had intended. The protest came at a critical time when it was too late for the organisers to get a re-authorisation of a new route, so there was no alternative but to scrub the entire event. Boreham had been planning to enter two tarmac specification cars for this event as part of their pre-RAC testing. The fourth entry which was being held over for Ford has now been cancelled.

Gavin Frew leaves Thomas Motors

Last Monday we heard that Gavin Frew was about to leave Thomas Motors, and in fact he relinquishes his post there as rally team manager and Rallye Sport controller tomorrow (Friday). It would be fair to say that Thomas Motors' rise to prominence in the competition world can be largely attributable to Gavin's efforts over the past three years. From very small beginnings Gavin built up the rally business and through his contacts as chairman of the local motorsport group, and experience gained in his days with Team Surtees, Gavin was able to push Thomas Motors to the top of the Ford RallyeSport tree both in terms of parts sales and in achievement; having won the '74 RAC championship with the talented Billy Coleman. As to the reasons behind his departure, Gavin declined to comment but the departure of their top man must indicate some cut backs in the competition field next year. There are apparently no plans to replace him at present. Despite leaving this week Gavin has been asked to look after the team on the Lombard RAC Rally this November; so far he has not made a decision on this offer.



Gavin Frew — leaves tomorrow.

Last weekend's Tour of Hamsterley was won by north east rally champion Fred Henderson, Toyota Celica. We are led to believe that the rally was a great success . . . .

Audetto to leave Lancia?

It now appears that Danielle Audetto is to give up his post as Lancia team manager and make the trip 'across the road' to Ferrari in the very near future. It seems that after next year's Portuguese Rally, Audetto will be taking on the job at Ferrari currently held by Luca Montezemolo. Audetto, known as the "English speaking telegraph pole" because (unsurprisingly) of his immaculate English and his amazing height, Audetto started rallying with private owners from the San Remo area and has long been a close friend of Amilcare Ballestrieri. He has co-driven for Luigi Taramazzo, Sandro Munari and Ballestrieri in the past and in '73 became Lancia's team manager, a position he has held since. The move raises speculation as to who will replace him and the most likely names would appear to be Silvio Maiga, Piero Sodano or Munari's regular co-driver Mario Mannucci (although it now appears as though the latter will be competing with Munari again this year and not returning to his prosperous Milan Hotel and restaurant business as was mooted some weeks ago. As a calm intelligent organizer Andetto should be a great success at Ferrari — and of course he is bigger than Regazzoni.

Keith O'Dell "comfortable" in hospital

Keith O'Dell, Paul Appleby's co-driver who badly injured his left arm on Saturday during the Cheltenham Festival is a temporary resident of the West Wales Hospital, Carmarthen, and he would be pleased to have a visit from any rally people in the area or any of his many friends. Keith will be in hospital for at least another week. Latest reports from the hospital indicate that he is now quite comfortable.

Dawson's Datsun

Andy Dawson has, at last, decided to contest the RAC in his single-cam Datsun Violet. The decision has been somewhat easier to make owing to the fact that Datsun competition parts are now much easier to get as the RAC approaches. Dawson plans to completely rebuild the car prior to the event incorporating the latest high ratio steering rack. Andy will also be lightening the car and using the latest lightweight fuel tank as well as rebuilding the engine. He is going to be a busy man as the rally approaches for he is also attempting to finish builds on the *Cars and Car Conversions* Avenger and Russell Close's Escort 2 in time for the event.

Perfect timing as Drew makes his return to stages

Drew Gallacher could not have timed his re-appearance on the rally scene much better than his arrival at the Border Rally last weekend. For it was exactly two years ago at the RAC rally that Drew drove his last forest. Last weekend his audience included no lesser men than Stuart Turner and Peter Ashcroft who were in attendance to monitor the experiments being tried on Timo's car; and the Ayrshire farmer managed to get within eight seconds of Timo by the close, having been fourth overall at lunch and starting very slowly. Gallacher has acquired the ex-Paul Gilligan County Garages RS which is fitted with an 1800 Terry Hoyle BDA, and although he described the car as handling "like a bowl of cold porridge" and spent the day in a rather less than jovial mood, things cannot have been *that* bad. It was certainly a spectacular comeback and more events are planned next year.



Another one overcooks it . . . Oliveras' Seat 1430/1800; and at the scene (far right) a consoling Hugh Bishop.

APG back Timo



Allied Polymer Group, the plastics and rubber products company, are to back Timo Makinen in the Lombard RAC Rally. APG, who have recently involved themselves in motor racing sponsorship, are reputed to be spending some £4,000-£4,500 on the one-off venture.

Mini man Kaby set for RAC

Terry Kaby's fourth overall on last weekend's Hercock Simpson ensured the Mini-Cooper 'S' driver of the *Cars and Car Conversions* championship. Kaby also finished third overall in the BTRDA Gold Star series and the London Counties Association of MC's stage championship.

The Hercock Simpson proved to be the highest overall placing this year for the remarkably consistent Kaby and co-driver Brian Rainbow. Other good results included 9th overall on the Uniflo-Gwynedd, South West Stages, and the Arkell. Ten class wins were notched-up.

For the RAC, Terry will be backed by Dunham and Haines and will be driving the Mini, with Bob Freeborough, that was used for the '74 event. Servicing will be in the capable hands of Les Harris and Terry's brother, Ralph.

Giro d' Italia goes to Fiat

The "Giro d'Italia" finished last week and it was won by Fiat resident test driver Giorgio Pianta in a 3.5 litre V6 engined Fiat 131 Mirafiori. Carlo Facetti was leading the event in his Marlboro sponsored Stratos when he was forced to retire on the last stage as the car caught fire. Andruet, in the 420 bhp Alfa Romeo T33 Stradale had the engine fail at Vallelunga after repeated trouble with the induction. Munari in the Alitalia Stratos was fastest at Vallelunga, Mugello, Verano and Casale but lost 10 minutes at a time control, as did team mate Pinto which relegated the pair to 52nd and 54th respectively. Munari subsequently forced his way back up the field into sixth overall by the close. Porsches were second, third and fourth, the former driven by Coggiola in Group four. Best performance from the ladies came from Vernay's Carrera which finished eighth overall. Anna Cambiaghi finished 12th after engine trouble.

Anyone for service?

Bob James' service crew are not looking forward to an idle RAC rally so they are offering their services to any driver or crew who needs an experienced back-up team. They will supply their own tools and vehicle and are capable of handling most makes of car with no problem. The man to get in touch with is Paul Dowlang whose phone numbers are work: 0222 885801, or home: 0222 882776.

● ATS Sterling Remoulds are well pleased with the performance of their sponsored driver, Fred Henderson of Durham, the new AN-ECCC champion. Fred's 5000 miles of rallying (with only two punctures) consumed no less than 104 of their tyres.

●George Beever will be swopping his Escort on the RAC for a Group One Peugeot 304S. The Silkstone Cross Motor Company have entered the car as their first venture into international rallying. Stuart France will be partnering George as usual and Stuart is anxious to contact another prospective Peugeot entrant with a view to forming a team entry. Stuart France can be contacted on: Huddersfield 851051.

Ron Shipp finished third on the Moonraker – report page 49.



Boyd quarry hosts rallycross

Lastweekend's"McCallHomesRallycross" held at the Boyd quarry complex in Ulster was won by George Warren who triumphed above a plethora of drama to take the prize. The event was televised locally and viewers cannot have failed to be given good value as cars repeatedly rolled or caught fire. All competitors were given two runs before the fastest eight overall went into two semi-finals of four cars each and the best two were then to contest a play off which was televised live. John Taylor was fastest overall on the day in the Haynes of Maidstone Escort 2 but thanks to the breaking of the ZF gear selectors he was not able to appear for any final. He did however take the class win.

The final contained Warren, Ronnie White's 1475cc Mini, Gilbert Ritchie's Mini and Robin Kinnear's Escort. Warren led off the line with White close behind. One the last lap White made superhuman attempts to pass George and within sight of the flag he clipped a tyre pile and rolled spectacularly five times, the car catching fire after the first inversion. The Mini was constructed almost entirely of glassfibre with a front mounted petrol tank and what with flames engulfing the front end he was very fortunate to be able to crawl through the rear window which had luckily popped out earlier. White was not wearing fire proof clothing. Larne MC marshalling was to a high standard and help was promptly on hand. The car was a total loss.

The Evans' engine

Derek Evans, who scored some startling results in stage rallies earlier this year has not been having much luck lately owing to the poor performance and reliability given by his RS engine. However, Terry's luck changed on the Cheltenham Festival last weekend when he fitted a 1598cc pushrod unit (Mexico) and finished in 10th place overall despite a broken manifold on the first stage of the event; and a resulting weak mixture all day which eventually resulted in a broken piston. The trouble with the BDA appears to centre around the camshafts which are improperly timed at present, resulting in a chronic lack of low-down torque.

Next year Derek and Terry will naturally be looking for sponsors but they plan to run the car with the Mexico engine until such a time as the BDA is reliable. At present Derek is planning to contest the ShellSport Tour of Dean in January and at least one international.

Willie's Mk2



Willie Crawford — new car.

