Autosport

INSIDE: COMPLETE RAC RALLY GUIDE

Haymarket publication

17th November 1977 30p

NASCAR: a changing scene

Maurice Phillippe: Tyrrell 008 designer □ Daly's F3 Thruxton

Autosport

November 17, 1977 Vol 69 No 7

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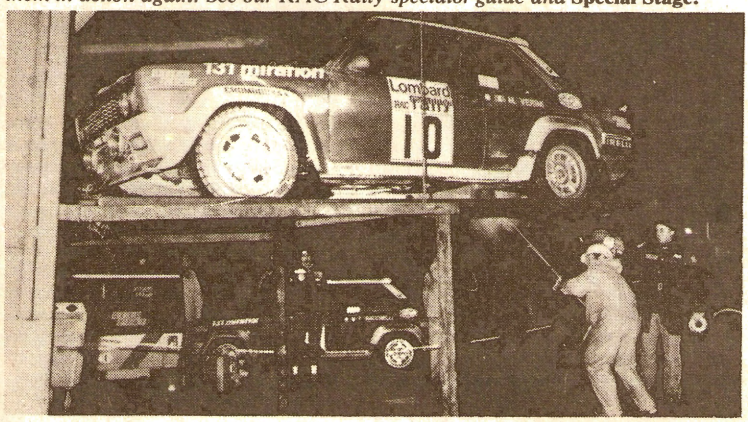
Insert: Complete Lombard RAC Rally spectator guide

The Italians are here again—and in unprecedented strength. It will be good to see them in action again. See our RAC Rally spectator guide and **Special Stage.**



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The days when foreign teams used to bring practice cars to the RAC Rally seem to have passed us by for the present, which can be no bad thing! However, on the eve of the Lombard RAC Rally, we have received an unprecedented number of reports of famous faces taking the air at a number of significant cultural centres and nature reserves around the country. The fact that these areas have names like Blenheim Palace, Sutton Park and the Lake District, is the crucial point.

Naturally there is no reason, legal or otherwise, why these gentlemen should not walk around future special stages of the RAC to get the feel of the place, and derive whatever advantage they can from memory. It is the fact that (a) they know the locations of all these stages; (b) that a very few are undoubtedly making, have made (and will use) notes; and (c) that many people wrongly think that the opposition is 'cheating' that is important. This last point gives rise for serious concern, and should be the catalyst for prompt, decisive and ruthless action on behalf of the RAC next week, when the cream of the world's loose surface rally driving talent will be pitting their skills (or their notes?) against each other in the forests and stately homes of England and Scotland.

As John Jensen discusses in *Purely Personal* this week, organisers of rallies have for too long tried to trick drivers into accidents—and firebreaks prove nothing about a driver's skill. But with better arrowing and hopefully accurate organiser-supplied stage 'notes', there is absolutely no need for private notes, marked maps and so on, whatsoever. The half-formed ideas that British drivers possess *and* use them should be scotched firmly by the RAC during the course of an event which will be the focus of motor sporting attention for all Europe throughout the coming weeks.

Our status in the eyes of European (and specifically Scandinavian) competitors sinks with every passing RAC. Any good performance has an added proviso or rider and, increasingly, Europeans feel that to compete with the British in Britain they must play the British game: notes.

The answer to such innuendo is to organise *proper* checks on road sections (or in stages), and this is not as impossible to manage as most apathetics assume it to be. After all, if the organisers of the Hunsruck Rally can catch such a 'wise' bird as Achim Warmbold red-handed, then there should be scope in an International event of RAC standing for men of intelligence to initiate proper checks.

Once the loophole of 'what constitutes a note' has been sorted out in the presence of a Judge of Fact, two-man teams of skilful searchers could cover the top 30 entries on the RAC Rally (and these are the only ones who matter in terms of prestige) at the rate of two to three minutes per car on a lax road section. They would need to be sure of themselves and absolutely ruthless. Competitors' radios might be used to warn their peers of note checks, but they wouldn't be used so readily if competitors had been made aware of the RAC's intention to monitor radio calls on the obvious RAC-ordained frequencies (or ban radios altogether).

Accumulated knowledge is one thing, that's experience; notes of special stages (or marked maps if you wish) are quite another. The feeling of foreigners that *we have* notes is both unhealthy for the sport and unhealthy for us. The RAC must make it obvious to them and to the FIA that it means business.

Welcome back

The BBC television *Grandstand* cameras were present at the international rallycross meeting at Lydden on November 5/6, and at the BARC's Formula 3 race meeting at Thruxton last Saturday. They will also provide Lombard RAC Rally coverage on November 26.

The lack of televised motor sport in Britain has, of course, long been a special hobbyhorse of AUTOSPORT, and it is therefore with great sincerity that we welcome back the BBC.

cover picture

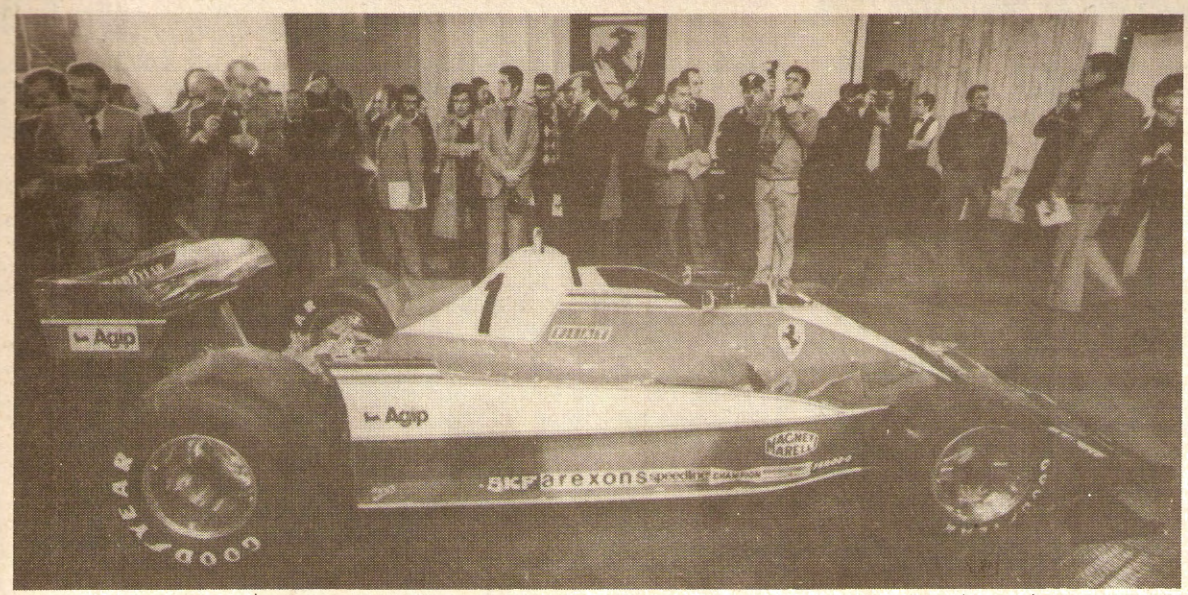
Richard Petty—one of the very few NASCAR Grand National drivers still winning races with cars other than Chevrolets—makes one of his famous pitstops with the STP Dodge. Gordon Kirby discusses the NASCAR scene in *Four million dollar circus*—page 31.

next week

Our up-to-the-minute illustrated report of the Lombard RAC Rally—Detailed review of the past Formula 2 season and René Arnoux's championship victory—Exclusive interview with the man many people feel should have been the 1977 World Champion, JPS-Lotus star Mario Andretti—New Renault 20TS tested*

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

edited by Nigel Roebuck



Launched on Saturday: the Ferrari 312T3. The cockpit, we are told, is 6cms further forward than that of its predecessor—a great deal less than this picture suggests.

Ferrari launch the 312T3

Ferrari announced the long-awaited 312T3 in Maranello last Saturday and, as you will see from the photographs, there are many outward changes.

In the new car, the driver sits 6cms further forward than in the T2, with the engine cover lengthened, giving a larger flat surface in front of the wing. The bodywork is considerably different, the view from the front of the car, for instance, inviting instant comparison with the JPS 78, as is also the case with the siting of the water radiators.

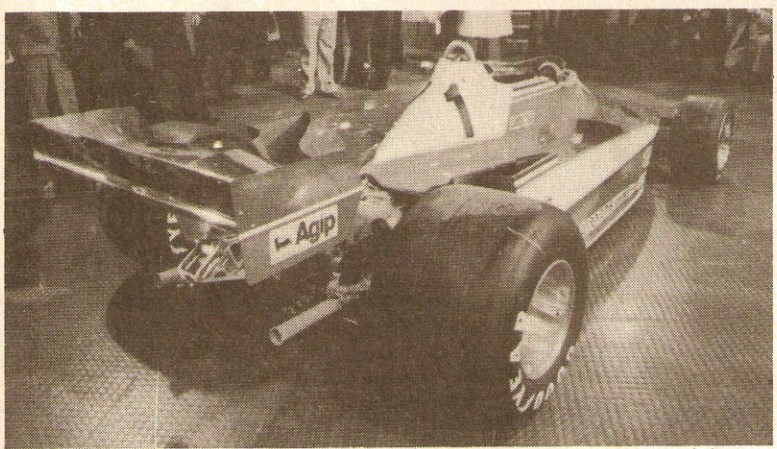
Perhaps the biggest difference in the two cars lies in the front suspension, however. The car is fitted with interchangeable asymetric wishbones which can be turned around quickly and simply, giving you either a long- or short-wheelbase car, the difference between the two being 14cms. (Interestingly, Renault have adopted just such a system on the new RS2 F1 car).

The weight of the transverse-mounted gearbox has been reduced considerably, and will, as ever, contain only five ratios—it would be extremely difficult to accommodate a sixth gear in the famous, still-secret 'box. A slight power increase has been found, the flat-12's output now quoted as 510bhp.

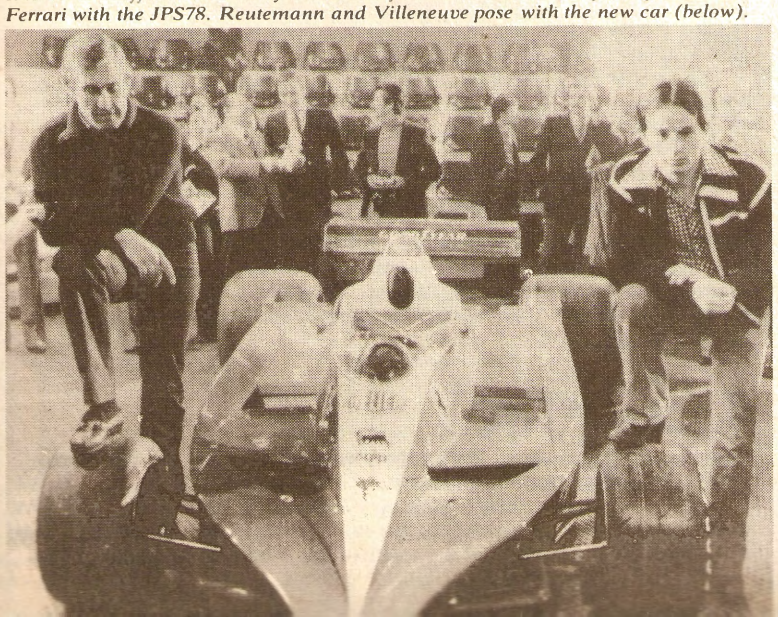
Enzo Ferrari reacted vigorously when asked a question about certain similarities between the T3 and the JPS. "Someone has maliciously suggested", he grinned, "that our new car is a replica of a certain other F1 car. I would tell you that, since our first cars were built in 1947, we have invented nothing. In our world, there is nothing new under the sun. Packard had a 12-cylinder engine in 1914, for instance. In the past few years, I don't believe there have been any real inventions. Everything is based on something which went before."

The Commendatore went on to say that his cars had recently tested a great deal on Michelin tyres, achieving extremely good results. "Michelin tyres", he said, "are now fitted to all Ferrari road cars, because only this company has been able to resolve satisfactorily the problems involved in making tyres for our GT cars, which are capable of 250-300kph". He was at pains to stress his admiration for the company, and it would come as no surprise if the Ferraris are Michelin-shod next season.

Ferrari also took the opportunity of confirming that Gilles Villeneuve would definitely drive alongside Carlos Reutemann in next year's team, thereby ending recent speculation that the French-Canadian might be replaced. Testing of the new car begins very soon.



It is not too difficult to see why the Italian journalists immediately compared the new Ferrari with the JPS78. Reutemann and Villeneuve pose with the new car (below).



Emerson stays put

In Sao Paulo, Emerson Fittipaldi confirmed last week that he had renewed his contract with his brother's Copersucar-sponsored Grand Prix team for another two years.

The Brazilian sugar company's involvement for 1978 and 1979 will cost them US$4,318,000, revealed the firm's president, Jorge Aralla. This sum will cover everything, including the running of the team, modifications to the current car and the design and building of the new car, on which Ralph Bellamy is currently at work. After three conspicuously unsuccessful seasons, we are glad to see that Copersucar are to continue with the team.

With that sort of budget, Ralph Bellamy's design talents and Emerson's driving ability, there should be the ingredients for success. There again, the same things were being said two years ago. Certainly, the fact that the cars are in future to be built in Britain rather than in Brazil must be a significant change for the better. Let's hope so. Emerson Fittipaldi should be *winning* Grands Prix, not struggling to qualify for them.

Brabham tests Boxer

Seen testing the Netherton & Worth Boxer-Hart Formula 2 car at Donington recently was Geoff Brabham. The Australian did, in fact, put in an entry for the recent Donington F2 race, but was unable to arrange a drive at the right price. The Boxer, of course, finished fifth in the race, driven by Danny Sullivan.

Onlookers report that Geoff gave a very good account of himself during the test session, it being his very first experience of driving an F2 car. What's more, Boxer's Brian Lewis was keeping an eye on Geoff's F3 Ralt at Thruxton on Saturday, indicating that there might well be further links between the two in the future. Lewis, of course, played a prominent part in Jack Brabham's racing team before going it alone.

