Autosport

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Brazil: Lole leads the champions

International Rally Review □ Formula 2 cars from Japan

Autosport

January 27, 1977 Vol 66 No 4

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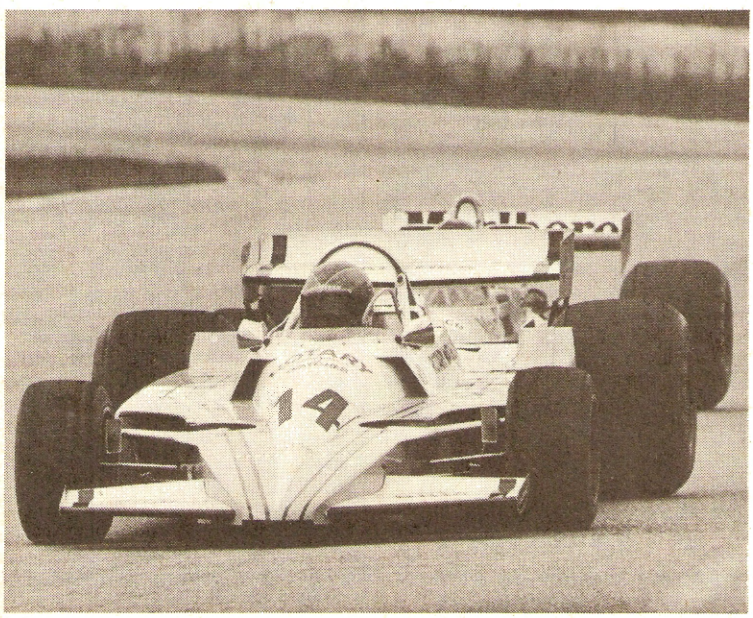
You had to be a bit smart with your camera if you wanted to catch the new Stanley-BRM Formula 1 car in action at Interlagos last Saturday (report: page 10). Here Larry Perkins leads James Hunt's Marlboro-McLaren during one of his few qualifying laps; in the race, the P207 overheated on the opening lap, and Perkins watched the Brazilian GP from the sidelines.



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Leyland in competition

The announcement of the Leyland Cars competition programme states prominently, if somewhat hesitantly, that it is "perhaps the most wide-ranging motor sport and bonus scheme programme proposed by any motor manufacturer," inviting a comparison between the present plans of Leyland and its French rival, Regie Renault.

These two state-owned companies are in direct competition, and each must achieve positive commercial results from motor sport in order to justify the expenditure of public funds on an activity which is still so mistakenly regarded in some quarters as frivolous. Leyland has made no public commitment to motor sport over a defined period, whereas Renault has let it be known that its motor sport programme will extend at least until 1980.

The Leyland programme for 1977 embraces national Group 1 touring car racing, with the Triumph Dolomites; international Group 2 racing with the Jaguar XJ Coupes; Formula 3 with the Dolomite-powered Marches; and international rallying with the Group 4 Triumph TR7s. In addition, there is the Leyland Mini Challenge series and, for the first time, Leyland will be promoting what looks to be a very acceptable bonus scheme for Leyland product users at club level.

Renault will realize a top-level motor sport operation in 1977: Formula 1 with the new 1½-litre turbocharged car; Formula 2 with Martini, also supplying engines to other teams; Group 6 with the mighty onslaught on Le Mans; and, it has been rumoured, the supply of engines for Formula 3. Renault's rally programme, largely a national one, is insignificant compared with Leyland's, but, unlike the Mini series, the Regie's own "one-make" series for R5 saloons has a firm foothold in Europe, while the company takes an active interest in its two single-seater formulae.

On balance, it appears that Renault's is the wider-ranging programme, but is it the way to go? In Italy, the state-owned Fiat company takes in Formula 1 and now Formula 2 with Ferrari, national single-seater categories at home and in Spain, and a really extensive international rally schedule, thus offering the public a mixture of product-identification and sheer prestige.

There are solid commercial reasons for Leyland's reliance on the production car concept, while Renault (which is subject to more direct government control) is unashamedly in the sport for the prestige. Renault men speak enthusiastically about "*la grande aventure*," and the national pride with which the Regie's competition programme was announced was conspicuously greater than Leyland's last Friday. Yet the jingoistic reaction at Silverstone last year, when the long-awaited Jaguar led its German rivals, went an unexpectedly long way towards making up for the initial bungling of the Group 2 project. It is to be hoped that a real sense of pride will result from Leyland racing and rallying successes this season, and that this will be carefully fostered by the company in the years ahead. While competition purely for national prestige makes little commercial sense, an element of this should be present in Leyland's plans. In Leyland's case it is perhaps not necessary, like Fiat, to use Formula 1 as the primary prestige area in racing, but we would nevertheless urge an activve participation in more prestigious categories.

cover picture

Carlos Reutemann scores his first victory for Ferrari in last weekend's Brazilian Grand Prix, in which he led the 1976, 1975 and 1974 World Champions across the finish line after the second 1977 race of attrition. Photo : Jeff Hutchinson.

next week

World Champion James Hunt recalls the Brazilian GP and looks ahead to the rest of the season in the first of his regular AUTOSPORT columns—Our free pullout wall calendar of 1977 British motor sport fixtures—We review the situation in British off-track motor sport, including hillclimbs, sprints, road rallying, autotests, autocross, rallycross, trials and drag racing—BMW 633 Csi road test—More on Ford's new Fiesta small car—Private Ear*

* These items were correct at the time of going to press.

edited by Nigel Roebuck

No surprises from Leyland Cars for 1977

Leyland have finally made known their competition plans for 1977, by means of a brochure.

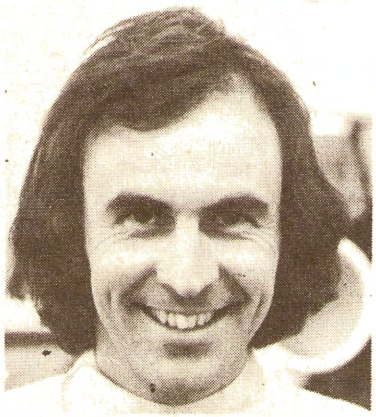
As widely expected, but not confirmed until the bitter end, the company has announced its four Group 2 Jaguar drivers as Derek Bell, Andy Rouse, John Fitzpatrick and Tim Schenken. They will run two of their Jaguar XJ5.3 coupes in all rounds of the European Touring Car Championship this year. The cars will again be prepared and serviced at races by Broadspeed Engineering, on behalf of Leyland.

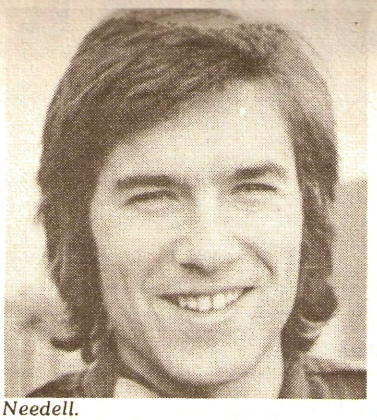
Although no pictures were supplied, the new cars are apparently quite different in appearance from last year's TT car. There is a new front spoiler, which improves air ducting to the front brakes, and a new 6in high rear spoiler, fitted to improve the car's "aerodynamic balance." The cars are now equipped with 19in diameter centre lock wheels (as opposed to the 16in wheels used on the car's only appearance last year), and "the wheel arches have been redesigned to cope with them" (always a good idea). We'd like to show you a picture of the car, but they didn't send us one.

And now for the Group 1 Dolomites. From the release, we quote: "The choice of drivers for these cars will depend largely upon the degree of sponsorship given to the championship and Leyland will make an announcement about its Triumph Dolomite Sprint drivers in due course." Presumably this will be done some time before the first round of the championship, at Silverstone on March 6. . . . Leyland declines to make any comment about this, but private sources indicate that two cars will be run on occasion (whenever Andy Rouse is available to drive one), while at other races, just one will appear in the hands of A. N. Other. From what we have been told unofficially, it sounds as though the Sprint has the potential to win overall in Group 1 this year thanks to several new homologation tweaks, while the engine is said to be putting out about 225bhp. We'd like to show you a picture of the car, but. . . .

Fitzpatrick.

Schenken.





Needell.

Tiff, Taylor confirmed

Confirmed this week by British Leyland: drivers of the Unipart March-Dolomite Sprint 773s will be Tiff Needell, winner of the premier Grovewood Award in 1976, and 29-year-old Ian Taylor, who last drove regularly in F3 some years ago. Team manager will be Alan Howell, who worked on Tony Dron's Unipart March 763 last year, and engine preparation will be by Holbay.

Taylor.

New £10m GP circuit

Sir Clive Bossom of the RAC was present at the Brazilian GP, having called at Rio on the way to look over the new circuit which has just been completed there at a cost of some £10,000,000. "Although I don't think its flat layout will be very popular with the drivers, its facilities are extremely good. It has a magnificent control tower, while each pit has showers and sleeping accommodation at the back," he said.

Apparently a decision will be made in about four months' time as to whether or not next year's Grand Prix will be held at Interlagos or the new track. It is likely that a non-championship race might be held there in 1978 following the GP at Interlagos, while in 1979 Rio would stage the Grand Prix proper.

Wheatcroft back to F2?

Currently there are rumours that Tom Wheatcroft is about to make a comeback as a Formula 2 entrant. At the moment nothing else is known, save that he is said to have ordered a new Hart engine. Will he run a development of the car which made a brief debut in Brian Henton's hands during practice at Thruxton last Easter? Will Henton be the driver? Whatever, if the stories are true, it will be nice to see Tom back as an entrant, particularly as the F2 date for Donington (October 30) has now been confirmed.

The name of Wheatcroft will definitely appear in F3 racing this year, however, for John Bright will campaign a F3 version of last year's R18 F2 car. Tom offered Bright the use of the racing workshop to build the car, which is based on the Formula Atlantic car driven by Richard Morgan in 1975. Bright's Wheatcroft should be competitive, but he desperately needs a sponsor to buy him some Toyota power.

Jones for Ensign . . .

Teddy Yip was a prominent figure around the Ensign camp at Interlagos last weekend, shortly before leaving for California to tie up his Indy arrangements for Alan Jones. Yip then planned to continue on down to Australia to watch Jones and Vern Schuppan in the Tasman Series.

Yip's interest in Team Ensign is the possibility of a second car for Jones of Patrick Tambay for the rest of the year. "At the moment nothing has been decided, but if Mo Nunn cannot manage a car for them then I will build a car for Alan myself, probably designed by Ron Tauranac."

Yip's racing plans cover a wide spectrum in all corners of the globe this year. He will be backing Jones in Formula 1, probably from Kyalami onwards, with a March, filling in for Ribeiro who will be running F2 races which clash. In addition he is doing Indy and CanAm in the States, while Schuppan will be doing the Atlantic and Tasman series for him.

When we asked him where he bases himself with such diverse interests, Yip said: "In the air—I spend over $30,000 a year on air travel." That's hardly surprising. How does he stay in touch with his business? He has a hard working family, chasing him around the world by telex. . . .

. . . or will it be Tambay?

"On holiday" at Interlagos was Patrick Tambay, no doubt keeping his ear to the ground about negotiations for an F1 Ensign with backing from Teddy Yip. "I won't be making any decision about a second car until we get to the European season," says Mo Nunn.

● Following our piece last week about various Alfa Romeo GTVs in British Group One racing, we hear that Derek Lawrence is also entered in the first G1 race of the season in a 2.0 version. Lawrence drove a 'Sud last year for Midland Alfa dealer Mario Deliotti.

F3 Hawke flies again

After a doubtful beginning, during which it raced only once, the F3 Hawke, introduced last year for Rupert Keegan to drive, has been given the kiss of life and with a new designer, Pat Symonds, has done quite a lot of testing of late. So much so, in fact, that Hawke have named a works driver for the car for this year: Jan Lammers. Lammers is a Dutchman in whom Hawke have great faith. They first noticed him when they took one of their FF2000 cars over for a promotional visit to Holland last year. They were impressed by his talent when racing against their own Hawke in the European Formula Ford series.

Now Lammers is being plunged into European F3 with a completely works-backed car, powered by a Toyota/Novamotor engine. Hawke are confident that the revamped car will be at the very first round of the European F3 season at Ricard early in March, and they are looking forward to a very competitive year.

New car for Emerson in LB

The South African GP on March 5 could be the last race for the Copersucar Fittipaldi FD04, for the latest Dave Baldwin-designed chassis is already well under way in the team's Sao Paulo workshops. The car bears a very strong resemblance to the present Ensign, which is also a Baldwin design. It has similar suspension and monocoque layout, while the front brakes are also twin caliper, but of a Brazilian make.

The airbox and rear wing will be similar to the current Copersucar-sponsored car initially, while the nose shape is also Ensign.

"As soon as the car is finished we will do a quick test at Interlagos and then ship it to Europe. Maybe if it's fantastic right away we will race it at Long Beach for the first time," said Team Manager Wilson Fittipaldi.

New Hewland six-speed gearbox for F1

Six-speed gearboxes look like being standard wear for the Cosworth Formula 1 brigade this year. Last year, of course, Hunt and Mass had one extra cog at their disposal, and most people were of a mind that it gave them a decided advantage. Now Hewland are producing their own six-speeder, to be known as the FGA6, and they will build fifty of them.

We rang Hewland to discover the identities of the purchasers, and were told that, in fact, all the Ford-powered teams had ordered them. The first of the new six-speeders will be ready next month, but Hewland have decided not to release any until there are enough to supply all those who want them. By Monaco, however, they are confident that all the teams will be running the new units.

Conny talks to Hesketh

Desperately keen to do a full season of Grand Prix racing is Conny Andersson. The Swedish F3 star's name has been linked with the Hesketh team recently, and we asked him whether the rumours were true. "Yes, I've talked to Bubbles," said Conny, "and, of course, I have to find some money. I do have two sponsors at the moment, one of which is Speedprint, and both are interested, but I don't yet have enough money for a year of F1." Andersson did, of course, have a one-off drive for John Surtees in the Dutch Grand Prix last year, but a full-time drive is what he wants. Conny also mentioned that he has been talking to BRM about the possibility of driving a second car for them, and has been asked to do some testing. He hopes to come over to England to discuss things further in about 10 days.

What of F2? Andersson said that he really wanted to do F1, but if no opportunity arose, he would undertake a full season of F2. He confirmed that he had been talking with Renault about using their V6 engines.

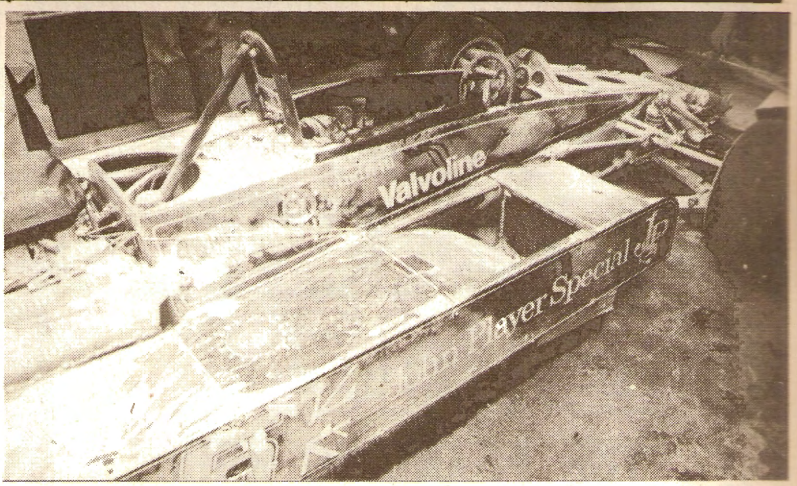
Larry wins bike race

One of the lighter features of the Brazilian Grand Prix was a bike event organised by a local bicycle firm for the mechanics and drivers.

In the first of the two races, which was for the mechanics, Brabham's Jim Chisman made his trip worthwhile when he cleared $500 and a free bike by beating the two Surtees mechanics, Andrew Guthrie and Graham Knapp.

In the second race, for drivers, Larry Perkins came home a clear winner from the Copersucar men, Emerson Fittipaldi and Ingo Hoffman, Perkins winning a healthy $2100 for his efforts. All the drivers got $200 starting money.

Clay Regazzoni tells JYS he's confident about the bike race (above), but it didn't work out that way, Larry Perkins taking it from Fittipaldi and Hoffman (below). Some consolation for the farcical debut of the BRM. . . .



At Interlagos, Mario Andretti had his second nasty fright in two weeks. . . .

Extinguisher precautions

Following the explosion of the JPS-Lotus 78 fire extinguisher in Argentina, both cars were fitted with a new bottle and different chemical for the Brazilian Grand Prix.

It seems that the sudden check of Stanley-BRM equipment by Civil Aviation Authorities just before its departure for Brazil, and the subsequent removal of several items such as batteries, brake fluid, fire extinguishers and even water coolant additives, could have been triggered off by the Lotus incident at Buenos Aires, and the possible consequences of such a thing happening in mid-air.

Now the F1 constructors wait and see what happens. Was this the start of regular problems, or just an isolated case?

ShellSport G8 plans

Prospects for this year's ShellSport International series look fairly promising. There will, of course, be no David Purley this year, and rumours of a F1 Boxer have been discounted. However, there should be a good sprinkling of F1 cars. We hear that Guy Edwards plans to run a March 771, Tony Trimmer a Surtees TS19, Emilio Villota a McLaren M23 (yes, really!), Divina Galica another TS19, David Prophet the ex-Divina TS16 (where has *he* been all these years ?), and an as yet unidentified Spaniard with a March 761. . . .

Lewis shelves F1 project

Brian Lewis's ambitious plans to build a Ford-Cosworth DFV-engined car for the ShellSport International Group 8 championship have come to nought, unfortunately, because Lewis simply does not have the cash to do it properly.

Lewis told us that his company was maintaining its tie-up with Netherton & Worth, and that he intended to continue racing with his 2-litre Boxer cars. A Boxer has been entered for the first round of the European F2 Championship, at Silverstone on March 6.

Ferrari not seriously ill

Over the weekend, there were gloomy rumours surrounding the health of Enzo Ferrari, suggesting that he was gravely ill. However, we spoke to Bernie Ecclestone about it, and he said that the rumours were wildly exaggerated. The 78-year-old Commendatore is, in fact, suffering from 'flu, no light matter for one of Ferrari's age, but not of the gravity first suspected. Brazil must have speeded his recovery somewhat, we hope. Get well soon, Commendatore!

Leyland's new bonus scheme

British Leyland's new cash-or-parts bonus scheme is an excellent idea. The company will pay bonuses of up to £1000 to private entrants who become overall championship winners by using Leyland cars throughout 1977. As well as this, Leyland privateers winning their class or overall in certain individual events will be eligible for bonuses of up to £500.

Included in this scheme are the European Touring Car Championship, the European GT Championship and the RAC Touring Car Championship, among others. Formula 3 races are also included, provided they are FIA listed races, or rounds of the BP or BRDC Championships. There is, of course, a prize scale, with the top awards going to the European Touring and GT Championships.

● Why did Leyland Cars choose to announce its 1977 motor sport programme too late for specialist magazine deadlines—that is, on a Friday? Because the primary objective of the announcement was national press exposure. But why did Leyland choose the Friday before a Grand Prix, with James Hunt taking up every national newspaper's editorial allocation for motor sport? You may well ask. The Leyland revelations were sunk without trace. Vauxhall must be amused. . . .

● Latest adornment for the walls of the Steering Wheel Club is the wheel from James Hunt's World Championship-winning McLaren M23.

Lunger—an M23 this time.

McLaren and March for Brett

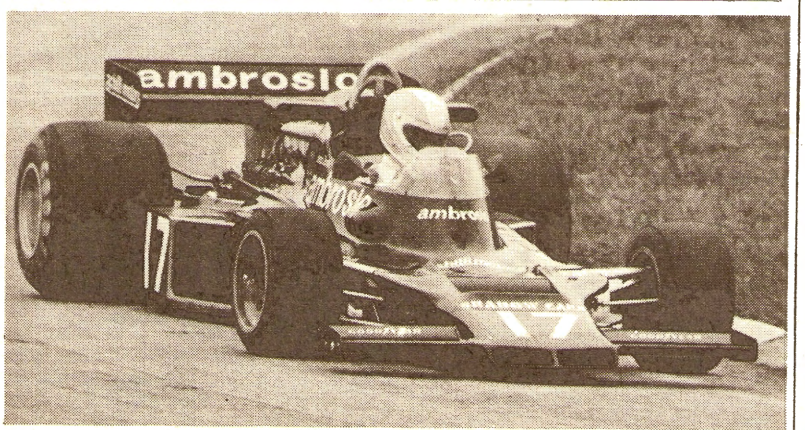
Brett Lunger is to give Grand Prix racing yet one more try. After disappointing showings with both the Hesketh and Surtees teams, the ex-Marine will be "hanging in there" again from Kyalami onwards. Bob Sparshot and John Woodington of BS Fabrications at Luton are building up a brand-new McLaren M23 for the American, but it is unlikely to be ready before the Spanish Grand Prix. Brett has thought of that, and has bought the ex-Stuck March 761 to use at Kyalami and Long Beach. He will not go to Fuji, but hopes to debut the M23 at Jarama. A spare ex-works M23 will be bought later in the season as and when the works team feel they no longer need it. Bearing in mind the form shown by Hunt and Mass in South America (and the destruction of Jochen's car last Sunday), that could be quite some time. Certainly, we think that Lunger's remark that "it's a dated car and end of season technology might catch up with it" seems a little guarded. . . .

● Former Modus F2 and Chevron 2-litre sports car driver Ian Grob has taken a step down for 1977, and will appear in F3 with a Chevron-Toyota B38.

● After a number of seasons in special saloon car racing with cars prepared by herself, Susan Tucker-Peake will do Group One this year in the RAC Touring Car series with a Renault 5TS.

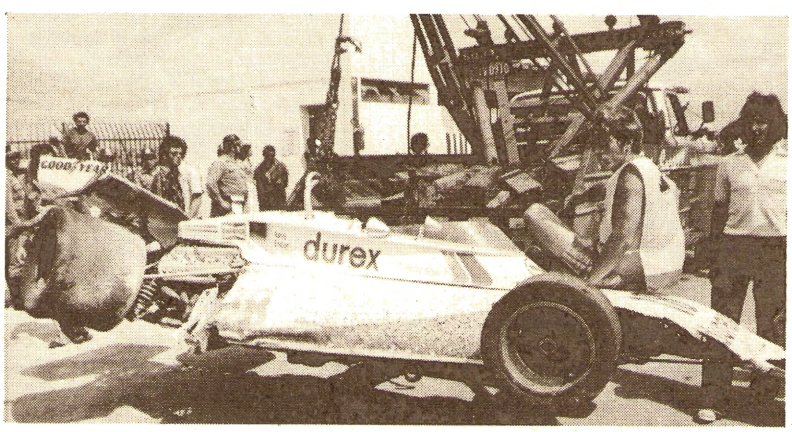
Two Inalteras to race in Daytona 24 Hours

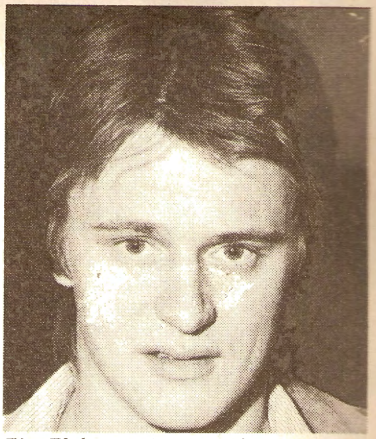
Despite the fact that they are strictly ineligible for the race, the entry of two Inalteras for the Daytona 24 Hours has been accepted by the organisers. The race, for Groups 2, 4 and 5 also permits IMSA GT cars, but not Group 6. The Inalteras, however, will not be eligible for points, positions or prize money. The French wallpaper company is keen that they run, however, because the race is widely broadcast. Managed by Vic Elford, the DFV-powered cars will be driven by Jean-Pierre Beltoise/Jean Rondeau and Lella Lombardi/Christine Beckers. Other leading entries include the Martini Porsche 935 for Ickx and Mass, privately-entered 935s for Finotto/Facetti and Wollek/Joest, the works BMW 320i for Peterson/Hobbs/Posey and a Chevrolet Monza for Holbert/Kaiser/Ballot-Lena.



Rookie fortunes at Interlagos

F1 newcomers had mixed fortunes in the Brazilian GP. Renzo Zorzi (above) drove very wisely on the crumbling track, finishing sixth with the Shadow DN5. For Hans Binder's Surtees TS19, the weekend was less satisfactory. . . .





Eje Elgh—works F3 Chevron?

Ronnie backs Elgh at Chevron

It is extremely likely that Sweden's Eje Elgh will be one of the works drivers in the Chevron F3 team this year. Among his sponsors are no less than Ronnie Peterson and Torsten Palm, who are to visit Chevron this week to finalise the deal, reputed to be worth about £35,000.

Is £35,000 really the cost of a season of F3 nowadays? "Yes," Chevron's Dave Wilson told us, "but, in fact, that only works out to £1250 per race, and when you think of the cost of tyres, rebuilds and so on these days, that's a pretty good price." Wilson confirmed that he was still trying to finalise a deal to allow Geoff Lees to run a works F3 car this year, so the final pairing could well turn out to be Lees and Elgh.

● Sad news from the CSI. For the second year running, the Spa 1000 Kms has been cancelled. It was to have been run on May 8, the same day as the Spanish GP. There are also a couple of changes in the F2 calendar. The Hockenheim race, scheduled for June 19, will now take place on June 5. Mugello, originally down for July 10, will now be run on June 19.

● The Mosport G5/G6 weekend, supposedly cancelled a little while ago, is now definitely on again, for the weekend of August 20/21. Also scheduled is a round of the CanAm Championship. Looks like one busy weekend . . . .

catchpole

by Barry Foley

Comparatively few of you thought that Carlos Reutemann's Ferrari would win the Brazilian Grand Prix, the votes breakdown reading Carlos Pace, James Hunt, John Watson, Patrick Depailler, Mario Andretti, Carlos Reutemann, Ronnie Peterson, Niki Lauda, Tom Pryce, Jochen Mass, Jody Scheckter, Gunnar Nilsson Emerson Fittipaldi and Jacques Laffite.

Closest of all to an absolutely correct forecast was Mr T. Wilton, of Grimsby, South Humberside, who predicted a win for "Lole" at 112.980mph; in fact, the Argentine Ferrari driver averaged 112.921mph. Mr Wilton, a magnum of Moët et Chandon will be with you soon.

The next round of the World Championship is, of course, the South African Grand Prix at Kyalami, on March 5. Last year's winner (in warm and sunny conditions) was Niki Lauda, whose Ferrari averaged 116.58mph. We will need your Moët entries not later than Friday, March 4. Send them, on a postcard please, to AUTOSPORT *Editorial, Regent House, 54-62 Regent Street, London, W1A 2YJ. We'll remind you again a couple of weeks before the race.*

Meet our new F1 columnist

For the first time in the 27-year history of the magazine, we are pleased to announce that AUTOSPORT is to feature regular columns written by a reigning World Champion. James Hunt is not a champion about whom people are negative. Depending on the reader's point of view, he is outspoken or offensive, controversial or self-opinionated, temperamental or petulant. His new AUTOSPORT column is certain not only to provide you with the inside story of the Grand Prix scene, but also with some clues to an enigmatic personality. Don't miss James Hunt's first column in AUTOSPORT next week.

● Next week's issue also contains our free AUTOSPORT National Calendar, with full details of Britain's 1977 motor sport programme.

Two more wins give Rosberg Kiwi title

With one South Island round remaining, Finland's Keijo Rosberg has clinched the title of 1977 Peter Stuyvesant Champion. Rosberg won the third and final Formula Pacific race in New Zealand's North Island at the Manfeild circuit in thoroughly convincing fashion on January 16, beating Californian Tom Gloy (Tui BH2) by over 20s, and he then took his Fred Opert Chevron B34 to another victory at Teretonga on South Island last Sunday, this time over team-mate Mikko Kozarowitzky.

At Manfeild, Rosberg started from pole position, having gained it on the final lap of the third and final qualifying session to displace Gloy, who had been fastest in the two opening sessions. Rosberg steamed his Warsteiner Chevron into the lead from the rolling start and never looked like relinquishing it in the course of the subsequent 54-lap (101.67 miles) race, and Gloy was similarly secure in second place.

Third, more than half a minute behind Gloy, was Queenslander Bruce Allison (Ralt RT1), who had the distinction of being the only runner not to be lapped. Fourth, first New Zealander home, was Dave McMillan (Ralt RT1) and he was followed in by Andrew Miedecke (Lola T360B), John Nicholson (Modus M4), defending Stuyvesant Champion Ken Smith in a Doug Shierson March 76B, Kozarowitzky in the other Opert Chevron, David Oxton (Chevron B29), and Enno Buesselmann (Birrana), all of whom completed 53 laps. Then came Albert Poon (Chevron B34) and Ross Stone (Cuda) on 52 and 51 laps respectively.

So far as Rosberg and Gloy were concerned, it was the New Zealand GP all over again. Although the Finn made it look easy, Manfeild was, in fact, a much tougher race for him than the GP. During the pace lap, prior to the start, petrol spilled on to his left leg, causing him agonising pain. Then, before half-distance, his clutch packed up. To climax it all, Fred Opert made an error in calculating the number of laps and, according to his pit signals, Rosberg prepared to take the chequered flag after 53 laps. That is, until Opert signalled him that he had one more to go: the Chevron completed the final lap, but finished with a completely dry tank.

Rosberg—Stuyvesant champion.

Manfeild was too much for the other favoured Stuyvesant contenders, Kozarowitzky and Richard Melville in particular. The Finn in the other Opert-entered B34 was third fastest qualifier, and he ran in third spot until a puncture cost him two laps after the race had run 10. He resumed to drive a tremendous race to take eighth spot. Jamaican Melville, fifth in the opening Bay Park round and third at Pukekoke, fared worse. Having qualified seventh, pitted at the same time as Kozarowitzky, without the nosecone of his Douglas Shierson-entered March 76B, but the trouble was a more far-reaching electrical fault and it resulted in his retirement from the race.

McMillan was the man who kept New Zealand in the contest, but this was thanks to a fantastic effort on the part of his Citizen Watches team and the rest of the Stuyvesant circus. In a warm-up session about an hour and a half before the scheduled race start, he blew the newly-installed engine in his Ralt and the gearbox suffered consequent damage. Everyone pitched in to replace the engine and gearbox and, when it became evident that he would not be ready in time, the drivers appealed to meeting promoter Robert Lester to rearrange the programme to run the Stuyvesant round last, so that McMillan could take his place on the grid as fourth fastest qualifier. Lester (who not only promotes, but also races — he took a first and a second place in two supporting Formula Vee races) readily agreed, much to the pleasure of the near-record 18,000 people who came to the meeting.

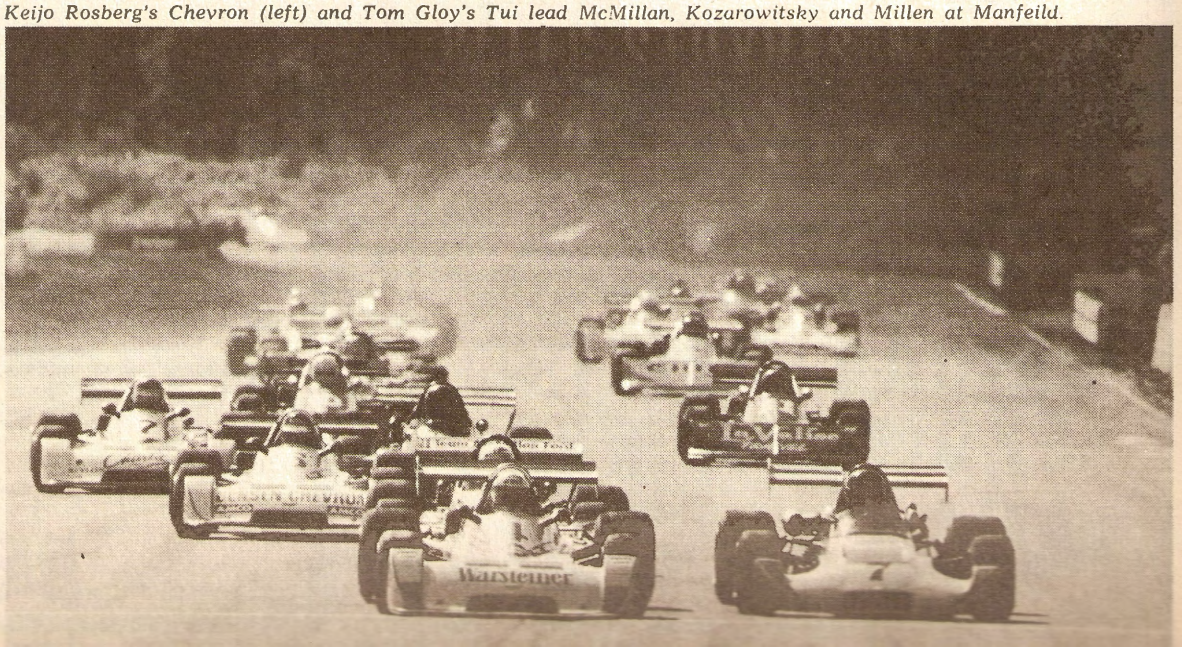
There was quite a dice for third place between Allison and Nicholson, and once Rosberg and Gloy were securely in the first two places, most interest centred on this continuing struggle. In the course of lap 49 Nicholson finally took Allison, and there was quite a cheer as the Kiwi driver's red Modus emerged in front of the Australian's black Ralt. But Nicholson's third spot was only for a brief interval. In the next lap he spun, and by the time he had the Modus pointing in the right direction again Allison was back in third place and McMillan and Miedecke were next in line.