Willie Crawford's plans for next season include a full scale assault on the Scottish Championship in a Mk 2 Escort whose shell is being prepared at Boreham. (In fact it is the next one to be built after the RAC cars.) Willie will also be fitting a Boreham built 'kit' to the car comprising 5.3 axle and rear disc brakes.

Scottish points

Official confirmation of the positions in the Gaelic Oil/*The Scotsman* rally championship have yet to be confirmed, but provisional award winners are as follows: Charles Samson 79; Murray Grierson 70; Bill Taylor 55; Jim Howdon 52; Dominic Buckley 49; Ian Wilson 41.

The top Challengers are as follows: Alistair Mackay 59; George Porteous 51; Bill Murray 38; Des McNelis 34; David Porter 29; Eddy Mackenzie 28.

Smolej for RAC?

Opel's spare RAC entry has still not been officially confirmed but is still being retained, which raises some speculation about the possible occupier of the slot. It seems conceivable that Walter Smolej will be given an Ascona as a reward for his efforts in the German championship, but his regular co-driver, Willi Pitz is going with Freddy Kottulinsky in the VW Golf GTI.

● In case of any confusion in our wording of an RAC Rally news story (Special Stage Oct 16th), the Opel team will comprise four Kadett GTEs, to be driven by Tony Pond, Walter Rohrl and Rauno Aaltonen with a fourth Kadett for Anders Kullang. Colin Grewer has entered his ex-Pond Ascona.

● Sixty and Worcs MC will be running the Wyvern Stages Rally on the 11th of April next year. The club promises at least 40 miles of good quality stages. The rally will count for both the Welsh Stages championship and the AWMMC Championship.

● A Welsh Road Rally Championship qualifier, the Autumn Rally takes place this weekend, starting from Llanstephen Car Park (159/353105). The Carmarthen MC event is back after a year's absence. Due to route clashes the mileage will be restricted to approximately 130.

● The Longleat stage of theLombard RAC this year is being sponsored by Avon Tyres. The stage will be run in the grounds of Lord Bath's stately home, Longleat House, near Warminster, Wilts on Sunday 23rd November. There are five miles of tarmac and spectator facilities will be available adjacent to Longleat House entering the estate from the Bath Arms at Horningsham.

Who drives the Cowan Polski?

Since Andrew Cowan is not now going to compete on the Polski Fiat Warsaw Rally over the weekend of the 7-9th November, Castrol, who have an association with the Polish manufacturers, have nominated Tony Pond to represent them in one of the cars which the works have reserved for this purpose. However connections at this end fear that it may now be too late to take up the option of the entry as the team manager is away at present and no one appears to know when he is likely to return. Second-in-command Andy Jaroszwicz is not prepared to commit himself to make any decisions in his absence, perhaps the fact that the team manager just happens to be the Prime Minister's son has something to do with it. Cowan is going to Tokyo as a result of his Southern Cross Mitsubishi Colt Lancer win and will presumably be involved in finalizing Colt's plans for the RAC.

Mother of Wales

Due to a clash of area and date, the Bury Automobile Club's major event for 1975 is now to be held on the 6th/7th December, called the Appollo Motor Co Mother of Wales Rally. This is again being held on Anglesey where last year the Club managed to establish good relations with the local populace and, at the same time, put on an event that was much enjoyed by competitors and marshals alike.

This year they are running the event on a restricted permit, there will be at least two selectives and several 'new' whites are promised. The event will start from the Star Motel, Gaerwen, first car away at 11.30 a.m. 90 entries at £6 from Secretary of Meeting: Mr. A. D. Higgins, 26 Hillside Walk, Blackburn, Lancs BB1 2BQ. Marshals will also be required — names please to Mr. C. Mansley, Anat, Cox Green Road, Bromley Cross, Bolton.

Algarve Rally

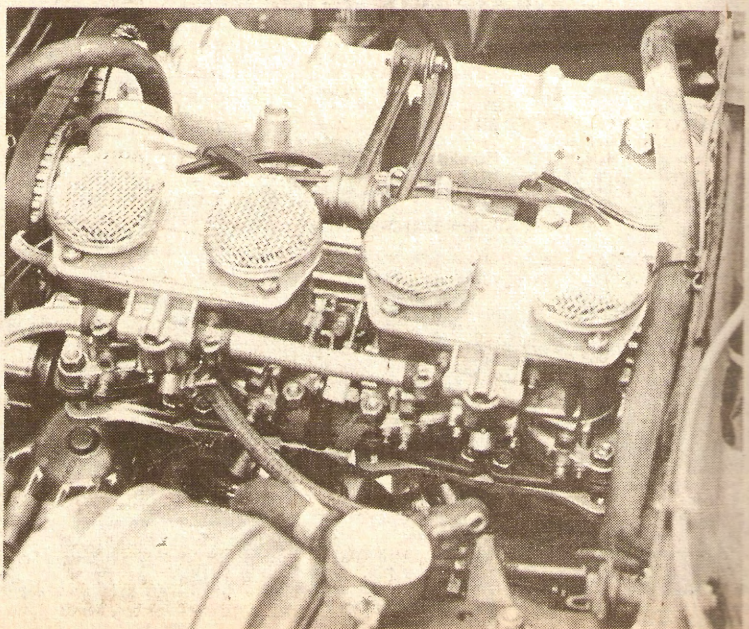
The economic and political situation in Portugal has deterred many competitors, but when the Fifth International Rally of the Algarve gets under way tomorrow (Friday) there should be 47 starters for the 800 kilometre route. However, with customarily good prize money from the richly sponsored event, the competition should prove fierce.

Top seed is Antonio Borges with his Porsche Carrera followed by Mario Figueiredo at two with his much-used Datsun 240Z. The Italian Ormezzano is at three in a Lancia with the German pair Werner Schweizer/Ostmann, who won the Group One Category on the Sherry in September, having again made the long trek south in their Opel Ascona. Other interesting entries include Mario Silva in a 911T Porsche and Carlos Torres in a Mazda. The only British entries are the two Team Robert Moss cars for Richard Wooldridge and Duncan Spence and for John Jago with Mick Hogan.

The start is from a Casino at Alvar, the halfway stop at the Monte Gardo Casino with the finish and the computerised results service based at the Vila Moura Casino. Most crews have made reccies of the route and found many of the 18 special stages dramatically rough. With the tight road schedule on Monday and virtually no time for servicing the number of finishers looks unlikely to exceed a dozen.

● Experienced co-driver Nigel Mills is looking for a regular ride next year. Nigel, of the Dursley MC, has had all kinds of experience within the sport including acting as Chief Marshall on stage/road events as well as more recently sitting with David Stokes, and latterly Paul "Bigfoot" Martin. Martin and Mills got on well together on the Castrol '75 and the Cheltenham Festival but it now appears as though Paul may not be able to continue his rallying as finance is scarce, and the Twin Cam badly needs some money spent on it to retain its competitive edge. Nigel can be contacted on Wotton-under-Edge 2140 in the evenings.

Just homologated in time for the Spanish Rally is the 16-valve Fiat engine in the Seat 1430/1800 saloon.





Just testing the driveshafts – Terry Kaby enjoyed a trouble-free run to a commendable fourth place and the Cars and Car Conversions *crown.*

HERCOCK-SIMPSON

After the goldrush...

With the Hercock Simpson Rally being the last round of the BTRDA Gold Star and the *Cars & Car Conversions* Rally Championships plenty of action was promised by the leading contenders. The results of both championships were to be decided on the outcome of the Soar Valley Motor Club's rally.

The full house entry of 120 cars assembled in the Victoria Park, Leicester, after scrutineering had been completed at the nearby Hercock-Simpson garage complex.

Most of the championship contenders were engaged in light-hearted attempts to out-psyche one another, David Stokes has obviously been taking lessons from Gordon Batchelor in this art.

Leading the field away from the 11.30 start were Randolph Whittal-Williams/Andy Butt in the Crickhowell Caravans Escort RS, they were full of hopes of winning both championships. At number two were David Stokes/Bill Andrews in "REV 120K", David has now got used to his new mount and promised a "do or die" attempt to clinch the BTRDA title.

Paul and Ted Bamford made a rare appearance with their Magard/Campagnolo Escort to start at three, while at four were the leading *Triple 'C'* contenders Terry Kaby/Brian Rainbow in the Dunham and Haines Mini. Robin Farrington made the long trip down from Southport to start at five in his now rather tired ex-Pond Escort RS. The incredible Langrop Fiat 124ST of Robin Langford started at seven; Robin was suffering from laringytis and looked really under the weather. Chris Daisy travelled up from Kent with his Rootes of Maidstone Avenger to start at nine, while rounding off the top ten was Richard Walker in his Escort RS1600. Other notable crews were Tony Ford in his ex-works RS at 17 with none other than Malcolm Smith co-driving. Rumour has it that Malcolm has acquired an ex-works rolling shell (000 97 M) to use next year.

Jon Lloyd was at 19 in his Imp, Mick Brown with his V6 Escort was at 20 and Willhire Van Rental man, Dave Wallis was at 23.

