

JODY SCHECKTER - SNOWMAN RALLY - DAYTONA 24 HR

AUTOSPORT

Complete review of 1975 Club Racing scene



AUTOSPORT

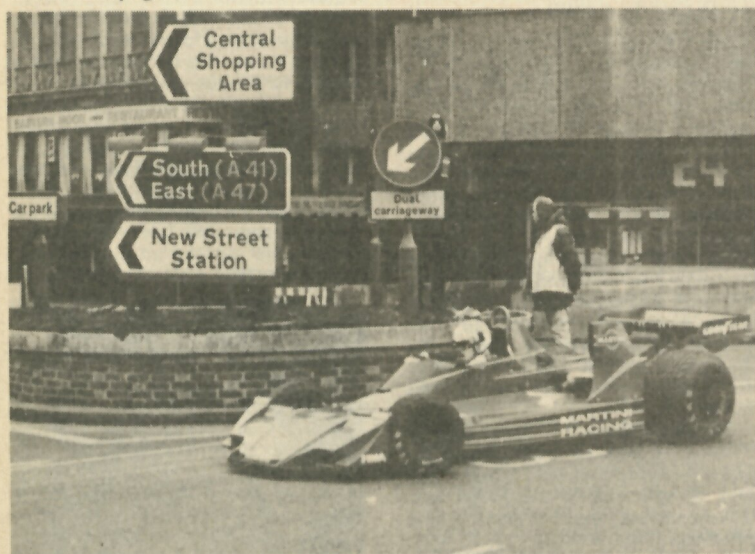
BRITAIN'S MOTOR SPORTING WEEKLY

February 5, Vol 62 No 6

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EDITORIAL

Yesterday (Wednesday) saw the presentation of the twelfth Grovewood Motor Racing Awards. These awards, worth £2,000 to the five winners, are open to any British and Commonwealth drivers and the final choice is made up by an independent panel of judges.

AUTOSPORT is proud to be represented on the judging panel as these awards are the most prestigious in Britain. It is not easy to select five names worthy of the Awards and this year was no exception. Part of the problem is the lack of British drivers in the major categories of racing from where one would normally look for a major award winner. Maybe it is time for the Grovewood Awards to be changed, or a new award introduced, whereby a driver would be specifically helped further up the ladder.

Other countries, France in particular, have been running award schemes for some time now, where they pick a driver or drivers in an annual practical competition early in their careers and then help them move up the ladder. These competitions are usually run in conjunction with Racing Driver Schools and it is indeed heartening to see both the Winfield Racing Drivers School and the Jim Russell School offering Formula Ford drives to their best pupil of the year in this country; however he may not necessarily be British.

One of the problems of the Grovewood Awards, for instance, is deciding whether a driver has already 'made it.' Recent award winners have included F5000 Champions and drivers who have already driven in Formula 2 or sometimes even Formula 1. We don't wish to detract from the achievements of those award winners; the panel, of which we were part, decided they were worthy winners, but surely they have already 'made it'?

Can a cash award of £1,000 for the winner be really anything other than a pat on the back for doing well? If a driver is already in F2 or F1 or a major champion in this day and age it's not, let's face it, going to help him buy a ride in anything else.

What we would like to see is a single Award winner picked from no greater level than Formula Ford 2000, and then given the total cash available (including what it would cost to lay on the kind of reception the Grovewood Awards have which must be the same amount again) and a fully equipped (maybe works run) car to do a full season's Formula 3. The cost of a fully equipped F3 team is, of course, nearly three times as much as the prize money being offered but there are enough British manufacturers and trade suppliers around to be able to provide the goods on loan for a year and have their name prominently displayed on the car during the season. As well as doing the British championships we must encourage the winner to move into Europe also.

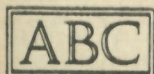
The Europeans come to Britain to race because it's the best place to race, but above FF2000 they're racing against fellow foreigners generally. It is time that some way of encouraging British competitors to carry the battle to the Europeans is conceived. Britain is no longer great — we set the standards for foreigners to aim at but we cannot match them ourselves.

AUTOSPORT would welcome a new award which would be of very real assistance to creating the right opportunities for a British driver.

our cover picture

This week's cover, depicting a grid of Escorts at Mallory Park, typifies the British club racing scene. Ian Titchmarsh's controversial review of 1975 begins on page 26.

Photo: David Winter



Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations

AUTOSPORT, FEBRUARY 5, 1976

Slightly later than usual, the 1975 Grovewood Motor Racing Awards were announced at London's Royal Lancaster Hotel yesterday (Wednesday). Top award winner was Brian Henton with Geoff Lees and Larry Perkins as the other two major prize winners. The two Special Commendations went to Tiff Needell and Jock Robertson.

The awards were presented by James Hunt, himself a former Grovewood Award winner.

The Grovewood Awards, the most coveted awards in British motor racing, have been presented annually since 1963 when they were introduced by John Danny, Chairman of Grovewood Securities. The awards were designed to provide financial assistance and also valuable publicity to young British racing drivers who, early in their careers, are demonstrating outstanding ability which could take them further.

The awards total £2,000 with £1,000 going to the winner, £500 to second and £300 to third placed drivers. The two Special Commendations carry £100 each.

The choice of winners is made by a completely independent panel of expert (so it says here!) motoring writers nominated by the Guild of Motoring Writers. This year's panel, which met last November, was Ian Phillips, editor of *AUTOSPORT*, Roger Bell, editor of *Motor*, Ray Hutton, editor of *Autocar* and Mike Cotton, editor of *Motoring News*.

The simple terms of reference for the judging panel have not changed since the awards began. The panel members are asked to choose drivers who, in their opinion, are showing outstanding promise in the early development of their racing careers, having regard to the cars and facilities at their disposal.

Brian Henton takes the top award despite the lack of tangible honours. He came close to winning an award in 1974 after cleaning up the Formula 3 championships although it was considered at the time that the opposition was not of sufficient quality for his ability to be properly judged.



Brian Henton – first

He wins the award this year because of his performances in Formula 2 racing. His efforts complied fully with the judging criteria of the award 'having regard for the cars and facilities at their disposal'. Henton, aged 28, from Castle Donington, had little at his disposal when he made his debut at the BARC Easter Monday Thruxton meeting – a loaned chassis from March, in compensation for a 'works' contract that never materialised, and one Ford engine which was considered to be uncompetitive. All the other equipment was second hand and the

1975 Grovewood Awards

team had no money in reserve. Henton was one of the fastest qualifiers and went on to lead the race until a tyre exploded. It was a truly sensational debut and he was the only British driver to challenge the heavily sponsored French teams which dominated the Formula during the year.

In the following races Henton suffered a series of disasters 'quite often they were not my fault, sometimes they were,' he admits. He hired the car out on a couple of occasions to other drivers so that he could finance the odd race for himself. Even so by the time the second British race came around, at Silverstone in August, he still could not afford to run the car.

However, Tom Wheatcroft, owner of the Donington Park racing circuit, just half a mile from Henton's home, came to the rescue and converted his Formula Atlantic car into F2 specification using Henton's Ford engine. Although it was a virtually untried car Henton again rose to the occasion and put the car on the front row of the grid and went straight into the lead of the race. For almost the whole event he swapped places with the Formula's most experienced runners and eventually finished a gritty and determined third.

Henton didn't sit in a racing car until 1970 when, with the proceeds of a successful business career, he bought a Formula Vee car. The following year he won the championship and in 1972 was runner up in the SuperVee Championship, taking in a number of European races to build up his experience.

In 1973 he moved into Formula 3 with a GRD and a vow to 'blow them all off. I'll be in Formula 1 by 1975', he boldly predicted. After winning both the Lombard and Forward Trust championships in 1974 nothing materialised for last season until he scraped together the Formula 2 car.

It was his performances in F2 that led to him fulfilling his ambition to be in F1 by 1975 and he had three races for the John Player Special team, although like the team's other drivers he had little success.

He frankly admits he did not enjoy his experience. 'I have seen what it is like and did not like it. I feel my interests are best served driving for Tom Wheatcroft, and I'll do that in any formula he chooses. If he wants to do Formula 1 then I certainly will. I shall be doing Formula 2 this year, and it is my intention to win races and drive for Tom until I retire.'

Henton's top award is the second time that a Wheatcroft backed driver has won such an honour, the late Roger Williamson having taken it in 1972.

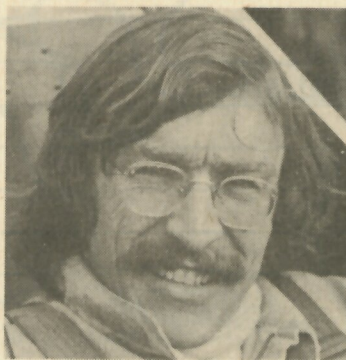
Geoff Lees – second



The second award goes to 24-year-old Geoff Lees from Warwickshire. After working on a friend's racing car he eventually bought himself a Formula Ford Alexis in 1972 and scored his first win that season. He missed out 1973, saving money to buy a more competitive car, and bought a Royale for 1974 and finished second in the STP championship.

Last year, with a new Royale RP21, he scored 32 wins and won every Formula Ford championship in the country as well as the Formula Ford Festival – a unique achievement.

At the televised Thruxton meeting he made his Formula 3 debut and is currently searching for sponsorship to do a full season in this category this year.



Larry Perkins – third

Larry Perkins hails from Australia but has been living in England for three years, takes the third award. Now aged 25, he won the Ford Australia Driver to Europe Award after a string of FV and FF successes in Australia in 1971. However he stayed down under to gain more experience and won the 1972 Formula 2 championship.

He came to Britain for a full year of Formula 3 in 1973 and with a GRD and later a Brabham he immediately made a name for himself all over Europe. As well as driving the car he also maintained it and looked after the engines while he was on the move.

Nineteen seventy four was a disaster – Perkins was chosen by Chris Amon to join his F1 team, but lack of sponsorship precluded any driving except one test session and official practice session.

For 1975 it had to be back to Formula 3 and Larry teamed up with fellow Australian Ron Tauranac to drive the latter's new Ralt car. He won the European Championship and scored a number of other notable successes including pole position at Monaco.

For the coming season Perkins will again be in Formula 1 having been chosen by the Dutch HB Bewaking Team to drive their Boro (né Ensign) which showed a great deal of promise in Chris Amon's hands at the end of last year.

We at *AUTOSPORT* are particularly pleased that 23-year-old Tiff Needell should earn a Special Commendation for his racing career begun when he won a Formula Ford Lotus 69F in a competition which we ran in 1970.

With no backing for the car Tiff struggled for three years in Formula Ford but gained plenty of experience and four wins. In the middle of 1974

the well used Lotus was finally pensioned off and he drove a semi-works Elden to second place in the Wella championship which led to the loan of a new Elden for 1975. This proved uncompetitive and from July onwards he changed to a Crossle. Immediately his luck turned and he took 12 wins and seven second places to gain the Townsend Thoresen championship. He was also given the works Hawke FF2000 car for the last five races and scored three wins and one second place to take fourth place overall in the 17 round championship.



Tiff Needell – commended

Tiff is desperately searching for sponsorship for a full season of Formula 3 as well as continuing in FF2000.

Scots born Jock Robertson is the youngest of the award winners at 23 and has been racing since early 1974. As a Bill Blydenstein employee he naturally drove a Vauxhall to begin with, backed by Gerry Marshall, in which he scored four wins.

For this season he switched to a Mazda RX3 saloon, again backed by Marshall and built and prepared by himself. Against some seasoned opposition he scored no less than 30 wins from 35 starts and won both the Radio 1 and Britax Production Saloon Car Championships and took 10 lap records.

Jock Robertson – commended



With an ambition 'to reach the top' he is hoping to move into single seater racing during 1976 either in Formula 3 or Formula Ford 2000.

What does the future hold for Grovewood Award winners? A quick look back at past winners shows that no less than 21 of the 36 drivers to win major awards have gone on to race Grand Prix cars. The names include, James Hunt, Tom Pryce, Alan Jones, Bob Evans, Dave Morgan, John Watson, the late Roger Williamson and Tony Brise, Vern Schuppan, Mike Beuttler, Tony Trimmer, Tim Schenken, Chris Craft, Alan Rollinson, Derek Bell, Jackie Oliver, Brian Redman, Piers Courage, John Miles, Chris Irwin and Richard Attwood.



The plot begins to shape in Brazil as Mosley and Herd chat (proposition?) to Ronnie Peterson...

Peterson: no move yet

There have been no concrete announcements about Ronnie Peterson's future since he returned, in a storm of speculation, from Brazil last week and, in fact, most parties, Peterson included, have been reluctant to say anything on the matter.

For Lotus Peter Warr, when asked about the Team's driver position, said: 'I can't say really, Mario (Andretti) hasn't got any news from Parnelli — he was due to get a decision last week and let us know but he hasn't.'

How about Peterson? 'I can't say anything about Ronnie. About 100 people have asked, and I'm not trying to be unhelpful, honestly I just don't know. I've not spoken to Ronnie since the race although I flew back on the same plane as him.'

'I heard all the stories of people tip-toeing down the passages of the hotel and secret meetings — but I worked two all nighters and didn't get back to the hotel so I don't know what's going on.'

'We're preparing a car for Ronnie for Kyalami and we're not immediately looking for another driver as we hope to have Mario for the whole year.'

On other Lotus connected drivers Warr confirmed that Brian Henton was still under contract and that they hadn't written off Jim Crawford. 'We offered to renew his option but he didn't reply to our letter.'

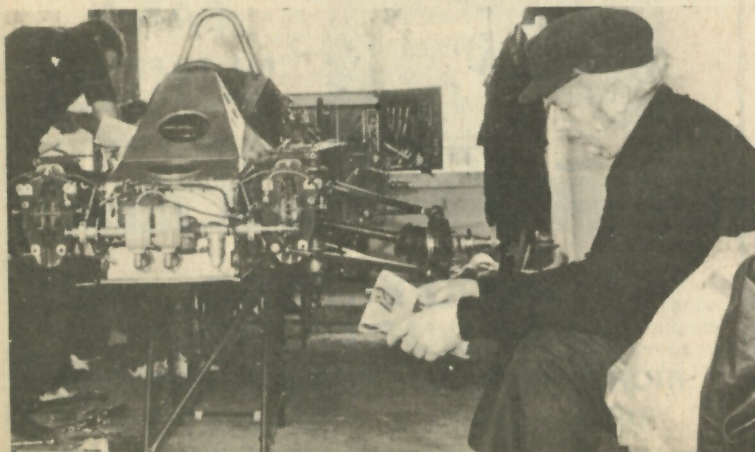
So will Peterson go to March as has been widely predicted? The March directors were tied up in discussions most of Monday and Tuesday and so one must presume that something big is about to

happen. All that Max Mosley was able to say was: 'Officially all I can say at the moment is that one of our sponsors is talking to Team Lotus and if anything emerges it will be announced at a later date. Anything else you may hear is just wild rumour and speculation'(!)

The wild rumour and speculation that we have heard is that Peterson is likely to join March towards the end of this week and will take over Lella Lombardi's Formula 1 car, the sponsor being the mysterious Count Zanon who tried to buy Ronnie's contract for March last year. If, for some reason Peterson doesn't go to March we hear that Frank Williams is more than interested. Should the latter situation arise we expect that Miss Lombardi will be given her marching orders anyway and that Gunnar Nilsson will take her place, vacating his F2 seat.

Nilsson is possibly the key to the matter and it is perhaps significant that he has not been his usual talkative self since returning from Brazil. Could he be involved in a swap deal, we must ask? Peterson wants to do some F2 races and could take over Nilsson's car as a partner to Maurizio Flammini. On the other hand Alex Ribeiro has just returned from Brazil and is looking for a works March F2 seat also. Perhaps, like the F1 team, the wise men of Bicester will run A and B F2 teams. Nilsson and Peterson (or Stuck on occasions) in one and Ribeiro and Flammini in another. In fact that sounds like an idea that would appeal to all parties. We'll know this time next week.

... meanwhile Colin Chapman appears bored with the whole thing.



Neve's Brabham deal

It was announced early this week that Belgian driver Patrick Neve had become a Brabham contracted driver, although it is uncertain when, or even if, he will actually get a drive in the Martini backed team this year.

'It's the same sort of deal we had with John Watson', said Brabham's Bernie Ecclestone on Monday. 'We'll help him all we can like we did with Watson, but there's no prospect of him driving in our team'.

Would he, perhaps, drive for the RAM team who have the old Ford powered Brabham BT44Bs, we enquired? 'No', was the short reply.

Whatever the future for Neve with his Brabham contract, he was soon pressed into action as he drove the Alfa powered BT45 in a demonstration round the streets of Birmingham last Sunday.

Although Ecclestone was reluctant to comment, some sources suggest that Neve will probably drive one of the Martini cars in the two non-championship races in Britain and possibly in at least one Grand Prix if no other seat can be found for him.

Neve himself wouldn't comment on the situation except that he felt, after spectating in Brazil, that the Alfa project could be very competitive given a serious testing session and that he would be glad of the opportunity to have a go.



Patrick Neve — Brabham contract

Neve will know this week whether he also has a seat in the semi-works Luigi BMWs in the European Touring Car Championship which, if it comes off, will provide him with plenty of European circuit experience.

On the question of the whereabouts of another of his contracted drivers, Damien Magee, Ecclestone said: 'I don't know where he is, I haven't heard from him and, no, I don't have any plans for him'.

Rapids move out

It was a very unhappy Ted Moore who called us on Tuesday morning to say that Rapid Movements will not be in racing in 1976. The decision comes following mechanic Tony Harvey's switch to March Engineering at the beginning of the week. 'It would be very difficult for me to replace Tony, who was more than just a mechanic he was part of the company, and so I've decided that we won't go racing this year. I'm very upset about it, but there's little I can do.'

Rapid Movements, who, of course, backed the phenomenally successful Chevron with which Gunnar Nilsson scored so many successes at the end of last year in Atlantic, were planning to contest the Indylantic series this year with Danny Sullivan driving. 'More than anything,' said Ted, 'I'm sorry for Danny as it leaves him without anything, but I shall do all I can to help him find a drive.'

Ted did confirm though that Rapids will be back in racing in 1977, but will concentrate this year on the business which is shortly to move into new and much larger premises.

It's coming

The new edition of the 'bible' is on its way. Publishers Patrick Stephens Ltd announce this week that the *FIA Year Book* (alias the Yellow Book) is now being bound and will be published on Feb 20, price £5.25.

Containing 820 pages, 200 photographs and 185 drawings it is the biggest ever published.

Enthusiasts are advised to order now to avoid disappointment.

IMSA to run Atlantic in America

It looks as though Formula Atlantic will take off in America this year after all. Following the IMSA decision to ban Porsches from their GT series, all support from VW has been withdrawn for the IMSA run SuperVee series. IMSA are keen to have a Formula series to back up the Camel GT championship and are planning a six or seven race Formula Atlantic series which will dovetail with the Players Canadian championship.

IMSA are planning a \$15,000 prize fund per race (the Players series is \$20,000). Entries will be \$100 per race and with an expected field of 40 cars this \$4000 will be ploughed into the prize fund. Each circuit will put up \$5000 and a sponsor the extra \$6000.

Teams already planning an Atlantic season include the Ecurie Canada works March team sponsored by Schweppes who will run Canada's top up-and-coming driver Gilles Villeneuve. He is expecting to go testing with Vittorio Brambilla in Florida later this month. In the American based semi-works March run by Doug Shierson will be Bobby Rahal and probably two others.

Fred Opert is planning on running four Chevrons but he doesn't know who for yet. GT star Hurley Haywood is expected to take over the *Penthouse* Atlantic sponsorship from Elliot Forbes-Robinson and run a Chevron in a team with Howdy Holmes, while SuperVee man Tom Bagley is also expected to campaign a Bolton product.

AP Safety Award to Peter Jowitt

The second Automotive Products Motor Sport Safety Award was presented at London's Dorchester Hotel on Monday of this week. The very popular and unanimous decision of the judges was that it go to Peter Jowitt, RAC Scrutineer and Accident Commissioner, and technical consultant to the F1 Constructors Association and the GPDA.

Introduced in October 1973, the AP Safety Award is designed to encourage interest in safety in all forms of motor sport. It is controlled by an independent committee headed by motor racing journalist John Blunsden and presented annually. Other members of the Committee include Jackie Stewart, Anthony Salmon (BRDC and Silverstone), Peter Browning (BRSCC) and European journalists Jabby Crombac and Franco Lini.

The citation for this year's award read: 'recognition of his great contribution over a number of years to the furtherance of safety in motor sport - with particular reference to his investigations into the cause of motor racing accidents, and the fund of specialised knowledge on accident prevention and survivability that he has contributed to the benefit of drivers, spectators and circuit owners.'

In presenting the award, Blunsden paid tribute to Jowitt's contribution:

'The panel are pleased to be able to recognise, through the presentation of this award, the enormous contribution that Peter has made in the safety field not only through his probing and exhaustive crash investigation work, but also through his efforts to secure the implementation of regulations covering vital aspects of racing car design and construction.'

In 1976 the panel, which remains the same, will again be looking at all aspects of safety but are acutely aware of the growing problem of cars leaving the circuit on high speed corners, with attendant risks to drivers and spectators.

Jowitt, in his acceptance speech, outlined the improvements that have been made in Formula One racing, especially to make the cars safer, but did stress that the one thing that still worries him a great deal is catch fencing. The main danger of the current catch fencing, he thought, was the high risk of it acting as a launching pad for cars rather than stopping them.

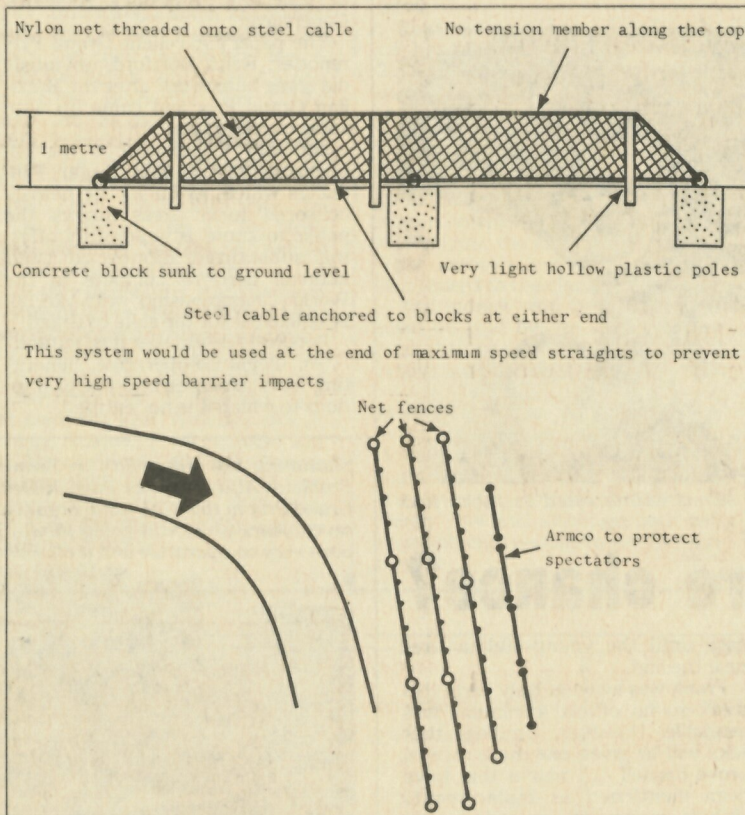
The main idea is to cut down barrier impact. Any system, he said, should satisfy the following conditions: cheapness; ease of installation; ease and quickness of replacement; ease of inspection; and predictability and consistency of characteristics. In addition he outlined some negative factors. The protec-



Peter Jowitt - AP award.

tion must not, on any account: contain elements which can fly and injure the driver or spectator; cocoon the car and trap the driver should the car catch fire; form a launching ramp to project the car over the barriers; throw debris onto the track which could damage other cars; take up so much space that the driver is denied space for corrective action; deteriorate in inclement weather.

Jowitt's ideas for improved catch fencing installation.



Jowitt put forward two alternatives to the current wire mesh catch fencing, crushable foam and nylon net barriers.

The crushable foam block, or alternatively bags of granular foam fragments, he thought were a promising field for experiment and would especially suit motor cyclists.

Where there is space available, Jowitt felt that a nylon net barrier of catch fence system, anchored only at its bottom edge to a steel cable, which is anchored to buried concrete blocks, would be the best solution. The first one or two nets in any such system would undoubtedly be destroyed in an impact, for it is only by destroying some structure that the energy can be dissipated. It would, however, be a simple matter to have more than one net on the steel cable, so that re-erection of the nets would be a rapid process. The only poles required would be very light hollow plastic, whose only duty would be to hold the net upright, contributing nothing to the energy dissipation.

Jowitt finished by saying that he hoped that it will be possible to find a way of testing and demonstrating new ideas and being sure of being absolutely right before proposing that circuits should make any changes.



Carlos Reutemann - "contracted"

Reutemann not leaving says Bernie

Rumours have been persisting for some time that Carlos Reutemann is on the verge of leaving Bernie Ecclestone's Martini-Brabham Team. However Ecclestone denied this on Monday. 'I've nothing to say on the matter except that he's a contracted driver and he'll drive for me under the terms of the contract up until the day I decide that he can go.'

'If he wants to go off and drive for anybody else then that's another matter. If he does want to do this, I don't know anything about it.'

Our informed sources suggest that Reutemann is none too happy at the prospect of Alfa Romeo flat 12 horsepower in the back of his Brabham chassis this year and feels that he'd be better off in a Ford engined car.

Ecclestone said, however, that the team were delighted with the car's performance in Brazil. 'I don't know why you should think that we were uncompetitive. Our performance was just the same as Ferrari at Interlagos last year and the year before. The car's got lots of potential and we'll be competitive by Kyalami. We were really happy with Brazil, we did the same time in practice as the man that came second in the race and quicker than those that finished fourth and fifth... that engine's a winner.'

● Irish sources tell us that Phoenix Park is a likely extra round for the Indyant series which would seem logical as there are a number of competitive cars there.

● American Sam Posey will be one of the works BMW drivers in Europe this summer driving a 3.0CSL in all rounds of the Silhouette (G5) Championship of Makes and Le Mans.

March undecided on F3

The format of the works March Formula 3 team is still not settled. Sandro Angelieri reports that he has had a number of people interested in the drive and even offering more money than is required, but they have been turned away. Current favourites for the British team would appear to be Britain's Stephen South

and reigning Formula Italia champion Giacomelli, who has impressed Angelieri and his Italian contacts.

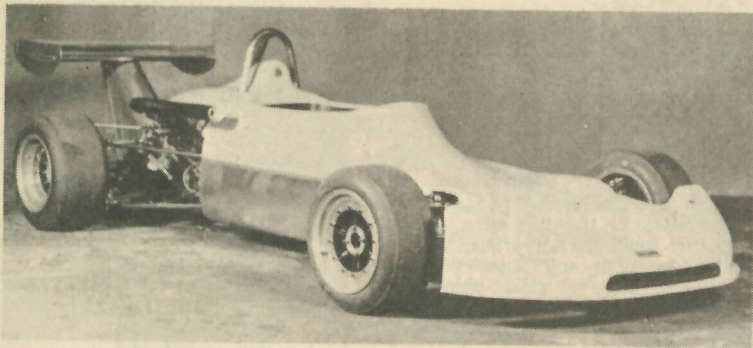
March also aim to support a works F3 car in the European F3 championship and favourite for this is, naturally enough, Swede Conny Andersson who has been racing F3s in Europe for some seven years.

F3 Ralt for Ian Flux

One of Britain's up and coming young drivers, Ian Flux, will be moving into Formula 3 this year. At the Shellsport awards last week, where he took a special prize for the Most Promising Young British Driver, Flux confirmed that he has recently been invited by the Ockley Team Racing to drive their Formula 3 Ralt in the BP and Shellsport

Championships this year and at Monaco.

Ockley Team Racing is a new team based in Camberley and formed by Ken Gumbie of Ockley Construction, who backed 19 year old Flux' Formula Vee Scarab in which he won this year's FV championship by winning 10 of the 16 races. The car will be painted white and be fitted with a Toyota Novamotor engine.



The new Van Diemen-GRD Formula 3 car which was tested last week.

New F3 Van Diemen—GRD tests

Ralph Firman's Van Diemen company announced their first Formula 3 car this week. Called, in fact, a Van Diemen-GRD it is a development of the GRD 375 which Firman took over after the GRD factory closed towards the end of last year. The GRD name will be retained until such time that Van Diemen produce a pukka F3 car of their own.

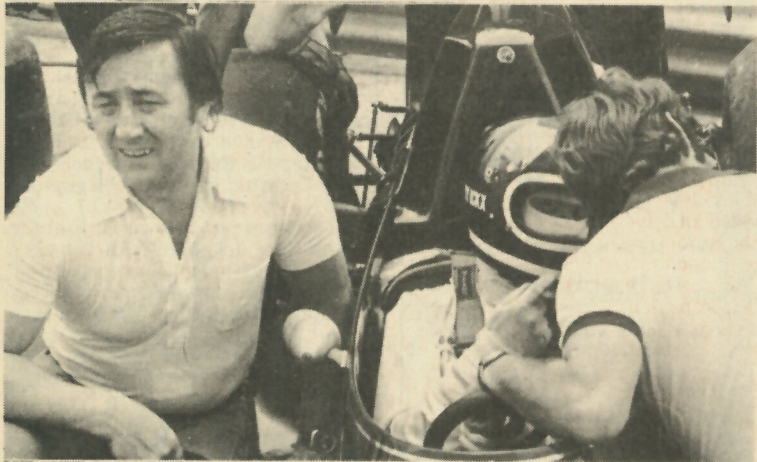
The new car went testing for the first time at Silverstone last week in the hands of Australian Terry Perkins and Frenchman Jean-Louis Schlesser. Despite very cold conditions Perkins recorded a very impressive time of 56.7s using a Holbay twin cam engine which has undergone yet more development

over the winter.

Firman is very much hoping to run a works F3 car in the British championships and Schlesser looks to be a likely candidate for the drive. Last year he drove a Modus in the Super Renault championship.

Changes to the new car include new bodywork, which was developed and tested extensively by Patrick Neve towards the end of last year and which cured the car's straight line speed problem. It also has bigger Lockheed brakes all round and is lighter than the previous model.

Van Diemen are also continuing to produce updating kits and spares for existing GRD customers.



Are they really happy? Walter Wolf (left) seems uninterested as Jacky Ickx talks to Harvey Postlethwaite.

Ickx—one more chance?

One of the many stories that came back from Brazil reporting turmoil in various teams was that the relationship between the Frank Williams team and Jacky Ickx was a little strained following his impressive showing at Interlagos.

Ickx, it will be recalled, was slower in the Hesketh 308C than newcomer Renzo Zorzi in the old Williams in practice and ran behind him in the

race until the young Italian tired near the end.

Frank was away in Italy early this week so no official comment was available. However, we hear that Ickx will be given one more race to prove himself... names that have been mentioned as replacements include reportedly unsettled men Ronnie Peterson, Carlos Reutemann and Gunnar Nilsson.

MCD's £500 RAC G1 races

Following our story last week regarding the position of the British Touring Car Championship, MCD's John Webb tells us that he, in fact, will run the 'padding rounds' of the championship but will only be putting up the £500 prize money that would have been demanded of him

had there been a sponsor for the series.

One reaction to this came from British Leyland PR man Alan Zafer who said: 'It doesn't really make much difference whether it's £500 or £1350, neither figure is realistic of what it costs to do the championship.'

Still doubts on Canada

The Canadian Grand Prix is still uncertain to be held this year, according to Mosport Park Executive vice president Bernie Kamin in a recent interview. He said that the Mosport management had still not received details of the Brussels agreement between the Formula One Constructors Association and the European promoters, and until those details are known the circuit cannot approach its sponsors.

"Holding the race is a 50-50 proposition at best," Kamin said, "It depends very much on the attitude of the F1 Constructors."

Last year's race, it will be remembered, was cancelled when FICA boycotted the meeting over a disagreement on prize and travel money.

In retaliation the Mosport organisers arranged a Corporation in America and obtained a court order seizing more than \$130,000 of the purse from the United States GP.

The litigation is still pending in the

New York Supreme Court. A recent action by FICA sought release of the money saying that the seizure was illegal in that it was made before the race when FICA did not own it. Mosport, however, claims it filed a second order after the race anticipating such a move.

For the Constructors, Bernie Ecclestone told us this week that they still did not have their money and that he was unsure of what the current state of play was.

If the battle is not settled soon it seems that the proposed Japanese Grand Prix may take Canada's place in the World Championship. Scheduled for Oct 24, just two weeks after Watkins Glen, the Constructors see no way of Japan being on if both Canada and America are held as there would not be enough time to bring the cars back to Europe, refurbish them and go to Japan. If Canada was off, on the other hand, it would be easy for them to go straight from Watkins Glen to Japan.

Copersucar exposed

An interesting piece of information came to light in *The Sunday Times* last weekend about the exact nature of Emerson Fittipaldi's sponsors, Copersucar.

The paper's excellent Grand Prix reporter, Keith Botsford, obviously did some homework after the Brazilian Grand Prix and came up with some startling facts.

Officially Copersucar is the co-operative of Paulista Sugar Producers which, as far as the heavily censored local press allows the public to know, is generously offering substantial money to their national hero to compete in the World Championship with an all Brazilian car for the sake of Brazil.

Botsford reports that it is, in fact: 'An illegal co-operative, benefiting from subsidies and tax exemptions to which it is not entitled.'

A near monopoly with a long history of insider deals.'

'The private fief of one Jorge Wolney Attala, currently under indictment for one such deal.'

'A business which uses its enormous profits to support such Right Wing activities as the infamously repressive Operation Bandeirantes.'

'The supporter of a group which tried to replace the "moderate" military regime of General Geisel with hardliners from the Sao Paulo based IInd Army.'

Botsford went on to describe the activities of Attala and the Copersucar company which are horrific.

His conclusion was that the sponsorship of the national Grand Prix team is a giant public relations exercise to divert public attention from the really vicious political power game which is being played.

Shattering the tranquility in Birmingham early last Sunday was the F1 Brabham-Alfa driven by Patrick Neve. It's all part of the plans to promote a Grand Prix in the City and organiser Martin Hone told us "after nearly seven years we're still going forward. Everyone, especially the police, have been very co-operative and it all went off very well."



Schuppan's home win

The first of the Australian 'Tasman' series rounds was held at Oran Park, Sydney last Sunday and resulted in a long overdue win for Vern Schuppan in the trusty Lola T332 owned by Teddy Yip and run by Sid Taylor.

In the early stages of the race Bruce Allison, Graeme Lawrence, Schuppan and David Purley (who moved up from sixth grid position in the Oaten Lola T330) led the field. On the fourth lap Purley was hit from the rear by Kevin Bartlett which caused an immediate misfire. A visit to the pits revealed nothing so he carried on in 15th place. At half distance, 50 miles, it began to rain and most runners pitted to fit wet tyres and Pearls began to make up places.

In the meantime Allison crashed out of lead while still on slicks, and Lawrence, who inherited the lead, also crashed.



Vern Schuppan - winner

This left Schuppan to take the flag ahead of Bartlett, NZ series winner Ken Smith, John Goss and Purley.

Bagley's win at Daytona

The first of this year's American SuperVee races, and the last under IMSA jurisdiction, took place last weekend at Daytona. Easy winner was Tom Bagley in the Kent Oil backed Zinc which took pole position and led from flag to flag to win by over 12s. Taking an equally comfortable second place was former FF and karting star Herm Johnson in a Lola.

Third place featured an almighty scrap which ended with Friz Gleason (Lola) third, Benny Scott (Black American Racers Lola) fourth and Bobby Rahal (Opert Supernova) fifth. The later had a troubled practice with engine problems and trying FF rear tyres and no wings but moved up from 15th to third at one point but dropped to fifth on the last lap.

● Top Canadian driver Elliott Forbes-Robinson will again be driving Francisco Mir's F5000 Lola T332 this year and will also be doing NASCAR in an ex-Cale Yarborough car.