Stuck confirmed for Shadow team

As expected, Hans-Joachim Stuck has put his name on a Shadow contract and will definitely lead the team next year. The identity of the second driver is not yet known, but it begins to look almost certain that Riccardo Patrese will stay on for another year.

Gunnar Nilsson's name has been connected with Shadow since halfway through this season but, believe it or not, it now seems quite possible that the Swede will also stay put—at Lotus! After all the speculation, it is extraordinary that this should be the case, but Gunnar has been unable to find himself a number one drive which was to his liking. Although the number two Lotus seat used to be considered a thing to be avoided, this is not the case these days. If the rumours that Nilsson is staying prove to be true, Mario Andretti will be a happy man, for he has never liked the idea of having Ronnie Peterson as a team-mate—he considers, justifiably, that a team should have a number one and a number two.

If Gunnar does remain at Lotus, though, where does Ronnie go? There are precious few options left open, and none of them could be considered a real top-line drive.

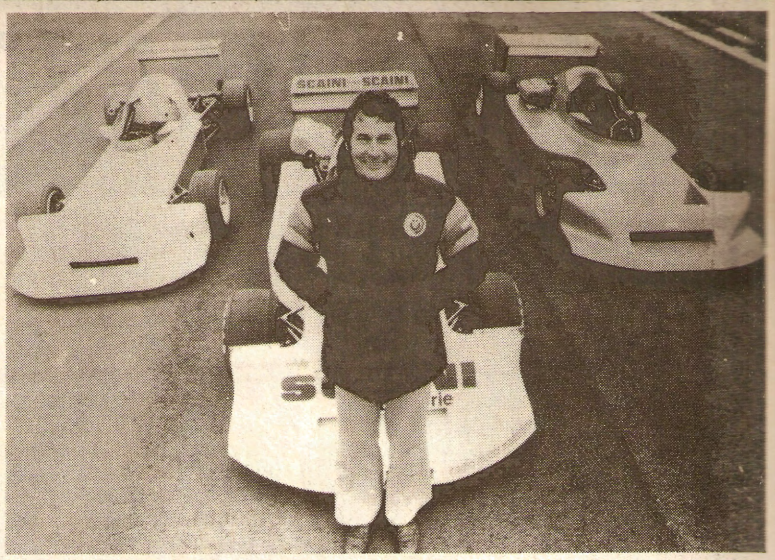
Testing troubles for Brabham BT46

If we believe what we hear, the Formula 1 Brabham BT46 is thus far not proving to be the miracle machine which we all expected. It is, of course, early days for the latest of Gordon Murray's designs, but so far the car's radical surface cooling system has proved extremely troublesome.

Apparently the car overheats—dramatically and rapidly. And if this is a problem on a November day at Donington, it will be rather more than that in Argentina. A couple of weeks ago, John Watson managed only 10 laps with the car before the engine began to cook itself. Last Friday they went back to the Derbyshire circuit, but the long trek proved fruitless, the car never even getting onto the circuit.

As the car was being warmed up, one of the mechanics spotted a rapidly growing bulge in the monocoque, and he immediately called for the Alfa flat-12 to be shut down. Apparently the sump had not been drained since the previous test, and had picked up dirt while lying idle. This had blocked the oil-ways in the monocoque skin—hence the bulging. As no parts for the fitting of conventional oil coolers were available, the test had to be called off. In testing so far, the oil cooling system has proved entirely satisfactory: the problem has always lain with the water cooling.

Despite the fact that the car—when fitted with conventional water radiators—has performed exceptionally well during tests at Silverstone, it is considered unlikely that the cars will race before the start of the European F1 season. For the first five Grands Prix of 1978, therefore, Niki Lauda and John Watson will almost certainly drive revised BT45Bs. The Austrian was due to start testing the team at Vallelunga earlier this week, his car a BT45B.



Robin Herd and his new collection.

Niki: too much F1

Interviewed in Munich last week, World Champion Niki Lauda said that he was very much in favour of reducing the number of Grands Prix in each season.

"It is absolutely impossible, psychologically and technically, to do a satisfactory job in 17 Grands Prix, crowded into one season," said Niki. "But, unfortunately, we do not have much say in the matter. Any decision to reduce the number of races would have to come from the constructors." Lauda went on to say that, in his opinion, two Grands Prix immediately came to mind when on the subject of reducing the number: Sweden, because the crowds are always very small, and Canada, because the safety facilities are inadequate.

Rather than cutting down the number of races, Niki commented, there were signs that the Grand Prix season would probably be extended eventually, to included places like Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Renault at Ricard

Regie Renault have never made any secret of the fact that a win at Le Mans is very, very high on their list of priorities. After looking set fair to dominate the race this year, the French cars all succumbed to mechanical problems when in a commanding position. The team's defeat did not go down at all well in France, naturally enough, and a further attempt to win the classic will be made next June. Had they been successful this year, it is thought that Renault would have abandoned sports car racing entirely. It is very unlikely that the cars will participate in races other than Le Mans.

Last week, the team carried out one of their periodic long-distance test sessions at Paul Ricard, and it proved a great success. "We drove the thing absolutely flat-out all the way", Derek Bell told us, "and it ran for 22 hours without problems." At that point, the test was halted. "No, we weren't going for a 24-hour run. We were aiming for a distance, and when we'd done it, we stopped. It really went well." The other drivers sharing the car were Patrick Depailler, Jean-Pierre Jabouille and Jean-Pierre Jaussaud.

The revised Formula 1 car, the RS02, was due to run for the first time last weekend, in the hands of Jabouille. Seen in the older RS01 at Paul Ricard earlier in the week was Jaussaud, driving the turbocharged F1 car for the first time. The under-rated Frenchman was ecstatic about the car, but it is unlikely that he will ever race it.

Sneva tests Penske

Penske Racing have completed the first stage of their development test programme with the latest Penske PC6 USAC championship car, with impressive results. The car has been driven in the States by all three of Roger Penske's 1978 USAC drivers, namely reigning champion Tom Sneva, Mario Andretti and newcomer Rick Mears.

The PC6 will replace the team's current McLaren M24 interim chassis, and has been designed largely by Geoff Ferris, who has also been responsible for the Penske PC3 and PC4 Formula 1 cars. It has been built exclusively in Britain, at the American team's UK base in Poole, Dorset, and is powered (like the M24s) by the Ford-Cosworth DFX turbo. Penske's engines are built and serviced at the team's race shop in Reading, Berks.

Only one PC6 chassis has so far been completed, but the team plans to have two more race-ready by mid-February. The three PC6s will be used as two race cars and a spare for Sneva and Mears initially, but by the end of May—in time for the Indianapolis 500, in which Andretti will definitely drive for the team—a fourth car will have been built, which will be a developed version of the present chassis. The team will enter three cars on several occasions thereafter.

During the initial testing in the States, Sneva lapped the newly resurfaced speedway at Michigan at 203mph and Ontario Motor Speedway at 201mph, significantly faster than his best efforts in the team's lead McLaren.

The new Marches

Officially announced on Monday were what Robin Herd calls his 'new generation' of customer cars, for Formula 2, Formula 3 and Formula B.

"This time we started with a clean sheet of paper," said Robin. "Initial testing and development of all three types is now complete and we are ready to start production with what we believe will be our most successful range so far."

Herd commented that the original range, built between 1971 and 1977, all stemmed from the original design concept. Every year they have been updated and improved "but they were beginning to get a bit long in the tooth", says Herd.

For all that, March's record of successful customer cars is altogether remarkable. This year, for example, Piercarlo Ghinzani has won the European F3 Championship, Stephen South the Vandervell F3 title, Gilles Villeneuve the Canadian Atlantic title and Ian Scheckter the South African one. And an astonishing statistic is that, in the past eight years, March have sold no fewer than 550 customer cars. This year the company turnover from the sale of cars and spares was over £1,250,000, of which better than a million represents export earnings. Are you listening, Denis?

When the company decided to abandon their F1 involvement (in the deal with ATS), Herd made out a forward planning schedule for the 65-man team at Bicester. This allowed for 50 cars to be built, a figure which has already been increased to 65, the number of firm orders and dealer requirements already received. "And that," says Robin, "is where we have to stop."

"Aerodynamics are the secret of success in race car design today," according to Herd. "Good aerodynamics mean more speed down the straight, and more adhesion and grip through the corners." Wings, of course, play a critical part in this, and Herd and his design team (Dave Reeves, Mike Foxon and Ian Reed) have nothing but praise for American Bob Liebeck, of the Douglas Aircraft Corporation, who has produced wing designs for which March have sole rights of manufacture under licence. As well as that, Robin has also received invaluable assistance from a couple of Southampton University lecturers, Ken Burgin and David Hurst. "Their wind tunnel has a road which moves at the same speed as the air," Robin says, "and we have learned much more about our cars' behaviour than would have been possible in a simple static tunnel".

The F3 783 chassis designed around the successful Toyota engine, sells for £7450, less engine. Either BMW or Ford engines can be accommodated in the new F2 chassis, which can be yours, less engine, for £10,950. And the Formula B 78B, designed around the Ford BD-series engine, comes out at £9750 a copy, once more less engine.

Disappointing Euro G1

The CSI has finally issued details to the RAC of next year's European G1 Championship. Perhaps the biggest surprise is that the upper engine capacity is to be 3.5 litres rather than the expected 3-litres. Information from Europe suggests that this step has been taken to guarantee Mercedes participation in the series. They have, of course, a ready-made contender in their 350 range. No other major manufacturer has a car of such capacity ready to race, so maybe, just maybe, Mercedes really are making the comeback which has so long been threatened.

Very disappointing, however, is the news that none of the championship rounds will be supporting races at Grands Prix, as was originally mooted. In fact, a BMW representative recently told us that his company would have no interest in the championship unless the races were run at Grand Prix meetings. However, if Mercedes come back, it is difficult to believe that BMW will be absent. But there could be serious repercussions for the privateers, many of whom could have sponsorship problems now that the glamorous rub-off of Grand Prix racing has been removed.

The championship will have ten rounds (run to British RAC saloon championship regulations), eight countries staging a round apiece with Belgium having two. Four British rounds were applied for, but only one has been granted. This, if you can believe it, is to be run over 30 laps of the Silverstone *club* circuit! It will be held on May 29. With a prize fund of just £2500, it is hardly a promoter's dream. The Spa 24 Hours is to be one of the rounds, so why could not the Tourist Trophy have been included?

RMO back Martini

After several weeks of negotiations, Martini team manager Hughes de Chaunac tells us that a contract was signed last Monday with the French team's Formula 1 sponsor. The new Martini-Ford F1 car, which will be driven by European Formula 2 Champion René Arnoux, will be backed by RMO (Relations Mai d'Oeuvre), the employment agency which is based in Grenoble (Arnoux's home town) and which has backed the Martini team's successful F2 programme for the past couple of seasons.

RMO boss M. Braillon says that his company is moving into Grand Prix racing not only because it will be good for its image, but also because its directors wish to make a positive contribution to the current increase in the French involvement in Formula 1. RMO will be the team's primary sponsor, and Martini have negotiations in hand with a second big backer, whose association with the team is expected to be announced within a couple of weeks.

Martini have also secured the French Elf petroleum company as a tertiary sponsor.

Provided that negotiations with the secondary sponsor are successful, Martini will undertake a full Grand Prix programme starting in Argentina on January 15. However, should this scheme fall through, they will start their season in South Africa on March 4, probably taking in Long Beach before tackling all the European Grands Prix.

Testing with the car—which will run with Goodyear tyres, not Michelins as rumoured in the French press—is scheduled to start very shortly. As yet, the new chassis has not been officially designated by the team.

On the Formula 2 front, it seems that no decision has yet been taken about the future of the Renault-powered MK22 cars with which Arnoux and Didier Pironi finished first and third in the European F2 series. According to de Chaunac, it seems possible that they might not be sold after all.

Jim Russell scholars

Last weekend saw the Jim Russell Racing Drivers School World Scholarship Competition, run annually at Snetterton.

There were ten finalists, to be judged by a panel which included Jack Sears, acting as Chairman, and two distinguished former pupils of the school, Derek Bell and Patrick Neve.

For the first time, the finalists were divided into two categories: British and overseas pupils. Each group had a 20-minute session, during which they were observed around the circuit by the panel, and there then followed a five-lap race, the first time this has been tried in the competition. Finally all the competitors were interviewed. The results of the race did not necessarily decide the winner of each category.

Finally selected as the UK winner was 20-year-old Anthony Reid, who wins a works drive in a Jim Russell FF1600 car in a series of races next year. A very handy prize indeed. The runner-up was Norman Lynch, whose prize is a two-week visit to the Jim Russell school at St. Jovite, with all expenses paid.

Gilbert Pednault, a French-Canadian, won the Overseas section, and he wins a works drive in a Jim Russell car in a series of races in England next year, plus an accommodation allowance for the racing period. Jeff Swartwout finished second, and this gives him a series of races at three circuits, plus an accommodation allowance for two months.

The Sports Editor of AUTOSPORT was also among the judges, and he came back remarkably impressed. The standard was excellent, and the prizes the best possible start to a young racing driver's career.

Inside story

Erstwhile part-sponsor of the Shadow F1 team, Franco Ambrosio will not be going to too many races in the next couple of years. According to the French newspaper *L'Equipe*, he will spend them as a guest of the Italian government. In short, he will be in prison.

Ambrosio was sentenced to two years last week, the Milan court finding him guilty of writing worthless cheques and also of swindling. He has yet to face further charges of corruption, said the paper.

All the Steering Wheel Club last week, Stirling Moss and Denis Jenkinson sign prints of a magnificent painting of their winning Mercedes 300SLR in the 1955 Mille Miglia. It is the work of Frank Wootton (above, left) and a limited edition of 850 prints will be sold at £39.50 each. For further information, contact Blaze Fine Arts Ltd., on 0342 27911.

Briefly. . .