With a 15 mile run-out to the first stage, the action soon got under way, with a 1½ miler at Husbands Bosworth. Robin Farrington was soon into the groove, taking fastest from Whittal-Williams and Stokes. Special Stage two was at Wilbarston, with a three mile thrash round the airfield. This was definitely a power stage with Whittal-Williams fastest, followed closely by Farrington and Stokes. Dick Lust had troubles here when a hose came adrift on his Imp, losing him considerable time.

The very rough quarry at Cottingham was used for the third stage. Jon Lloyd lost his clutch powering away from the start line, while Colin Barrell was another in clutch trouble, knocking the pipe off the slave cylinder. Richard Walker in his Escort got a "flyer" here, dropping 15 seconds, while Stokes, Kaby and Farrington were next quickest all on 41 seconds over the one mile stage.

The first forest stage followed, this being the one miler in Harrys Park Wood, strangely this was run south to north so eliminating that downhill lefthander that caught out so many crews last year. Stokes put up the fastest time here, putting the power from his BDA to good use on the long straight.

Wakerley Forest followed and it was here that Farrington's rally came to an end with a blown head gasket. Stokes was again quickest from Whittal-Williams and Wallis.

The real dramas started at the next stage, Fineshade I. About half a mile into this narrow, slippery forest was a downhill, adverse cambered righthander with a large tree on the offside of the bend. Whittal-Williams hit the tree amidships, resulting in a badly bent shell and back axle. Several other crews including Stokes and Robin Langford savaged the tree before Manson/O'Brien in a Firenza hit it really hard and blocked the track. It took 20 minutes to clear the stage and all following cars were warned of the danger.

Tony Ford was quickest on this stage, with Stokes second and Peter Bryant third fastest. Ford again made fastest time on stage seven. Fineshade 2, showing that he is fast becoming the man to watch; however Malcolm Smith was calling for more use of the handbrake, threatening Tony that if he didn't use it, Malcolm would!

After the forests the rally moved eastwards to the quarry at Bedford Purlieus where Bryant was quickest from Stokes and Kaby. The perimeter track of Wittering Airfield provided the next stage where many crews cleared this 2½ mile blind, including Stokes who put "REV" well off on a left hander in the process.

A short one mile farm track followed before the cars made their way to Ketton Quarry for two stages there. Both stages were a bit pointless and not in keeping with the event, the second one was scrubbed from the results when a novice inverted his Escort and broke his arm. Many crews spent their two hour rest halt re-fettling their cars at the Ketton service area before going to the halfway at nearby Morcott.

The first stage after the restart was Jacobs Ladder, the one mile farm track used earlier. Stokes and Ford were quickest 10 secs over bogey with Kaby on 15. A second visit to the Quarry at Bedford Purlieus followed where Kaby hand-braked his way round to take fastest from Stokes and Walker. Stage 15 was cancelled so it was back to the forests, this time to be run in darkness. Wakerley 2 came first where Stokes and Ford were again fastest, both on 'four over', with Kaby and Walker next up seconds further back. An interesting note here was that Stokes, Ford and Kaby were quicker in the dark than they were earlier in the daylight.

A caution board was put up before "that tree" in Fineshade 3 for the second run; Ford again putting up the quickest time from Stokes and Kaby. The last Fineshade stage, SS18, was another Ford benefit with Stokes, Kaby and Mick Brown close behind. All that remained was a return visit to Wilbarston Airfield, where it was very difficult picking out the arrows in the uncanny blackness of the runways.

Sleath and Jeffery were caught out here, inverting their previously immaculate Team Davies Datsun 240Z. Once again Stokes and Ford tried for equal fastest with Smith in the Pierstune Capri 3000 third fastest.

There followed a two mile run to the finish at the Hunting Lodge, Cottingham, where food and drink were available, with a bar extension to 2.00 am. The results were made final at 11 pm showing David Stokes/Bill Andrews the winners from Tony Ford/Malcolm Smith by a margin of eight seconds. In third place were Dave Walker/Simon Cross with Terry Kaby/Brian Rainbow bringing their Mini into fourth place. The awards were presented at 11.30 pm, so there was ample time for celebrations afterwards. David Stokes/Bill Andrews were proclaimed provisional winners of the 1975 BTRDA Gold Star Championship, with Randolph Whittal-Williams second and Terry Kaby third.

Terry Kaby/Brian Rainbow in the Dunham and Haines Mini were proclaimed provisional winners of the 1975 *Cars and Car Conversions* Rally Championship, with Randolph Whittal-Williams second and Robin Langford third overall.

The Hercock Simpson had turned out to be a success, well organised, and with a popular format of day and night stages. If only those quarries could be omitted and Hexton Park and Fermyn Woods brought back in next year, it could be a first class event.

BRIAN RAINBOW

1, D. Stokes/B. Andrews (Escort RS) 424 penalties; 2, T. Ford/M. Smith (Escort RS) 432; 3, D. Walker/S. Cross (Escort RS) 480; 4, T. Kaby/B. Rainbow (Cooper S) 498; 5, D. Wallis/M. Chadwick (Escort RS) 514; 6, M. Brown/A. Norwood (Escort V6) 550; 7, G. Lockwood/R.Amor (Escort TC) 559; 8, C. Daisy/R. Bateman (Avenger) 564; 9, R. Whittal-Williams/A. Butt (Escort RS) 574; 10, P. Bryant/C. Wilson (Imp) 583.

It all came good for David Stokes and "REV" – first place and the BTRDA championship.



Mini challenge details

Eighteen races per class, substantial cash prizes and a new Mini 1275 GT as first prize at the end of it all — that's the programme for the Great Leyland challenge, Leyland's Mini series involving the new 1275 GT Formula, Mini 1000 (nee Miglia) and 850 (nee Seven).

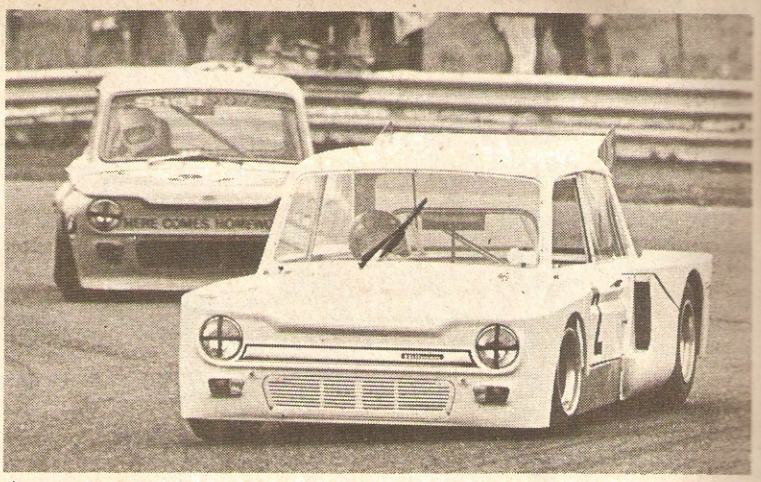
These details were announced last week when Leyland announced their competition plans for the 1976 season. The new series will have eighteen races per formula, of which the best 13 will count for the 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 2, 2 . . . scoring system. The programme will include races at Silverstone, Snetterton, Thruxton, Mallory Park, Castle Combe, Brands Hatch, Croft, Cadwell Park, Lydden, Rufforth, Llandow and Oulton Park; in fact nearly every English and Welsh racing circuit apart from Aintree and Longridge.

Each formula will have its own end of season class award; the Bob Fox trophy for 850, the Peter Collins for Mini 1000 and a new Leyland Cars Trophy for Mini 1275 GT. The first four challengers to take the chequered flag in each class will receive trophies and the winner a £25 parts voucher for Leyland ST goods.

Challengers in the 1000 and 1275 GT classes will also receive generous cash awards covering the first 10 finishers, but at the conclusion of the challenge, the top 10 points scorers in all three classes will receive big cash awards in addition to a trophy.

While the regs for the 1000 and 850 classes remain pretty much as before, the 1275 GT class has a new set of regulations of course. Although all regs will be set out in a specially printed booklet, the new 1275 GT regs show that production wheels and tyres must be fitted and a certain amount of polishing, lightening and balancing may be done to the engine. A single Weber DCOE carburettor may be fitted and any A series flywheel, excluding the ultra light version, fitted. The regs aim to keep the cars looking outwardly unmodified.

Reception to the new Formula is apparently good, according to the Mini Seven Club's Lorrie Lassman, who of course has been administering the Mini Seven and Miglia formulae and continue to do the same to the new formulae. Already several established names such as Neil Dineen, Mick Osborne etc are considering returning to their Mini mounts, and both Lassman and Leyland are keen to have Leyland dealers involved in both sponsorship of individual races and cars, and the reaction has been very good, states Lassman.



A comparison in Imps: Jonathan Buncombe's Chevron/Imp is followed by John Homewood's more conventional machine.