Brazilian GP statistics

The individual fastest laps for the Brazilian Grand Prix, as usual, make interesting reading. They were: Jarier, 2m 35.07s; Lauda, 2m 35.84s; Hunt, 2m 36.29s; Regazzoni, 2m 36.57s; Depailler, 2m 36.91s; Pryce, 2m 37.10s; Stuck, 2m 37.71s; Laffite, 2m 37.79s; Brambilla, 2m 37.87s; Mass, 2m 38.55s; Fittipaldi, 2m 38.91s; Scheckter, 2m 38.98s; Reutemann, 2m 40.14s; Peterson, 2m 40.17s; Andretti, 2m 40.45s; Pace, 2m 41.06s; Zorzi, 2m 41.21s; Ickx, 2m 41.29s; Lombardi, 2m 41.75s; Hoffmann, 2m 43.77s. Watson and Ashley did not complete a flying lap.

Another interesting statistic from Interlagos were the weights of the competing cars. Lightest was Brambilla's March at 577 kgs. The rest were: Lotus, 581 kgs; Ferrari and Penske, 590 kgs; Ligier, 593 kgs; McLaren, 604 kgs; Williams (Ickx), 612 kgs; Shadow, 616 kgs; BRM, 621 kgs; March (Stuck), 625 kgs; Tyrrell, 626 kgs; Williams (Zorzi), 630 kgs; Copersucar (Fittipaldi), 640 kgs; Brabham, 669 kgs; and Copersucar (Hoffmann), 673 kgs.

New F2 money scales

The latest CSI bulletin gives full details of the new Formula 2 financial structure. In doing so they have also confirmed their ridiculous ruling that Graded drivers will not compete for the championship and that only six will be permitted to start in any one event.

A maximum of 36 cars will be allowed to start championship events, providing the circuit is licensed to take that many, and prize for single and two part races will be (in Swiss Francs): 1st, 10,000; 2nd, 8,000; 3rd, 7,000; 4th, 6,500; 5th, 6,000; 6th, 5,500; 7th, 5,000; 8th, 4,500; 9th, 4,000; 10th, 3,500; 11th, 3,000; 12th, 2,800; 13th, 2,600; 14th, 2,400; 15th, 2,200; 16th, 2,000; 17th, 1,800; 18th, 1,700; 19th, 1,600; 20th, 1,500.

In two heat races the money will be split evenly between the two parts and drivers who have not covered 50% of the total number of laps of a heat or, if the race is conducted as one, of the race, will only get 50% of the prize money.

Travelling money will be paid on distances as the crow flies worked out on an Ordinance Survey map. The rates will be (in Swiss Francs): up to 250 kms, 1,000; up to 500 kms, 1,300; up to 750 kms, 1,600; up to 1,000 kms, 1,900; over 1,000 kms, 2,200.

Thirty percent is payable after the car has fulfilled practice conditions; 30% after the car has fulfilled qualification practice and 40% after the car has started. Each organiser will contribute 3,000 Swiss Francs to the FIA common fund which will be distributed as follows: The sum total of points gained by the first ten drivers in the championship will be divided into the amount in the fund. This amount per point will be distributed to the classified drivers.

The money won by competitors must be paid by the organiser not later than one hour after the official results are published.

● Engine builder Neil Brown has asked us to make it clear that his development of the Dolomite Formula 3 engine is a completely separate programme to that of Denny Rowland although both will be supplying versions to the Unipart team.

Briefly....

● Bad news filtered through from the Cresta Run in St Moritz, Switzerland this week where racing men Tony Dron, Rupert Keegan, Richard Lloyd, Richard Piper and our very own Chris Witty are attempting to break records on the number of times not to reach the bottom of the run — expedition leader Tony Dron, the Unipart March F3 driver, broke his wrist on Monday. The others we gather are still in one piece.

● The annual BRSCC London Film Show will be held on two nights this year, Monday Feb 9 and Tuesday Feb 10 at the Surrey Tavern, The Oval, Kennington, starting at 8 pm.

The two hour programme will include the award winning ATV documentary about Graham Hill, the 1975 Tour of Britain film, a British Leyland film featuring the British Touring Championship winning Dolomites, a Champion film called 'Hard Charging Man' and the film of the 1975 RAC Rally.

Admission is by ticket only and they are 50p each from Miss Jane Partington, BRSCC, Empire House, Chiswick High Road, London W4 (non-members welcome).

● First day ticket sales for the Long Beach Grand Prix totalled \$20,000.

● A. J. Foyt has announced that he will let Mark Donohue's closed course Land Speed Record stand as a memorial to Mark, who he much admired.

● Page and Moy have announced that by buying currency "forward" they have avoided any chances of currency and fuel surcharges being added to the price of their motor racing tours to the end of September. Sounds like a better deal than ever.

● South African driver Basil van Rooyen, who has been in retirement for the past couple of years, is making a comeback following the start of the new Formula Atlantic championship over there. He has bought a new Chevron B34 and will run it with sponsorship from Wrangler Jeans.

● Stories currently circulating in the foreign press suggest that the Nurburgring won't be the venue for this year's Graman Grand Prix. However, FICA secretary Peter Macintosh said this week: 'I've seen the stories too but it's news to us'.

CATCHPOLE

By Barry Foley





Brian Redman drove supremely well for 14 hours to give BMW a convincing win. John Greenwood's disappointing Corvette follows.

DAYTONA 24 HRS

Redman overcomes the lot

By GORDON KIRBY

Photos by CHARLES LORING

By the time Sunday's pallid dawn began to spread itself across Daytona's giant crater of a speedway it already looked as if the works-run BMW CSL of Brian Redman/Peter Gregg/John Fitzpatrick was howling comfortably on towards a clean victory. It was true that the German car's lusty six-cylinder engine had lost one of its cylinders a few hours earlier but even so the BMW was continuing, as it had since just past two o'clock, to maintain a lead of more than fifty miles before a trio of pursuing Porsche Carreras. Benefitting particularly from an insistent relentless drive from Redman the leading entry of the three-car BMW team had led almost every lap of the race as the 24 Hours of Daytona turned at last, towards its final hours.

But just then, as Redman settled into another stint behind the wheel, the BMW suddenly coughed to a halt on the flat, road-course portion of the circuit. Brian scrambled from the car and began searching through the engine compartment for a clue to this entirely unsuspected failure. Within minutes he had discovered traces of water pumping its way into the injectors and, working frantically, he cleared enough of the foreign fluid to limp painstakingly around to his pit, but in the meantime the pursuing Carreras were drawing dangerously close. By that time the BMW team had investigated their fuel supply and found it ruined by water. Soon other cars were found to have suffered the same fate and when the gasoline company who supply all the fuel at Daytona were able to ascertain which teams had received bad fuel they quickly informed the officials. John Bishop, president of IMSA reacted with a swift, controversial decision. "We decided that it was enough to represent a force majeure," he said and at ten minutes past ten in the morning the race was red-flagged. The cars were brought into the pit lane and for the next two and half hours those machines affected by the bad gasoline were able to have their fuel systems cleansed. At ten minutes before one in the afternoon the race was restarted and ran on to its scheduled three o'clock finish under a pall of protest and thickening sheets of rain.

Positions at the restart reverted to those at nine o'clock and the leading BMW, its lost cushion of time recovered, pushed on to win. Redman, exhausted and drained of emotion after nearly fourteen hours of driving, brought the car home to something like his twenty-second classic long-distance triumph. Behind the Formula 5000 Champion, Hurley Haywood pursued Al Holbert without success so that Holbert and co-driver Claude Ballot-Lena took second, a lap ahead of Haywood/Jim Busby's similar Carrera RSR. Haywood, who was not affected by the bad fuel, was most vocal of all in his disapproval, of both the stopping of the race and the method of the restart. His joint protest of the restart in conjunction with Holbert and others was summarily rejected and ultimately he protested Holbert's second place on the basis that Holbert had reversed into his pit on one occasion.

The fifteenth Daytona 24 Hours was that kind of acrimonious meeting of men and their machines.

ENTRY AND PRACTICE

In conjunction with Le Mans this year's Daytona 24 Hours relinquished its World Championship status in order to offer the first straws of another theory aimed at re-establishing the declining state of long-distance racing. This year the two races conform to a set of unique regulations combining IMSA GTs, FIA Groups 2 and 5 machinery, NASCAR Grand International cars and Le Mans GTX machines. The theory is one of returning to legitimate, production-based cars, comprising a mix of autobahn-style GTs with freeway-based American stockers.

Prize money for Daytona was double that of last year, to a figure of \$100,000 and the race was again the first round in IMSA's burgeoning Camel GT Championship. For the past two years the Camel GT series and the Daytona 24 hours have been won by Peter Gregg and his familiar white Brumos Porsche Carrera (it was actually '73 and '75 in which Gregg won this particular race — it wasn't held in 1974), but these days IMSA is in a state of transition and with the Carrera — which has

become something of a synonym for IMSA — expected to be less and less competitive this year, Gregg has made an almost startling change from Porsche to BMW for 1976. Prompted largely by IMSA's banning of the turbo Carrera Gregg's change of chassis is being nurtured by complete factory support not only for Daytona but also at Sebring later next month. Jochen Neerpasch and his team of mechanics were on hand at Daytona to run Gregg's two CSLs, one for he and Redman and the other in Coca-Cola colours for David Hobbs and Benny Parsons. Neerpasch will oversee the running of the cars again at Sebring and thereafter Gregg and Jack Anderson, his team manager, will run the effort on their own, retaining the Hobbs/Parsons car as a spare and employing usual co-driver Hurley Haywood in the longer IMSA events.

The two BMWs were unchanged from last year's end of season IMSA specs with the exception of reverting to Goodyear tyres after utilising Dunlops for all save Daytona last year. A third BMW was run in conjunction with the team cars under the Hermetite banner for Tom Walkinshaw/John Fitzpatrick/Holman Black-

burn. This latter car was prepared by the Hermetite mechanics and was fitted with narrower wheels (by 1.5 ins) and an older, canted engine which utilised a subsequently more confused exhaust system and was estimated to be some 15 bhp down on its mates.

The BMWs only realistic challenge in terms of outright speed was the legendary SuperCorvette of John Greenwood, but when the big beast ran into trouble during the special, thirty-minute 'Top Ten' qualifying sessions, the German cars were easily able to take the first three spots in the 72-car field. Redman was the fastest of all (1m 56.550s) in one of his typically enthusiastic performances, full of long, finely-balanced, oversteering slides. Brian's usual cheery expression turned to an uncharacteristic scowl the next day when the local newspapers hailed the pole-winning performance of their favourite son P. Gregg Esq., (he lives eighty miles north of Daytona in Jacksonville) and not a mention of Our Brian anywhere! It's worth noting that in night practice Redman was nearly four seconds faster than any other BMW man with a best lap that was within a second of his pole position effort.

David Hobbs qualified the Coke BMW second (1 m 57.427 s) while Benny Parsons was not far off that mark in his first taste of the Daytona road circuit. Neerpasch noted that the stock-car man adapted very well to the BeeEm and appeared to be very good in his treatment of the clutch and gearbox. Despite losing time in tracing an unbalanced tyre Tom Walkinshaw completed the BMW domination of the grid with a crisp 1 m 58.436 s in the Hermetite car.

Quite surprisingly the outside place on the second row was won by a Greenwood Corvette 'Kit Car' constructed and driven by the Garcia brothers, Javier, George and Manuel. These Florida residents are regulars both at Daytona and Sebring but they have never been anywhere near as high up the grid as their 1 m 59.389 s.

With Gregg's defection to BMW, Al Holbert takes up an almost uncontested role as America's fastest Porsche driver and he showed his capabilities by lapping in 1 m 59.607 s for fifth fastest time. Holbert was using the ex-Hurley Haywood Carrera for what might be his last appearance in an RSR (he's planning to run a Chevy Monza later this year) an occasion for which he had the services of experienced French long-distance-man Claude Ballot-Lena. Sixth fastest was the only Monza in the field, a privately-run example owned and driven by 51 year old Tom Nehl but qualified by his much faster co-driver Steve Behr (2 m 00.334 s). Behr said that the car's chassis was not as good as another Monza which he co-drove last year but that it had a very good engine. Unfortunately Nehl crashed the car in the race-day morning warm-up, rendering the Monza a non-starter.

George Dyer qualified his Carrera seventh best (2m 00.656s) in preparation for his third full season and on this occasion his co-driver would be the young but experienced Mike Keyser. John Greenwood's Corvette was a comparatively poor eighth fastest (2m 00.766s), hampered as it was by a fuel metering problem throughout the "Top

Ten" qualifying session. Previous to that the car had blown a head gasket so that Greenwood's practice was severely curtailed and his new co-driver was unable to manage many more than a dozen laps. For this event and Sebring, Greenwood will share a seat in one of his cars with F5000 Talon driver Mike Brockman whose sponsor, Levitt Racing, have bought the car to campaign the full Camel GT calendar.

A surprising ninth fastest was the Pantera of veterans Hugh Kleinpeter/Ron Goldleaf (2m 01.530s), while the Corvette of Ted Mathey/Joe Chamberlain/Carl Shafer was qualified by the latter in 2m 01.873s to complete the "Top Ten." In subsequent practice sessions a few cars went faster than some of the first ten but had to fill up positions on the grid from eleventh back. Fastest of these was the Turbo Porsche of Sepp Gregger/Egon Everts/Jurgen Lassig which recorded 1m 59.205s in its maiden outing. Next came the familiar red and white Camaro of Canadian veteran Mo Carter (we thought he retired last autumn!) who had obtained the services of Formula Atlantic comingman Gilles Villeneuve. The tiny Villeneuve didn't get in much practice in the car (this was the first time he had driven a big sedan on a road course) but he was very nearly as quick as Carter after barely fifteen laps on a circuit he had never seen before.

Thirteenth fastest and quickest of the Grand International cars was the CAM2 Chevy Nova built and driven by the brothers Allison. The car is based entirely on their "sportsman" stock-car chassis, weighs in at just under 3,200 lbs, is equipped with stealthy components like a 7 litre engine, 1 1/2 ins front discs (you wouldn't believe the calipers!) and was qualified by Donnie in 2m 02.241s. Being the good ole plain folk that they truly are Bobby and Donnie did much of the work on their car and when they ran into gearbox troubles (which seemed to be the car's weak link) the two of them leapt into the back of an aging Chevy pick-up truck and set to on the piece with big spanners and heavy hammers.

Other GI cars were being run by David Pearson and his son Larry who were running a "sportsman" version of David's Purolator Ford Torino built by USAC stock-car ace mechanic and driver Jack Bowsher. The Silver Fox qualified the car seventeenth best (2m 02.804s) behind the Carreras of Bob Hagestad/Jerry Jolly and John Graves/John O'Steen/Dave Helmick and the Camaro of Herb Jones/Steve Faul. Car & Driver's Dodge Dart "Kit Car," driven by Buddy Baker and Joe Rutman, the latter a well-known mid-western, short-oval expert, qualified twenty-first in 2m 04.900s. The McGriff brothers, Hershel and Doug, brought along their short-track Chevy Nova which they qualified down in twenty-sixth place (2m 06.087s) but more was expected in the race from these Oregon gentlemen. James Hylton modified his Nytro-9 Grand National Chevelle for the job and with co-driver Richard Childress he qualified thirtieth while the Dodge of Ed Negre

co-driven by Bob Mitchell and Arturo Merzario was bedevilled with every kind of problem and was back in 44th place.

The Hurley Haywood/Jim Busby Brumos Porsche Carrera was harangued throughout practice by gearbox troubles which left them back in twenty-eighth place on the grid. Fastest under 2-litre qualifier was the Porsche 911S of Bill Bean/Jack Ansley/William Grainger which would start from thirty-first place while the only Ferrari in the field was the Daytona entered for Milt Minter/Jim Adams/Chris Cord which would start on the seventeenth row. Near the back of the grid were cars like the impossibly tiny Honda Civic and a road-going, fully-muffled Mazda Cosmo which included among its drivers Formula Atlantic TM Bill Scott.

Biggest rhubarb of practice centred around the late arrival of Charlie Kemp's Armor-All All-American GT Cobra II Mustang. The car arrived at the track late Thursday night and immediately raised eyebrows and curled lips. It carried the ultra-liberal AAGT rules to an extreme in that the car was built around a space frame-cum-mono-coque and clothed in an extensively modified bodysell. IMSA were quick to question the legality of the car and though Kemp claimed that he had checked every part with the club, officials suggested otherwise. Initially the car was banned but after lengthy negotiations (and endless puns about the imminent arrival of Henry Kissinger) it was agreed to let the car run as a Grand International car just this one time. The car was far too new to attempt to race, however, and when Kemp retired it after just six laps of the race suffering from every kind of problem co-driver Sam Posey was relieved to be excused from any more embarrassment.

RACE

The cold snap which had taken hold of Florida during the days of practice began to ease the night before the race so that Saturday dawned brilliantly sunny with the prospect of seventy degree temperatures in the afternoon and no risk of freezing in the smallest hours of the night. After a good Super Vee race (the last that IMSA will see), the huge field took up their places on the vast pitlane before what was claimed to be and certainly appeared to be the largest crowd ever for the 24 Hours.

The three BMWs offered a superb advertisement for their homeland as they paraded the now rasping, now bellowing field through a single lap toward the starter. They swept down beyond the pits in perfect order, Gregg and Hobbs filing off the banking and onto the infield section side by side while the Garcia Corvette did its best to force its way around the outside of Walkinshaw. But Tom was having none of that and as he held steadfastly to a tight line, the Corvette began to wobble wide so that the Hermetite BMW shot away from the first turn cleanly, in company with

its mates, while the Corvette spun its rear wheels in frustration.

All through the flat infield the three white BeeEms proudly led the field, but as they rasped up onto the banking, the Greenwood Corvette, Brockman at the wheel, gathered itself up and sprang forward, quickly passing the Carreras of Dyer and Holbert, then slashing past Garcia's externally similar car. As Gregg led past the pits, the stars and stripes-covered Corvette hurtled into the hunt, passing Walkinshaw near the start-finish line and nestling in behind Hobbs.

The next lap Brockman, driving the unfamiliar car neatly, thundered by Hobbs and set off after Gregg. The leader was pacing himself quickly but comfortably, matching his gait to Neerpasch's request of between 2 mins even and 2:03 laps ("I decided that 2:01 would therefore be right and I stuck to that," Gregg later explained in his clinical manner). By the third lap he began to run through the backfield and during the next few laps he pulled away from Brockman but soon, as the F5000 man accustomed himself to his mount, he started catching the leading BMW. Very soon a fascinating, if contained, chase took form between the BMW and Corvette. It lasted, in fact, until Brockman peeled off for his first fuel stop at the end of the twenty-ninth lap, having put in probably the best show of any Greenwood co-driver ever — he never over-reached himself, he threaded very carefully through the thick clots of traffic and above all else had made the first hour of the race at the very least an interesting academic study. And too, his few laps just ahead of Gregg were the only time the BMW would be led in the race.

For some time after his and the BMW's first fuel stops Brockman was able to retain second place but about twenty minutes later he brought the Corvette in a little earlier than planned, complaining of a vibration. It was soon discovered that a tooth had chipped from the ring and pinion and with that the BMWs began to prance away on their own.

For a little while Everts' Turbo Porsche and Holbert's Carrera were able to chase and sometimes lead Walkinshaw but slowly Tom was able to pull clear of them, using traffic to particularly good effect. Holbert meanwhile was unable to get far enough ahead of Everts on the infield to avoid being passed on the banking by the more powerful car and after a while he settled into a towing match with the Turbo which helped him go 52 laps (nearly 200 miles!) before his first fuel stop.

With the Brockman/Greenwood Corvette losing time in the pits and Hobbs having the misfortune of a tyre deflation while flat-out on the banking and thereby losing nearly two laps limping to the pits for a replacement and taped repair to the damaged fender fibreglass, Gregg was, by the second hour, able to establish a lead of a full lap to Walkinshaw. The combination of that good, early fuel mileage and his own determined driving allowed Holbert to keep Walkinshaw within range, well clear of Hobbs. Very soon these four cars had broken well away from the rest of the field. Of those who might have given chase, Dyer went out very early because of engine failure, the Garcia Corvette ran into gearbox troubles and Haywood, who worked into the first ten very quickly, promptly lost time with first a leaky cam cover and then a pair of broken windshields. The Allison Nova also showed a good turn of speed only to run into more gearbox troubles after very few laps.

As the afternoon became evening the three BMWs consolidated themselves at the front with Hobbs recovering from his tyre failure and a broken throttle cable to push his way back into third place. Holbert/Ballot-Lena continued to be the only team to be able to maintain any kind of pressure on the tails of the BMW trio but fairly early in the evening Holbert had a rear tyre chunk as he flew past the pits which sent him into a long, rubber-stenched spin down onto the end of the pit apron. Al brought the car back to his pit (upon which a protest against him would later be based) where it was discovered the axle-shafts needed replacing. With that the BMWs were left all alone, far ahead of the rest of the field.

It carried on that way until well past midnight but then the first sign of BMW fallibility showed its face when the Hobbs/Parsons car drove slowly down the pitlane, stopped for a long consultation at its pit, then was jacked up while the driver climbed out. For nearly ninety minutes it sat there while a failed gearbox was changed. Not much more than an hour later the Fitzpatrick/Walkinshaw car suddenly went missing and after a while Walkinshaw came walking in with news of a dead

Tom Walkinshaw has the Hermitite BMW under David Hobbs' similar car of the banking.



engine. He went back out with some mechanics to assist him and discovered a broken distributor drive. That fixed, the Hermetite BeeEm returned to the race a few laps ahead of the Coca-Cola version but between them and the Gregg/Redman car there were now as many as half a dozen Carreras.

As the coolest portion of the night brought blankets and jackets to the pits a growing list of problems began to afflict those machines which vacillated about the first ten — all, that is, except the leading BMW which continued to rasp on happily save for Gregg falling victim to a late-night snack which upset his stomach and forced Redman to drive a double-stint. Such was the rate of attrition that Holbert/Ballot-Lena were soon back into a comfortable second place from Graves/O'Steen/Helmick, while Haywood/Busby, now recovered from their early problems, pushed their way into fourth place ahead of the Hagestad/Jolly Carrera which had changed a gearbox around midnight. For a while Brockman/Greenwood were also able to work into the first five but a couple of collisions with slower cars aggravated an engine overheating problem and well before dawn the Corvette was out.

With Gregg's stomach problems, Fitzpatrick was pressed into service in the leading car for a pre-dawn stint. He came in to hand over to Redman again just as the first signs of dawn were beginning to hover vaguely through the sky and it was then, not long after beginning his fourth two-hour segment that the F5000 Champion began to feel signs of a burned valve. Soon the engine had lapsed onto five cylinders but it didn't deteriorate any more than that so that Brian was able to keep to within four or five seconds of his normal pace. Just about dawn, however, another problem struck at the leader.

As the car howled off the eastern banking and across a large bump in the tarmac just there — a bump which is the bane of Grand National drivers — the tail suddenly snapped to the right, pulling the car into a long, ragged spin. Redman, calm as ever despite his extra work load this night, collected the car together and brought it carefully down into the pits where a rear suspension bracket was found to have pulled out. Quickly, efficiently the BMW mechanics refabricated the piece and within fifteen minutes Brian was on his way again, still comfortably clear of the Holbert/Ballot-Lena Carrera.

With the grey, overcast coming of day the BMW continued to command the race ahead of a train of Porsches and when Holbert's blue car suddenly pulled in just after eight 'o'clock with a blown engine the BMW position became even stronger. About an hour later however, as Holbert's team completed a rapid engine/gearbox swap and got their man back into the race, the leader came in for a scheduled fuel stop which was to throw a convulsion of controversy across the race.

Not long after dawn the fuel truck, provided as ever at Daytona by Union 76 oil company, made one of its regular runs down the back of the pits with a load of fuel pumped from the company's permanent gasoline station in the paddock. Like all gasoline transporters this particular tanker was divided, or baffled, into three compartments. As it approached the west end of the row of pits the truck's operator had to change to a new compartment and with this same load of fuel he replenished the overhead tanks of most of the

The second and third placed Porsches of Holbert/Ballot-Lena and Haywood/Busby about to be lapped again by the winner.



The NASCAR cars were disappointing — this is the Dave and Harry Pearson Ford Torino.

faster Porsches as well as the BMW team, all of whom were located in a cluster at that end of the pitlane. Now, it is Union's policy — as it is with any gasoline dispensing outfit — to test all their fuel for water condensation as they draw it from their underground tanks in the paddock. But for some reason it seems that their always-dependable methods seem to have gone wrong on this occasion. Very soon, a large number of cars — as many as ten — were running into similar engine cutting-out problems. Of all the cars pitted in that portion of the pits the only one not so affected was the Brumos Porsche of Haywood/Busby whose team manager had refused fuel on that particular pass by the tanker simply because they had no need for it at the time.

The others however, were soon in serious trouble with Redman, the leader, being the first to experience the problem. Very soon the problem was communicated to the officials as Redman struggled to get his car going while Holbert and Haywood, both now running in the same lap, drew closer and closer. IMSA's John Bishop was across the road from the Speedway having breakfast when he first heard of the fuel problem and quickly rushed back to the control centre to consider the problem. Equally as rapidly he made a decision to red-flag the race and amid grumbles of bribery and corruption and sabotage the race was stopped at 10.10 on Sunday morning. This was the first time that a red flag has ever been used in an IMSA race and when questioned as to how he would have treated the problem had it happened at the other end of the pits, where most of the slower or walking wounded happened to be pitted, Bishop replied: "I would have done the same thing, absolutely. In fact, it would have been easier."

Most of the drivers either refused to comment about the red flag or were vaguely, rather unconvincingly favourable. Hurley Haywood, the one faster car not affected, was the biggest dissenter, "I think it's crazy," he said, "when you mount a tyre improperly you don't stop the race. That's supposed to be part of racing."

Nevertheless Haywood's team took advantage of the delay to replace their car's gearbox as did the Hermetite BMW team, while the rest of the leaders struggled to clean out their fuel systems. Finally, at 1.50 pm, the race was restarted with the cars assuming the order they had been in at 9 am when the fuel problem seemed to first arise. Holbert and Haywood circulated a petition to have the restart based on positions at the time of the red flag, but this was flatly denied.

As it was two of the leaders' races were in fact ruined by the watered fuel. The Graves/O'Steen/Helmick Porsche managed only a few staggering laps and instead of taking up its comfortable position six laps ahead of Holbert and Haywood it remained in the pits and slipped down to eighth place. The Walkinshaw/Fitzpatrick/Blackburn BMW was even less able to run properly and managed only a single stuttering lap before stopping completely out on the circuit.

During those final two hours rain began to fall with ever increasing intensity and, in fact, Redman spent much of the last thirty minutes in the pits while a cracked windshield was replaced and a broken wiper was thrown away. Haywood chased hard after Holbert through the rain, but the latter actually made ground on the former and consolidated himself in second place. Other than smashing the nose in the rain and changing a gearbox early in the night Hagestad/Jolly ran smoothly into fourth place ahead of the Carrera of Tillson/Oest/Jennings which had no troubles to speak of and the Minter/Adams/Cord Ferrari which ran flawlessly into sixth. The under 2 litre class was won by the Porsche of Hindson/Davenport/Carney which led the class for two-thirds of the race. After all their other problems Hobbs/Parsons were able to manage only a small amount of laps in the rain and could not improve on tenth place.

The Grand International cars, running on 15 ins stock car tyres, had no rain rubber so the survivors were forced to creep through the last ninety minutes on slicks. As it was the Pearson/Pearson/Bowsher Torino prevailed after leading the class most of the way in a tussle with both McGriff/McGriff who failed to finish, and Hylton/Childress. The fastest of the Grand International cars however, was the Allison Chevy Nova which recovered from its early gearbox troubles to catch and pass the winning Torino at one point. In so doing the CAM2 stock-car lapped very nearly as fast as the winning BMW for as long as a full hour. There must yet be potential there.

So this year's dress rehearsal for Le Mans showed promise if not excitement, intrigue if not a plain old drone through the night and perhaps more than anything else the great persistence of Brian Redman.

Daytona 24 hrs

Daytona-Le Mans Trophy
Daytona Beach, Florida, USA

1. Brian Redman/ Peter Gregg (3.0 BMW 3.0 CSL), 545 laps, 2092.8 miles, 104.04 mph.
2. Al Holbert/Claude Ballot-Lena (Porsche Carrera), 531 laps.
3. Hurley Haywood/Jim Busby (Porsche Carrera), 530 laps.
4. Bob Hagestad/Jerry Jolly (Porsche Carrera), 510 laps.
5. Mike Tillson/Dexter Oest/Bruce Jennings (Porsche Carrera), 508 laps.
6. Milt Minter/Chris Cord/Jim Adams (Ferrari Daytona), 500 laps.
7. Bob Hindson/Vic Davenport/Frank Carney (Porsche 911S), 493 laps.
8. Dave Helmick/John O'Steen/John Graves (Chevrolet Corvette), 493 laps.
9. Phil Currin/Cliff Gottlob/Peter Knab (Chevrolet Corvette), 483 laps.
10. David Hobbs/Benny Parsons (3.0 BMW CSL), 481 laps.



Nothing could stop the Avon Tyres Escort of Pentti Airikkala and John Davenport — not even Airikkala's fever of 102 degrees.

RAC RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP — 2

SNOWMAN RALLY

Finnish takeover bid

By JOHN DAVENPORT

Photographs by HUGH BISHOP

It must have been something to do with it being David Sutton's birthday for despite having a temperature of 102°, Pentti Airikkala wowed it to them in the north of Scotland last weekend and won the Snowman Rally in the David Sutton Cars Mk II Escort. One might even say that he 'flu to victory! As well as being a happy occasion for these two gentlemen, this win marked a first and a last: it was the first championship win for Avon Tyres and Castrol who both support the team, and it was also the last appearance in competition for co-driver John Davenport who joined the RAC Motor Sport Division on Monday.

Despite the slippery conditions on many of the stages, Ford Escorts had their usual hey-day, and took the first four positions overall. Second was the Cossack sponsored works car of Roger Clark and Jim Porter with the Allied Polymer Group Escort of Ari Vatanen and Peter Bryant in third place after an excursion cost them almost three minutes. Clark now leads the Motor RAC Championship with 19 points to Vatanen's 17. In third place in the championship and fourth overall on the Snowman lie Billy Coleman and Donal O'Sullivan in the Thomas Motors Escort. They broke a half-shaft on the very last state of the rally but were able to limp out and finish.

Colin Malkin impressed as expected but lost time with unsuitable tyres for some stages.



A mere twelve seconds behind Coleman's Escort was the British Leyland Group 2 Dolomite Sprite driven by Brian Culcheth/Johnstone Syer. They had a bad day with one episode in a ditch and another with a broken throttle linkage. Behind the Dolomite in sixth place was the other Government entry of a 16 valve Avenger for Colin Malkin/Paul White who went well but were especially unhappy on the snowy stages. Seventh place was just held by Andrew Cowan/Hugh McNeil in their ultra-reliable Mitsubishi Colt who squeezed home four seconds ahead of fellow Scotsmen, Drew Gallacher/Ian Muir in their old Escort RS 1600. The best Group One car was the DTV entry for Scotsmen, Jim McRae and David Brown who had an easy time of extending their Group One RAC Championship lead after the retirement of Tony Rond/Dave Richards in the Leyland Dolomite and the many problems of Robin Eyre-Maunsell/Neil Wilson in the 1800 cc Avenger. The surprise of the day was the most excellent performance of the White Horse Avenger driven by Gavin Waugh/Peter Handy which was the second Group One car, finished tenth overall and won the up to 1600 cc class. This was despite some time lost with the car on its side when they had to get out and push it on to its wheels again.

It was a disappointment to lose Russell Brookes/Andy Marriott when the Andrews Heat for Hire Escort went off after an excellent start and similarly Bill Taylor/Hugh McIver and Donald Heggie/George Dean were extremely competitive until they were sidelined after a few stages with mechanical problems. It was not a happy day either for GM with Tony Fall failing to reach the start with his Opel Kadett while his "clubman" car driven by Andy Dawson/Colin Wilson only moved a few hundred yards from the start before suffering engine failure. Then DTV's main hope for a good overall placing, the Group 2 Magnum of Will Sparrow/Nigel Raeburn, picked up two maximums as well as almost destroying itself on a bump.

The Snowman Rally is organised by the Highland Car Club and was sponsored by Mercury Motor Inns whose Inverness location was used as the start and finish, and by Cordiners the local Ford agents who provided the scrutineering venue and many of the cars used by the officials. As is usual with this most northern of the RAC Championship rallies, the weather was to play quite an important part in the result and the word on everyone's lips before the rally was — snow. It had in fact thawed in the week prior to the rally and Clark of the Course, Bob Wilson, was quite worried that some of the stages might have to be cancelled. As it was, every single one of the twenty-two stages was run successfully even though several of them were covered in frozen snow or ice. The amazing thing was that where the stages were not icy, they were as dry as a bone and there was as much dust around as one would



Brian Culcheth was involved in a day-long battle with Billy Coleman — both drivers suffering times losses; the duel was eventually resolved in Coleman's favour by just 12s after last-stage dramas.

expect to find in mid-summer. For those with a choice of tyres, this made choosing an especially difficult process and it is perhaps significant that Airikkala, whose Avons come in but one variety at the moment, was never hung up over choice of tyres and was thus consistent over nearly all the stages, dry or icy.

The whole rally was to occupy one day and thus the start had to be at seven o'clock on Saturday morning in order to fit it all in. Scrutineering took place on Friday evening and was followed by a forum and film show in the Mercury Motor Inn. Most of the southern crews had arrived early with the works Fords coming up on the BR Motorail service to Stirling and Aberdeen. Vatanen came on the train with his car but Clark flew up in his own plane. Airikkala came by BEA but wished he hadn't when they lost his bags and he had to go round borrowing clothes and gloves and buying driving shoes. He was still suffering from the influenza that had troubled him on the Tour of Dean and was so bad that he nearly could not start the next morning.

There was a good entry of over one hundred cars but this was depleted when Tony Fall/Mike Broad failed to show in the DOT Kadett which had apparently suffered engine failure on the way north. Nigel Rockey has still not got a car and scratched his entry but otherwise the field was pretty much intact as it assembled on that cold Saturday morning. Andy Dawson in the Stockhill Garage Opel Kadett was first off the line as he won this event last year in his Kleber Scholarship Datsun but unhappily the Kadett dropped a valve on the way to the first stage. By the time that the tenth car was leaving, he was back in the hotel.

For those that did reach the first stages just outside Inverness near Culloden battlefield, it was still dark and many had difficulty in finding the first stage for it began in a new housing estate and the Tulip road book supplied by the organisers only covered the stages themselves. Ice was present but only in small patches and despite two fearsome yumps towards the end of the stage, there were no serious incidents. Roger Clark had a problem with his lights but by the third and fourth stages at Culbin, daylight had already arrived.

After four stages, Brookes and Vatanen held a slim lead over Airikkala with Clark, Culcheth, Taylor and Coleman not far behind. The two

Monaghty stages proved very little for despite some icy patches, the leading cars cleaned them. Russell Close/Mike Greasely had a minor fire in their Motor Centre/Avon Tyres Escort when the battery cut-out switch developed a short but they were able to extinguish it and keep going. Less fortunate were Donald Heggie/George Dean in his ill-fated Escort which had the transistor ignition pack up and left them stranded in the stage. Poor Robin Eyre-Maunsell was not having a good time of it in the Ulster Dealer Team Chrysler Avenger as it had started having gear selector problems in Culbin and was now restricted to two gears for propulsion in the forward direction.

The next stage was Lossie, the infamous narrow twisty four miles which is so stony towards the end. Here, Brian Culcheth, driving the old Group 2 Dolomite with considerable verve on his newly acquired A2 Dunlops, misjudged a staggered cross-roads and left the road backwards. Had the engine not stalled, this misdemeanour might only have cost him a few seconds, but it refused to re-start for at least thirty seconds by which time the rear end was well stuck and the car needed pushing, a task in which some spectators were only too willing to help. On the same stage Bill Taylor ground to a halt with his Escort's engine wrecked owing to a failure of the gears in the oil pump. With his three year contract with the Royal Bank of Scotland now at an end and negotiations under way for a continuation, Taylor is at present rallying entirely on his own money and this could scarcely have come at a worse time. Stopped here too was the works BL Allegro of Pat Ryan/Mike Nicholson who suffered a complete electrical failure that was not susceptible to any fault finding and the car was eventually removed with a trailer. Ronnie McCartney/Frank Main were expected to be challengers in the Group One scene with their Mazda RX3 but they lost time here with a puncture and again later through the same cause.