Bay Park winner Steve Millen, who qualified fifth ahead of Allison, lost all his chances when his Chevron B34 failed to complete the right-turning sweeper into the pit straight and ploughed into the rough in a cloud of dust. He was soon on the track again, having lost a lap, but a pitstop to check the car took up more time and after 13 laps he was sidelined with a cracked battery, probably the result of his earlier misadventure.

After the race, Rosberg completed his slowing down lap with a spluttering, fuel-hungry engine, and scrambled from the Chevron calling for a bucket of water to rinse away the agony he had suffered for the whole journey, caused by the fuel spillage. Once that little matter had been attended to, his smile soon returned, for two wins in a space of eight days had netted him $6000, gained him 18 Stuyvesant points and placed him firmly at the top of the table with only two rounds remaining.

The first of the South Island meetings took place at Teratonga last weekend, and Rosberg took the Chevron to its third successive victory, clinching the Stuyvesant title with an unassailable 27 points to the 16 of Gloy. The American Tui driver finished third to Kozarowitzy, who picked up his first points of the series having retired from each of the opening three qualifying rounds.

Keijo Rosberg's Chevron (left) and Tom Gloy's Tui lead McMillan, Kozarowitsky and Millen at Manfeild.



correspondence

the editor is not bound to agree with readers' opinions

Difficult to please

have just finished reading the AUTOSPORT issue January 20. I of course immediately turned *Private Ear* before thinking of taking te of anything else that might be in the ronicle!

Just in case anyone has not read it, or heard e say so before, I think James Hunt is a very rthy World Champion, is doing an extremely nscientious job of fulfilling the many comitments of the championship. At the same time is winning many hearts and, by so doing, inging more people "INTO" the sport.

It is extremely difficult to please all of the ople all of the time. It is also almost impossble to ensure that, when interviews occur, the riter reports what you say in the manner that u mean it and not in the way *he* wants the ory to read.

James has his own way of doing things, just Jim Clark had, or Graham had, and this is it should be! I well remember a Wee Scot tting a bit of stick for having long hair!

Let me finish by saying that as always I joy reading my AUTOSPORT.

YON, SWITZERLAND. JACKIE STEWART.

Paint that wagon

rely someone can come forward and offer tiring Jim Walsh some sponsorship.

We all know of his FF1600 record at Silverone, and his efforts elsewhere speak for themlves.

Paint your name on this man's car and you ill receive your money's worth of sponsorship.

HIRLEY, W. MIDLANDS. N. M. DUNSTAN.

ournalist's rule, ok?

suggest that Nick Brittan shows prudence efore renewing his contract with his spy in pan (*Private Ear*, January 20). I have sent the ganisers instructions to give all facilities to easure the cars to a member of the CSI Subommission for technical regulations, Gerard ombac, who happens to be on the spot as an PA journalist and Editor of *Sport Auto*.

YVON LEON,

ARIS, FRANCE. *General Secretary, CSI.*

ndylantic problems

read with interest your *Shades of Mediocrity* ature (January 20) on the 1976 club racing ason. Team Trimmer and, I think, most other tlantic competitors, had and still have our are of financial problems with the administrars of Indylantic, but I do believe that, even ough some of his ideas were misguided, ardle has the interests of the sport at heart. also think that in certain respects, the formula ceived a raw deal from the motoring press rlier in the season and this, in turn, assisted the general malaise as graphically outlined Nick Brittan. Most competitors enjoyed the maraderie between the teams and the Wentzuff rivalry is undoubtedly overstated.

Finally, Tony Trimmer and all at Melchester cing would like to thank their many friends r the help so freely given during 1976 and also UTOSPORT for its helpful coverage of our activies—but please, you really can't believe our tron is Maki! Gossip has its place—but not in UTOSPORT.

EXLEYHEATH, KENT. BRIAN MORRIS,

Melchester Racing with Tony Trimmer.

Motorsport and soccer

notice that Ian Titchmarsh in his Club Racing eview perpetrates a by-now somewhat overorked (I know, I have used it myself) comparion, that of the size of Fourth Division football owds with those at motor sporting events. It ight prove useful objectively to consider some lient points in relation to the crowd-drawing apacity of both sports.

First and foremost, football is a sport in which ne can readily identify with one side or the ther, the players representing a town (or strict), whereas motor racing is essentially a ersonal challenge. The results of my local club, outhend United, will be awaited with interest and scussed in shops, pubs and trains by considerbly more than the average home gate of 6000 or so, whereas the position of local F3 star, Rupert Keegan, in his last race will probably interest a group of people numbering no more than a few hundred. As a result the local papers devote a substantial number of column inches to United and very little even to the extremely promotable Mr Keegan—although to some extent this is a chicken-and-egg situation and if motor sport were given more coverage greater discussion would ensue.

At this juncture I must admit to becoming far more emotionally involved watching Southend United than when spectating at any race meeting —and I have attended some 25 meetings a year for the last eight years—although when directly involved with an entrant the personal contact makes the whole thing far more interesting. For the average motor racing spectator who is far less involved than I, the enthusiasm must be even less. Can you imagine 5000 people shouting for Rupert Keegan in an F3 race—probably the equivalent of Fourth Division football?

All 92 Football League clubs are situated in urban areas, with generally good public transport facilities, and hence are easier to reach for the spectator who, upon arrival, has the option of seats or covered or uncovered standing on concrete terraces. Even some of the grounds with notoriously poor accommodation, such as Newport or Colchester, have far superior spectator facilities to, say, Snetterton. On the other side of the coin League clubs have to pay the players and only four out of the 92 made a profit last year, whereas the circuit owners only pay the top-line performers and, we are led to believe, produce satisfactory yearly financial returns.

In the halcyon days of even ten years ago, when skill talked louder than money, crowds were attracted to even national status meetings in their tens of thousands because Grand Prix drivers would be very likely competing in a GT or saloon event. In the long run might not motor racing be better served by the likes of Hunt competing in more races in Britain than in testing precious Formula 1 machinery? It appears that the influx of big money at the highest level and the presence of sundry needless categories at the lower levels are resulting in there being only one type of motor racing which the public can understand—F1—and even at the high rates of admission Grands Prix normally seem to be a profitable proposition.

BENFLEET, ESSEX. JOHN ASQUITH.

Is this sportsmanship?

Your hard-to-believe story (*Pit & Paddock*, January 13) concerning Kitty O'Neil has another, even less savoury, side to it.

Certain US newspapers are reporting that Kitty's deafness from birth condition, plus her understandable difficulty in speech, are the "real" reasons for her drop by the sponsors! Surely this is the saddest ever example of "American sportsmanship"?

WALLINGTON, SURREY. GRAHAME FLEMING.

Not reckless Daly

I read the letter from Derek Daly you published on January 13, where Derek was concerned that Tim Schenken had bracketed him with a number of Formula Ford drivers whom Schenken considered overly reckless—views Schenken discussed in the recent interview published on Tiga cars.

I think the point Tim was making was more general and he was not "getting at" Daly directly, or any other driver at all; during the season both Schenken and Ganley of Tiga, and we as Tiga Formula Ford entrants, were becoming increasingly concerned about the latitude given by race organisers to drivers' "blocking tactics," for want of a better description. Some drivers seemed prepared to stick their necks out farther than others in the knowledge that disqualification would only come as a result of a driver protesting—something which most drivers would rather not do.

The point of Schenken's remarks ought to be understood by everybody concerned. It's not the drivers' fault if they are *allowed* to indulge in dubious tactics; it is the fault of those responsible for enforcing proper race track behaviour. Unfortunately the burden will be pushed on to competitors, bringing protests unless the organisers become much more positive in 1977.

ASCOT, BERKS. MIKE KNIGHT,

Winfield Racing Drivers' School

Spray "well done"

Watching Roger Clark's Cossack Escort on TV in the 1976 Lombard RAC Rally led me to use your columns to congratulate the manufacturers of Cossack Men's Hairspray on a really sensible and effective sponsorship.

Here is a sponsor who has (presumably) put money into our sport and yet not tried to interfere with the sport's organisation. He has used Roger Clark in his TV advertising as well as sponsoring him and has made the bright red Cossack Escort the best-known sight in British rallying.

I'm sure that the sponsorship has done Cossack Hairspray some good and it's certainly done rallying in Britain good. If only all sponsors, in other sports as well as rallying, could be as mature and realistic.

Well done Roger, and well done Cossack!

KEITH MARLOW.

SCHOLING, SOUTHAMPTON.

"Bollards" ... and to you

I hope you will give me a chance to reply to your taunt of "bollards" in AUTOSPORT (January 13).

Many thanks for publishing a photograph of my liquid suspension experiment for racing Minis. The ride comfort was greatly improved and it was almost impossible to differentiate between floating sensations on the track or off. Unfortunately the Rufforth Mk II Units were inferior to their Moulton predecessors in the steering, braking and traction departments; so many thanks to the marshals who carried out their quick removal and so assisted in the back to back test.

I would like to take this opportunity to pick up Ian Titchmarsh for a small inaccuracy in his always excellent Club Racing Review. Alan Curnow finished second in the Leyland Cars Mini 1275GT Championship and Malcolm Leggate was third.

Here's hoping that 1977 brings continued close, clean, exciting Mini 7 racing.

MARTIN GOODALL.

FORDINGBRIDGE, HANTS.

Dishy New Year

I would like, through your letter page, on behalf of the Silverstone lady marshals, to thank all the 1976 Dish of the Day winners for being such good sports. Thanks also to those "Dishes" who gave up an evening to take us out for a fabulous meal on November 17.

We will always remember their kindness towards us, both on and away from the circuits.

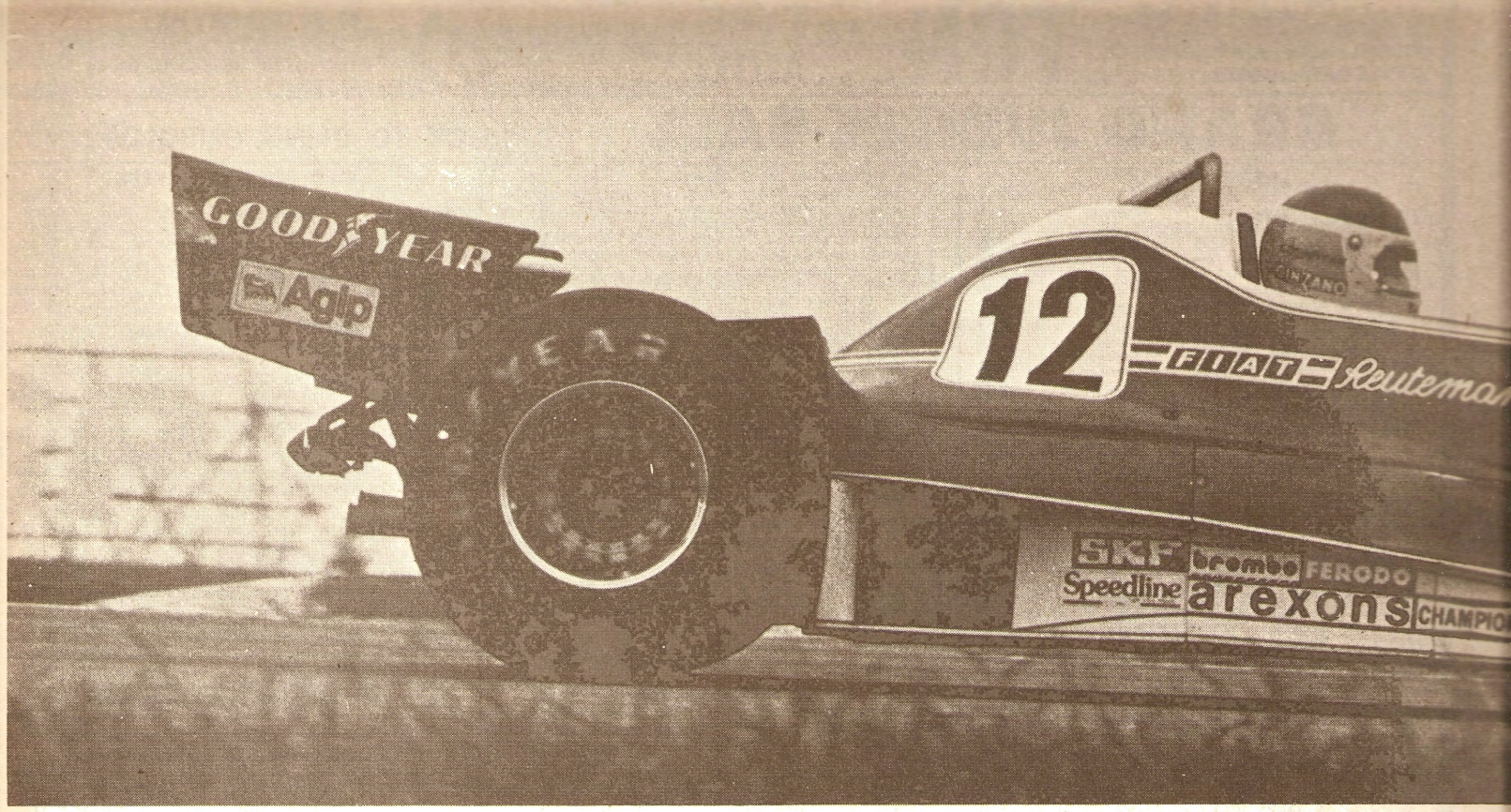
VAL ADAWAY,

Organiser, Dish of the Day

WELLINGBOROUGH, NORTHANTS *Championship*

Then as now?

Last weekend's sad debut for the new Stanley-BRM—and the varied comments which are likely to follow—were partially mirrored 25 years ago in the editorial of AUTOSPORT of January 25, 1952, with comments surrounding the decision to switch to Formula 2 on the continent, putting the 1½-litre supercharged BRM out of most foreign events. Again, people were saying that it wasn't BRM's year. BRM, however, stated inside—in bold type—their intention to contest all Grand Prix races as they had received no official announcement of the proposed change. Among reports carried that week were the initial stages of the Monte Carlo Rally. The Glasgow starters found a great deal of snow and ice about. Maurice Anderson's remarkably well equipped Hillman Minx again caused interest, the car boasting a folding wash basin. How useful! Chains—nothing, you understand, to do with wash basins—were not carried by all crews, among them Cecil Vard from Eire who said that if they became necessary "you'd had it anyway."



Lole stakes his claim

Reutemann wins for Ferrari—Hunt's McLaren second after pitstop—Brabhams fly again—Lauda a subdued third—Good drives by Andretti (Lotus), Regazzoni (Ensign) and Pryce (Shadow)—Another race of attrition—Report and photography : JEFF HUTCHINSON.

If the Interlagos race track were a lady she would be beautiful but treacherous. Like a very special woman she needs a very special man, and last Sunday that man was Carlos Reutemann.

For 40 laps he played with her curves with a feeling that won him his first victory for Ferrari and put him in the lead of this year's World Championship scorings.

Behind him she had left a string of shattered dreams, 15 out of the 22 starters, eight of which were piled in a heap all on the same curve which the scorching Brazilian sunshine had made too hot to handle. A new surface had been rubbed clean of its grit which lay waiting like a hidden disease which so many people caught.

Of the seven that survived, there were three World Champions filling the next three places, James Hunt, Niki Lauda, and Emerson Fittipaldi, their experience saving them from her wily ways, although all three had their problems.

Hunt was forced to stop for fresh front rubber as understeer set in until the tyres could take no more, while Lauda could not get to grips with his car throughout the entire weekend, and Fittipaldi needed a stop to replace a punctured rear tyre.

Fifth place went to Gunnar Nilsson's Lotus 78 despite two stops, while the Italian Renzo Zorzi in the old Shadow DN5 lost his Grand Prix "virginity" with a painless point for a distant sixth.

It was another race like Argentina—half the story lying with the men who didn't quite make it. Men like Mario Andretti, whose fine efforts in the Lotus were lost through an electrical failure, and like Clay Regazzoni who might have given the Ensign its long overdue first success were he not caught up in somebody else's mistake.

Or there was Carlos Pace, who spent all his effort in the first moments of practice and the race, throwing away his second chance to taste the fruits of success at Interlagos.

There was a greater sense of purpose in the paddock by the time the teams had reached Interlagos. With the first race under their belts the illusions were gone. Whether it was getting on top or staying there, every team now knew where they stood. The job in hand was more clear cut and along the rows of garages the feeling of competition was strong in the air.

The memories of Argentina had been washed away by the gentle waves lapping some golden picture-postcard beach on which most of the teams had managed to spend a few days before heading inland to Sao Paulo's Hilton Hotel which, as usual, was the nerve centre of Grand Prix racing for the next seven days.

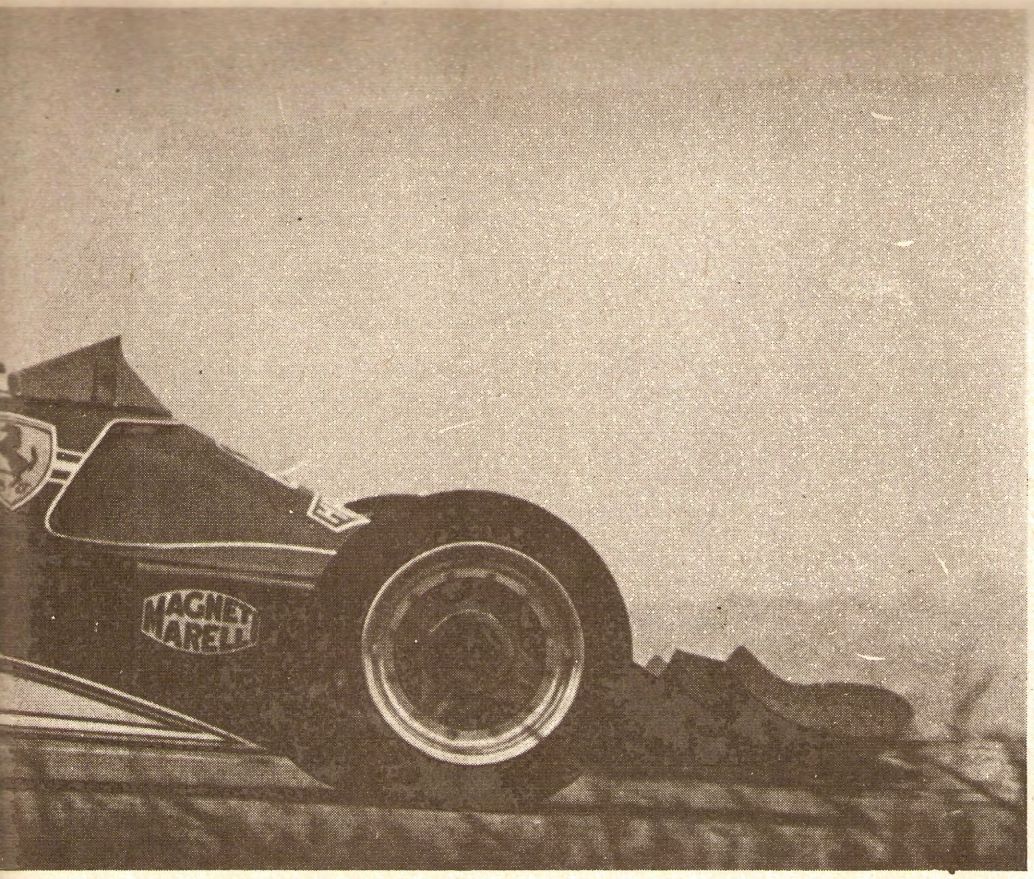
The contrast between the two South American venues was striking. The soldiers present wore smiles instead of guns and even the weather was more friendly. It was hot, but no worse than a hot day in Europe, thanks to a welcome portion of cloud cover and a cooling breeze.

On the Wednesday before the race, which had been designated a general free practice day for any teams wanting it, there was even some rain, so even for those that did test the real job of getting acquainted with the long five-mile track did not begin until first practice on Friday morning. In the five practice hours that followed, old acquaintances were quickly renewed, while others were made, but of the 22 drivers and their machines there was not one who could say they knew her well. Like the women of Brazil, Interlagos is beautiful for the spectator, but getting involved with her is a different matter. She is devious and unpredictable, as practice was to prove.

Last year's pole position went to James Hunt's McLaren M23 at 2m 32.5s, but within five minutes of the first car taking to the track at 10 am sharp on Friday morning, Carlos Pace's Martini-Brabham BT45 had his home crowd bubbling with excitement when he reeled off a mid-31s time with comparative ease. By the end of that first hour he dropped that time to 2m 30.57s, but four hours, more practice and another day saw him no further on.

Instead, it was once again James Hunt who stole the lady's heart. Driving his familiar McLaren M23, now repaired and with suitably larger bolts in the rear suspension that broke and caused his Argentina crash, his big problem at the start of practice was an upset stomach, which half-way through the first session saw him rush into the pits and leap out of his car for the nearest loo. By the second session things were a little better: "I think all the vibration must have cleared me out," joked James, who had improved his time but was still seven-tenths off Pace's morning best.

It was not until the third and final practice session on Saturday morning that he got it all together for an all-out flying lap, balancing the red and white McLaren superbly on the fine line of its limit to record a best of 2m 30.11s. Balance was the key to Hunt's performance. He was able to hold the McLaren in breathtaking full power slides through the fast, long fifth and sixth gear corners around the Interlagos track that would bring tears to the eyes of those who remember Woodcote the way it was, or an F1



Carlos Reutemann, on his third outing for Ferrari, started from the front row and took over the lead with 18 laps remaining.

race at Spa. Interlagos is a mighty circuit.

If James was looking worried, his performance was not the cause of it; would the tyres stand up to that sort of punishment for 40 laps, especially if the race proved any hotter than practice? The front right tyre of the McLaren had reached a dangerous 275 degrees during full tank tests in the final session, while the rears too were running well up at 250 degrees. "We are going to have to make a few adjustments to try and look after the tyres for tomorrow," said a pensive James at the end of practice. Everybody here had used the same Argentina race tyres—the abrasive Interlagos track made "qualifiers" a waste of time.

If you had taken odds on who was going to be sharing the front row of the grid with Hunt at the end of the first day's practice, there would have been few people foolish enough to put money on one of the Ferrari team. Despite some special pre-race testing the previous week, when different front suspension geometry settings were tried in an effort to overcome their current handling problems, both the Ferrari cars were still the centre of some confused head scratching and suspension changing all through Friday's practice.

There was an air of chaos as springs, top links, ride heights and entire front suspension set-ups were changed in a bid to try and balance the front and rear ends of the Ferraris with each other, none of the changes making much apparent difference. At the centre of all this confusion was Mauro Forghieri, his Italian temperament sometimes bubbling over into fits of arm-waving as he flitted from Reutemann to Lauda getting even more confused with each driver's comments between short bursts on the track.

At the end of the first day Reutemann was in sixth spot and Lauda eighth, but then with time running out in the final session Reutemann, his car equipped with a slightly different rear wing shape, suddenly found his car handling much better and turned in a time that was to put him at the front with Hunt, a full 1.8s faster than his previous day's best. Afterwards, hurried adjustments were made when the wing was found to be 4cm too high. . . .

A leaking fuel tank at the beginning of practice on Saturday meant that Lauda had to use the T-car for all of the final session, which he claimed afterwards was suffering from "something very wrong in the chassis," while in the final untimed session he also failed to get going properly after the fire extinguisher sprang a leak. Then, after getting going, he ran out of petrol on the last lap!

It was a very long-faced Lauda who left the track on Saturday night and from the raised voices that were coming out of the Ferrari garage one gets the feeling that he is not too happy with the fact that he did not get to try the new wing and that, more to the point, Mauro Forghieri does not think that it's the wing that makes all the difference. With his Friday time the best, Niki Lauda was starting from 13th place on the grid!

Third place on the grid went to Mario Andretti, who once again got the new Lotus 78 right up among the front runners. It was his now-repaired Argentina car, which was featuring some new upswept wind deflectors on the side of the monocoque just ahead of the rear wheels. Even though his team-mate Nilsson tried them both on and off the second car and found them costing 200rpm on top line speed, Andretti decided to stick with them throughout practice and was one of the smoothest-looking drivers on the track. Things were looking good for the man from Nazareth, until the final session that is, when for the second time in two races he was once again the victim of a weird accident.

He left the pits on his first lap with full tanks only to find himself sitting in a pool of petrol half-way around. He drove easily around intending to stop at the pits again, but as he came up to the tight second gear right-hander behind the pits, the cockpit exploded in flame. "I just managed to get the car around the turn to stop it hitting the barrier and then I got the hell out of it," said Mario. Like a fighter pilot escaping his blazing aircraft he did a backward roll over the rear wheel while the car was still doing around 30mph, and as he rolled along the grass, the flames from his burning overalls were fortunately snuffed out. The still blazing car rolled off down the track and came to rest against the barrier, the cockpit area quite badly damaged before fire marshals rushed up and put the fire out. Once again the steely Mario suffered little more than a nasty fright, but he must be wondering how long his luck is going to last.

Next to Andretti on the grid came the second McLaren of Jochen Mass, who once again put in a fine performance although it was overshadowed by that of his team-mate Hunt. With new tyres—which Mass did not get the chance to use—he might well have been on the front row too.

And then came Carlos Pace, who was never able to match the speed of his very first hour in the car. His second session was spoiled by a handling problem thought to be a faulty shock absorber, while on Saturday in the hotter weather his car seemed to lose the bite that it had had on the first day. His team mate John Watson was also experiencing the same problems, while his troubles were further complicated by a down-on-power engine the first day, and then a seized front brake which cost him half of the timed session the second day.

When he did get going he found the car particularly sensitive to changes of track temperature, which the Ferrari lap-by-lap timing of every car also showed up, the times fluctuating in sympathy with the passing clouds. Watson's eventual seventh place, considering his problems, was not so bad after all, although after such a promising start for the Brabhams, it almost seemed a disappointment.

Another disappointment were the two Tyrrells, but even if their times were not as fast as hoped for, they were the most exciting cars to watch. Both Ronnie Peterson and Patrick Depailler were having serious problems with their six-wheelers which had never raced at Interlagos before. As they turned into the corners the car would go into understeer until a great lurch at the wheel or one of the many Interlagos bumps would send it into oversteer to get the car around the corner.

By the end of practice and a lot of patient adjusting the team had arrived at a point where the cars were much more predictable, despite still looking frightening from the other side of the fence, and Depailler set a very creditable sixth quickest time. The Tyrrells' one advantage over the rest of the field was their top speed, which, according to a Ferrari speed trap, was 10kph faster than anything else on the track.

Peterson was looking happy at the end of practice with eighth fastest time behind Watson, for a day earlier, at the end of the second session, he thought that his 13th fastest time was the best he was going to get and he would have little chance in the race. "Now if I play it cool and keep it on the road I stand a good chance of finishing in the points," said the hopeful Swede who thought that the problem lay in a lack of suspension travel at the front end of the car. "On every corner it turns in then goes solid at the front and snaps into oversteer as the suspension travel is taken up. There's nothing we can do about it, more wing just makes it worse."

Ninth fastest time went to an impressive Clay Regazzoni, who had started off the first day with fifth quickest time without very much difficulty. When he got set for a faster time in the final session a puncture and then a wrong diameter replacement tyre and a water leak all turned their chances of going better into a "general cock-up," according to Mo Nunn. But when Clay lapped second fastest on full tanks in the final untimed session with the car back the way it should have been for the third session, the team were far from unhappy with their fifth row placing. A revised radiator layout, which consisted of removing two of the four oil radiators and putting the remaining two under the rear wing had solved the overheating problems

▶

continued

which had plagued the car at the last race.

Another half-second off the Ensign's best lap was still fast enough to see Gunnar Nilsson in 10th spot with the second Lotus, his biggest problem being learning the circuit, while he was finding it harder to balance his car than his team-mate Andretti.

Vittorio Brambilla kept upsetting his practice sessions by grinding away his low Surtees' nose section (and on one occasion a radiator) against the Interlagos kerbs, while his engine also seemed to be running a bit flatter than others. Despite that, Big John was looking happier than he had at the beginning of practice when Brambilla's handling troubles in the first session were cured by a revision of the front suspension geometry.

While Brambilla contented himself with a couple of nose sections, his young team-mate Hans Binder managed to damage his car badly when he crashed exiting the fast right-handed *Curva Del Sol* at the back of the pits. "I got one wheel over the kerb and the car spun and went into the barrier before I could do anything," said Binder, who was lucky to step out of his badly damaged car with no more than a bruised ankle.

Fortunately the team had a spare car for the Austrian, in fact Binder's race car from Argentina, which did not arrive until the day before practice after being "lost" in transit from the South. Binder failed to improve on his Friday time with his replacement car on Saturday, but was later relieved to find out that a suspect shock absorber had been diagnosed by Brambilla who used the car for full tank tests in the final session after the team had temporarily run out of spare noses for his own car!

Twelfth quickest was Tom Pryce in the Shadow DN8, despite the fact that it was proving very slow down the straight and, on the first day in particular, very much a handful around the corners switching from understeer to oversteer half way through. A front suspension change, this time sweeping the top links forward an inch on the Shadow, seemed to help the balance and Tom was hopeful that with a trouble free run he could end up in the points by the end of the race.

Lauda's thirteenth place looked like being only a temporary position at the start of the race, for he still had the pre-race warm-up session to get his Ferrari into the more balanced trim of Reutemann's.

Fourteenth fastest after another trouble-filled practice was the new Ligier of Jacques Laffite. Early on, his first day's practice came to an end with yet another broken engine caused by valve problems, and it was not until Friday morning with a freshly arrived replacement (featuring the old style valve seating) that the car ran without problems. "Now it's not bad, but just not quick enough," said Laffite at the end of the day.

Two more of the six drivers who failed to improve their first day times were sharing the eighth row of the grid, Jody Scheckter's Wolf WR1 heading Emerson Fittipaldi's Copersucar. Both had spent much of the final timed session stuck out on the track with electrical failures, while both had been sharing the fifth row of the grid at the end of the previous day's practice. "It was starting to get right, but then it started to oversteer again," said Jody, who like many of his fellow drivers was having a job to get any sort of consistent handling from his car.

Fittipaldi's car was suffering from a worsening oversteer problem, but the answer to that became apparent when both the new fabricated rear uprights were found to be cracking! All of them, both on Emerson's car and his team-mate Ingo Hoffman's Copersucar, were suitably strengthened for the race.

Hoffman started to go his own way with adjustments to his car at the end of the first day's practice and by the end of the second day was feeling much more confident with a time that was good enough for 18th place on the grid. "Now I feel I can start to slide the car through the quicker corners without getting worried," said Ingo.

Ian Scheckter, by the end of the second day, was feeling much happier with his March 761B which he was finding too much for him the first day. From "bouncing all over the road, and spinning everywhere," nineteen detail overnight adjustments had made the car a lot more controllable, although he was still lost with the handling when he ended up the day on full tanks. "This is a hard track as well. I can't wait to get to a civilised place like South Africa. If I'm still at the back of the grid there, then I think I'll give up racing," joked Ian, who despite his problems was still only six-tenths of a second slower than his brother, sitting right behind him on the grid in the ninth row.

His team mate Alex Ribeiro was on the back row, his impression of what his car was doing over the bumps looking like the latest version of the Brazilian Samba.

Sharing the ninth row with Scheckter was Renzo Zorzi, who despite twice having sticking throttle problems out on the track plus general handling problems was looking much more at home in the Shadow than he had been a couple of weeks before.