Dual purpose Superloon

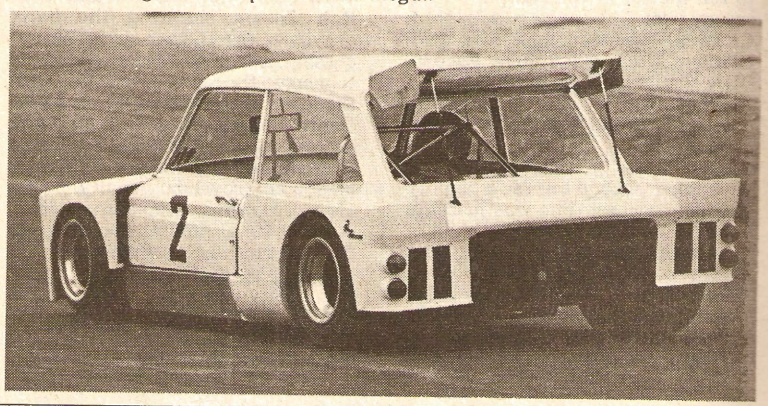
Despite the demise of Super Saloons, they still appear. The latest, which made its appearance at Thruxton on Sunday, was an interesting new Chevron-based Hillman Imp.

John Wadsworth is the man responsible for building the car from a Chevron B 19 in which he has sprinted. However, with Jonathan Buncombe, he built up an Imp body, left in the 2.0 FVD engine, and with the help of ten "pins", fitted the new body onto the Chevron. The change takes place back to a Chevron just as easily.

After an excellent session in practice, despite 1000 kilometer hard compound tyres, Buncombe ran into trouble with the scrutineers who didn't like the seating position, nor the rear wing which sprouted from the roof line rather like a conventional Imp rear window, so the car wasn't eligible for championship points, but he was allowed to race. They also didn't like the lack of roll bar, although there was a conventional Chevron roll over bar, but none round the confines of the Imp shell.

But it was certainly a 'loon to be reckoned with, practising just a couple of seconds slower than Gerry Marshall's Firenza. Reaction from other drivers was "great to see it," or "wish I'd done it myself," so the interest is still there.

That rear wing on the Imp – deemed illegal.



Olds rolls out of it

A crowd of over 3,000 people turned up for the final round of the Journal/ANECCC Autocross Championship at Hagg House Farm, Ellington, near Morpeth, last Sunday, to see John Lindores emphasise his superiority in this year's championship by collecting another BTD in his BDA Escort.

Sixty-odd contenders for honours turned out on a new 1000yds course at the Hubb Hire sponsored event run by Tynemouth & District MC and the crowd saw two spectacular rolls during the three runs over three laps.

In the first, the luckless Trevor Olds suffered a broken constant velocity joint and comprehensively rolled his big engined Mini into a lump of scrap being severely shaken up in the process while later on Alan Strong wrote off his Firenza on his first run.

Olds' misfortunes robbed him of a possible runner-up spot in the series to Lindores, this honour going to the consistent Dominic Buckley in his Escort.

In his incredibly reliable Escort, Buckley arrived at the event having finished sixth on the previous day's Border Rally and proceeded to pip his arch rival Les Eagleton by two tenths to take the class. This is at least the second time Buckley had done this in recent months and speaks volumes for the reliability of man and ma chine.

Earlier in the day Olds pitted a newly acquired ex-Richard Longman circuit Mini against Geoff Manners in the small Mini class but was beaten by three seconds, while Peter Muirhead caused a major upset by toppling Harry Horne by four tenths in their battle in Class 2.

BTD: J. Lindores (Escort), 2m 10.8s.
Class winners: G. Manners (Mini), 2m 22.4s; P. Muirhead (Special), 2m 17.0s; H. Currell (Anglia), 2m 28.6s; R. Phillipson (Anglia), 2m 20.4s; R. Stockle (Cooper S), 2m 33.0s; D. Buckley (Escort), 2m 16.2s.

Kitching out of a hat trick

Although the clerk of the course had to survive a major panic less than six hours before the start when road subsidence caused a re-routing of four miles, last Saturday's North Humberside MC Parish's Moonraker Rally went down well and lived up to its reputation. Peter Kitching and John Wylie, hoping to make it a hat trick, had to give best to Dennis Pelling and Adrian Dixon in their Escort who won by 23 marks.

Using a format of five selectives in the first half and then getting the navigators to earn their corn with 60TCs in the latter stages, Pelling and Dixon piled on the pressure from the start and held an advantage of about half a minute after the quintet. Kitching and Wylie (Avenger) and Ron Shipp who had Alan Hill in the Magnum, cleaned the first three selectives along with Pelling and they finished the event in that order with Shipp/Hill 18 marks down on the runners-up.

Ascona owners Ken Murray and Peter Smith had a rare old tussle for fourth place, Murray claiming the position by only four marks with navigator W. Kilpatrick, while Smith had Dave Langdon alongside. The Escort of K. Goodall and C. Edwards finished sixth on 383 marks.

Firework spectacular

Santa Pod hold their tremendous Firework spectacular meeting this weekend at the Bedfordshire track. This is the meeting where night runs are held, the only night runs to be held in Europe and a remarkable sight it makes. Dragsters, funny cars, motorcycles — they'll all be there, with runs commencing at 3 pm on Saturday, through to eight in the evening followed by fireworks. On Sunday, racing starts at 10 am through to 6 pm, with the finals run in the last hour in the dark.

● Lack of entries caused last weekend's BARC Sprint at Greenham Common to be cancelled.

Good loan

With his own car out of action, Rob Turnbull borrowed the smaller of David Render's Brabhams at last Sunday's Peterborough MC sprint at RAF Duxford near Cambridge and promptly walked off with BTD. His winning time of 40.92s was almost five seconds quicker than Render, who, with a wider car, clobbered markers on two of his three runs. Render just got second BTD with 45.55s, a fraction ahead of Bob Glass in his Lotus 7.

Best of the seven class battles was between the two three litre Capris of John Gray and Peter Jones who were only separated by 0.008s.

BTD: R. Turnbull (Brabham BT29), 40.92s.
Class winners: K. Holyome (Mini), 56.86s; B Wood (BMW), 52.21s; J. Gray (3.0 Capri) 52.07s; P. May (Cooper), 47.07s; B. Glass (Lotus 7), 45.84s; A. Bishop (Davrian), 46.63s; D Render (Brabham BT35), 45.55s. **Ladies:** Miss C Stevenson (Sprite), 57.51s.



Reg Mullenger lifts a wheel in his Escort on his way to BTD, but he rolled later.

Mullenger beats aces...

Frustration was the name of the game at Snetterton on Sunday; for the drivers who saw their chances of a good time ruined by a Red flag for someone else's accident, for the organising clubs who saw all their efforts in the close season to improve the facilities thwarted by a small section of track, for the spectators who had to suffer the long gaps in the proceedings on a grey and miserable afternoon — frustrating, it should have been Rallycross!

Without a backer Sporting CC of Norfolk and West Suffolk MC self-funded this first of their Winter Rallycross offerings at Snetterton and were rewarded by an entry of sixty or so and a reasonable crowd. The last minute withdrawal of several top "names" (Hugh Wheldon and Dave Fuell to name but two) left the contest for BTD wide open but, surprising all but the local Rally fans, Reg Mullenger took his Escort-BDA into first spot with his first run, only to roll the car at the Hairpin on his second heat. The spectacular Nobby Creswell, like Mullenger in a Roy Gladwin prepared 2 litre Escort-BDA, should have given Mullenger a run both for BTD and for the Rally car class win but was never in real contention.

Stan Rolfe (Cooper S) would have taken second but for a penalty and his next best time was just 0.1s behind Chris Gamble who had a somewhat torrid time with his ex-Dave Palmby Escort. Nick Garner in the Solihull Motors/Team Castrol 870 Mini set such a pace on his first run that it mattered nought that he pulled off early on his second. Elaine Seymour's 850 Mini was just pipped by Steve French's 1 litre car for second in class after one of the best races of the day, the lady had been involved in an even closer dice in her first race until tangling with Phil Clark's Mini at the left flick.

Dave Baskerville in the sole Airey Mini present looked a good bet for fastest time after his 3m 10s practice. His first race was tremendous, for 2½ laps he was just ahead of the three Escorts of Ian Turner, Bob Merridale and Graham Hathaway but his bid ended as the race was stopped following Dave Stone's Mini inverting exiting the pit. In his re-run he almost stopped after a high yump at the same point and was almost caught but recorded a 3m 08.2s which was enough for the class and third fastest overall. Baskerville, Merridale, Hathaway and John Saunders (Mini) were again drawn together in the second runs and again produced a fantastic race. With many non-starters and with Rob Gibson shunting the bank heavily at the Hairpin while beetle-chasing, it was left for Peter Harrold to mop up the over 1400cc class with the Autocavan entered 2.1 litre VW. Denis Pettitt (Escort T/C) took second in class after Mike Smith (1500 Mini) was relegated to third after a controversial penalty. Smith suffered more than most from stopped runs, finally recording his first full time in his fourth race.

BTD: Reg Mullenger (2.0 Ford Escort-BDA), 3m 07.5s.

Class winners: Mullenger; Nick Garner (870 Austin Mini), 3m 15.0s; Dave Baskerville (1.4 Airey Mini), 3m 08.2s; Peter Harrold (2.1 VW), 3m 08.5s.