Stage eight was a turning point in the rally. It was an eight mile stage in new territory high on a hill at Aultmore near Keith but the really special thing about it was that it was 95% snow and ice. The tracks of the course cars had made two icy slicks but there was grip to be found under the virgin snow at the sides of the road and in the middle. The two Finns knew this and took full advantage of the fact that they were refining early on the road to record fastest times — Airikkala 10m 03s and Vatanen 10m 09s. Roger Clark was suffering from rally-fade having finished a very tough Monte Carlo but a week earlier and subsequently having been fully occupied filming and testing before flying up himself for the Snowman, but still he was in the same minute as the Finns. Russell Brookes ended a fine drive by winding up in the ditch so that he could not get back on but he need not have felt lonely for the Sampson brothers, Charles and Alec, emulated his predicament only half a mile or so away while Russell Close also slid into the ditch and stayed there. Colin Malkin had stayed on A2s and had a positively frightening run over the stage losing two minutes to the leaders. The Avenger of Gavin Waugh tried to get some ice in its White Horse Whisky by tipping up on to its side and lost over a minute getting the right way up again. Billy Coleman lost more time with a rear wheel puncture and he was to have another one, this time at the front, after a couple more stages.



Above: Ronnie McCartney drove the "vacuum cleaner" Mazda spiritedly despite puncture problems while Roger Clark (below) was off-song on the early stages and never showed his usual form.



Now Vatanen led by a short head from Airikkala with Clark in the van. Will Sparrow was making the DTV Magnum go very well but he blotted his copybook on the next stage in Whiteash when he disappeared up a firebreak backwards and took a maximum to get the car back to the road. The errant gearbox of Eyre-Maunsell had been changed after SS9 and now with four gears to play with, he had one of his famous shunts and did quite a lot of damage to the car. Despite losing three minutes, he got it off the stage and the Chrysler mechanics who had just changed his gearbox in 12 minutes set about changing the steering arms and rack. The chassis was kinked and it was a subdued Eyre-Maunsell that carried on.

Shunts seemed to be the order of the day for poor Mick Briant/John Cappler brought their rally to a disastrous end on stage 10 when they hit a patch of ice downhill and wrote off their Group One Escort RS 2000. Just three stages later and it was Ari Vatanen's turn and he was stuck with one wheel off in a ditch for some three minutes until Peter Bryant's determined pushing got them going again. Thus at lunch time, the positions were fairly well settled with the still sick Airikkala with a 40s lead over Clark with Malkin, Culcheth and Coleman several minutes adrift behind Vatanen. The Group One category was already in the hands of Jim MacRae for Tony Pond had retired two stages back with big ends in his Dolomite, a rare mechanical failure for this normally reliable car. DTV had been dealt another blow in the Sparrow department as he had gained a second maximum when the sealing ring blew off on his air filter. He summoned help on the radio and MacRae took a gallon of Castrol in to him which got them out of the stage.

After lunch, the rally toyed around with some short stages near Cawdor where Airikkala contrived to remove his Escort's rear spoiler and then went to Meall Mhor where snow again covered the majority of the stage. Vatanen flew to record 4m 55s with Airikkala on 5m 06s and Clark 5m 12s. The British Champion was very tired and commented that he seemed to have no reserves left to turn on. A reverse re-run over the yumpy first stage of the rally saw quite a lot of grief with Sparrow breaking his shock absorbers and bending the body of the Magnum while Murray Grierson rolled his ex-works Escort. Drew Gallacher lost quite a lot of time when he mowed down a fence just before the finish line and had to be pushed back to the road.

The finale of the rally comprised two long stages at Glen Affric and Glen Urquhart. On the first of these Brian Culcheth had his throttle linkage break and lost a couple of minutes fixing it while on the second Billy Coleman broke a half shaft and



Jim MacRae now leads the RAC Group One section comfortably after a superb ninth place.

lost a similar amount of time but neither of them dropped enough to give Colin Malkin the chance to move up a place. Vatanen was really trying hard and took back on Airikkala over thirty seconds on these two stages alone. However, the final result was the Avon-shod Finn in first place with Vatanen finishing just forty-one seconds behind Clark.

Back at the Mercury Motor Inn, the results went up shortly after six o'clock in the evening but due to several re-counts — including one made after the results were final — the prizes were not presented until the small hours of the morning, when several of the leading protagonists had gone to bed. Still everyone seemed happy even if the bar was closed (it reopened by popular demand after a few errant locals were persuaded that there was no more whisky that night) and the Snowman should be assured a full entry list next January.

Overall Classification

1. P. Airikkala/J. Davenport (Ford Escort RS1800) 104.48;
 2. R. Clark/J. Porter (Ford Escort RS 1800) 106.01;
 3. A. Vatanen/P. Bryant (Ford Escort RS 1800) 106.42;
 4. B. Coleman/D. O'Sullivan (Ford Escort RS 1800) 111.16;
 5. B. Culcheth/J. Syer (Triumph Dolomite Sprint) 111.28;
 6. C. Malkin/P. White (Chrysler Avenger) 112.14;
 7. A. Cowan/H. McNeil (Mitsubishi Colt Lancer) 113.09;
 8. D. Gallacher/I. Muir (Ford Escort RS 1600) 113.13;
 9. J. MacRae/D. Brown (Vauxhall Magnum) 113.13;
 10. G. Waugh/P. Handy (Chrysler Avenger) 114.52).
- RAC points: 1. R. Clark 19; 2. A. Vatanen 17; 3. B. Coleman 13.
Group One: J. MacRae 18.

- SS1 = 1, Vatanen, Culcheth 2.05; =3, Clark, Coleman 2.06; 5, Airikkala 2.08.
SS2 = 1, Vatanen 0.56; =2, Coleman, Culcheth 0.57; 4, Clark 0.59; 5, Airikkala 1.00.
SS3 = 1, Vatanen 6.51; 2, Airikkala 6.56; 3, Culcheth 7.02; 4, Coleman 7.05; 5, Clark 7.08.

- SS4 = 1, Airikkala 3.49; 2, Vatanen 3.50; 3, Clark 3.52; 4, Culcheth 3.54; 5, Coleman 4.00.
SS5 = 1, Clark, Vatanen, Coleman 4.40; =4, Airikkala, Culcheth 4.48.
SS6 = 1, Airikkala, Clark, Culcheth 3.30; 4, Airikkala, Culcheth 4.48.
SS6 = 1, Airikkala, Clark, Culcheth 3.30; =4, Vatanen, Coleman 3.50.
SS7 = 1, Airikkala, Clark, Vatanen, Coleman 4.00; 5, Culcheth 4.49.
SS8 = 1, Airikkala 10.03; 2, Vatanen 10.09; 3, Clark 10.24; 4, Culcheth 10.56; 5, Coleman 12.06.
SS9 = 1, Vatanen 4.07; =2, Airikkala, Clark 4.11; 4, Coleman 4.18; 5, Culcheth 4.26.
SS10 = 1, Coleman 7.10; 2, Vatanen 7.12; 3, Clark 7.13; 4, Airikkala 7.20; 5, Culcheth 7.25.
SS11 = 1, Airikkala, Vatanen 5.33; 3, Coleman 5.43; 4, Clark 5.47; 5, Culcheth 5.55.
SS12 = 1, Vatanen 3.13; 2, Clark 3.19; 3, Airikkala 3.20; 4, Coleman 3.25; 5, Culcheth 3.29.
SS13 = 1, Clark 4.46; 2, Airikkala 4.48; 3, Coleman 4.51; 4, Culcheth 4.52; 5, Vatanen 7.28.
SS14 = 1, Airikkala 2.24; 2, Vatanen 2.47; =3, Clark, Coleman 2.50; 5, Culcheth 2.51.
SS15 = 1, Airikkala, Vatanen 2.13; 3, Clark 2.17; 4, Coleman 2.18; 5, Culcheth 2.19.
SS16 = 1, Airikkala, Clark 2.28; 3, Coleman 2.30; 4, Vatanen 2.31; 5, Culcheth 2.35.
SS17 = 1, Vatanen 2.00; =2, Airikkala, Coleman, Culcheth 2.02; 5, Clark 2.05.
SS18 = 1, Vatanen 4.55; 2, Airikkala 5.06; 3, Clark 5.15; 4, Coleman 4.18; 5, Culcheth 5.19.
SS19 = 1, Airikkala, Vatanen 2.14; 3, Clark 2.17; 4, Coleman 2.20; 5, Culcheth 2.21.
SS20 = 1, Vatanen, Culcheth 1.56; 3, Clark 1.57; =4, Airikkala, Coleman 1.58.
SS21 = 1, Vatanen 13.12; 2, Airikkala 13.22; 3, Coleman 13.35; 4, Clark 13.45; 5, Culcheth 16.26.
SS22 = 1, Vatanen 11.00; 2, Clark 11.15; 3, Airikkala 11.21; 4, Culcheth 11.56; 5, Coleman 14.05.

Unfortunately the stage times are rather less meaningful than usual owing to the fact that the Highland Car Club did not retain copies of the original records showing all competitors' performances. The stage times below are thus merely a record of the fastest five drivers who actually finished the rally.

Ari Vatanen unfortunately spoilt a perfect run with just one delay in a ditch. His times were sometimes 3s quicker per stage mile than other top drivers.





Tapio Rainio survived to score his second "Arctic" victory in three years.

MARLBORO ARCTIC RALLY

Tapio on top of the world

Story and photographs by MARTIN HOLMES

Tapio Rainio and Erkki Nyman (Finnish Saab 96) won their second Marlboro Arctic in three years last weekend when their team-mates Simo Lampinen/Juhani Markanen lost a comfortable lead when the differential failed. As usual it was one of the world's great adventure rallies, the more so this year with temperatures reaching all-time low records, even for this event. At times the figure was below minus 40 degrees, which brought with it some unusual hardness in the roads used and contributed to many mechanical failures. Waterholes on frozen river stages at the beginning of the rally caused untold havoc: few people could believe what they saw when ice formed an immovable wedge around gear linkages, brakes and steering arms. The inclusion of these stages highlighted criticism of the organisation, which encompassed other troubles such as poor arrowing of stages and, a very poor roadbook but which except for the luckless contingent who suffered did little to detract from the main objectives. This was to conquer the elements, compete in the world's coldest rally and see the incredible beauty of a Finnish winter north of the Arctic Circle. For the first time, non-Scandinavian drivers succeeded in reaching the finish — the German crew Dieter Gunther/Wilfried Nanz (RS2000) and the British competitors Fred Henderson/Dave Orrick (Toyota Celica GT) gaining this honour, together with memories to last a lifetime.

Seventy-nine crews were listed to compete on the main portion of the event, which was 1800 km long and included about 700 kms of secret route stages held entirely over snow or ice-bound roads. There was another event run concurrently over the second part of the event, for which 55 "Juniors" were entered, this being more in the nature of a restricted status event. The major part of the rally was the first part, when competitors had to drive for over 24 hours practically non-stop. In this loop the route headed northwards deep into the wilds of Lapland beyond Ivalo until it reached Karigasniemi on the Norwegian border, north of

the 69th parallel. A stage of 105 kms led competitors to this point, where there was a midnight halt in temperatures the worse side of minus 40 for a couple of hours or so, before returning back down the stage again. Perhaps the only compensation was that the hardest part of the winter was over, in that there is some seven or so hours of acceptable daylight available at the end of January, but nonetheless it was potentially a most unpleasant prospect to break down at all, let alone in the dark. Spectators, not unnaturally tended to be pretty sparsely gathered, particularly on the longer stages, whilst if your engine failed

you had no means of keeping warm. On the plus side, the snowbanks ensured that practically any off-road excursion would be pretty harmless body-wise, although even the slightest excursion would necessitate some hearty spade work.

Stage length varied considerably, from less than two kms up to the 105 km monsters mentioned earlier. Six out of 32 stages were held on frozen rivers or lakes, the first two being damaging to competitors in the way mentioned later (stage two was cancelled after car no 28 had passed through. Out of the top 28 competitors, only six reached the finish, the others mostly retiring through damage here). Many stages were repeated, run in opposite directions, and these were invariably much rougher the second time. Ice was forming after the passage of the cars the first time and formed vicious ridges which threw cars into the snowbanks and thumped the suspension mercilessly. The narrowness of the tracks meant that it was almost impossible, on many occasions, to pass a stranded driver. The system of road timing enabled drivers, upon request, to ask for two, three or even more minutes' delay in starting a stage behind the car in front, but even so there were endless stories about baulking from this reason. In any case it was often impossible for a crew themselves to move a car until the next car arrived. Dust thrown up by cars meant catching the car in front another unpleasant affair: Timo Salonen went off and retired in the late stages through just this cause.

The second part of the event was a much simpler rally, a drive of some nine hours around stages mainly to the south of Rovaniemi, in other words south of the Arctic Circle. By the time competitors arrived back in Rovaniemi for their seven-hour break after the first long run, most of the action had been settled. There was a tough fight for second place, but out of the 79 starters 32 reached the break and 27 made the finish.

ENTRY

Works teams came from Finnish Saab and Polski Fiat, concessionaire teams from Volvo and Chrysler, whilst as usual in Finland there were serious private sponsored teams. Saab produced the strength behind the entry. Three of their V4 96s with 1815 cc engines, were entered, one (Simo Lampinen's) fitted with fuel injection and the other two (for Jari Vilkas and Tapio Rainio) with carburettors. This team had won for the past two years, and with the absence of Swedish Saab (there was a national rally in Sweden the following week, and it was fairly obvious the marque would win anyway) they were clear favourites for a hat-trick. Polski-Fiat entered Andrzej Jaroszewicz/Ryszard Zyskowski in the familiar red Fiat Abarth 124 Rallye, whilst there was a new 125p for Jussi Kynsilehto/Martin Holmes. This was originally due to have an 1800 cc engine, but after the Monte Carlo shock about non-homologation, it was fitted with a 1600 cc unit. The car was painted in the colours of Nortti, a blue and orange scheme also seen on the cars of Hamalainen and Laine.

The concessionaires provided the technical novelties, surprisingly. Volvo entered a 66, the model formerly marketed by DAF. Leo Kinnunen, the racing driver, whose last rally was this time last year, was the driver. Following some outings by Per Walfridsson last year in a Daf, Sweden became interested in using the Volvo 66, but confusion over homologation plans led to this car using a 1300 cc engine developing only 106 bhp. There are plans to use a Renault 8 Gordini engine in the future, which will produce 130 bhp from the same size whilst there is also the Walfridsson engine which develops 127 bhp from only 1100 cc. Leo was most taken with the ease of driving the car, rating this as a car with considerable potential on an event such as this. The Simca Chrysler venture was all a little secretive, until some blue vans appeared outside the Pohjanhovi Hotel with French registrations and bearing the inscription "Chrysler France," so it was obvious that something important was going on. The drivers for the three Simca Milles were Bernard Fiorentino, Pauli and Henri Toivonen. They were built for Group 2 with 1300 cc engines, giving about 125 bhp, using twin carburettors although injection had been tested recently. Four speed gearboxes were used, although the ratios were closer than normal. Plans for the future are uncertain, but there are entries for the KAK Rally with two cars, using 1300 cc engines — a 1000 and an 1100.

The other entries were private, to a greater extent. Opel Asconas were popular with cars used by Ulf Gronholm, Hannu Valtaharju and Faj



Pauli Toivonen has lost none of his skill — as he proved by taking his Simca 1000 to fourth place.

Fyhrqvist, there were an incredible number of Avengers, of which the quickest were expected to be those of Kyosti Hamalainen and Pertti Karha. Skodas came with John Haugland and Markku Saaristo, Datsun Violet with Timo Salonen (who went very well in the 1000 Lakes but who is now using the Markku Alen white car). Private Saabs were surprising in their paucity, with only the car of Northern Lights Rally winner Antero Laine being competitive. There were several Alfa Romeo 2000s, though the car of Kyosti Saari, a local driver, was expected to go the best. From abroad, and facing what appeared to be a hopeless task against Finnish experience and expertise in this type of event, came Klaus Russling/Franz Mikes from Austria with a VW 1600, from Germany came four cars, the champion Reiner Altenheimer/Michael Schwagerl with his usual black Porsche, a yellow Kadett of Reinhard Hainbach/Heinz Jager, the KWS Autotechnik RS2000 of Dieter Gunther/Wilfried Nanz and an Ascona for Holzhammer and Schmidt-Bohlander. From England we had the Toyota Celica GT of Oates Garage, Willington, County Durham, and crewed as usual by Fred Henderson/David Orrick, and finally from Belgium we had Georges Mignot/Leon Lejeune, the Boucles de Spa folk, with another Opel Ascona. Apart from Haugland, the rest came from Finland!

New regulations in Finland were recently announced, governing the number and type of studs that can be used on rallies. The number depends upon the quantity of studs that can be fitted for a given length of circumference of tyre rather than the actual number per tyre, and for an average tyre worked out at around 200. What was amazing to a stranger was the almost complete reliance upon one type of tyre. Kumi-Helenius are a re-tread company that operates from the rally home town of Rovaniemi, and factory and private teams alike were happy to use this rubber. As for the actual studs, regulations govern not only the length of stud but its method of fixing, the diameter and shape, which had to be cylindrical. The fitting had to be done from outside the tyre, so Dunlop's Monte tyres would not have been legal, and also a certain proportion of the width of the tyre had to be completely clear of studding. This was not all! A total of 12 tyres were all that one car could use. At scrutineering crews had to present all the tyres they intended to use, and special marks indicating the event and the number of the competitor concerned were branded on to the side of the tyres. Six or seven times during the event, checks were made to ensure that the rules were obeyed. What became obvious from the outset was that really powerful cars would probably be unable to restrict themselves to 12 tyres and still keep their studs, and this was one of the main reasons why Fords withdrew their original entry for Timo Makinen in an RS1800.

One of the major features of Finnish rallying is the concession made in order to obtain permission to run the rallies: racing is confined to the special stages and road sections are held at a slow speed. To this end, time controls were placed both before and after stages, to take away the temptation to hurry on the road in order to make good any delay on a stage. There were maximum penalties on stages (these depended on the length of the stage, but the exact maximum penalty was uncertain because they were quoted differently in many

places) and excesses over this maximum were regarded as road penalties, counting towards overall permitted lateness, 30 minutes in each loop, and also being penalised at a reduced rate.

The police, as always, had radar checks, and in previous years these had been placed even in very remote areas. The maximum speed permitted according to regulations on the road sections was 80 kph. One km more and exclusion was the result. If you exceeded some lower limit there was a graduated scale of penalty, with exclusion only being applied if you transgressed by more than 10 kph. This seemed straightforward, but when the route details were issued the day before the start things were obviously wrong. The averages for the road sections were irregular. It was difficult to say how irregular because the time cards and the roadbook distances did not correspond, but it was obvious that some sections were set at averages of over 70 and many at over 60. The organisers explained that this year the radar traps would only be set up near villages, crossroads or other hazards, and that competitors need have no worry. Some competitors were eventually to be disqualified for speeding, the most important being Marketta Oksala, who was leading the ladies' prize until the penultimate stage until being excluded. It was a bad system altogether.

RALLY

Lampinen was the first driver away, following his victory on this rally last year, with a gap behind due to the absent Makinen. The leading foreign drivers followed: Jaroszewicz, Russling, Altenheimer and Fiorentino before the leading Finns. The ice stages were the first to be tackled,

and for many the last as well. Not only the foreign drivers suffered. The havoc was terrible. Lampinen had a clear run and when the results were issued he had a lead of 29 seconds — over a distance of less than 10 km. Everyone else suffered blockages. The second car through, the Fiat Abarth, met the water holes and stopped, the third car, the VW stopped and then everyone else was forced either to come to a halt or to pull into the snowbanks to avoid the water holes. Not only did the water holes give off a steam which was like a dense fog but also they formed a danger that only the local drivers really appreciated. For the foreign drivers it was frightening to feel the car slowly sinking through the holes — it felt as if it would fall right through to the water below. In fact there were layers of ice beneath the water, but these were not visible to the eye! The real danger lay in what happened afterwards. The instant icing. People who had maximum penalties on the first stage included Jaroszewicz, Fiorentino and the local driver Saari in an Alfa Romeo. Karha with an Avenger just escaped the maximum by seconds, but was still some 10 minutes slower than the best time. What was never determined was the road penalty that these cars suffered through exceeding the maximum since road penalties were never published in the results. Henri Toivonen never survived the first stage with his Simca: not only did he have ice on the car but he broke the crown wheel and pinion as well. The chaos here was nothing compared with that on the second stage. The first competitors were told that the stage would be shortened, and were invited to drive through the stage until they found the start marshal. No marshal! Later competitors were told the stage was cancelled, but were ordered to drive through to the end. Only after about two dozen cars had passed were the marshals' positions altered so that competitors could avoid the stage altogether. There was water everywhere. Drivers were stopped everywhere. Jaroszewicz found the steering completely jammed and Russling could not change gear. For two hours these crews worked on their cars, standing in freezing water, trying to make the cars mobile again. Heikki Enomaa with the Blue Rose BMW had his differential cooling oil pipes break due to ice and the first he knew of this trouble was when the differential seized. Matti Johansson (RS 1600) had the steering seize but continued.

Stage three was the first proper snow stage. 50 km long, it used normal roads, some wide but mainly fairly narrow. Lampinen suffered a broken rear break pipe here, despite using neutral time on stage two to clear away as much ice as he could. Jussi Kynsiletho retired when his engine stopped: it seemed that it had just stalled and a lot of time and effort was spent trying to push start the car. Gunter in the KWS Autotechnik Escort even stopped to tow the car, but it was to no avail. A cam had jumped the belt. From this stage cars went to Kemijarvi for a short ice stage before heading northwards towards Lapland. After six stages Lampinen had a minute lead over Rainio

No damage to worry about, but plenty of spade work is the penalty for any misjudgements — 3rd placed Sarri.





Salonen's Datsun Violet tackles one of the many "night" stages – daylight being at a premium in January at this latitude.

(after 55 minutes' driving) with Valtaharju equal third with Laine. After another three stages Lampinen had increased his lead to nearly two minutes, but by now Laine was out with differential trouble, and helplessly blocked the road waiting for help to move the car. Valtaharju was some 20 seconds ahead of Hamalainen, the first group one driver, while another two minutes behind came Pauli Toivonen. Fiorentino retired after stage 10 with residual effects of ice whilst on the long stage 12 Lampinen stopped with no drive. It was thought that the gearbox casing had cracked and allowed the differential to come out of mesh. Harri Vaananen retired his private Simca Rallye 2 with a broken sump and Erkki Pitkanen retired his Group 1 Avenger with a broken gearbox. The position was now Rainio in the lead four minutes ahead of teammate Vilkas, who in turn had two minutes' lead over Leo Kinnunen with the Volvo 66. Behind same Salonen, Toivonen and Valtaharju. The torture was not yet over, as the cars now faced a return drive along the 105km stage and a series of stages which repeated those tackled earlier. Gronholm was the first to go, off the road on stage 13, whilst Vilkas was able to continue although he lost nearly 15 minutes through going off. Timo Jouhki retired with water pump trouble on his Avenger. Stage 14 was no less hard on the cars. Hamalainen retired with engine failure in his Avenger. Over-revving. Jumping! He reckoned he was in with a good chance of winning the rally and was trying as hard as he could at the time. Vilkas went off again, this time for good and Ilpo Saari, brother of Kyosti, also went off. He drove an Avenger and two other similar cars retired with electrical troubles, Hans Sevelius and Seppo Nittymaki. In Sevelius's case there was a fire and the fire extinguisher filled the car with foam. On stage 15 Kinnunen retired with a broken wheel stud due to driving with loose wheel nuts after a tyre change. After Vilkas' excursions the little Volvo had been lying second overall for three stages. On stage times Valtaharju was now second ahead of Toivonen and Saari, who had eventually made the top ten after his maximum. Karha was also climbing fast and was lying seventh. Three more stages remained before the rest halt, where Rainio was leading by 15 minutes from Toivonen in the Simca Rallye, with Valtaharju third after road penalties were added.

The second part of the rally was tame by comparison. Nearly all the leading retirements had happened. Markku Saaristo after a long excursion was continuing with his Blue Rose Skoda "just for fun", but after two stages he retired through gearbox failure. Rainio's task was to maintain his lead and drive sensibly, although the fight for second place was very serious. Toivonen started just two seconds ahead of the Ascona, with Saari and Salonen five minutes behind but chasing hard. After three stages Valtaharju was second. After eight stages Salonen was just two and a half minutes behind Toivonen. On stage 30 he left the road and retired, two

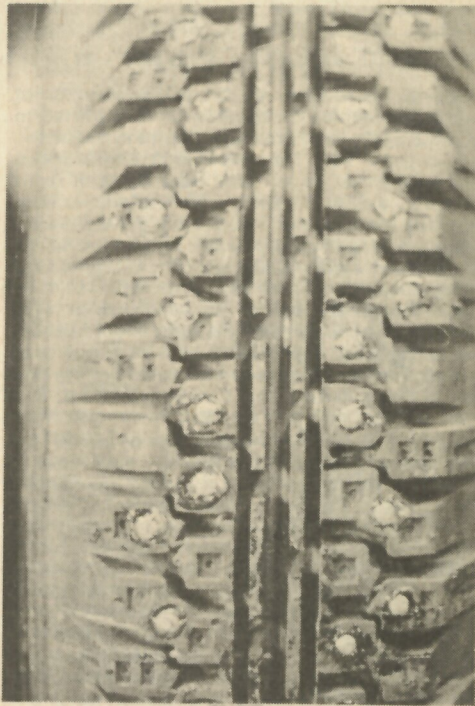
minutes behind the little Simca. With five stages to go he was seven minutes behind, and on the final stage he overtook the French car to score a fantastic third place overall. Overshadowed by his performance but equally as impressive was that of Pertti Harha in fifth place three minutes behind the Simca. A last-stage off cost Kauko Makela in a Group 1 Peugeot 304S seventh place – he fell six places to 13th. Also in trouble on stage 32 was Martti Heiskanen with his RS2000. He had put up fantastic performances on the ice stages, but had split his sump. He even arranged service in the middle of the final stage in order to refill his engine, but all this cost time and ninth place was all he could manage. Haugland was the best non-Finnish driver with seventh place after two delays due to baulking. Gunther was 18th after replacing broken shock absorbers which he had to suffer for two long stages. The British co-driver Michael Wood finished 15th with Curt Nelskyla despite a broken exhaust manifold which ruined the effectiveness of their heater, and one quick but

non-damaging roll, but surely the happiest man to finish was Henderson. His major problems were a 20-minute off and broken suspension arm caused by the rubbers failing in the cold. Germany had a less happy time than Britain, for excepting Gunther they had no finishers. Altenheimer went off the road and then to add insult to injury went off again whilst driving quietly back to the headquarters, and Hainback damaged his engine when water entered the carburettors of his Kadett, and blew it up. But of all the achievement few can have compared with that of Saari, of whom doubtless we will hear much more in the years to come.

Marlboro Arctic Rally

Overall Results

1. T. Rainio/E. Nyman (Saab 96) 29178 pens.
2. H. Valtaharju/R. Anttila (Opel Ascona) 30346.
3. K. Saari/J. Markula (Alfa Romeo 2000 GTV) 30597
4. P. Toivonen/M. Tiukkanen (Simca 1000 Rallye) 30624.
5. P. Karha/Sutonon (Sunbeam Avenger) 30809 9.
6. K. Fyhrorist/L. Malmstrom (Open Ascona) 32010; 7. J. Hangland/P. Nyborg (Skoda S120) 32088; 8. V. Metso/K. Itkonen (Opel Ascona) 32205; 9. H. Heiskanen/E. Tikka (Ford Escort RS2000) 32227; 10. R. Hameennemu/J. Pikkarai (Open Ascona) 32240.



The Kumi-Helenius retread tyre from Rovaniemi.

The Daf 66 in new Volvo guise looked an impressive machine. Future cars will produce 130 bhp.





INTERVIEW

Ari Vatanen—culture shock!

PETER NEWTON talks to the new Finnish resident at Boreham.

Fourteen months ago Ari Vatanen set out on a local rally one Saturday night; it was not a wildly significant affair, merely a local stage event and the 22-year-old student typified an entry packed with highly competitive, aspiring young giant-killers. There was however a little more at stake for Ari than merely casting his fortunes to the trolls in the forest, for he had decided on two courses of action for the coming weekend; firstly he was not going back to school on Monday, and secondly he was going to win the rally and become a professional rally driver — the fact that the entry list included Hannu Mikkola did not seem to deter him at all.

A glimpse of his car might have been enough to send a shiver of foreboding down the backs of all but the most foolhardy — barely recognisable as an Ascona, Ari's rally car crouched, forlorn on the road, all jagged edges and asymmetrical lines, a brutally campaigned machine with some mechanical origins which were said to have emanated from across the desolate steppe of the Russian frontier. The car had not been touched for two years, and that was the way the driver liked it, for it was reliable and as long as the Vatanen troll swung happily from the cracked interior mirror, the young auto mechanics student knew that all was well.

Such is the pace of the Finnish rallies, and so keen are the youngsters to topple the maestros and so expensive are spares that Ari only finished three rallies in 1974 — he had already finished second to Hannu Mikkola and Timo Makinen, and then that Saturday night he beat Hannu. A man cannot execute these feats without being 'noticed,' and various talent spotters claimed to have 'discovered' the tall, lanky youth — a British journalist, a Ford PR man (Timo Putkonen, who co-drove Hannu Mikkola), Mikkola himself and DOT, with whom Vatanen corresponded. In the event a combination of all their efforts sent Ari on his way and it was here that British spectators first came

to know Vatanen, who, speaking little or no English, stood around awkwardly in the lobby of the Centre Hotel, Cardiff, just prior to the Welsh, while passers-by surmised as to his name and whereabouts, and Dave Richards and DOT did their best to look after him.

His exploits on the Welsh and Scottish last year are too recent history to be re-dredged, but when the dust had settled and the enthusiasm of the moment had died down, the mutterings could be heard loud and clear—we had definitely not seen the last of Ari Vatanen... but when would we see him again and what would he be driving? Ford had already expressed their interest and DOT were only too aware of the fact they were on the point of losing their new charger. The wheels were already in motion and when the Ford deal to re-sign Hannu Mikkola for '76 fell through, plans were accelerated significantly. Timo Putkonen, Stuart Turner and Peter Ashcroft decided that Ari should be given a try in a works car on two small Finnish events after the Scottish. It was then that the slice of luck, which is so much a pre-requisite of stories like this, fell to Ari. Makinen was getting a new RS1800 for the 1000 Lakes as part of a policy decision, even though his old car was almost perfect. The latter stayed in Finland and it was natural that Ari hopped happily into it. Perhaps



"I don't really mind what has been said about me — any foreigner getting a chance like this could have expected the same — it is not nearly so hard as I expected and it is understandable to take some criticism."

though there was a little more than merely the element of chance in Stuart Turner's appearance on the 1000 Lakes as a spectator. He was vastly impressed with Ari's brief though spectacular performance; Ford were sold on Vatanen, the school truancy gamble had paid off — after all as Ari says "I can always go back to school!"

The deal when it finally broke at the beginning of this year was perhaps the most coveted ever

to be offered to a rising rally driver. Hannu Mikkola had a similar though less ambitious initial programme way back when; but the Vatanen contract caused more than a few intakes of breath, both within the British rally scene and in the specialist press. Whether one approves or disapproves of Boreham's policy is at once largely irrelevant and in any case is not at issue here. Ford ARE British rallying and have ceaselessly (though of course entirely in their own interests in the first instance) injected it with the vitality which makes our national scene one of European envy. A young, quick, receptive trainee was required post-haste, and one gauged that within the team hierarchy there might have been some substance in the suspicion that both Timo and Roger had almost priced themselves out of the market during annual contract renewal time last November/December. Apart from all other considerations there must have remained the conviction that Ari Vatanen's presence would at the very least serve to remind the establishment that they were neither infallible nor irreplaceable. Peter Ashcroft's bald statement — "he IS the man" — contained much more than immediately met the eye.

"I had to work very hard for the Dean result, I know the mistakes I make when I'm driving; there are lots of them and I have a long way to go."

Since the Ford press conference in January, Ari has been quietly getting on with the job as 'errand boy' at Boreham, 'dogsbody' to the works team, and of course apprentice rally driver. The rumblings in the press have of course affected him, but they evidently do not affect his performances one iota, for in two national rallies so far this year he has managed to achieve what no other British driver of any age or experience has managed to do in recent times. He has finished second and third while mixing it with the best in the land and has led Roger Clark by over a minute — a story which one could be forgiven for thinking came from the realms of fiction.

Last weekend, Vatanen gave some real substance to the theory that led to his signing; namely that he is the quickest driver down a given stage to make an appearance for many years. He was fastest on 15 of the Snowman's 22 stages and would have won comfortably had there not been one of those indiscretions which occurred in the afternoon, dropping him down to third behind the 'old hands.' One can well understand the barely tangible trace of bitterness among the ranks of the stalwarts for the comparative ease with which Vatanen has slid into a position from which he can challenge the best in the sport; but the name of the game is winning, and there is no doubt that Vatanen will shortly be doing just that.

We talked to him at Euston station as he was about to board a night sleeper express to Perth for the Snowman, and it was immediately clear that Ari has not really changed at all from the carefree days of the Scottish, when he scarcely spoke any English and the situation was always — 'flat out or bust.' Whether or not you approve of Ford policy — and it is hard to disapprove on objective grounds, it is almost equally hard not to be influenced by the young man's infectious vitality and humour. He is well aware of the magnitude of the chance that has been offered him, but he is

"Of course my style has changed a little with the new responsibility; I am now — what is the English word — reasonable? (!) — I have a good car and must look after it . . ."

relaxed and happy, just as though the old Ascona was outside and he was on the point of rushing into it and astounding everyone with his antics.

Vatanen knows he is learning and has a long way to go in the art of professionalism, but he is prepared to talk about it with a slightly amused self-criticism and an endearing candour. These two facets persist in diluting the credence of the ferocity which he is only too pleased to unleash at the wheel of a rally car. His English is now dramatically improved, but he laughs at his inability to find the correct words — "of course my style has changed a little with new responsibility — I am now — what is English word — reasonable? — (!); I have good car and must look after it . . . but the moment I get into the car.



Familiar surroundings for Ari — on the Arctic in '74.

his voice trails away and is immediately replaced by a broad grin; and a long sideways glance from Peter Bryant serves to give one some insight into the conversation within the Escort on stages. In such a climate of amicable banter one cannot resist asking the most cretinous question possible — "oh! I know you would like the answer to that one, oh yes! well, how about: 'I beat him tomorrow!'" The company dissolves in laughter at the quasi-theatrical nature with which the proclamation is delivered. In retrospect it was a proclamation that so nearly came true last weekend. So what does Ari think of British drivers now that he has seen the best we can do at close range? "Before I came here I heard in Finland from many drivers — 'it is so easy to beat English drivers' — that was true some years ago. Now it is completely different and I really mean what I say now; one or two events don't prove anything in England. What I would like to say though is that they are too frightened that they cannot do well in overseas rallies. This is not true and they could certainly do well in Finland for example. After all, unknown Scandinavians come over here, pay all the bills, and do well. I soon realized that I had to come to England to progress — its the only way to go higher. Because I think that England is still the centre of rallying sport."

As an exposure vehicle, Ari's appearance and driving in this country has been little short of a masterstroke — suddenly the results of the national rally series are awaited with eager enthusiasm and even baited breath. The quotable Mr. Turner has gone on record as saying that should anyone consistently beat Ari prior to the RAC Rally in November then they will get his works drive. On present showing it appears as though the seat is as safe as anything is possible to be in rallying, for Ari is clearly one of a very few superfast drivers down

a given stage; what remains, and it is a big task in itself as well he knows, is to acquire some experience. He has all the determination and ambition required and he has the sense of humour and capacity for self-criticism which are so necessary in a sport so fickle.