● The RAC Diamond Jubilee Trophy, awarded only five times in the past 20 years, is to be presented to Cosworth Engineering, Keith Duckworth (who designed the DFV) and Ford, in recognition of the DFV's 100th Grand Prix victory, scored by Jody Scheckter's Wolf at Monte Carlo.

● Jochen Mass tested the ATS PC4 for the first time last week. The tests, held at Mugello, were entirely satisfactory, and Jochen later said that the car was a great deal better than he had expected.

● Rupert Keegan has been seen testing the Surtees TS19 more than once recently. At Goodwood, he was apparently setting very respectable times. Will he drive for Big John next year?

● Italian sources indicate that Clay Regazzoni will devote much of his time next year to the testing of a 5-litre Group 5 car, in preparation for its competition debut in 1979. The car? Well, they say it is a Mercedes. . . .

● Graham Eden is pulling out of next year's British F1/F2 series, as Howsons, his team's sponsor, have acquired a new managing director, who apparently has no interest in backing a racing team. Eden's driver, Tony Rouff, is now looking for a drive, preferably in F2. He can be contacted through Motor Race Consultants.

● It has been officially confirmed that next weekend's Macau Grand Prix will be the third and final race in this year's Rothmans International Far East series. The Indonesian Grand Prix was cancelled due to the track not being approved by the FIA, the Selangor Grand Prix in Malaysia was cancelled due to the track closure following the tragic accident during the Malaysian GP event, and, as usual, the Phillippines event seem unlikely to take place.

● Joe Cloutier, a former Vice-President of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway Corporation, has been named as President, the successor to Tony Hulman who died recently.

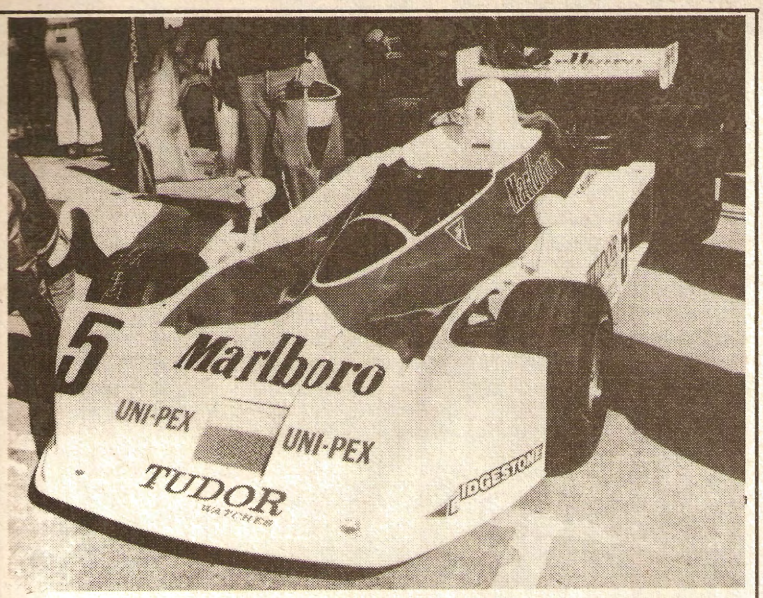
● It seems very likely that the occupant of the second works Ensign in 1978 will be Brett Lunger. Mo Nunn told us he was not very hopeful of enough Marlboro sponsorship to run Bruno Giacomelli, which he very much wants to do.

● The latest addition to the Donington Collection/Leyland Historic Vehicles Collection is one of the racing Jaguar XJ5.3 coupes, which arrived last Friday.

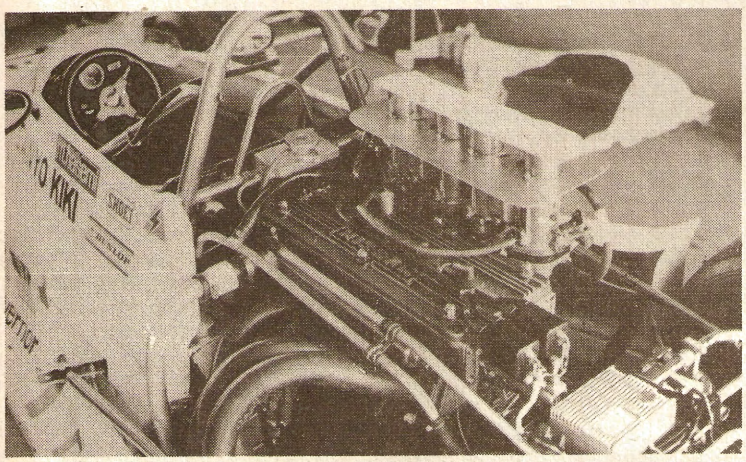
● The international Bank Holiday F3 weekend, held this year at Donington and Silverstone, will be repeated in 1978. The Donington race will be run on Saturday, August 26, with Silverstone two days later on August 28, Bank Holiday Monday.

catchpole

by Barry Foley



Seen at Suzuka. Above: This purposeful-looking machine is the modified Formula 2 Nova-BMW 512B with which Kazayoshi Hoshino clinched the Japanese national championship title (see page 12). Below: Masahiro Hasemi, the former Kojima Formula 1 driver, is using this Nissan-Datsun engine in his Formula Pacific 1.6-litre Chevron, which he will race at Macau next weekend.



INTERSERIE CHAMPIONSHIP (G6/7) FINAL TABLE

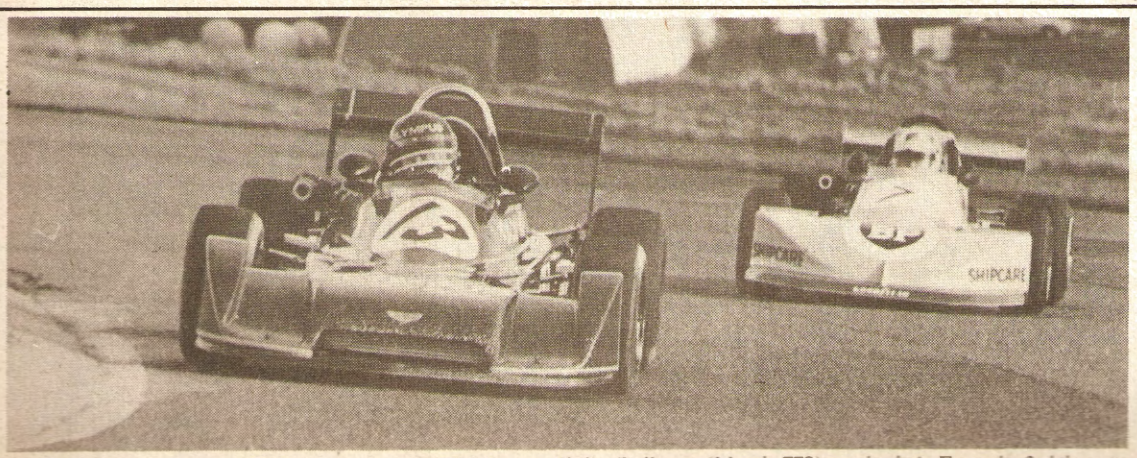
		Nat	May 08 Kassel-Calden	May 22 Berlin	Jun 12 Wunstorf	Aug 28 Nürburgring	Sep 18 Mengen	Oct 8/9 Hockenheim	Total points
Division 1									
1	Jörg Obermoser	D	15	—	18	20	3	15	71
2	Peter Hoffmann	D	7.5	15	30	—	12	4	68.5
3	Jörg Zaborowski	D	—	8	22.5	10	10	2	52.5
4	Reinhold Jöst	D	—	—	—	15	20	12	47
5	Karl Langjahr	D	9	—	9	4	4	—	26
6	Leopold van Bayern	D	—	—	—	—	15	10	25
7	Derek Bell	GB	—	20	—	—	—	—	20
	Arturo Merzario	I	—	—	—	—	—	20	20
	Eugen Grupp	D	—	—	—	6	8	6	20
10	Siegfried Rieger	D	—	12	—	—	6	—	18
Division 2									
1	Helmut Bross*	D	30	(6)	30	20	20	15	115
2	Kurt Roth	CH	9	20	12	12	15	(8)	68
3	Eugen Strähl	CH	—	15	—	15	—	20	50
4	Norbert Dombrowski	D	12	8	—	6	8	2	36
5	Charly Schirmer	CH	—	12	22.5	—	—	—	34.5
6	Walter Baltisser	CH	22.5	—	6	—	—	—	28.5
7	Roland Binder	D	—	—	15	—	—	12	27
8	Dieter Münch	D	—	—	18	8	—	—	26
9	Dieter Schulz	D	—	3	9	1	12	—	25
10	Rüdi Jauslin	CH	15	—	—	—	—	6	21

*Overall Champion

Aussie title for Gardner

After a race-long battle with Tony Edmondson (Chrysler Charger), Frank Gardner won the final round of the Australian Sports Sedan Championship at Lakeside with his fabulous Corvair racer. Frank—who became the most famous saloon car driver competing in Europe during his long stay in Britain—is still very much the man to beat in saloon racing: he took the Australian Sports Sedan title in 1976, and during 1977 won every one of the seven qualifying races. . . .

Frank Gardner, Australian Sports Sedan Champion for the second year running with this Players-backed Corvair, leads Tony Edmondson's ex-John McCormack Charger.



Divina Galica (Chevron B38, leading) and FF2000 star Philip Bullman (March 773) made their Formula 3 debuts at Thruxton last Saturday. Report: page 42.

Daly to Macau GP

A full entry of 30 cars has been received for next weekend's 24th Macau Grand Prix, the round-the-houses event for cars conforming to Formula Atlantic specifications.

Heading the field are Riccardo Patrese driving Bob Harper's Chevron, and Teddy Yip's Ralt driven by Alan Jones. BP F3 champion Derek Daly is making the trip to drive Sid Taylor's March 742 which Jones drove last year. Fred Opert has entered a single Chevron, to be driven by Keke Rosberg, while Vern Schuppan is this year entered by John MacDonald. Notable absentees are Patrick Tambay and Graeme Lawrence, who are leading the Rothmans International Trophy series. Japanese challengers include Masahiro Hasemi (Chevron-Datsun B40), while from down-under Andrew Miedecke and Ken Shirvington will both be March-mounted, and Kiwi Steve Millen will be in his usual Chevron.

Of the regional drivers the strongest challenge will come from the fast improving Beng Soeswanto and evergreen Albert Poon.

The Macau GP annually boasts a real carnival atmosphere, which is enjoyed by competitors and spectators alike. The prize money is HK$35,000 (about £4500), with an HK$10,000 bonus for any driver who can break Alan Jones's lap record of 2m 21s.

● The CSI has issued the provisional dates of the 1978 World Championship of Makes (Group 5) and European Sports Car Championship (Group 6) series. They ate as follows:

World Championship of Makes 1978: Feb 5 Daytona (USA); Mar 19 Mugello (I); Apr 16 Dijon (F); May7 Spa-Francorchamps (B); May 14 Silverstone (GB); May 28 Nürburgring (D); Jun 25 Osterreichring (A); Jul 9 Watkins Glen (USA); Aug 20 Mosport Park (CDN); Sep 3 Vallelunga (I); Sep 24 Estoril (P); Oct 15 Hockenheim (D).

European Sports Car Championship 1978: Apr 2 Nürburgring (D); Apr 23 Monza (I); May 14 Vallelunga (I); Jun 4 Imola (I); Jun 25 Estoril (P); Jul 2 Jarama (E); 16 Perouse (F); Sep 17 Salzburgring (A).

● James Hunt looks set to win the Tarmac Championship for the second year running. His Japanese Grand Prix victory should have put him easily far enough ahead on points to clinch the title, even though Alan Jones is looking for a victory at Macau next weekend:

Tarmac British Racing Championship (at November 11): 1, James Hunt, 238pts; 2, Alan Jones, 188; 3, Tony Trimmer, 179; 4, Guy Edwards, 141; 5, Peter Gethin, 140; 6, Tony Dron, 103; 7, Val Musetti, 85; 8, Vince Woodman and Gordon Spice, 83; 10, John Watson, 78, etc.

correspondence

the editor is not bound to agree with readers' opinions

The point of racing

Your last few issues have contained a number of suggestions of how the current Grand Prix points system might be revised. I submit that a combination of these suggestions is the best solution, with one addition.

Points should definitely be given to the top six finishers (at least) so as to keep competition for lower positions intact (Mr Maitland, October 13). Drivers such as Regazzoni, Jones and Brambilla who don't have the equipment to finish regularly in the top three should still be rewarded for good drives. However, the gap between first and second should be increased, both to reward the winner, and to provide incentive for those following the leader. Perhaps this would decrease 'stroking to the finish', if, for instance, points were awarded 12-6-4-3-2-1. Finally, the system of awarding one point each to the pole man and to the driver who sets fastest lap should be reinstated, so that we don't have cases such as Mario Andretti's dominating performance in Canada (for example) receiving no recognition in the points column.

Under this system, Niki Lauda's consistency, coupled with three wins, two poles, and three fastest laps, would still make him World Champion. However, Andretti (four wins, seven poles, seven fastest laps) would pass Jody Scheckter into second place in the standings, and Hunt (three wins, six poles, three fastest laps) would pass Carlos Reutemann for fourth place overall.

In this manner, the drivers who are *fast* (isn't that what racing is all about?) are rewarded for their efforts. Surely Mario and James deserve recognition for their combined 1977 record of seven wins, 13 poles, and seven fastest laps.

RIVERSIDE, CONN, USA — MAC RAND

A fairy tale

As Christmas approaches I felt that readers might like their own motor racing fairy story, so here it is.

Are you sitting comfortably? Then I'll begin.

Once upon a time, there was a young man named Jack, and he wanted to go motor racing more than anything else in the world. Now, he was poor, but he worked hard and saved his money until he could buy an old Formula Ford. He could not afford to go to any of the racing drivers' schools, so when he first raced he was very inexperienced. He made a few mistakes and he had a few crashes, but it soon became obvious that he was going to very good indeed.