...but there are problems

Another chapter in the continuing saga of Snetterton's Rallycross circuit took place on Sunday when it was decided to call a halt to the racing after the second runs after three cars had already rolled at the corner after the fast swoop through the Gravel Pit. Although the corner concerned was surfaced with chalk during the recent circuit revisions, it comes so close to the uphill approach that most drivers were setting up their cars well before the corner and a large rut soon appeared in the very loose, sandy hill.

After Dave Stone and Pete Hemmings rolled their Minis in quick succession the course was slightly modified with the agreement of all parties concerned. Henry Stillwell became the third victim with a very nasty series of rolls and with the RAC Steward already far from happy with this part of the circuit, the Clerks of the Course from SCCON and West Suffolk MC called a halt at the completion of these heats.

It is understood that a very serious Steward's report is going to the RAC regarding the circuit and it seems therefore that unless further infilling is undertaken, then Rallycross may be in jeopardy at the Norfolk circuit.

In view of the vast improvement over the old circuit that the latest one gives, both for competitors and spectators, it is hoped that all the parties concerned can finalise any changes before the next event planned for November 23. Certainly a little earlier than the course modification suggested to the circuit by the RAC after the TEAC September meeting which gave all of two days notice!

Lotus 7 in, but out

As we said last week, the Lotus 7 is officially in modsports racing for 1976, but as we suggested as well, the two major clubs, the BRSCC and the BARC are unlikely to allow it in their major championships. Their regulations will read that the championships are for Modsports cars as per the RAC's Blue Book, excluding the Lotus 7.

The situation as it stands now is that the BARC are to discuss the matter with their race committee very shortly, but the BRSCC have already taken the decision to exclude the Lotus 7 from their recently announced championship.

The rocky road of the Lotus 7 began late last year when the 1975 Blue Book went to press without the entry showing the Lotus 7 to be eligible. However, the Lotus was deemed eligible and thus, according to the distributors and builder, Caterham Car Sales, should be allowed to race. It was then decided to allow the car to race, providing fellow competitors agreed. At the RAC open day on Modsports in August, the Lotus 7 was generally agreed upon as being allowed next year, but mounting opposition since then has seen the car out of the races, and both the BARC and the BRSCC have been deluged with letters demanding its exclusion.

Now Caterham Car's Graham Nearn feels that this opposition is unfounded. Some competitors feel, it seems that Lotus will appear with 1.1 engines and blow off the modsports Spridgets but Nearn was swift to discount this. He had a meeting with Neil Eason-Gibson and Dean Delamont of the RAC, Peter King, Ian Clark and Jon Fletcher who race modsports. Sid Offord of the BARC and his driver Dave Bettinson, and they all came out with a clear view of the situation, but it has been since then that the opposition has mounted.

Now Nearn is adamant. "There's no way that I'm going to take no for an answer," he said this week. "I'm not going to be pushed around by a load of militants. It should have been allowed in this year. It's a British sports car and it should be allowed to run on British race tracks."

Meanwhile Peter Browning of the BRSCC has come up with a suggestion that with sufficient support, the Seven should be channelled back into Clubmans whence it came. "We'd be delighted to see seven or nine of them at the back of a B sport grid," he said this week. However, the saga continues.



Jock Robertson — two titles.

Jock's double

After last year's clean sweep by the Chrysler Avengers in the production saloon car series — including the RAC Touring car championship — it seems that this year is that of the Mazda, with Jock Robertson being the prime mover.

On Sunday, Robertson took the Britax series, having already tied up the Radio One championship, and this despite being in one of the most competitive classes in production saloon car racing.

Jock had considerable problems just before practice, for despite having fitted a new gearbox to the Mazda during the week, it got him as far as the scrutineering bay. But changing the box took Robertson a mere 20 minutes and he proceeded to walk away with the class win, which meant that Phil Dowset had to be content with second in the championship.

Britax Production saloon car championship, final positions: Over £2300: 1, John Brindley, 30; 2, Derrick Brunt, 24; 3, Brian Rice, 6. **£1700 to £2299:** 1, Phil Dowsett, 44; 2, Gerry Marshall, 23; 3, Marc Smith, 21. **£1300 to £1699:** 1, Jock Roberston, 48; 2, Tony Lanfranchi, 16; 3, Bill Sydenham, 15. **Up to £1300:** 1, Tony Stubbs, 40; 2, Neville Knight, 26; 3, Simon Kirkby, 22.

Quick prizes

With commendable efficiency the organisers of the Journal/ANECCC Autocross Championship, held their prize presentation at the Hadrian MC headquarters last night (Wednesday), although the last round of the series was only three days previous.

John Lindores collected the overall trophy with 65pts, Dominic Buckley was second on 57pts, Trevor Olds third on 55 and fourth equal were Geoff Manners and Les Eagleton on 49pts with Harry Horne sixth on 48pts. Class winners were Manners, Olds, Currell, Lindores, Malcolm McConnachie and Buckley.

Carribean team

Bob Howlings, the Cheshire driver who races rarely these days, has flown out to take part in the Carribean series with Team Speedbird British Airways.

He will drive the lightweight Lotus Elan of Cheshire Sports Motors, Congleton, of which he is a director, and has sent it there on a one-way ticket as he is likely to sell the car at the end of the series as he did last year with the Brabham BT21 with which he swept the board.

Bob has taken as his mechanic Manchester saloon-car racer Stuart Turner, and will be presenting a trophy to Guyana Motor Club in appreciation of its kindness to British competitors.

Also in Team Speedbird are Derek McMahon and Alec Poole with a Ford Escort RS2000, and Scottish lady racer Jennifer Birrell.

Thoroughbred rift

It seems that the association between Oldham and Crowther and Forward Enterprises, the main driving forces in the Thoroughbred Sports car series, is over. Oldham and Crowther issued this statement at the beginning of the week.

"On October 25 we had a discussion with a director of Forward Enterprises concerning a new rule instigated by him for the 1976 Thoroughbred championship. For various reasons we considered a change in rules at this late stage to be unfair to competitors who had already commenced preparation of their cars in accordance with rules announced in September. The director did not agree with us and we therefore regretfully withdrew our sponsorship. We do not feel that we can sponsor a championship whose rules appear to be dictated by one person, especially when that person is also a competitor. Under no circumstances would we have withdrawn our support if there had been a suggestion that rule changes would be democratically made."

To clarify this, in September a bulletin was issued saying that there would be NO CHANGES (their capitals) other than fibreglass panels and L section tyres which competitors knew about anyway. Last Friday, however, Anthony Hutton of Forward Enterprises phoned O and C saying that all internal panels must be original (formerly free) and of course, many competitors concerned have thrown these parts away.

Thus, Oldham and Crowther feel many competitors would be involved in costly fabricating jobs, probably more so those who can least afford it. Thus they objected to having the rules dictated by John Harper of Forward, and have duly withdrawn their support.

However, Oldham and Crowther may be involved in another championship next year, but they are eager to prevent competitors from gaining the impression that they are abandoning the Thoroughbred field.

Reg: in and out of the money

Reg Mullenger's prize money for setting BTD and winning the Rally Car class at Snetterton on Sunday was some recompense for bending the Castle Street Garage (Thetford) entered Escort with a roll at the Hairpin in his second race. At least he had the satisfaction of being the first Rally Car to win a Rallycross meeting since the days of Timo Makinen and Ove Andersson at the famous snowy meeting at Cadwell Park in 1968. In fact this was the first Rallycross event for the well known East Anglian Stage Rally and Autocross driver. His sideways style warmed the crowd, particularly his use of every possible inch of tarmac at the Hairpin until he overdid it "watching for B - - - - y Nobby" his arch-rival Cresswell, and slid the Escort onto it's roof.

Harrison's varied treble

What a weekend for constructor Ken Harrison. In two very different sports, Harrison gained three victories at the weekend. In the trialling world, Gordon Jackson took his Harrison constructed prototype Ibex to a win on the BTRDA sporting trial in Yorkshire, and John Hopkins took his production Ibex to a similar win at the 750 trial at Cheltenham. Meanwhile, down at Thruxton, Peter Cooke was the easy winner of the clubman's round for the Richardson Trophy, so it was a good day for the Kent constructor.

Westley's title

With a total of 77pts Terry Westley, the VW driver from Walsall, has won the ANWCC Autocross championship. He clinched the title last weekend at the Lancs and Cheshire meeting.

Second is Dave Ridgeway in his DHW Special with 75pts and Mike Spray (Cortina) is third with 72pts. Other class winners are Graham Harper (Honda Civic), 71 pts; David Baines (Escort), 58pts; John Clarkson (Escort), 60pts; Derek Chadwick (Mini), 57pts. The Ladies award goes to Miss Muriel Banks (Cooper), with 61pts.

DTV/Castrol on the road

Dealer Team Vauxhall and Castrol launched their road show last week with the first showing of an excellent new film called "Winning ain't easy." The film, covers Clive Skilton's efforts at a drag meeting at Wroughton, Gerry Marshall with Baby Bertha at Oulton Park, and the DTV rally team on the Manx.

On the road show's programme of 14 venues from the Isle of Wight to Scotland, there will also be accompanying cars, including a rally Frienza and various Vauxhall products involved in competition. After the film has been shown, there will be "specialist spots" from DTV's Chris Coburn, Castrol's Ian Parry and Dunlop's John Horton. After an audience quiz, there's a forum with the above mentioned plus possibly Gerry Marshall and Will Sparrow, followed by another film from Castrol. The whole show is chaired by fun loving John Foden.