There are doubtless many 'downs' as well as 'ups' on the way for Ari, but he is learning from his mistakes and his domination of the Snowman Rally needs little illustration for it was so crushing. Doubtless he will soon acquire the technique of driving comfortably within his vast natural ability, as Roger Clark and all other great drivers have learnt before him. As an individual, it

Before I came here I heard in Finland from many drivers — 'it is so easy to beat English drivers . . . ' that was true, some years ago. Now it is completely different and I really mean what I say here. One or two events don't prove anything."

is almost impossible not to like Ari Vatanen and as a driver it is impossible to ignore his spectacular performances — not bad for a 23-year-old who has entered just 19 rallies in his entire career! . . . and then of course there is his 19-year-old brother, 'the other Vatanen' — "he is twice as fast as me but fortunately he doesn't realize it yet!" This 'prodigy' is of course at the wheel of that faithful old Ascona, but Ari has removed the most essential piece of equipment from it, and the little smiling troll now swings from the mirror of that APG-backed left hooker.

First sight of Vatanen for British spectators was almost inevitably spectacular — at full cry on the Welsh last year.





Back at school— the Brazilian GP

The Brazilian Grand Prix was just like being back at school again on the first day of a new term. Everyone had been off doing their own thing during the two month winter vacation. There were notes to compare on the merits of a ski holiday versus a trip to the sun. And then we all took stock of the new toys presented to us by our patrons.

My contract with Ken forbids me to go skiing during the off-season (he's very concerned about broken legs) so I'd spent my winter at home in South Africa soaking up the sun, doing a bit of business and fitting in a training programme in the local gym. So by the time we got to Brazil I was in good shape and ready to tackle the new year which looks like being one of the busiest so far with 16 Grands Prix on the calendar already plus three or four non-championship F1 races thrown in just to stop us falling idle.

Some of the new toys were really quite outstanding. The Ligier-Matra with its enormous, and soon to be illegal, air box was quickly nicknamed the "Flying Teapot". Everyone was keen to see if it would repeat the performances it had put in at Ricard during private testing.

And it was quick on the tricky swooping 8 Km circuit here too. It's not difficult to see where it gets some of its speed from. It's built right down to weight, so much so that it's well over 100 lb lighter than my Tyrrell. But while it's light it's also fragile. A cracked wheel and a deranged gearshift bore testimony to that during the weekend. They'll need to beef it up and put a little weight on it to give it the stamina that a GP racer needs to survive. They've fallen into the trap of building a qualifying car rather than a racer. But they've got the money, the common sense and the enthusiasm to put it right.

There's been a lot of talk about Emerson switching teams just for the money. I don't think that any of the people inside GP racing thought that was really the case. Emerson never makes a move unless he knows it's to his all round advantage. There was no way Emerson was going to take a fistful of money to drive an uncompetitive car. And didn't he show us just how competitive the Copersucar is going to be. Third row of the grid with a new car is nothing to be ashamed of. What upset him in the race was just a niggling little electrical switch fault that could have happened to anybody.

The McLaren's new 6-speed gearbox takes the award for the "tweak of the week". Except I think the advantage it shows it more likely to make it the tweak of the year. Certainly it puts the McLarens right up there in the number one position to challenge the Ferraris. James drove a blinder of a lap to take pole and would have been right there still in the first three at the finish had not an injection trumpet cracked off leaving him on

seven cylinders and ultimately with blown engine. Mass proved, after his little "off" that the McLaren is a real runner by coming right through the field from 19th up to be sixth at the finish.

Jarier and Pryce proved again that the Shadows can be very fast indeed. I think Jarier could have maybe even won the race had he not charged too hard and lost his car on Hunt's oil slick. The French press allowed that his crash wasn't his fault — it was the oil. They seem to have overlooked the fact that everyone else drove through, or around, the slick without tossing their cars into the fence.

John Watson signalled his, and his team's intentions for the year with a fourth row grid position which could have been a strong result had not a small fuel line union snapped and started a fire in the pit lane.

Yes, Ferrari are still strong favourites to head the fields this season. But having said that I think that the pack that hunts on the heels is stronger and more competitive than before.

"... in fairness, I have to admit that my fifth place was inherited rather than won ..."

Two of the sad let-downs were the Brabham-Alfa team and Lotus. The Alfa-powered cars were overweight because they were carrying about 10 gallons more fuel than the rest of us (about 100 lbs) and even then they ran out before the end of the race. Carlos Reutemann was really unhappy and at the end of the day was walking around looking like a grisly bear with piles. He's pretty unhappy about having had to give up the Ford-powered Brabham which was competitive in favour of this new car which he believes will not ever be competitive.

And Ronnie's scene with Lotus was just super bad news. Neither he nor Mario could get the cars out of the also-rans at the draughty end of the grid and at the end of the day Ronnie, who normally is a very cool guy, was seen in heated arm-waving arguments with Colin Chapman.

For me it wasn't a good race. In fact I had a terrible time. But having said that I must say that it's the first time I've ever come back from South

America with any world championship points. So if nothing else I've broken my Latin American jinx. But in fairness I have to admit that my fifth place was inherited rather than won in a straight fight.

We'd had handling problems in practice and I just couldn't get the car out of a terrible understeer condition. For the first three laps of the race she was fine and I made up three places and then, for whatever mysterious reason, we got the dreaded understeer condition back again. It was like driving a snow plough into the corners.

There were two ways to handle this problem. Knock off some of the speed on the approach and go through a lot slower losing maybe a second a corner or really boot the throttle and get the tail out on the approach.

The first method is safe but slow and the second quicker but trickier. A couple of times I booted it to get the back out and the nose pointing at the corner and very nearly didn't catch it in time. So I figured that discretion was going to be the better part of valour and that I'd try and nurse it to the finish. Apart from the fact that the car didn't handle she felt good and strong and I was in good physical shape. In the sweltering heat other drivers were visibly wilting so I plodded on taking advantage of their mechanical and physical frailties. My reward was an unspectacular fifth place and two points.

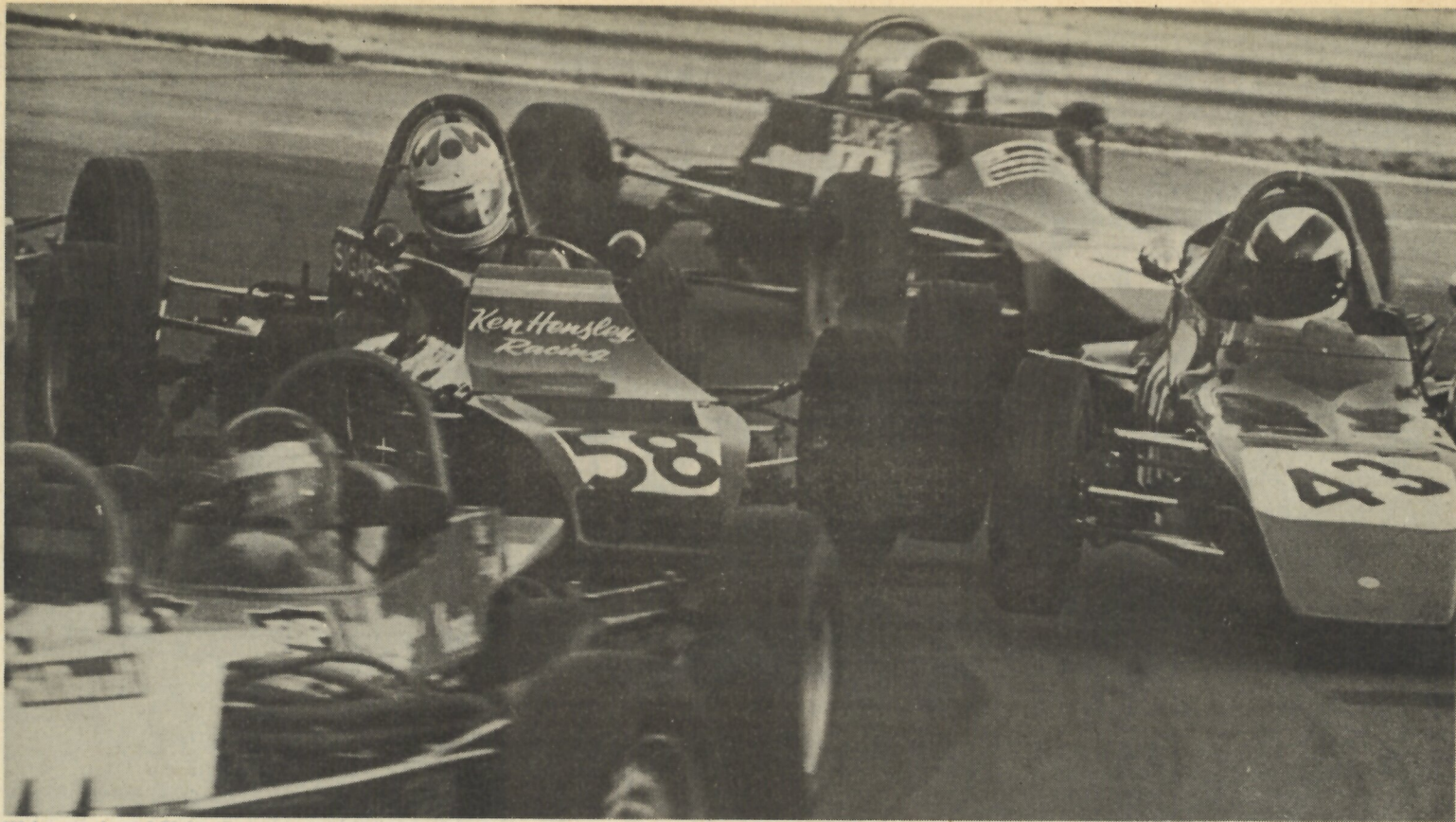
There was a smile on Ken's face as we pulled in at the end and I could see his till operating finger on the twitch. Patrick's second and my fifth put the team into top money earning stakes — and that also is part of the name of this expensive game.

I'm delighted that my own South African GP is back on. While I was back home I talked with our Minister of Sport and was really encouraged to find how disappointed he was over the initial cancellation and how hard he worked to find a sponsor to get the event reinstated. I also met Louis Lyte, the millionaire industrialist who is to sponsor the event, and he told me that his appearance as a sponsor is largely due to the encouragement he got from the Minister. We're very lucky to have a Minister who is a race fan.

We've got a month before the race and you can bet that all the teams will be making the most of that time at the drawing board and on the test tracks (snow permitting) in an effort to paint the front row some other colour than red.

"There was a smile on Ken's face as we pulled in at the end and I could see his till operating finger on the twitch" — Scheckter talks to Tyrrell in the Interlagos pits.





Welcome aboard flight 43 to Armco beach

SEASONAL SURVEY — CLUB RACING

Shades of mediocrity

By IAN TITCHMARSH

If the United Kingdom was in the depths of its worst recession for 30 years, the racing world hardly seemed to notice it. The demand for race meetings was as high as ever, and perhaps the major concession to the aftermath of the oil crisis was a tendency on the part of both competitors and spectators to stay closer to home and restrict their activities to their local circuits. Certainly, there were still the championship-chasers who travelled wherever the points could be found, but the owner of a 'mainstream' type of club racing car usually found he had quite enough available for him without travelling to the other end of the M1. This understandable reluctance to travel meant that the bill of fare offered by the majority of circuits hardly varied throughout the season, with only a permutation of the major championships to add interest, so that the poor spectator was presented with the sight of the same people winning and losing in the same cars every time he went. Naturally enough he soon became bored and stayed away, to be lured back only when there was a special attraction.

In 1975 this special attraction centred chiefly around the BBC Radio One production saloon car championship, a product of the "pop" days which Motor Circuit Developments reintroduced at Brands Hatch the previous year. The added publicity on the air from Noel Edmonds and others, combined with the drawing power of the DJs, pop stars *et al* resulted in above average crowds at club meetings, which would otherwise have been nothing out of the ordinary, but the impetus did not seem to be maintained throughout the season. With the obvious exceptions of Cozy Powell and Edmonds himself, the participants in the Radio One races were hardly big names either in motor racing or the world of pop, and one production saloon race was much like any other to the uninitiated, so that there was really very little to bring the people back again, which was the object of the exercise in the first place. The fact is that motor racing at club level probably has very little to offer the casual spectator on a regular basis, week in week out, even if it can be an all-consuming passion for those of us who promote, organise, marshal, compete or scribe at every available opportunity between March and October.

Last year we anticipated the arrival of Donington Park as a fine new circuit. The Public Inquiry was going on and dates had been inscribed in the calendar in expectation of a favourable decision. The Inspector's report only arrived 12 months later, and although Tom Wheatcroft's dream may be still unrealised for the moment, another former team patron, Denys Dobbie, did get his Knochhill project under way with six successful meetings at his newly-constructed 1.3 mile facility, just off the Edinburgh/Perth motorway. Although it hosted major F3 and 2-litre sports car races, it was generally too far north for the majority of English competitors except those who frequent Croft. However, it is playing an important part in establishing the sport in Scotland where Ingliston has had its own way for too long. The other circuit change was the emasculation of Oulton Park to Mickey Mouse proportions to which cosmetic surgery is now being applied, leaving this country with only two regular club circuits over 2 miles in length — Cadwell Park and Thruxton — and two more which are very occasionally available — Silverstone and Brands Hatch GP.

In the past this annual review has tended to

concentrate on so-called "club" racing which can presumably be defined as amateur racing by club members for personal enjoyment with financial reward as a secondary consideration. Over the past 10 years or so, as promoters have seen club racing as a money-spinning exercise, drivers have benefited from this exploitation of their hobby so that fame and reward can now be seen as an attainable goal for a small minority. For several years now drivers and entrants have engaged in so-called club racing as a more or less full time exercise in certain areas, promoters have been able to offer higher rewards, and it is now very difficult to distinguish between a club meeting and a national one. As long ago as 1966 *AUTOSPORT* headlined a Brands Hatch meeting as: "An International Club Event" and the trend has continued. Formula 3 is a particular case in point. A few years ago there used to be three British-based championships — the Shell, the Lombard North Central and the Forward Trust. The last two were almost exclusively held at Restricted meetings. In 1974 the international Shell championship was abandoned, leaving the other two which, in the face of poor support, were

themselves dropped from the calendar. As recounted in a recent issue, BP came to the rescue and helped the BARC to promote a championship which was neither one thing nor the other with rounds at Monaco, the Swedish and British GPs at one extreme and Silverstone and Brands Hatch club circuits at the other. Whatever it was, it was certainly successful with more or less the same entry at every round but was it club racing? Probably not, particularly since the majority of the competitors came from overseas anyway even if they did base themselves here.

Conversely there were a number of so-called international championships which were anything but. Formula Atlantic attracted a smattering of Americans and Antipodeans, all of them British based, but no European interest to its John Player series, while both the Formula Ford 2000 and RAC Southern Organs Touring Car Championship were totally insular affairs and are likely to remain so. So, while F3 has deservedly a review of its own, the rest come within the scope of this piece. One other effect of this international grading of national events now being revised, has been to render the winner of the Tarmac British Racing Championship rather unrealistic. This valuable championship attempted to rearrange the points system for 1975 to prevent yet another win by the fastest Chevrolet Camaro driver in the RAC Championship. It almost worked with the late Tony Brise only failing to win by a few points but, with no disrespect to Stuart Graham's ability and superiority in a Camaro, his opposition over a series of some 15 20-lap races was hardly equivalent to that encountered by James Hunt, Tom Pryce, Derek Bell and Brise himself in Grands Prix, Le Mans and other major races. Lancashire's own Brian Redman was not even eligible so his American Formula 5000 Championship counted for nothing yet FF2000 drivers were well into the Top Ten. It is a worthy idea but surely needs further revision before the 1976 RAC Saloon Car Champion cleans up again.

FORMULA ATLANTIC

It was the mixture as before although the John Player series was down to 12 rounds from last year's 14. The two Irish rounds at Mondello and Pheonix Parks went missing for reasons variously attributed to money or safety depending to whom you were speaking, and when, although Ireland did have its own Atlantic scene supported by a dozen or so drivers at best. In 1974 the subsidiary MCD club series had begun the season unsponsored only to find itself smiled on by Jim Miller and his various Organs. The Southern variety carried over into 1975 only to disappear along with Mr Miller in late summer which was when they'd

come in 12 months earlier.

Despite providing an attractive form of second division Formula 2 (if that's not a contradiction in terms) the crowds never flocked to the racing in the required numbers. Come to think of it, they hardly flocked to F2 either in this country! MCD, who had promoted the idea since 1971, decided it was impractical to continue, particularly in the face of unrealistically-based demands from the spokesman for the entrants. This spokesman, a midfield runner by the name of Peter Wardle, recast his ideas and dreamed up Indylantic, whereby the entrants take the financial risks and do much of the promoters' work for them. Good, luck to them but if you want to become a serious racing driver in the senior classes of racing, rather than hero for the day at Croft or Brands Hatch, F3 has to be the way to go.

Which is not to say that Formula Atlantic, as it has been, has not played its part in assisting the careers of up-and-coming drivers. Before the 1975 season was very far gone, Tony Brise was at last able to convince the Formula 1 world that the talent he had been showing in Formula Ford and F3 were worthy of something better. His Atlantic season was remarkable. After spinning out of the lead of the first round on a soaking track, he won the next six races in succession together with three Southern Organs rounds; established an almost unbeatable lead in the JP points table; and then never won another race. By then, however, he was making the F1 and F5000 world sit up and take notice and the Atlantic spotlight focused on another refugee from F3, the Swede Gunnar Nilsson who won the last JP round and the last four MCD races with a conviction and confidence as impressive as Brise's had been.

As for most of 1974, Brise's car was the works Modus immaculately prepared by Nick Jordan and using an engine from the 1974 champion John Nicholson who went off to try his luck in the Canadian races. Nilsson took over American Matt Spitzley's seat in the Rapid Movements Chevron B29 which had one of several engines from John Dunn's Swindon outfit. Nicholson and Swindon between them almost cornered the market in competitive engines with the formerly popular Brian Hart only having the occasional look-in. Far and away the most prolific chassis purveyor for the Formula was Derek Bennett with at least nine of the Chevron B29 models appearing at one time or another in the championship. Modus really only had Brise while the best March could do was a rebuilt 1974 car, designated a 75B, for Ray Mallock. The two Lola T360s had both raced during the previous year but there was one very welcome newcomer from Tom Wheatcroft, designed by Mike Pilbeam formerly of BRM. It was a little late arriving but it scored one win in each championship and followed these up with a glorious third place in the Silverstone F2 race.

That the overall standard of driving was high was demonstrated when several of the leading competitors, but neither Brise nor Nilsson, tried their hand at F2. Jim Crawford and Ray Mallock both showed that if they had the sponsorship which is dished out to the French, Italians and Germans, Britain would not be so poorly represented in either F2 or F1 while the American Ted Wentz was equally impressive. Crawford was once again the bridesmaid, finishing some 25 points behind Brise in the JP championship and not contesting the MCD in his SDC Racing-entered works Chevron-Hart. Crawford's career, despite a couple of races and several test sessions in the JPS Lotus 72, failed to progress significantly during the year but he may still prove to be an F1 driver with a future. He won two races during the year as did another driver who failed to fulfil all the hopes that had been placed on him after a highly successful 1974 season — Richard Morgan. On the strength of 32 FF wins in 1974 (the same number, incidentally, as Geoff Lees last year), Morgan was selected by Tom Wheatcroft to drive his BP-backed car while a Chevron was acquired until the new car was ready. A win in the first JP round and a later win in the new car failed to cement the relationship between patron and driver. There was never the rapport which existed for Wheatcroft in the days of the late Roger Williamson, and before the season was over Morgan had been replaced by the extrovert Brian Henton, a man much more in the Wheatcroft mould. In the right team Morgan's ability will undoubtedly come out but at the moment he lacks the off-circuit dynamism which is needed before a young driver stands out from his peers.

The only other driver to win a JP race was Wentz who saved his effort for the British GP day at Silverstone. For a person as articulate and intelligent as Wentz it was surprising that he



Scandal — semi-naked body seen in public park

should continue to display errors of judgment as he had the year before. He was at one time the man most likely to beat Brise with his Wella for Men-sponsored Lola T360, but his big day at Silverstone happened in the absence of the Modus driver, and at other times there were spins, bumps and mechanical problems which kept his points score down. In the less important SO/MCD races, possibly because the pressure was less, he was more successful and emerged as champion, despite only one win against Nilsson's four and Brise's three, thanks to consistently high placings. Another model of consistency was "Tiger Cyd" Williams who was runner-up in the first two years of Atlantic, to Vern Schuppan in 1971 and Bill Gubelmann in 1972. Once again Williams drove Graham Eden's two-year-old Brabham BT41 but his season was badly affected by a practice accident at Oulton Park following which he drove several races in considerable pain and was never the same man again, even though some outside sponsorship from Harrisons of Birmingham solved the team's financial problems. Williams still finished third in the JP championship with less than half Crawford's score and barely one-third of Brise's.

Two other drivers who looked likely winners during the year were Nick May and Australian Bobby Muir. May obtained sponsorship from Strakers of Wimbledon to run a Lola T360B, and this former U2 and saloon car driver showed considerable speed, allied to a tendency to spin when trying too hard too soon, which suggests he could make the grade although he has been around for some time. Muir, no relation of his compatriot Brian, came to England with Bob and Marj Brown's Birrana team and a formidable reputation in F5000 Tasman series. The car needed strengthening and sorting but turned into a potential winner once it acquired a Swindon

For the last time — shut that door

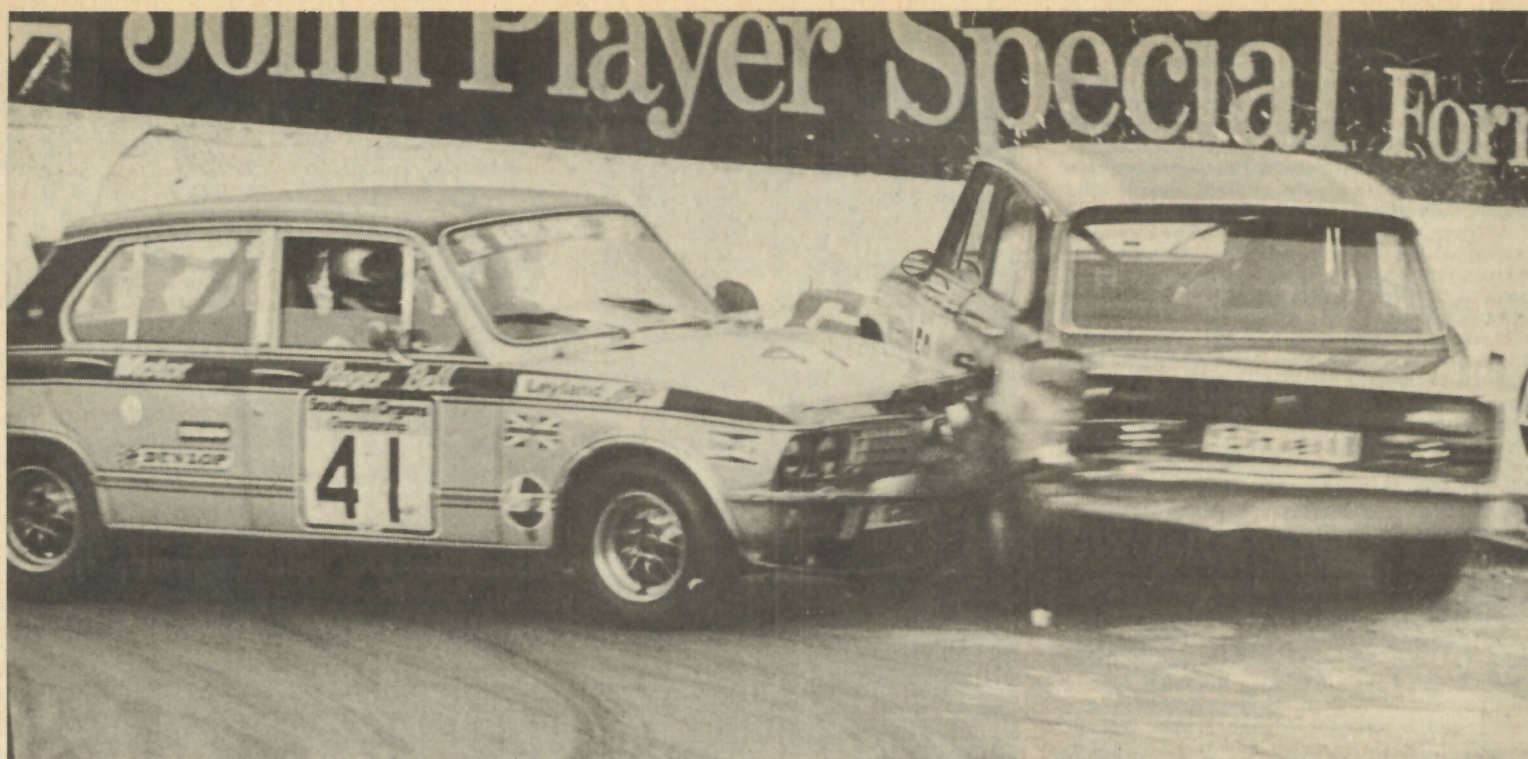


engine. Ray Mallock had a disappointing year in the Ardmore Racing March 75B until he turned to F2 while Dave Morgan, Richard's well-known older brother, did what was expected of him with a second and a third from two early races in a Chevron B29 destined for Bobby Brown in America. Two other Chevron drivers who managed second places once each were the young New Zealander Brett Riley, who took over the Wheatcroft chassis, and Irishman Alo Lawler who surprised many with his steadiness and speed after his Formula Ford antics. In Ireland Patsy McGarrity acquired a new Chevron and new opposition, his former supremacy being successfully challenged more than once by Des Donnelly's March 73B and Jay Pollock's rare Crosslé 27F.

It would be totally wrong to suggest that it was a bad year for Atlantic. It was anything but as far as the racing was concerned. Grids were generally of reasonable size, if not overlarge, but the crowds just didn't want to know. Whether they will be any more interested in the the Indylantic, or MCD's open single-seater championship, cannot be any more certain.

FORMULA FORD 2000

For a while it looked as though the economic recession combined with the usual problems of a new formula would leave this senior version of the popular Formula Ford 1600 out in the cold. The Allied Polymer Group sponsored the 17-round championship and gradually, as the season progressed, the message got across that it wasn't that much more expensive, if at all, than FF1600 and certainly several thousands of pounds less costly than F3. The grids filled up and this seems to be at least one more class which can look forward optimistically to the future.



Eve of destruction

Generally speaking the cars were grown up versions of FF chassis — grown up in the sense of having wings, restricted width racing slicks and the 2-litre Ford Pinto engine from the Escort RS2000. The one type of permitted tyre, by Dunlop, lasted for ever and the engines, mainly from the familiar FF1600 tuning shops, showed ever increasing reliability. Several drivers, who had experience of the 1600 cc F3 of 1971, likened the power output to those cars which suggests that just about the right balance has been struck.

The drivers came both downwards from F3 and, as intended, upwards from FF1600 but the first three were all of the former type. Champion, with six wins to his credit, was Derek Lawrence in a Crosslé 31F for which Lawrence went to his old power supplier Roy Thomas of Titan. Thomas knows his engines and Lawrence's skill saw the car finish and score points in 16 of the 17 rounds. In a way it was a reversal of the 1972 situation when Lawrence had played a strong second fiddle to Ian Taylor in FF1600. This time it was Taylor's turn to finish second in his works Dulon MP16 with three wins to his credit. Holbay, already with a season's experience of the Pinto in F3 form, prepared Taylor's engine as they did for the only other man to win three championship races, Tiff Needell. Needell was a late arrival on the scene, taking over Syd Fox's seat in Mac MacKinstry's works-supported Hawke DL14 but he straight-away showed he should have been there earlier by taking pole position for his first race, which ironically enough Fox won in the works Palliser! The Palliser won on one other occasion in the hands of Damien Magee, who added some sparkle to the thin early season grids. Former JPS F3 driver Bernard Vermilio went to Merlyn for his chassis, Scholar for his engine and won twice while Jeremy Rossiter gave Adrian Reynard's design one satisfying win. Needell who was fourth behind Vermilio in the final table, and Rossiter, who was demoted from fourth to sixth after a weight problem at the final round, were the two men who benefited most from the Formula in the manner intended, but hopefully there will be many more this year.

FORMULA FORD 1600

The impossible happened in 1975 and the same driver won all three major championships during a year which was beset by remarkably few problems either on the track or in the scrutineering bay. That driver was Geoff Lees, no newcomer to the Formula but presented for the first time with the resources to attain every FF driver's dream. His hardest struggle undoubtedly came in the MCD/National Organs-sponsored series where he and South African Van Diemen driver Kenny Gray broke clear of the field in mid-season and then swapped wins until the very last, whereupon Gray had one or two incidents befall him which saw Lees triumphant by 12 points. In the BARC series, backed this time by Mike

Keegan's British Air Ferries, Lees won by seven points from Hawke DL12 driver Rick Morris who had a good season which brought him into the limelight for the first time, while in the Silverstone-based Brush Fusegear races Lees won by 13 points not, as you might suppose, from Jim Walsh but Matthew Argenti.

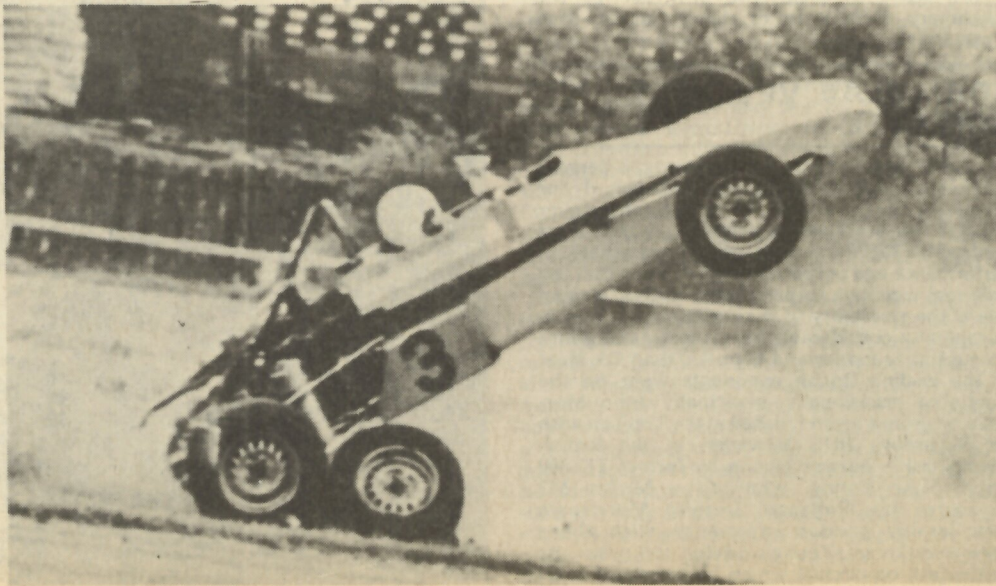
Lees used two of the new Royale RP21s to achieve what Ian Taylor, Richard Morgan and others before him had failed to do. He was rarely, if ever, the cause of an accident although he sometimes fell foul of other people's as does any good FF driver (!), and was seemingly able to pull out that little extra to be first across the line when the flag came out without driving his car into the ground to get there. The RP21 was one of the few totally new cars to appear successfully during the year, and several were to be seen, with South African newcomer Rad Dougall taking third overall in the MCD/NO table thanks to lots of wins at Mallory Park and not a few crashes elsewhere.

The other dominant chassis came from Van Diemen, Crosslé and Hawke. As related Gray used a works-supported Van Diemen to dispute the MCD/NO series with Lees while Argenti had a variable season in his Van Diemen, shining mainly at Silverstone but fast elsewhere when in the right frame of mind. Third in both the BAF and Brush championships was the young English-based Ulsterman Jim Walsh who obtained some good sponsorship for his Hawke but showed an inconsistency which flawed his obvious speed and car control both at his favourite Silverstone and

elsewhere. He was in danger of being written-off as a one circuit specialist but his record shows wins at Mallory, Oulton and Brands as well. In Scotland Stu Lawson's Hawke was generally the winning car.

Not surprisingly after all of Richard Morgan's successes, Crosslé sold a fair number of cars but the results were not the same, in this country at least. In Ireland it was rather different with Dubliners Eddie Jordan, Derek Daly and David Kennedy sharing the spoils between them in new 30Fs. Both Jordan and Daly joined in the English circus and proved themselves front-runners and the same would probably go for Kennedy if he came. From Jersey came Mike Blanchet, hoping to emulate Richard Morgan by switching from an old Lotus 61 to a new Crosslé but the results were not so impressive despite several successes, fifth in the NO/MCD and fourth in the Brush Fusegear Canadian driver to Europe Rod Bremner used both a 25F and a 30F to be often with the leader but rarely a winner, fourth in the BAF standing being his best championship result. Phil Dowse combined a season of Capri racing with a Crosslé 25F, with notable success but few wins in the single-seater, but the whole Crosslé camp was shaken up by the arrival in mid-season of Tiff Needell who was offered a 25F by Chris Hiatt-Baker as a change from his recalcitrant Elden. From July onwards Needell carried a before him at Brands Hatch, sewing up the Townsend Thoresen championship and running with the leaders elsewhere, all of which earned him the Hawke FF2000 drive.

"There were jeers from the opposition benches today when the Prime Minister announced that Britain had launched its first rocket from a base adjacent to his own constituency"



Those were the main protagonists and cars which could be found disputing the lead every weekend in the major championships. Merlyn, for so long the mainstay of the Formula, lost a lot of ground during the year but made up some of it with Bernard Vermilio returning to drive the side-radiated Mk 29 in the last few races. An interesting car which deserved more recognition and success than it actually achieved was the John Lipman-built Javelin raced by Richard Eyre to fifth overall in the Brush, despite a season interrupted by someone else's accident. Older Merlyns still played an important part in local races. In the West, the ancient Mk 11A of Terry Richards was often a winner; at Brands Hatch Rob Wicken, inevitably, ran his Mk 17A in the Townsend Thoresen to come second to Needell, while David Kemp's Mk 20A took fourth; in the North Mick Starkey's Mk 20A fought many a battle for supremacy with John Simpson's Nike Mk 10 with honours fairly evenly divided in the end. Dulon had a quiet year with their MP17 although MRS instructors Dave MacPherson and John Stevens had some wins, while American teenage sensation Eddie Cheever showed promise of things to come before he switched to F3.

There were really only three engines in it as far as the leading runners were concerned. Scholars were still the most popular with Needell, Walsh, Gray, Dougall, Morris, Vermilio and Argenti all going to Doug Wardropper. David Minister provided for Lees, Dowsett, Blanchet, Eyre, MacPherson and Wicken, while Denny Rowland was the motive force for Bremner. Tyres were all one sort of Dunlop racer which worked tolerably well. Lap times were generally slower, wear rate better and overall cost about the same.

MONOPOSTO FORMULA AND FORMULA 4

These two categories are almost complementary and indeed one partly grew out of the other. Both cater for the true amateur who races for fun, although F4, which is for one-litre single-seaters, has assumed a rather more polished air than the 1600 cc Monoposto Formula where the cars tend to be a few years older, and effective rather than immaculate.

For the second year in succession Alan Baillie won the Monoposto championship with his one-off Viking challenged by several varieties of BT21 Brabham in the hands of such as Trevor Scarratt, Paul Maxwell, and Joe Applegarth, who had a sort of BT23C, while Jim Yardley's engineering expertise produced his front-engined Beagle Mk 3 in which the Ford power unit lay completely on its side, winning a few races.

Fergus Tait, after an unsuccessful attempt to break into F3, returned to F4 with one of the new Deltas and won wherever he went, chased most times by his old car, the ex-Ian Taylor March 733, now in the hands of former Mini driver Ian Briggs. John Brown was another to win for Delta while newcomer Bruce Coate-Bond acquired Nick Crossley's 1974 championship-winning Ensign LNF4 and won twice before running out of money. Despite a disparity in performance between the best and worst cars in the Formula, F4 and Monoposto continue to provide a relatively cheap means of racing a not so old single-seater. At a time when fewer people can afford new cars, it makes sense to make the best use of the machinery already in existence rather than scrapping it.