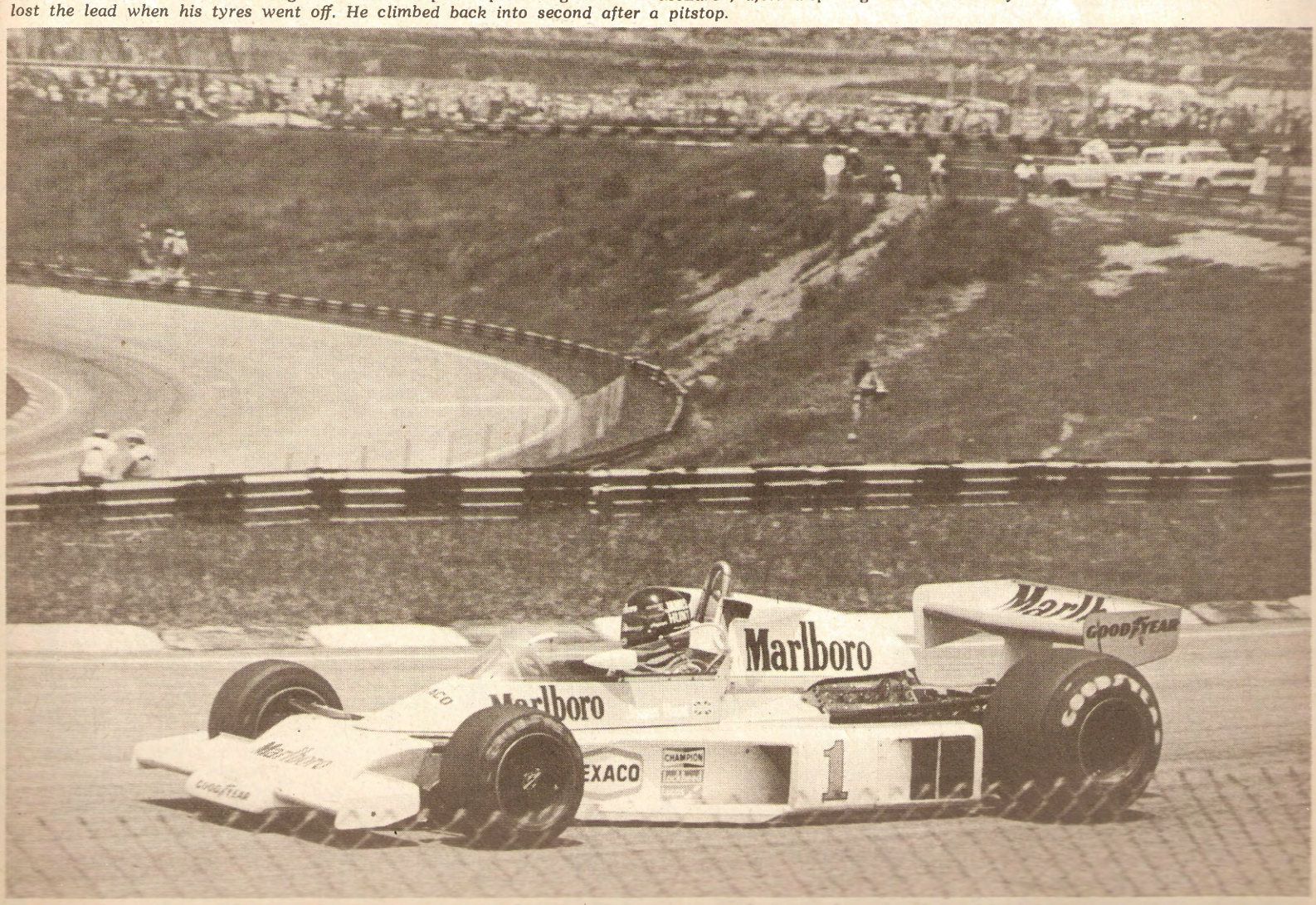
Bringing up the back of the grid a distant 12 seconds off the pace was Larry Perkins trying to keep a brave face with his Rotary Watches BRM P207 on its first outing. Things started to go wrong for the team even before it had left for Brazil. At the airport in England a CAA inspector decided to relieve the team of a fair amount of its spares such as brake fluid, batteries, fire extinguisher and other assorted items which were deemed unsafe to put in the hold of the plane. Things went from bad to worse.

The entire first session was lost with a faulty fuel metering unit, while the second session was spent discovering that the car's air box was costing 400rpm of the engine's power and upsetting the rear wing effectiveness. With those minor problems solved by simply ditching the airbox, another more serious problem arose. The car was running far too hot. An attempt to get it running cooler in the third session failed miserably, Perkins only able to run a couple of laps before the temperatures went around the clock and he was forced to stop at the pits.

Added to that was the fact that when Perkins was running he found the car distinctly down on power compared to the opposition. For the moment, it looks as though the Lion of Bourne will be hard pushed even to qualify for the grid as soon as they get to Europe where the competition will be a lot stiffer.

Perkins' one consolation in practice was that he managed to win a large trophy and $2,100 in cash in a bike race against his fellow drivers (See *Pit and Paddock*). Who said something about pedals on the BRM?

Poleman James Hunt was leading with the championship-winning Marlboro-McLaren, after disposing unceremoniously with Carlos Pace's Brabham, but lost the lead when his tyres went off. He climbed back into second after a pitstop.



There was a worried look on the faces of team managers and drivers alike as they readied their cars for the 8.30 am pre-race warm-up session on Sunday morning. The problem was the clouds, or rather the lack of them. Even at 8.30 in the morning the sun was beginning to burn. By mid-day, the scheduled starting hour, it would be at its worst. Even in practice, which was relatively much cooler, tyres had been a cause for concern, while a pre-race overnight track washing made sure that the track was at its most abrasive, so now it was tyres and how to look after them for 40 laps that was uppermost in everyone's mind.

The short half-hour session went off without incident, teams only able to guess what settings they would need for the race, for by the time the race came track conditions would be so different that what worked well at 8.30am might be all wrong a few hours later.

Mario Andretti was back out in his repaired Lotus, the JPS mechanics having done a fabulous job throughout the night, for only the name on the side of the car told you which of the two cars had been so badly burned the night before.

Long before the race, the surrounding green hills had slowly changed colour as over 100,000 people poured into the track to take up station at their chosen spot, protected from the sun by a mass of gay umbrellas. The cars started to filter out on to the start line with 20 minutes to go and by the time they had all taken their places there was a noisy buzz of excitement filling the track that seems unique to South America. From among the packed stands opposite the pits a group of Reutemann supporters bravely started the "Ar-gen-tina" chant but were almost immediately lost in a sea of cat calls and whistles.

Then that was drowned out by the sound of 22 racing engines starting up, the drivers doing another full lap before taking up their final positions a few seconds before the start.

The ten-second sign was held out and the engine-notes rose to a crescendo, Carlos Pace ignoring it all as he must have been counting slowly up to ten in anticipation of the green light. With a couple of seconds to go he dropped the clutch of the Brabham-Alfa and by the time the rest were pulling away from the line, Pace was looking for a way past the leaders. Hunt was slow away and had Reutemann surging ahead on his right, while through the middle it was Pace who came through inside Reutemann to take the lead on to the main straight.

The crowd went crazy as Pace burst into sight out front, Reutemann, Hunt, Mass, Andretti and Regazzoni all hard on his heels. Behind them Depailler was leading Laffite, Jody Scheckter (who also made a lightning start), Peterson, Brambilla and Pryce.

Trailing at the tail-end of the field was Gunnar Nilsson, who had been nudged from behind by Depailler's Tyrrell and was forced to stop for a new rear tyre which had been bumped and gone flat.

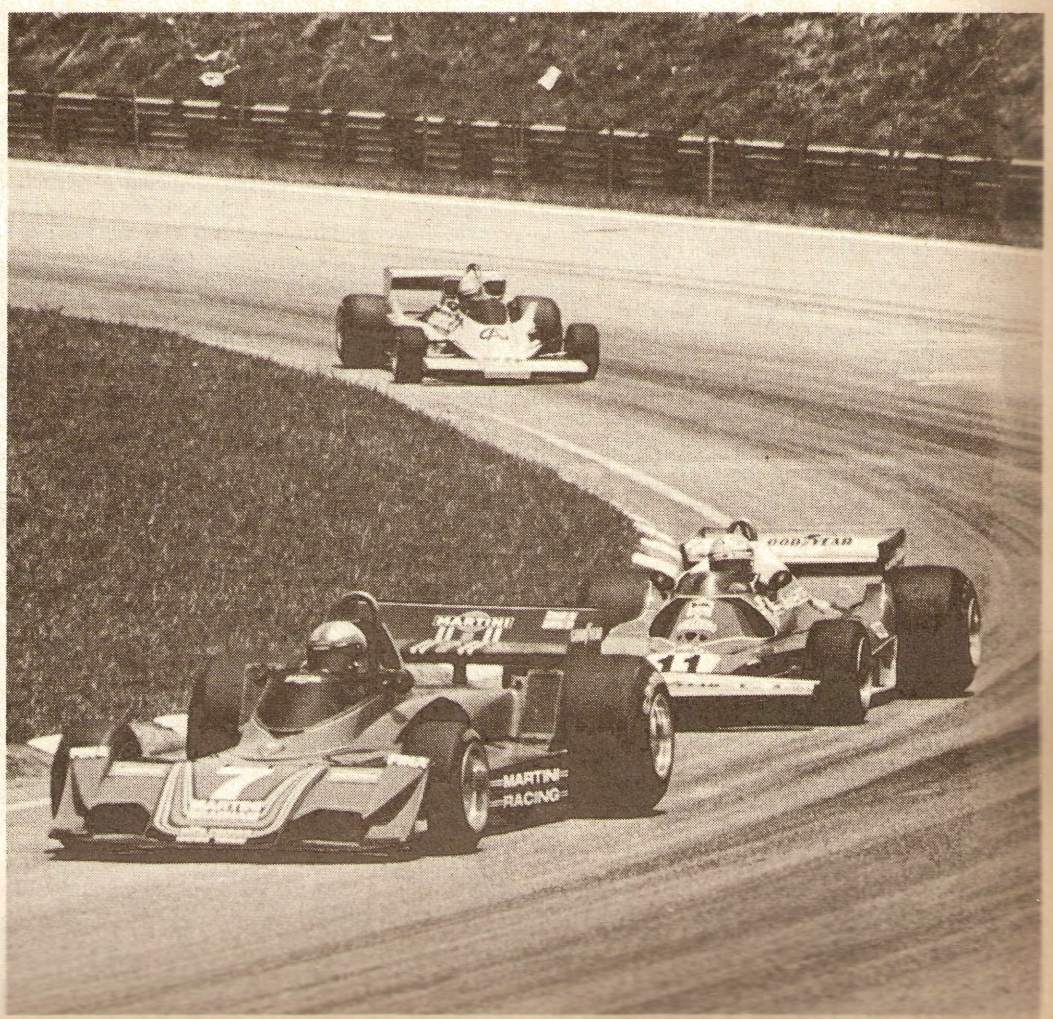
It wasn't much surprise to see Perkins cruising slowly around to retirement after just one lap, which had been enough for the BRM to boil and pump out all its water, but added to that was the March of Ian Scheckter, which pulled off half-way around the second lap with no final drive. Apparently an oil line to the gearbox had fractured and nasty things happened inside. Less than two laps and two gone. There was something familiar about this story.

Vittorio Brambilla was also effectively out of the running after two laps when Peterson had a moment in front of him and Vittorio was forced over the kerbs and into a repeat of his nose section radiator routine which took almost 20 minutes to put right.

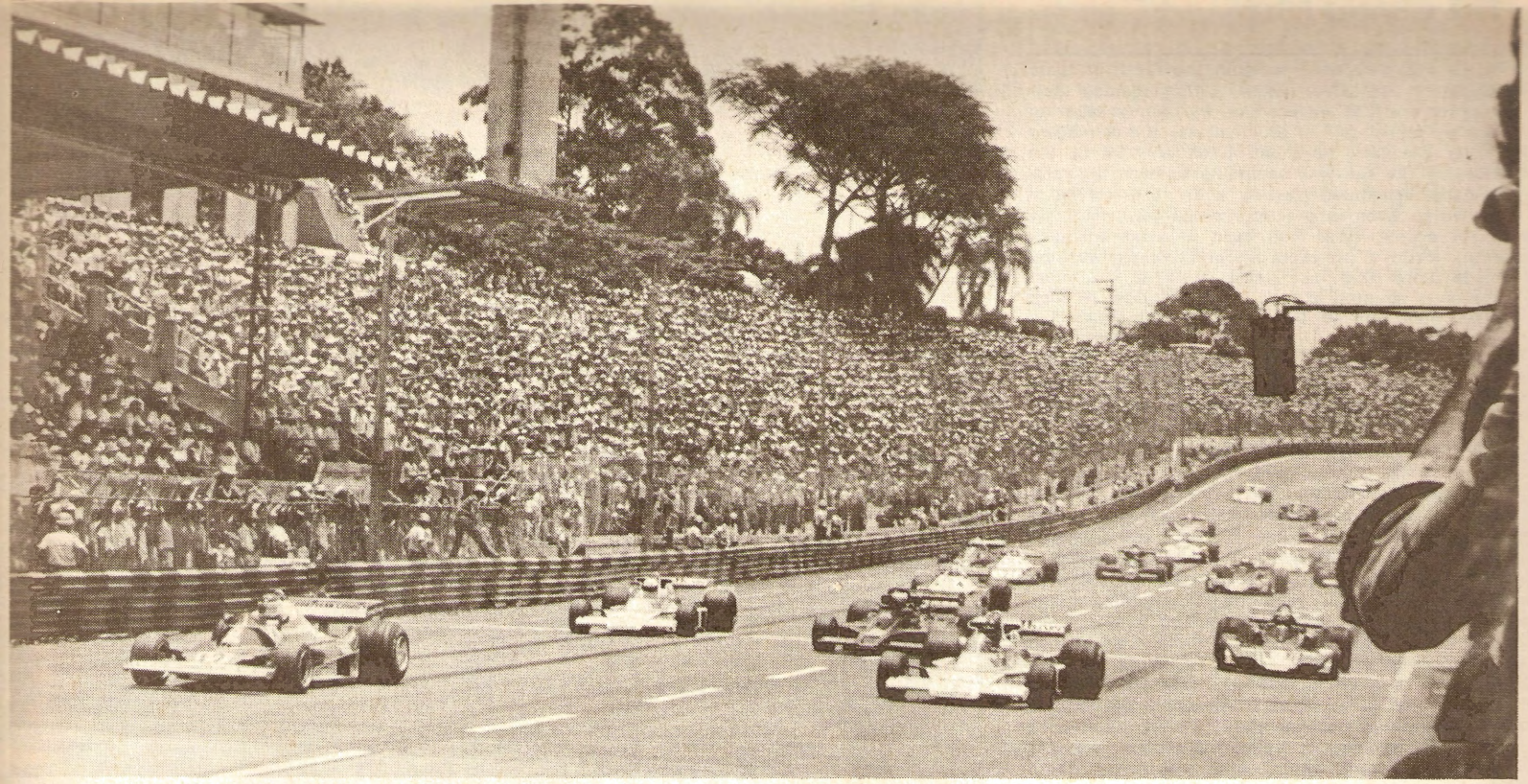
Fortunately, there was a good race going on up the front of the field—for the time being at least. Pace was holding his own against Reutemann for the first two laps and then when Hunt slipped by the Ferrari on lap 3 and pressed the Brabham hard Pace only stayed in control for another three laps.

The pace was hot, and by now so was the sun. So hot in fact that the freshly surfaced section of track on turn three was coming apart in a fine layer of "marbles" being plucked out by the wide sticky tyres with every car that passed.

With the sun in the drivers' eyes as they approached the fast fourth gear corner at the end of the straight it was almost impossible to pick out the "safe" line between the slippery



Above: Early dice between Reutemann's winning Ferrari, the Marlboro-McLaren of Jochen Mass and Mario Andretti's JPS-Lotus. Below: John Watson's Martini-Brabham leads Niki Lauda's third-placed Ferrari and Emerson Fittipaldi's Copersucar-Fittipaldi.



Reutemann and Hunt lead the field away as Pace begins his charge along the inside and into the lead.

F1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP — **BRAZILIAN GP** — **2**

continued

edges, the first driver to run foul of it being Pace in his haste to shake off the hard-pushing McLaren that was filling his mirrors. Half-way through the corner the Brabham snapped into a vicious slide going almost around before some sudden grip made Pace's correction lock snap it back into shape.

By that time the McLaren had almost slipped through, but as the nose of the Brabham came back on to line the rear wheel of the McLaren caught the corner, smashing the nose and the radiator.

Reutemann had a huge slide on as he suddenly switched lines to avoid a collision as well, and he was just able to get back on line and keep it on the track. It was a close thing.

So with Hunt unscathed and Lole's rhythm temporarily upset the McLaren had several lengths' lead by the end of the seventh lap, and Pace came limping back for long repairs, His chances of another home win now gone.

Behind Reutemann were still Mass, Andretti and Regazzoni, while Depailler was slipping farther and farther back despite some very animated driving in a bid to keep up. Laffite was pulling away from Peterson in seventh place while the Swede was being pulled in by Pryce who was running really strong.

Scheckter's early assault on the leading cars had soon faded away as his car developed a worsening oversteer, Peterson and Pryce moving ahead after eight laps, while John Watson, who had managed to get by Emerson Fittipaldi at the same time, was also closing fast on the Wolf.

With Watson by the Copersucar, Lauda then pressured Fittipaldi, finally taking twelfth place from him after 11 laps which instantly became tenth as he passed the Wolf in its dying breath, its engine making funny noises.

We were losing cars fast, but up front it was still a great race and, for the moment at least, it did not seem to matter.

Hunt's initial advantage over Reutemann seemed to be neither growing or shrinking at this stage; the attention was all on the battle for third place as Mass struggled to hold off Andretti and Regazzoni, both of whom looked to be biding their time and driving well within the limits of the track and their tyres, even though only a few seconds separated them from the leading two cars.

And all the time the tyres were plucking at that new section of track. Then it happened. Mass, being craftily "teased" in USAC fashion by the artful Mario, got off line on turn three and found himself a passenger in his car. The M23 slewed through the catch fencing which was thrown out on the track just as Regazzoni came into the corner: the Swiss was equally helpless as he collected the debris and joined Mass at the side of road.

Depailler almost joined him, but managed to squeak through along with Laffite. But then came Ronnie on ten-tenths with a brake balance problem and he skated straight off the road and into the now unprotected wall as well.

Three more cars out of the race, but that was only the beginning. For a while everybody got the message and, as we still had Hunt, Reutemann and Andretti we still had a first-class race. Hunt's lead began to dwindle. Reutemann and Andretti (who seemed to have no trouble playing tag with the Ferrari), were soon right on Hunt's tail, but then with one lap to go before half-distance we lost Andretti with an electrical short in the ignition switch. That was a blow, for us as well as Mario, who said later. "I was looking good, the tyres were fine and I was nursing the car along, I would have been there at the finish for sure."

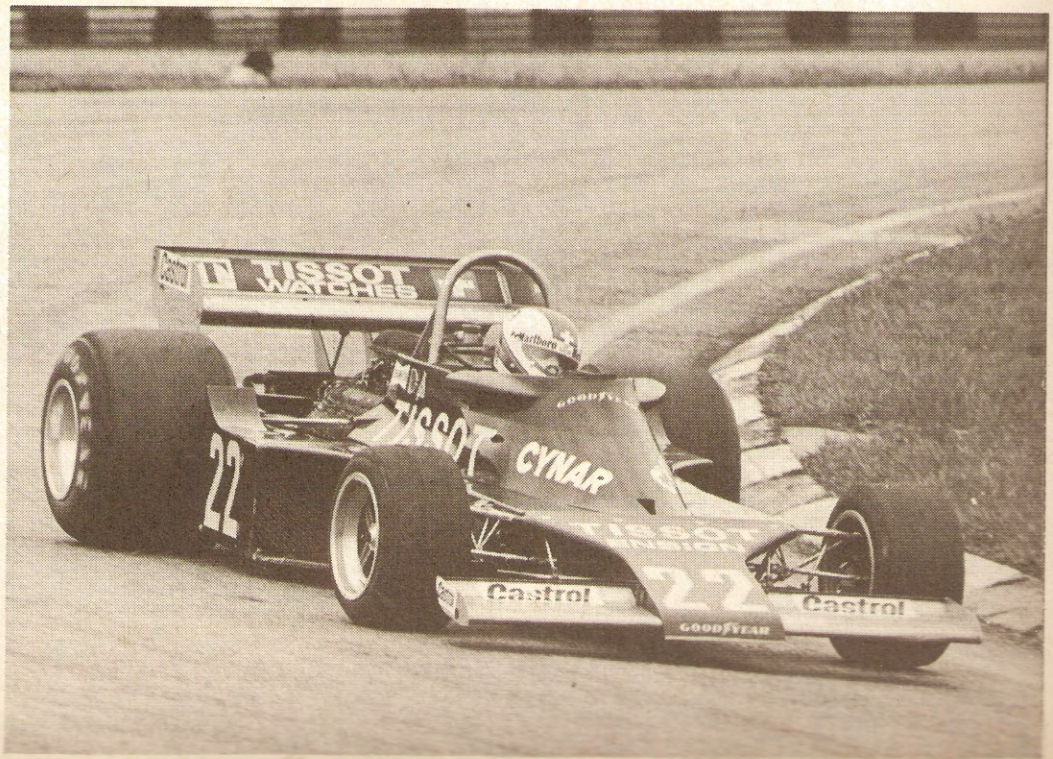
Meanwhile, back on the track, Hunt was now in a bad state, the Ferrari snapping at his heels, looking for a place to pass through the corners, for the McLaren could out-run it on the straight. It was only a matter of time, and that came on lap 23, the Ferrari sweeping by into a lead that it was never to lose. Reutemann's patience paid off, for when the time came to move ahead it was "no problem."

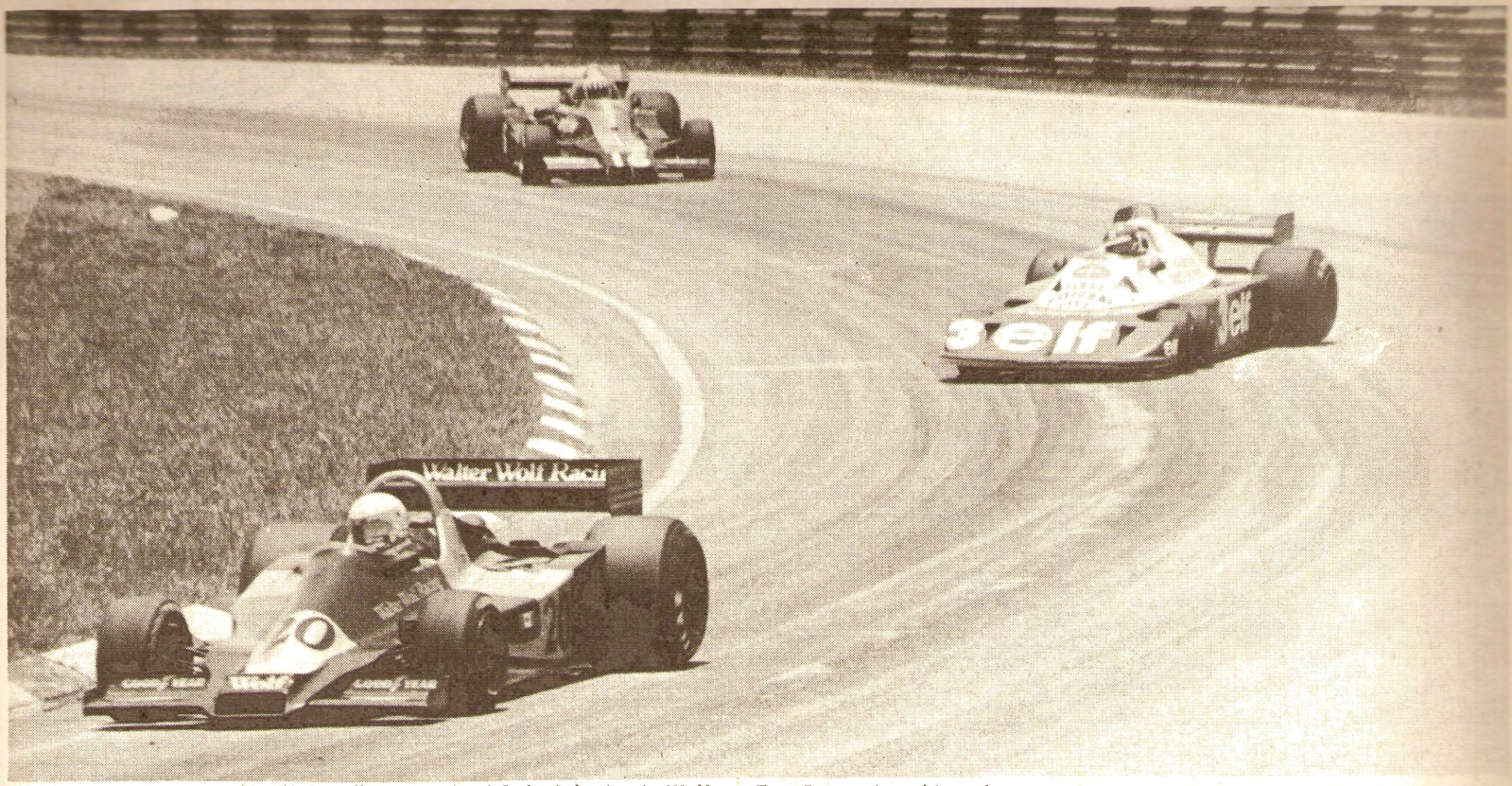
Hunt's car was suffering from chronic understeer brought about by the changing track and higher temperatures, until in the final few laps before he was taken by Reutemann, "The car felt like it had two flat tyres at the front."

He had pointed to his pit that he was coming in, but they thought he was pointing to his back tyres, so when on lap 25 Hunt rushed in for tyres he found two fresh rears waiting to be put on. Despite the confusion he was back out in the race 23 seconds later with two fresh fronts, still in fifth place, only just behind Watson and Lauda.

Second place, 40 seconds behind Reutemann, now belonged to Tom Pryce, the Ligier having slowed and finally pitted for a plug change after going on to 11 cylinders just as it had in Argentina.

Clay Regazzoni ran a strong fifth for Ensign before tangling with the debris from Mass's accident.





Ronnie Peterson slews the Elf-Tyrrell in pursuit of Jody Scheckter's Wolf, as Tom Pryce views his style.

Hunt was back into third place a couple of laps after his stop, but by now, barring more dramas, Reutemann's lead was safe and Pryce looked like he was heading for second place, both their cars looking good, although unknown to us on the outside Pryce was keeping a close eye on his temperature gauges which had climbed high during those hectic first few laps.

By this time Depailler was also out of the running when a punctured rear tyre flailed around and damaged the rear right radiator which necessitated a long stop before he could eventually re-join the race. During that stop he foolishly drank a lot of cold water and when he re-joined the race he was in 13th and last place.

It certainly proved an unlucky number for him, for two laps later, perhaps feeling unwell from his fill of cold water, he left the track at the dreaded turn three and slammed the Tyrrell into Mass's relatively unharmed McLaren which destroyed both cars for ever. So big was the shunt that it sent Mass's car several more yards up the track while the front right-side wheel which took most of the initial shock came right back hard into the monocoque. Patrick's knees were slammed together and when he struggled free of the car, he fell to the ground, unable to stand. He was taken off to hospital, but after X-rays was allowed back to the hotel suffering from a badly bumped right knee and nothing worse

Shortly before Depailler's crash, Brambilla had also gone off in the same spot, virtually the entire outside of the turn filled with parked cars in various states of damage.

And then along came Laffite, stacking the Ligier neatly on top of the parked Surtees, while he was followed into the wall by Watson and Pace.

This was just crazy, a sort of slow-motion Silverstone débâcle all over again. Then we lost Pryce, and it was almost with a sigh of relief that news filtered back that it was only a blown engine. He was the last to go, just seven laps away from a well-deserved second place.

So who did we have left?

There was Reutemann up front, now treading very gently around the littered track, with plenty of time to spare from Hunt who was charging hard but without much chance of getting higher than second unless luck played a hand. He set the fastest lap of the race on the lap he learned that he had taken second place, but the Ferrari was long gone.

Lauda was now a distant third almost a full two minutes behind Reutemann, his car still not handling as well as his team-mate's.

And there was Emerson Fittipaldi back in fourth place again, just as in Argentina. His car had run like clockwork, but for a brief pit stop to change a punctured rear tyre at half distance. He was a lap down on the leading trio.

Only 35 seconds behind Fittipaldi after a hard drive was the Lotus 78 of Nilsson, which he pushed so hard after his early stop that he needed two more front tyres on a later stop. He also took on more fuel (which the team knew they had to do anyway after a tank had been cannibalised from Nilsson's car to get Andretti in the race).

And the final point went to Renzo Zorzi who soldiered around in the second Shadow without much drama and earned a place in the record books for his efforts, not to mention a few welcome quids for the Shadow team.

The only other runner was Ingo Hoffman, who brought the second Copersucar home in seventh place, his last ten laps a battle against a slowly deflating tyre which just held together until the finish.

With two cars out of the seven finishers, the Copersucar team on their home track had a right to look happy.

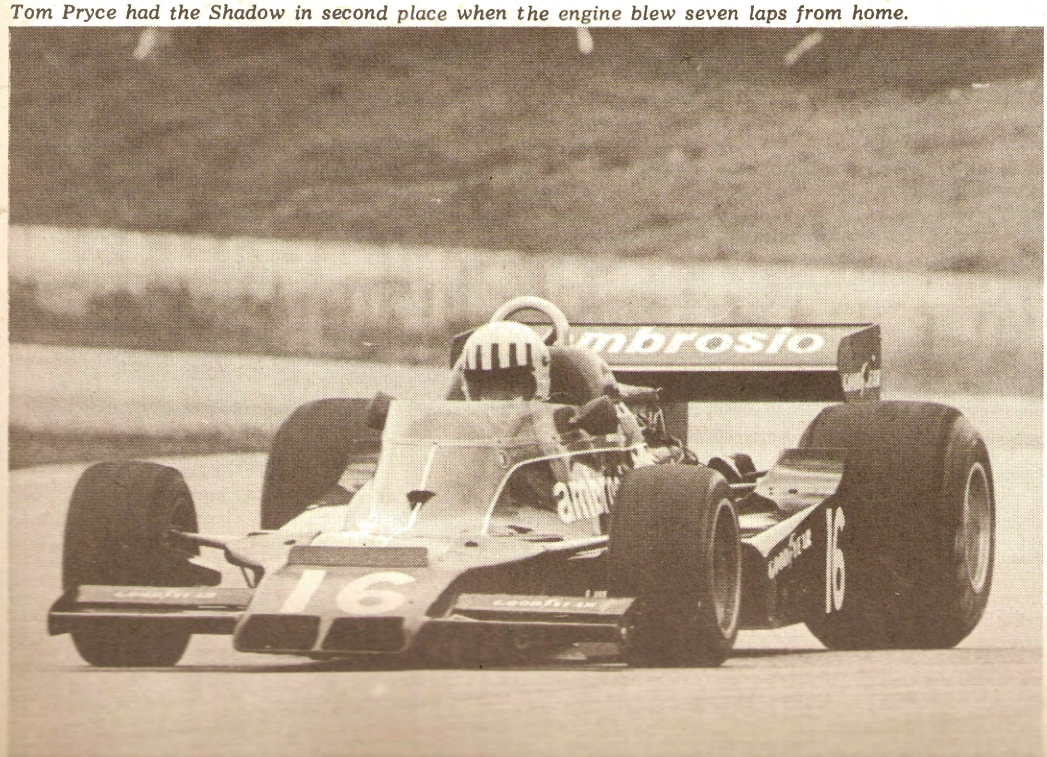
Completing the list of 15 retirements (from 22 starters) was the second Surtees of Hans Binder, which stopped with buckled front suspension after Binder had spun and "kerbed" it a few laps previously, and the second March of Ribeiro which went out with a dropped valve after 16 laps.

Thanks to "Lole," it was a Ferrari day at Interlagos but one cannot help but wonder how many more Ferrari days we are going to see this year if Ferrari don't get back to the state of efficiency they were in two years ago.

Reutemann now holds a four point lead after the first two races, but in his own words, "It's a long way to go to the end of the season and we will have to do a lot more work on the cars." He won't have another race as easy as this one, that's for sure. It's as well this race came five weeks before the next, for in those five weeks most teams are going to be very busy repairing the damage which Lady Interlagos inflicted last Sunday.

Brabham, Surtees and Tyrrell each have two badly damaged monocoques. The Ligier is another possible monocoque case while there is no doubt that Mass's faithful old McLaren won't see the

Tom Pryce had the Shadow in second place when the engine blew seven laps from home.