Higgins loses a mere 4

Although he was only joint second at lunch, Peter Higgins drove faultlessly for the rest of the day to win last Sunday's Salisbury and Shaftesbury MC round of the BTRDA PCT championship at Mere near Warminster. Higgins in his Mexico collected his second BTRDA silver spoon by finishing the event with only four marks lost on the thirty-six hills.

Barry Score got within three marks of Geoff Spencer in the hotly contested Mini class having a much better afternoon than the champion. Among the production saloons, Charles Barter was in fine form with his Ford Popular equalling Higgins and Martin Ellis (Popular) at lunch. Barter subsequently lost one further mark to finish second overall while Mike Stephens, who led in his Mexico at lunch with only two marks lost understeered into a six marker on the second round and that was that.

Mike Harrison scored an easy sports car class win in his Midget on 25 marks with Jim Loveday making an infrequent appearance in another Midget to finish a long way behind. Malcolm Brown was excluded from the results after a stewards enquiry following a protest from Harrison about the gear ratios in his Sprite. Brown declined to have his car rescrutineered.

The small Imp class was closely fought but Mike Hinde emerged the winner by one mark over Bob Carr who cleaned everything in the afternoon and Colin Taylor was an excellent third only two marks down.

Geoff Spencer – BTRDA champion



Overall: P. Higgins (Mexico), 4 marks lost.
Class winners: G. Spencer (Cooper), 27; C. Barter (Ford Popular), 5; M. Harrison (Midget), 25; M. Hinde (Imp), 8; B. Cotterell (Imp), 27.

Ensign and Lyncar battle

The first of the season closing sprint meetings at Silverstone last Saturday attracted over 130 competitors to the Coventry & Warkwickshire meeting on the club circuit. Both runs consisted of a two lap dash and at the end of the day David Morris from Wales emerged a narrow overall winner with his Ensign F2.

He had a consistent day's motoring getting down to 2m 0.4s on his final run to oust Michael Endean's Lyncar from top spot with 2m 1.2s.

The two biggest classes, each with 21 entries, went to Ron Collings in his 2.8 Porsche Carrera by four seconds while Endean headed the over 1300 cc single seater class very comfortably from Robert Glass in his March 702. One of the fastest and neatest drives of the day came from Malcolm Beer in his Midget who took the modsports to 1600cc class in 2m 17.8s and some indiciation of his performance is gauged by the fact that Alan Wood's Elan was only four tenths quicker in the bigger capacity class.

There was an unusual mixture in Class 10 where special GTs, sports racers were mixed with single seaters to 1300cc but Barry Pusey brought his Brabham along with a 1 litre engine to wipe up the class by nine seconds.

BTD: D. Morris (Ensign F2), 2m 0.4s.
Class winners: C. Matthews (Imp), 2m 49.2s; R. O'Brian (Cooper), 2m 52.6s; C. Hewardine (Mustang), 2m 29.4s; R. Collings (Porsche Carrera), 2m 27.8s; C. Rogers (Mini), 2m 29 0s; D. Carvell (Cooper), 2m 22.4s; W. Horton (Firenza), 2m 18.8s; M. Beer (Midget), 2m 17.8s; A. Wood (Elan), 2m 17.4s; B. Pusey (Brabham) 2m 26 0s; M. Endean (Lyncar), 2m 1.2s. **Ladies:** Mrs J. Cox (Cooper), 2m 32.8s. **Best Coventry & Warkwickshire:** M. Trye (Elan), 2m 21.8s.

Lees: just one to go

By completing the second leg of his prospected treble, Geoff Lees earned himself a unique piece of sculpture from BAF. The trophy measures some 15 in high and weighs 12 lb Eastwood near Southend. The sculpture in aluminium, is a hawk-like structure.

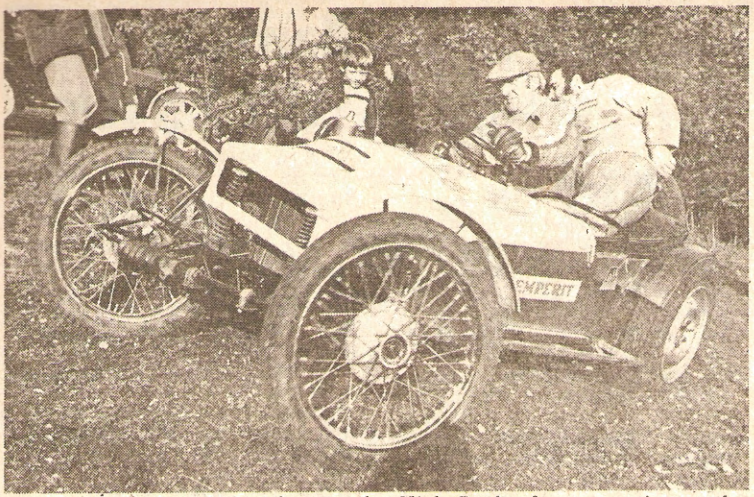
BAF prize winners also have the pleasure of their generous holidays which have been arranged through BAF boss Mike Keegan. Geoff Lees gets a week's holiday for two in Lucerne as well as a £200 cheque and his trophy, Rick Morris received £150 and a holiday in Rotterdam for four days, which he said might become his honeymoon, and third placed Jim Walsh received £100 and a three day holiday for two in Ostend.

Lydden's TV International

Bjorn Waldegard, Lars Nystrom, Guy Deladriere, Per Engseth and Rolf Nilsson — just some of the foreigners who are coming over to Lydden this weekend to compete in the Embassy International rallycross and for the two day meeting, they'll be up against the best in British rallycrossing: John Taylor, Rod Chapman, Hugh Wheldon, Tom Airey, John Smith, Mick Bird, Keith Ripp . . . the names go on and on.

The two day meeting at Lydden starts at 9 am on Saturday when the sixty drivers of whom thirty are qualified to run already, will practice. During this session a further 18 will qualify and they'll run in the runs on Saturday which will be televised by BBC Television Grandstand. They'll be racing for a £900 prize fund with the winner collecting £200. The timed runs start at noon on Saturday.

The leading 36 competitors from Saturday will run from 12.30 pm Sunday for the same prize fund, and this too will be televised for screening on the following Saturday. A special Scottish rallycross team will be competing in the event comprising Bill Crawford, a stock car champion and the Knockhill circuit manager, Donald Heggie, the rally man, Dave Stewart from Perth and Robin Kinnear, the latter three in Escorts with Crawford in a Vauxhall Viva. Of these, Heggie and Stewart have to qualify.



Gordon Jackson took his Ibex to the High Peaks for a practice at the championship venue, and came away the winner.

Jackson catches two

Any one of four drivers could have won last Sunday's High Peaks Sporting Trial run by Sheffield and Hallamshire MC near Sheffield, but a combination of errors by most at one stage or another finally produced another win for Gordon Jackson in his Ibex. So close were the top quartet that only four marks separated them at the end of a thoroughly enjoyable event — from their point of view — though the event for the rest of the majority of the 31 entries was tough and some very high totals emerged.

Using the same land as will be used for the national final later in the year, 12 sections were tackled four times. In the initial stages Kincraft man Tony Harrison took the lead on 11, from Laurie Brown (Aberties) on 15, Jackson was third on 19 and Jack Pearce was fourth on 20 with his Kincraft. Brown had far and away the best second round dropping nine marks to lead on 23 marks as lunch was taken, a lead he shared with Julian Fack (Impunity), who unfortunately retired from the fray midway through the third round when the rose joint on the A frame broke.

The see-saw continued after lunch with Harrison snatching the lead by two marks from Jackson, Brown was down to third four marks off the pace and Pearce still trailed by 12 marks.

The champion then made up for all his errors on the last round, cleaned the lot and by dint of having the greater number of cleans overall he annexed second from Brown, the pair finishing on 49 marks, just two behind the Ibex man.

After twice leading, Harrison had to be content with fourth on 50 marks while Lol Hurt (Ford Special), on 70 was just two ahead of John Fack (Impunity). The rest were nowhere.

1, G. Jackson (Ibex), 46 marks; 2, J. Pearce (Kincraft), 48 marks; 3, L. Brown (Aberties), 48 marks; 4, T. Harrison (Kincraft), 50 marks; 5, L. Hurt (Ford Special), 70 marks; 6, John Fack (Impunity), 72 marks.

RAC Championship: 1, Pearce, 147pts; 2, Julian Fack, 123pts; 3, John Fack, 119pts; 4, Harrison, 113pts.

Now Bolton's Devils Own

Cyril Bolton has done it again! Defying remarks that his Illuminations win was somewhat lucky, etc, he went out last Saturday night with Colin Francis in the Mini Sport of Padiham home built British Leyland wagon and after a quiet first third, he proceeded to pound the opposition into the dust and came home an almost unbelievable five minutes ahead of a top class field to win the Devils Own Rally run by Kirkby Lonsdale MC as part of the *Motoring News* Rally championship.