A poor, but honest, racing car manufacturer, realising that Jack had potential, offered to help, and soon Jack had a brand new car to race in. Neither of them could afford to go testing, so development had to take place on race days and, as Jack could only just afford to go racing, he had to confine himself to racing at Brands Hatch. He, and the car, soon began to go well, consistently doing laps of 51secs on the club circuit, but he often had problems with other people's accidents and he did not get into the results as often as they had hoped.

Being a bright lad, he realised that to go motor racing properly he would have to find a 'Good Fairy' to assist him financially. Now, he had his own car and reasoned that £5000 would be the right sum of money to ask for, to enable him to get results. He went along to a progressive company, and asked them to help.

Now, the 'Good Fairy' was very impressed with Jack and sensed that he was honest, genuinely wishing to make his name in motor racing. Running a progressive company, and not knowing a great deal about motor racing, he decided to contact a firm of motor racing consultants. This was when poor Jack's luck began to fade.

The consultants' report said that, yes, he was a good driver, but that the chassis was uncompetitive (which did not please the poor, but honest, racing car manufacturer at all). Jack was a good prospect for sponsorship, and his racing would cost £15,000 per season with another £15,000 on top for promotion and, to be really effective it would have to be for three seasons, so the total cost would be £90,000, and the consultants would be delighted to handle the promotion for them. Needless to say, the 'Good Fairy' decided that motor racing was not for him and would take no more part in Jack's future.

So, poor Jack still has his racing car (which, incidentally, he considers to be just as competitive as any other make), and he still wants to make his way in this tough sport. But he has become very cynical about the attitude of those who, you would think, should care most about motor racing, but who are killing the sport for the sake of a quid. And who can blame him?

Our story has a sad ending, but also a very useful moral. Here was a driver with talent, who could have achieved results with the £5000 he asked for; and here was a company prepared to put that amount into racing. They would have enjoyed their season's racing and would probably have gone on to further things, but now, because of the money-grabbing attitude shown by some involved in motor racing, they do not want to participate. Sad, but true.

MRS L. G. WESTFOLD

BURY ST EDMUNDS, SUFFOLK

No disruption

As a member of Team Knowldale, I felt I should write this letter in an attempt to sum up the still growing controversy with regard to the RAC Rally.

First, our sincere thanks to all press media, radio and television for their generous coverage. Coverage that in our opinion was fair and to the point, and laid the blame squarely with that profoundly stubborn body in Belgrave Square. We know from the many phone calls and letters from competitors and motor clubs offering their support that our claims are fully justified; in fact the whole rallying fraternity knows this with, of course, the exception of the RAC organisers.

I must state quite plainly, however, that as sportsmen we of Team Knowldale have no intention of disrupting the event by asking marshals to withdraw their voluntary support, which has been suggested. We have no wish to spoil what is after all a first class event (run properly) for the 59 British crews whose entries have been accepted.

Although the RAC have thought fit not not to alter their decision this year, they have at least suggested a meeting with ourselves to advise on next year's entry.

In closing I would ask that anyone, anybody, competitor, marshal or motor club, make their protests known to the RAC and forward a copy to myself or John Clegg. Everyone is entitled to an opinion, let's not be afraid to make these known to the RAC. Please send your copy letters to: Team Knowldale, 8 Rakewood, Littleborough, Lancs.

LITTLEBOROUGH, LANCS — R. S. CRABTREE, *Team Knowldale*

Less sportsmanship

Judging by the various press reports that we read, it seems that, as public interest in the Formula 1 World Championship grows, the sportsmanship among its contenders is sadly on the wane.

1976 was marred by court battles and bickering over technicalities, and this season ended on a sour note with Niki Lauda's refusal to compete in the final three rounds, and James Hunt's over-publicised temperamental right-hook to a Canadian marshal. Neither Hunt nor Lauda have done much in those closing rounds to enhance a sport that is not what it was. No one will deny the courage of Niki's return from Nürburgring 1976, but is he really a worthy champion?

Both James Hunt and Jody Scheckter, like Lauda, have won three races, while the moral champion, Mario Andretti lies back in third position. It is your own editorial comment that winning races is the name of the game, and there does seem to be something odd when the man who wins the most is not the champion.

Driving on your own to several second places is not the stuff of true champions.

I feel, like many others, a strong need to change the points scoring system. The Tarmac British Championship awards double points for a Grand Prix win so why, F1CA/CSI, can we not have more incentive to win? Why can't we have an 18-6-4-3-2-1 score for the first six places? That would sort out the men from the boys!

BROMLEY, KENT — JOHN SAYERS

Help special saloons

As the present season draws to its close, I would like to express a loud and clear cry for help! I am only a spectator, although I am heavily involved behind the scenes. I was a bit perturbed to read that some magazines are mentioning 'a jaded turnout of Special Saloons'.

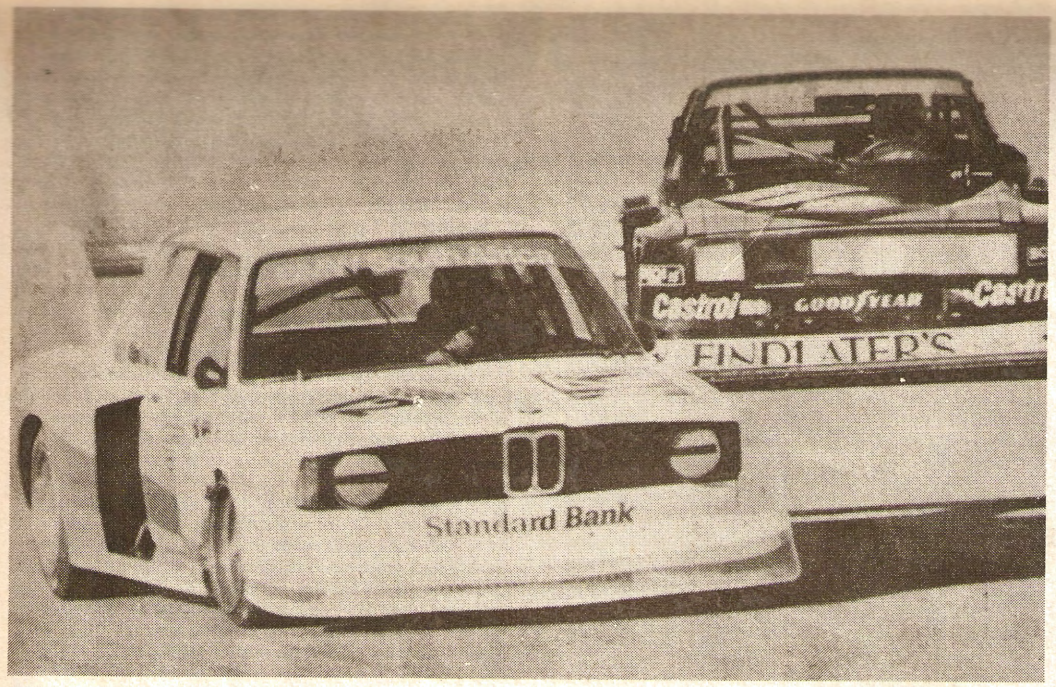
Yes, some are jaded, if anything by the total lack of incentive. Just nobody, but nobody, wants to know about Special Saloons. The prize money is pittance: £35 for a first in any championship round. That does not even cover half of the expenses, let alone get the cars out of that jaded image. There are some lovely cars about, into which a lot of time and attention go—not to mention money. It has become wellnigh impossible to do it for fun. The racing is on the whole good and entertaining. But still Special Saloons are held low in esteem.

It has become a muddled and frustrated class. There will always be those who have less than average cars, who do not win, and never get a credit to their name. But it is these drivers and their continued support who are keeping Special Saloons alive. It is one of the oldest forms of racing, so please, sponsors, let us have a little more moral and financial support. Many formula racing categories are not the greatest, either!

KENT — J. P.

Then as now?

The lead story in AUTOSPORT, November 14, 1952, concerned the late Peter Collins's coming of age party. The guest list resembled a 'who's who' of motor racing, among those in attendance being Reg Parnell, Stirling Moss, Ken Wharton, Bob Gerard, Duncan Hamilton, Ken Gregory, Dennis Poore, George Abecassis and John Heath. Speeches were witty, a huge birthday cake was consumed and the Collins family laid on a superbly stocked bar which would have done a first-class hotel proud. A 500cc Kieft, driven by Dick Irish, had been putting up creditable performances in the USA, winning the Bainbridge hillclimb in Ohio just a few days after taking delivery. From there he went on to Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania, to take the unlimited class, following this victory with another at the Rock County races in Wisconsin. At Thompson, Connecticut, he attained the fastest race average of the day with another triumph to round off an excellent season in which the British car aroused great interest wherever it appeared. Wilbert Todd reigned supreme in the Newry MC-promoted Irish Experts Trial proving, once again, that he was the leading Irish Trials driver of the era.



Marc Surer in the standard Bank-backed BMW 320i leads Hans Heyer's Zakspeed Escort. The German, sharing the Findlaters Whisky-sponsored car with Jody Scheckter, went on to win, while Surer and Manfred Winkelhock had to be content with fifth overall despite winning the second 122-lap part.

Ford dream, BMW nightmare

Works BMW team wins both heats but with different cars—Zakspeed Escorts score one-two for Ford—Scheckter and Heyer each win South African classic for a second time—Local BMW wins Index of Performance—Report: TONY FASSATI.

BMW had an unhappy weekend in South Africa for the Wynn's 1000 Kms at Kyalami. After starting from the back of the 54-car grid, Ronnie Peterson/Hans Stuck won the first of the event's two 122-lap parts in one of the German team's 320i Group 5 cars, but it was retired early on in the second part with a transmission failure. Its sister car, driven by Manfred Winkelhock/Marc Surer, won the second part, but had been delayed in the earlier race because of an electrical fault.

However, apart from a fleeting gearbox problem with the winning car, the Zakspeed Ford Escorts of Jody Scheckter/Hans Heyer and Armin Hahne/Toine Hezemans/Reinhold Jöst ran reliably throughout the six hours, and were able to extract the maximum benefit from the BMW team's dramas to score a noteworthy one-two finish. The third works BMW, driven by Harald Grohs/Markus Höttinger, finished third after being delayed when it ran out of fuel out on the circuit, while the Schnitzer BMW turbo of Klaus Ludwig/Harald Ertl retired early with a broken turbocharger after qualifying comfortably on the pole.

It was Scheckter's second successive Wynn's victory, and the second in three years for Zakspeed.

Like last year, South Africa's touring car classic, the Wynn's 1000, attracted a superb international entry, including five of the rapid 2-litre Group 5 cars which have contested the 1977 German championship. There were three works BMW 320i entries, including one for F1 drivers Ronnie Peterson and Hans Stuck.

The other two cars were driven by regular BMW Junior Team members Manfred Winkelhock/Marc Surer and by Harald Grohs, partnered on this occasion by new team member Markus Höttinger from Austria. The German Zakspeed team arrived with their superbly prepared Ford Escorts for the strong driver pairings of Jody Scheckter/Hans Heyer and Armin Hahne/Toine Hezemans, with Reinhold Jöst as reserve driver. Yet it was the Schnitzer-built BMW 2002 turbo of Klaus Ludwig and Harald Ertl which produced the best practice time on the Friday, and annexed pole position for the first of the two 122-lap heats which made up the 1000kms distance.

The 54 starters for the six-hour event included all the regular South African Touring Car Championship contenders, the fastest of which was Eddie Keizan's BMW 530, co-driven at this meeting by Ian Scheckter.

Both Jochen Neerpasch of BMW and Mike Kranefuss of Ford were in attendance at Kyalami, and the BMW competitions boss was therefore on hand to get another works 320i flown out from Munich when Hans Stuck crashed his car beyond repair during unofficial practice. In fact, the BMW team had all kinds of problems getting the replacement 320 to South Africa, having to suffer numerous air freight delays which meant that Peterson/Stuck could only practise their race car in another unofficial session, and had to start from the back of the enormous grid. In addition, the substitute car was not fitted with a long-range fuel tank, so the F1 pair would have to make an additional refuelling stop, making the task of winning a daunting one.

Kranefuss, aware that the Peterson/Stuck car would have to build up a big lead in order to accommodate the extra stop, instructed Hahne/Hezemans to go after the lead Bee-Em, and Heyer/Scheckter to hold back and content themselves with keeping in touch with the Winkelhock/Surer 320. However, the Schnitzer turbo BMW was clearly so much faster than the works and Ford opposition that neither Neerpasch nor Kranefuss could plan for anything else than the Ludwig/Ertl car breaking during the race itself.

FASTEST QUALIFIERS

Klaus Ludwig (D)	Harald Ertl (D)	BMW 2002 turbo	1:25.4
Marc Surer (CH)	Manfred Winkelhock (D)	BMW 320i	1:26.7
Hans Heyer (D)	Jody Scheckter (ZA)	Ford Escort RS	1:27.2
Ronnie Peterson (S)	Hans Stuck (D)	BMW 320i	1:27.3
Armin Hahne (D)	Toine Hezemans (NL)	Ford Escort RS	1:28.2
Harald Grohs (D)	Markus Höttinger (A)	BMW 320i	1:28.4
Eddie Keizan (ZA)	Ian Scheckter (ZA)	BMW 530	1:37.0

54 starters

RACE

As expected, Ludwig shot off in the 1.4-litre turbo car at the start of the first part, leaving Winkelhock and Heyer disputing second place some way behind. Hezemans, supposed to be one of Ford's hares, diced initially with Grohs for fourth place, as Peterson made his way rapidly up through the field towards him.

However, as Kranefuss had predicted, the Schnitzer car did not last. Only half an hour out from the start, Ludwig coasted silently into the pit road with a terminal turbocharger fault: the axle shaft had snapped.

Heyer now led from Winkelhock, the pair battling furiously until they collided, and the Standard Bank-backed BMW had to make a pitstop with damaged bodywork. Later, Surer took it out again, but he came straight back with a serious electrical fault; the car lost another 20 laps in the pits while the fault was traced, and a defective cable replaced.