FORMULAE VEE AND SUPERVEE

The niche which these two Volkswagen-derived single-seater formulae have established for themselves in the British scheme of things over the last few years seems neither to expand nor contract. FF2000 is now very comparable in performance and purpose to SuperVee so that the only real incentive to participate in the German one is the possibility of taking in some races in Europe at a considerably lower cost, taking into account prize money and bonuses, than F3. Most of the leading British exponents went on the Continent occasionally, principally John Morrison, who once again finished in the Top Ten with his Supernova BH5. However, in the British championship he was beaten by former FF1600 driver Mike Young, who ran a Modus M2 sponsored by Wallspan. Despite Morrison's considerably greater experience with these idiosyncratic cars, Young's driving ability was up to the task on circuits which he knew although



And the other one said: "roll over"

abroad it tended to be a different story. The third driver of class was Peter White, who ran the works Royale RP19, similar to the FF1600 RP21 rather than the previous year's championship-winning RP18. White won twice but ran out of sponsorship which thwarted a sustained effort. Morrison won six races to Young's five, the Supernova driver rarely scoring points when he didn't win, while the only other driver to win a race was that perennial trier Bruce Venn with his Elden. Simon Kirkby, chiefly known hitherto for his efforts in various saloons, showed himself to be no mean pedaller of single-seaters with another Supernova and wound up third in the championship, ahead of Venn and White, without actually winning a single race.

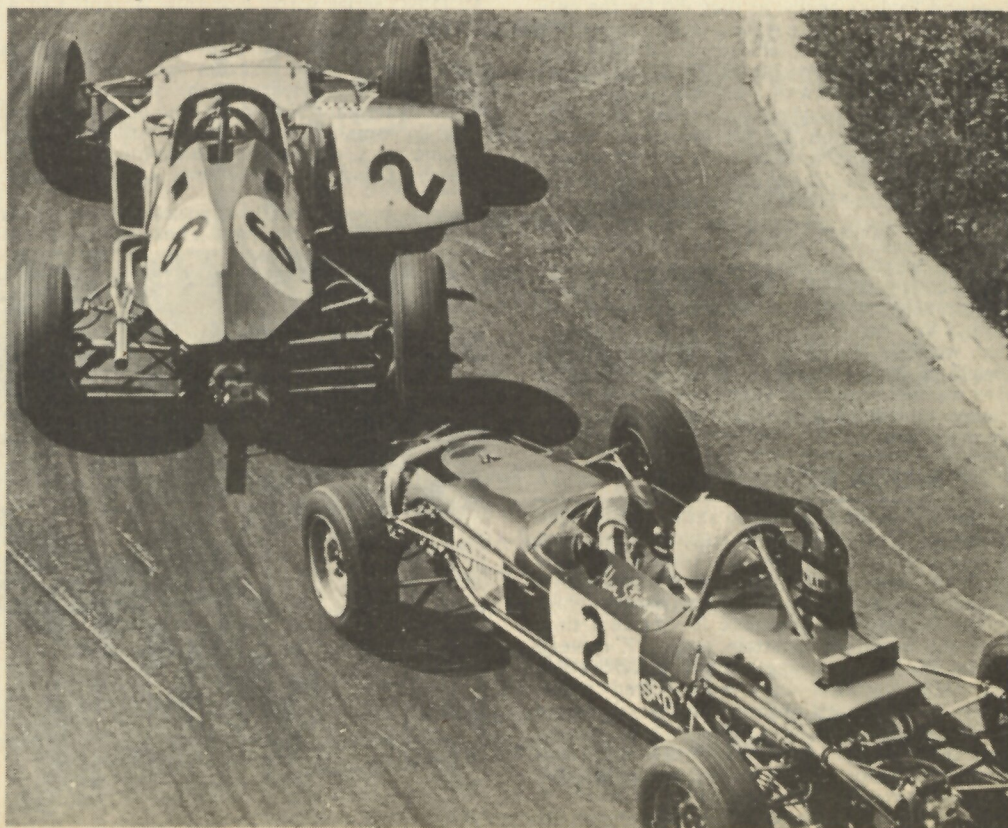
Up to mid-season the Formula Vee championship was a neck and neck struggle between teenager Ian Flux in his ShellSport-sponsored Scarab and Peter Wimhurst's Vee Max. Flux had

started racing in Vee the previous year and quickly showed speed, but Wimhurst has been around since the early days of throbbing Beetles in this country. Unfortunately an accident interrupted Wimhurst's best season ever and left Flux to win almost every time out thereafter. The self-built cars of Gordon Rae and Ray Simpson also showed well after several seasons of endeavour. There seems to be something about Vee racing which rewards the faithful.

FORMULE LIBRE

This year *formule libre*, variously called Formula 5000 or the MCD open single-seater championship, will be back in prominence after several seasons in the doldrums. Silverstone has remained faithful to the cause with its Jaybrand Racewear-sponsored series of races on the club

Can I have my nose back, mister





Choreography by Maniacs Miscellaneous

circuit, but entries were lower than before. There was no doubt about the winner, however, John Wingfield, who took unto himself an elderly spaceframe Brabham BT35, removed the 1850 cc FVC engine from his newer BT40, and took on the task of defeating John Jordan's CanAm McLaren on its home ground. He succeeded magnificently, winning four of the six races and the championship while finding time to creep off to other circuits when they had *libre* events and win most of those, too. Second to Wingers was the similarly-powered Lyncar of Mike Edean. In the North former Mini ace Andy Barton used a Lotus 69 but mainly the ex-Geoff Friswell March 73B to clean up at Croft and, Iain McLaren's Chevron B26/31 permitting, at Ingliston as well, while Tony Dean found it easier to win with his F5000 Chevron B24/28 at Rufforth than in the ShellSport Championship for a variety of reasons.

One very interesting car expressly built for *libre* racing was Frank Sytner's Mallock U2 Mk17 with 1850 cc Hart BDA, a car which also ran in the hands of Dick Mallock as a 2-litre sports car and may well realise its full potential this year, which brings us neatly to...

CLUBMAN'S FORMULA

Otherwise known as "The Return of Friz the Whizz". After finding Formula Atlantic impossibly expensive out of his own pocket Geoff Friswell returned to the class of his former glories and carried all before him in an immaculately-prepared Mallock U2 Mk 16 (that's the one without

the De Dion rear end) and won both the MCD/Lec Refrigeration and, wait for it, National Organs/-BARC championships. Just to make sure he set a standard which the others found it almost impossible to match, he even had the nerve to ask Brian Hart to do him an engine! To give the others a chance, Friswell had the decency to have an accident on August Bank Holiday, which kept his car out of action for a couple of weekends.

Man with a mission was Frank Sytner and that mission was to beat Friswell. He did it once only, on his home circuit in front of a few hundred people at Aintree in a non-championship race and without front wings (not that the latter made any difference) but he threw away his greatest moment of glory with a last lap spin when beating Friswell fairly and squarely round the GP circuit at Silverstone. Sytner, like so many others, used an updated U2, his being an original Mk 11B which he had formerly owned but which had been acquired by the *eminence grise* (sorry, *noire*) of the Formula, Peter Evans. Apart from Sytner, no one else had the beating of Friswell, although Noel Stanbury grew a beard in the attempt and then gave up for pastures new, leaving his Gryphon for others to crash. Peter Cooke commissioned a remarkably innovative car from Ken Harrison, former designer of F4 cars, and won several races while always looking fast. The voluble Caldwell Smythe switched allegiance from Gryphon to Mallock with some success as did Gryphon creator Andy Diamond on one notable occasion when he borrowed De General's car for a win. Ruari Gillies (Gryphon) and Creighton Brown (U2

Mk 17) both showed up well from time to time although '74 champion Brown's season was not as full as he would have liked. In Ireland Derek Shortall carried all before him in a Gryphon while Tim Wood's Magnum and Ray Edge's ex-works U2 were frequent winners on the Northern circuits. Both Vernon and John Davies had a quiet year by their standards, neither winning many races nor having many accidents.

In the B class, the one-litre screamers were abolished to F4 in favour of FF1600 engines only and Nick Adams, in only his first full season of racing, became the man to beat in his U2 Mk 14. Adams won the Tricentrol series outright, Friswell having opted out of this one, and won his class in the other two. Not bad for a beginner. His chief rivals were Alex Ferrada in one of the most immaculate U2s you could ever wish to see, Chris Greville-Smith's Phantom, Peter Clark's Centaur and the shared Arthur Mallock/Alan Webb U2. In the North Ken Shipley and Geoff Lambert carried on their 1974 Champagne fights in their U2s with Shipley winning that championship.

Clubmen's, or Super Sports as they would prefer to be called, remains an essential part of the club racing scene, full of characters who epitomise the attitude of racing for fun yet trying hard to win. This year they should be appearing in one of the supporting races for the Silverstone International Trophy. A fair reward for the spectacle they have given to club racing over the last 10 years.

SPORTS CARS

There used to be something called Special (later Sports) GT racing and every year we used to lament its inevitable decline. Last year it more or less disappeared out of sight. The BARC, faithful to the last, said they would run a series of four or five races with no actual championship at stake, and a small nucleus of cars left over from previous years participated. The John Corfield/Peter Andrews Martin BM10, John Calvert's Huron, Lynden Thorne's Aldon AL2X and Les Aylott's Ardua were all there supplemented by the occasional Lola or Chevron.

Perversely, however, because of the decline in international 2-litre sports car racing, the class which had sounded the death knell of British Sports GT, there was a significant number of British competitors with late-model Lola T290 and Chevron B21 series cars with nowhere to race them. And so it came to pass that 2-litre racing was reborn in this country, and in particular in Scotland, so that the RAC has decided to run one of its unpublished championships for the category again this year. John Lepp's March 75S was one of the regular winners while Iain McLaren's ex-works Chevron B26/31 had a good record in his home country.

MODIFIED SPORTS CARS

For a class of racing which carries virtually no publicity and is designed purely for competitor enjoyment, mod sports seems to be able to sustain a consistently high level of political content. It used to be the E-type-beating Spridgets which caused the anguish and then the Spridgeteers became unhappy about the arrival of first the Elans and then the Davrians. Last year there were two main bones of contention — the Lotus Seven and the Porsche Carrera RS. The controversies have been well ventilated in these columns in recent months but essentially certain commercial pressure groups ought to face up to the fact that mod sports has always, from the earliest days of *marque* racing, been for *selected* types of car so that, although there may be more Sevens on the road, whether from Hethel or Caterham, than Clan Crusaders, a Lotus Seven is not the type of car which mod sports racing ever has, or ever should, cater for. It's no longer competitive in Clubman's Super Sports that's too bad. It's also worth remembering that there were three road-going Mallock U2s built not so many years ago!

The Porsche Carrera problem is slightly different since the cars clearly come within the concept of mod sports but the regulations clearly excluded 911s of the Carrera variety, presumably in the interests of cost. Protagonists of the Porsche maintain that all Carreras have 911 chassis numbers and are therefore all 911s, adopting the sort of argument which used to be exploded by schoolmasters at the age of 12. In fact, it's hard to see why anyone should want to spend such vast sums of money either on a new Carrera RSR or on modifying a standard 911 to RSR specification in order to beat 10-year-old Lotus Elans and 20-year-old Jaguars.



The ubiquitous (at least at the start of the year) Mr Miller agreed to put up money for the BARC's annual championship which remained the senior series. The BRSCC's Midland Centre stepped over the party line and arranged its own very successful championship, chiefly at Mallory Park after Donington failed to open. The club's HQ have got the message now and 1976 will see the BRSCC not only back with a national mod sports championship but also showing greater perception than the BARC by refusing to have anything to do with the Lotus Seven. Away from the championship circuits, mod sports still had a strong following, particularly at Brands Hatch, Silverstone and the far North, where the neglected 1151 to 1300 class gained greater recognition.

For the first time for an age John Pearson's way-out Jaguar XK120 was not the most successful of the over 3-litre cars. It may have been the fastest but Pearson was only able to take in half the season with help from his former sponsor Victor Raysbrook. Winner of his class in the BARC championship was Robin Gray in his Lawrencetune Morgan Plus 8 which was more than once able to get on terms with the fastest Elans, thanks to Gray's intrepid driving, and suggested that further development would make it faster still. Best of the E-types was Brian Murphy's, an immaculate yellow rebuild of an ex-Warren Pearce machine now powered by a special 4.4 litre engine.

Andy Fraser's Marcos V6 was the fastest car in the 3-litre division, taking over the mantle formerly held by the TVR Tuscan V6s, until the arrival of the Porsches. Fraser persevered but could not hope to match the German sophistication and several of the later races saw John Cooper all on his own.

Easily the best supported division was that between 1151 and 2000 cc which of course had its sub-division at 1300 outside the championships. Despite all the competition, it provided the champions. For the BARC it was Richard Jenvey, long-time supporter of mod sports first with a Midget and, since 1974, an Elan which in effectiveness and scruffiness was a worthy successor to Jon Fletcher's machine! Jenvey was usually capable of winning not only his class but also the race overall, his greatest threat coming, when it was allowed to race, from the Lotus Seven of Dave Bettinson. Bettinson found himself in the embarrassing position of having prepared a car which the RAC said he could race only to find the regulations changing against him. There was naturally considerable sympathy for Bettinson which tended to cloud the issue that the Seven should never have been permitted in the first place. Winner of the BRSCC championship was John Evans, in an immaculate Elan, which was rarely as quick as Jenvey's but more than a match for anything else. One other Elan was particularly successful, the ex-VRM/Pearson car of Scotsman Andy Smith which went better and better as the year progressed and its driver grew in experience and confidence, no doubt benefiting from having the experienced Kenny Allen as team mate. His main successes came in the North and Scotland where his chief rival was the unique Jensen-Healey driven by former Elan and GT40 exponent Eric Liddell. In Ireland, Mike Nugent continued his winning ways with his ex-Mike Crabtree Elan when he was permitted to race.

The classes have been slightly altered this year to segregate the Spridgets from the Elans by having the split at 1500 rather than 2000 cc. A good move because the small British Leyland sports car is still a popular racer. In Ireland they tried to keep it all-Spridget which allowed John Gale and Arnie

The world awaited touch down with baited breath



Circuit alterations at Oulton Park

Black to dominate in the absence of Nugent's Elan. At Silverstone Graeme Dodd won the Vandervell Novices' Award with his, Keith Ashby was successful in the South-East and Ian McCullough tended to do most of the winning at Croft.

The day of the 1150 Spridget or Ginetta G4 was over. To win you had to have the latest generation of glassfibre DIY kit from Davrian, Ginetta, Clan or Mini-Jem. Perhaps surprisingly, but a credit to his abilities and experience, Ian Hall with the Mini-based Jem won the BARC championship class and ran Jenvey closest for overall honours. Simon Packford was the prime exponent of the Davrian in the BARC championship in the absence of the works cars but spent half the season sorting his new Mk 7. In Scotland John Kirk used his ex-works Mk 5 to win in sprints, hillclimbs and races alike but in the latter had to contend with the ex-works Clan Crusader which was run by Andy Smith's team for Kenny Allen. It was a pity neither Kirk nor Allen raced more often in the Midlands and South, but understandable in view of the distances involved. Barry Wood's Ginetta G15 has been a strong force in mod sports for several years and 1975 saw Wood back with a serious challenge in the BARC championship. Alas, a serious accident at Castle Combe in late August badly injured Wood and destroyed the Ginetta.

PRODUCTION SPORTS CARS

Now that it operates at the unsponsored, amateur level this category has found its niche and can operate quite happily alongside mod sports without either being affected. There were two championships, the major one run by the BRSCC and a second, less well-supported one sponsored in a small way by Formula Atlantic driver Derek Cook and Direct Tapes in the North.

Chris Alford, a former Formula Ford driver and an employee of John Britten's, persuaded his boss to run a Morgan 4/4 in the intermediate class — £1,401 to £2,250 — and won 15 out of 15 races entered which made him a worthy champion. He also had the bright idea of writing to tell us about the racing generally, so several of the facts are his not ours!

The over £4,500 class was abandoned by the organisers, having already been more or less abandoned by competitors the previous season. This should have made the racing more open for overall position but Chris Meek decided that his annual ego trip should take place in a specially-built Lotus Europa of which Alford says: "Though it may comply to the letter of the regulations, it does not comply with the spirit of this class of racing." To which no doubt the organisers and the 36 other drivers who took part would say: "Here! Here!" Disregarding Meek, the racing was close between Andy Roughton's more reasonable Europa, John Britten's Morgan Plus 8, Colin Blower's TVR and Rod Gretton's spectacular V12 E-type. Britten and Blower won twice while Gretton had one win.

In the middle class Alford's Morgan "was pushed very hard five times and very nearly beaten once at Mallory Park". Opposition came from the MGBs of John Targett and Doc Griffiths and Gerald Vaughan's Triumph TR6. Gentleman of the press Terry Grimwood acquired a new 1.5 MG Midget from British Leyland Special Tuning and showed he could put his driving where his mouth is by winning eight times out of 10, his defeats coming at the hands of the 1973 champion Geoff Till in his Aldon Midget.

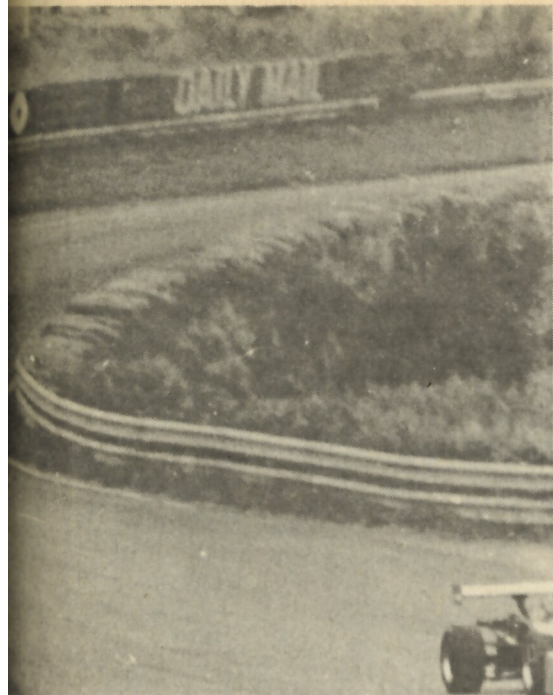
SALOONS

Disregarding the hot rod and banger racing so beloved of a certain weekly comic, it was possible during 1975 to race anything from a Mk VII Jaguar or Ford Anglia of the fifties through more or less unmodified saloons of the seventies to Formula 5000-based silhouettes of saloon cars, somewhere in the British Isles. There were championships for two types of Group 1 or production saloons, Super Saloons, Special Saloons, Classic Saloons, Mini-Seven and Mini-Miglia Saloons and no doubt with Ladbroke's assistance we'll soon have gambling saloons.

The RAC and its Motor Sport Council would no doubt prefer us to begin with the RAC Touring Car Championship, that great institution which

Give us a kiss



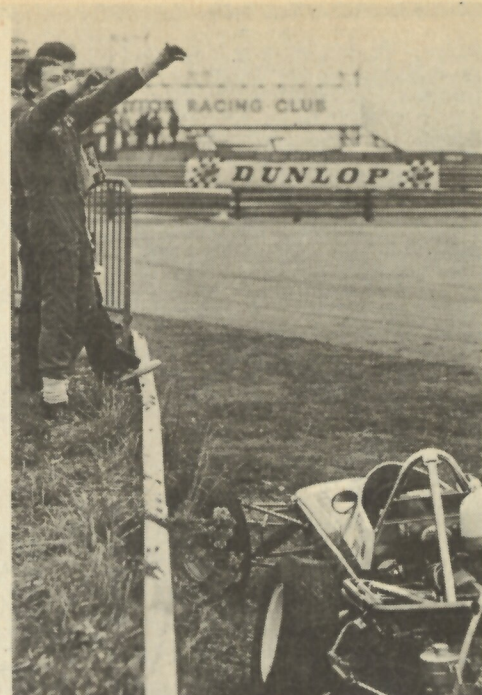


and Opel Commodore GS/E but Gordon Spice rather spoilt that with his Wisharts Capri with which he won the championship class despite missing half the races after a Formula 5000 accident. The Opel pursuit was headed by John Handley's AC Delco/Tony Fall car, ex-F3 man Peter Hanson and former Cobra and TR6 driver Shaun Jackson. Mixing it at times with the Opels was the currently least-battered of Stuart Rolt's two Capris.

Ralph Broad was paid by British Leyland to win the championship and earned his money just as he used to do for Ford in the sixties. The combination of a Broadspeed Dolomite Sprint and Andy Rouse's driving not only dominated the 1601 to 2500 cc class but also showed up the slower Camaros and quicker Capris and Opels. Two cars might have threatened the Dolly dominance but both struck trouble early on. The Mazda RX3 of Barrie Williams was still being afflicted by an incurable misfire when the money ran out while Tom Walkinshaw's promising efforts in a Ford Escort RS2000 were thwarted by the husband of a well-known horsewoman (sorry horseperson) who contrived to roll and leave it with rather more than four faults. Bill Shaw's Shellsport team of Dolomite Sprints looked promising while John Hine was driving but the promise was unfulfilled until Hine was replaced by veteran Australian Brian Muir. To everyone's delight, except BL's, Muir beat Rouse at Oulton Park for which he had to make amends by conspiring with the stewards to allow Rouse to pass him under the yellow flag in the final race at Brands Hatch and thereby win the championship. Rouse thus joining the select group, founded in South Africa by Jackie Stewart, of drivers permitted to pass under the yellow flag when championship points are at stake.

The closeness of the overall championship struggle had arisen because each class had been dominated by one car/driver combination so that Rouse, Graham and small class champion Win Percy all arrived at the final round in with a chance. No doubt Spice would have been added to this had he not had his accident. Percy pointed the Samuri Toyota Celica GT towards the chequered flag with increasing ease and assurance, although the Official Receiver played his part by effecting the withdrawal of the Halesfield Motors Avenger GT which Bernard Unett had been pedalling in his usual skilful and forceful manner. The third team contesting this class was the *Penthouse/Clark Alfa Romeo* set up which needed the long straights of Silverstone to be competitive, although drivers Stan Clark and Tony Dron were always trying hard.

After reading all this you might be forgiven for thinking that, despite the variety and appeal of saloon car racing, it was in rather a sorry state. However, where one national institution (the RAC) failed, another (the BBC) succeeded in collaboration with MCD by backing a club racing Group 1 championship through the medium of Radio One, to which we have already referred. A



Praise be to...

has gradually meant less and less as the years have passed since the RAC took it away from the BRSCC. Backed by the dynamic publicity machine in Belgrave Square, and financed by, you've guessed, Mr Miller, this championship carried an insignificance never previously attained. Events were run at anything from the British GP to Ingliston clubbies and foreign participation was precisely nil because no one else built cars to the same regulations. This is obviously such a great basis for success that the championship will be even more introverted this year; there is no sponsor (something the outlawed Camaro drivers seem to be more capable of attracting) and many leading British drivers want to race in Group 2 in Europe.

The Camaros are out because they are boring and win races, or at least one or two of them are/do. Stuart Graham, after being forced to fit a 7.4 engine early on to keep pace with Richard Lloyd's Simoniz/Think Automotive Camaro, then proved who was the better driver/preparer by winning almost every time. Not that Lloyd was much slower but he seemed to be afflicted by unreliability. If both of them failed Vince Woodman, who also swapped his 5.7 for a 7.4 later on, moved in and won.

The 2½ to 4-litre class, which should leap into prominence this year (hollow laughter), should have been a battleground between the Ford Capri

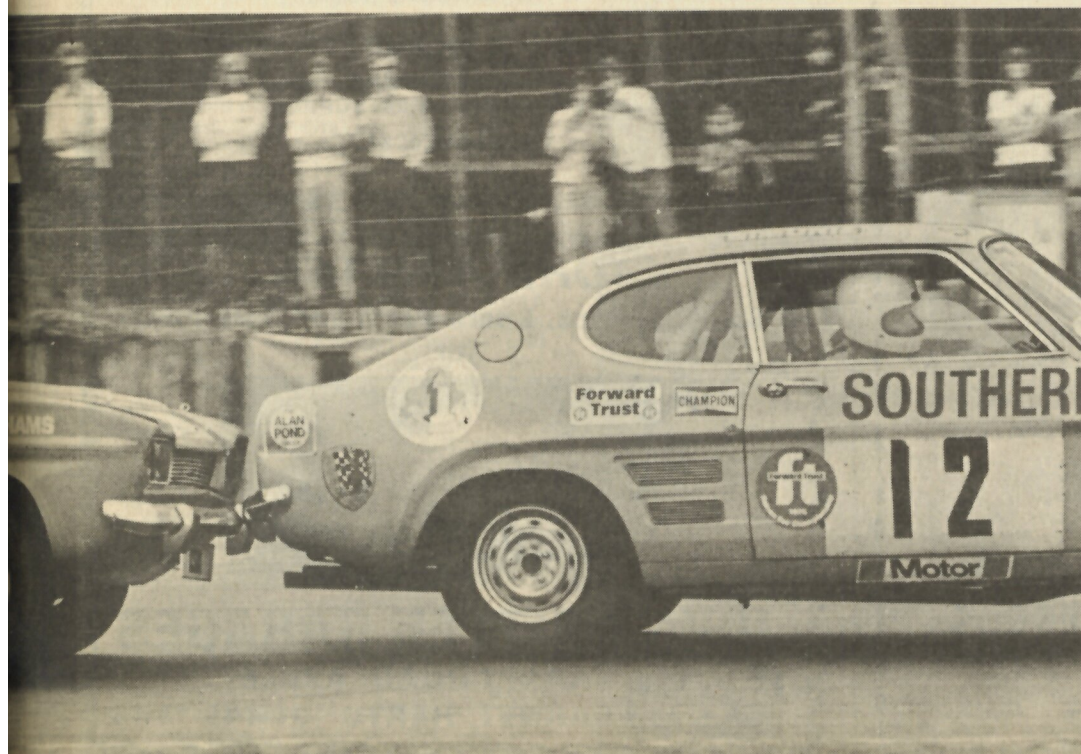
sure sign of the significance which the participants attached to the class was the amount of cheating which went on. At least one of the most successful Chevrolet Camaros as well as most of the Mazdas were disqualified at some time or other and one wonders how many other cars slipped or were talked through the net. Outside the Radio One and BARC/Britax championships, production saloon racing has never really existed at club level so the same faces in the same cars could be seen doing the same things at the same circuits throughout the year. There was no variety and little if anything unpredictable about the racing.

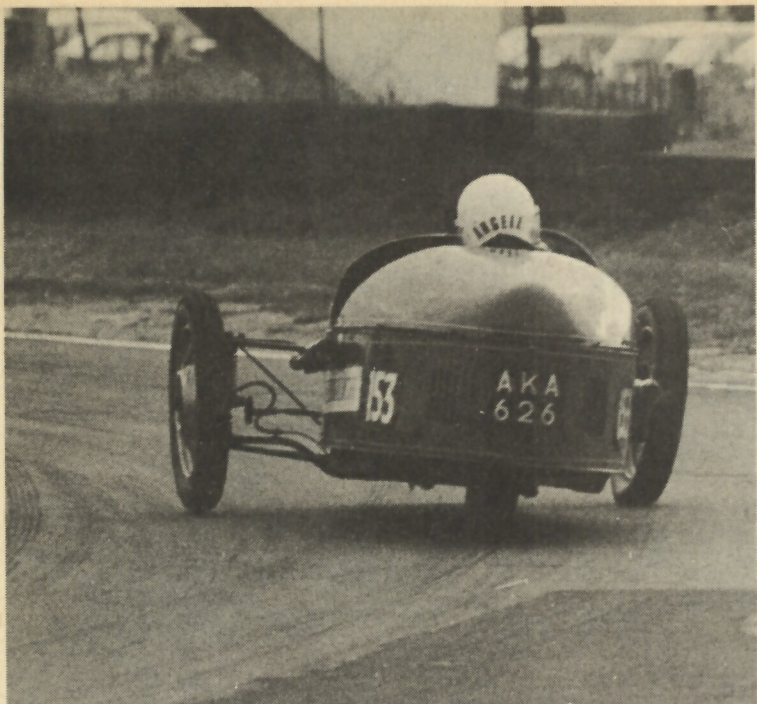
The swansong of the Camaro saw a healthy group of these cars contesting the over £2,300 class with scant opposition from an Alfa Romeo Alfetta and the occasional BMW Si. John Brindley emerged as winner of the class in both championships by showing the greatest consistency but any of Bob Ridgard, Derrick Brunt, Roger Payne and, whether legal or not, Brian Rice were capable of beating him on occasions. The racing was often close but because the cars tended to be driven unspectacularly they quickly became tedious if strung out. Nevertheless it seems an unnecessary waste of good machinery to outlaw them.

The revised price divisions brought the 3-litre Capri back into contention and made life hard for the Vauxhalls in the £1,700 to £2,299 class. Generally it seemed that a MkI Capri was the best bet with former champion Ivan Dutton winning his class in the Radio One series with his Century Oils car while FF driver Phil Dowsett noticeably gained in saloon skills as the season progressed and won his class in the Britax which had few rounds early on and which Dutton did not contest. A third Mk I Capri won the Radio One under 21 award in the hands of Marc Smith. Only Gerry Marshall (who else?) kept the smaller-engined Vauxhall Magnum competitive with the Hamilton Motors car and succeeded in scoring several wins as well as second in class to Dowsett.

Marshall's protegee and former Magnum driver Jock Robertson won both championships outright from the £1,300 to £1,699 class which quickly became the preserve of the rotary-engined Mazda RX3s, thanks to some careful price-fixing. The Rotary Club, as it became known, divided itself into two camps, Arians and others, and despite all the rule-bending that went on the racing remained remarkably close with Robertson certainly scoring on driving ability and car preparation, for which he was also responsible, over such notables as Tony Lanfranchi, Bill Sydenham, Jean-Pierre Aux and Wendy Markey.

As ever the greatest variety of makes came in the cheapest (a relative term) class where the Moskviches, or those that had survived the scrap heap, were relegated to the role of also-rans and honours were shared between Sunbeam Imp Sport, Radio One class winner in the hands of Simon Watson; Simca Rallye I, a strong threat to Watson in the hands of Simon Kirkby until Halesfield Motors withdrew; Lada 1200, with which Tony Stubbs won the Britax class once





Three wheels on my wagon and I'm still rolling along (left). Rustproof but not dent proof (right)

Kirkby was out of the way, Watson not contesting this one; Mini Clubman 1275 GT, for which Peter Jopp obtained sponsorship from Henlys and the *Evening Standard* and lost a good deal of weight but rarely emulated his first time out win with the car; and Honda Civic, Danny Alderton returning from obscurity since his days of FF glory in South Africa only to damage the car badly in a couple of crashes. Neville Knight also ran a Simca with success and Tim Dodwell's Mini Clubman was often as quick as Jopp's sponsored machine. The class may have been relatively slow but it was certainly highly competitive.

In Scotland the classes were merely divided at £1,699 and Eddie Labinjoh's Alfa Romeo 2000GTV had things very much its own way for overall victory. Under £1,699 Team Zippo Alias Smith and Jones dominated with their Mazda RX3s, Ian Smith winning more often than Chris Jones. Both of them visited Ireland from time to time where George Windrum's Capri, Plum Tyndall's Magnum, Robert Ward's ex-Handley Dolomite Sprint and Frank O'Rourke's Opel Ascona all won.

Before leaving the less modified type of saloon, we should mention the BRSCC's championships for Escorts and Renault 5s. *Penthouse* magazine sponsored the Escort championship which admitted Mk 2 Escort Sports alongside the older Mexicos, the latter remaining predominant and winning all the races apart from one non-championship event. Steve Thompson, who in the past has been able to display his talents in higher levels of the sport, was offered the ex-Colin Vandervell 1974 championship-winning car by Martin Hone and gave the car its second year of success. Mike Freeman ran him closest when he could take the time off work while Graham Hollis was a promising new talent who emerged to score the same number of points as Freeman in the end.

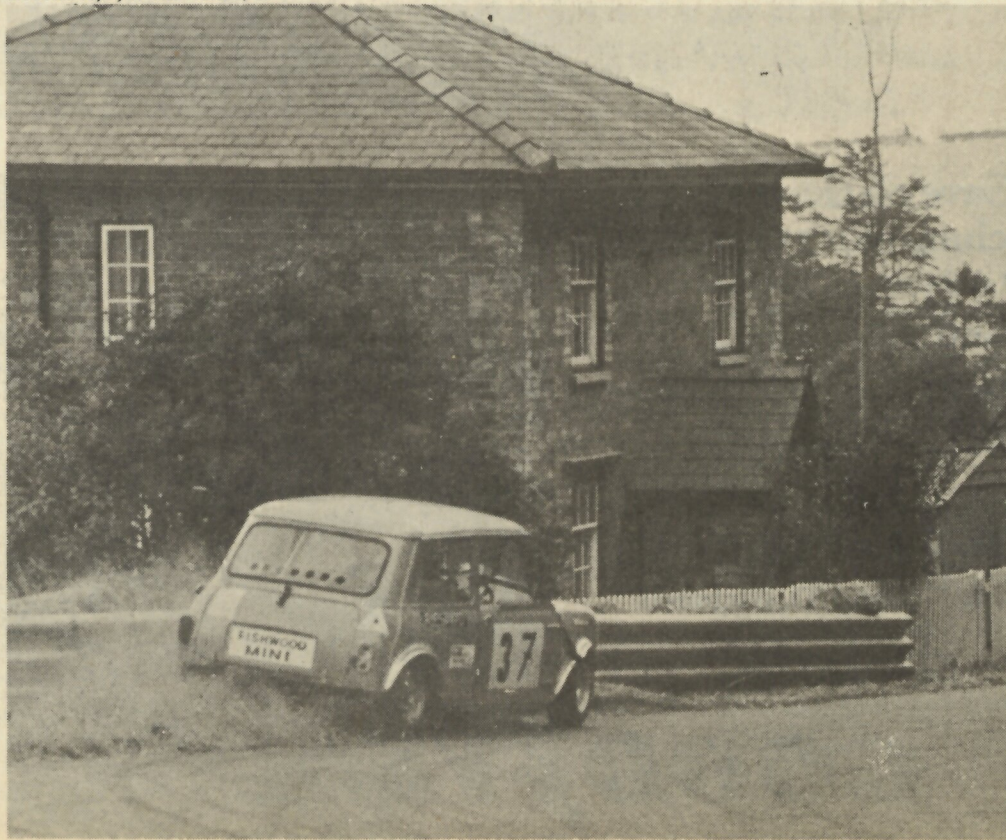
Renault racing was no better, and generally worse, than the year before but sensational moves are afoot to make it more like speedway racing than ever by making the fast men start at the back. A few years ago the RAC decreed that cars which practised out of session should start with a 10 s penalty to ensure that fast drivers did not have to work their way through a packed grid before the first corner. Presumably so few Renaults are expected on the grids that this theory does not apply to them. Neil McGrath won the championship as he should have done.

Super Saloons were given a championship of their own through the BRSCC and Tricentrol for the first time. At their best these mighty monsters provided some of the best club racing around; at their worst they were not half as bad as some people, particularly those who had not thought of the idea in the first place, liked to make out. Happily, attempts to kill the class after only one year have failed for the idea of returning these cars to club special saloon racing would never have worked. They have developed too far in several significant cases to make it worth anyone's while trying to compete in their more conventional Escort, Anglia or Vauxhall. The great mistake in hindsight was to run one round of

the championship at the British GP meeting, for, although the entry was excellent and the race by no means a long one, the effort proved too much for many entrants who are, after all, in the majority of cases private individuals with limited resources.