BRAZILIAN GRAND PRIX. DATE 23 JAN.1977 CIRCUIT INTERLAGOS

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND 2 — LENGTH 40 laps of 4.946 mile circuit. — 197.84 miles

WEATHER HOT. DRY — No. of STARTERS 22 — FINISHERS 7

WINNER C. REUTEMANN in FERRARI 312 T2 — av. speed 112.921 mph

FASTEST LAP J. HUNT in MARLBORO-McLAREN M23 No. 1 on lap 33 in 2 min. 34.55 sec. 115.214 mph

EXISTING LAP RECORD J-P. JARIER in UOP-SHADOW DN5 in 2 min. 34.16 sec. 115.509 mph

PREVIOUS YEAR'S RESULT N. LAUDA in FERRARI 312 T at 112.759 mph

ENTRIES

NO	DRIVER	CAR	ENTRANT	FUEL/OIL CONTR.	TYRE	CHASSIS	ENGINE	
1	J. HUNT	MARLBORO-McLAREN M23	MARLBORO TEAM McLAREN	TEXACO HAVOLINE	GOOD	M23/8/2	DFV	
2	J. MASS	MARLBORO-McLAREN M23	MARLBORO TEAM McLAREN	TEXACO HAVOLINE	GOOD	M23/9	DFV	
3	R. PETERSON	TYRRELL-FORD 34	ELF TEAM TYRRELL	ELF ELF	GOOD	34/4	DFV	
4	P. DEPAILLER	TYRRELL-FORD 34	ELF TEAM TYRRELL	ELF ELF	GOOD	34/3	DFV	
5	M. ANDRETTI	JPS-78	JOHN PLAYER TEAM LOTUS	- VALVOLINE	GOOD	78-2	DFV	
6	G. NILSSON	JPS-78	JOHN PLAYER TEAM LOTUS	- VALVOLINE	GOOD	78-1	DFV	
7	J. WATSON	MARTINI-BRABHAM-ALFA	MARTINI RACING	FINA FINA	GOOD	BT 45-3	Alfa flat-12	
8	C. PACE	MARTINI-BRABHAM-ALFA	MARTINI RACING	FINA FINA	GOOD	BT 45-5	Alfa flat-12	
9	A. RIBEIRO	MARCH 761 B	HOLLYWOOD MARCH RACING	- VALVOLINE	GOOD	761B-2	DFV	
10	I. SCHECKTER	MARCH 761 B	TEAM ROTHMANS INTERNATIONAL	- VALVOLINE	GOOD	761B-1	DFV	
11	N. LAUDA	FERRARI 312 T2	S.p.a. FERRARI S.E.F.A.C.	AGIP AGIP	GOOD	312 T2 026	Type 312B	RACE CAR.
11T	N. LAUDA	FERRARI 312 T2	S.p.a. FERRARI S.E.F.A.C.	AGIP AGIP	GOOD	312 T2 027	Type 312B	USED PRAC. 3
12	C. REUTEMANN	FERRARI 312 T2	S.p.a. FERRARI S.E.F.A.C.	AGIP AGIP	GOOD	312 T2 029	Type 312B	
14	L. PERKINS	STANLEY-BRM P207	ROTARY WATCHES - STANLEY - BRM	- -	GOOD	P207-01	BRM V12	
16	T. PRYCE	SHADOW-FORD DN8	SHADOW RACING WITH TABATIP	FINA VALVOLINE	GOOD	DN8-1A	DFV	
17	R. ZORZI	SHADOW-FORD DN5	SHADOW RACING WITH TABATIP	FINA VALVOLINE	GOOD	DN5-5B	DFV	
18	H. BINDER	DUREX-SURTEES TS 19	DUREX TEAM SURTEES	FINA DUCKHAMS	GOOD	TS 19-02	DFV	RACE CAR
18T	H. BINDER	DUREX-SURTEES TS 19	DUREX TEAM SURTEES	FINA DUCKHAMS	GOOD	TS 19-01	DFV	CRASHED FRIDAY.
19	V. BRAMBILLA	BETA-SURTEES TS 19	BETA TEAM SURTEES	FINA DUCKHAMS	GOOD	TS 19-04	DFV	
20	J. SCHECKTER	WOLF WR1	WALTER WOLF RACING	FINA FINA	GOOD	WR1-01	DFV	
22	C. REGAZZONI	ENSIGN N177	TEAM TISSOT - ENSIGN WITH CASTROL	- CASTROL	GOOD	N177/MN-06	DFV	
26	J. LAFFITE	GITANES-LIGIER-MATRA	LIGIER - GITANES	SHELL -	GOOD	JS7-01	Type MS.V12	
28	E. FITTIPALDI	COPERSUCAR-FITTIPALDI FD	COPERSUCAR FITTIPALDI	- -	GOOD	FD 04-3	DFV	
29	I. HOFFMAN	COPERSUCAR-FITTIPALDI FD	COPERSUCAR FITTIPALDI	- -	GOOD	FD 04-1	DFV	

RESULTS

POS.	NO.	DRIVER	CAR	LAPS	TIME	SPEED	BRAKES	DAMPERS	GEARBOX	PLUGS	INJECTION	ELECS.
1	12	C. REUTEMANN	FERRARI 312 T2	40	1h. 45m. 07.72s.	112.921 mph.	LOCK FER	KONI	FERRARI 312 TRANS	CHAMPION	LUCAS	MARELLI DINOPLEX
2	1	J. HUNT	MARLBORO-McLAREN M23	40	1h. 45m. 18.43s.		LOCK FER	KONI	HEW FG 400/6	CHAMPION	LUCAS	LUCAS
3	11	N. LAUDA	FERRARI 312 T2	40	1h. 46m. 55.23s.		LOCK FER	KONI	FERRARI 312 TRANS	CHAMPION	LUCAS	MARELLI DINOPLEX
4	28	E. FITTIPALDI	COPERSUCAR-FITTIPALDI FD	39			LOCK FER	KONI	HEW FGA 400	CHAMPION	LUCAS	LUCAS
5	6	G. NILSSON	JPS-78	39			LOCK FER	KONI	HEW FG 400	NGK	LUCAS	LUCAS
6	17	R. ZORZI	SHADOW-FORD DN5	39			LOCK FER	ARM	HEW -TI 200	CHAMPION	LUCAS	LUCAS
7	29	I. HOFFMAN	COPERSUCAR-FITTIPALDI FD	38			LOCK FER	KONI	HEW FGA 400	CHAMPION	LUCAS	LUCAS

RETIREMENTS

NO	DRIVER	LAPS	REASON
14	L. PERKINS	1	BOILED. LOST WATER.
10	I. SCHECKTER	1	FINAL DRIVE.
19	V. BRAMBILLA	11	CRASH.
20	J. SCHECKTER	11	ENGINE.
2	J. MASS	12	CRASH.
22	C. REGAZZONI	12	CRASH.
3	R. PETERSON	12	CRASH.
9	A. RIBEIRO	16	ENGINE. DROPPED VALVE.
5	M. ANDRETTI	19	ELECTRICS. SHORT IN IGNITION SWITCH.
4	P. DEPAILLER	23	CRASH.
26	J. LAFFITE	26	CRASH.
7	J. WATSON	30	CRASH.
18	H. BINDER	32	FRONT SUSPENSION DAMAGED IN KERBING.
8	C. PACE	33	CRASH.
16	T. PRYCE	33	ENGINE.

CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS

DRIVERS

C. REUTEMANN	13
J. SCHECKTER	9
C. PACE	6
J. HUNT	6
E. FITTIPALDI	6
N. LAUDA	4
M. ANDRETTI	2
G. NILSSON	2
C. REGAZZONI	1
R. ZORZI	1

MANUFACTURERS

FERRARI	13
WOLF-FORD	9
BRABHAM-ALFA	6
McLAREN-FORD	6
FITTIPALDI-FORD	6
JPS-FORD	4
ENSIGN-FORD	1
SHADOW-FORD	1

DATE FRI 21 JAN WEATHER HOT. DRY

PRACTICE 1

8	C. PACE	2m. 30.57s.
2	J. MASS	2m. 31.50s.
1	J. HUNT	2m. 31.64s.
22	C. REGAZZONI	2m. 31.69s.
12	C. REUTEMANN	2m. 31.97s.
5	M. ANDRETTI	2m. 32.21s.
7	J. WATSON	2m. 32.65s.
20	J. SCHECKTER	2m. 32.81s.
28	E. FITTIPALDI	2m. 32.94s.
4	P. DEPAILLER	2m. 32.99s.
3	R. PETERSON	2m. 33.29s.
11	N. LAUDA	2m. 33.75s.
16	T. PRYCE	2m. 34.32s.
6	G. NILSSON	2m. 34.82s.
19	V. BRAMBILLA	2m. 35.38s.
9	A. RIBEIRO	2m. 36.70s.
18	H. BINDER	2m. 36.81s.
10	I. SCHECKTER	2m. 37.89s.
26	J. LAFFITE	2m. 38.21s.
17	R. ZORZI	2m. 38.60s.
29	I. HOFFMAN	2m. 39.00s.
14	L. PERKINS	2m. 53.24s.

DATE FRI 21 JAN WEATHER HOT. DRY

PRACTICE 2

5	M. ANDRETTI	2m. 30.83s.
1	J. HUNT	2m. 31.29s.
8	C. PACE	2m. 31.86s.
7	J. WATSON	2m. 32.30s.
11	N. LAUDA	2m. 32.37s.
12	C. REUTEMANN	2m. 32.50s.
2	J. MASS	2m. 32.68s.
28	E. FITTIPALDI	2m. 33.13s.
19	V. BRAMBILLA	2m. 33.19s.
20	J. SCHECKTER	2m. 33.24s.
3	R. PETERSON	2m. 33.97s.
22	C. REGAZZONI	2m. 34.24s.
6	G. NILSSON	2m. 34.37s.
16	T. PRYCE	2m. 34.54s.
18	H. BINDER	2m. 35.79s.
17	R. ZORZI	2m. 36.22s.
10	I. SCHECKTER	2m. 36.86s.
9	A. RIBEIRO	2m. 37.55s.
29	I. HOFFMAN	2m. 38.04s.
14	L. PERKINS	2m. 48.01s.
4	P. DEPAILLER	2m. 49.13s.

DATE SAT 22 JAN WEATHER HOT. DRY.

PRACTICE 3

1	J. HUNT	2m. 30.11s.
12	C. REUTEMANN	2m. 30.18s.
5	M. ANDRETTI	2m. 30.35s.
2	J. MASS	2m. 30.36s.
4	P. DEPAILLER	2m. 30.69s.
8	C. PACE	2m. 30.82s.
7	J. WATSON	2m. 31.09s.
3	R. PETERSON	2m. 31.63s.
6	G. NILSSON	2m. 32.14s.
19	V. BRAMBILLA	2m. 32.19s.
16	T. PRYCE	2m. 32.22s.
22	C. REGAZZONI	2m. 32.29s.
26	J. LAFFITE	2m. 32.43s.
28	E. FITTIPALDI	2m. 32.98s.
20	J. SCHECKTER	2m. 33.32s.
10	I. SCHECKTER	2m. 33.46s.
11	N. LAUDA	2m. 33.48s.
17	R. ZORZI	2m. 34.62s.
29	I. HOFFMAN	2m. 35.57s.
9	A. RIBEIRO	2m. 36.19s.
18	H. BINDER	2m. 36.42s.
14	L. PERKINS	2m. 42.22s.

STARTING GRID

POLE

1 J. HUNT 2m. 30.11s.	12 C. REUTEMANN 2m. 30.18s.
5 M. ANDRETTI 2m. 30.35s.	2 J. MASS 2m. 30.36s.
8 C. PACE 2m. 30.57s.	4 P. DEPAILLER 2m. 30.69s.
7 J. WATSON 2m. 31.09s.	3 R. PETERSON 2m. 31.63s.
22 C. REGAZZONI 2m. 31.69s.	6 G. NILSSON 2m. 32.14s.
19 V. BRAMBILLA 2m. 32.19s.	16 T. PRYCE 2m. 32.22s.
11 N. LAUDA 2m. 32.37s.	26 J. LAFFITE 2m. 32.43s.
20 J. SCHECKTER 2m. 32.81s.	28 E. FITTIPALDI 2m. 32.94s.
10 I. SCHECKTER 2m. 33.46s.	17 R. ZORZI 2m. 34.62s.
29 I. HOFFMAN 2m. 35.57s.	18 H. BINDER 2m. 35.79s.
9 A. RIBEIRO 2m. 36.19s.	14 L. PERKINS 2m. 42.22s.

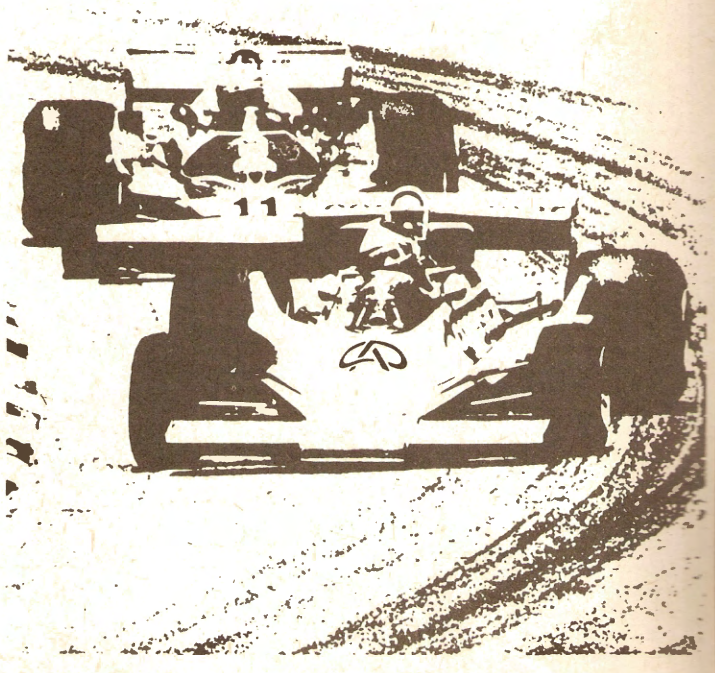
LAP CHART

AUTOSPORT

GRID ORDER		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1	J. HUNT	8	8	8	8	8	8	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
12	C. REUTEMANN	12	12	1	1	1	1	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
5	M. ANDRETTI	1	1	12	12	12	12	2	2	2	2	2	2	5	5	5	5	5
2	J. MASS	2	2	2	2	2	2	5	5	5	5	5	5	26	26	26	16	16
8	C. PACE	5	5	5	5	5	5	22	22	22	22	22	22	16	16	16	26	26
4	P. DEPAILLER	22	22	22	22	22	22	4	4	4	4	4	4	7	7	7	7	7
7	J. WATSON	4	4	4	4	4	4	26	26	26	26	26	26	4	4	4	4	4
3	R. PETERSON	26	26	26	26	26	26	20	3	3	3	3	3	11	11	11	11	11
22	C. REGAZZONI	20	20	20	20	20	20	3	16	16	16	16	16	28	28	28	28	28
6	G. NILSSON	3	3	3	3	3	3	16	20	20	7	7	7	17	17	29	29	29
19	V. BRAMBILLA	19	16	16	16	16	16	28	7	7	20	20	11	29	29	17	17	6
16	T. PRYCE	16	28	28	28	28	28	7	28	28	28	11	28	6	6	6	6	17
11	N. LAUDA	28	7	7	7	7	7	11	11	11	11	28	17	18	18	18	18	18
26	J. LAFFITE	7	11	11	11	11	11	(8)	29	17	17	17	29	9	9	(9)	(5)	8
20	J. SCHECKTER	11	(19)	29	29	29	29	29	17	29	29	29	18	8	8	8	8	
28	E. FITTIPALDI	10	18	18	18	9	17	17	18	18	18	18	6					
10	I. SCHECKTER	18	29	9	9	18	18	18	6	6	6	6	9					
17	R. ZORZI	29	9	17	17	17	(9)	6	9	9	9	9	8					
29	I. HOFFMAN	9	17	6	6	6	6	9	8	8	8	8						
18	H. BINDER	17	6	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19						
9	A. RIBEIRO	(6)																
14	L. PERKINS	(14)																
									LAP									

18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
1	1	1	1	1	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
12	12	12	12	12	1	(1)	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
5	5	16	16	16	16	16	7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
16	16	7	7	7	7	7	1	7	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	28	28	28	28	28	28	
26	7	26	(26)	11	11	11	11	11	7	7	7	7	28	28	28	6	6	6	6	6	6	
7	26	4	11	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	6	6	6	17	17	17	17	17	17	
4	4	11	(28)	6	6	6	6	6	6	(6)	6	6	17	17	17	29	29	29	29	29		
11	11	28	(4)	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	29	29	29							
28	28	6	6	29	29	29	29	26	29	29	29	29	18	18	8							
6	6	29	29	18	18	26	26	29	(18)	18	18	18	8	8								
29	29	17	17	26	26	18	18	18	8	8	8	8										
17	17	18	18	8	8	8	8	8														
18	18	8	8	4	4																	
8	8																					

LAP CHART BY COURTESY OF NORAH TYRRELL



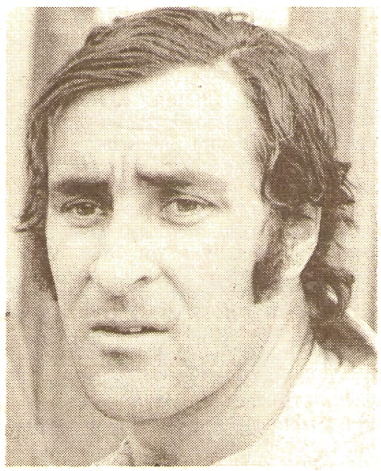
Monte latest...

Opels fail again, Munari leads, Zanini out

As we went to press on Tuesday we gathered from Monte Carlo that Sandro Munari had moved into a predictable lead in the rally. However, there was a certain amount of controversy surrounding his position for the organisers were criticised for cancelling a stage in the Col de Toutes Aures because of blizzard conditions. Commenting on this decision, both Guy Frequelin (driving an Alpine A310) and Markku Alen mentioned that to cancel a stage in a winter rally because of snow was ridiculous! Obviously the spectre of the Burzet incident back in '73 must still be strong in the minds of some. Munari went into the lead after

The Col de Toutes Aures stage (SS2) was cancelled causing the controversy, and on SS3, Roquesteron, Munari completed the 19 kilometre test in 14m 13s to take the lead by one second from Guy Frequelin so that at the end of the concentration run the top ten was as follows: Munari 22m 00s; Frequelin (Alpine A310) 22m 01s; Alen (Fiat) 22m 10s; Bacchelli (Fiat) 22m 13s; Verini 22m 16s; Andruet (Fiat) 22m 25s; Pinto (Lancia) 22m 29s—having spun on the first test while on his way to a very quick time; Darniche (Lancia) 22m 32s; Rohrl (Opel) 22m 42s; Bondil (Porsche) 23m 10s.

Markku Alen (left, below) and Guy Frequelin were both well placed in second and third overall respectively on Tuesday.



tackling the almost dry Roquesteron Pass test.

The concentration routes were remarkable for the retirement of the first works Opel when Nicolas' car blew a piston on the descent of the Brenner Pass Autoroute. The routes led to Gap where the rally re-started. Heavy snow was in the process of melting so that leading cars set off in a mixture of slush and deep pools of water. As the stage dried out, so later numbers profited and at the end of the first stage the leader of the Monte was Luxembourg driver Alain Beauchef in a privately entered G1 RS2000! On dry weather tyres he was five seconds quicker than anyone.

At 09.30 on Tuesday the rally re-started with tests on the Turini, and on this first stage of the day Zanini retired his SEAT 124 Especial, apparently after an accident. On the next test the sole remaining works Opel retired when Rohrl's engine also failed (this on the Auban test).

On the Turini, Darniche was fastest (5.04), from Alen (5.07), Bacchelli (5.09) with Munari and Rohrl (5.11). All except Munari were using narrow snow tyres here.

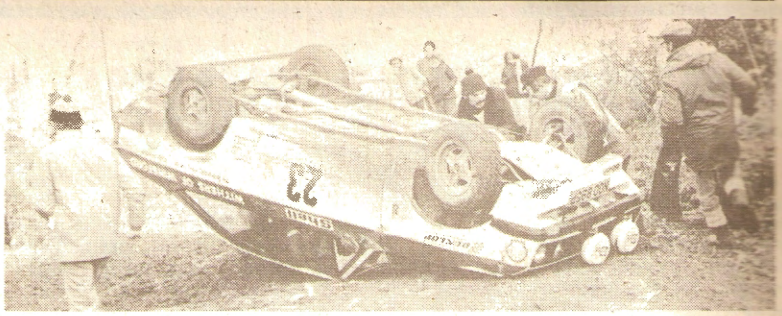
The position after Auban was as follows: **Overall—Munari 27m 11s; Alen 27m 17s; Frequelin 27m 19s; Bacchelli 27m 21s; Verini 27m 24s.**

Lakeland postponed

Following our story last week, we received this communication from the Lakeland Stages organisers on Sunday:

It is with regret but with considerable optimism that the organisers of the Lakeland Stages Rally, scheduled to take place on Saturday, April 30, 1977, have taken the decision to move the event to Sunday, October 2, 1977. Following the 1976 Rally the Forestry Commission requested that the event be moved away from the summer months. And the April date was then chosen, when a larger forest mileage was promised and confirmed. As late as Christmas the organisers were informed that Whinlatter and Set- would not now be available in April, and despite protracted negotiations through all possible channels the organisers felt that in order to maintain the standard of the event, a change of date was necessary. The organisers are confident in obtaining fresh stage mileage that will be available on the new date. The Lakeland Stages will still be a qualifying round for both the Castrol/ AUTOSPORT *and Esso/BTRDA Gold Star Rally Championships.*

Perhaps the "Lakelands" situation highlights the long overdue revue of forestry road availability in the Lake District. Hopefully the recent appointment of a Forestry Liaison Officer for the area will result in the



"Down under" on the Dean . . . David plans to go north shortly.

Tuition for Down Under David

We gather that David Lang is the latest recipient of Pentti Airikkala's special terms for competing on the Hankkiralli in Finland on February 18. David is of course competing in the Mintex International which would have meant that his Sutton-prepared G1 car would never have made the start in time. However, Cal Withers has provided him with another RS2000, albeit a virtually standard machine, and David hopes to put a quick engine in it for the rally. The car is apparently about one year old, and has only been used for the occasional road rally. We are very pleased to hear also that David is taking up Pentti's offer of ice driving instruction! Go to it, sport!

Galway: decision date?

Unett debuts new G1 engine for Chrysler

It seems most likely that Billy Colman will after all be driving the Chequered Flag Lancia Stratos in Galway on February 4. On Monday last he flew over from Ireland for talks with Graham Warner, and one imagines that their discussions must have centred around the possibility of Billy driving the car only on events in which he has no plans to rally a Team Toyota Europe car. Warner is very keen to sign Billy for a year of British events and Irish internationals. However, Billy seems to be equally keen to drive for Toyota both in Europe and Ireland; and it appears as though he has a restricted "deal" for just these ends. The Ford of Ireland trail seems to have finally gone cold, and in any case Boreham scarcely have a car to lend, even if they wished to, so Billy it seems will be without a car in Galway unless he takes the Stratos offer.

Warner however is intent on maintaining one driver throughout the year and Billy it seems is his man (although Cahal Curley's name has again been linked with the car, as has Adrian Boyd's).

Billy's Toyota plans seem to hinge around car availability, for although it seems likely that he will be given a car for the Circuit of Ireland, Ove Andersson's small team in Brussels simply do not have the resources to give him regular drives. Mikkola will be competing regularly in Britain at least until after the Scottish in June; so there might be a possibility of Billy driving Hannu's car after this date. Such a prospect means Billy missing both the Welsh and Scottish which one assumes that he would like to contest, however a deal seems still some way from final resumption.

Chrysler will be entering two cars in Galway (as was intimated here last week) for Robin Eyre Maunsell and Bernard Unett (in Robin's old G1 car). Both drivers have been entered in G4, but Unett's entry will be in the form of a testing exercise for he will in fact be using the new 2-litre Chrysler G1 engine which is homologated for the new car only and which has still to make its first

the engine is a derivative of the 1850cc "Brazilian block" motor which Robin has been using in Group One for some time. The suggestion to compete in Galway is very much Robin's idea, and seems to make a lot of sense as well as fun. Unett is seeded at 29 with Paul White showing him the way, while Robin is at 12 in the G4 Avenger.

There is a mysterious entry at 11 for Team Toyota Ireland which apparently has little relevance, while Coleman at number one has still to officially nominate his car.

Andy Dawson, who is taking Rupert Saunders with him as co-driver, is said to be dispensing with Andrew Marriott's services after the Mintex International; and Rodney Spokes' name has been mentioned as a regular partner in the London garage owner's work-backed RS1800.

Galway top ten is as follows:

1, Billy Coleman/-; 2, Roger Clark/Jim Porter (RS1800); 3, Dessie McCartney/Terry Harryman (Porsche Carrera RS); 4, Brian Nelson/Malcolm Neill (Porsche Carrera); 5-; 6, John Taylor/John Horton (RS1800); 7, Chris Sclater/Martin Holmes (Vauxhall Chevette); 8, Andy Dawson/Rupert Saunders (Datsun Violet); 9, Jeremiah Buckley/John Caplice (RS1800); 10, David Agnew/Robert Harkness (BMW 2002 Tii).

At 14, Derek Boyd will be making another appearance in the Carrera "bought" from David Agnew (it appears as though brother Adrian will not be driving this car again, preferring the more twitchy Alpine which he is expecting to drive on the Circuit of Ireland once again); while Jan Churchill and Sir Peter Moon will presumably be sharing the driving of a Carrera at number 17. Phillip McCartan appears in a BMW Alpina while David Lindsay and Sean Campbell are mysteriously seeded low down at 20 and 27 respectively.

Little known rally starlet, motorsport personality and latter-day circuit dicer Jeremy Walton may make a return to the fray at num-

Leyland's rally plans

Last Friday, a red folder appeared on the editorial desk which upon inspection gave us a little more news about Leyland's plans this year, although naturally nothing about any possible V8 development (or indeed news of *any* engine or chassis developments) nor clues to the current co-driver enigma involving at least Fred Gallagher and Dave Richards (the latter we gather will be handling Leyland's Open House evenings among other duties); nothing in fact about any detail developments concerning either the cars, or "ex-

John Davenport—Motor/sport director.

works" deals. We learn that the Dolomite Sprint now produces "approximately 180bhp." It seems more likely however that with the fitment of recently homologated side-draught Weber induction the car will now have over 200bhp for Pat Ryan to play with (in which case he should be in line for regular top five placings overall in the British championship).

It is naturally understandable that Leyland's new regime should not want to advertise their trade secrets to the Press at this juncture, and they are doubtless highly sensitive to "old chestnut" criticisms concerning, "the taxpayers money" etc; but it might have been desirable to scotch such innuendo at an early stage; and certainly the lack of hard facts, photographs and news in what most observers consider to be a rather nebulous document, leaves one with plenty of question marks which are clearly not going to get answered at present.

The TR7 programme which commences this year with the **Boucles de Spa** (on which Leyland are entering one car for Tony Pond/Fred Gallagher) includes a most interesting and clearly carefully chosen series of foreign international events comprising the **Trifels Rally (March 26/27); Elba (April 21/23); Ypres 24 hours (June 24/25); 1000 Piste (July 9/10); Hunsruck Rally (July 20/24)** and the **Tour de Corse (November 5/6).** In addition two works TR7s will be competing on all British internationals besides those in Ireland, culminating in the Lombard RAC Rally during November, by which time both Leyland and the Press will hopefull know much more about the team and their cars.

Foreign events such as these have obviously been chosen for a number of logical reasons. First one must presume that a large proportion of the competition budget is coming

thus rallies have been chosen not necessarily because of their championship status but with their promotability and marketing possibilities in mind. Secondly, the above events allow a "breathing space" to develop the great potential of their new rally car out of the public spotlight, a factor which will help reduce pressure on Abingdon from all sides, while allowing the team to step back in should they win. Thirdly these continental events nearly all involve pace notes and practising; a preamble which few British teams ever master. It must be clear to observers that Leyland's plans involve logical progression in the years to come, and such a progression eventually means WCR rounds. This being the case, there's no time like the present to familiarise the entire team with both the "feel" of competing abroad, and the special problems of logistics which such a situation can bring. Finally the rallies which appear here (and one suspects there may be one or more additions before the end of the season) are interesting in that the TR7s stand a fair chance of winning most of them should things go right. They will clearly be outpaced in Corsica should Lancia appear as they are currently planning to do; and in Elba one hopes that they will cross a works Fiat 131 or three; but the others clearly offer the team a chance of overall victory which during a development period would be cheering indeed. John Davenport is under no illusions as to the special qualities required to win regularly in Europe; by the end of the year his new team should be in a position of some authority on the subject.

National rallies are being left in the care of Pat Ryan whose job this year will be to win the RAC Group One Rally championship with the Sprint. Latest homologation tweaks make such an eventuality an even more probable case, despite the disappointing start to the season in the Dean, where a lack of rear brakes made the car uncompetitive and doubtless played a large part in Pat's subsequent excursion. The Sprint seems to be far and away the most powerful car in Group One at present and other competitors will have to drive extremely quickly to compensate for the power and torque deficiencies of their cars. The Dolomite may not handle as well as an Opel or a Ford but as much as 50bhp and (more important) the relevent torque advantages, make the Dolomite almost irresistible, on paper. Pat will be competing with Mike Nicholson on all RAC rounds this year. We expect that a TR7 development car may also appear later in the year on nationals.

The rallying side is completed by Leyland's generous bonus scheme open to non-works entrants (and it seems as though we are likely to be seeing plenty of people driving Dolomites and TR7s before the year's end). The scheme covers the national RAC and Castrol/AUTOSPORT championships, and the company intend to make bonus payments in cash (or Leyland ST parts of their choice up to double the bonus cash value). The project is being administered by Ron Elkins, Technical Services Supervisor at Leyland ST, Abingdon. Eligible competitors must register their achievements with Abingdon and enquiries should be made to the above address concerning time schedules, eligibility etc. Awards are being donated according to a payment scale on five tiers whereby a win in a WCR event is worth £500 (category A) while a Castrol/AUTOSPORT victory is worth £25 etc. RAC Rally championship wins (excluding the Mintex International) are worth £150 (while first in Group One is worth £75); all of which makes the bonus scheme highly commendable and should prove a contributory factor in getting competitors into Leyland cars, which after all is a major part of the game.

In conclusion, the rally plans appear to be most exciting, although we shall regrettably have to wait for a while before the team are more forthcoming about their activities. A number of internal problems have still to be resolved and it is naturally assumed that these should be dealt with away from the public eye. It is certainly very cheering to have Leyland's European plans confirmed, and the programme should hopefully bring about great interest in Leyland and its products.

Tony Pond on his way to third overall on the Castrol '76. He will spearhead Leyland's return to Europe.

Welsh Rally format

This year's *Western Mail* International Welsh Rally, a counter in the European Rally Championship for drivers, the Motor RAC Championship and the Welsh Stages Championship, has apparently been condensed both in time and overall mileage without reducing stage mileage by removing many long loops resulting in 240 miles of stages in the 850-mile route.

Thanks to the continued and increased sponsorship of the *Western Mail* it has been possible to maintain the standards of the Rally without passing on to the competitors the whole of the increase due to revised Forestry Commission charges.

Regulations for the event will be distributed to British and Continental crews on January 28, 1977 and entries will be accepted from January 31, 1977 to March 21, 1977 at £100 and up to April 4, 1977 at £110.

Scrutineering will start on Wednesday afternoon, May 11, and will run through the day on Thursday, the start and rally headquarters will be in Cardiff and accommodation can be booked through the Centre Hotel.

The first car will leave Cardiff at approx 9pm on Thursday, May 12 to tackle 14 stages before the breakfast halt in mid-Wales, further stages in the mid and north Wales complex will lead to an overnight halt in Aberystwyth where the rally headquarters will be the Bellvue Royal Hotel opening at approx 6pm. From the 8am restart, the route will traverse mid and south Wales forests as well as some 20 miles of tarmac stages to the finish back in Cardiff on Saturday evening at approx 6pm. Computerised results should give provisional results shortly after the last car arrives with the prize presentation taking place before midnight.

Great care has apparently been taken in selecting suitable spectator stages and ensuring that the greatest level of safety is available to the public. The offer of the Ford Motor Company to provide two Spectator Control Units has been accepted and together with highly experienced marshals used for these stages, will provide a view of one of the most exciting spectator sports at minimum risk.