As one competitor put it at the finish at Mellings Hall, "he simply flew in the last third during which time he pulled out almost four minutes on Messrs Birkett and Orrick who are no slouches in their Ascona." The 200 mile all selective route attracted nearly 100 crews and Bolton turned up with Colin Francis as replacement of the semi-retired David Stephenson.

In the first period patchy fog began to make its presence felt as the crews got to grips with the guts of the event but the only major retirement was John Edwards-Parton who stuffed the Lloyds of Stafford RS 2000 into a wall. At first petrol Mick Briant, with David Taylor headed the field on 1084s from Bolton/Francis on 1159s with Birkett/Orrick third on 1173 in the Ascona.

In the second third Bolton began to make his presence felt and with Briant falling back, reason unknown, the Mini Sport man pulled out a 66s lead on Birkett by the time the crews had a breather for another lot of petrol and third at this time, and beginning to make their mark were Chris Huddlestone and Nigel Hunter in their Avenger GT.

The last part of the night belonged entirely to Bolton and there was nothing anyone could do about him. He ran out the winner on 3021s, exactly five minutes up on Birkett-/Orrick with Huddlestone/Hunter hanging on to third by the skin of their teeth from Briant/Taylor (RS 2000), while the old team of Kevin Videan and Peter Valentine brought the ever faithful Datsun 240 Z into fifth on 3444s. Local crew Lol Catterall and Mal Capstick (RS 2000), finished sixth on 3502s. Novice winners were S. Ogden and M. Stubbs (Mexico), on 4509s.

Stott's narrow BTD

Showing he had lost none of his nerve or verve in spite of a hefty roll recently in the car, David Stott collected BTD by the skin of his teeth at the final round of the ANWCC Autocross Championship run by Lancs & Cheshire CC at Tyldesley, near Manchester, last Sunday. In his ex-Tony Vernon car, Stott returned home the winner with 111.83s against Terry Westley's 111.86s, but the Midlander emerged the championship winner in his 2.1 litre VW.

Class S saw Muriel Banks put it across Graham Harper by more than a second over three laps of an 800 yds course. Muriel's Cooper S was up against Harper's smaller engined Honda, following latter season rumblings of non-homologation. In the Escort battle, Peter Keegan and David Baines were a second apart and there was a surprisingly close battle in the specials where Dave Ridgeway's DHW was strongly challenged by Mike Duffy's Flying Wellie. The rally car class also produced some close times with Quinton Hinchcliffe (RS1600), beating Jim Jones by just over a second and a half.

John Clarkson showed a real burst of form to challenge closely for BTD but a spin on his second run when ahead of Westley spoilt matters in the Escort.

BTD: D. Stott (Cooper S), 111.83s.

Class winners: Miss M. Banks (Cooper), 120.875; J. Hopwood (Mini), 113.81s; P. Keegan (Escort), 122.1s; T. Westley (VW), 111.86s; D. Chadwick (Mini), 113.73s; J. Clarkson (Escort), 112.18s; G. Chadwick (Mini), 123.7s; D. Ridgeway (DHW Special), 115.6s; Q. Hinchcliffe (Escort), 116.1s. **Ladies:** Mrs L. Rowlance (Mini), 118.58s. **Novice:** F. Hartshorn (Cooper), 118.8s.

BRIEFLY . . . .

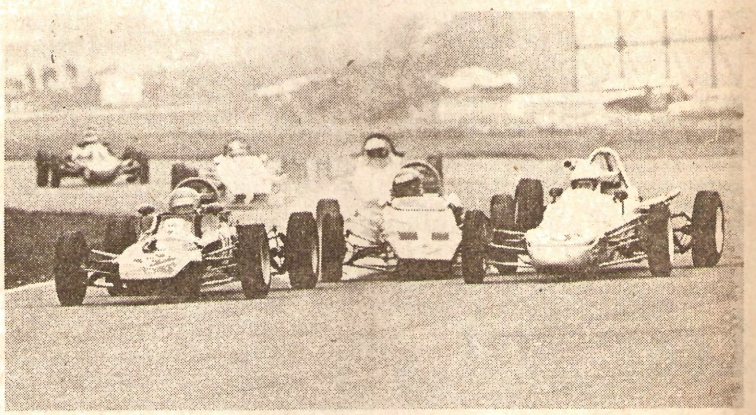
● Bexley Light Car Club are holding their annual Mudsplatt production car trial this Sunday at Canada Heights, Button Street, Swanley, Kent. There will be ten tests with two attempts at each.

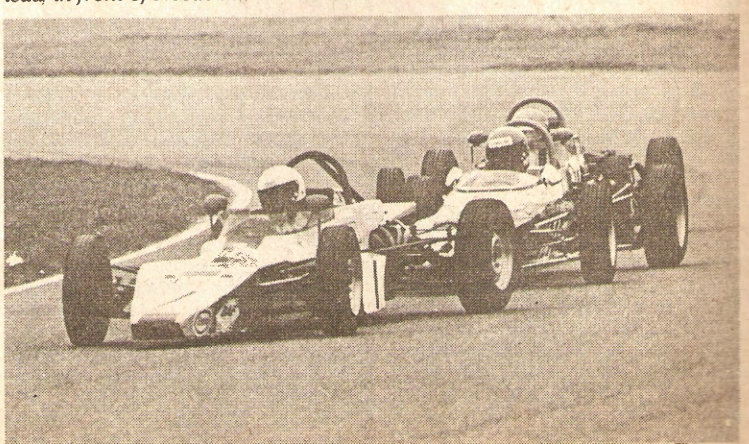
● By finishing second on last week's Devils Own rally — despite lack of brakes in the latter third — Geoff Birkett and Dave Orrick have clinched the ANCC rally championship in their Brady's of Barrow Ascona. In the eleven events, they've scored two wins, were runners up on four occasions and finished third twice.

● By scoring his twelfth class win last Sunday, Geoff Spencer has clinched the BTRDA production car trial championship. Spencer is also odds on favourite to do the double for in the RAC championship he has 14 class wins with three rounds to go and only Bill Moffatt has an outside chance of overtaking him.

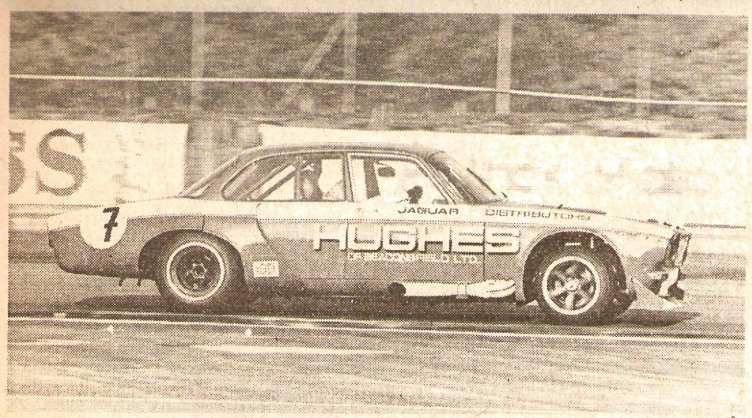
● For the MG enthusiast, the MGCC's spring meeting this Saturday is a must. Over 60 of the marque are entered at Silverstone where the event starts at 12.30 pm. The MGs range from Magnettes, T types and Triple Ms to MGBs and MGCs, while non-MG entries include a Porsche Turbo, Geoff Farmer's rapid Imp and Wridgeway Horton's Vauxhall Firenza. Competition should be keen, especially in the MG classes.

● East Midlands Rally Championship top navigator Eric Cowcill blushed as his wife beat him in the PAN autotest meeting last Sunday in the family Clan Crusader. Mrs Lesley Cowcill did 356.4s to beat hubby by 21s. Quickest on the day was Brian Garton in his Mini on 306.0s beating Phil Buck (Mini), by 10s.





FF action at Thruxton: as Rod Bremner nips through on the left, Jim Walsh and Tiff Needell run into trouble at Club. Below, Geoff Lees has a turn in the lead, in front of Needell and eventual winner Rod Bremner.



Recognise the relaxed position, the white helmet or the straight arms driving Tony Hazlewood's Jaguar XJ8 Super Saloon? Yes, it's none other than Stirling Moss giving the Westwood supported car a run at Silverstone last week. Moss lapped the club circuit around the minute mark, which is faster than the car has ever been before on this circuit. Moss tried the car after a tie up in a lawn mower race when he drove a Westwood product in Sussex. Moss, said Hazelwood, was perfectly at home in the car, and thoroughly enjoyed the drive, doing around 20 laps.



Supersports news

Veterans making news on Sunday were Sid Marler and Arthur Maloock, the senior citizens of the Supersports series. Marler was in the Gryphon formerly raced this year by Noel Stanbury, and very pleased he was with it too. Father Mallock practised his B sports car a phenomenal three seconds under the lap record, but in the race, got rather crossed up at the chicane and had a mild coming together with Chris Greville-Smith finishing third in class.

● A standing ovation was afforded John Walker when he stepped up to receive a special award to mark his having marshalled on 50 rallies qualifying for the *Motoring News* Championship at the conclusion of the Devils Own last weeekend. Clerk of the course Don Davidson made the award to a surprised but delighted Walker who must be known by thousands of expert, semi-expert and novice crews alike all over the country.