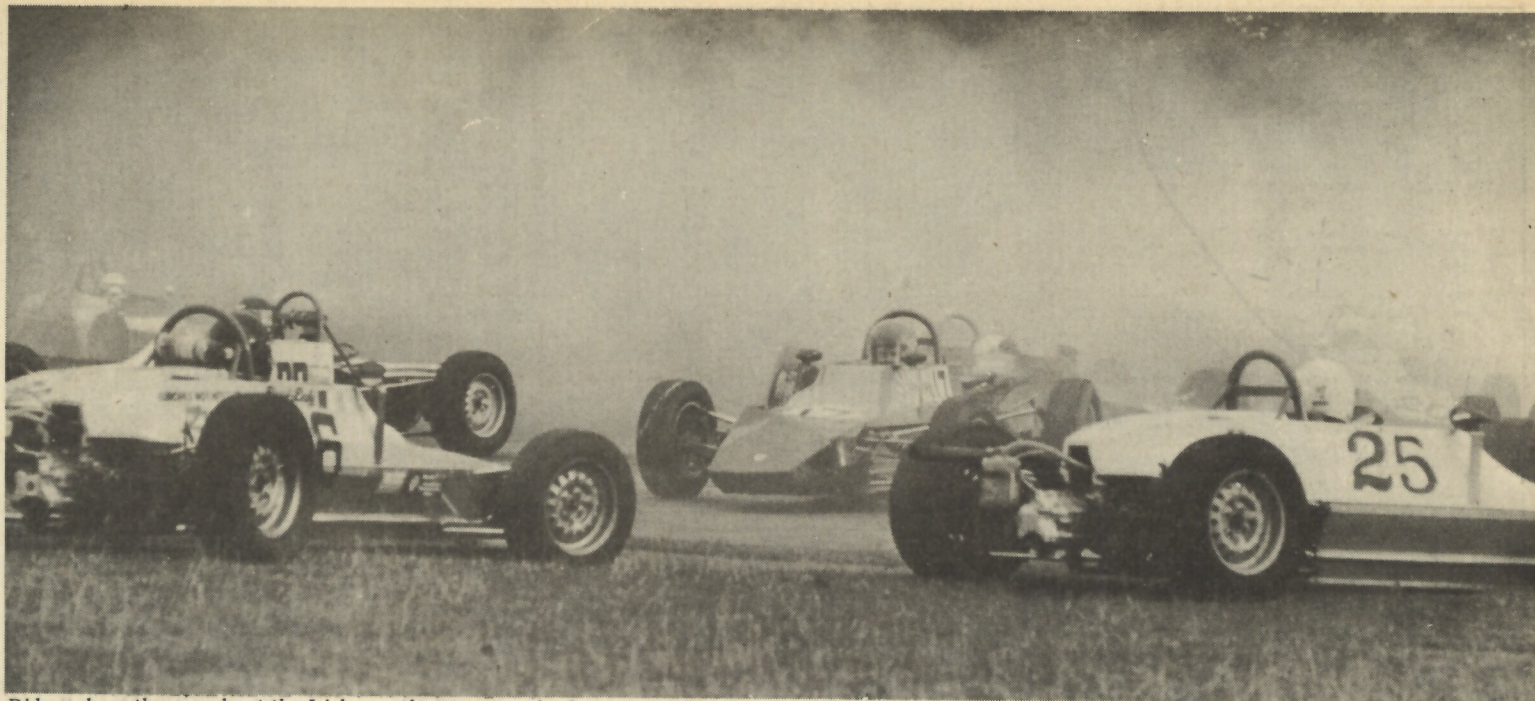
Best use of available resources was made by the lads from Dealer Team Vauxhall who built up from the remains of 1974's Ventora Big Bertha, a sort of Firenza-looking thing called Baby Bertha complete with the 5-litre Repco- Holden V8. The car was soon sorted and Gerry Marshall used it to trounce or play with the opposition, depending on how the mood took him. It was one of the best sights in club racing and when he was pressed, as happened early in the car's life when Alec Poole showed what a first class driver could do with only 2-litres of Ford BDG in a Skoda shell, or when Mick Hill returned to the wheel of his second Capri which had been sold to Martin Birrane, then there were fireworks. Poole, together with his inimitable sponsor Derek McMahon, added a welcome touch of blarney to the proceedings wherever they raced and the former British saloon car champion was second to Marshall in the championship. Nick Whiting's spaceframe Escort

Second left for the house, sir



FVC was always quick and often a threat to Poole while Bill Dryden took over the more conventional 2.5 Firenza once Marshall had started his liaison with Baby Barta. Colin Hawker's DFVW, a Volkswagen 1600 bodysell with Ford DFV engine, De Cadenet Le Mans chassis and F1 Brabham suspension was a promising car whose development was retarded by a nasty mid-season accident, while Tony Strawson shoehorned one of Ian Richardson's old 7.2-litre Chevrolet engines into Mick Hill's original Capri and came third in the championship. Richardson himself was a considerable disappointment for he built an 8.1-litre Chevrolet Corvair but rarely managed to bring it on to the starting grid.

There was the usual abundance of special saloon championships. Whiting won the MCD/Simoniz series, just reward for consistently good performances with a beautifully prepared car. Dave Millington's Brook Hire Vauxhall Firenza concentrated on the BARC Forward Trust series, winning its class easily while Strawson won a poorly-supported class in the Silverstone/Esso Uniflo championship. Other names to feature included once again Tony Sugden in his perennial Escort BDE; Brian Whiting (no relation) with a



Did you hear the one about the Irishmen that went racing?

similar car which always seemed fast but fragile; Paul Rhodes in the North with an Escort FVC; and Phil Clarke at Snetterton with a Firenza like Millington's. Dryden took the ex-Marshall DTV car home with him to Scotland and prevented Norman Hodgson's ex-Whiting (N) Escort FVC from winning everything. Arthur Collier's ex-John Turner Skoda cleaned up in Ireland.

For as long as we can remember the 1300 class has been a Mini-Cooper S preserve at club level. Nowadays it's essential to have a BDA installed to do well as Peter Baldwin showed by winning the Esso Uniflo championship outright and his class in the Simoniz. A similar Allen BDA-engined Mini-Clubman was raced in the North and Scotland by Eric Smith and left the rest breathless. Running with a BDA engine in the right make of car, an Escort was Graham Goode who had won the Forward Trust the year before with an Anglia. The Escort took some time to sort but should be a strong contender this year. Conventional Minis were raced by Tony Westbrook, Tony Allies, Terry Harmer (for the umpteenth year), Freddy Heaney and, in Ireland, Stee Griffin but, although they were all quick only Heaney was ever able to beat the 1975 Fordward Trust champion Phil Winter whose Longman Cooper S rarely failed to win its class — a magnificent effort.

In the 1-litre division the Mini now hardly has a look in at the championship level — it's all Imps. John Homewood lost his Kent Messenger sponsorship to Nick Whiting but nevertheless cleaned

up their championship to such good effect that he's been banned from winning it this year. He also found time to win races at most other circuits than Brands Hatch. His arch-rival for fastest Imp man, although they rarely met, was Jeff Ward who had a new spaceframe Imp built by Richard Wallinger with which he won his class in the Simoniz and Esso Uniflo but could only take second to Brian Prebble's Imp in the Forward Trust. Ray Calcutt and Richard Oliver chased Homewood in vain with their Imps at Brands Hatch while Basil Dagge and Pat Mannion also had a go in similar cars. Richard Long's spaceframe BDA-engined Anglia was an occasional threat, particularly at Snetterton and Silverstone, while Derek Walker's Fiat 850 Coupé on an old Merlyn F3 chassis with 1-litre Holbay engine was a winner in the North West. In Scotland Imps dominated too in the hands of Ian Forrest and John Fydon.

Imps are moving into the 850 class in a big way too but with not quite the same dominance yet. Dr David Enderby found time off from his medical practice to chase Simoniz points all over the country with his 850 Mini and only just failed to surpass Whiting for the overall title but in the Forward Trust it was Roger Gill's Imp winning the class from the similar car of Clifford Watts, while Geoff Gilkes had the bright idea of putting an Imp engine in a Mini shell with which he won his class in the Esso Uniflo from the Imp of Mike Kirby. Gill's was probably the fastest of all, adding a

second in class in the Simoniz to his FT win. A Mini of which great things were expected, and sometimes seen, was that of Charles Bernstein but after surpassing itself in front of 47,000 people at Mallory Park by winning the 1-litre Forward Trust race outright, it faded from the scene.

Classic Saloons were a new concept for 1975 and worked very well, completely failing to fulfil the fears of rude people who knock any new idea unless paid to do otherwise. A pleasant mixture of nicely-prepared saloon cars from the mid-fifties turned out with winners including Jaguar Mk IXs, Lancia Aurelias, Jaguar 2.4s and Ford Zephyr Mk 2s. Andy McLennan did his Doc Sheppard act with an A35, later joined by Roger Andreason's Minor 1000, while Mike Hawes won the championship with consistency rather than speed in an MG Magnette. Miles Marshall unearthed a Borgward Isabella TS from somewhere and soon started winning his class in a manner which must have made Bill Blydenstein nostalgic. Altogether a very good thing which hopefully will not be spoiled by over exposure with too many rounds in this year's expanded championship.

Finally, Mini racing which this year is to be made "respectable" with sponsorship from British Leyland — something we've been pleading for for years. In the 850s Graham Wenham returned for his second championship, hardly anyone else winning a race. He even had the nerve to take the TEAC championship once he'd cleaned up the main one! Alan Curnow went to Richard Longman for his Mini Miglia and the formula worked for he won the championship in the end quite easily after initially having a lot of competition from the much less experienced Russell Dell. Mini-Seven started up in the North of England where Paul Ratcliffe and Colin Hesford were the most successful.

FORMULAE 750 AND 1300

It is perhaps to be expected that in a time of economic stringency the lowest cost classes of racing should flourish and this was certainly true of the 750 MC's Reliant-engined formulae for diminutive 1½-seaters. Such was the demand from entrants that many times two races had to be held on the same day and no less than 89 drivers scored points during the year. Kim Perry, in only his second season of racing with one of David Newman's DNCs, won more races than anyone else and won the championship deservedly but he was closely pressed by the self-built cars of Tim Green, Rob Wells and John Giles.

As predicted last year, with 1974 champion Tim Gath moving on, John Allan's mid-engined Allan Mk 4 became a serious contender for the Formula 1300 title and at first everything seemed to be going his way, despite relying on only 1200 cc. Then Bob Davis got his self-built Davis fully sorted to win most of the races from June onwards and eventually clinch the championship with a front-engined car. Phil Lloyd, in a mixture of Nomads and Centaurs, Brian Cocks in a rebodied Elva Mk 8S and Paul Webb's Delapena filled the places behind Allan.

CLUB RACE WINNERS 1975

			Out-right	Class	Total
1.	Geoff Lees	1.6 FF Royale-Minister RP21	32	—	32
2.	John Homewood	1.0 Sunbeam Imp/5.3 Vauxhall Magnum-Aston Martin V8	21	10 (9)	31 (30)
3.	Gerry Marshall	2.3 Vauxhall Magnum Coupé/2.3 & 2.5 Vauxhall Firenza t/c/5.0 Vauxhall Firenza-Reppo V8/2.0 Triumph Dolomite Sprint/2.5 Ford Zephyr 6 Mk 2	23	7	30
4.	Jock Robertson	2.0 Mazda RX3 Coupé	17	11	28
5.	Nick Whiting	2.0 Ford Escort FVC	24	—	24
6.	Geoff Friswell	1.6 Mallock U2-Hart Mk 16/1.6 Mallock U2-Davron Mk 11B/1.4	22	1 (—)	23 (22)
7.	Kenny Gray	1.6 FF Van Diemen-Scholar RF75	20	—	20
8.	Peter Baldwin	1.3 Mini-Clubman BDA	3	17	20
9.	Kenny Allen	1.0 Clan Crusader-Imp	5	15 (14)	20 (19)
=10.	Nick Adams	1.6 FF Mallock U2-Close/Holbay Mk 14/1.6 Mallock U2-Close Mk 17	3	16	19
=10.	Phil Winter	1.3 Mini-Cooper S	3	16	19
12.	Tiff Needell	1.6 FF Elden-Scholar PH10C/1.6 FF Crosslé-Scholar 25F/2.0 FF Hawke-Holbay DL14	17	—	17
13.	Chris Meek	1.6 Lotus Europa Special	14	3 (2)	17 (16)
14.	Graham Wenham	848 Mini	15	1	16
15.	Roger Gill	850 Hillman Imp	1	15	16
16.	Chris Alford	1.6 Morgan 4/4	—	15	15
17.	Willie Green	3.8 Jaguar E Lightweight/2.5 Maserati 250F/3.3 Ferrari 275LM	13	2 (1)	15 (14)
18.	Jim Walsh	1.6 FF Hawke-Scholar DL12/1.6 FF Hawke-Close DL12	14	—	14
19.	Jeff Ward	1.0 Hillman Imp	9	5	14
20.	Phil Dowsett	3.0 Ford Capri 3000GT/1.6 FF Crosslé-Minister 25F	2	12	14
21.	David Enderby	850 Mini	—	14	14
22.	Andrew Smith	1.6 Lotus Elan	8	6 (4)	14 (12)
23.	Robin Gray	3.5 Morgan Plus 8	5	8 (5)	13 (10)
24.	Derek Daly	1.6 FF Crosslé-Minister 30F	12	—	12
=25.	Andy Barton	1.6 Lotus-BDA 69/1.6 March-BDA 73B	11	1	12
=25.	John Brindley	5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28/2.0 Mazda RX3 Coupé	11	1	12

=28.	Eric Smith	1.3 Mini-Clubman BDA	3	9	12
=28.	Iain McLaren	2.0 Chevron-Hart B26/31 BDG	11	—	11
=28.	Kim Perry	742 DNC-Reliant Mk 3	11	—	11
30.	Ian Forrest	1.0 Hillman Imp	3	8	11
=32.	Ian Flux	FV Scarab Mk 1	10	—	10
=32.	Eddie Jordan	1.6 FF Crosslé-Woodie 30F	10	—	10
=32.	Neil McGrath	1.0 Renault 5TL/1.6 Ford Escort Mexico	10	—	10
=32.	Brian Rice	5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28	10	—	10
=32.	Fergus Tait	1.0 Delta-Delta/Ford IRF4	10	—	10
=32.	John Wingfield	1.8 Brabham-Somers/FVC BT35	10	—	10
38.	Richard Jenvey	1.6 Lotus Elan/2.0 Vogue-Ark/BDG SP	9	1	10
=39.	Simon Packford	1.0 Davrian-Imp Mk 7	3	7	10
=39.	Derek Walker	1.0 Fiat 850 Coupé-Ford	3	7	10
=41.	Ivan Dutton	3.0 Ford Capri 3000GT/1.3 Simca Rallye 1	—	10	10
=41.	Tony Stubbs	1.2 Lada 1200	—	10	10
=43.	Bob Davis	1.3 Davis-Ford Mk 1	9	—	9
=43.	Rad Dougall	1.6 FF Royale-Scholar RP21	9	—	9
=43.	Norman Hodgson	1.8 Ford Escort FVC	9	—	9
=43.	Rick Morris	1.6 FF Hawke-Scholar DL12	9	—	9
=43.	Patsy McGarrity	1.6 Chevron-BDA B29	9	—	9
=43.	Gunnar Nilsson	F3 March-Novamotor/Toyota 753/1.6 Chevron-Swindon B29 BDA	9	—	9
=43.	Steve Thompson	1.6 Ford Escort Mexico	9	—	9
49.	Alan Curnow	1.0 Mini	8	1	9
=50.	Brian Murphy	4.4 Jaguar E	7	2	9
=50.	Frank Sytner	1.6 Mallock U2-Davron Mk 11B/16/3.8 Jaguar E Lightweight/1.9 Mallock U2-Hart Mk 17 BDG	7	2	9
52.	Simon Phillips	2.0 Frazer Nash Le Mans Replica/2.0 Cooper-Bristol Mk 2/2.0 BMW 328	2	7	9
=53.	Alex Ferrada	1.6 FF Mallock U2-Davron Mk 16	—	9	9
=53.	John Kirk	1.1 Davrian-Imp Mk 5	—	9	9
55.	David Ham	3.8 Lister-Jaguar	5	4 (3)	9 (8)
56.	John Cooper	5.0 Ford GT40/2.8 Porsche Carrera RSR	3	6 (5)	9 (8)
57.	Reg Woodcock	2.2 Triumph TR3	—	9 (8)	9 (8)
=58.	Matthew Argenti	1.6 FF Van Diemen-Scholar RF75	8	—	8
=58.	Mike Blanchet	1.6 FF Crosslé-Minister 30F/1.6 FF Lotus-Minister 61	8	—	8
=58.	Mike Nugent	1.8 Lotus Elan 26R	8	—	8
62.	Eddie Labinjoh	1.1 Fisher-BL Spyder/2.0 Alfa Romeo 2000GTV	7	1	8
63.	Richard Thwaites	2.0 Elva-BMW Mk 7S	4	4	8
64.	Stee Griffin	1.4 Mini-Cooper S	3	5	8
65.	Gerald Clark	1.3 Mini-Cooper S	1	7	8
=66.	Simon Watson	0.9 Sunbeam Imp Sport	—	8	8
=66.	Terry Grimwood	1.5 MG Midget	—	8	8
68.	Dave Bettinson	1.6 Lotus-Holbay 7	4	4 (3)	8 (7)
69.	Ian McCullough	1.3 Austin-Healey Sprite	1	7 (6)	8 (7)
70.	Ken Shipley	1.6 FF Mallock U2-Rowland Mk 11B	—	8 (7)	8 (7)
=71.	John Allan	1.2 Allan-Ford Mk 4	7	—	7
=71.	Joe Applegarth	1.6 Brabham-Ford BT2 3C	7	—	7
=71.	Ian Briggs	1.0 March-Felday/MAE 733/1.0 Mini	7	—	7
=71.	Jim Evans	2.0 Ford Escort RS2000 Turbo	7	—	7
=71.	David Kennedy	1.6 FF Crosslé 30F	7	—	7
=71.	David Orbell	1.6 Mallock U2-Holbay Mk 11B/16	7	—	7
=71.	John Simpson	1.6 FF Nike-Scholar Mk 10	7	—	7
=71.	Mick Starkey	1.6 FF Merlyn-Scholar Mk 20A	7	—	7
=71.	Brian Whiting	1.9 Ford Escort BDE	7	—	7
80.	John Evans	1.8 Lotus Elan	6	1	7
81.	John Pearson	3.8 Jaguar XK120	4	3	7
82.	Keith Ashby	1.3 MG Midget	3	4	7
=83.	Jim Adamson	1.0 Davrian-Imp Mk 7	1	6	7
=83.	Ian Smith	2.0 Mazda RX3 Coupé	1	6	7
85.	John Morgan	3.8 Jaguar Mk 1	5	2 (1)	7 (6)
86.	Tony Allies	1.3 Mini-Clubman	1	6 (5)	7 (6)
87.	Ian Hall	1.1 Mini-Jem Mk 2	—	7 (6)	7 (6)
=88.	Derrick Brunt	5.7 Chevrolet Camaro Z28/3.0 BMW Si	5	2 (—)	7 (5)
=88.	Barry Reece	850 Mini	—	7 (4)	7 (4)
=89.	Tony Dean	5.0 Chevron-Morand/Chevrolet B24/28	6	—	6
=89.	Bernard Devaney	1.6 FF Hawke-Rowland DL12	6	—	6
=89.	Ray Edge	1.6 Mallock U2-Davron/Holbay Mk 14/17	6	—	6
=89.	John Gale	1.3 MG Midget	6	—	6
=89.	Derek Lawrence	2.0 FF Crosslé-Titan 31F	6	—	6
=89.	Stu Lawson	1.6 FF Hawke-Scholar DL12	6	—	6
=89.	John Morrison	FSV Supernova-Heidegger BH5/FSV Supernova-Daghorn BH4	6	—	6
=89.	David MacPherson	1.6 FF Dulon-Minister MP17	6	—	6
=89.	Paul Sleeman	1.6 FF Merlyn-Minister Mk 11A	6	—	6
=89.	Tony Strawson	4.7 Ford Capri V8/7.2 Ford Capri-Chevrolet V8	6	—	6
=89.	Mike Young	FSV Modus-Heidegger M2	6	—	6
=100.	Glenn Eagling	1.6 FF Van Diemen-Scholar RF75	5	1	6
=100.	John Bright	1.6 FF Merlyn-Whitehurst Mk 11/1.6 FF Royale-Whitehurst RP21	5	1	6
102.	John Fyda	1.0 Hillman Imp	4	2	6
103.	Graham Goode	1.3 Ford Escort BDA	2	4	6
104.	Peter Cartlidge	1.0 Austin A40-Ford	1	5	6
105.	John Webb	1.6 Lotus Elan 26	—	6	6
106.	Andy Houston	1.6 FF Gryphon-Lion C4A	—	6 (5)	6 (5)
=108.	Creighton Brown	1.6 Mallock U2-Close Mk 17	5	—	5
=108.	Arthur Collier	5.0 Skoda-Chevrolet S110R V8	5	—	5
=108.	Russell Dell	1.0 Mini	5	—	5
=108.	Bill Dryden	2.5 Vauxhall Firenza t/c	5	—	5
=108.	Tim Green	742 Time-Reliant Mk 3	5	—	5
=108.	Philip Guerola	1.8 Brabham-Norvic/FVC BT30	5	—	5
=108.	Rob Haigh	1.9 MGA	5	—	5
=108.	Kelvin Hesketh	1.6 FF Crosslé-Minister 30F	5	—	5
=108.	David Kemp	1.6 FF Merlyn-Abbott Mk 20A	5	—	5
=108.	Paul Rhodes	1.8 Ford Escort FVC	5	—	5
=108.	Terry Richards	1.6 FF Merlyn-Rowland Mk 11A	5	—	5
=108.	Bernard Vermilio	1.6 FF Merlyn-Scholar Mk 29/2.0 FF Merlyn-Scholar Mk 28	5	—	5
=108.	Rob Wicken	1.6 FF Merlyn-Minister Mk 17A	5	—	5
=121.	Gerry Brown	1.5 MG TC	4	1	5
=121.	Nick Faure	3.0 Porsche Carrera RS	4	1	5
123.	Derek Shortall	1.6 Gryphon-Ford C4A	3	2	5
=124.	Gerry Glass	850 Mini	2	3	5
=124.	Chris Jones	2.0 Mazda RX3 Coupé	2	3	5
=126.	Charles Bernstein	850 Mini	1	4	5
=126.	John Bury	1.3 MG Midget	1	4	5
=126.	Terry Harmer	1.3 Mini-Cooper S	1	4	5
=126.	Roger Matthews	1.0 Mini-Ford S	1	4	5
=126.	Paul Ratcliffe	848 Mini	1	4	5
=126.	John Targett	1.8 MGB	1	4	5
=132.	Brian Classick	5.3 Iso Grifo Bizzarini V8	—	5	5
=132.	Geoff Gilkes	850 Mini-Imp	—	5	5
=132.	Simon Kirkby	1.3 Simca Rallye 1	—	5	5
=132.	Geoff Lambert	1.6 FF Mallock U2-Holbay Mk 14	—	5	5
=132.	James Pinkerton	1.3 Mini-Cooper S	—	5	5
=132.	Clifford Watts	850 Hillman Imp	—	5	5
=132.	Barry Wood	1.1 Ginetta-Imp G15	—	5	5
139.	Tony Sugden	1.8 Ford Escort BDE	4	1 (—)	5 (4)
140.	Tim Wood	1.6 Magnum-Holbay C75	3	2 (1)	5 (4)
141.	Peter Pitman	1.0 Hillman Imp	2	3 (2)	5 (4)
=142.	Peter Richings	1.1 MG Midget	—	5 (4)	5 (4)
=142.	Andy McLennan	1.0 Austin A35	—	5 (4)	5 (4)
=142.	Colin Hesford	848 Mini/3.5 Morgan Plus 8	—	5 (4)	5 (4)

NB 1. All British and Irish races of less than National Open status plus all FF2000 events included.
NB 2. Figures in brackets represent total and class wins where there were at least three starters.

HISTORIC CARS

We've already dealt with classic saloons but they were only one aspect of a growing trend towards the preservation and, just as important, the use of obsolete racing machinery of all kinds. Nostalgia for its own sake is bad because it can stultify or, worse still, enhance artificially the value of something and take it out of reach of those for whom it was originally intended. But at a time when new racing cars are so expensive that only the sponsored few can afford them, it surely makes sense to rediscover, restore and race cars which in their heyday were regarded as the ultimate. However, as we suggested last year, there is a danger of racing cars into the ground and a rest of a couple of years would do no harm. Bill Allen, the man behind the JCB/Speed Merchants Historic Car Championship, has formed the same view so that 1975 will have seen the last of the present series.

Ideally the JCB brought together all that was best in racing and sports-racing cars built before 1961 divided into classes at two and three litres. Unfortunately the best is not always the cheapest or fastest and cars which were the best in say 1956 may not be competitive with cars built three years later. The result has been a gradual departure from the scene of the likes of Jaguar D-types, Aston Martin DB3Ss and Maserati 250Fs to be replaced by a mass of Lister-Jaguars, Lotus Elevens and a few Maserati Tipo 61s. There was one glorious exception to the general rule, however, in the shape of Anthony Bamford's 1958 Maserati 250F with which Willie Green dominated not only the 3-litre class but also the races overall in the absence of Neil Corner. Green's main threat came from assorted Listers, either Jaguar or Chevrolet powered, with David Ham and Bruce Halford in the former kind going particularly well and later John Beasley in a Chevrolet-engined monster. Simon Phillips' stable of Bristol-engined cars provided him with a Cooper-Bristol with which to win all but one of the 2-litre classes, thereby running Green very close for overall honours. Alan Cottam's A-type Connaught was the other winner, reviving memories of F2 racing in the early fifties.

Catering for slightly later machinery, and concentrating on sports cars only, was the Classic Car Championship supported by *Thoroughbred and Classic Car* magazine. Once again Willie Green was the man to beat, Anthony Bamford having made a Ferrari 275LM available for him after the first round when he ran a lightweight E-type Jaguar. This change of steed cost Green the championship for, although he was always a winner with the Ferrari so was Richard Thwaites in the under 2-litre class with his Eastern Carpet Stores Elva-BMW Mk 7S so the Yorkshireman won the championship. Green and Thwaites were very evenly matched on the circuits, although in different classes, and on occasions it was only Green's years of track experience which gave him the advantage. In the GT classes Brian Classick's Iso Grifo Bizzarini and John Webb's Elan won but both had close competition, particularly Classick who had to contend with Frank Synter in the Bamford E-type once Green had vacated it. Webb's sponsor was Monsieur Rochas who were sufficiently impressed to want to sponsor the whole championship this year.

Yet another type of historic racing was the Thoroughbred Sports Car championship sponsored last year by XK Jaguar specialists Oldham and Crowther, Martin Crowther himself featuring fairly prominently with his own XK120. With the competitors able to draw on popular sports cars of the fifties, this class was particularly well-supported although the winner once again was the amazing Triumph TR3 of Reg Woodcock. His class opposition from assorted TRs, the odd Morgan Plus 4 and AC Ace plus the Frazer Nash Le Mans Replica of Simon Phillips rarely stood a chance. Over 2700 cc there were some fine battles between John Harpers' special aluminium XK120, John Chatham's Austin-Healey 3000 and David Preece's Aston Martin DB4. Unfortunately Harper had a nasty accident with the XK at Oulton Park which left Chatham and Preece to share the wins for the rest of the year. In the up to 1650 cc class Bruce Brown's Elva Courier carried on as before until the engine blew up, by which time he had clinched the class from the similar car of Jerry Trace and Michael Gue's Lotus Elite.

As usual we've tried to cover most things and most people of significance but no doubt if you're an ace and we've forgotten to mention you, you'll write and tell us about yourself without being asked!



Graeme Lawrence won the final round of the Peter Stuyvesant Tasman series, having looked a winner throughout the event

TASMAN 4 — TERETONGA

Lawrence takes best race

After failing to score a point in the first three races, Graeme Lawrence got it all together to win the fourth and final round in the Peter Stuyvesant international series at Teretonga Park, Invercargill, on January 18. But it was Ken Smith who finished up series winner, after being the Teretonga leader until just beyond the half way mark. He finished second to Lawrence, 57.8s in arrears, having been slowed by an oil leak in the gearbox of his Lola T332.

Third and fourth, having run 61 of the 62 laps, were Australians Kevin Bartlett (Lola T400) and Bruce Allison (Lola T332). Delayed by a puncture early in the race, Jim Murdoch (Begg 018) ran 59 laps for fifth and sixth was Victorian John Edmonds (Elfin MR5) who completed 55 laps. The other MR5 driver, Baron Robertson was the only other finisher in the ten-car field.

Australian Paul Bernasconi pushed his T400 to the finish line in the hope of taking eighth place prize money, but was ruled out by the race officials. Brian Redman (Chevron BMW) tailed Bartlett and Allison until he was forced to abandon when the left rear wheel studs sheared in lap 43. Max Stewart (Lola T400) swapped places with Lawrence in the earlier part of the race, but drifted when his engine began to lose power and then finally abandoned when a stone lodged under the accelerator pedal, sending the revs up to more than 9000.

Lawrence in the Lola T332 looked good from the time qualifying started. He gained pole position with 52.9s lap, which was 1s dead better than the official record set by Graham McRae (McRae GM2) in 1974. Then in the race he took the official record with a 53.4s lap.

ENTRY

There were 15 entrants on the race card, but only 11 fronted up in Invercargill and they, of course, were all the people that mattered, led by Smith with his well-turned out La Valise Travel T332. After the disastrous Wigram affair, some had a fair amount of work to put in on their cars to make them raceworthy. Among those who counted themselves lucky was Bartlett who found when the engine of his T400 was stripped that a malfunction in the valve train gear had been, in fact, the cause of the misfiring that had afflicted the Glenn Abbey-built engine since the flat-crank unit was installed for Manfeild. According to Bartlett, if the oil pump drive had not failed at Wigram the valve trouble would have wrecked the engine. Lawrence, who had blown an engine in the Wigram pre-race warm-up had to build up an engine to replace it. This, he described as a "Lawrence" engine and a particularly strong one, as it was the unit with which he had set a lap record at Manfeild last December in the New Zealand — Australia test series.

Redman, who had with some wit attributed his Wigram retirement to an electrical failure ("A connecting rod unfortunately cut through the ignition lead") simply replaced the "hot" 295 bhp engine installed specially for Wigram with his remaining 290 bhp unit and packed up the remains of the Wigram engine and sent it back to Munich.

Baron Robertson arrived without his Elfin Repco MR5, explaining that his mechanic had encountered a "handling problem" towing the car down from Christchurch. Robertson, who is racing on a shoestring budget and has been buying left-over used tyres from people such as Lawrence and Smith, is having a rather better series than most people and himself had expected. By the time he reached Teretonga he had picked up more than \$5500 in prize money and that, he said, was rather better than Lawrence had done! The amiable Victorian John Edmonds was also on hand with his Elfin Repco MR5 and obviously enjoying his New Zealand motor racing holiday.

PRACTICE

The circuit was open for testing prior to the qualifying day, but not many took advantage of that. Redman went out in the Chevron and professed himself happy, but said he would have been even more happy if the main straight had been shorter! Allison, with Warwick Brown still

overseeing his operations, also had a run and it appeared that his problems had been overcome. Then Brown took the T332 out for a few laps, had a rear wheel bearing collapse and that resulted in rear suspension damage which had to be made good in time for Saturday qualifying. Murdoch was the only other who bothered about the testing day.

There were two qualifying sessions, each of about 45 minutes on the Saturday. Heavy overnight rain did nothing to raise drivers' spirits, but it cleared away and the track was dried out by a cold southerly wind, which had its origins in Antarctica, before the field was let off under the eyes of the timekeepers. As has come to be the case in this series, it was very soon obvious that Lawrence and Smith were once again going to set the standards. In 1974 Graham McRae (McRae GM2) set a lap record of 53.9s for the 1.6 mile circuit and this was the figure that Smith and Lawrence immediately set out to improve on. By the time the session ended, Lawrence was down to 53.1s and Smith to 53.6s. Both were confident that they would improve in the afternoon session. Bartlett, looking as though he was trying very hard, made 54.7s. Stewart spent most of his time in and out of the pits, apparently wrestling with a fuel problem, and did not get a time. Bernasconi was also having troubles which appeared to be connected with fuel and the best he could do was 74.8s. So it was left to Allison to keep the Australians in the picture and this he did with a 54.2s lap to be third best. Murdoch did 55s dead, Edmonds 60s dead and Love in the old Begg FM5, still carrying its "For Sale" sign, managed 69.9s to beat Bernasconi, but that did not mean a thing.

In the afternoon Lawrence and Smith made good their forecasts. Lawrence came down to 52.9s, an improvement of a second on McRae's record, for an average speed of 107.75 mph. Smith made 53.2s to share the front row for the rolling start with Lawrence. Allison could not better his morning 54.2s, but that was good enough to make him No 3. Bartlett improved to 54.3s to join Allison on the second row. Stewart sorted out his troubles to the extent of becoming fifth quickest with 54.7s and he had Murdoch for company on row 3 with his morning 55s.

Redman, who had a morning best of 55.5s, improved to 55.2s and that put him well clear of the eighth qualifier, Bernasconi, whose best was 58.2s. Then came Edmonds, with 59 dead, Robertson (69.4) and Love (69.9) on his own at the back of the grid.

Then when everyone was packing up for the

day, race officials announced that the times of Love and Robertson did not measure up. Robertson was most unhappy about that and discussed the matter with Lawrence, who promptly went and talked with race officials. Not long afterwards it was announced that Robertson would be a starter.

RACE

It was about 3.30 pm when the field was arranged on the grid. It set off in orderly array behind the Datsun 260Z pace car which was driven considerably faster than had been the case the previous week at Wigram. Lawrence and Stewart appeared to make the best of the start, but by the time they swung into the left-hand sweeper at the exit to the main straight, Smith had hit the front, with Lawrence, Stewart, Bartlett, Allison and Murdoch next. That was the order at the completion of lap 1, except that Redman had taken over Allison's sixth place. The young Australian spun and slithered in a cloud of dust to the infield at the Elbow, the tight left-hander that leads into the main straight. Allison resumed behind Robertson, who was running ninth.

Next time round, Bernasconi, who had been seventh, pitted to replace a broken water pump drive belt. The leaders had completed 20 laps when he resumed. After five laps, Smith was still in front and Stewart had taken Lawrence to be second by less than a car's length. These three had opened up a gap on Bartlett, who now led Redman by the length of the main straight and then came Allison, who had made up ground rapidly. Edmonds and Robertson. In the fifth lap Murdoch had punctured his right front tyre and so, at that stage, he was a pit visitor. In the seventh lap Stewart hit the front, but by the end of lap eight Smith was leading again and Stewart had been taken by Lawrence. A lap later Allison slipped by Redman and moved in on Bartlett, where he remained for the rest of the race. In the eleventh lap Smith, Lawrence and Stewart began doubling the tail-end of the field and by then they were well clear of Bartlett, Allison and Redman. The latter would move in on the two Lolas on the twisty bits of the circuit, but lose all the ground again on that long main straight.

Up front Smith, Lawrence and Stewart were in a huddle. Then Stewart began to lose ground, the engine of the T400 sounding as though it had lost some of its sting. However, Stewart did get back to second spot when Lawrence was claimed at the Elbow and spun to the infield. He resumed in third place, still comfortably clear of nose-to-tailers Bartlett and Allison. Lawrence was now 7s behind Stewart and it took him eight laps to reel in the Australian. Three laps later Lawrence was well clear of Stewart and hot on the heels of Smith, whose T332 started blowing smoke in the twisty bits on the back of the circuit. Nevertheless, Smith held on grimly with Lawrence now tucked in under his rear wing.

Lawrence took Smith in the 38th lap and three laps later he doubled Redman, who was still lying sixth behind Allison and ahead of Murdoch. But his race was nearly over. Two laps later the Chevron-BMW was in the pits and Redman had run his last New Zealand race. In lap 45 Lawrence and Smith doubled Bartlett and Allison and six laps later Lawrence had opened up a 7s lead over Smith. It was soon after that Stewart abandoned the race. A small stone had lodged under his accelerator pedal and the throttle jammed open, the revs soaring to about 9200. The stone subsequently moved, but Stewart found that he was unable to close the throttle to let the engine drop below 4000 rpm. There was nothing to do but stop. So now the order was Lawrence, Smith, Bartlett, Allison, Murdoch, Edmonds and Robertson. It remained that way to the finish. Lawrence and Smith lapped Bartlett and Allison in lap 45. In the dying stages of the race, Allison had two spins at the Elbow, but on each occasion resumed without losing his place. Lawrence moved away from Smith and came home an easy victor. Smith was obviously nursing his car to assure himself of the Stuyvesant title.