In the interests of saving competitors time and cost (and increasing the popularity of the event) the traditional Sunday morning run to Llandow has been deleted enabling the many Continental and far travelled crews to use all the Sunday to travel home.

Judging by the current rate of enquiries it is essential that crews book their accommodation in Aberystwyth as soon as possible, if they are not to be disappointed at the limited choice left. Copies of the regulations can be obtained from the Rally Secretary: Carey Edwards at 49 Heol y Gors, Whitchurch, Cardiff, or Ansafone Cardiff

Cheers ! to Glayva

We are very pleased to report that at the 11th hour (and only a week before the first round of the championship) *The Scotsman* Rally series has a sponsor in the form of Ronald Morrison and Co Ltd, proprietors of the famous Glayva liqueur. (Any enquiries on this fine drink might be addressed to acting unofficial Press Officer, Johnstone Syer, who has been known to take the odd glass before retiring.)

Michael Morrison, in announcing Glayva's involvement commented: ". . . we feel we should now turn our attention to rallying, which we consider to be a fast-growing and highly popular branch of the sport. I am sure we will benefit from our involvement in it."

There are 14 events scheduled in the '77 championship which starts this Saturday with the Highland Car Club's Mercury Motor Inns-sponsored Snowman Rally (won last year by Pentti Airikkala/John Davenport when the event qualified as an RAC round). Competitors in both Challengers and overall divisions will have 10 events in which to compete —drivers counting six from 10 events; Challengers five from 10.

Events are as follows: February 29 —Snowman; March 19—Hackle; April 2—Bank of Scotland Rally; April 23 —CP Granite City; May 14—Blane Stages (Challengers only); June 4/7 —Scottish; July 3—Jim Clark; July 16—Border Counties (Challengers only); August 6—Arbroath Stages (Challengers only); August 19/21— Burmah; September 10 — Rippin Saltire; September 24 — Bowmaker Autumn Stages; October 22—Lombard Border; October 30 — Lows Trossachs (Challengers only).

GLAYVA Scotch Liqueur
THE SCOTSMAN
SCOTTISH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

● Well known for exploits under his own Lothian Sports Cars banner, Willie Crawford plans to contest the 1977 *The Scotsman* Scottish Rally Championship. Willie has not competed regularly in this series since 1973 when he was second overall. With joint sponsorship this year from Lowland Tyres, who will supply the Dunlop rubber, the immaculate RS1800 will make its debut on the Snowman Rally with John Easson as co-driver for the season.

Snowman opens season

Jim McRae will be out in a Ford at the weekend. The Scottish G1 driver who is again this year contracted to SMT/DTV for RAC rounds in his usual Vauxhall, has been loaned a car by Andrew Smith for the opening round of the Glayva-sponsored *Scotsman* Rally championship at the weekend. Jimmy's machine is the ex-Colin Vandervell G1 RS2000.

Top ten crews for the Snowman on Saturday are as follows:

1 Charles and Alec Samson (RS1800); 2, Murray Grierson/John Shannon (Datsun Violet); 3, Drew Gallacher/David McHarg (RS1600); 4, Ian Wilson/Charles Young (Opel Kadett GT/E); 5, Andrew Cowan/ Hugh McNeill (Colt Lancer); 6, Donald Heggie/George Dean (RS1800); 7, Bill Taylor/Ian McIver (RS1800); 8, Willie Crawford/John Easson (RS1800); 9, Allan Arneil/ Ian Buttery (RS1600); 10, Ian Gemmell/Frew Bryden (RS2000).

Jim McRae—RS2000 drive.

Alistair Brearley debuts his new RS1800 at 11, Jim McRae is at 13, and Arthur Jasper and Jim Howden are at 14 and 15 respectively. The event starts at the Mercury Motor Inn, Inverness at 0800 and the halfway halt is the Mercury Motor Inn at Fort William. When we last spoke to Bob Wilson, Clerk of the Course for the Highland Car Club event, he mentioned that several of the stages had been deep in snow but he now expects all to be passable. The 220-mile route includes some 75 miles of stages. Spectator information is as follows:

At 7.30 on Friday evening prior to the rally, the *Press and Journal* in conjunction with Highland CC will be staging their now traditional forum at the Mercury Motor Inn. The panel will be chaired by Ross Finlay with Andrew Cowan, Charles Samson and John Horton as his "guest". Films include *Scotch and Dry*. Tickets at 50p are available from Melvins Book shop in Union Street, Inverness or presumably on the door.

		Map reference	First car
SS 1 and 18	Glenurquart	26/449298 (finish)	08.37 and 16.27
SS 2 and 17	Portclair	34/424151	09.19 and 15.50
SS 3	Inchnacardnoch	34/366089	09.31
	(approach to this stage is narrow and used by rally cars)		
SS 5 and 16	Glengarry	34/283012	09.55 and 15.07
		(park on verge away from the roadside)	
SS 7 and 14	Mandally	34/301987	10.04 and 14.56
SS 8 and 13	Clunes	34/305885	10.13 and 14.43
SS 9	Leanachon	41/147773	10.37
SS 10	Glenrigh	41/025635	13.40
SS 11	Torlundy	41/146771	14.00
SS 12	Glenloy	34/143812 (finish)	14.24

It makes sense

The BTRDA Rally Committee have recently issued an excellent document on "Recommendations for Improving the Passive or Secondary Safety of Rally Cars" which is being circulated to all motor clubs shortly. Far from being a patronising or condescending work, the leaflet is well worth reading, particularly for those building or planning to enter their first rallies; and sound advice on roll cages, extinguishant and basic principles for modifying rally cars (starting with suspension, braking and safety equipment) are well worth serious consideration. We hope it gets the attention it deserves.

Ricky moves on

A familiar face on the rally scene, normally to be observed at service halts clutching (or brandishing) a giant mole wrench, mouthing oaths at errant drivers or grovelling under rally cars, is none other than the highly popular figure of Ricky Bell —ace rally mechanic. We gather that Ricky, former chief mechanic with Russell Brookes who latterly looked after Robin Eyre Maunsell's championship-winning Chrysler Avenger, has now moved to DTV where he takes up the post of chief mechanic. Pentti Airikkala could not have hoped for a better man.

● Rally HQ for the ATS Stages on July 16 (Castrol/Autosport round 8), is still the Ivy Bush Royal Hotel in Carmarthen. However the hostelry has recently been taken over by Trust Houses Forte, so the organisers suggest that competitors book early because the holiday period will then be in full swing. A telephone call to the South Wales Tourism Council on Carmarthen 7557 will provide competitors with a list of all accommodation in the area; or they can 'phone Ed Morgan at Pontyberem 737 for advice.

● Regulations are now available for the Cheltenham Festival National which is being held on Saturday, March 26 (Castrol/Autosport round 4). This excellent and very popular event will have at least 90 miles of stages (there are likely to be one or two surprises in store) and all information may be obtained from Ken Dudley, 19 Carisbrooke Road, Hucclecote, Gloucester GL3 3QR.

Briefly

● Vauxhall Main Dealers, Vincent Greenhous of Greyfriars Motor Works, Shrewsbury, will host a visit of the successful DTV Castrol Road Show on Thursday, February 3, 1977.

The Road Show consists of an evening of Motorsport films, including the new Castrol film *Stages to Victory*, and Vauxhall's filmed tribute to Gerry Marshall's 1976 racing season *There's only one Gerry*. There will also be slide presentations, an audience competition, a forum including ace raconteur, Chris Lord, and a display of cars featuring the exciting new Chevette HS, plus the Evans brothers' Vincent Greenhous-sponsored Vauxhall Magnum Rally car. Speakers will include Roger Willis of Castrol, John Horton of Dunlop, and Roy Cooke of Vauxhall Motors.

Doors open at 7.30pm, admission is free and tickets are not required, although lucky number programmes will be on sale during the evening for a draw of free motor accessories prizes.

● Regulations are now available for the Benson and Hedges Circuit of Ireland (8/12 April, *Motor*/RAC Round 3; ECR coefficient 3). No practice or notes are now allowed. Information and regs available from Ulster Automobile Club, 3 Botanic Avenue, Belfast, Northern Ireland BT7 1JG.

● Ari Vatanen's Finnish programme this year includes: the Arctic Rally Feb 4; Eastern Rally June 18; Swiss Rally Aug 7; 1000 Lakes August 26; Nokia Rally Oct 15; Teboil Rally October 29 and the Pohjoln Rally November 12.

● A further series of Nigel Raeburn's navigation evening classes starts on Thursday, February 17, 7.15pm, for six Thursday evenings. Topics covered include all aspects of stage and road rallying. Not only navigators but also quite a few drivers have found previous courses useful. Details and enrolments to: Wythenshawe Adult Education Centre, The Birtles, Wythenshawe Town Centre, Manchester M22 5RF. Phone 061-437 1231.

● Glen Mitton is going G4 this year courtesy of Woolworths. He will be contesting the Castrol/Autosport championship plus the Welsh, Scottish and Lombard RAC Rallies. The new car will have a Brian Hart motor plus Safety Devices shell. Glen hopes to debut the car on the Cheltenham Festival until which time he will be driving his G1 RS2000.

All six Leyland Motorsport Open House evenings commence 7.30-8pm with tickets available from the Leyland Cars Distributors involved.

Monday, January 31
More & Gamon Ltd,
17/23 Nicholas Street, Chester.
Tel : Chester 315477

Friday, February 11
Dutton Forshaw (Sussex) Ltd
30 Chapel Road, Worthing
Tel : Worthing 31671

Tuesday, February 15
Southern Brothers Ltd
Austin House, Hartington Road, Preston
Tel : Preston 51631

Wednesday, February 16
Dias (Dumfries) Ltd
Glasgow Road, Newbridge, Dumfries
Tel : Dumfries 72551

Thursday, February 17
Appleyard Gibbon Ltd
47 Kirklee Road, Kelvinside, Glasgow
Tel : 041-334 2231

At home in the directors' club

CHRIS LORD, 1976 Castrol/AUTOSPORT Group One Champion, discusses his rallying life with PETER NEWTON.

"I was very disappointed with the Castrol film; there was no coverage of Group One at all; and besides, what have Roger Clark, Tony Pond, etc, got to do with the Castrol/Autosport championship anyway?"

Snow volleyed against the raked windshield as the huge wipers strove to keep pace with the opaque onslaught, iridescent street lamps dissolved into a memory as the polar blizzard stepped up its attack upon our metallic cocoon. The big BMW rocked on its springs as a torrent of angry sub-zero air fought to remove the impediment from its path and all around us lay a white world punctuated by abandoned cars, forlorn and useless relics under the lash of the elements. Deep drifts, wind-driven spume pouring from their crests like storm-tossed waves, had formed against walls, Armco and scattered jack-knifed trucks. Now they seemed to march towards us, cutting down the thin line of beaten white track, our sole escape from the immobilized city.

The big coupé ground onwards, crunching warily through a thick white carpet, the muffled mechanical whir of its wiper blades periodically drowned by the manic scream of the blizzard outside. A glance out at the snow drifts and a whirling white world ahead would have been sufficient to have convinced most laymen that this was indeed a forgotten land somewhere within the Arctic Circle, so one constantly had to remind the senses that this was in fact Leeds municipal by-pass, and Chris Lord was on his way home from work!

Rallying attracts an astounding spectrum of colourful characters to its midst; they come from all imaginable walks of life (and some that one cannot); managing directors, bank clerks, garage mechanics, farmers, even social security, and it's often their social interaction as much as the chance to test their skill which contributes to their mutual enjoyment and so sustains the sport itself. Chris Lord enjoys both social and competitive aspects of his sport with a fervour and commitment which very much mirrors his attitude to life. One of the most sociable and well-liked of rallying's "directors club," Chris runs two highly successful businesses in Leeds which he built up himself. In rallying circles he has something of a reputation as an outspoken critic of the establishment, just as he is lavish with praise when he feels it is due; so it was with great interest and anticipation that the writer visited the home of the Castrol/AUTOSPORT Group One rally champion recently. A notable raconteur and after-dinner speaker, Chris did not disappoint; in fact he had a new phrase already for my impending arrival. Gone was: "don't print this but..." and in its place was the thoroughly more formal, "not for publication," a phrase which regrettably seemed to precede a number of fascinating conversations that evening.

Potted biographies lurking within the confines of limited profiles are often as sure a cure for insipient insomnia as any reading matter is capable of being. However, the manner in which Chris discovered rallying (he would doubtless argue that rallying discovered him!) cannot pass entirely without comment. The exact dates are largely irrelevant, but Chris, who began his rally career as a co-driver, was persuaded to compete in the Firestone with a certain Mike Baxter (some names have been changed throughout to protect the innocent). The adventure was tackled with the kind of unflagging British appetite for romance which surrounded the early post-war Monte Carlo rallies. The Mk1 Lotus Cortina was fitted with a roof rack and Mike, Chris, their wives and their beach balls set off for sunny Spain; not even a failed wheel bearing on the M1 could quench their spirits!

This was to be the first time that either driver or co-driver had used or made pace notes. When the battered and care-worn Cortina, complete with roof rack, drew up at scrutineering alongside the gleaming Porsches and Alpines, it rapidly became a source and focus of great amusement among the locals. However, when it was discovered that the same tattered machine was lying seventh overall after the first loop, public abuse turned to astonished respect. Inside the car, however, the story was rather different. Chris delights in telling the retrospective tale, "Mike was driving like a man possessed, there was a sort of glazed look in his eyes; he utterly believed everything I told him, and I'd lost my place right at the start; I soon got round to imploring him to slow down, the accident was inevitable!" Fortuitously enough it happened on one of the few corners without dizzy drops into valley floors thousands of feet below, and both men survived to repair the old car and persuade it to return to England. They had made history, however, as Pedro Berena, doyen of the Firestone for so many years, marked the event with a typically expansive Latin gesture, "the crazy English, Baxter and Lord; they 'it a mountain!"

Associated co-driver recollections include a drive with Phil Cooper on the Circuit of Ireland which manifested itself into one of the largest alcoholic "benders" of Chris's life. "By the time we reached Killarney there was Phil and myself, Bob Bean, Jack Tordoff, Paul Stevens, and Brian Marchant; we weren't sober for eight days!" It was from Bob Bean that Chris bought his first car, convinced that he could show the establishment a few tricks. He could and did, achieving a total distance of 300 yards in a straight line before having an major accident on his first-ever rally as a driver! "It went great," he says smiling hugely! "steering and stopping it was the problem! That car cost me about £250 but another one landed on top of us as we were five feet below road level in a ditch, so I reckon that rally cost me about £560 since we had done rather less than half a mile!"

If his rally career began in bizarre fashion, then it was only a consistent counterpart of his professional one. Along the way Chris has been a technical representative for a plastic company, a service engineer on vending machines, and even a biscuit salesman in Somerset. Complete with trilby, sports jacket and firm-supplied Morris Minor 1000, the 19-year-old Lord ventured forth under copious heaps of "half chocolate coated wheaties" power-sliding his "Moggy" to village stores across the country! Today he is managing director of two plastic companies, the ▶

Chris Lord pressing on with the Elgam Organs Magnum.

The directors' club
continued

principal of which, Barkston Rubber and Plastics, had a turnover of some £500,000 last year. In addition to this distribution company, he has also set-up a plastics engineering plant which has grown in two years to turnover some £100,000 of business.

His rally activities of late have been notable for a number of PR-orientated features which aspiring young drivers might do well to study. The Lord philosophy is logical and simple. "Most of us in rallying are egotists. For myself, I prefer to be a large fish in a small pond. To be driving a Ford would almost be an admission of defeat; and I've found Vauxhall very helpful. I know I'm not a superstar, therefore I've got to tell as many people as possible what I'm doing, because no one is going to ask me. If one was looking for a sponsor, then my advice would be, 'get out of the motor trade.' One must concentrate on a product with national appeal equipped with a PR department ready and willing to back it up. I consistently find that greater interest is shown towards us in the music Press than in the motor-sport Press. But very often its not just a question of money; if sponsors are not wholeheartedly enthusiastic, then I wouldn't take any money from them, one has got to give them value for their investment. Enthusiastic sponsors sustain my own enthusiasm; which is why I'm looking forward to this year so much." (Chris has recently signed a deal with Century Oils who will co-sponsor the Elgam Organs car.)

Chris admits (and one could scarcely fail to notice) that one of his greatest attributes is that of sales technique, but equally he says that most of his rally support has still arisen in story book style from chance meetings at parties or long-standing friendships which have suddenly produced interest. He happened to know a director of the J. T. Coppock company, UK distributers for the Italian Elgam Organs concern. At a party he was bemoaning a lack of sponsors to his acquaintance. The association started there.

As an introduction to Group One rally driving, 1976 was at once a rude awakening and a satisfying triumph. Chris recalls his initial underestimations with a certain amount of embarrassment. He thought it would be rather boring to contest this section of the Castrol championship, even mentioned casually to Roger Willis that he would have little or no trouble wiping the floor with the rest. His first event in the new Coburn-built Magnum was the Cheltenham Festival: "We ended up about sixth or seventh in Group One and I spent the day shouting at John Horton (who was co-driving in this instance) about the rubbish tyres we had fitted; I was actually caught on stages for the first time and the blow to my ego was highly sobering!" Chris had certainly found out the hard way just how tough and competitive Group One can be these days. The championship boasted the sort of competition which on the final Greystoke test of the Lakeland Stages event, saw the leading four G1 cars separated by a scant eight seconds. "Group One has given me a new insight into driver ability, it's so much easier to go up in power rather than to go down; this is where I rate Pond and Brookes so highly. There's a certain snobbery among the G4 boys who look down on us lads driving our G1 barges, it should be the other way round: People who have switched over as I did have said, 'it's so bloody dangerous; *they're* telling me!"

Group One, he feels, has to close its loopholes on the homologation game, or eventually die a premature death. Aside from the bending of all the rules, there are the "ludicrous stipulations, such as the one about the co-driver's seat being standard—Arthur (Brick) would never have broken his arm in our Castrol '76 shunt if he had been sitting in a properly-designed rally seat; this is an area where the RAC could help us, but so often their sole contribution appears to amount only to a name tag, adding an air of respectability to the sport."

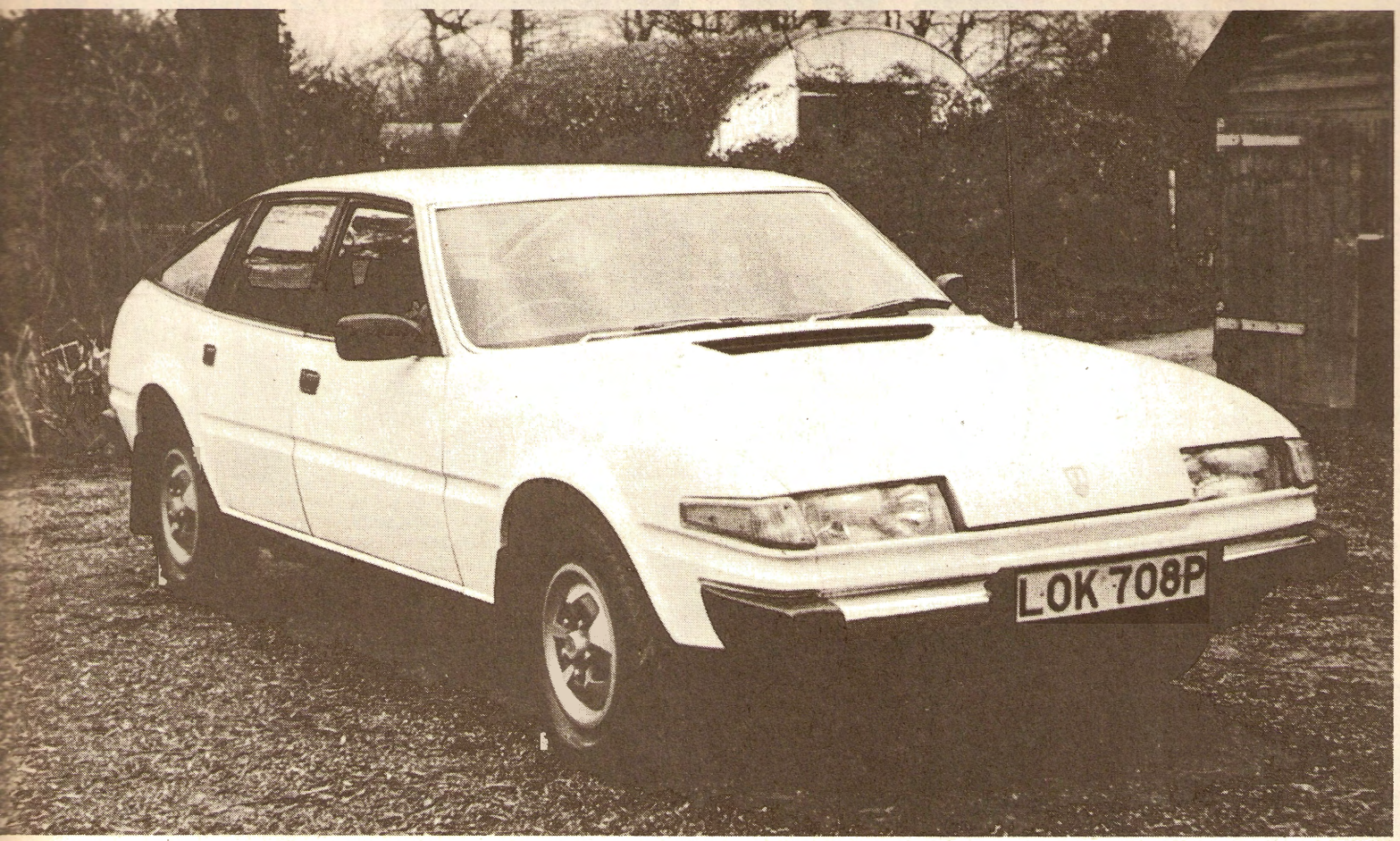
Talk of the RAC inevitably leads on to talk of the recent November Rally over which Chris was particularly vocal at the time, and with whom many competitors agreed. "That rally, even more than any other, should be run for competitors. In my book there are sponsors, organisers, spectators and competitors in the rally business. On the RAC Rally, competitors were last on the list of priorities. In fact we (competitors) seemed to be running the event for everyone else. Rallying certainly needs 'Mickey Mouse' stages to fill the coffers, but any contact between organisers and competitors was purely coincidental. At one point we were asked to do 350 road miles for a return of 14 miles of stages. Only the RAC Rally could get away with this state of affairs. We received long-winded non-descript mumblings as a response to constructive criticism—I'd like to see them leave their gin and tonics and second-hand opinions back at the plush hotels and come out for a looksee."

Rallying is more than just a pastime for Chris, for it gives him an interest in a sport in which he can be competitive, and this fascination in addition to the great cross section of participants keeps him returning each year. Has he finally decided to end the "prostitution" of his left hand seat? Apparently yes, as Tony McMahon will be partnering him on a regular basis next year. In attempting to generate as much publicity as possible during 1976, Chris found himself sitting next to journalists, promotions men and trade representatives as well as *bona fide* co-drivers. Having again insisted on the proviso that names are changed in this text in order to protect the innocent(!) he continues discussing the relative merits of co-drivers with a mixture of amusement, identification, exasperation and almost Laurel and Hardy tragi-comedy. It's while he rambles on about this particular topic that you realise how much he enjoys making others laugh. With an immense talent for after-dinner speaking, as well as a liking for rally forums, etc, Chris hopes that he is able to give something back to a sport from which he has extracted so much fun and enjoyment. He is not afraid to speak his mind on sensitive topics and Chris nearly always holds an opinion on major issues. "People may say I'm loud-mouthed and a bit brash but as long as they're not indifferent to me, that's the main thing."

By morning the snow is receding fast and Leeds and its environs emerge from the ravages of the night. I am sad because it means that those country pubs he was suggesting will have to remain unexplored for the present; and he is sad because he won't be able to impress me with a Fowkes-style display on the snow in his automatic BMW CS! At times it feels very satisfying to be involved in this sport, even if only peripherally; and Chris Lord, plus a host of people so different and yet so alike, is one of the reasons why. ■

Kicking up the dust during the 1976 Mintex International.

by John Bolster



Rover now assume that the public will accept a fairly radical shape and still remain faithful to their marque.

Fast and effortless travel

The new Rover 3500 has attracted a great deal of publicity, partly because of the circumstances surrounding its birth. In a few words, it is Leyland's opportunity, with a brand new factory and a massive loan, to escape from the slough of despond into which they have sunk. If they don't make a success of this one, they have virtually had it.

However in this assessment of the 3500 we shall ignore such pressing problems, treating it as just another car to be tested. Certainly, from an engineering point of view, the body shell is an outstanding achievement. The car it replaces had a somewhat limited success, because there was insufficient leg room for the rear passengers and a lack of space for their luggage. A bold increase of no less than 7in makes this a long-wheelbase car and the rear track has a similar massive enlargement. Overall, the new Rover is 6in longer, 3in wider, and 2½in lower in the roof-line but, by employing modern constructional techniques, this much larger machine has been held down to the weight of the old one, within a few pounds, despite more lavish equipment.

More important, the wind tunnel has been called into play, so that the bigger saloon suffers less drag than its smaller predecessor. It is assumed that the public will now accept a fairly radical shape and will be willing to renounce the tall radiator grille in favour of the functional air inlet beneath the front bumper. Aerodynamic stability has also been secured, notably by sweeping up the tail to reduce rear-end lift.

The suspension is of the simplest, with MacPherson geometry in front and a well-located live axle, of which the shortcomings are reduced by the adoption of the Boge self-levelling system, which keeps a well-laden car off the bump-stops. The long wheelbase also improves the ride, and to avoid the slow steering response with which long-wheelbase cars are usually reproached, power steering with an unusually high gear ratio has been standardised.

The light-alloy V8 engine has been up-rated, the hydraulic tappets now permitting 6000rpm before the dreaded "pumping up" takes place and among a number of detail improvements, electronic ignition is certainly the most important. The power output has gone up from 143 bhp at 5000rpm to 155 bhp at 5250rpm. The car owes much of its character to the 5-speed gearbox, of which the high overdrive ratio could not have been practicable without the low-drag body styling. It is these two features that make a fuel consumption figure better than 20mpg possible, even for the fast driver, which would scarcely be anticipated with a 3.5 litre V8 engine.

The interior is attractively furnished and the equipment is generous indeed, as the data panel shows. The seats are comfortable and if the driver sits rather too low to see all four corners clearly, the relatively short bonnet is a help. Though the rear seat folds to give extra baggage space, the high sill may impede loading of bulky objects through the large fifth door. In general the passengers take their ease with ample space to relax and their luggage travels on soft carpets. The heating and ventilation work particularly well and are easily controllable, though a little assistance from the fan is generally desirable, and the lights are excellent.

The maximum speed of well over two miles a minute is highly satisfactory and this comes up on the direct fourth speed. Fifth is purely an overdrive, which is pleasantly quiet, the lower indirect gears being somewhat audible. The ratios of the box are exceptionally well staged and the gearlever is quite light to handle, falling only a little short of the usual knife-through-butter simile. Though the car is over-geared in fifth, it's surprising how well the engine pulls it at quite moderate speeds, to the benefit of fuel economy. With the driver relaxed at the wheel, covering the miles but in no particular hurry, the car seems to settle down at 100 to 105 mph with a very small throttle opening. The brakes give one every confidence when the car is driven hard, the hand brake also holding well.

The engine has plenty of torque in the middle ranges, picking up speed rapidly after a check without calling for a gearchange. At low revs, however, the V8 seems curiously lazy and though it is smooth and flexible, it lacks the punch and throttle response of some smaller four-cylinder units. The high gearing adds immeasurably to the sense of effortless ease which the car gives when cruising fairly fast. One is more conscious of the engine when accelerating through the gears and at high speeds the wind noise is frankly disappointing; this may be due to the fit of the doors on the test car and I did have the hatchback burst open at over 100mph, though it may not have been properly closed.

Being somewhat nose-heavy the Rover is, not unexpectedly, a fairly strong under-steerer and very stable at speed. The power-assistance of the steering is well-proportioned and, being quite high-geared by modern standards, it largely hides the under-steering characteristic. There is some compliance, both in the front suspension linkage and the flexibly-mounted rack, which makes the steering feel a little vague at first, but the impression soon passes. The steering does not self-centre very strongly and fails to transmit much feel, but in fact it is quite pleasant when one is used to it. I disliked the mis-shapen wheel and fast drivers will soon change it for a circular one, as it's awkward to spin through the hands.

The car corners very neatly, without much roll, the rear axle behaving properly on bumpy corners. It is the front end which is the limiting factor on sharp and slippery bends, but in general the Rover is well-balanced and obedient. As is usual with short torque tubes, the traction is poor when reversing uphill on a loose or slippery surface, but the tramping of the axle under these conditions has been greatly reduced since I first tried this model. The ride feels hard at low speeds and there is some audible thumping from

the suspension, but once the car is well into its stride, all the occupants travel in comfort.

The test car was fitted with run-flat tyres, which are no doubt a great convenience if a deflation takes place where it would be awkward to fit the spare. Nevertheless, I was shocked to see that "my" car carried no spare wheel. A car like the Rover is built for the busy executive, who drives to a strict timetable, with a 'plane, boat, or important business meeting at the end of the day's march. For such a man, only a proper spare wheel will do.

For a motoring writer, like myself, it would be folly to travel without a spare. For example, I have often left Geneva or Turin in the morning, with a ferry booked at Calais and printers waiting for my copy in London the same evening. With a run-flat tyre, I would be limited to 50mph after a deflation, when my schedule called for 100mph cruising, and in addition I would have to find a repairer within 100 miles, who could not in any case do the job inside my time limit. I have no argument against such things for shopping trips, but a real driver will change his wheel in well under ten minutes and be on his way rejoicing, especially if, like me, he carries two spares!

Let me emphasise, once again, that run-flat, tyres are merely an optional extra on the Rover 3500. The standard tyres are 185 HR 14 steel-braced radials by Pirelli, Michelin, or Avon, another option being Pirelli 195 HR 14 tyres, on light-alloy wheels that add greatly to the appearance of the car.

The new Rover is a big car, as you realise when you have washed it as often as I have! It gives very fast and effortless travel for four substantial adults and, for the man who likes a V8, it is about the only one that will consistently give him better than 20mpg. Perhaps I should mention that my test car was a fairly early pre-production example, so my comments may be unnecessarily severe where a certain lack of refinement is concerned. I shall make a point of trying a normal production model in due course, when I hope I shall be able to place it alongside the Jaguar as a car to appeal to the truly discerning motorist.

SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE DATA

Car tested: Rover 3500 four-door saloon, price £5130. Extras on test car: electrically operated windows £106. Denovo wheels and tyres £97, passenger door mirror £21, all including car tax and VAT.

Engine: V8, 88.9 x 71.1mm (3528cc). Compression ratio 9.35 to 1. 155bhp DIN at 5250rpm. Pushrod-operated overhead valves. Lucas electronic ignition. Twin SU carburetters.

Transmission: Single dry plate clutch. Five-speed synchromesh gearbox with central change, ratios 0.833, 1.0, 1.396, 2.087, and 321 to 1. Hypoid bevel rear axle, ratio 3.08 to 1.

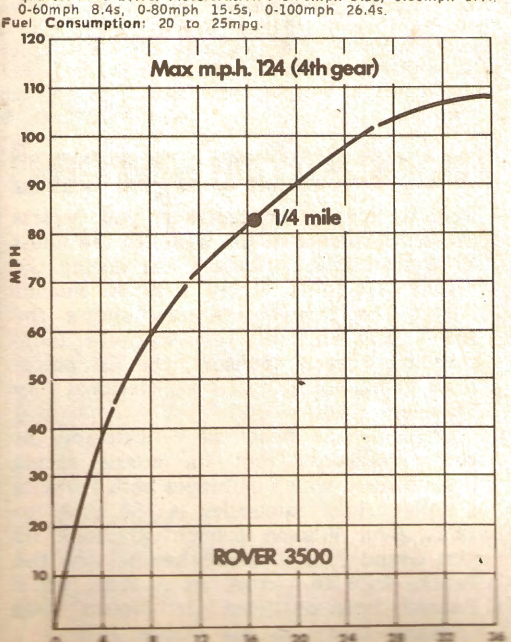
Chassis: Monocoque steel body and chassis. MacPherson independent front suspension with anti-roll bar. Power-assisted rack and pinion steering. Live rear axle on trailing arms, short torque tube, and Watt's linkage, with self-levelling dampers. Coil springs all round. Servo-assisted disc/drum brakes. Bolt-on steel wheels, fitted 195 60 HR 375 Dunlop Denovo tyres (extra).