Friz the champion

Geoff Friswell was a particularly well dressed spectator at Thruxton on Sunday, but not in his Nomex. Friswell had already won the National Organs Clubmans series and with a contract from Southern Organs burning in his pocket, didn't want to jeopardise his finances any further by placing his U2 at risk in the first race of the day. Although it was rumoured that he'd lost his lap record to Peter Cooke's Harrison, on confirmation this was stated to be untrue and the lap record in fact was printed wrong in the programme.

● After writing off his Honda recently at Mallory Park, Danny Alderton was in the wars again at Thruxton on Sunday. He borrowed Ivan Dutton's production saloon Mazda RX3 for the Britax round, but got no further than practice when he rolled it at the chicane on some dropped oil. The Mazda was quite extensively damaged.

Championship positions

BP Super Visco Scottish Libre championship, final placings: 1, Andy Barton, 54; 2, Norman Dickson, 28; 3, Iain McLaren, 20; 4, Patsy McGarrity, Ken Fildes, 17.

Bernard Hunter Crane Hire Formula Ford championship, final positions: 1, Stu Lawson, 33; 2, John MacGilvray, 33; 3, George Franchitti, 13; 4, Colin MacLean, 13; 5, D. Hall, 10; 6, P. Morrison, 10.

Radio Forth championship for production saloons, final positions: 1, Jennifer Birrell, 28; 2, Andy Smith, 26; 3, Tom Irvine, 24; 4, Ian Stirling, 22; 5, Eddie Labinjoh, 20

Hartley Whyte championship or sports and special GT cars, final positions: 1 Iain McLaren, 28; 2, Kenny Allen, 28; 3, Andy Smith, 26; 4 Tony Charnell, 24; 5, Eddie Labinjoh 22; 6, A. Mackintosh, 17.

Carlsberg Super Sports car championship: 1 A. Mackintosh, 31; 2, Rory MacNab, 19; 3, A. Watson, 12.

British Caledonian Airways championship for modified sports cars: 1, Kenny Allan, 28; 2, Mike Nugent, 24; 3, John Kirk, 22; 4, Andy Smith, 20.

BMRC Trophy members championship: 1, Eddie Labinjoh, 54; 2, Andy Barton, 48; 3, Kenny Allen, 44; 4, Bill Dryden, Stu Lawson, 39.

National Organs Formula Ford championship: 1, Geoff Lees, Kenny Gray, 101; 3, Rad Dougall, 53; 4, Mike Blanchet, 35; 5, Phil Dowsett, 27; 6, Matthew Argenti, 23.

Lec Refrigeration Clubmans sports championship, final positions, fully modified: 1, Geoff Friswell, 106; 2, Peter Cooke, 41; 3, Caldwell Smythe, 32. **Formula Ford engined:** 1, Nick Adams, 93; 2, Chris Greville-Smith, 89; 3, Alex Ferrada, 86.

Radio One Production saloon car championship, over £2300: 1, John Brindley, 45; 2, Brian Rice, 40; 3, Derrick Brunt, 30. **£1700 to £2299:** 1, Ivan Dutton, 43; 2, Gerry Marshall, 32; 3, Marc Smith, 26. **£1300 to £1699:** 1, Jock Robertson, 52; 2, Tony Lanfranchi, 22; 3, Jean-Pierre Aux, 20. **Up to £1299:** 1, Simon Watson, 48; 2, Tony Stubbs, 36; 3, Simon Kirkby 23.

BBC Radio One Under 21 award: 1, Marc Smith, 26; 2, Mike Smith, 20; 3, Jeff Allam, 5; 4 Rod Birley, 4.

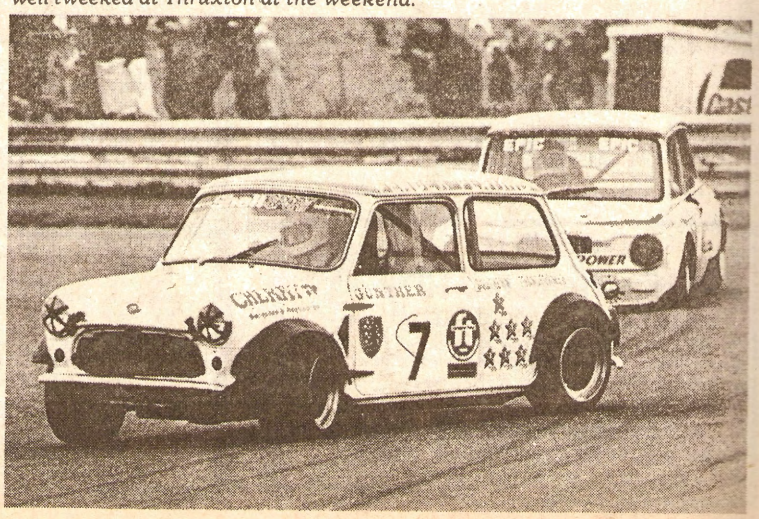
National Organs Clubmans sports car championship, final positions: fully modified: 1, Geoff Freiswell, 81; 2, David Orbell, 30; 3, Peter Cooke, 28. **Formula Ford engined:** 1, Nick Adams, 77; 2, Nick Scott, 44; 3, Andy Houston, 37.

British Air Ferries Formula Ford championship, final positions: 1, Geoff Lees, 71; 2, Rick Morris, 64; 3, Jim Walsh, 61; 4, Rod Bremner, 38; 5, Lou de Marco, 24; 6, David Heale, 19.

Forward Trust special saloon car championship, final positions: over 1300cc: 1, Dave Millington, 37; 2, Tony Sugden, 13; 3, Joe Russell, 12. **1001 cc to 1300cc:** 1, Phil Winter, 61; 2, Tony Allies, 8; 3, Dave Thomas, Tony Pearce, 5. **851 cc to 1000 cc:** 1, Brian Prebble, 19; 2, Jeff Ward, 15; 3, John Homewood, 13. **Up to 850 cc:** 1, Roger Gill, 34; 2, Cliff Watts, 26; 3, Jack Wines, 16.

Miller Organs Modified sports car championship, final positions; over 3000 cc: 1, Robin Gray 26; 2, John Pearson, 17; 3, Guy Beddington, 13. **2001 cc to 3000 cc:** 1, John Cooper, 22; 2, Andy Fraser, 16; 3, Nick Faure, 15 **1151 cc to 2000 cc:** 1, Richard Jenvey, 47; 2, John Evans, 35; 3, Dave Bettinson, 24. **Up to 1150 cc:** 1, Ian Hall, 41; 2, Simon Packford, 33; 3, Barry Wood, 21.

Forward Trust special saloon champion is Phil Winter, below, getting his Mini well tweeked at Thruxton at the weekend.



Facey's Torbay

Taunton MC members Andy Facey and Neil Arnold took their RS 2000 to a four minute victory on the Torbay Rally down in the West Country last weekend. On a 200 mile route using much of the well known Devon and Cornwall rally country, they finished on 49m to head a field of 58 crews, of whom 41 managed to finish an event run in almost perfect conditions.

In the first half the battle for the lead was extremely close for at the petrol halt only two minutes separated the first four cars. Facey/Arnold led on 18m followed by K. Chapple/M. Gray in a Dolomite Sprint on 19m with Peter Crewes/Brian Benson (Cooper) and Graham Booth/Brian Little (Capri), both on 20m.

At this stage last year's winners David Adams and Ralph Yelland were in fifth spot in their Mexico but they were soon out in the second half with overheating. Crewes/Benson and Booth/Little matched each other throughout the second half and such was their pace that they overtook Chapple and left him behind to the tune of seven minutes. Crewes was runner-up on the furthest cleanest rule on 53m. Best of the semi-experts were J. Taylor and P. Heal (Cooper S), who finished fifth on 62m and the Barnard brothers (Mexico) were sixth on 67m. Best novices were the Salisbury and Shaftesbury crew of A. Waterman and L. Bone in a Fiat 124 who were ninth on 70m.

Team autotest

The well known Ken Wharton Memorial autotests in conjunction with Pedmore House are being held this Saturday once again at the Hagley and District Light Car Club's headquarters at Pedmore House, Ham Lane, Stourbridge, Once again there will be teams from Northern Ireland, England, Scotland, Eire, Wales with Northern Ireland trying for their seventh win in succession. The tests start at 10.30 am on Saturday having just a break for lunch before battling until dusk.

The English team comprises Trevor Smith (Midget), John Larkin (Clubman GT), and John Calton (Mexico); newcomer to the North Ireland team is William Hill-Scott (Midget) along with Ken Irwin (Clubman GT), and Ken Shields (VW). The Eire team is Stephen Griffin (Midget), Alan Murray (Cooper S) and Frank Linehan (Austin 1300). The Scottish team is Granger Robertson (Midget), David Robertson (Cooper) and Gordon Aird (Datsun Cherry). The Welsh team comprises Keith Northall (Sprite), Peter Williams (Clubman GT) and David Jones (VW).

● One casualty in the Special Saloon practice at Thruxton was George Ostroumoff who made a very nasty mess of his Imp in a high speed accident around the back of the circuit. However, the Redditch driver was fortunately unhurt.













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