PETER GREENSLADE

Peter Stuyvesant International
Teretonga Park, New Zealand, January 25
62 laps — 99.26 miles

1. Graeme Lawrence (Lola-Lawrence Chevrolet T332), 56m 56.6s, 101.66 mph;
 2. Ken Smith (Lola-Chaparral Chevrolet T332), 57m 34.5s;
 3. Kevin Bartlett (Lola-McKay Chevrolet T400) 61 laps;
 4. Bruce Allison (Lola-Molloy Chevrolet T332), 61;
 5. Jim Murdoch (Begg-Bartt Chevrolet 018), 59;
 6. John Edmonds (Elfin-Holden Repco MR5), 53.
- Fastest lap:** Lawrence 53.4s, 102.37 mph (record) **Peter Stuyvesant series:** Smith, 24 points, Allison, 16; Murdoch, 10; Lawrence, Redman, Stewart and Bartlett, 9; Edmonds 3; Graham Baker, 2; Robertson, 1



Graham Elsmore — award winner.

Graham Elsmore's just desserts

Ford Rally Man of the Month in January was 24-year-old Graham Elsmore, the haulage contractor from Colford, Gloucestershire. The quietly spoken Elsmore, who this year is being supported by AVJ Developments to add to his Avon Tyres contract, runs a 1700cc BDA Mk1 Escort and has over the past few months consistently been discussed by the judging panel.

On this occasion the voting was overwhelmingly in favour of Graham for his seventh overall on the Shellsport Dean during which he beat many of the established British stars and again impressed watchers with his neat and tidy style. In donating the award the panel also took into account his win on the Wydean Stages last year, an event whose territory, like the Shellsport Dean, he knows well; and more important perhaps, his second overall on the Cheltenham Festival behind Nigel Rockey last year; a result which underlined the fact that his successes were not to do with 'local knowledge'. He will be out on Castrol/AUTOSPORT rounds this year.

English in?

There seem to be more indications from the southeast that F. English, the Ford main dealers, are on the verge of returning to the lucrative world of rallysport on an individual basis rather than Thomas Motors have successfully done in recent years. The appointment of ex-Ralph Broad employee, Chris Bodsworth, just a month ago is in itself significant, for Chris' brief is to revitalise the rallysport retail affairs and Thomas Motors have proved just how successful this can be through direct involvement in rallying itself. Chris, who became a rally convert after eight years of circuit racing when he found himself directly involved with the Broadspeed-built Donald Heggie Escort last season, hopes to be shortly putting the garage combine back on the map in terms of competition, and it seems that we may see some significant developments emanating from here shortly.

And now: the Opel Kadett story

It seems scarcely possible that he could be back in the news again this week but one cannot refute the possibilities surrounding the latest entry in the Ronnie McCartney dossier. Ronnie was in Stafford on Monday making the final adjustments to the G1 RS2000 which Lloyds have built and which Ronnie is to drive in Galway should the snow which was falling heavily in Ireland as we went to press, relent. The latest gem concerns another tarmac spectacular later in the year, the Circuit of Ireland over Easter, and it is at this venue that we hear Ronnie is to drive a DOT Opel Kadett GTE. A spokesman for DOT described the suggestion as being "a strong possibility" on Monday but the deal apparently depends on a number of factors not least of which is DOT's ability to have another car ready by such a time. We also hear that Opel, Ireland, have been approached in connection with the deal and are allegedly interested in the proposition so there is no knowing what may come of it.

Ronnie was not available for com-

ment on Tuesday but a spokesman commented that "there is certainly no truth in this rumour at present." We gather that the possibility of the deal coming off depends very much on dealer reaction in Ireland and of course on whether DOT will have another comparable car by then. But with Ronnie's latest association with Lloyds of Stafford, there may well be a Ford in the offing for the talented Irishman.

DOT's unscheduled halt over Shap Fell on the weekend in transit for the Snowman was a result of as yet unspecified engine failure and rather than risk severe damage to the engine, Tony Fall decided that discretion was the better part of valour. This mishap however leaves him chronically short of practice for the forthcoming Mintex International so DOT have put an entry in on the first round of the BTRDA championship, the Gwynedd, on the 14th for "testing and development" purposes. By coincidence Barry Lee is expected to be doing approximately the same thing with the new Glovers Datson.

Comings and goings on Rallies Committee

Following John Davenport's appointment to the RAC, he has of course resigned from the Rallies Committee. Other retirements at this time include Dave Holliday and Henry Liddon. The proposed additions to fill these vacancies are Peter

Ashcroft on behalf of the SMMT and Roger Clark; the latter proposal because the Motorsport Council feel that it would be a good idea to set a precedent in inviting the reigning RAC champion to sit on the committee.

A weekend of ECR Rounds

There are three ECR qualifiers taking place this weekend, in Ireland, in Belgium and in Germany. The line up for the Boucles de Spa includes 1, Gilbert Stapelaere/Vailant (Escort RS1800); 2, Stig Blomqvist/Hans Sylvan debuting the new twin cam Saab 99; 3, Tony Pond/Dave Richards in the Chequered Flag Lancia Stratos; 4, Lars Carlsson/Bob de Jong (Opel Kadett); and 6, Horst Rack/H. Kohler in their Porsche Carrera. Many of the German crews seem to have forsaken

their local Markedwitz Rally for Spa, but the principal entries at the former include Schewe, Smolej, and Altenheimer. The Galway top ten was published in these columns last week but it proved impossible to contact the organisers on Monday or Tuesday due to postal strikes, and telecommunications difficulties; however we will be carrying a full report of both Galway and Boucles de Spa next week. It now seems almost certain that Chris Sclater will not be going to Ireland.

These two gentlemen need no introduction to rally fans; Brian Nelson (left) and Malcolm Neill will be conducting this newly-built Porsche in Ireland at the weekend. The rally starts in Galway at 5.00 pm and goes on till 10.30 pm. Saturday action starts at 9.00 am and finishes at 5.30; while the Sunday run begins at a leisurely 12.00 and finishes at 4.30 pm.



RAC points

Current positions in the RAC Rally championship are as follows: Roger Clark 19 points; 2, Ari Vatanen 17 points; 3, Billy Coleman 13 points; 4, Pentti Airikkala 10 points; 5, Russell Brookes 8 points; 6, Tony Fowkes 7 points; 8, Brian Culcheth and Colin Malkin 6 points. In G1, Jim MacRae is the new leader with 13 points, from Robin Eyre Maunsell and Tony Pond, both with nine points.

...and in Canada

The third round of the Castrol backed Canadian rally championship, the Pek K'Lona, which took place in the Okanagan Valley, British Columbia, last weekend was won by local Vancouver crew Taisto Heinoner/Tom Burgess in a Volvo 142. They were 16 minutes ahead of Ross Sutcliffe/Alan Farrant (Plymouth Duster).

After three rounds the leaders are placed as follows: Perusse/Bellefleur 35 points; Victor/Wejer 22 points; Heinonen/Burgess 20 points. The next round is the big one of the championship, the Canadian Winter Rally on the 14/15th February at which Adrian Boyd and his Alpine are expected to make an appearance.

Baby for Makinen

The first round of the French rally championship, the Ronde de la Giraglia which takes place in Corsica next weekend, will see Timo Makinen out in an unusual machine — a little Peugeot 104 coupe ZS which is entered in the prototype class. No details of the car have yet been fully released, but there is another 104 entered in G1 for Christine Dacremont. Other leading entries include Darniche's French importer-entered Lancia Stratos and Jacques Henri's Alpine, although the latter may be affected by the withdrawal from massive motorsport involvement of Christine Laure, the ladies ready-to-wear clothes firm; this decision apparently caused during the recent Monte Carlo rally as a result of an unspecified "incident" with a media reporter.

Ivy League Porsche back in business

Following the serious road accident involving Del Lines' Porsche Carrera in testing last year, the car has now been completely rebuilt around a new 3-litre shell with the 2.7 litre Charles Ivy engine installed. Sponsorship as usual comes from Bernie Inns and Del is planning to concentrate on Castrol/AUTOSPORT and BTRDA rounds this year. Other plans for the car include that promised drive for Colin Malkin on the Cheltenham Festival which would have taken place last year had the car not been written off. There is also apparently some talk of a racing driver piloting the car on the Welsh — wonder who that could be! Shock news for fun-starved Coleshill fans is that John Foden will be doing most of the co-driving...

Huxford 'Liberated Ladies'

Jean Denton is doing some good work on behalf of Britain's recalcitrant lady rally driver population, and she is intending to channel Huxfords activities into the Castrol/AUTOSPORT championship. In recent years the female rally contingent in this country has been regrettably small, and the little band were threatening to shrink further this year. However, Jean is convinced that many good lady drivers can be persuaded back to the woods to play with the lads, and thus Huxfords, who have something of a reputation for being pro-lady drivers, are putting up £150 of prize money and four trophies for the

championship, the principal of which will be known as the 'Liberated Lady Trophy,' a suitable draw for a sponsor we feel sure.

Huxfords are keen to keep themselves involved with motorsport especially with Fiat's 131 programme likely to snowball in the future. Jean would be pleased to hear from any potential 'Liberated Ladies' (that naturally applies to AUTOSPORT as well!) and she can be contacted at 03292-82811. Of course in liberated go-ahead Britain, this idea could well be illegal under the latest sex discrimination act, but Jean will surely think of a way around this obstacle.

Cheltenham Regs

Regulations will shortly be available for the Cheltenham Festival national, round two of the Castrol/AUTOSPORT series, which takes place on Saturday, March 27. The event will again be based in Llandrindod Wells and scrutineering will take place on the previous Friday. Cars will be set off at 30-second intervals on some stages, and digital timing under the supervision of Ken Dudley will be used throughout. Regs will shortly be available through Ken at 9 Carisbrooke Road; Hucclecote; Gloucester; telephone Gloucester 66788. Ken requires a 6½p stamp, but he will provide the envelopes himself.

Pentti on Hankki?

Following Pentti Airikkala's magnificent win on the Snowman last weekend, we hear that he has been invited by Ford (Finland) to compete on the Hankki Rally using the David Sutton/Avon Tyres Escort RS1800.

Mintex top 30

1, Billy Coleman/Dan O'Sullivan (RS1800); 2, Roger Clark/Jim Porter (RS1800); 3, Erik Aaby/Martin Holmes (RS1600); 4, Tony Fowkes/Bryan Harris (RS1800); 5, Ari Vatanen/Peter Bryant (RS1800); 6, Russell Brookes/John Brown (RS1800); 7, Chris Sclater/Martin Holmes; 8, Pentti Airikkala/Keith Wood (RS1800); 9, Tony Pond/Dave Richards (Dolomite); 10, Tony Fall/Mike Broad (Kadett GT/E); 11, Andy Dawson/Andrew Marriott (Stratos); 12, Ronnie McCartney/Derek Smith (Carrera); 14, Will Sparrow/Rodney Spokes (Magnum); 15, Colin Malkin/Paul White; 16, John Taylor/John Jensen (RS1800); 17, Valter Jensen/Haakon Stamnes (BMW 2002 Tii); 18, Nigel Rockey/Derek Tucker; 19, Tony Drummond/Phil Short (Escort RS); 20, Brian Culcheth/Johnstone Syer (Dolomite); 21, David Thompson/Mike Greasley (Carrera); 22, Paul Faulkner/Monty Peters (RS1800); 23, George Hill/Phil Short (Magnum); 24, Bob Bean/Alan Greenwood (Escort RS); 25, Robin Eyre-Maunsell/Neil Wilson (Avenger GT); 26, Barry Lee/John Gittins (Datsun Violet); 27, Gavin Waugh/Peter Handy (Avenger GT); 28, Richard Iliffe/Tony McMahon (Escort RS); 29, Pat Ryan/Mike Nicholson (Allegro); 30, Phil Cooper (Marina). Perhaps one of the stranger seeding positions is that of Laurie Richards who finds himself at start number 50.

Ford bonus scheme made simple

Details of Ford's 1976 Bonus Scheme for racing and rallying were announced recently. Divided into four categories, the maximum bonus of £1500 applies only to the winner of any World Rally Championship round while £1000 is applicable to the winner of the RAC Rally Championship (providing he is not a works driver — though whether Russell Brookes or Billy Coleman qualify is not immediately clear). Category Three — an automatic landing of £500 — will be paid to the winner of the RAC Rally Championship, group one section, and to the winner of each qualifying round of the European Rally Championship of coefficients three and four. Finally, £250 bonuses are waiting for each qualifying round of the ECR, coefficients one and two; the winner of the *Motoring News* Rally Championship; the *Cars and Car Conversions* Championship; class category in any WRC round and Ladies Award in any round of the world rally championship. One thing — you do require a product of FoMoCo.

Russell Brookes drove spiritedly in the early stages, and was three seconds behind Vatanen at one point before he succumbed to the treacherously icy conditions.



Rothmans aim to go down big in Kuwait

Rothmans, under the banner of Tobacco Exporters International, have quietly been building up their involvement in Middle East motorsport affairs over the last 18 months, and because of the fact that they have a very large consumer market over there, have helped set up the Rothmans Autosport club to promote rallies in the Persian Gulf states. The latest outcome of this build-up is the Kuwait International Rally which takes place on Thursday and Friday, 26/27th February, over a total mileage of 500 kms including 300 kms of special stages — the first occasion on which stages have been used in Kuwait. Teams of three cars have been entered by a number of local importers including Mercedes, Datsun, Renault, Toyota, GM and Honda. If the rally proves to be the success which the organisers think that it will, there may be much bigger happenings on the horizon for next year, with invited European drivers taking part etc.

● Positions in the Northern Ireland rally championship after the first round are as follows: Dessie Nutt/Derek Smyth (Vauxhall Magnum) 12 points (also first Group one); John McAlorum/Paul Phelan (BMW) 10; Tommy Speers/Joe Law (Escort TC9); George Robinson/Stuart Carpin (Escort TC) 8.

In G1, Tommy McQuaide/Gerard Currid (Mexico) currently lie second to Dessie Nutt and Joe Pat O'Kane is third. The next round, run by the Omagh MC takes place in March.

● Latest addition to the swelling list of Castrol/AUTOSPORT trade awards is Kleber who are offering cash awards for the first five finishers on internationals and the first three finishers on nationals.

New Trident

In order to use their current Forestry allocation and in memory of club Vice-Chairman Derek Wickham, who tragically passed away last month, Croydon & District Motor Club will be running a Forest Stage Rally on Sunday, 28th March, 1976.

This will be the club's first Stage Rally since the last of their Trident Rallies in 1973. Centred around the Camberley area the event will appropriately be known as the 'Bramshill Trident' Rally. The total length of the event will be around 50 miles which will include some 25 miles of Forest Stages.

The entry fee will be kept as economical as possible to encourage clubmen and it is expected that the Rally will count towards the LCAMC and ASEMCA Rally Championship.

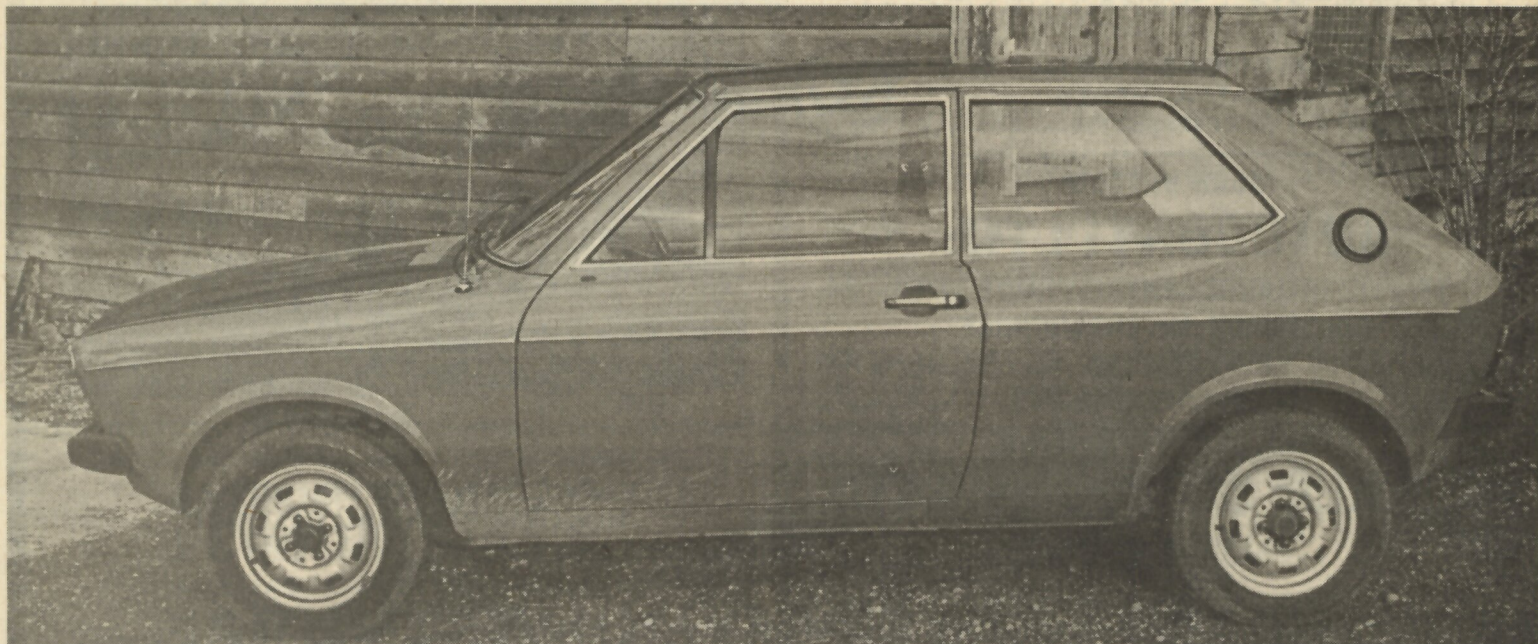
The Regulations will be available during the middle of the month and request for copies should be sent with a S.A.E. to the Secretary of the Meeting: Mrs. Jan Cox, 18 Beatrice Avenue, Norbury, London, S.W.18.

● The Wolverhampton CC have contacted us with news of the Circuit of Eppynt, a AWMCA qualifier which is scheduled to take place on the night of 20/21 March. There are 60 stage miles in a total of 110 and the events starts at 11.00 pm with scrutineering at Prynnes Service Station beforehand. The event finishes at the Abernant Lake Hotel and will be run on the circuit principle in three 20-mile loops. Entries are available at £14 from Jim MacKay, Flat 11, West Lodge, 76 Tettenhall Road, Wolverhampton. SAEs would be appreciated.

Arctic synopsis

Leading retirements: Simo Lampinen/Juhani Markkanen (Finnish Saab 96) — transmission (differential) stage 12. Andrzej Jaroszewicz/Ryszard Zyszkowski (Fiat Abarth 124 Rallye) — ice in steering, stage 2. Klaus Russling/Franz Mikes (VW 1600) ice in gear selectors, stage 2. Reine Altenheimer/Michael Schwagerl (Porsche Carrera) went off, stage 11. Bernard Fiorentino/Jean Jacques Lenne (Simca Rallye 2) — ice on screen after stage 10. Ulf Gronholm/Raimo Anttonen (Opel Ascona 1.9) went off, stage 13. Timo Salonen/Jaakko Markkula (Datsun Violet) went off, stage 15. Leo Kinnunen/Atso Aho (Volvo 66) broken wheel studs, stage 15. Reinhard Hainbach/Heinz Jager (Opel Kadett) water in engine, stage 2. Jussi Kynsilehto/Martin Holmes (Polski Fiat 125p) engine, stage 3. Kyosti Hamalainen/Urpo Vihervaara (Sunbeam Avenger) engine after stage 14. Jari Vilkas/Juhani Soini (Finnish Saab 96) went off, stage 14. Henri Toivonen/Antero Lindqvist (Simca Rallye 2) differential, stage 2. Antero Laine/Kalevi Paiveaz (Finnish Saab 96) differential, stage 2. Markku Saaristo/Timo Alpnen (Skoda 120S) gearbox during stage 21. Aarketta Oksa/Sinnikka Palmuaro (Lada 1200) disqualified after stage 21 for speeding.

European Championship points after Arctic Rally: 1 Rainio 80, 2 Valtaharju 60, 3 Saari 48, 4 Toivonen 40, 5 Karha 32, 6 Fyhrqvist 24, 7 Franz Wittman 20, 8 Haugland 16.



The Volkswagen Polo is an example of modern, rectangular styling with the minimum of curves.

VW Polo: smoothness and refinement

That well-known *Punch* artist, H. M. Bateman, did a famous series of drawings about "The Man Who . . ." They depicted people who had the misfortune to commit some appalling social gaffe, with every member of a remarkably large audience expressing horror, dismay, or disgust. There were the man who missed the ball on the first tee at St. Andrew's, the guardsman who dropped his rifle, and the car that touched a policeman on point duty, among many others.

I would be a worthy subject for this rogue's gallery, as I am the man who hates Beetles. Nevertheless, I have recently been living with a Volkswagen which shows no trace of its plebeian ancestry; indeed, it will be a trend setter among the new crop of small cars. This is the Polo, and though it is the smallest of the new range of front-drive VWs, it is much more refined than the Passat or the Golf and steers better, too.

The Polo is an example of modern, rectangular styling, with the minimum of curves. Some of us may consider it a bit too box-like, but at least it provides the maximum interior space on a short wheelbase. Its not a really small car — the occupants are not as chummy as those in a Mini — but its appreciably more compact than a typical 1100 cc saloon. This is really noticeable when one is parking it in town, but the major benefit is reduced weight, which means more miles per gallon.

The often-quoted fuel consumption figures, taken at various steady speeds, mean precisely nothing. Normal motoring on the road is a continuous process of increases and reductions in speed. Every time you accelerate, the heavier the car the more power it takes, so weight costs money when you pay for your next fill-up of petrol. The small overall size of the Polo means that it weighs less, even though it is not of particularly light construction.

A conventional MacPherson front end is paired with a rear suspension layout that is halfway between independent trailing arms and a trailing dead axle. There is an axle beam, but it is halfway up the arms in the form of a letter H. The beam is allowed to flex torsionally but is sufficiently rigid to keep the wheels upright. This is one of those modern expedients that would have shocked engineering purists in the past, but it evidently saves weight compared with conventional solutions, and its also easier to make as well as being effective.

Transverse engine mounting, with the all-indirect gearbox placed to offset the drive, instead of using a power-wasting primary gear train, is now regarded as normal for a front-drive car. Where the Polo leads is in having a naturally quiet engine, instead of trying to insulate the interior

from the ghastly row. Some of the quietness comes from good basic design in such important areas as the combustion chambers and the water jackets, but the elimination of those noisy and power-wasting skew gears is an engineering refinement which is overdue. As the distributor is driven directly from the end of the camshaft and the oil pump is on the crankshaft, the usual vertical shaft is no longer required.

The Polo has the popular type of body in which a large third door, incorporating the rear window, opens upwards. The rear seat folds out of the way, leaving a flat floor for the transportation of bulky objects, and when the seat is in its normal position, a shelf hides the luggage. This type of body is sometimes erroneously called an estate, but the sill over which luggage must be lifted — 11 in. high in this case — calls for another definition. A true estate has a flat platform without a sill, but the obstruction is only serious

with very heavy objects.

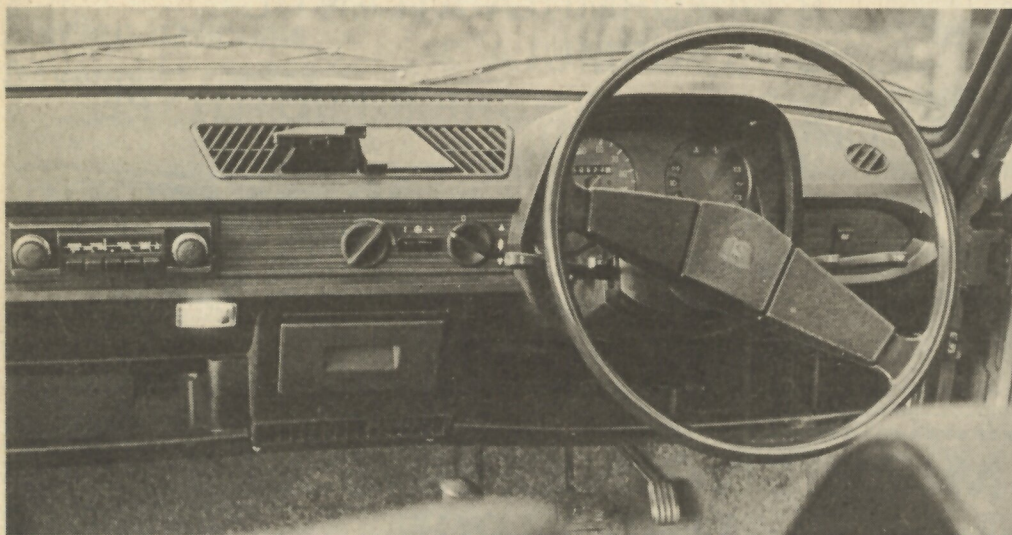
The front seats are comfortable, with leg room to spare for the tallest driver, and the rear seating is more than adequate for a small car. The controls are well placed so that one finds everything straight away and drives the car without any conscious effort; the only exception is the collection of stalks under the steering wheel, which may be mistaken for each other at first. A generous area of glass gives an excellent all-round view and it is very easy to judge the length when parking, both front and rear.

The gearlever is well placed and easy to use, the changes going through rapidly without any baulking. The engine revs happily without becoming noisy and is also flexible, with plenty of torque for its size. The little unit is smooth, quiet, and refined, with a capacity of only 895 cc, confirming my view that the best four-cylinder engines are of less than 1 litre in capacity.

The Polo has the popular type of body in which a large third door incorporating the rear window, opens upwards, the rear seat folds out of the way leaving a flat floor for the transportation of bulky objects.



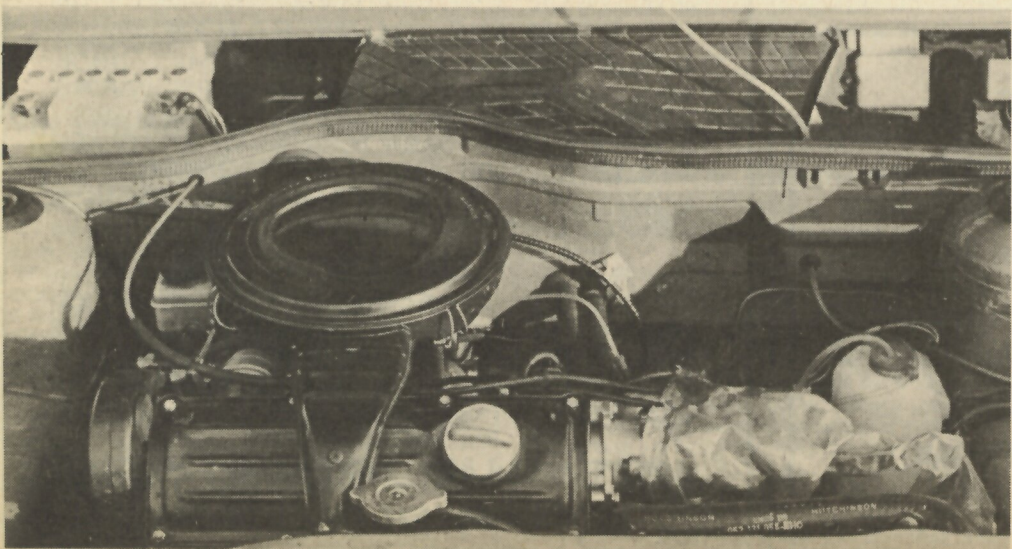
Road test



Above, the controls are well placed so that one finds everything straight away. Below, the ride is not particularly soft, but the worst bumps on well-known roads seem suddenly to have disappeared.



Below, the transverse engine mounting with the all-indirect gearbox placed to offset the drive, instead of using a power-wasting primary gear train.



This small engine is sufficiently powerful to drive the car at 82 mph, in spite of a high enough gear to prevent peak revs from being reached in top. This speed is more than sufficient for an economy car, which scarcely any owners will ever drive above 70 mph. When all the seats are occupied by substantial personages, there will be a greater loss of performance than in the case of the popular 1100 cc saloons, but few people load baby cars habitually to the gunwales and the acceleration is quite satisfactory under normal conditions.

What is so charming about the little machine is the exceptional smoothness and silence of its engine and transmission. The level of road noise is also low, which is not always the case with these semi-estate bodies, and there is very little wind noise. The brakes have no servo but this is not noticeable and they do not fade during hard driving.

The heater is very powerful indeed and starts operating quite soon after a cold start. The separate ducts for cool breathing air give ample volume, though one would prefer adjustable eyeball ventilators instead of flaps perhaps. Although the heating and ventilation are excellent, I wonder why the cool air flaps are so shaped that passengers invariably try to insert their cigarette ends, while the air extractors in the rear quarters look like petrol tank caps to filling station attendants. Perhaps the Germans have a sense of humour, after all.

The handling is very good indeed, the car being well balanced, with just enough understeer to give stability at speed. The average driver would find difficulty in deciding which were the driver's wheels and the change of attitude on lifting off in a corner is minimal. The improvement in the handling of front-drive cars has been very marked recently and this is one of the better examples. The ride is not particularly soft, but the worst bumps on well-known roads seem suddenly to have disappeared. Both for ride and roadholding, the object of the exercise is to keep all the tyres on the road all the time; the suspension of the Polo does just that.

This car shares the unusual steering geometry of the other VW and Audi models, but in this case the less endearing characteristics are not in evidence. The steering is pleasantly light and the car is stable in gusty winds.

The Volkswagen Polo is a 40 mpg car that is more refined than most 20 mpg vehicles. Its the best VW yet by a very long way and I predict a great success for it.

SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA

Car Tested: Volkswagen Polo 3-door saloon, price £1,698 including car tax and VAT.

Engine: Four-cylinders 69.5 x 59mm (895 cc). Compression ratio 8.2 to 1. 40 bhp DIN at 5,900 rpm. Belt-driven overhead camshaft. Solex downdraught carburettor.

Transmission: Single dry plate clutch, 4-speed synchromesh gearbox with central remote control, ratios: 0.963, 1.347, 2.050, and 3.454 to 1. Helical spur gear final drive, ratio 4.267 to 1.

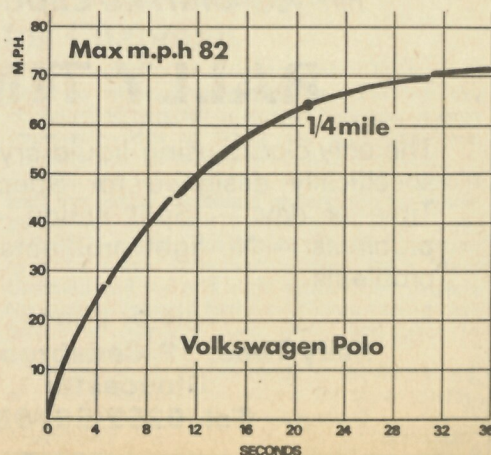
Chassis: Steel integral construction. MacPherson independent front suspension with anti-roll bar. Rack and pinion steering. Rear trailing arms united by torsion member. Dual circuit disc/drum brakes. Bolt-on steel disc wheels, fitted 135-13 tyres.

Equipment: 12-volt lighting and starting. Speedometer. Fuel gauge. 2-speed windscreen wipers and washers. Heating, demisting and ventilation system. Heated rear window. Flashing direction indicators with hazard warning. Reversing lights.

Dimensions: Wheelbase 7ft. 8in. Track 4ft. 3in./4ft. 3.5in. Overall length 11ft. 6in. Width 5ft. 1.5in. Weight 13 cwt. 1 gr.

Performance: Maximum speed 82 mph. Speeds in gears: Third 70 mph, second 45 mph, first 27 mph. Standing quarter-mile 20.9s. Acceleration: 0-30 mph 5.0s, 0-50 mph 12.2s, 0-60 mph 18.1s, 0-70 mph 30.5s.

Fuel Consumption: 35 to 41 mpg.



Foreign nationals: Davenport replies

As a member of the RAC Rallies Committee in 1975 and now a member of the RAC Motor Sport Division, I was naturally most interested to read Ross Finlay's letter in your columns last week. My personal notes of that fateful Committee meeting on April 10th 1975 show that two things were discussed which have a bearing on this matter of foreign nationals competing in rallies held in Britain. First concerns the RAC Rally championship of 1976. It was decided that on International rallies such as the RAC, only the results of British and Irish licence holders relative to one another would be taken into account. For example on the last RAC Rally, Roger Clark only scored points for second place though he was beaten by a Finnish licence holder, Timo Makinen. Had that happened on the 1976 event, then Clark would have taken full points for being the best classified British or Irish licence holder. The whole purpose of this is to rationalise the scoring system so that British licence holders who are competing in the International events counting for the RAC Rally Championship title should not have their points affected by the results of foreign licence holders. The question of foreign nationals competing in British National rallies was discussed in reference to a letter from the IRDC who wished the RAC to consider excluding from participation in British rallies foreign nationals holding British licences. This was not accepted. As far as the FIA are concerned (Article 112 of the International Sporting Code) a competitor adopts the nationality of the licence he holds and this is how the Committee's decision was translated into the Blue Book.

The next time that anything resembling these points was raised came in the December meeting when it was suggested that despite the decisions as set out in the approved minutes the April meeting had decided to ban foreign nationals with British licences from scoring in the RAC Rally Championship. A pretty long discussion followed, which turned principally on whether this was a new concept or not. The Committee voted on this further concept and passed the wording: "who are normally resident in the UK" as an addition to the Blue Book which would effectively change the ideas that the Committee had back in April.

Not surprisingly, December 11th 1975 is considered rather late to be changing the rules for the 1976 Championship for which people have already contracted drivers not to mention the fact that the Motor Sports Council has to endorse such a fundamental change. In any case, I am sure Ross will recall, any rule change decided upon by a Committee is left to be endorsed by that Committee at its next meeting, to try and prevent hasty decisions which then have to be revoked.

The results of this sad affair is that once again and quite unfairly the RAC Motor Sport Division has been pilloried in public and the Rallies Committee has lost the wisdom and experience of Ross Finlay. The Motor Sport Division will survive but by far the greatest loss is the expertise and knowledge of Scottish affairs that Ross brought to the Rallies Committee.

RAC, LONDON SW1

JOHN DAVENPORT

Will the spectator pay and pay?

How much longer will it last?

It's the same each year at the beginning of the season. Money, money, money.

Brands Hatch have had to spend £150,000 on F1 teams, let alone the other £100,000 they spent on the required track improvements, etc.

Good old "I am not in it for the money" Fittipaldi rakes in £3,666 a day. What do the spectators get for their money?

Entrance fees of £5 a head to cover organising costs. The possibility of a brief glance at a car as it is wheeled onto the grid.

And possibly worst of all, the total commitment of a sponsor to one F1 car, to the cost of other less elite formulae.

I am not saying that I don't approve of F1 racing, just let's stop and think a little about how

AUTOSPORT, FEBRUARY 5, 1976

much it is worth spending on the spectacle, and how much will the public pay to see it?

DISS, NORFOLK

JEREMY CLAYDON

Three GP questions....

May I through your magazine ask Messrs John Webb and Bernie Ecclestone three questions about the forthcoming British Grand Prix at Brands Hatch?

1. Are you trying to exclude the ordinary enthusiast by charging extortionately high prices for the Grand Prix? If not how do you expect them to afford and pay the higher prices.