Equipment: 12-volt lighting and starting with front and rear fog lamps. Speedometer. Rev-counter. Oil pressure, water temperature and fuel gauges. Voltmeter. Clock. Heating, demisting and ventilation system, with heated rear window. Electrically-operated door windows (extra). Electrically locked doors and rear boot. Red warning lights in doors. Flashing direction indicators with hazard warning. Two-speed and intermittent windscreen wipers and washers. Reversing lights. Radio.

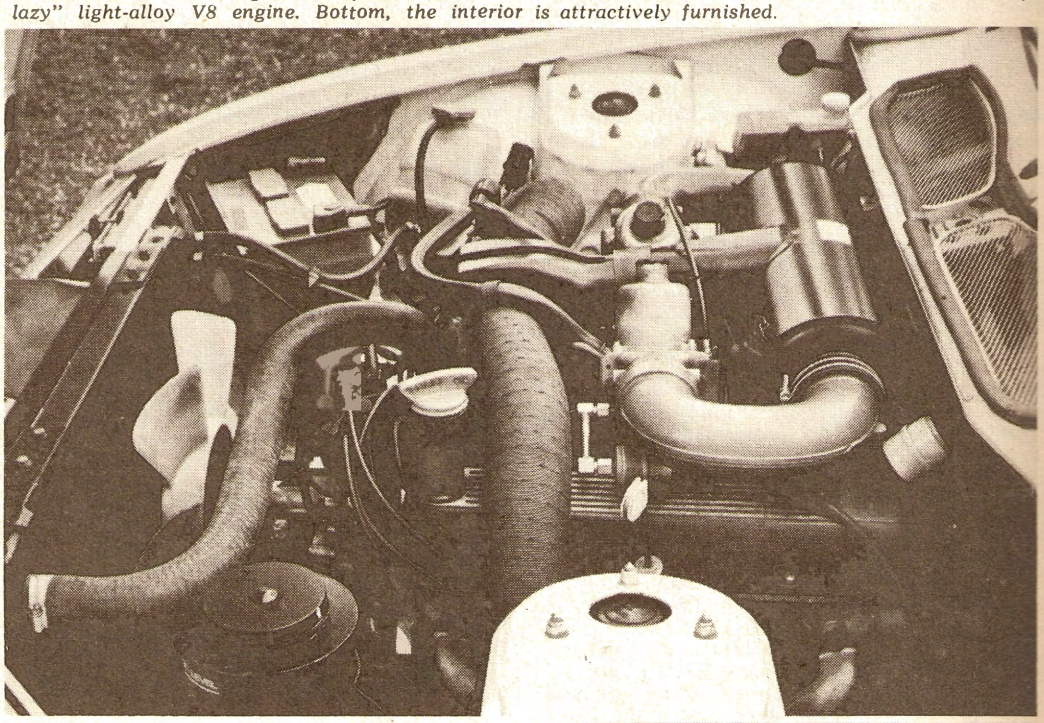
Dimensions: Wheelbase 9ft 2.8in. Track 4ft 11.1in. Overall length 15ft 5in. Width 5ft 9.6in. Weight 1 ton 6cwt.

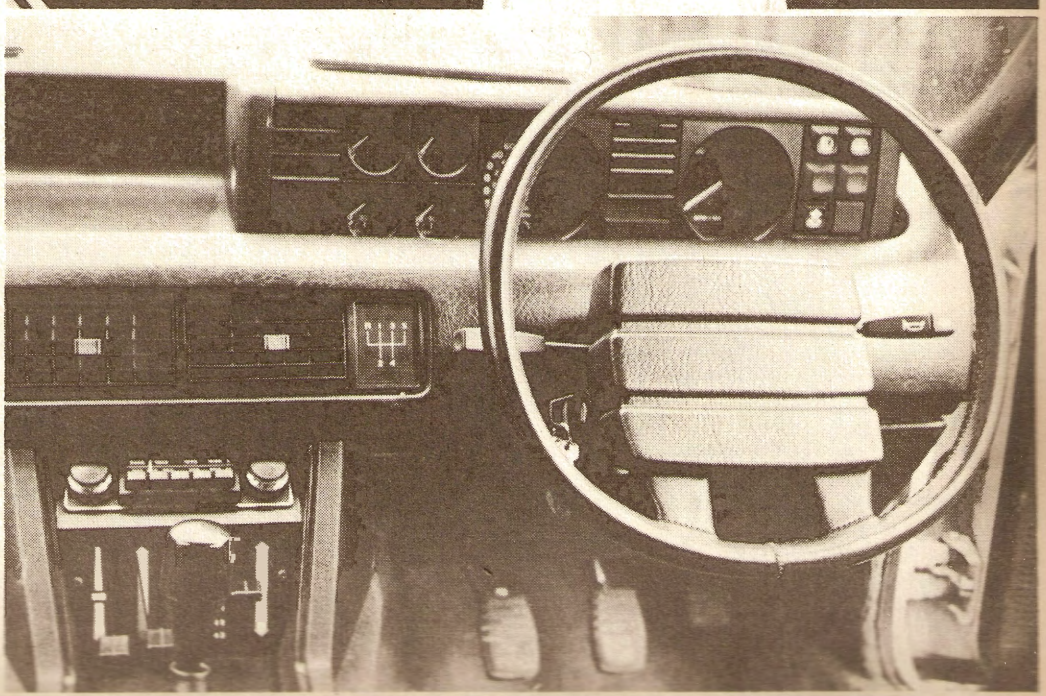
Performance: Maximum speed 124mph. Speeds in gears: fourth 120mph, third 102mph, second 69mph, first 43mph. Standing quarter-mile 16.7s. Acceleration: 0-30mph 3.3s, 0-50mph 6.4s, 0-60mph 8.4s, 0-80mph 15.5s, 0-100mph 26.4s.

Fuel Consumption: 20 to 25mpg.



Above, the tall radiator grille is replaced by an air inlet beneath the bumper. Below, the "curiously lazy" light-alloy V8 engine. Bottom, the interior is attractively furnished.





Made in Japan

Facing page, top: Noritake Takahara at speed at a wet Mount Fuji with his F2 Nova 512. Centre: front and rear views of the monocoque of an early 512 prototype, the chassis now used by Naohiro Fujita. Bottom: interior of the well-equipped Nova factory at Fuji.

KUNIHIKO AKAI provides the background to Nova Engineering, a firm whose Formula 2 cars have been beating the European-built opposition in Japan.

When Jacques Laffite arrived in Japan for the Suzuka Formula 2 meeting last November, he could have been forgiven for thinking that victory was his for the taking. Down to drive a Chevron, the Frenchman was the only accepted "world class" driver present. There were other Chevrons and a few Marches there, but the majority of the opposition comprised locally-built machinery.

In fact, it was from among the Japanese cars that Laffiite's unexpected opposition materialised. After qualifying, it was Kazuyoshi Hoshino's Nova-BMW 512 on the pole. Unhappily, Hoshino never made the race, but Laffite readily admitted the Nova's superiority in practice. Nova Engineering is a young company: in a little over two years, it has produced a car at least as quick (on its own territory) as anything the established European F2 constructors can produce. And now there are suggestions that there may soon be a Nova F1 car . . . .

One of the sensations of last year's Japanese Grand Prix was the performance of local star Kazuyoshi Hoshino. Driving Hiromu Tanaka's Heros Racing Tyrrell 007, Hoshino started the race from the eleventh row. At the end of the first lap, the elderly F1 car was up in eighth place, and after two laps, it was fifth! On the wet track, Hoshino's Bridgestone tyres were working well, and he ran as high as third before his retirement. Sponsored by Uni-pex (who make walkie-talkies and PA equipment), the performance of the car was one of Fuji's talking points.

Hoshino, of course, is highly respected in his own country, being conclusively the fastest man in Japanese Formula 2 racing. At the Suzuka F2 race in November, the 1975 European champion Jacques Laffite was present with a Chevron, but the Frenchman was beaten for the pole by Hoshino's Japanese-built Nova. Unhappily, the Nova's BMW engine broke on the warm-up lap, robbing Hoshino of an almost certain victory. Laffite, who won the race, said afterwards that the Chevron would not have beaten the Nova in a straight fight.

Nova Engineering was founded, in April 1973, by Shinsuke Yamanashi, and the first F2 car produced by the company appeared at the JAF Grand Prix at Suzuka in late 1974 in the hands of Naohiro Fujita. During unofficial practice, however, Fujita had a huge accident, and the new car was damaged too badly to be repaired in time for the race. Six months later, however, the car appeared in the Japanese GP (then an F2 race), and Fujita finished tenth. Thereafter, the car became more and more competitive, and by the end of 1975 it was consistently among the front runners.

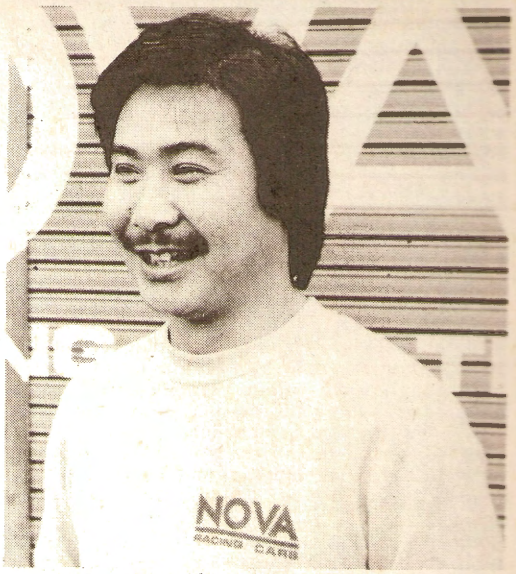
At the beginning of 1976, the Nova 512 was introduced, and Noritake Takahara bought one. Takahara has his own team, and the car was prepared and entered by them. It was a dream debut for the new car. Last May's JAF Grand Prix at Fuji was run in conditions much like those at the F1 race in October, with thick fog and heavy rain. Takahara was on tremendous form, catching Brazilian F2 star Alex Ribeiro (March 752) on the very last lap to score a great win for Nova. After that race, Kazuyoshi Hoshino joined the team, and since then Nova Engineering have run three cars for Takahara, Fujita and Hoshino.

One of the founder members of Nova Engineering, along with Yamanashi and Kikuo Kaira, was the late Hiroshi Kazato, who raced many times in Europe. Tragically, he was killed on the notorious banked section of the Fuji circuit in 1974, during a sports car race. Kaira later left Nova, and is now chief engineer of the very professional Kojima F1 team.

Before the formation of Nova, Yamanashi ran a speed shop in Tokyo. Even then, Kaira was doing a great deal of race car design, and Yamanashi has a very high opinion of his work. In those days, Takahara and Kazato did the driving, but Yamanashi and Kaira also competed occasionally. This they gave up in 1971, when Kazato went off to the States to do some CanAm racing with a Lola. It was at this point that Yamanashi and Kaira became seriously involved in building racing cars, specialising in cars for the Japanese national formulae, using Honda and Nissan 1300cc engines.

After only one season of CanAm racing, Kazato decided to abandon it in favour of F2 racing in Europe. His ultimate ambition was always Grand Prix racing. He enjoyed CanAm, figuring it was excellent experience for handling real power, but was rightly certain that F2 was the best way into F1. The venture was not a success, Kazato failing to make much impression with both a March and a GRD. He liked neither car, and eventually asked Yamanashi to build him an F2 car for both European and Japanese races.

Yamanashi agreed, and decided to change premises by moving from Tokyo to Mount Fuji, very close to the main gates of the race circuit. It was a very convenient site, already occupied by several teams who used Fuji regularly as a test track. In April 1973, the move was made, the new and very large premises were acquired,



Nova's President Shinsuke Yamanashi.

and the outfit changed its name to Nova Engineering.

Originally, Kazato had suggested that they build an F1 car, but Yamanashi was adamant that they simply did not have enough experience. He was, however, prepared to build an F2 car, and Kazato's European experiences with the March and GRD were a considerable help to him. The first car, the Nova 02, was built in 1974.

The team's intention was to run it at the JAF Grand Prix in November, but all their plans were tragically brought to a halt in the middle of the year when Kazato lost his life. Japanese motor racing received a huge jolt. Without any doubt, Hiroshi Kazato had been regarded as their leading driver, the man most likely to break into Grand Prix racing. Yamanashi was distraught, but construction of the new car continued, and Naohiro Fujita was engaged to drive.

Now, a little over two years later, Nova Engineering look to have a very bright future. There is nothing revolutionary about the 512. It has a conventional moncocque, outboard front brakes and inboard rears. Front suspension is double wishbone with outboard Koni dampers at the rear, there is a single top link and parallel lower link, radius rods and outboard Konis. A Hewland FG400 gearbox is used. It is a simple concept, but highly effective nonetheless.

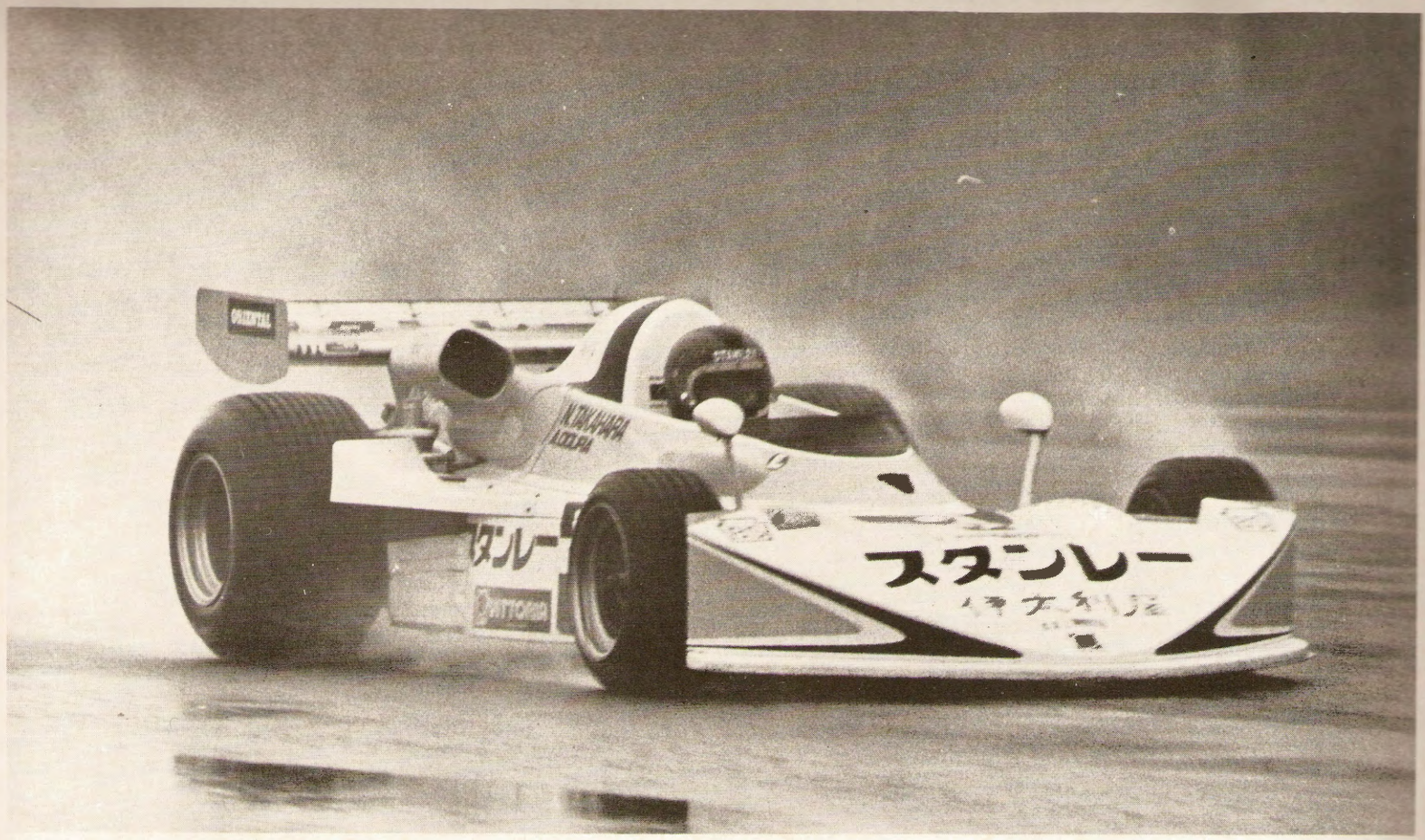
Of the future, Shinsuke Yamanashi has this to say: "I am delighted that we were able to develop our F2 car to the point where it could beat the Marches. We shall continue to develop the 512, and will run the cars in Japanese F2 races. But really, I would like to have a base in England, to build cars there to contest the European Formula 2 Championship. But F1 is our ultimate aim. At the moment, of course, we have virtually no knowledge of Grand Prix cars, so I would like to get over to Europe for the F2 races first, and then build an F1 car later. I do not know when it will be, but I am sure we can do it." ■

Hoshino's Nova 512/3 in the Japanese F2 Grand Prix at Suzuka.

our centre spread

This week's colour centre spread depicts Patrick Depailler at the wheel of the latest Elf-Tyrrell P34 Formula 1 car during the recent Argentine Grand Prix at Buenos Aires. The six-wheeler now sports the livery not only of Ken Tyrrell's long-standing French sponsors, the Elf petroleum giant, but also of First National City Travelers Checks.

Citibank has benefited considerably in recent seasons from its motor racing involvement, which embraces both Formula 1 and various categories in the USA. In 1976, John Watson brought Citibank its first Grand Prix success when he took the Penske PC4 to victory in Austria, while Ronnie Peterson won at Monza with Citibank livery on his March 761.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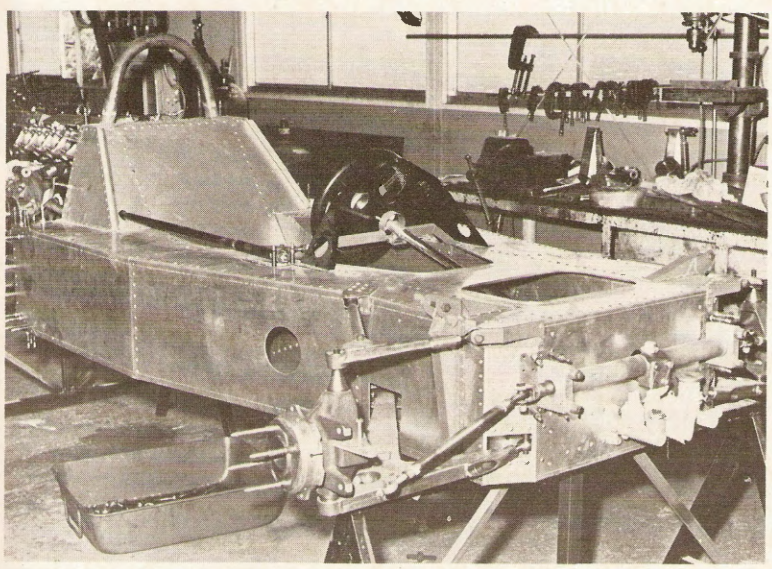

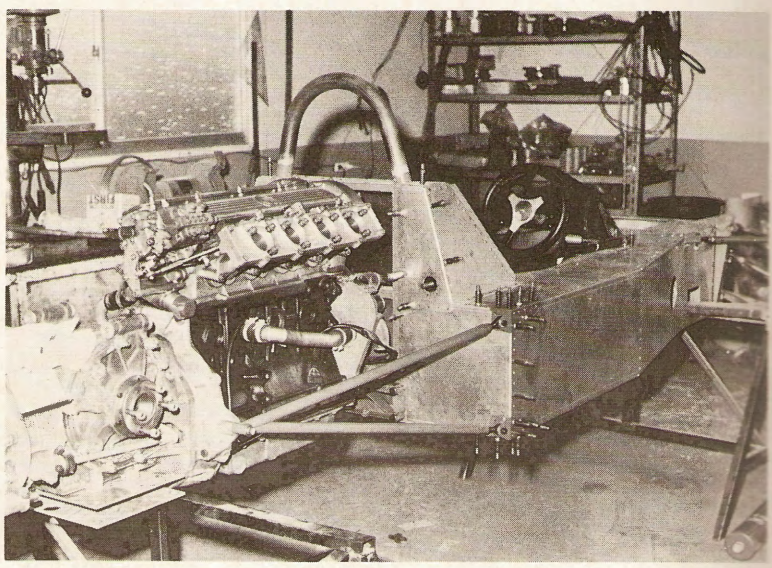

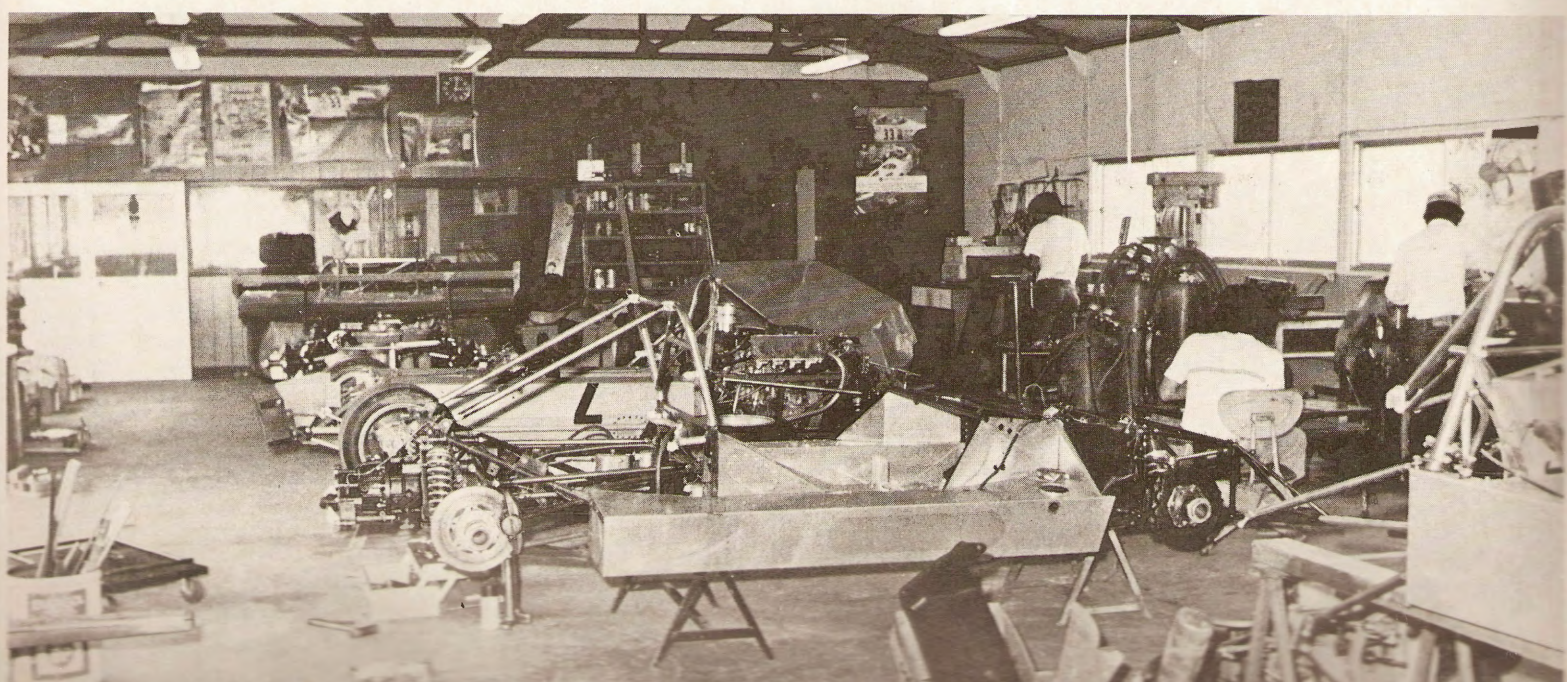

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Clean sweep for Lancia

MARTIN HOLMES discusses Lancia's domination of the international rallying scene.

Lancia once again ruled the international world of rallying in 1976. For the third year running, they used their purpose-built Stratos sports cars to conquer the World Championship and last year, for the first time, a private driver was the European Champion driving one of these cars as well. Their leading driver, Sandro Munari, was also awarded the unofficial FIA drivers' award together with his co-driver Silvio Maiga.

Secret routes, practised routes, gravel or asphalt—whether based on out-and-out speed or with an element of endurance—all have fallen to the futuristic Stratos. Only events which demand outright endurance or events held entirely on snow and ice have defeated these machines.

In a year of gradual awakening from the manufacturers in Europe when a variety of new types of cars have been rallied, these two-year-old machines have, through the constant development by their English engineer, Mike Parkes, and Italian, Nic Materazzi, been unbeatable in the World and European series.

Opel, through a wide representation of private entries and some spasmodic performances by the official team, forced Lancia through to the penultimate round before the World series was clinched, while Fiat though not contesting the World series this year, have offered enough evidence that next year they will be a very strong force indeed.

Events

The international calendar in 1976 was divisible almost without exception into the World and the European series. These rallies were limited to cars complying with the FIA groups 1, 2, 3 and 4 and there were only a handful of other events which admitted the more extensively modified cars within Group 5. Ten rounds were eventually held in the World series and 35 in the European, while almost all the other international events held little more than national relevance.

Despite the grandiose title of the World series, only two events (the Maroc and the Safari) were held outside Europe, after financial problems led to a Canadian event, the Rideau Lakes, being cancelled. Very few events in other parts of the world can be held within existing FIA championship rules because manufacturing requirements mean that local cars will seldom fit the groupings required; although in 1977 the FIA are proceeding with a championship event in New Zealand. Leading rallies not fitting into the championship were held this year in New Zealand, South Africa and West Africa, while in France and Italy, events which combined races with special stages or hillclimbs were also held.

World Championship (WCR)

The story of the Lancia Stratos and that car's suitability to a wide range of rallying situations is becoming a legend in its own time. Most of the World series events used gravel roads which, in turn, creates the impression that it is unlikely that a frail, glassfibre car could succeed. The performance of the Renault-Alpines at the beginning of this decade began to dispel this myth, and certainly the Stratos has wiped it away.

In accordance with FIA policy, most of the championship events are open to pre-event training with only the RAC Rally carrying a standing exemption, though for an experiment this past year, the Swedish went "secret" as well. Only the Safari rally in East Africa is confident enough of the demands of its natural terrain to hold its event entirely on open roads with timing no more accurate than to-a-minute, although the Moroccan event could easily dispense with the niceties of more accurate timing. Only the Swedish Rally is a completely "winter" rally, following a series of Monte Carlos held in mild weather — these two being the only events on which it was necessary to resort to the use of studded tyres.

Lancia was in the unique position of even *contemplating* a full season in the World series, although each event was considered carefully beforehand as to its probable success and the necessity of entering from championship expedience. Out of the 10 events they eventually entered nine, opting to miss the 1000 Lakes which demands driver skill more than car performance: they did not have a 1000 Lakes specialist in their team.

They started last season with a sweeping win on the Monte Carlo Rally when they took the top three places. This was an event that promised to be a lottery and ended up a convincing success. The lottery aspect concerned the tyres. The organisers, in an attempt to limit the excess of opportunities to spend money, specified that only one type of tyre could be used throughout the event. There would be no limit on studding, simply on the type of tyre. The problem was that the choice of tyre had to be made before it became clear what the weather would be like! Through an impressive exercise in clairvoyance most of the leading drivers chose basically dry-weather patterns, although the Michelin users opted for winter patterns. The three works Lancias chose the then-new Pirelli P7 which at that stage was only in clear-weather design. The tyres were low and wide, on the rear of these cars the tyre size was 295/35, and up to 1,200 studs could be accommodated on each cover, if necessary. Darniche, the private French Stratos driver, used the Michelin winter patterns and came third — behind the two surviving works cars. Andruet with a similar-shod Alpine A310 put up an incredible performance to split the factory Lancias in the early stages but later crashed on a road section. After Darniche, the next best winter tyre user was Frequelin in a Group 3 Porsche, who was seventh overall.

In Sweden, Lancia had the first of several worrying reverses, when two out of three team cars crashed, leaving Lampinen to cruise gently home into fourth place. It was Saab's rally, the last major event the Swedish (as opposed to the Finnish) manufacturer entered with the old model 96. They finished an impressive one-two, with Per Eklund beating his team leader Stig Blomqvist. It was a strange event, held as a secret rally but using stages which had in previous years been open to practice. Predictably it was a Scandinavian's event, no central European drivers making the top 10 places. The Swede Anders Kullang was third in the final official Opel entry with the old Ascona model.

By European standards, the Portuguese is a much more orthodox event, although factory participation was very low: only six fully professional entries being received. Of these, half finished, with Lancia coming first (with Munari, just as at Monte Carlo) and fourth while a most encouraging second place went to the Toyota Celica of Ove Andersson. Third place was taken (after a delay frustrated the second Lancia) by a private Opel Kadett in Group 1, a position that created a great amount of interest for this type of car. While official Opels had a terrible year private, less powerful versions were to prove extremely popular. Out of the 10 World events, private Opels won the Group 1 category four times — and won the Group 2 category four times as well.

The three leading summer events, Safari, Acropolis and Maroc, all place a traditional emphasis on endurance and in 1976 this proved to be the case again. It is difficult to imagine how a Colt Lancer could ever win a performance rally (though in Great Britain Cowan's example won the national Scottish championship), but in Africa they took the top three places. Despite the distance, there was superior manufacturer interest in all these events, even though Lancia only succeeded in bringing a car to the finish on the Maroc.

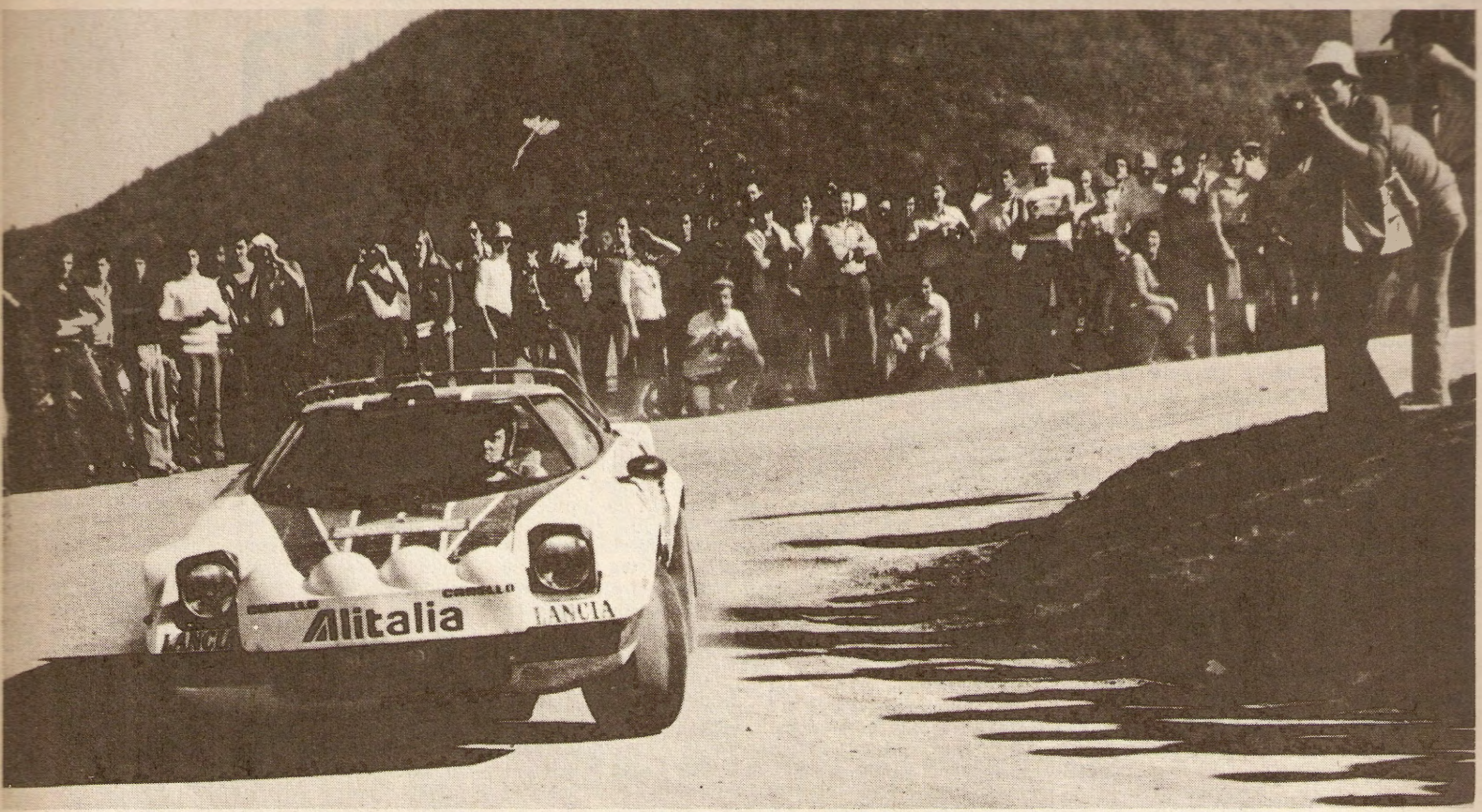
Peugeot had a poor Safari when their six-cylinder 504 Coupes failed, leaving the faithful four-cylinder cars to finish fourth and fifth; but they had a fantastic Maroc, with six cars in the top 10, including first and second. Again the old four-cylinder cars saved the fortunes of the team. Datsun scored first and third on the Acropolis, with a private Renault-Alpine A110 in between.