The BMW team was in trouble again when Grohs failed to appear, leaving Hezemans on his own. The BMW mechanics waited with the fuel churns at the ready, but it was not until Harald strode in on foot to report that the car was parked, out of fuel, at Club House Corner that they gave up hope entirely. Before the race there had been three works Bee-Ems and two Zakspeed Escorts; now the odds were 2:1 in Ford's favour.

Meanwhile, however, Peterson was charging hard; indeed, after only five laps he had his BMW up into sixth place. He had climbed up to fourth place behind the Grohs/Hezemans struggle when he had to make his pitstop for more fuel.

When Scheckter took over the leading car, Ronnie had already passed the Hezemans Ford, and he moved into the lead while the other Zakspeed Escort was in the pits. Jody rejoined and immediately became engaged with Höttinger (in the Grohs car), having quite a dice with the young Austrian before pulling away. However, Scheckter could not match the pace of Peterson, who had time to hand over to Stuck. The German/Swedish pairing went on to win the first part, and thus started on the pole for the second.

The first few laps of the second part of the race produced the most exciting racing of the meeting, with Stuck, Heyer and Surer driving magnificently, and battling away to the applause of the large crowd. Sadly the group was split up on lap 4 when the BMW of Stuck hit trouble, pulling off the circuit behind the pits where his race ended, one mechanic commenting that whenever Stuck and Peterson share a car it never reaches the finish! This time, the BMW was jammed in second gear.

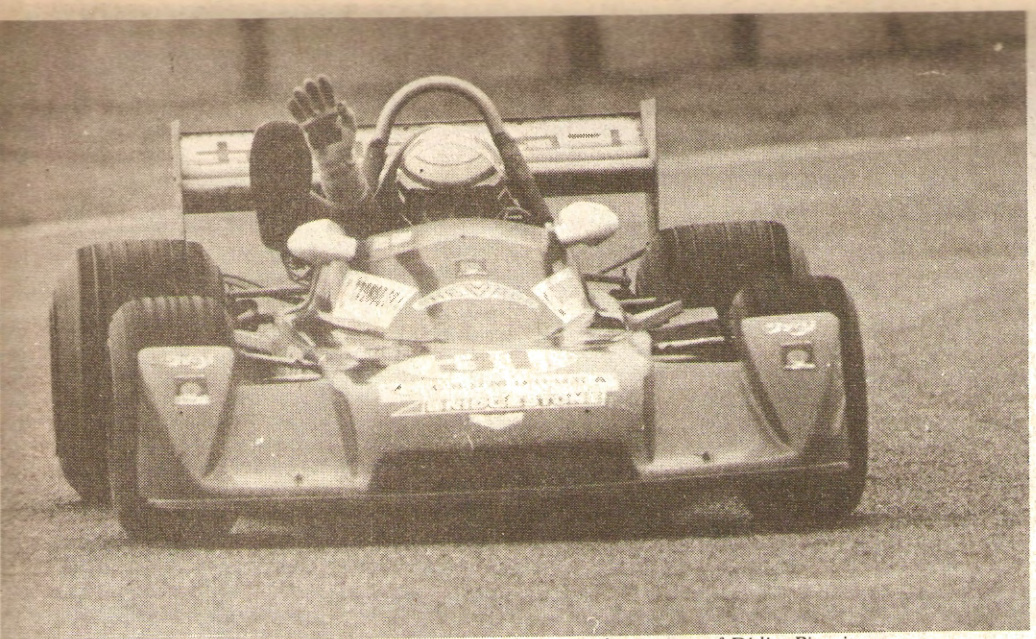
The disconsolate Peterson sat on the pit counter, almost glad to be at the end of a catastrophic season and lamenting his last race win. Although the Winkelhock/Surer car was the quickest machine running, its electrics were still playing up, involving the car in some very quick stops although the fault was not cured. Indeed, Manfred had a frightening moment in the dark when the lights flickered continuously and he had to follow directly in the tracks of another car, using its tail-lamps as a guide to the circuit. Nevertheless, Winkelhock/Surer won the second part.

But the Zakspeed/Findlaters Escorts of Heyer/Scheckter and Hezemans/Hahne/Jöst went on a trouble-free run to the finish, both cars completing the 244 laps without a serious hitch (Hezemans being surprised at the reliability of Zakowski's cars after his miserable outings with the Weisberg/Grab Escort back in Germany). On aggregate, the two Fords finished ten laps ahead of the Grohs/Höttinger BMW, which in turn was eight laps clear of the Index of Performance winning BMW 530 piloted by Alain Lavoipierre/Tony Martin. The Keizan/Ian Scheckter 530 broke a driveshaft. Fifth, and only 19 laps behind the winners after their problems, were Surer/Winkelhock, while the Mazda of Colin Burford/Hennie van der Linde completed the top six.

Wynn's 1000 Kms
Kyalami, South Africa, November 5
Two parts of 122 laps

1, Hans Heyer/Jody Scheckter (2.0 Ford Escort RS), 244 laps;
2, Toine Hezemans/Armin Hahne/Reinhold Jöst (2.0 Ford Escort RS), 244 laps;
3, Harald Grohs/Markus Höttinger (2.0 BMW 320i), 234 laps;
4, Alain Lavoipierre/Tony Martin (3.0 BMW 530), 226 laps;
5, Manfred Winkelhock/Marc Surer (2.0 BMW 320i), 225 laps;
6, Colin Burford/Hennie van der Linde (2.3 Mazda RX), 221 laps;
7, Eddie Keizan/Ian Scheckter (3.0 BMW 530), 208 laps; 8, Basil van Rooyen/Brian Cook (1.4 Datsun 140Z), 206 laps; 9, Andy Terlouw/Ron Samuel (1.3 Mini-Cooper S), 203 laps; 10, Mike Domingo/Abel d'Olivera (2.0 Alfa Romeo GTV), 202 laps; etc.

Fastest lap: Surer, 1m 29.2s, 102.72mph.



Riccardo Patrese took the first Formula 2 win of his career . . . at the expense of Didier Pironi

Patrese at last

Patrese scores his first F2 win of the year—Pironi retires with blown engine with six laps to go—South shows well in first F2 event—Hoshino is Japanese champion—Report: KUNIHIKO AKAI

Taking place only two weeks after the Formula 1 Japanese Grand Prix at Mount Fuji, the Formula 2 JAF Grand Prix at Suzuka provided Italian Riccardo Patrese with his first race victory of 1977, and the first F2 win of his career. Driving his regular Chevron-BMW B40, Patrese won the race easily, but only after the retirement of Didier Pironi's locally entered March 742, which the Frenchman had driven into a strong lead in wet conditions. With six laps to go, Pironi's engine blew in the most expensive manner, for it cost him the 2 million yen first prize—almost £4,500. Japanese drivers filled the next five places, led by Kazuyoshi Hoshino (Nova 512B) and Kunimitsu Takahashi (Kojima 008), both of whom had taken part in the Grand Prix in Fuji. In his first F2 event, Vandervell F3 Champion Stephen South finished seventh with a March 752, but the other three European-based drivers—Danny Sullivan, Keijo Rosberg and José Dolhem—were all out of luck.

F2 JAF GRAND PRIX — **SUZUKA**

The annual JAF Grand Prix at Suzuka was the final round of the Japanese Drivers Championship, which before the race was contested by two drivers, Kazuyoshi Hoshino and Kunimitsu Takahashi. They were the only men still able to take the national title, so for the rest of the 14 Japanese drivers the main interest in the event was the chance to compare their abilities with those of the European-based visitors, of whom there were six.

Hoshino's BMW-powered Nova 512B had new bodywork for this race, looking very similar to the styling used on last year's Ligier F1 car, with a nose-mounted radiator. In the second practice session on the Saturday afternoon, the Heros Racing entered car lapped in 1m 57.42s, which was just good enough for pole position. Sharing the front row with his team leader was the talented young Satoru Nakajima, driving the Heros team's Nova 522, who was just two-hundredths slower.

Two European drivers shared the second row, Keijo Rosberg and Riccardo Patrese. 'Keke' was not driving one of the Fred Opert Chevrons on this occasion, but one of Kauhsen-Renault F2 cars, with which the Finn recorded 1:57.83. However, the Shadow F1 driver did have his regular Strebel-backed Chevron B40, shipped to Japan especially for this race, and managed an identical time to his F2 sparring partner.

Masami Kuwashima was disappointed with the performance of his black Nova 522 in qualifying, an engine misfire slowing him in both sessions, but he recorded 1:57.95 to start on the inside of the third row, alongside Naohiro Fujita with his older Nova 512B (1:58.57). Noritake Takahara, whose Kojima F1 drive in the GP had ended after only one and a half laps, could not break his jinx and found himself qualifying seventh fastest with his Nova 512B at 1:58.97, which was 0.09sec faster than Kenji Takahashi (March 742). Also driving a locally entered 742-BMW was Didier Pironi, whose car handled badly in the first session. In the afternoon, he changed the rear dampers to Japanese-made Kayaba units (as used on the Kojima F1 cars), and the little Frenchman got down to 1:59.43 late in the session despite the fact that his engine would only run to 9000rpm.

Kunimitsu Takahashi, who had his first taste of F1 racing with the Tyrrell 007 two weeks before, had high hopes with his Speedstar Wheels entered Kojima 008, but after recording 1:59.58 he crashed Maso Ono's latest F2 design; the Kojima mechanics worked all night, and the car was ready on race day to take up a position on the fifth row alongside Pironi.

Frenchman José Dolhem, who has had only one European F2 race this season in Willi Kauhsen's team, arranged to drive a Japanese-owned March 742 at Suzuka, and qualified on the sixth row at 2:01.76, alongside Keiji Matsumoto (Chevron B40), who lapped in 2:00.09. Driving the same March 752 used by Alex Ribeiro in this event last year, Stephen South qualified at 2:02.31, while Danny Sullivan, driving a new Ralt RT1 for Tom Hanawa's Le Mans Company team, had transmission problems in qualifying, and could manage a best of only 2:02.37.

There were several Formula Pacific (1.6-litre) cars in the 20-car field, and the fastest of them was Masahiro Hasemi's Datsun-powered Chevron B40 at 2:03.79, which was 15th fastest. Behind Hasemi—the man who proved so quick in the Kojima 007 car in the 1976 Grand Prix—came the old Surtees TS15 of amateur driver Jiro Yoneyama (2:4.90) and then Tetsu Ikuzawa, the leader of the Fuji 2-litre sports car series, who was worried by engine troubles in both sessions (2:04.34). The remaining three grid places were taken up by the Formula Pacific cars of Takao Wada, Kenji Tohira and Funiyasu Satoh, the last-named using a Toyota 2TG engine in his Chevron as opposed to the Datsun units employed in the other Pacific cars.

RACE

Race day dawned very cloudy, and as the first race in the supporting programme got under way the rain drops began to fall. Three minutes before the start of the main race, it began to rain heavily, and the start was delayed while most of the teams changed to wet-weather Bridgestone tyres. The only drivers not to change to wets were Hasemi and Yoneyama.

As the starting light flashed to green, Patrese made a superb start from the second row, and went by Hoshino and Nakajima on the way down to the first corner. They completed the first of the 35 laps in the order Patrese, Hoshino, Rosberg, Kuwashima, Nakajima and the rest, but at the end of the second lap Rosberg was heading for the pits and retirement with a camshaft problem on his Kauhsen. Nakajima passed Kuwashima to take up a Heros Racing second-third formation, and then Pironi also went past Kuwashima, taking over fourth place after only six laps. Pironi was going very fast, and in the next few laps he picked off all three of the drivers in front of him. The rain stopped after ten laps, but the track was still very wet, and once in the lead Pironi went away.

At half-distance, Pironi had a lead of 20secs over Patrese, and a victory for the works Martini-Renault driver looked a certainty. Hoshino in third place had been passed by Kuwashima, but the latter then spun at the hairpin and gave Hoshino back the position, while Kunimitsu Takahashi was up to fourth place with the Kojima.

When 29 laps had been completed, the white March of Pironi suddenly headed for the pits, oil pouring out of the blown engine. Patrese inherited the lead once more, with Hoshino and Takahashi chasing him for all they were worth, but they could not catch the Italian, who won with over 15secs in hand.

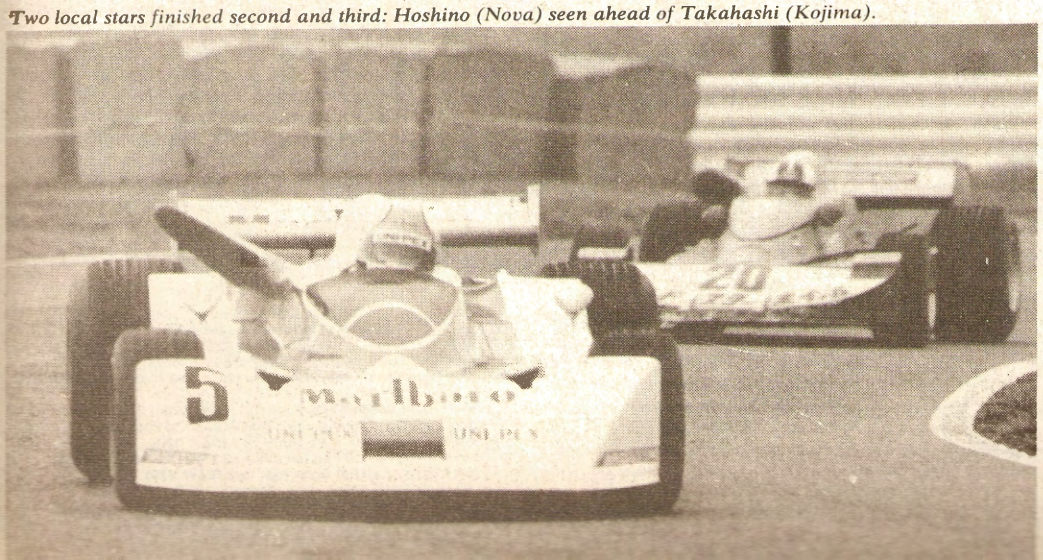
Hoshino successfully held off Takahashi for second place, and thus clinched the Japanese national title for a second time. After driving consistently fast following his spin, Kuwashima managed to finish fourth just ahead of Nakajima and Kenji Takahashi, who crossed the line 0.6sec apart. South, in seventh place, was the last driver to complete the distance unlapped.