2. Why are there no tickets on sale for the main start/finish grandstand?

3. Why are there only three races on Race Day?

I have just received my 1976 programme for the MCD circuits and included with this were the usual advance booking forms for the Race of Champions and the British Grand Prix. At first glance the main point to stand out was the extortionately high price for entry — £5 per person! For this you only get into the circuit, for the "extras" such as the paddock that is £3 and the grandstands £4 and £6 each seat.

According to Bernie Ecclestone the FICA has agreed to co-operate with the organisers and arrange special viewing periods. Before the constructors retreated into their motorhomes and the race cars behind their awnings the public could see the mechanics working on the cars in the paddock. Why has this changed?

Referring to my second question, I noticed in the advanced booking form for the Grand Prix that the main start/finish grandstand seats are not for sale to the general public. Who has these seats — the sponsors retinue and hangers on perhaps? The only grandstand seats for sale are the grandstands down Paddock Hill and through Clearways. The cost — £4 and £6 for these cold, draughty and uncomfortable seats.

This is not all, it would seem that for all this good, hard-earned money we are to see fewer races. The only races to be run on Race Day are the actual Grand Prix which should run for about 90 minutes, a Group One Touring Car Race, and a Celebrity Race for the "also-rans" and publicity seekers. For our £5 entry ticket we should see, if we are lucky, about 2½-3 hours racing. Is this good value for money?

Organisers be sensible and give the public what it wants, more races on Race Day and lower prices, and in that way more people will come and more money will be taken. This should be coupled to proper advertising for the event. Advertising in AUTOSPORT and *Motoring News*, etc, is advertising to the converted, advertising should be aimed at the mass market in newspapers, TV and radio where it will reach more people who are uncommitted for the day.

In conclusion organisers, constructors and sponsors think of the general public before starting such events. As pointed out by the correspondent in your issue (January 22, 1976) the most important people in motor racing are not the organisers, constructors or sponsors, but the spectators and by increasing the cost of admission to its present extortionate level and lowering the number of races to the abysmal three will alienate the general public and leave great open spaces around the circuit where spectators should have been.

BEACONSFIELD, BUCKS

DAVID SHARPE

....and more dissatisfaction

To obtain grandstand seats for the British Grand Prix it is necessary to book many months in advance.

Upon taking up my seat opposite the pits at last year's event at Silverstone I found that my view was considerably altered from what I might have expected from previous years' experience.

Firstly by moving a number of the pits (including Ferrari) out of sight past the bridge and secondly by the advent of the chicane meaning that the cars were now accelerating in a straight line past me — where previously they had been still in the high speed drift that was Woodcote corner.

This year Brands Hatch is undergoing similar modifications to track and amenities so before parting with a considerable amount of money (£60 for 6 tickets) I have been attempting, with little

success, to find out what effect the alterations will have on one's view of the race — particularly from the new stands to be built between Paddock and Druids — for example, where will the new corner finish relative to the actual stands and will the marshal's bridge be retained because that could cause considerable obstruction to vision.

Telephoning and even visiting the circuit has failed to produce any positive information so no doubt one will have to take pot-luck again.

Also it seems that this year the start/finish line grandstand was sold out even before the booking form was printed and the information made public — surely this is something which should be investigated.

LEAMINGTON SPA, WARMS

ALAN JENKINS

Anything is better....

On behalf of the Aston Martin Owners' Club I shall be glad if you will publish the following reply to Nick Brittan's item on marshals and the BARC's reply.

Replying in the first instance to Nick Brittan, anything that is done to help marshals must be better than nothing, even though the BARC's scheme is aimed at their own membership, and if they supply marshals for various meetings, that can only encourage others to join.

Perhaps Nick Brittan would like to encourage F1 drivers to contribute something towards a marshals' fund from their vast income, which the majority goes abroad as soon as it is earned. The AMOC is one of the very few clubs which treats its marshals reasonably well, last year we thought we led the field by paying out, at our meetings, £1 in cash to each marshal. There are other clubs who issue vouchers which can only be changed on the circuit, or if you want cash for these vouchers you normally have to wait until the end of the meeting, which after a hard day nobody wants to do.

The majority of work on all circuits, whether it be for club meetings or internationals, is done purely by voluntary helpers, who do it for the sheer pleasure of being able to participate in motor sport. If any of your readers would be interested in marshaling for the AMOC we are running a race meeting at Brands Hatch on May 18 and a further one at Silverstone on July 10 they can contact me for further information.

SANDERSTEAD, SURREY

JIM BROADLEY

(Chief Marshal, AMOC)

....than nothing

I feel I must reply personally to Martin Shalders and Tim Norman (AUTOSPORT January 22). I, too, do not consider myself to be paid official — not at 50p a day — and do not wish to be, however, I do feel that if an organising club is going to give a marshal something they could at least give him something he can use — perhaps to buy a lunch. My point was made in defence of the marshals who do maybe four BARC meetings a year (not 50-55) — 4 x 25p = £1 50p = £1.50. BARC membership is £7 in the first year, this means that these marshals have got to find an extra £5.50 in order to join.

MILTON KEYNES

RAY DARVILL

PS What is the BARC going to do with the extra revenue from the 44% increase in entry fees?

Refresher courses for Chapman

Many thousands of spectators have been privileged to witness, on numerous occasions, the courage and tenacity of Ronnie Peterson against impossible odds or when the race has been virtually 'lost' for him by the failure of others.

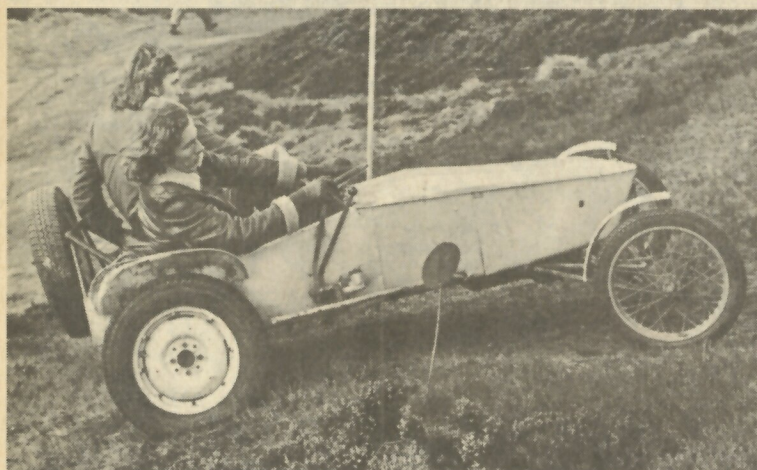
When one sees batteries fall off, water unions leak, mechanics scrabbling underneath for wheel nuts at a pit-stop — not to mention the catastrophe of the 76 — might it not be better for Mr Chapman to have some refresher-courses from Herr Ulenhaut and the odd night-school visit to Herr Neubauer to remind him how to run racing cars before he displays such gross bad-taste in discussing Ronnie's fitness in public?

Perhaps the old Ferrari tactic, in the lean years, of always blaming the drivers for their misfortunes has rubbed off on Mr Chapman?

LONDON W5

"ASHAMED"

(name and address supplied)



The Fack twins John and Jeremy (or Jeremy and John) who won the Geoff Taylor trial at the weekend.

Fack family field day

The Fack family had a field day in chilly Shropshire last Sunday when they trounced the opposition to collect first and second places on the Hagley and District LCC's Geoff Taylor Sporting Trial, fourth round of the RAC Championship. For John and Jeremy (the twins) it was particularly satisfying for they won their first championship event for more than a year and thoroughly trounced their slightly more illustrious brother Julian into the bargain.

John, in the original Impunity, dropped only 49 marks on four rounds of 10 sections and produced some seemingly impossible climbs in the post luncheon period during which he climbed from seventh spot, nine marks down, to lead by two marks at the start of the penultimate round. The hang gliding brothers more than hung on to their lead for in the last round they went further and further in front ending up 14 marks better off than Julian in the latest Impunity.

The Kincraft trio of Messrs Pearce, Allen and Harrison, filled the next three spots, Reg Allen, returning after a long break, showed he had lost but little of his old form and finished on 74 marks, seven marks better than Jack Pearce who in turn had Tony Harrison breathing down his neck towards the end, the latter totalling 84 marks.

Gordon Jackson, persuaded to travel again, was in a challenging position with his Ibex at lunch, two marks down, but he was sidelined with a broken diff almost immediately afterwards and rued changing bits and pieces the previous week.

Lol Hurt (Ford Special) started the day well to be third after the first tour but he never recovered from a disastrous second round which dropped him to seventh and he finally placed sixth well ahead of Mike Smallwood in his Dingo.

1 John Fack (Impunity), 49 marks; 2 Julian Fack (Impunity), 63 marks; 3, R. Allen (Kincraft), 74 marks; 4 J. Pearce (Kincraft), 81 marks; 5, A. Harrison (Kincraft), 84 marks; 6, L. Hurt (Ford Special), 94 marks.

Homewood is top Shell man

At a very pleasant function last week, Shellsport honoured the successes of their drivers in competition by announcing their awards and their plans for 1976. The main plans, such as the Shellsport 5000 championship and F3 series have been announced, but the celebrity races will continue at Brands Hatch for journalists, GP drivers, disc jockeys and MPs. Most important is a new association with Leyland Cars, for two celebrity Minis will be raced in 1275 GT challenge in the new Mini Challenge series. They will be driven by leading personalities in the racing field, but won't affect championship results or scores.

Major award winner from the 1975 season was the Gold Star winner, John Homewood who had 30 wins from 32 starts and the Kent Messenger saloon car series to his credit. The 27-year-old farmer from Charing in Kent also received a special award for taking 50 wins at Brands Hatch being the third driver to do so since car racing commenced in 1950. These wins were achieved over five years and it brings his total up to 54 victories, just three short of Tony Lanfranchi on 57 and seven behind

record holder Don Parker.

Second in the Gold Star awards was Nick Whiting on 25 victories throughout the year and third was Peter Baldwin with 18 victories. Best young British driver was Ian Flux, now 19 from Leatherhead who won ten of his 15 races this year in Formula Vee and best young overseas driver was Patrick Neve for his F3 efforts. Most successful celebrity driver was Divina Galica, the skier who was also Shellsport sponsored. Most successful of the rally drivers was 28-year-old Mick Briant from Princes Risborough who won the *Motoring News* championship, the BTRDA and the Welsh rally championship in 1975.

Among the club championships, Shellsport drivers who scored class or outright wins were: Ian Flux, Mick Briant, John Homewood, Nick Whiting, Nick Adams, Peter Baldwin, Alan Curnow, Phil Winter, Roger Gill, Geoff Gilkes, David Enderby, Alec Poole.

● Last year the RAC got a little fed up with clubs failing to notify them of cancelled dates in their calendar. This was particularly noticeable in autocross.

Brands practice days

The BRSCC are running two of their Brands Hatch practice days on February 28/29. The Saturday (28) will be on the club circuit, costing £10 per car, each group having 55 minutes. They will be in the following groups starting at 1 pm: Formula Ford, Formula Ford/Clubmans, Saloons/Modsports/Prodsports, Formulae 1/2/3/5000/Atlantic/2000.

On Sunday, the sessions will again be 55 minutes but over the GP circuit at a cost of £15 per car. The divisions will be as follows in their order on the day, starting at 9.30 pm: Formula Ford, Formula Ford/Clubmans/Saloons, Prodsports/Modsports/Clubmans, Formulae 1/2/3/5000/Atlantic/2000. Drivers will be asked for full licences as on racing days plus medical certificate, etc. Would be drivers are asked to contact the BRSCC.

● Sporting triallists John and Jeremy Fack may be seen on BBC's Tomorrow's World next Thursday (February 12), when a new land yacht project they are developing will be screened.

More Seven clarification

Dave Bettinson rang us this week with a little bit of Lotus Seven news to correct what the RAC issued in a recent bulletin. The misleading paragraph stated that the only engine eligible was the pushrod Ford crossflow engine of 1558 cc and that it shouldn't be destroyed.

This isn't entirely true, in that the engine concerned is the 1598 cc pushrod Ford, and it can be bored out, providing that one stays within the class, ie not more than 2000 cc.

Bettinson himself is shortly announcing a couple of sponsors, but says that the season is by no means going to be easy. With the restrictions imposed by the RAC, he reckons that it will be quite a feat to stay as competitive as last year, and he's working hard on the idea. Meanwhile, he defends the BARC's decision to allow the car into modsports by pointing out that there hasn't exactly been "a rush" to buy Sevens for racing, so the class of racing won't become the easy rapid domain of the Seven.

● Thirty competitors attracted vast crowds to a slalom at Wallace Park, Lisburn last Saturday run by UAC. It was won by Mike de St Paer (Mini) from the recently rebuilt special of Ronnie White.



Geoff Clement (right) with his Chevrolet powered Mazda Super Saloon.

Clement's Mazda 'loon

Geoff Clement, a refugee from Anglia racing, took a year off last year and came up with the first Mazda Super Saloon. He doesn't qualify for rotary club membership though as his car has an F5000 Chevrolet engine.

This car is a Mazda RX3 Coupe shell round a space framed chassis to his own design with the roll cage an integral part. It has side monocoques which add safety strength and they are foam filled.

All the suspension is from March and at the rear end an E Type diff is fitted retaining inboard brakes. It has Melmag wheels at the rear and March wheels at the front.

The gearbox is by Borg Warner, a T10 fitted as far back as regs will

allow and thus the engine is naturally almost inside the car. The Chevrolet, dry sumped but on carburettors, is solidly fixed with the gearbox, both being used as chassis members.

The front bodywork is one piece and lifts off, while the rear is in fibreglass incorporating an adjustable wing. Radiators are mounted in front of the rear wheels, but even so, the weight distribution is so good that two men can lift the car at the front. It is estimated that the car will weigh under 18 hundredweight. The programme for the car is basically to run in the Super Saloon rounds, as yet unsponsored, but if any should be forthcoming, it would be very welcome.

Stephen Courts Stephens

The 1976 BTRDA and RAC Production Car Trial Championships got off to a fine start when two drivers tied for overall honours after 38 sections on the Dudley and District CC's Tocky Bonk Trial near Kidderminster. The tie deciding factor of greatest number of lowest scores had to be applied and this gave Mike Stephens victory in his Mexico over Stephen Courts in his Skoda Combi. Both dropped 37 marks with Stephens collecting 26 cleans to the 25 of Courts who had led Stephens by nine marks at lunch.

These two were in a class alone so far as the rest of the Class 2 entry was concerned for second place man R. S. Taylor (Skoda) dropped 63 marks and Harry Tregenza's Mexico finished on 75 marks. As a result the other four classes never had a look in so far as overall victory was concerned.

The usual horde of Minis in Class 1 had only Phil Darbyshire challenging and his Maxi did well initially but was locked out later on. After being four adrift at lunch to John Hodgson, Geoff Spencer finally collected the class in his Cooper on 81 marks, Hodgson finishing four down while

Mike Burrow was a very satisfied third on 95 marks.

It was dog eat dog in the sports car class but Stephen Bradbury did really well to beat the likes of Messrs Harrison and Brown and his father as well to take the class in the family Sprite on 41 marks. Father Reg tied with his son at lunch on 24 marks while Brown was two adrift and Harrison eight marks behind. In the final results Reg finished four down on his son while Harrison overtook Brown who went off the boil in the latter stages.

Overcoming early uncertainty about their new vehicles, Don Hobbs (Fiat Coupe) and Nigel Hugo (Steyr-Puch) had a fair old struggle for honours in Class 4. Never more than half a dozen marks apart, Hobbs finally won the class on 64 marks to Hugo's 67 while Peter Young was best of the Imps on 69 marks. Tony Cooke was an easy winner of two in Class 5 with his Imp.

Overall: M. Stephens (Mexico), 37 marks lost. **Class winners:** G. Spencer (Cooper), 81 marks; S. Courts (Skoda Combi), 37 marks; S. Bradbury (Sprite), 41 marks; D. Hobbs (Fiat Coupe), 64 marks; T. Cooke (Imp), 46 marks. **Novice:** S. Caley (Mini), 105 marks. **Team:** Coventry and Warwickshire.



Mini on the Miglia - Minisport of Padiham's Brian Harper with Norman Jackson at the weekend.

Beecroft's vital selectives

Open to Group 2 cars for the first time, the annual major rally on the Knowlale CC's calendar - the Mini Miglia - was won last weekend by Ron Beecroft and Adrian Dixon in an

RS 2000. They completed the 200 mile route in Cumbria, West Yorkshire and Lancashire with the loss of 17m 14s and they owed their success to a faster total time on the two selectives. In second place, only seven seconds down were Ian Harrison and Stephen Bye in a similar car.

Sponsored by Merinall Developments Ltd of Royton, the event again attracted a full entry of 90 crews, roughly equally split between Group 1 and Group 2. Conditions were good, in the main, with the odd patch of ice, and these conditions, plus a good route, kept competitors on their toes throughout the night.

The Escort-Rover of Keith Watkinson finished third on 19m 7s, Watkinson being navigated by Jeff Smith and in a close finish Tony Jackson and Rod Carter (Escort TC) squeezed home clear of Walter Figg and Hugh Edwards (Cooper S), by 12s for fourth place. The leaderboard was completed by Michael Cooper and John Gooch (Escort), on 24m 33s.

The various capacity class awards went to: Martin Dawson/Keith Wood (RS 2000), 26m 13s; Bill and Roy Honeywell (Mexico), 33m 17s and Mike Vizor/Peter Abbott (Escort Sport), 34m 26s.

Bradburn is top man

At their well attended and enjoyable prize giving dance last Saturday, the Mini Seven Racing club gave away their club awards for their members' achievements in 1975.

Cups went to the first three in each of the classes, and in Mini Seven, Graham Wenham naturally picked up the major award with Terry Pudwell and Jim Mancey taking the next two places. Jeremy Wheatley was the best newcomer in the year and for the greatest number of pole positions during the year, Graham Wenham collected the Norman Finn trophy, and became a trophy giver with a special award to his mechanic Mick Derrick.

Alan Curnow took the top prize for the Miglia championship, the next best two being Steve Harris and John Bradburn, the latter also collecting the Mini Seven Club's Driver of the Year trophy computed from six selected events. Best newcomer in Miglia was Colin Davies.

Lydden on Sunday

Lydden's rallycross series opens this weekend with the first of the TEAC rallycross championship rounds. It seems that all the usual faces will be there, including John Taylor who no doubt will be hoping to repeat his feats of last year when he won the series. He'll be in his normal Haynes of Maidstone Escort 11.

The TEAC series has its own method of qualifying and racing, so there should be an excellent final. The practising starts at 12.30 pm with the first timed runs at 1.30 pm.

Crawford for Daf?

Sponsorship of three cars in racing and road rallying and bonus schemes in three championships - that's the ambitious programme of events for Alan Minshaw's Demon Tweaks race, rally and suspension service at Tattenhall, near Chester.

The former winner of the Triplex production saloon car championship himself will again be driving the Daf Marathon 55 complete with Oldsmobile engine, hoping for better results than in the year past. The main problem was with the engine, but after much attention, Minshaw is abandoning the specialists and his own company will rebuild the engine and hopefully get some more reliability. However, the parts required are currently ice-bound in the Great Lakes on board a Manchester Liners container ship. The idea is that Minshaw will race the Daf in special saloon car events, and a name driver of Chevron origin - Jim Crawford? - will drive in Tricentrol Super

Saloon rounds.

Demon Tweaks will also aid a brace of Escorts. One will be for Neil McGrath who'll be doing the BRSCC Escort series, a series he knows well, as well as being 1974/5 Renault 5 champion. The Mexico is currently in the hands of ex-Boreham man Derek Speight and the engine is with Stuart Whitehead.

The other Escort is the twin cam version of Bryan (Doughey) Roe who'll be supported by Demon Tweaks on *Motoring News* events where he'll be crewed by Pete Forrester. Roe recently finished second on the Mermaid Rally.

Demon Tweaks will also be involved with over £1,000 worth of sponsorship in the following championships on a points basis: *Car and Car Conversions* rally championship, Simoniz special saloon championship and the BBC Radio One Production saloon car championship. More details at a later date.

Scaise's tidy 3 Rivers

Furness District CC members David Scaise and John Millington were clear winners of last Saturday night's Three Rivers Rally run by Tynemouth and District MC over a 180 mile route in Northumberland. Seventy two crews started but only 37 got round a very tight route, much of which was fresh even to the experienced crews. Scaise and Millington had 957 penalties in their Escort and are the early leaders in this year's ANECCC Rally Championship, the rally being the championship opener.

Second, in an Avenger Tiger, were Alec Cannon and 'Geordie' Tindall on 1132 penalties and they were a long way ahead of Gordon Jennings and Gordon Brodie in their Escort RS on 1326 penalties.

There was close competition for the next three places with John Saint and Alan Graham taking fourth in another Escort on 1431 penalties from Dennis Raper/Ian Irvine (Escort), on 1464 penalties while Martin Rudd and Brian Hughes were sixth in their Mexico on 1467 penalties.

Champion two years ago in the area, John Ellis was back with a new Escort but lost all but top early on. He carried on to finish eighteenth and had the small satisfaction of being quickest on one of the six selectives. The mixed crew of David and Joan Martin were seventeenth in their Saab 96 to win the novices award and best Tynemouth members were Norman Sidney and Martin Liddle in their Escort who took thirteenth spot.

Sevenoaks film show

A film show in conjunction with the Marlboro Film presentation unit is being held on February 10 at Aisher Hall, Sevenoaks School, Kent in aid of the school's rugby football and cross country teams' tour of Australia later this year. The films include reviews of the 1973 International rallying season, a review of the 1974 GP season plus either the preceding or the following season, whichever is available, and a review of the 1973 motor cycling season. The admission is by programme, either in advance or at the door, at 50p a time. There will also be a raffle of Marlboro products. Any further help should be addressed to Graham Palmer, a fire truck marshal at Brands, on Otford 2552 after 6 pm.

Kirkistown reprieved

The doom clouds, which have been hanging over the future of motor racing in Ireland, had a dramatic lift last week when the 500 Club's new chairman, Archie Phillips and competitions committee chief, Des McAuley, visited the RAC in London regarding the track licence which has to be granted before the chequered flag can drop at Kirkistown for the 1976 season.

Faced with an almost hopeless bill of £35,000 for basic improvements it has now been agreed that the work required can be phased over the two years period. This gives great encouragement to the fund raising efforts of the highly enthusiastic new committee.

The initial appeal to the member-

ship has been bringing in a very encouraging sum of over £1,000 per month and phase two of the operation will be starting this week when the chairman, Archie Phillips, and vice chairman, Malcolm Templeton, will be looking for considerable support from their colleagues in the motor trade.

Allied to these appeals has been the outstanding work of the Ladies Committee who have raised in the region of £1,200 to date with their highly enjoyable functions. Their next venture is at the Glenmachan Hotel, this Friday night, where Ireland's top motor sporting personalities will be letting their tyres down at the 500 Club Disco. Everyone is welcome to come along.

Dutton's FF2000

Richard Dutton (who stars on our centre spread this week trying to alter Oulton Park) has changed FF2000 chassis and bought an Elden. Dutton comes from Grantham where he manages an agricultural workshop. When he moved up to FF2000, he sold his FF Titan to fellow Grantham citizen Tim Wallwork, 19, a company director of a furniture restorer. Wallwork has now taken on the Crossle which Dutton campaigned in FF2000 last year. Both drivers will use Neil Brown engines, Brown coming from nearby Spalding where he's been working hard on both FF and FF2000 mills, claiming 106 bhp.

Bucks/Herts quiz series

The Bucks and Herts Newspaper Group are currently getting together a Castrol type quiz series. They invite any club based, or drawing the bulk of their membership from the areas covered by its newspapers: *The Bucks Herald*, Aylesbury, the *Hemel Hempstead Gazette* series and the *Buckingham Advertiser* series. Rounds in the series are to be sponsored by local motor dealers and the winning club should scoop £100 plus other goodies. The dealership evenings should be open to members of the public with general evening entertainment including films, etc. Closing date for entries, to be sent to the group's motoring correspondent, Peter Edwards at *Hemel Hempstead Gazette*, 39 Marlowes, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, tel: Hemel Hempstead 62311 is February 12.

● Two well known production car triallists appeared with different machinery on last Sunday's Tocky Bonk trial run by Dudley and District — and both did well. Don Hobbs, who last did a championship trial two years ago, appeared in a Fiat 850 Coupe to win Class 4 beating Nigel Hugo's screaming ex-works racing Steyr-Puch (suitably modified of course).

Scottish Sprint/climb dates

Both the Scottish sprint and hillclimb championships will be using similar class structures this year, with once again classes for near standard road cars in order to encourage new blood to the sport.

The hillclimb series currently embraces eight rounds, of which competitors must compete in at least one event at each venue plus two others to qualify. They are:

March 21, Kinkell Braes; April 25, Doune; May 30, Rumster; June 20, Doune; June 27, Fintray; August 8, Fintray; August 29, Rumster; October 17, Kinkell Braes.

The sprint series currently consists of seven rounds but it intended that this number increase one to eight when the East Ayrshire CC confirm their event. This year the series will include at least one event at Knockhill and plans are in hand to use the new sprint circuit at Bank in Ayrshire when it is available. There will be a separate class in sprinting for vintage cars with a special trophy. Dates of the sprint series are:

March 28, Ingliston; April 18, Ingliston; May 2, Ingliston; August 1, Ingliston; September 12, Ingliston; September 26, Ingliston; October 10, Knockhill. East Ayrshire CC, tbc.

Regulations for the various events may be procured from two sources. The sprint series regs and registration forms are available from Les T. Jones, 8 Clifford Road, Stirling FK8 2AQ, tel: Stirling 2415, and the hillclimb information from A. G. M. Pattison, 72 Galbariath Drive, Milngavie, Glasgow, tel: 041 956 4959.

● In recognition of his unflagging interest in production car trials — it's said he has not missed marshalling a BTRDA round for two years — John Walker from Watford recieved a silver cigarette box at an informal presentation ceremony during lunch on the Tocky Bonk last weekend. All regular BTRDA contenders had subscribed to the award.

● John Bradburn, who was awarded Driver of the Year trophy by the Mini Seven Club last Saturday at their annual presentation dance, is to be sponsored in the Mini 1000 challenge this year by Presswork and Fabricators of Birmingham. Aldon, who sponsored him last year, will still be doing his engine.

Dunlop sponsor Novice FFs

The BRSCC have found a sponsor for their Novices championship in the form of Dunlop and the event will be titled the Star of Tomorrow championship. It will be open to drivers who hold a restricted competition licence on or after January 1 and who have not scored National championship points at the opening date for entries.

Most of the nine races will take place on the practice days for two day BRSCC meetings and none clash with National FF championship rounds. The final will be held at the annual FF festival at Brands in November.

Awards in each race will be cash vouchers to the value of £15, £10, £8

and £5 which will be presented to the four highest placed competitors. They may be cashed in with the Dunlop Competition Centre for FF racing tyres or ordinary road tyres. All cars competing must carry two Dunlop decals.

Points scoring for the overall championship will be 9-6-4-3-2-1 and seven out of the nine best scores will count towards the end of season awards of trophies to the three highest placed drivers.

Qualifying rounds are: March 20, Mallory Park; March 27, Snetterton; April 15, Oulton Park; April 18, Brands Hatch; July 10, Castle Combe; August 29, Brands Hatch; September 17, Oulton Park; October 9, Mallory Park; November 7, Brands Hatch.

Van Diemen and MacInnes Amcron are joining forces to run Matthew Argenti (in car) in a works backed RF76 in the Townsend Thoresen and Brush Fusegear Championships. Matthew has driven Van Diemens for the Amcron manufacturers for the past two seasons, finishing second in the Brush series last year. MacInnes also hope to run two cars in the Radio One series, drivers to be announced later.



Marshall's Corvair

Gerry Marshall rang us up last week to put us straight on the ownership of the ex-Ian Richardson 8.1 Chevrolet Corvair. He is currently offering the car for sale, with carbs instead of the troublesome fuel injection, but he only wants to sell it to a very slow driver. "After all, it is the quickest car in the world" said Marshall, who wouldn't want to have to chase it throughout 1976 in Baby Bertha.

Meanwhile, he stirred the pot a little by reckoning that there's a 90 per cent chance that Mick Hill will be running a rear engined VW in Super Saloon racing this year. Marshall himself has a very considerable sponsorship programme worked out for as many as seven drivers, details of which will be revealed shortly.

Ambulance donation

A donation of over £700 was handed over last week to the BARC by the friends of John Chubb. It will go towards the equipping of two new race rescue vehicles which will be officially handed over to the club at a presentation ceremony in the spring.

John Chubb was a London garage owner who died following an accident at home in January. He was a longtime friend and mechanic to sports car and F3 driver Simon Sherman. When John Chubb died, his wife Sally requested that instead of flowers, donations should go towards the equipping of the race rescue vehicles. They will carry the inscription "Part of the equipment in this vehicle was donated by his friends in memory of John Chubb."

Harrap scores at home

Taking full advantage of the fact that part of the route passed within half a mile of his home in the Aylesbury area, Bill Harrap scored his first night rally success for several years last weekend when, with Peter Rushforth, they won the Hermit Rally run by Aylesbury MC over a 150 mile route in Buckinghamshire.

In their Saab 99 they dropped 22m 15s on an event which included one three and a half mile selective which was eventually needed to decide the destiny of third and fourth places.

From a field of 78 crews, Harrap and Rushforth had a fight on their hands in the first half, despite some tight navigation and at the petrol halt they led by a minute with two crews hard on their heels on the next minute. There was a sting in the tail, however, and this caused many crews to lose a lot of time and

eventually Harrap and Rushforth finished slightly more than five minutes up.

Second, as they were all night, were Keith Rumary and Graham Dore in a Viva who finished on 27m 38s while the Escort of Rowland Tompkins and Brian Thorpe went some 10s quicker on the selective to take third on 29m 15s with Graham Sisson/Steve Turner (Lotus Cortina) fourth on 29m 25s.

Equalling this time were Malcolm Anderson and Roland Carlin in an Imp but they had dropped a minute very early on in the night. Sixth were Geoff Twigg and Mick Burrows (Cooper S), on 30m 9s.

Best novices were Peter Rose and Colin Lewis in an Escort on 52m 30s and they won their category by some four minutes from Ian Ingram and Raymond Toombs in an Austin 1800.

Pugh again after 6 years

Using several classic roads in the Bulth Rhyader area, including the Elan valley, Birmingham University MC's Mermaid rally was won by John Pugh/John Williams in a Mexico who repeated their success of six years ago. On a night when several roads became impossible due to snow, the organisers had their work cut out to keep the rally moving. An early headache came when they had to cut the first two controls and later more amendments were necessary when a ford was blocked.

Pugh and Williams were fastest on three of the selectives and led all night finishing on 24m 10s, a minute and a half ahead of Bryan Roe/Pete

Forrester in their Escort TC. Third, three and a half minutes down on 27m 40s were Cyril Bolton and Colin Francis in the Minisport Cooper S and they were hounded by Mike Pattison/David Taylor who brought their RS2000 into fourth spot on 28m 1s.

From a field of 107, only 48 managed to get round and leading semi-experts Tim Howard/Nigel Lloyd (Escort) were a fine fifth despite dropping 41m 17s. Sixth were Geoff Kitney/Alan McCann in a Mexico on 1F 44m 44s. The nov'ie award was won by Derek Wright/Mike Brown in an Escort TC who finished eighth overall with 1F 48m 31s.

Janet's new Crossle

After a season of promise in an elderly Lotus 69, 20-year-old Janet McPherson will be in much more competitive machinery this season in the form of a Crossle 30F with Minister engine. This is thanks to sponsorship from J and P Polymers, a local firm from Whitefield, Lancs who put this ex-kartist up into competitive FF ranks. Janet, a punch card operator during the week, is hoping to take in around 30 meetings, with special emphasis on the Northern Formula Ford championship.

Meanwhile, her 17-year-old brother Stuart is another member of the family to be taking to the tracks. He's currently rebuilding a U2 and hopes to race it in A class this year, although the family are having a publicity campaign to persuade him that B sports is quite sufficient for a beginner.

● The British Motor Racing Marshals Club are holding their National Training Day on February 21 at Silverstone, first lecture at 10 am. All aspects of marshalling should be covered, plus practical circuit marshalling under simulated racing conditions.

Festival note

Just in case you hadn't noticed (because someone on our staff didn't), the Formula Festival this year leaves its normal home, Snetterton, and makes the journey south to... you've guessed it... Brands Hatch. Does this mean more promotion for the event?

R. Chapple/C. Mills (Dolomite Sprint) were winners of Pegasus MC's Orion Rally held last weekend. Second were C. Young/C. Holt (1.3 Escort) from R. Hibberd/W. Jarvis (Mini).



Capacity grids for FF2000

The BRSCC and Allied Polymer Group are expecting capacity grids by April or May for the FF2000 field. With recent interest and acquisitions, sales in some quarters have been going well and it's expected that around 30 cars will be on the grid for the Race of Champions round.

When capacity grids are reached the BRSCC reckon on running qualifying races for the finals, something which was envisaged around June, but it's now felt that this could happen a month or two earlier. A spokesman for APG said that they were extremely pleased with the reaction, and also surprised considering these days of inflation.

Arif has a sponsor, no car

After a winter worrying about the whereabouts of one Sidney Miller, Wil Arif, one of the first men to wear the Southern Organs name, has come up with a new sponsor in the form of a Garden Centre called Brookside Nursery, near East Peckham, and only about 10 or 12 miles from Brands.

The Garden Centre, which also has film and reception facilities and a wine and beer section, have provided 25-year-old Arif with enough money to run a Formula Ford, and after a year in FF2000, he's currently on the look-out for a competitive chassis which can be run on a semi-works deal. So far he's had offers of a test-drive and interest from Van Dieman, Dulon and Image.

With the Garden Centre being in the South of England, he's restricting himself to two championships at Brands and Lydden, the MCD series at Brands, while taking in the prestige RAC FF series and the Silverstone Brush Fusegear series. Incidentally, Arif is still looking for the bloke who nicked his Minister FF engine and Hewland Mk 9 gearbox. He's offering a reward for their recovery.

Winfield's Tiga prize

The Martini-Winfield Racing Drivers School are holding a competition at their British base at Goodwood on February 26 for their best five pupils along the lines of their legendary talent finding Volant Shell competition which they hold at Magny Cours in France.

The prize for the winner will be a new FF Tiga, from the new set up run by Tim Schenken and Howden Ganley. The two former GP drivers were testing the car at Goodwood recently and put in some impressive performances.

Valour man

One contender for the Victoria Sporting Club International Award for Valour, given to the world's bravest sportsman, is said to be Hugh McMaster. McMaster, from across the Irish sea, has one arm and hillclimbs and sprints his racing Mini. Jim McClements uses the car on the circuits. The International Awards for Valour will be presented at the Guildhall, London, on February 20, when heroes from all sports will be present to see the winner.

Linda's deals off

Despite a couple of tempting offers, Linda Cunningham will be restricting her track career to celebrity races this year. The blonde comedy actress had deals with both a Ford and a Vauxhall all nicely tied up when a lucrative offer to go on theatrical tour with Sid James came up, and for a girl whose career is on the boards, it was too much to turn down. So regrettably, her four wheel deals are off, and she'll just take part in the occasional Escort race when she's asked.

Eveson by 40s

Enstone Airfield near Banbury hosted its first special stage rally last Sunday when Bruern MC had sixty crews for their closed event and offered five stages totalling approximately 30 miles. Two of the stages had to be cancelled, one when a watch went wrong and the other when a Mini and an Ascona collided head on with dire consequences to both vehicles.

Winners were Charles Eveson/John Wilcox in an Escort 1800 who totalled 2737s to win by 40s from John Vicker and his wife Sandra in an RS2000. Ron Aiken/Terry Dunn brought a similar car into third on 2791s and Graham Hall/Bob Panther (RS1600) were fourth on 2815s.

Leading novices Mike Warner/Bob Stephens were fifth in their 3.0 Capri only six seconds down while M. J. Friday/John Hamer were sixth in a Mini on 2840s.

● Miss Maggie Comport would like it to be known that she is not in any way financially involved in Fred Sigafoos' motor racing, as stated on page 45 of last week's issue.

GERRY MARSHALL
TRICENTROL SUPERSALOON CAR CHAMPIONS 1975



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