The remaining four autumn events started at the end of August in Finland when a single Fiat Abarth 131 Rallye with a damaged engine held a lead in front of a private Ford Escort RS1800 — Finns taking all the top nine positions—while at San Remo eight of the top 10 were all Italians. ▶

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP OF MAKES 1976

	Monte Carlo	Sweden	Portugal	Safari	Acropolis	Morocco	1000 Lakes	San Remo	Corsica	RAC	Total points
1 Lancia	20	10	20	—	—	12	—	20	20	10	112
2 Opel	10	12	12	—	8	—	—	8	3	4	57
3 Ford	8	—	4	—	—	—	15	—	—	20	47
4 Saab	—	20	—	—	—	—	8	—	—	15	43
5 Datsun	—	—	6	4	20	—	6	—	—	3	39
6 Toyota	—	—	15	—	—	—	12	—	—	8	35
7 Fiat	6	—	—	—	—	—	20	6	—	—	32
8 Peugeot	—	—	—	10	—	20	—	—	1	—	31
9 Alpine	—	—	—	—	15	—	—	—	12	—	27
10 Mitsubishi	—	—	—	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	20
11 Porsche	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	8	—	14
12 Alfa Romeo	1	—	—	1	10	—	—	—	—	—	12
13 Citroën	—	—	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	10
14 Lada	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	6
Renault	—	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	6
16 BMW	—	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	4
17 Mazda	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
Volkswagen	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	3
19 Volvo	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Triumph	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
20 Chrysler	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1

Facing page, above: Darniche on his way to winning the Nîage et Glace (and latterly the ECR) for French Lancia importer, Chardonnet. Below: Zenith of Fiat's year, a singleton 131 Abarth entry on the 1000 Lakes brought victory for Markku



Above: Waldegaard's last drive for Lancia; the Swede on his way to winning the controversial San Remo Rally. Below: Roger Clark came back to confound his critics with a sound victory on the RAC after an indifferent season.

Clean sweep for Lancia

continued

For the Lancia team, San Remo was an event which I doubt if they will ever quite understand. Their carefully-laid plans went wrong. They won the rally — their cars filled the top four places — but this was small consolation in view of the fact that a foreign driver, Bjorn Waldegaard, had won outright ahead of Munari.

While Lancia were gaining top or at least high-scoring points on all these events, Opel (mainly through privateers) were adding to their scores as well, and right up till the Tour de Corse, Opel could in theory have won the series. A predictable Lancia one-two on the rebellious French Mediterranean island ended the hopes of the German manufacturer. Munari, still unhappy at his defeat on his home territory, was very nearly beaten by Darniche as well. Only a casually lost minute early in the event denied Darniche victory. For the Frenchman, the comparison with Munari was interesting. The Italian had the more powerful type of engine, with four instead of two valves per cylinder, and yet the Frenchman could match his speed. Darniche had spent a long and often tedious season winning his national French and then European season as well, often wondering how his skills rated against others ! In Corsica he had his answer.

The British RAC Rally rounded off the season. Lancia sent one token entry, for Munari rather than for Waldegaard who, it appeared, could not meet up with his new team quick enough, and for whom he scored a professional third place in a type of car he had never driven before. Ford scored their only World win of the year when Roger Clark profited from some bad luck for Airikkala. Second with an excellent performance was Stig Blomqvist in the 99 EMS, Saab's new model. Lancia eventually beat Opel by 112 points to 57, with Ford a surprise third place with 47 (two out of four points scores being gained by privateers) and Saab at 43.

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP OF DRIVERS 1976

1	Bernard Darniche	F	380
2	Antonio Zanini	E	288
3	Andrzej Jaroszewicz	PL	254
4	Walter Röhrl	D	137
5	Salvador Canellas	E	125
6	Tapio Rainio	SF	120
7	Fulvio Bacchelli	I	105
8	Jean-Louis Clarr	F	96
9	Lars Carlsson	S	91
10	Russell Brookes	GB	90

European Championship (ECR)

Being a series for drivers rather than manufacturers, a still further reduced level of manufacturer participation was only to be expected but, remarkably, this series was won by a privately sponsored and entered driver, Bernard Darniche. From the start of the season there were few indications, the complex coefficient-system of points taking time to evolve before there were indications of likely winners. When each country and each type of rally in each of the representative countries had been held, it became clear that anyone unbeatable in his own country and then able to go abroad and succeed, would stand a good chance, and three candidates emerged. They were the French Stratos driver Darniche, the Polish Stratos driver Andrzej Jaroszewicz and the Spanish factory team driver Antonio Zanini.

The 35 events in the series were held all over Europe, ranging from five in Eastern Europe to two in Finland, two in Eire, three in Spain and even one in Cyprus. The coefficients have been probably the greatest source of confusion about this series. Basically the normal FIA scoring system of 20 points for a win down to one for 10th are multiplied-up according to the coefficient concerned, with four being a maximum coefficient and one the minimum. The coefficient four events are intended to be reserved for the elite in the series while the "ones" are offered to newcomers in the series and those events which do not warrant higher status.

In reality there has been a "hotchpotch," with many well-considered events such as the Arctic and the Lyon-Charbonnieres never meriting a high coefficient, and many hard-trying organisers stuck with a coefficient which never does them justice. 1976 was the second year in which this system was used and, if there is valid criticism, the most salient must be that there is insufficient feed-back to and from the FIA about necessary alterations to the coefficients.

A better aspect about the championship is that inclusion in the series is a good, if not infallible, guide to the worth of an event, and that organisers have an opportunity of gauging the value of their event in comparison with others. Furthermore, the series of events gives useful pointers to popular formats, many events (though far from a majority) offering a two-night layout with a rest halt in between each leg.

With a run of single-coefficient events at the start of the season (a single four-coefficient event in the middle), the results of that single event held a disproportionately important factor in the early championship positions. Tapio Rainio, the Finnish Saab team driver, had won the Arctic, ahead of Hannu Valtahaarju, a private Opel Ascona driver, and these two headed the charts for a long time. Then Rainio won another event in his native Finland, the Hankki Rally, which increased his score even further. Finally, at the end of March, a second win by Zanini in his native Spain (after the Costa Brava and the Firestone) put him level. Darniche, meanwhile, was waiting quietly in France, scooping an impressive number of home wins. He had won the four-coefficient Lyon-Charbonnieres and later in June he went to Italy and won the three-coefficient Four Regions. He was suddenly in the lead. Then Jaroszewicz rapidly shot to prominence after some good positions in Spain and Switzerland with his old Fiat Abarth 124 Rallye. When he acquired his Stratos, a first place in Bulgaria (3) and then in Poland (4) put *him* in the lead.

It had all the makings of a classic season, and this promise was duly fulfilled. Zanini meanwhile had not been idle. He had been to Belgium where he took fourth at Ypres. He then went to Poland where he came second and later he went across to the opposite end of the Mediterranean for the Cyprus Rally, where again he came second, and in this way he kept right in contention.

Saab's large and heavy 99 EMS was the sensation of the RAC Rally. Per Eklund, pictured above, retired in the final stages while lying fifth overall.

The high spot in the season came during October at the Rally of Spain, the only time all year when all three contenders faced one another. Darniche, after winning the German Baltic Rally, merely needed a good position to be unbeatable. Jaroszewicz had to beat Zanini and Zanini had to win. Zanini, being Spanish, had all the chances. His co-driver devised the route of the event, foreign entries were discouraged and he had the confidence of having won that event the year before. He did not win this time, however. Two punctures on the same special stage finished his chances. He pulled back, with a little help from a friendly rival, to come third, enough to take second place in the series. Jaroszewicz meanwhile had been lying second overall behind another private Stratos (that of the Spaniard, de Bagration) when he mistook his pacenotes and went off the road, while the French driver, after himself surviving an excursion when the front panel collapsed and jammed the front wheels, finished second overall and clinched the title. It had been a title he had never set out to achieve. It is doubtless a title he would not seek to retain, but it was a just reward for a driver and a team which worked well and proved unrivalled in its sphere.

The success of the 1976 European series lies in its continuity, and the sense of involvement that it offers events which come within its ambit. It is inextricably involved with FIA politics, ranging from the apparently dictatorial demands of the official observers, through to the constant fights between events and the FIA about matters such as the need for advance publication of special stage routes. There is nevertheless a constant freshness about this series which is not found in the World events. Within the World championship competitors find a tedium in attending the same events in the same places and meeting the same people year after year, and this is something completely missing in the European series. On the debit side it demands a mathematician to keep abreast of results — and also a person with worldwide contacts who knows about the many badly-reported events held in remote areas, whose events still carry equal relevance to the overall championship.

The Cars

Lancia decided to concentrate on the Stratos, having abandoned the Beta Coupe at the end of 1975 when it was apparent that it was not getting any better. While outwardly identical to the cars that first appeared in Group 4 form in 1974 they have been consistently improved under Mike Parkes' direction, particularly in the sphere of suspension and braking. The engines have remained in either four-valve or sometimes (for private drivers and for events where reliability counts more than performance) in two-valve form. Relevant power outputs are 275bhp and 250bhp, more or less.

The supply of Stratos' is obviously dwindling and 1977 is expected to be the final year of factory participation with these cars. Private Stratos drivers have been able to achieve a surprisingly high degree of reliability — when the right people maintain the cars. The best preparation expert currently seems to be Maglioli of Biella : even Jaroszewicz from Poland uses him. Most successful Stratos teams have two or three such cars, Darniche being unusual in having only two, one of which has been kept almost exclusively for competition and the other car for training. These cars are plentiful in Italian events, when 10 or even more can appear on entry lists for a single event. Competition limited to Group 4.

Fiat, while not contesting any championship, have proved to be the rally cars of the year. The Fiat Abarth 131 Rallye was first investigated as a competition car at the time of the cancellation in April, 1975, of the X1/9 project. It was first used on a rally (with the old 1800 engine) in November (when it won, as a Group 5 car) and ultimately it was fully homologated into Group 4 in April, 1976.

The second weekend in April it competed in the European championship — and won outright, with first and second places overall. This was no fluke but the result of a massive development programme, coupled with correct design specification. Fiat have a mandate to compete in top-class competition using a car that is outwardly a normal production saloon. The plastic bodywork, the rapidly adjustable independent rear suspension, the structural roll cage — all these things dispel the illusion to the knowledgeable, but the effect remains all the same. The performance of Verini at San Remo when he challenged the leading Stratos' in what looked like an ordinary Mirafiori saloon, completely exemplified this situation. Early rallies in Elba and the Tulip showed that gearbox failure was a problem, but towards the end of the season, troubles diminished until at San Remo three of the four

▶

Clean sweep for Lancia

continued

factory cars retired simply through accidents. Sundry troubles at the RAC disappointed although all three works cars were in good positions.

The high spot of the year was Alen's win on the 1000 Lakes. The famous Finnish event does not demand special performance from a car but it does demand the best possible roadholding and it was this factor which enabled Alen to keep his lead when his engine went sour shortly after half-distance.

Opel: The official Euro Händler team would doubtless like to forget 1976, hardly anything they did going right. Their best result was third in Sweden for Kullang, with a model they immediately scrapped for competition, while the best official Kadett result was an excellent fourth place at Monte Carlo for Rohrl, best non Stratos. Kullang came seventh in Britain after an excursion off the road lost two places — and that was all. A total of only 26 points!

"Meqepe" in a Group 1 Kadett was third overall in Portugal, highlighting this model's excellent characteristics. Lightness, handling — and simply availability of the cars — were great attractions to private owners; even though of all the important Group 1 cars they are probably the least powerful. The Italian Conrero team provided eight points at San Remo, the best non-Stratos again. The team run many cars in Italian national events, in Groups 4, 2 and 1.

Euro Händler entered various European championship events to gain running experience, and here they were more successful with Rohrl finishing fourth overall in this series. Euro Händler have only competed in Group 4. Another important private Opel result was that of Klaus Russling who finished fifth on the Acropolis, with an Ascona.

Ford gained a remarkable third place in the World championship using the Escort, which this year celebrates its 10th anniversary in active competition. The RAC and the 1000 Lakes are favourite Ford outings though, to their embarrassment, it was a private Escort (the David Sutton/Avon car of Airikkala) which gained the 15 points in Finland. This same car then led the RAC for most of the event before Clark's official version eventually won.

After several years bound by financial restraint, Fords have been able to return gradually to big time rallies abroad. Entries were made at Monte Carlo, Maroc and the European series Firestone. The former event was a resounding success, with fifth place behind three Stratos and Rohrl's Opel; yet the Firestone saw an ignominous defeat at the hands of SEAT while mechanical problems ended the African event for them. Fords suffer certain failures which they cannot permanently eliminate, notably head gasket and rear axle, in Group 4. Gearboxes create a lot of trouble but have been developed so that they can be quickly changed.

All official entries have been made with the RS1800 in Group 4 but both engine and gearbox work is proceeding with Group 2 in mind, while RS2000 entries have been made in Group 1. Saaristo won this group on the 1000 Lakes while a semi-official French entry won this group in Maroc. Semi-official Group 4 RS1800s won various European events, including Galway, Circuit of Ireland, Lucien Bianchi, Scottish and the Taurus. Official entries by Vatanen won the Welsh and the Manx Trophy.

Saab: both Finnish and Swedish manufacturers count points towards the marque total. In Sweden, the whole year was spent with one thought in mind, the RAC Rally. The new car was first seen in its full specification at Boucles de Spa, a European championship event that was very icy and provided a deceptively easy win for Blomqvist. Afterwards the 99EMS was seen at various events, like Elba (distributor failure), Welsh ▶

Above: The Opel Euro Händler team had a sad year attempting to develop their 16-valve Kadetts. Walter Rohrl, however, had a good result at Monte Carlo and here at San Martino.

Above: It took until December of last year to perfect the 504 Peugeot Coupé for endurance events and Makinen won the Bandama despite some problems. Below: Colt's fine 1-2-3 victory on the Safari was somewhat unexpected.

Clean sweep for Lancia

continued

(engine), Baltic (delayed by electrical fault), 1000 Lakes (sumpguard trouble), and the non-championship Munich-Vienna-Budapest, when it came second behind a private Opel. Finally they took second place on the RAC Rally, with their second car retiring very near the end with transmission trouble. In Finland, development with the 99EMS is less far advanced, so that the 96 V4 has been used on all major events with engines in various sizes and with both carburetters or injection; always in Group 4. Saab were winners as predicted with the 96 in the Swedish Rally.

Datsun: Group 4 Datsun Violets have appeared in many places, sometimes full factory entries, often cars loaned to either private or contracted drivers to use semi-privately. Highlight was Kallstrom's victory on the Acropolis, the right car for the event. The biggest disappointment was Mehta's retirement when leading on the Safari, through an accident with a non-competitor. Recent Violets have had some extremely powerful engines, as witness the performance of Dawson's loaned car on the Scottish and Burmah when it was competitive with the Ford Escorts. Fischer's Violet, which finished sixth in Portugal, was a completely private single-cam car as opposed to two-cam factory cars.

Toyota have been working all year trying to improve the Celica, though strangely their best result of the year was on the Portuguese, in March. Mikkola's performance on the RAC, which he led at the beginning of the event, indicates that performance is now completely competitive even though reliability is sometimes missing. Axle and injection troubles have occurred frequently through the season. The 1600cc Corolla has also been used during the year, providing fifth place on the RAC—an incredible performance for a car so small but obviously well short of rally-winning class. Official Toyotas are used by Warmbold on German events (he won the European Marktredwitz Rally) and by Therier in France.

Peugeot were the only manufacturers to use three different types of car last season. The old 504 saloon remained the most successful model, winning the Maroc. The 504 Coupe is fitted with a production-based V6 engine and was first seen at the Safari Rally, eventually winning the non-championship Bandama Rally at the end of the season. The small 104ZS has been used in both Group 5 and Group 2.

Renault-Alpine have not competed officially, but through the finance of Gitanes have supported Jean Ragnotti who has used an A310 through the season as a development exercise for the new V6 which first appeared on the Tour de France as Group 5. Ragnotti led the Acropolis for a long time before suffering suspension trouble.

Mitsubishi have scored only once in the World series on the Safari, when they won most convincingly, but they scored an almost equally convincing victory on the non-championship Southern Cross in Australia.

Other manufacturers competing regularly are: **VAZ,** the Russian Lada team who have been running apparently within Group 2 and which scored an excellent sixth place on the Acropolis. Power outputs are thought to be around 140bhp; similar to **POLSKI-FIAT** which have fared well in certain Eastern events but which have been abandoned on Western events in deference to the serious efforts of Jaroszewicz in the Lancia. Jaroszewicz was only able to compete with the Stratos late in the season and soon found it is a car which needs acclimatisation. His results in this context have been encouraging.

SKODA have only shown their new 130RS in the West on the RAC, when it won the Group 2 category after a virtually faultless run; a good performance for a car designed for asphalt rallies.

SEAT: non-results on World events (12th on Monte Carlo) can easily be overlooked, but anyone who has witnessed the way their drivers work will never underestimate them. The team concentrated primarily on Spanish championship events and only later on foreign events. Once 1800cc engines with 16 valves were introduced at the end of 1975, the team stayed with this specification until a new Group 5 car was shown at the Rallye Cataluna. This is a prototype for next year's model, based on the 124 Especial rather than the old 1430/1800 FU model.

Principal Drivers

By virtue of results, this has once again been the year for **Sandro Munari,** a driver who obviously suffered from the political dramas of Lancia this year. His best rallies have probably ▶

Above: Shekhar Mehta enjoyed a very useful season with important results in Cyprus, Greece and "down-under." Here he takes his Datsun Violet to third overall on the Southern Cross. Below: Toyota made good progress last year and Ove Andersson (below) finished fifth in a 1600 Corolla on the RAC.

Clean sweep for Lancia

ontinued

een those he never had any hope of winning—ike coming third in Maroc. On this event he rought to the finish — and into the World series oints — a car which he was expected to break. Ie had the fortune of reliability, the luck of a ancellation of a crucial stage in Portugal, the uck of a lapse on the part of a rival in Corsica — and put together a reliable performance whenver he was sent out on an event.

For **Bjorn Waldegaard,** much the same can be aid, though he had a lapse in Sweden and ventually he was happy to find another team hat would give him work when his relations t Lancia went sour.

If adaptability is the prime virtue of a rally river, then **Simo Lampinen** must demand attenion for his performances in different types of ar: he finished in a top 10 position with Saab, ancia and Peugeot, being well on the way to oing the same with Ford when he went off the oad on the RAC. His ability is all the more pparent when such a wide range of events are onsidered. He has had an unhappy year with echanical trouble in Saabs although he was ifth on the 1000 Lakes, notwithstanding running ut of petrol on a stage!

Blomqvist has scored two World championship econds and a European first, especially impresive since most of his year was spent rallying a ew car.

Alen: a World championship first, World ixth, and a European first and fourth, again while vorking to perfect a new model.

Darniche: following his wins on the Tour de rance and the Tour de Corse two years ago omewhat slipped last year, which made is '76 Corse result very important; while his ellow Frenchman **Nicolas** must be feeling relieved hat his Maroc win has offered some consolation ollowing the sudden official Alpine withdrawal at he end of 1975. Though **Andruet** has had a peronally terrible year, firstly through injuries from is Monte accident, then the withdrawal of Alfa omeo for whom he was rallying Group 5 lfettas; he did win the Ronde Cevenole in a ired Porsche.

Almost forgotten in Britain is **Andrew Cowan,** hird on the Safari, winner of the non-hampionship Heatway and Southern Cross — vith Mitsubishi Colt/Chrysler Avenger. Never articularly well known anywhere except Africa s **Mehta,** third in Greece, winner in Cyprus, vho has specialised in endurance events in many istant places while **Mikkola,** although his third lace in Finland was his best result, also had a VCR point to his credit with Peugeot in Corsica vith a 104, and Toyota team manager **Andersson** ad a second in Portugal and fifth on the RAC.

Since nearly all the leading drivers retain regular co-drivers, most of the comments regarding he drivers above refer also to Silvio Maiga, Hans Thorszelius, Hans Sylvan, Ilkka Kivimaki and Alain Mahe. Co-drivers usually become noted vhen they compete successfully with several ifferent drivers, and surely the most notable in his connection during 1976 was Arne Hertz, uccessful with Mikkola, Lampinen and Anderson; while one of the unsung successes was hat of Willi-Peter Pitz, Rohrl's regular co-driver, vho at short notice went with Darniche on the altic Rally and helped him to a victory that nexpectedly gave Bernard the edge in a series vhich he retained to the finish.

South African Stuart Pegg, in co-driving Clark o victory on the RAC, made many wonder vhether there could have been any advantage in ocal experience, but at least he finished clear f road penalties, which led to the careless loss f positions of many of his rivals. Surely the ost satisfying experience of the year, however, ust have been that of Timo Makinen and Henry iddon, expelled by Fords after the RAC and hen the winners of the Bandama Rally in Decemer.

Above: Makinen drove very quickly for Ford on the 1000 Lakes, but was thwarted by fuel problems. He ended a great career for Ford in sad fashion with a roll and crown wheel failure on the RAC.

FIA AWARD FOR DRIVERS 1976

		Nat	Monte Carlo	Sweden	Portugal	Safari	Acropolis	Morocco	1000 Lakes	San Remo	Corsica	RAC	Total points
1	Sandro Munari	I	20	—	20	—	—	12	—	15	20	10	97
2	Björn Waldegaard	S	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	20	—	12	47
3	Simo Lampinen	SF	—	10	—	8	—	15	8	—	—	—	41
4	Stig Blomqvist	S	—	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15	30
5	Roger Clark	GB	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20	28
6	Bernard Darniche	F	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15	—	27
7	Markku Alén	SF	6	—	—	—	—	—	20	—	—	—	26
8	Harry Källström	S	—	—	—	4	20	—	—	—	—	—	24
9	Ove Andersson	S	—	—	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	23
10	Raffaele Pinto	I	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	12	—	—	22
	Jean-Pierre Nicolas	F	—	—	—	2	—	20	—	—	—	—	22
12	Joginder Singh	EAK	—	—	—	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	20
	Per Eklund	S	—	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20
14	Anders Kulläng	S	—	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	16
15	Robin Ulyate	EAK	—	—	—	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	15
	Tasos Livieratos	GR	—	—	—	—	15	—	—	—	—	—	15
	Pentti Airikkala	SP	—	—	—	—	—	—	15	—	—	—	15
18	Hannu Mikkola	SF	—	—	—	—	—	—	12	—	2	—	14
19	Manuel Pereira	P	—	—	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12
	Andrew Cowan	GB	—	—	—	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	12
	Shekhar Mehta	EAK	—	—	—	—	12	—	—	—	—	—	12
	Jean-Pierre Manzagol	F	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12	—	12

FIA AWARD FOR CO-DRIVERS 1976

1	Silvio Maiga	I	20	—	20	—	—	12	—	15	20	10	97
2	Hans Thorszelius	S	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	20	—	12	47
3	Arne Hertz	S	—	10	15	8	—	—	12	—	—	—	45
4	Claes-Göran Andersson	S	—	12	—	—	20	—	—	—	—	4	36
5	Hans-Erik Sylwán	S	—	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15	30
6	Alain Mahé	F	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15	—	27
7	Ilkka Kivimäki	SF	6	—	—	—	—	—	20	—	—	—	26
8	Arnaldo Bernacchini	I	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	12	—	—	22
	Henry Liddon	GB	—	—	—	—	12	—	10	—	—	—	22
10	Björn Cederberg	S	—	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20
	David Doig	EAK	—	—	—	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	20
	Michel Gamet	F	—	—	—	—	—	20	—	—	—	—	20
	Stuart Pegg	ZA	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20	20
14	Chris Bates	EAK	—	—	—	15	—	—	—	—	—	—	15
	Miltos Andriopoulos	GR	—	—	—	—	15	—	—	—	—	—	15
	Atso Aho	SF	—	—	—	—	—	15	—	—	—	—	15
	Risto Virtanen	SF	—	—	—	—	—	—	15	—	—	—	15
	Johnstone Syer	GB	—	—	—	12	—	—	—	—	—	2	14
19	João Baptista	P	—	—	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12
	Jacques Jaubert	F	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	10	—	12
	Jean-François Filippi	F	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12	—	12

Michael Roe

Michael Roe is currently tipped for a works Royale deal in Formula Ford this season after a successful 1976 season in Ireland in an RP21. Unfortunately, his main and much publicised exploit in England last year was a not inconsiderable **shunt** at Aintree but in Ireland, he is a champion.

Young Michael's efforts have been tinged with success and shunts. At the age of 2½, he wrote off the family VW against a haybarn door, but as the son of a veterinary surgeon he gained valuable driving experience in the lanes and farmyards. As soon as he was old enough to race, he and his father went autocrossing, immediately gaining some success, but the second full season in 1972 ended tragically when a steering arm broke on his VW Buggy and the car careered into the crowd, injuring several spectators and writing off a BMW 2000, a Mini and a VW van.

While father Roe became less interested in motor sport, Michael continued to be keen, bought the ex-Devaney Crosslé 25F and started a season of Formula Ford, but at Kirkistown put the car into a bank.

Undeterred, Michael started buying and selling fish, and helped his father in the veterinary business and soon managed to rebuild the Crosslé, leading David Kennedy, Derek Daly and Devaney right until the last corner at the big Phoenix Park meeting before falling back to sixth. After the first Mondello race of 1976, Roe sold the Crosslé to Northern Irish driver John Eastwood, and with the help of John Murphy got behind the wheel of a Royale RP21 and hasn't looked back since.

For 1977, Roe will definitely have an RP24, possibly as a works driver with Trevor van Rooyen. With consistency, he could well be the driver to beat in Britain next year.

John Brown

"I don't know why I bought it—it just looked nice"; John Brown was referring to his haphazard purchase of what he turned into the F4 championship-winning racer. His choice was a typically canny one. The Ian Reed—designed Delta IRF4 was an immediate front runner. In only his second season of racing, John became the 1976 F4 Champion.

John Brown, at a mere 23, heads the extensive Warwick-based John Brown Wheels organisation. To the enthusiast, he is probably more famous for his nationwide chain of accessory supermarkets, and four-page magazine ads, than for his racing success. The business was started four years ago when he was 19, and remains his first concern. Just how this was built is an object lesson in enterprise . . . and cash-flow. John's ex-Hill Lotus 6 road car needed alloy wheels. A bolt-on goodie shop could supply, but at a high price, so a manufacturer was approached. His borrowed trade card gave him an attractive discount and the seed was sown. Friends bought wheels from John, then friends of friends placed orders. Soon, "unwanted gift" ads appeared in local papers—giving a number to ring. The number was always a public phone box—outside which John waited to receive orders. Wheels were purchased by cheque on Day One, sold on Day Two and the cash banked on Day Three, in time for the cheque to clear. This is not today's policy, as the company's sustained growth has shown.

For 1975, John decided to have a go at racing, and bought his Delta. His friend, designer Ian Reed, helped out with the programme and in his first season, John was third in the F4 series.

Reed now works as a designer for March, but as a "hobby" gave weekend assistance to John during this season. The '76 championship, like F1, F2, F3 and FF last year, was decided on the last round, in John's favour.

This year, he feels F3 would be ideal. However, the necessary degree of involvement to achieve success is perhaps too great for John's business commitments. He would rather do one thing as a champion than two things half-heartedly. Empire building or racing, he's a man to watch.

RD

Trevor Hopkins

For 29-year-old Trevor Hopkins, winning the 1976 Embassy championship was the culmination of two years of improving performances in the rallycross world. Prior to the final round at Lydden, Trevor was just five points clear of John Button and John Welch, but Trevor was the only one to reach the final and in the end found himself victor in the series by 17 points.

A haulage contractor in partnership with his father, from Ashford, Kent, a county which seems to breed more rallycross stars than any other, Trevor has been auto/rallycrossing for six seasons now. He first showed impressive form at the Embassy Internationale in November 1975 when he rocketed round Lydden to be third to the Carrera of Bjorn Waldegaard and Guy Deladriere's VW, ahead of Messrs Taylor, Chapman, Airey and Smith.

In 1976 he harnessed this speed with some degree of consistency and was especially successful at Snetterton where he gained three outright wins and a second place.

Some sponsorship has been forthcoming from Randstad for his continental ventures, but in Britain his sport is basically funded from his own pocket. His Mk 1 Escort houses the popular Terry Hoyle BDA and is the only one of its kind to sport similar spec front struts to the works Mk 2s. For this year a Mk 2 Escort will be built up and maybe in Trevor we could have someone to assume the mantle of John Taylor, who is being seen less and less in the sport.

J.A.

Leyland's big bonus

Probably the best bonuses to be offered by a British company in motor sport have been announced by Leyland Cars in their Leyland Motorsport announcements last week. The bonuses include various international sports such as Formula 3 and Group Two racing, but go down through production saloon car racing to prodsports, modsports, hillclimbs, drag racing, rallycross, autocross, production car trial and autotest.

The idea is two tier, and in the sphere of *Sports Extra*, only two types of bonus may be claimed. In the first case, both the production saloon championships are open for bonus payments on an event basis. Thus, should a Leyland car finish first overall, the driver, having notified the co-ordinator, Ron Elkins, may claim £25 or up to double that value in parts from ST. Second overall, in this case, may also claim a bonus per event of £15 and first in class gets the same amount.

The other form of competition on an event basis is rallycross, including European Cup for Drivers, all other FIA listed events, British National championship rounds and UK televised races. The structure in this case is £30 for first man, £20 for second and £10 for third.

The second case is on a championship basis. In the British Radio series, the overall winner of the series, if a Leyland car, may claim £150, and in the Britax production saloon series, the bonus is £100 for each class winner if a Leyland driver. First in each class in the production sports car series and modsports series may claim £50, with second getting £30 and third man collecting £15.

In the RAC Leader and BARC/Guyson series, first in each class may collect £25 if Leyland mounted, and a group winner in the RAC National championship may pick up £25, but his car must be 100 per cent Leyland including the chassis and engine. On the championship basis, the overall winner of the European championship may pick up £250 if a Leyland driver and in the British series, it's £100.

Finally, in autocross, class winners in the RAC and BTRDA series may pick up £25 if driving a Leyland car, and the same applies to production car trialling and autotesting, the latter applying to the RAC series only.

As mentioned previously, the whole series is being administered by Ron Elkins who can fill in any details, and he, as Technical Services Supervisor, may be contacted at Leyland ST, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 1AU, tel: 0235 25251.

Manitou-LE's four BMWs

As we intimated some weeks ago, next year's Manitou Racing Team will be running a total of four cars in this year's production saloon car series, all BMW 3.0 Sis, and all painted in the distinctive red, white and blue colour scheme of Manitou. However, this year's team will be one with a difference. For a start, Manitou, who manufacture fork lift trucks, have joined forces with Lubrication Engineers (UK) Ltd of Pangbourne, Berks, and it is this company who will supply oil to the BMWs, and they have also agreed to guarantee the expensive engines against failures caused by lubrication problems. The new team is to be called the Manitou—LE Racing team and is based in Dorset at Manitou dealer Graham Miles' garage.

Miles indeed, will again be seen in one of his cars, the ex-Tony Lanfranchi model that he drove last year. Number one driver however is Derrick Brunt, recently crowned as the fifth most successful BMW racing driver in the world at the Motorsport prize giving. He will again be driving his own car that he prepared last year and won his class in the Britax production saloon car championship. Loughborough driver David Taylor again drives his Marshall Wingfield BMW, another ex-Lanfranchi car, while the final machine will be that driven on occasions by Jim Marsden, the director of General Relays who entered him last year. However, on other occasions, this car will be driven by journalists and various personalities. Among those of the latter at the press conference last Thursday were Sweeney man Dennis Waterman and northern comedian Les Dawson, both of whom should be seen testing the car soon. The Manitou—LE team will contest both the Britax and British Radio series.

Dennis Waterman intimates that there's room for two in the front of one of Manitou-LE's BMWs, while Les Dawson and team mascot demonstrates that it's cosier that way.