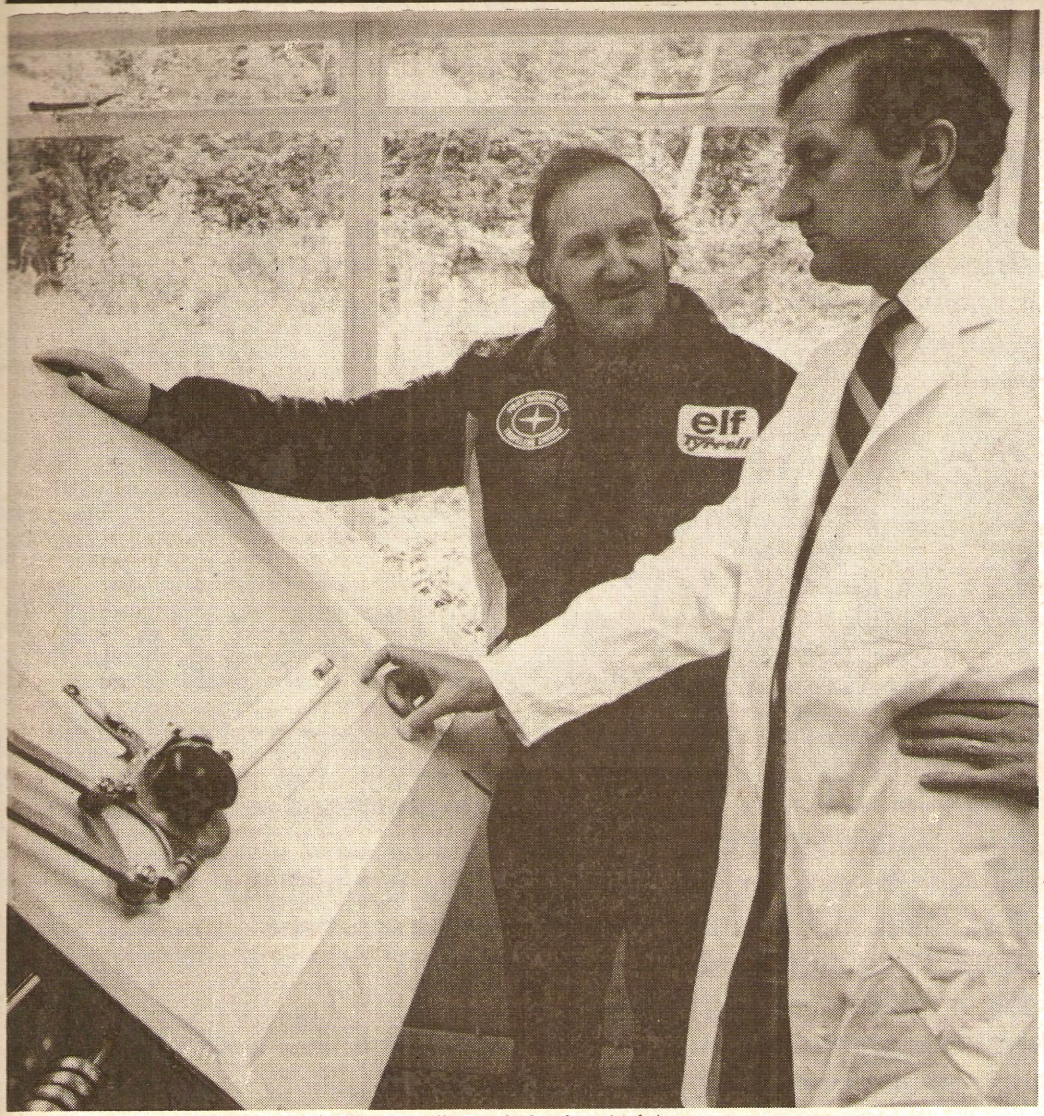
Both Sullivan and Dolhem had pitstops, the American finishing 16th after a long delay caused by a fuel pressure problem, and the Frenchman coming home 11th. In the Formula Pacific class, Hasemi passed Wada with two laps to go as the track dried, having spent the whole race on slicks.

JAF Formula 2 Grand Prix
Suzuka, Japan, November 6
35 laps

1, Riccardo Patrese (Chevron-BMW B40), 1h 18m 44.23s, 99.52mph;
2, Kazuyoshi Hoshino (Nova-BMW 512B), 1h 18m 59.98s;
3, Kunimitsu Takahashi (Kojima-BMW 008), 1h 19m 4.21s;
4, Masami Kuwashima (Nova-BMW 522), 1h 19m 13.70s;
5, Satoru Nakajima (Nova-BMW 522), 1h 19m 15.20s;
6, Kenji Takahashi (March-BMW 742), 1h 19m 15.80s;
7, Stephen South (March-BMW 752), 1h 20m 26.82s; 8, Noritake Takahara (Nova-BMW 512B), 33 laps; 9, Masahiro Hasemi (FP Chevron-Datsun B40), 33 laps; 10, Takao Wada (FP Nova-Datsun 512), 33 laps; etc.

Two local stars finished second and third: Hoshino (Nova) seen ahead of Takahashi (Kojima).





Phillippe with his predecessor at Elf Team Tyrell, Derek Gardner (right).

The man behind Tyrrell 008

The new Elf-Tyrrell F1 car announced this week brings its designer Maurice Phillippe back to Grand Prix racing after a two-year absence. DOUG NYE outlines Phillippe's career since the great days at Team Lotus.

The Silverstone paddock, British Grand Prix meeting, 1975. Maurice Phillippe, fresh back from three years working in America, meets Ken Tyrrell.

"Hello", says Ken, "you're back then?".

"Yes . . .", replies Maurice.

"What are you going to do?"

"Well, I'm thinking about that. . . ."

"Don't rush into anything—think about it well before you sign with anybody. . . ."

Ken Tyrrell's public image is barely noted for offering friendly free advice, but that last remark might have meant everything—or perhaps it meant nothing. As it was the ex-Lotus and Vel's Parnelli Jones engineer did not rush into anything, did not sign with anybody else and, when Derek Gardner decided to vacate his Team Tyrrell position this season to return to 'legitimate' industry, Phillippe was given the job.

Maurice has made a comeback to his first love—Formula 1 racing at top level—after six rather lack-lustre years. During his time at Team Lotus, when he was responsible for the Lotus 49s and 72s, he stood at the top of the F1 designers' league. His time in America working on USAC and an under-financed F1 project for VPJ did little for his reputation. Motor racing favours harsh judgments. Just like a racing driver, a racing car designer is only as good as his last result. Maurice never found himself going down the slippery slope into minor formulae or into sub-contracting detail jobs for the overworked team engineers, but while his sidestep across the Atlantic offered good experience it took him away from the white heat of Grand Prix competition. On his return to the UK he kept his hand in with consultancy work on the Copersucar and free of calendar pressures he sat back to ponder deeply the problem of F1 design. More than that, he spent his own money in having prototype parts made and machined for the car he would like to build, and there are not too many engineers with that kind of courage in their convictions. . . .

Maurice Phillippe is a Londoner, born in April 1932 and raised in Edmonton where he was educated at Latymer's Grammar School. He became a De Havilland engineering apprentice, learned to drive to ease commuting between Edmonton and Hatfield and 'got in' with the DH racing band. In the early 50s several DH employees were closely involved with the emergent Lotus Engineering Company of Tottenham Lane, Hornsey. Frank Costin, 'Mac' Mackintosh and Peter Ross were a notable trio and, with two apprentice friends, Maurice emulated them and planned the 'ultimate 750'. It never materialised but he built instead his own 1172 Formula stressed monocoque sports racer, riveted-up from aluminium sheet and clad in an all-enveloping body. It was called the MPS, Lotus did much of the welding and Maurice began racing it in 1955 in the up-to-1500cc sports-racing class which "was much more fun than 1172."

National Service in the RAF called a temporary halt and when he returned to DH in 1958 the MPS was obsolete. He sold it as a road car, and last caught a fleeting glimpse of it in 1965 when he went to watch the Brighton Run and his creation flashed across some traffic lights where he was waiting!

Back at DH he planned an 1100cc sports-racer and got to know yet another Hatfield employee, Brian Hart, who was preparing his Terrier in one of the company hangars. Formula Junior took effect internationally in 1959 and Hart and Phillippe built themselves a front-engined Ford 105E Junior each—Brian's the latest Terrier and Maurice's being christened the Delta.

He crashed it twice in its debut meeting at Brands Hatch, Easter 1960, and wrote it off but by this time cars had replaced aeroplanes in his affections. He joined Ford at Aveley to become a project engineer on the Anglia 1200 and there he met an old friend from the RAF Wireless School at Yatesbury—Mike Cadby, who was later to build the Dino Clubman's cars. Phillippe, Cadby and another colleague tried hard to buy the Cosworth Lotus 7 but couldn't afford the asking price. A year later Bill Brown called from Cosworth to complain that the 7 was taking too much space, would Maurice like to take it off their hands? He did just that—for a very favourable price—and there followed two very successful club race seasons in which Maurice Phillippe was always front running and often a winner.

In mid-1965 there came another 'phone call out of the blue, this time from Colin Chapman's secretary ". . . Asking", Maurice recalls, "if I'd like to come up and had a chat with you know who . . . with a view to. . . ." In September he joined Team Lotus as the design team—of one.

The story of the competition cars which flowed from his drawing board during the next six years fills a book (by me) and his first job was to design the tubular engine bay needed to adapt the one-off Lotus 39 monocoque (intended for the flat-16 Climax engine) to a 4-cylinder Climax FPF for the Tasman Series in 1966. His designs thereafter progressed through the H16 BRM-engined 43, the F2 48, the Indy turbine 56 and F1 turbine 56B, the 4-wheel-drive 63 and Indy 64 and included the classical World Championship-winning 49 and 72 which became such trend-setters. Just how much of those cars was Chapman and how much was Phillippe will become an historical teaser, but Maurice's was a large share for sure.

Indy visits

During his two three-year Lotus contracts Maurice made several trips to Indianapolis. There, in 1966, Jim Clark and Al Unser handled the works Lotus 38s run in dayglo STP livery, or 'Granatelli Green', as it was known. Maurice was taking care of them and coincidentally both Andretti and A. J. Foyt had bought David Lazenby-built 38s from Lotus Components and were running them as alternative qualifiers alongside their American machines.

These cars, with their monocoques built in the Midlands on a Lotus sub-contract, were the famous 'Soft Alloy Specials' with tubs of commercial aluminium made in error. Both lucky owners sought out Phillippe saying "Hey, show us how to sort this lot out. . . ."

From this introduction to the USAC scene Maurice got to know both Al Unser and Mario Andretti quite well, particularly since the latter drove for Team Lotus in 1968-69. Offers began to be made and by 1971 there was heavy pressure to attract him to the States. Four USAC teams made overtures and in 1971 Maurice took a holiday in Southern California where, "coincidentally", Firestone were running a tyre test sesssion at Ontario Motor Speedway, where all interested teams would run.

When Maurice saw the Californian lifestyle he was interested, and as Andretti had finally opted to leave Granatelli and join Al Unser in the Parnelli Jones/Vel Miletich team so Phillippe's mind was made up.

His Lotus contract expired in September '71 and Maurice and his wife left for California where Vel's Parnelli Jones were based in Torrance. Starting work on his first VPJ track car he found attitudes entrenched in the USAC faithful:

"George Bignotti was VPJ's Chief Mechanic. He had been really big on the Indy scene for years. I very seldom saw eye to eye with him, or with American organisational methods, and there was always this funny almost anti-engineer feeling within USAC. You've got to bear in mind how they had a nice comfortable thing going with their front-engined roadsters until Jack Brabham and then Lotus turned up with funny cars from Europe and just destroyed the Establishment. We ruined it for them and the reaction once they had gone rear-engined and independently-suspended was to fight against any further form of innovation. Like the DFX which is rocking the Establishment at the moment; there's a USAC move to force the DFX users to run less turbocharger boost than the old Offies. That's typical. . . .

Despite this reluctance to face reality Maurice found VPJ's facilities almost unimaginable: "They had their own R&D company where Dick Jones—who was West Coast Competitions Manager for Champion Spark Plugs—developed their engines. He also had the Champion dyno facility in Long Beach and whizzed from one shop to the other. Even *he* never saw eye to eye with Bignotti and George had his own facility, which he had sold to VPJ when he joined them, actually at Indy with *his* own dyno. Then in our shop in Torrance we had yet another dyno—superb, no comparison with the little rabbit hutches you see at Cosworth where you can barely slide around the engine.

"I was just amazed to see the waste in USAC racing. You know, Drake just pushes out his Offenhauser engines looking barely distinguishable from those built pre-war. Each one comes out to a certain standard, save for a few minor variations for special customers and then they buy the engine and just throw away most of its insides and replace them all with their pet bits. Jones and Bignotti used to argue endlessly about what parts should go in where. . . ."

Adapting to USAC

If you ask Maurice how he tackled USAC racing, the answer is bluntly honest: "Well, I think if we're truthful I never did really tackle oval track racing. In retrospect I tended to build over-innovative road racers and expected them to work on the banked ovals!

"You see, my Indy experience with the 4-wd cars indicated that their nice smooth trajectory through the turns was their major advantage, because they lapped quickly and yet weren't all that fast down the straight. If the truth be known those turbines weren't that much more powerful than a Cosworth DFV. Because of USAC restrictions they just didn't pump the volume of air and even around 105-110 per cent power those little turbines were giving at the outside 550hp.

"That experience indicated that a steady car in the corners was required and if there's any tendency for the car to show minor instability it detunes the driver so rapidly you can forget it. You see them come into the pits and sit there, eyes staring and white-faced, and you know you've got chassis trouble!