McKinstry leads Dulon effort

Mac McKinstry, who for some years has been an enthusiastic sponsor and entrant of several aspiring Formula Ford and FF2000 drivers, in particular Tiff Needell, last week was officially appointed team manager for Ken Hensley Racing. Mac, who is surely one of the most amiable and popular men on the FF2000 scene, is not only to take over the paper side of the Ken Hensley Dulon team, but will be actively involved in running the Dulons at the circuits.

This means that he severs a tie with Hawke which he has maintained for a couple of years, and it also means that they, temporarily, don't have a works driver. Equally, it means that Mike Wilds is also without his Hawke FF2000 drive as that was something between Mac and Wilds, and Hawke would prefer a young up-and-coming driver rather than a proven driver such as Mike. However, Wilds and Hensley have been good friends for some time, even if it was Wilds' former sponsor, Dempster Developments, that cost Hensley rather a lot of money when he first entered motor racing....

Meanwhile at Hawke, with their former FF driver Jan Lammers firmly committed to Formula Three, they would like to see Michael Bleekemolen, their European FF driver, doing FF2000 in this country in one of their cars. Currently, the tall blond Bleekemolen, who has an office cleaning business in Holland, is works Hawke FF driver, but has commitments to Crossle. It seems to depend on his sponsors, but if Bleekemolen did the British FF2000 season and the Dutch FF season, then he would have to miss four BAF FF2000 rounds and six MCD rounds.

But even if Bleekemolen doesn't do the British series, Hawke still have enough eggs in their basket to tempt another British driver who has shown talent in the last year: Philip Bullman. The young Essex driver still hasn't finalised his plans, and having changed from Crossle to Hawke in mid-season, is a known quantity when it comes to Hawke personnel.

Whatever happens, it's a very busy year for Hawke, and a year which they approach with relish.

Philip Bullman — works Hawke FF2000?

Ward's cars

Russ Ward, who won last year's RAC Leaders Hillclimbing championship will have a brace of new beasts to tame in his quest for further success in 1977. The most lethal motor, and an unknown quantity as far as Ward is concerned, is a 5-litre supercharged engined Ford Escort complete with E-type transmission. This beast, to be used for selected events only, will be backed by the Haynes Publishing Group of Companies.

The second machine is less surprising for a man who is so used to Sprite motoring. Once again, Ward has his eggs in the Aldon basket but instead of a Sprite, the idea is to use an Arkley SS, which is being built by Clive Brooks and Aldon Automotive. There are three engines to be used: a 1450cc long stroke, a 1400cc short stroke and a 1293cc engine that was used last year. All engines will again be supercharged with an Allard/Wade blower. Both the RAC Leaders and BARC Guyson series will be contested with this car.

● Ladies! Bored with watching your husband/boyfriend/lover doing his thing at the racetrack while you trot to and from the restaurant at his beck and call? The BRSCC East Anglian Centre are looking for two girls to do some typing at six or so of their meetings. Anyone who goes along to BRSCC East Anglian Centre meetings at Snetterton and gets bored is asked to ring Valerie Knight during the day on 01-283 3444, ext 103.

Programmes balanced?

It's interesting to note from BRSCC regulations that are currently available for all their meetings up to April 11 what they are currently providing for FF2000 events at each championship round. At the opening Brands meeting, there's a 20 lap championship race and a 15 lap consolation event. At the same meeting, the opening round of the British Radio series will be run over 15 laps, as will the Townsend Thoresen Formula Ford final after two ten lap heats. It's interesting to note that despite the introduction of Sports 2000 to the calendar to "provide a balance," only once in the 12 meetings does Sports 2000 appear, despite some amazingly saloon biased meetings. It appears that even Clubmen's has had to take a relative back seat too, although in the case of MCD circuits, the decision doesn't necessarily rest with the BRSCC.

● Modsports driver Keith Ashby has sold his ultra-quick MG Midget to veteran Irish modsports campaigner Ian Woodside for racing in the very competitive Irish 1300cc modsports class. Ashby is rather secretive about his own plans for the season, but it is said that Richard Longman is preparing a very special A series engine for Keith's other lightweight Spridget to challenge Ian Hall's domination of the 1500cc modsports class.

Mini series continues

When perusing this year's competitions calendar, one thing that is instantly noticeable is just how acceptable Mini racing has become since the tightening up of the regulations under the auspices of Leyland Cars and the Mini Seven Racing Club. The challenge is now almost certainly the most important special saloon car series in the country (if it can be called special saloon) and the cars are accepted as genuinely good looking and competitive racing machines.

Not surprisingly, Leyland Cars are to continue with the three series contributing towards the Leyland Mini challenge in 1977, and with the rest of Leyland Motorsport, the overall plans were announced last week.

The Challenge is worth nearly £6000 overall, when it comes to end of season prizes and race awards but even so, Leyland consider it good value. As Keith Hopkins, director of sales and marketing of Leyland Cars says, "the championship series will continue to provide us with a great opportunuity to promote our products and give racegoers lots of hair-raising entertainment."

The prize fund, as mentioned, is considerable. The 1977 champion wins a new Mini 1275 GT (value about £1890) as well as a trophy, while the second and third drivers in the series will receive £500 and £250 holiday vouchers respectively. All three class winners also receive a trophy. The first four drivers to take the chequered flag in the 850 class will receive trophies and parts vouchers for Leyland ST goods, while 1000 drivers receive cash awards and trophies and 1275 GT get just cash awards, although the winners of the latter two also get Leyland ST vouchers. At the end of the series, the top 10 point scorers in all three classes will receive big cash awards in addition to a trophy.

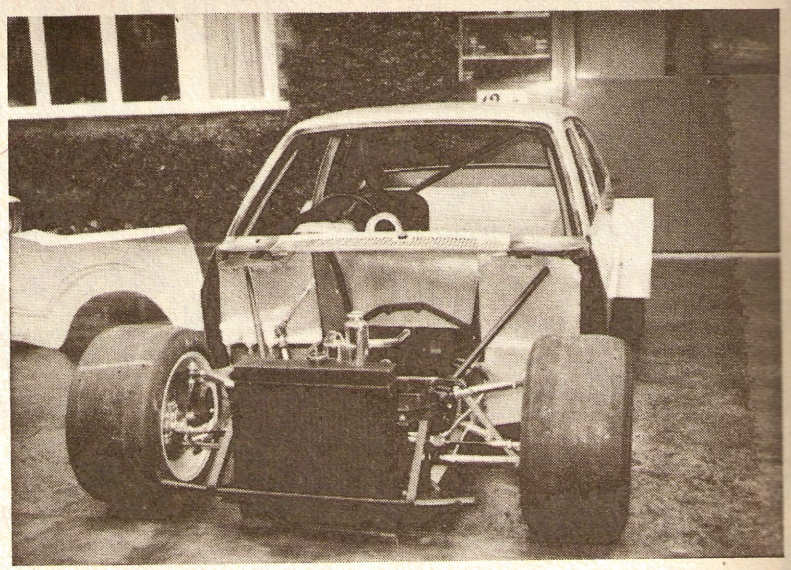
There will be 16 races in each class of which the best 13 will count. Points will be scored at Leyland's unique rate of 10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3 with two for all finishers below that and non-finishers get one point.

The individual dates of the challenges are below:

Mini Challenge 850: March 27, Snetterton; April 11, Castle Combe; April 24, Mallory Park; May 8, Thruxton; May 29, Silverstone; June 6, Oulton Park; June 12, Brands Hatch; July 10, Castle Combe; July 17, Brands Hatch; July 24, Cadwell Park; August 14, Cadwell Park; August 28, Snetterton; September 4, Mallory Park; October 2, Donington; October 9, Brands Hatch; October 15, Silverstone.

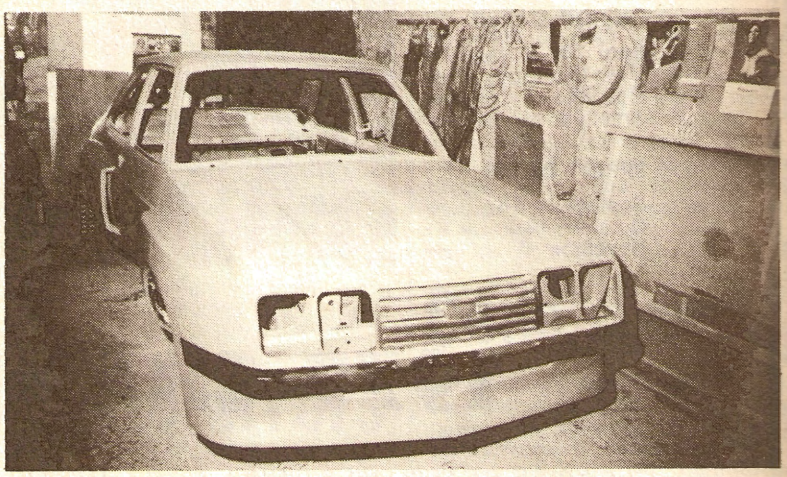
Mini Challenge 1000: April 11, Mallory Park; April 17, Donington; May 8, Brands Hatch; May 22, Cadwell Park; May 29, Silverstone; June 6, Snetterton; June 19, Thruxton; July 3, Brands Hatch; July 10, Mallory Park; July 24, Cadwell Park; August 29, Castle Combe; September 18, Snetterton; October 1, Castle Combe; October 9, Brands Hatch; October 15, Silverstone; October 30, Donington.

Mini Challenge 1275 GT: April 10, Snetterton; April 24, Silverstone; May 8, Thruxton; May 22, Brands Hatch; May 29, Silverstone; June 6, Mallory Park; June 26, Snetterton; July 10, Castle Combe; July 31, Brands Hatch; August 20, Oulton Park; August 29, Thruxton; September 4, Mallory Park; September 25, Cadwell Park; October 2, Donington; October 9, Croft; October 16, Donington.



Whiting's Escort progresses

Currently taking shape in the John Robinson Racing Services Northampton workshop are a number of Escorts destined for racing in this country and abroad. The most important, as far as club racing in Britain is concerned is the car that's destined to be driven by Nick Whiting, for, as with most of Nick's immaculate cars, it's being built up by Robinson. It'll be running with a V6 Essex engine and on 15in wheels, and while the other cars are more modelled on the RS2000 with subsequent bodywork, Nick's will have the flatter front. The other cars, similar to that below, are destined for Sicily, Walter Robertson, who'll race his in Scotland with a 2.2 BDG, and Mike Beckwith who'll also have a BDG. Finally, Robinson told us that a representative from Paul Newman Racing in the States was due at the workshop the other day, but unfortunately hasn't turned up yet.



. . . and Minis go to Ireland

After the undeniable success of the British Mini championships, Leyland Cars are introducing a 10-round 850 series at Mondello Park this season, commencing with the St Patrick's Day meeting and concluding with the meeting on September 25. The prize fund is valued at £750 with £100 and a trophy for first man in the series, £50 for second man and £40 for third down to £10 for sixth. The points scoring is on the World Championship basis of 9-6-4-3-2-1 with double points for the final round.

There are two additional awards, one for best prepared car competing in the challenge with the prize donated by Mondello Racing Club, and the other being a £100 voucher for a series of advanced lessons for the best performance by a newcomer, provided by Mondello Racing Drivers School.

● Frank Blanchard, former FF2000 driver, is contesting the Sports 2000 series next year and is interested in setting up a Sports 2000 register to safeguard the interests of drivers going into the new Formula this year. He may be contacted at 737/741 Romford Road, Manor Park, London E12, tel: 01-478 1486.

● Guest at the Sixty and Worcester MC's dinner dance on February 4 will be Tony Mason, who, it is reported, is gaining quite a name for himself in the art of after dinner speech making. Venue is the Elgar

Longton's £6000 championships

The Longton and District MC are promoting championships this year worth some £6000, totally unsponsored. Undoubtedly, their most successful is their sprint series which is worth £1500 and comprises 14 events from Castle Howard to the Isle of Man and includes such regular venues as Longridge and Blackpool. Payments take place down to twelfth spot and there are 120 available places for entrants, but, as the entry was full in two weeks last year, it's worth writing to M. J. Hayhurst, 35 Preston Old Road, Blackburn, immediately.

Entries are still available for the club's seven-round rallycross series which is worth £2860. There's another round of this on February 13, and the person to write to for entries is E. K. Gowers, 83 Lindale Gardens, Blackpool. A works driver is expected to give a demonstration run at the February 13 event.

The Longton club are also running an autocross championship with a prize fund of £500 and those wishing to enter should phone Preston 56789, and finally there are both off-the-road, marshals and rally championships, which bring the prize fund up to a staggering £6000 mark.

● Former 750F driver Ian Shaw is going Formula Ford this year with the ex-Jim Walsh Hawke DL12. Shaw will contest the Townsend Thoresen and Brush Fusegear series, and is entered by JAK Products, who produce team clothing for JPS,

Kennedy's better half

A much tighter second half which caught out all competitors saw Stewart Kennedy and Tony Watson come through to win the Total Downs Rally, run by Eastbourne and Ram MC over a 136-mile route in Sussex last Saturday night.

Kennedy and Watson, in an Escort Sport Mk II were one of three crews who cleaned the first half of the event but they went on to win by two minutes, dropping two minutes themselves.

Second were Derek Webb and Rick Smith in an RS 1600 and third, on six minutes, were Alan Meopham and Mick Town in a Mexico.

Fourth, on 12 minutes lost, were E. Mankletow and J. Evans in another Mexico, with Paul Syrett and Geoff Willis fifth in a Mini Mascot on 14m. David Clarke and Peter Harwood (Cooper S), were

Safety booklet

Tony Fall and other members of the BTRDA Rally Committee, have got their heads together to produce an informative and useful leaflet listing their recommendations for improving not only the safety of rally cars in terms of equipment to be used but also listing items pertaining to service crew vehicles, helmets, etc.

The leaflets are available, free of charge, from Mike Stephens, c/o Thor Hammer Co Ltd, Highlands Road, Shirley, Solihull, who would very much appreciate a 9in x 4in stamped addressed envelope.

● A possible added attraction at Brands this weekend is the Chequered Flag Lancia Stratos, that is providing Graham Warner can find a driver to give it a quick thrash around the rallycross circuit. Further such attractions are hoped for the Mallory round of the rallycross series, including a possible

NSCC's busy programme

As usual, the Nottingham Sports Car Club are looking forward to a busy 1977 season with eight race meetings and a number of club championships, not the least of which is the King of Cadwell *Libre* series mooted by Cadwell owner Charles Wilkinson last year.

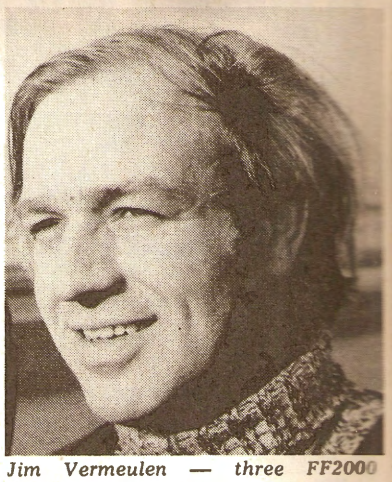
The race programme features four at Croft, two at Cadwell and two at Donington Park. One of the main series is the Formula Ford championship and the winner of this will receive £250 plus the Graham Coaker Memorial Trophy. Scoring will be on the 9-6-4-3-2-1 system with £3 per point. The *Formule Libre* series has a first prize of £250 from Charles Wilkinson and £100 for the runner-up while the three-class—up to 1000cc, 1001cc to 1300cc, over 1300cc — Alan Pond special saloon car series has a £150 first prize with £75 going to the other two class winners.

The NSCC have their own *Formule Libre* prize, the Nottingham Cup, plus £50 while the Peter Wingfield trophy continues with the Hooley Rosebowl for B class cars and £50 for the winners of each class. The Dick Protheroe trophy and £50 goes to the overall modsports winner and £10 goes to the other three class winners. The Keith Douglas award, plus £50 is presented annually to the member gaining the highest number of points in all championships. Competitors must be racing members or associate members in order to score points and obtain prize money. There's also a personal accident insurance free to members only during 1977, so the year's programme is certainly ambitious.

Mallory infill

Contrary to our report recently, a new road is being constructed—for rallycross traffic—between the two lakes at Mallory Park. Apparently many hundreds of tons of infill has already been laid and will be ready to receive the action on February 6. The entry list is practically full already.

We understand the course will use the race circuit start and finish line, turn right into what is the paddock on race days, past the concrete toilet block/changing rooms, on to the new section and rejoin the tarmac just before the Lake Esses. The rest of the lap will use the club circuit.



Jim Vermeulen — three FF2000 Hawkes.

Hawke sell 30 DL17s

Among the new orders for running Hawke DL17 Formula Fords in this country are James Weaver, the former novice driver who did so well in the Dunlop series and Scotsmen Duncan Hall, Stuart Lawson and Bernard Hunter. Hawke have made and delivered 30 new Formula Ford DL17s all over the world, and among those will be works cars in both Britain and Europe. Michael Bleekemolen is running the works car in the European series, as well as doing FF2000, while Bernard Devaney is the works FF driver in this country. Jim Vermeulen is another Dutchman who's shown interest in FF2000 in Holland and he's ordered three new FF2000 Hawkes, and Dutchman Leo Steenbergen, who used to drive the Fabergé Formula Vee car in Holland, is another on his way over to see Hawke.

Haynes' sprint support continues

The Haynes Publishing Group of Sparkford, Somerset, are again sponsoring the National Sprint championship which is organised under the auspices of the RAC. There are 15 rounds in the 1977 series and among those intending to compete this year are the first three in last year's series, Dave Harris, David Render and Simon Riley, plus Johnty Williamson and David Franklin. The Haynes Publishing Group originates, prints and publishes a wide range of Car Owner's Workshop Manuals, with 135 titles currently in print, plus an extensive series of hardback books covering all aspects of motoring, motor sport and allied topics.

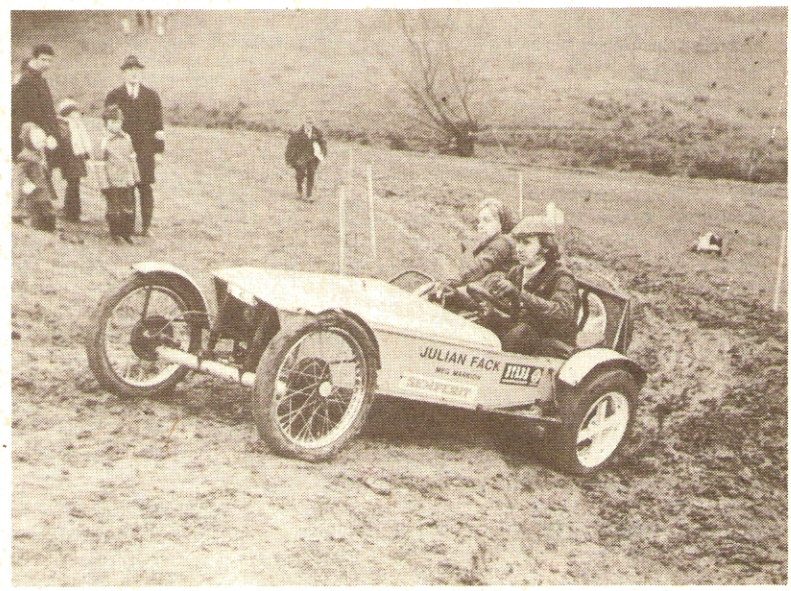
Adams overtakes Wanklyn

Although they led by a minute at petrol, K. Wanklyn and J. Waters had to be content with second place in their RS1600 on last Saturday's Tyre Services Monte Rally, run by Haldon MC entirely in Devon.

Winners, by a clear four minutes, were Dave Adams and Ivor Pengelly, in a Mexico who dropped 19m on the 200-mile route, which was clear apart from some fog when the rally crossed Exmoor.

Last year's winners Keith Spear and B. Nicholls were going quite well early on but broke their suspension when they went off route in their Marina.

Third was another RS 1600 in the hands of T. Hadley and M. Barber on 25m, the best semi-experts R. Luscombe and A. Collins were fourth in a Mini on 31m and R. Lock/M. Hall in another Mini were only a minute behind in fifth. The leaderboard was completed by Malcolm Kerswell and Roger Gillard in a Mexico who dropped 35m. Top novices were Charles Spencer and Nick Sloman in an Escort on 43m.



Julian Fack and Meg Marrion who took second place to the all-conquering Jack Pearce.

Pearce top despite errors

Despite dropping 10 marks on a section "through being idle and not looking at it beforehand," Jack Pearce cruised to his first win in this year's RAC Sporting Trials Championship when he won the Kitchen Trophy Trial, run by the North Midland MC on a new site at Hathersage near Sheffield last Sunday.

Pearce, for whom a run of three events without victory was almost unprecedented, dropped 31 marks on three rounds of some very slippery and difficult sections.

On a site made difficult by the recent thaw, but otherwise undamaging with a lot of grass and bracken as the main constituents, the field of 21 had considerable difficulty in progressing round the event and it was decided to run the entire event without a break.

On the first round of eight sections—two were cancelled—Pearce was one behind his old rival Julian Fack who dropped a mere two marks. Already these two had opened a lead for third placed Charles Pollard was on nine marks and then came Lol Hurt (Imp Special) and Keith Butterfield (Cannon), both on 13 marks.

On the second round Pearce pulled away into an unassailable lead mainly due to the fact he was one of the very few to negotiate a treacherous bog and steep incline which demanded extremely delicate throttle control. Dropping only a further eight marks in his Kincraft, Pearce's nearest rival, on the round, was Hurt who dropped 22 marks. Poor Fack suffered on more than one section but still hung on to second place and while he recovered some of the composure on the third tour when Pearce relaxed too much, there was never a hope of anyone catching the champion.

Hurt, third behind Fack, had a good day and was only four marks down while Charles Pollard, in another Kincraft, was fourth. John Fack made his first appearance of the year to take fifth in the original Impunity while Keith Butterfield and Richard Rimes (Aberties) both dropped the same total this being Rimes' best outing.

1, J. Pearce (Kincraft), 31 marks; 2, Julian Fack (Impunity), 49 marks; 3, L. Hurt (Imp Special), 53 marks; 4, C. Pollard (Kincraft), 57 marks; 5, John Fack (Impunity), 71 marks; 6, K. Butterfield (Cannon), 72 marks.

RAC Championship (after four rounds): 1, Julian Fack, 56 pts; 2, Pearce, 52 pts; 3, Jackson, 35 pts; 4, Benson, 26 pts.

Consistency!

In the three seasons that he has been Rallycrossing at Snetterton Rob Gibson has never completed all of the day's races. January 16 was no exception. Despite being third fastest in the over 1300cc class on the first of the runs his Ford T/C-engined Sprite developed gearbox problems and he was left to contest the rest of the event with only third gear, a very difficult task on the gooey track. He managed to beat Peter Harrold's VW off the line in the second race but this ended with an engine covered with mud and water and loss of sparks after contesting the line through the quarry mudhole with Brian Pearce's Mini. In the last event the clutch was sacrificed for another demon start and again he beat the VW for the first corner and harried Harrold for two laps after being passed until a spin and then the remaining gear failing saw him actually pushing the Sprite the last 100 yards over the finish, still recording a respectable time.

● Although it was announced many months ago, it seems that the Cooper Oils Northern Clubmans championship won't be taking place after all this year. Cooper Oils have apparently pulled out which rather leaves some of the Northern clubmans competitors in the lurch, which is sad, because all the movement of cars and drivers indicated that it would be a very good series in 1977

Barry Crump leads class winner Ian Thompson (81) and Tim Packford.

Reeves' 0.1s victory

With the last two Snetterton Rallycross events going first to Trevor Reeves and then to Peter Harrold it was appropriate that on January 16 the contest for BTD finished up with only 0.1s between Mini and VW driver with Reeves just getting home ahead. Even with a few notable non-starters the second round of West Suffolk MC/Sporting CC of Norfolk's winter series, sponsored on the occasion by Nobby Cresswell's FTC Plant, attracted a good quality field on a soggy track which made close racing the exception.

Current winter series champion Chris Gamble took another maximum score in the rally car class, but only just after a puncture halted one run and a determined Willy Vevers spun his VW while leading the Escort driver in his last race. Mike Shambrook's Escort-BDA and Michael Helm's 2.2 litre Pinto-engined version also had good days, while Stan Rolfe entertained the large crowd with an enthusiastic display in his totally unsuitable 3-litre Capri. Ian Thompson and his 8-port-headed Swiftune 850 Mini proved invincible in the 1-litre class where Roger Burn normally dominates, but this week the Clan only completed half a lap of practice before an untraceable ignition fault took over. Ian Thompson won all his races but Julian Delefortrie also impressed with some forceful driving of his home-brewed 1-litre Imp but spoilt his runs with some silly spins at the Hairpin. Another local, Tim Packford, came good with a consistent set of runs in his well-known local ex-Dave Stone Mini.

Trevor Reeves took Class three honours and his efforts with the 1300cc car driven here by brother Graham on Boxing Day also took BTD. He was usually matched with the 1300 Mini of Nick Garner and Ian Turner's similar size Escort. His closest race with Garner was the first and the two Minis fought wheel to wheel for nearly all the three laps. The other races saw Garner in some difficulty in cornering on the slimy tarmac Hairpin. Surprise of the class was Pete Simpson, known previously at Snetterton for his spectacular efforts in Avenger and Escort, who was second in the points scoring and third fastest 1300 Mini beating even Reeves in the first set of times. Barry Crump was a determined fourth in class. An uncharacteristic spin on his second run didn't stop Peter Harrold (VW) scoring a maximum for the Championship but the time spent following Rob Gibson's Sprite in the vital last race on a drying track cost him BTD, by just one tenth of a second. Fastest of the big-engined Minis, and one time class leader was the Ripspeed entry of Derek Scarrow who is having a much better season and getting quicker each meeting. Graham Hathaway was once again fastest of the Escorts and secured third in class while brother Barry had an off day culminating with a collision with Bruce Rushton's Escort and retirement with the bonnet flapping over the screen. Bruce Male got it right on his last run after a poorish day to squeeze his Team Castrol 1450 Mini into fourth ahead of a much-improved Will Gollop who at last seems to have found a way of keeping his Saab on the track. Tony Gover might well have been higher placed had his, now 1400cc, Mini not expired on the last event.

BTD: Trevor Reeves (1.3 Mini), 3m 27.8s. **Rally Car Class**: 1, Chris Gamble (1.8 Ford Escort-BDA), 3m 47.9s; 2, Mike Shambrook (1.6 Ford Escort-BDA), 3m 53.1s; 3, William Vevers (2.0 VW), 3m 54.2s. **Rallycross cars; up to 1000cc**; 1, Ian Thompson (850 Mini), 3m 42.1s; 2, Julian Delefortrie (1.0 Hillman Imp), 3m 45.1s; 3, Tim De Vere Packford (1.0 Mini), 3m 46.5s. **1001cc to 1300cc**; 1, Reeves; 2, Nick Garner (1.3 Mini), 3m 30.6s; 3, Pete Simpson (1.3 Mini), 3m 35.8s. **Over 1300cc**; 1, Peter Harrold (2.0 VW), 3m 27.9s; 2, Derek Scarrow (1.5 Mini Clubman), 3m 29.4s; 3, Graham Hathaway (1.6 Ford Escort T/C), 3m 33.4s. **Non-Championship run-off**; Harrold, 3m 27.1s.

Snetterton Winter Rallycross Series; Championship positions after two events. Overall: 1, Chris Gamble, Ian Thompson, Trevor Reeves, 40 points. **Rally Car Class**: 1, Gamble; 2, William Mawle, 18 points; 3, Mike Shambrook, Michael Helm, William Vevers, 17 points. **Rallycross Cars—up to 1000cc**: 1, Thompson; 2, Julian Delefortrie, 32 points; 3, Roger Burn, 19 points. **1001 to 1300cc**: 1, Nick Garner, 33 points; 2, Derek Sparks, Pete Simpson, 24 points. **Over 1300cc**: 1, Peter Harrold, 36 points; 2, Graham Hathaway, 29 points; 3, Trevor Reeves, 20 points.

BRANDS HATCH

There's a full entry of 80 cars for this Sunday's round of the Castrol/BTRDA Clubmans rallycross which is run by the BRSCC at Brands on Sunday. Leading at the moment in the series is young Trevor Reeves, the Dove Group sponsored driver from Upper Warlingham in Surrey, but the Mini driver is expected to be at a disadvantage, despite a course alteration to speed up the lap times, with alterations at the Paddock Bend end. So one might expect one of the many Escort drivers to do well, and there are enough of these: George Warren, Tony Merridale, Nobby Cresswell, Dimi Mavropoulos, Colin Richards, Bruce Rushton, Graham Hathaway, Ian Smith, Robin Kinnear while the Minimen are equally numerous: Reeves, Terry Smith, Dave Potter, Bruce Male, David Angel, Brian Peacock, and Mick Bird. Trying to establish their marque of car in among the successful regulars in rallycross are such names as Geoff Thomas, Peter Harrold, John Button (VW), Rob Gibson (Sprite), Will Gollop (Saab), Roger Dowson (TR7), Roger Burn (Clan Crusader) and Colin Slaughter (Skoda). Practice starts at 9am, and timed runs, of which there will be three per car with four running at a time, start at 12.30pm.

● An extra rallycross for the Snetterton calendar is being presented by TEAC on Good Friday.

● Former Formula Ford driver, Chris Finnegan, who pulled out of competition a year or so ago after a number of "unfortunate incidents," is returning to the tracks this year in the first British-based Tiga FF2000. He will start testing his car when the weather improves, in conjunction with Tiga partners Tim Schenken and Howden Ganley, and then contest the FF2000 series as far as limited funds allow.

Courts beats Betteridge

With a healthy entry of almost 50 cars, the Association of Midland Car Clubs Production Car Trial Championship got off to a fine start last Sunday when Owen Motoring Club ran the Snowy Mountain Trial on a new site near Rugeley in the Midlands.

Overall winner, after a good scrap with Brian Betteridge, was Stephen Courts in his Skoda Combi who dropped 98 marks while Betteridge, in his dilapidated-looking VW was best Owen member on 71 marks. He probably lost the event when the VW jumped out of gear and he stopped.

Members of the Coventry and Warwickshire club had a field day for in addition to Courts, Dave Smith (Cooper S) and Richard Taylor (Skoda Octavia) were class winners. Smith came from behind to overtake clubmate Ray Warrington and win Class 1 by two marks with John Hodgson (Cooper S) in third spot.

Taylor had a hard struggle to win Class II as he was closely followed throughout by John Hinckley in his Mexico and he ended the day one mark behind. An interesting newcomer was Steve Thompson, the former Formula 5000 saloon car driver who appeared in an Opel Kadett coupe.

Only five marks separated the first three in the largest class, for rear engined cars to one litre, with Peter Shale (Stiletto) finishing on 75 marks, four behind Betteridge and just one ahead of Ron Cakebread (Chamois).

Overall: S. Courts (Skoda Combi), 98 marks lost. **Class winners**: D. Smith (Cooper S), 56 marks; R. Taylor (Skoda Octavia), 133 marks; R. Jones (Sprite), 84 marks; B. Betteridge (VW), 71 marks. **Novice**: S. Tibbetts (Cooper S), 73 marks. **Ladies**: Mrs G. Warrington (Cooper S), 86 marks.

International events

Date	Venue	Event
Jan 29	Kyalami, South Africa	F Atlantic
Jan 30	Wigram, New Zealand	F Atlantic, FF, G1/2

British events

Date	Venue	Event	Status	Club	Start	Details
Jan 28	—	Rally	CP	Scottish Sporting CC	—	Moonbeam Rally
Jan 29	Mercury Motor Inn Car Park, (MR28/685467)	Rally	N	Highland CC	08.01	Snowman Rally
Jan 29/30	McGregor Garages, Station Road, Poulton-le-Fylde (MR102/351397)	Rally	R	S Shore (Blackpool) MC	—	Roskirk Trophy Rally
Jan 29/30	Romney Marsh	Rally	R	S.W.L. MC	21.00	Marsh Mist Rally—ASEMC Championship
Jan 29/30	Full Sutton, York	Rally	CP	Selby & DMC	—	Three Swans Rally
Jan 30	The Barge Battlesbridge, Essex (MR178/780947½)	Rally	C	Benfleet & DAC	10.01	Snowflake Rally
Jan 30	Brands Hatch, nr Dartford, Kent	Rallycross	R	BRSCC	11.30	Castrol/BTRDA Clubmans Rallycross
Jan 30	Harp Farm, Boxley, nr Maidstone (MR172/763600)	Sporting Trial	C	750 MC	11.00	Coomber Trial

Secretaries of the Meeting are requested to send details of all forthcoming events to Miss Linda McRae, Autosport Editorial, Haymarket Publishing Ltd., Regent House, 54/62 Regent Street, London W1A 2YJ

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