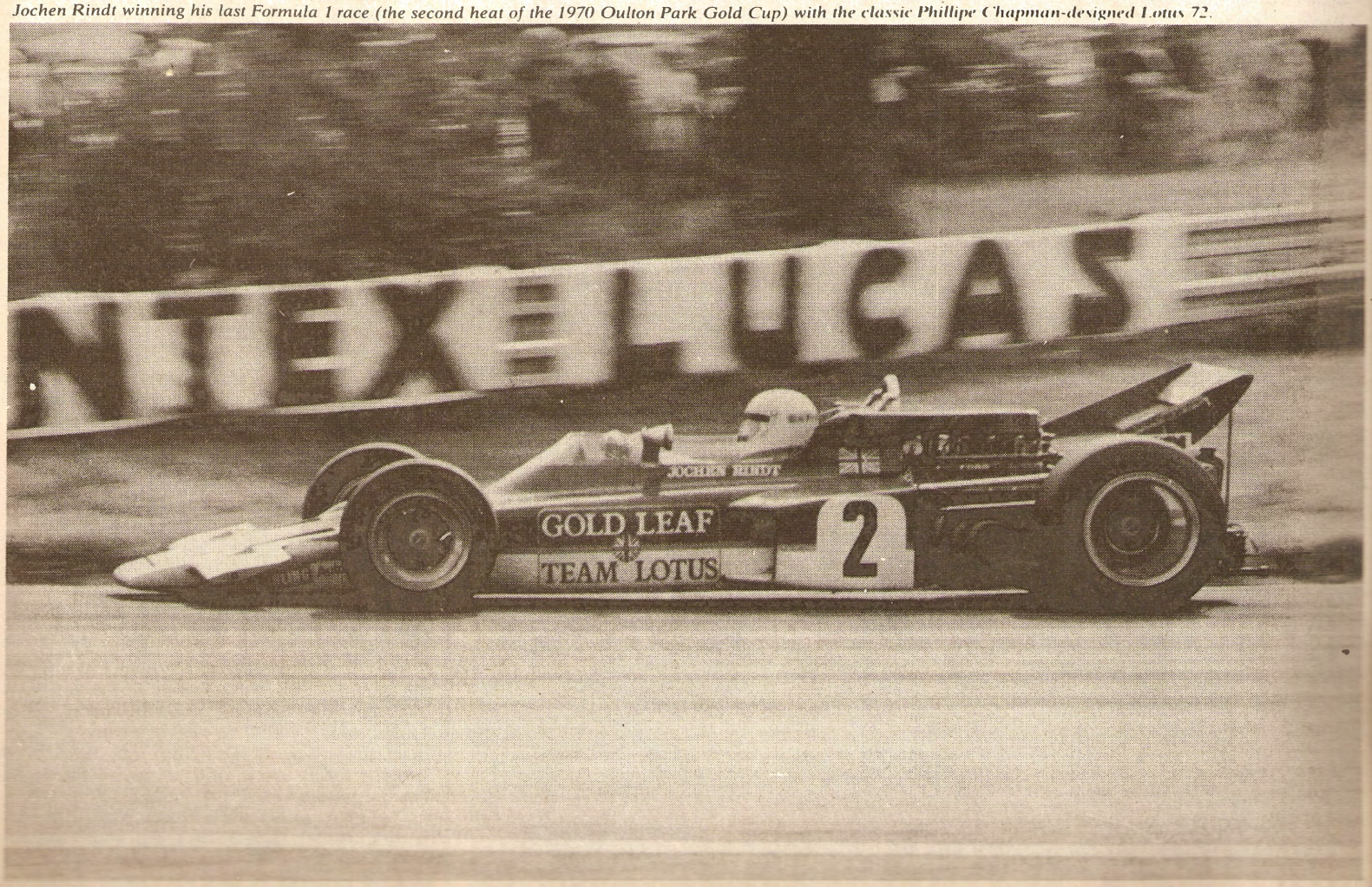
"The corners are long, OK, but they're taken at very high speed and any bobble on the car makes all the difference if you've set it up to clear the outside wall by two inches on the exit, between doing that and just creaming the lot into the concrete. You can't back-off either at that kind of speed so an unstable chassis is a very scarey thing.

"So for USAC they build cars with very stiff springs and 1¼-inch *solid* front anti-roll bars because they can't afford to roll. They don't have the suspension offset which we used in the 'sixties. Some people do use slightly stiffer right-side springs now but basically the whole car is set up assymmetrically anyway. When the car sits static it's actually got a tilt to the left, there's differential castor built into the front uprights and they run something like a quarter-inch stagger in the right-rear tyre—it has a larger diameter than the left-rear so that it actually powers the car round to the left in the turns and the driver has to negotiate the straights with right lock on the steering. . . ."

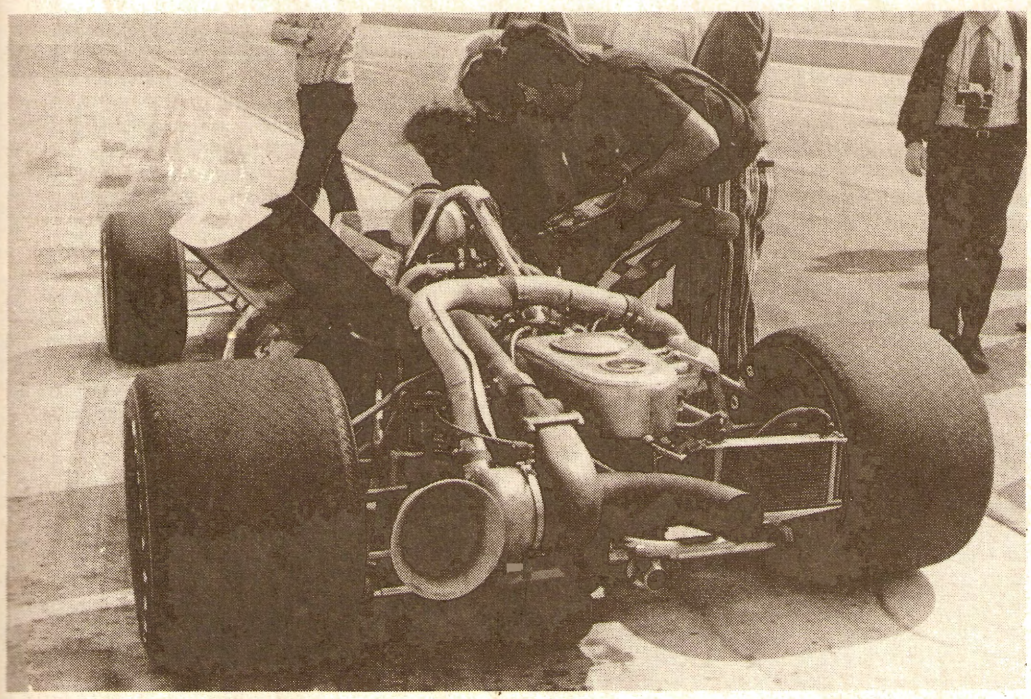
If that was the challenge, where did Phillippe go wrong?

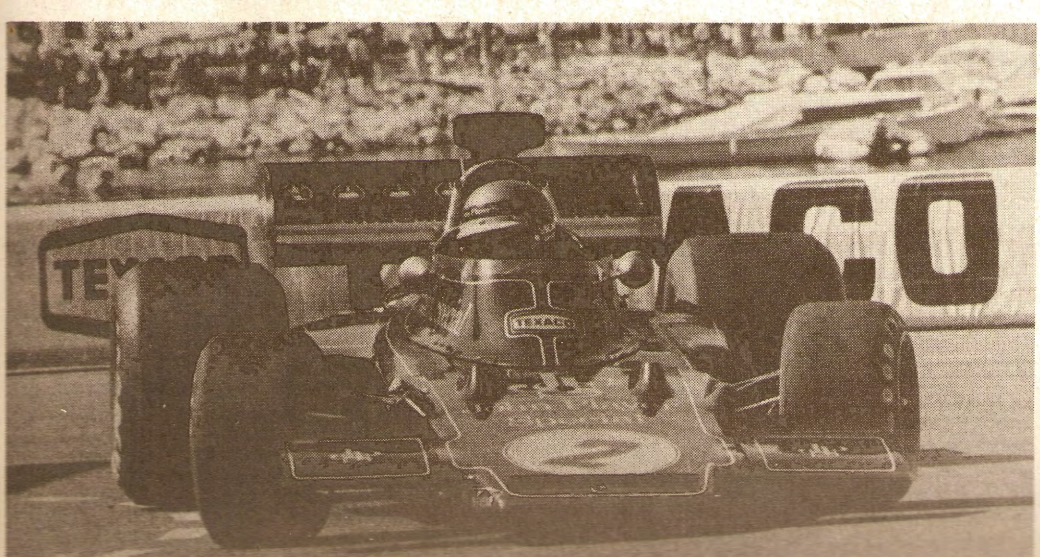
"It's easy to see in retrospect. I think I never sprung my USAC cars hard enough, and on the first car especially I made a mistake on the rear roll-centre height. At the enormous speeds these cars run aerodynamic downloads are immense so the cars are literally buried onto the bumpstops, particularly at the rear. It should have been obvious, but the rear roll-centre on a track car has to be much higher than on a road-racer otherwise, as the car settles, its roll-centre submerges below ground level and that gives a violent characteristic change at crucial moments which makes the car very unstable and scares the hell out of the driver!"

Jochen Rindt winning his last Formula 1 race (the second heat of the 1970 Oulton Park Gold Cup) with the classic Phillipe Chapman-designed Lotus 72.



Two views of an early test session with the futuristic-looking VPJ-1 USAC car in 1971; Mario Andretti is at the wheel. Bottom: The Lotus 72 design was still winning races in 1974; this is Ronnie Peterson at Monaco.





The man behind Tyrrell 008

continued

Phillippe's striking VPJ-1 chassis quickly had its rear suspension modified. The cars had triangular section hulls with dihedral midship wing sections. "Their object was to reduce aerodynamic load on the outer wheels and load up the inside wheels in the turns when the car went into yaw. As the rules then read, the wings could extend to the midpoint of the tyre and that gave sufficient room to install a fair-sized dihedral wing section around the CG of the car. It showed quite well in gusty conditions, which are always troublesome in USAC racing, and on one occasion Joe Leonard was running at Trenton when he started to spin in his own oil on the long, steep banking there. He was broadside at very high speed when the dihedrals bit at that extreme state of yaw and snapped him back straight without spinning. Anyway, at Indy I suggested running one car without its dihedrals to see how it went and as soon as one car was stripped so the other two drivers had theirs stripped off too—quick as a flash—and they never went back on. It was the reluctance to innovate which left them for scrap. Give 'em a chance to go safe and conventional and they'd take it. . . ."

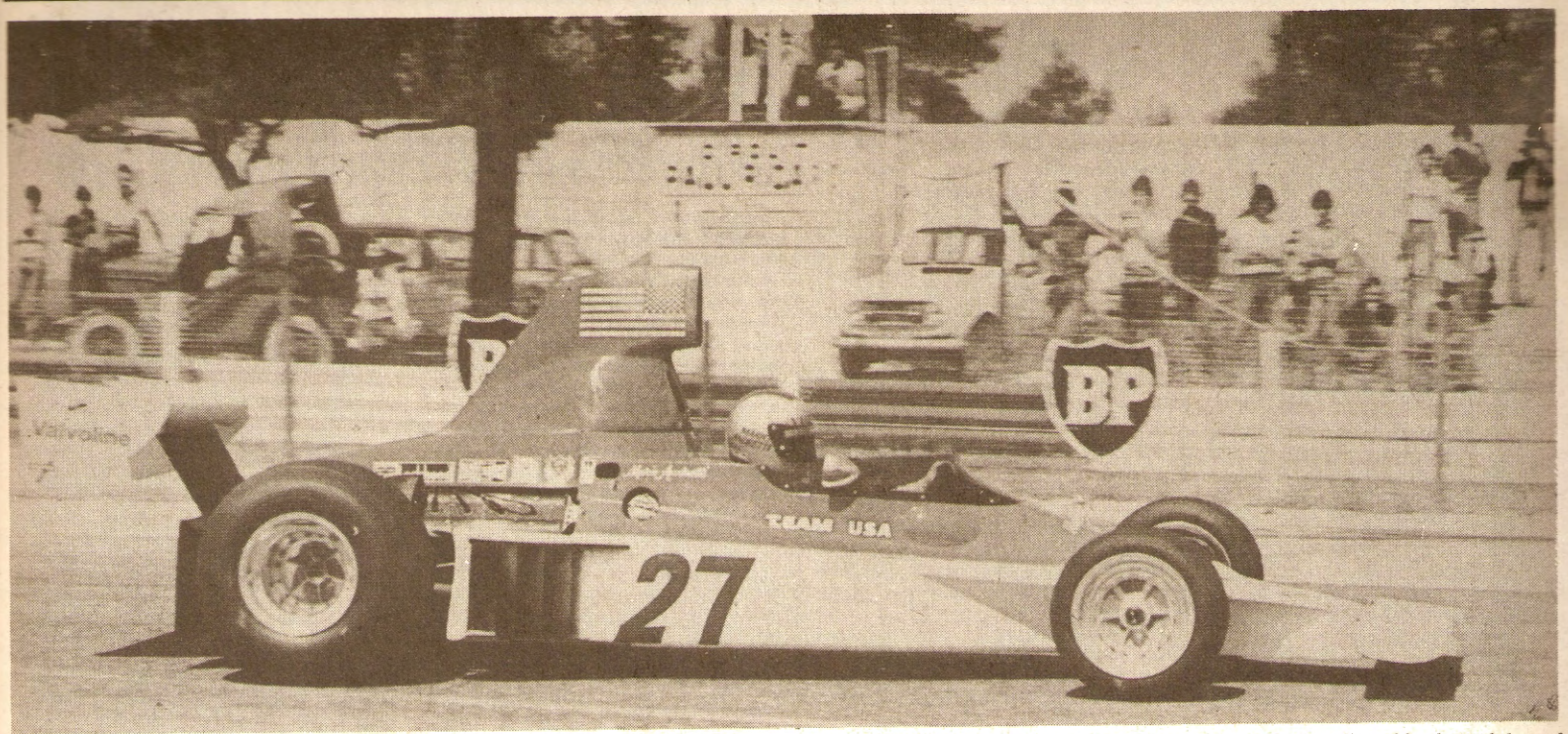
VPJ won three USAC races and reliable Joe Leonard brought them his second consecutive National Championship title with these VPJ-1s in '72, while Al Unser and Mario Andretti between them led most of the races but often hit trouble. Each driver had two cars available, plus his own chief mechanic and crew. Maurice supervised the whole complex operation, and rates Unser and Andretti as "very useful drivers" while bespectacled ex-motorcycle champion Joe Leonard always amazed him. "Both his team-mates treated him as a competitor should they ever be placed to lap him, because he was seldom aware of their presence! Yet he was always consistent and always there. On a bike he came into his element. One day at Ontario Parnelli brought along some trial bikes and persuaded Joe to have a go. He'd storm down the pit lane, lock up front and rear on the brakes, balance there virtually stationary in a big cloud of tyre smoke, then select first and poodle away for another go. Remarkable."

Closed course record

Maurice wanted to develop the VPJ-1s into 1973 but their drivers held that they were too nervous as chassis and Vel's Parnelli opted for an all-new VPJ-2 design. Maurice produced a slab-type car with a little Eagle influence in its bluff nose and divided radiator. Mario did most of the testing at Texas International Speedway and there later that season Mario set his incredible closed course record of 214.158mph with the car pancaked onto its bump-stops by sheer air pressure. Maurice recalls TIS as one of the most spectacular USAC venues with its steep-banked D-shape "making standing in the centre rather like control-line flying. You can see right into the cockpit as the car goes round the bankings and with a radar gun aimed at your car you can read off its speed—220mph,230, 233, 235—whaaammm. Great!"

That VPJ-2 proved very good on fast tracks but unhappy on the mile ovals. It won two early races but come Milwaukee the drivers persuaded Vel and Parnelli to adopt 'Chinese Eagle' rear suspension, bought from fake-Eagle constructor Grant King, unbeknown to Phillippe. He was not happy.

For 1974 VPJ bought Eagles while Maurice built a smaller VPJ-3 which was tested at Indy inconclusively, then placed on pole at Trenton and led the race in Andretti's hands before its



Mario Andretti at Paul Ricard in the Ford-Cosworth engined Parnelli VPJ-4 Formula 1 car in 1975. The Parnelli Grand Prix programme was badly affected by the withdrawal of Firestone from Formula 1, and the VPJ-4 was Phillipe's last F1 design until the new Tyrrell 008.

engine blew. Back at Indy Mario preferred his Eagle and the Phillippe car was relegated to the back store.

Meanwhile, Formula 1 was in the wind. With Firestone's concentrated support it was a project of immense potential. "We started in April on a car to run that August and to race at Mosport and the Glen that autumn. We had a 3½-year Firestone contract to run, Mario and we could design the car on the basis of 100 per cent Firestone tyre support; rather like Renault with Michelin today. Tyres would be tailored to suit the individual car with the advantage of all Firestone's experience. This was an excellent set-up and the car was a very much refined Lotus 72 if you like, with torsion bar suspension, side radiators and inboard brakes. I used inboard front brakes because providing you have the tyres specially made to match that set-up you can gain an advantage.

"You see, with inboard front brakes you don't have the brake putting heat into the wheel and thence into the tyre carcass and so you can run a much softer compound than can an outboard-brake car. It's nothing to do with wheel loading, it's simply heat from the outboard brake being conducted to the wheel and tyre. There are a multitude of factors involved, of course, but with Firestone's help we could have run qualifying tyres through a race distance while anybody else would have burned them out in a couple of laps. . . .

"Anyway, two months after starting the contract Firestone quit abruptly. Vel's reaction was to buy all the existing tyre stocks and moulds and to sign on a young tyre engineer but that just left us with a frozen state of obsolete development. Then the sponsors lost confidence. From having Viceroy and Samsonite, Castrol, Minolta Cameras and Olympia Beer backing the team—big operation it was, F5000, drag-racing and off-road as well as USAC and now Formula 1—we lost first Castrol. Then there was a kind of domino thing as the others lost confidence and backed out. Firestone gave lump sum compensation in lieu of the technical support we needed and suddenly from having the basis for a terrific F1 programme we were scratching. When the team went off to Argentina and Brazil for the start of 1975 and my airline reservation was cancelled, and Vel said 'I'm not going so why should you', I realised it was all over."

Maurice had been joined at VPJ by his former Lotus assistant John Baldwin, and by Dick Scammell. They set up VPJ's European HQ in the old GRD works at Griston, Norfolk, but as the European GP season began even Andretti was saying "Ah don't think it's gonna last". Maurice had pencilled the basis of a Cosworth DFX-powered (the VPJ-5), USAC derivative of the F1 car and as his contract expired on May 1, 1975, he did not renew it. Andretti blistered him, saying that Phillippe wasn't a racer and had quit when the going got hard. Maurice felt that until Mario devoted himself to a Formula 1 season and began to spend more time in Europe he was not taking it seriously. In retrospect, Phillippe quit because he *was* a racer, and VPJ were not racing realistically.

As it was he gave up a lot in leaving the team; a beautiful apartment surrounded by the Pacific Ocean at King Harbour and a weekend home 7,000ft up in the mountains at Lake Arrowhead—even though he seldom found time to enjoy either of them. Back in Britain he tried with Dick and Andrew to find sponsorship to acquire the VPJ-4 Grand Prix cars, while at that British GP he had his brief chat with Ken Tyrrell. He also had Frank Williams introducing him to Walter Wolf, and Graham Hill making noises. Big Lou's funfair at Bourne was another suitor, but the Griston team broke up as Ferguson moved into the Lotus boat companies and later became JPS team manager for this past season, and Dick Scammell and Maurice were left in fruitless search for a sponsor.

Tyrrell 008 is born

It was during this period that Maurice designed an F1 car with no inhibitions about deadlines and race dates and began some extensive research which in part sees the light of day in Tyrrell 008. He produced wind tunnel models and drawings, and invested in some metalwork.

By the middle of '76 the VPJ project was beyond saving and walking through the Brands Hatch paddock tunnel Maurice emerged in time to see Emerson Fittipaldi wrestling his Copersucar down Paddock Hill in practice for the GP. Moments later in the pits he met the Brazilian brothers saying "What *on earth* are you doing . . . ?" A lively discussion resulted in him becoming their chassis consultant, concentrating on solving some of Copersucar's chassis, suspension, cooling and oil system problems. He made the car a regular qualifier instead of a regular non-qualifier and, while not very quick, it was far from very, very slow.

"The Copersucar had all the typical characteristics of a car in trouble. All its brakes were wound on the front, purely because the rear suspension geometry allowed it to take on too much positive camber under braking, up-edging the tyres and so allowing the rear brakes to lock. It wouldn't tolerate any braking on the back at all, it had great heavy springs and an enormous front anti-roll bar. All bad news. The back end of that modified car has gone basically onto the new car which Dave Baldwin designed for them for this year. You know Copersucar have quite a good facility and they do have the potential to succeed. But it is essential that the designer should be on site in Brazil where parts are made because remote control just does not work in Formula 1. . . ."

In February Derek Gardner contacted Maurice to handle some work which Derek's P34 programme required and in May Ken Tyrrell began asking what Maurice thought were "strange questions". Gardner had decided to leave and when Tyrrell offered Maurice the job outright it was too good an opportunity to dismiss.

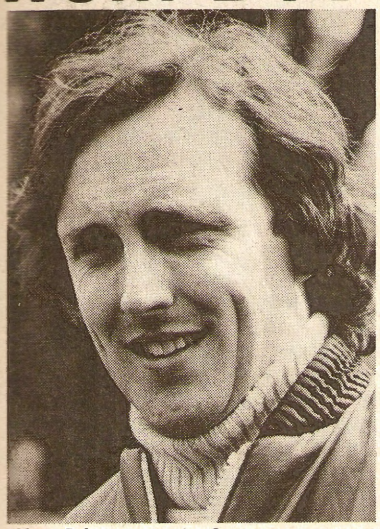
Of the six-wheelers, whose development Derek saw through before he left, Maurice remarks: "That innovation has a lot of merit, but I'm not sure necessarily that the best advantage was taken of the possibilities. Unfortunately the cars are tremendously overweight" (he is a weight-saving fanatic, as 008 will show) and going from an excessively narrow track to an excessively wide track added a great deal of extra weight to load up things like brakes even more. Extra weight means you need a special tyre which demands wholehearted tyre company support. . . ."

Of his new team he says: "I'm very happy because it has such vast potential and is more likely than most to realise it. Finding Karl Kempf's research facility operating in your Grand Prix team is absolutely tremendous and although Karl's research is long-term it will pay off. Having him here really gilds the bloody lily!"

Maurice Phillippe is back in mainstream motor racing with—perhaps—the feeling that he has something to prove. After six years of ups and six years of relative downs he has joined a team which has its own reputation to recover. Racing drivers are at their best when they are hungry. . . . Elf-Team Tyrrell and Maurice Phillippe should both be ravening for

edited by Peter Newton

Latest from DTV



Chris Sclater—staying?

Chris Sclater's future with DTV seems to be on the way towards settlement, although it is by no means 100 per cent finalised. In essence, the deal involves a Chevette drive with General Motors (Europe), the administration of the project to be undertaken from the company's offices in Belgium, with a view to assisting the promotion of GM (Vauxhall) marketing operations across the Channel. Principal sphere of operations would be France, Belgium, Holland and Italy, and the rallies in prospect would be mainly ECR rather than WCR.

Such a project naturally demands two cars, and probably a further practice car as well, so it is naturally an expensive and ambitious programme. However, it is a programme which could undoubtedly suit Chris who would prepare and look after the cars himself in England (for a number of reasons, not least of which is the added complication and expense of frequent visits to Shepreth from abroad).

However, the European connection have not finalised a budget for the operation as yet, although they are obviously very keen, and as Chris remarked to us on Monday: "I naturally can't agree to the project until I know the programme". Chris's only misgivings about the prospects for such a development are that he will miss out on British events; and he is in no doubt that, to remain really competitive, the British scene is the place to keep one's hand in; even if more attractive rallies exist on the Continent. However, the GM (Europe) operation now seems a strong possibility, and Chris is very much the sort of determined character to make it a great success (he's not a bad engineer either!). Martin Holmes will be co-driving.

Chris is hoping to have two rally cars at his disposal and is currently looking for suitable premises near his Surrey home in which to prepare the cars. GM (Belgium) will be taking care of all the paperwork, etc.

DTV's other major operations are very much as outlined in AUTOSPORT recently. Airikkala's programme is to include the Home International championship plus additional premier European events including the Swedish and 1000 Lakes (there is also talk of the Portuguese event); while Jim McRae is going to be as busy as we intimated—driving the second G4 Chevette in Home Internationals as well as a new single camshaft SMT G5 Chevette on our Castrol/AUTOSPORT rounds (this presumably being the 'blueprint' for future G1 projects).

The Chevette is being built at SMT's High Performance Centre in Dunkeld Road, Perth. Ian Anderson and Alex Strathdee, Jimmy's specialist rally mechanics will be looking after the car, while Walter Gray will be wearing his usual team manager's hat. According to Walter, the car will be similar to the Group 4 Chevette. It will have a single cam 2300 engine and be constructed to a simpler and lower cost specification. It will be indentified as the 'SMT for Vauxhall' car and will be a part of a five car 1978 line-up representing SMT's Motor Sport Division.

At last! Rohrl signs

German sources confirm the Fiat deal

Walter Rohrl has at last signed for Fiat; that was the news that broke last Friday in Germany following his signature on an Italian contract the previous day. The deal, which comes as a surprise to many, follows almost a month of speculation with regard to the future of the immensely talented German, during which he has been considering offers from Porsche, Ford and Opel in addition to the Fiat contract.

All the possibilities had much to offer, so it's no real surprise that he has taken so long to make up his mind. Besides, when one is that much in demand, one can afford to let the bidding push itself as high as possible! His existing situation with Opel did not in itself promise immediate success for the future, but the company were apparently quite happy for him to take up the additional Porsche contract for Safari (and six races); as were Ford when Peter Ashcroft talked to him in Cologne recently. The Ford programme appears to have been centred on the German championship, with one or two major tarmac internationals towards the end of the year. One also imagines that Walter might have been asked to participate in some racing on their behalf.

The Porsche offer, however attractive, was, by definition, small in terms of appearances (if not in remuneration), and the Ford offer was also once again (they tried two years ago) taken very seriously, especially in the light of Walter's recent experience of Fiat at first hand, and it is well known that he has not been entirely happy with the existing situation during his three event tenure (San Martino, Canada and San Remo) with the team.

The latest Fiat offer obviously put the others into the shade, however. Its basic essentials are as follows: eight guaranteed WCR rounds for Fiat; and a Lancia Stratos for the German championship! In addition we gather that the cars may well be painted white, and thus available for any sponsor(s) whom Rohrl will doubtless be able to attract. Thus the German was offered a degree of autonomy and a number of definite appearances which must have been to his liking. In fact this deal must constitute one of the most attractive offers ever made to an individual rally driver. In the inimitable parlance of *The Godfather*, it was an offer that he could scarcely refuse.

Walter Rohrl—superb offer.

Walter may thus find himself on Safari competing *against* Porsche, since it's likely that either Fiat, Lancia or the combined team will be competing there. The Lancia versus Porsche battle in Kenya should be an interesting spectacle.

Christian Geistdörfer will be co-driving for Walter next year.

Fiat and 'Flag . . . together

Any differences of opinion about rallying that Billy Coleman and Dave Richards have had recently (Richards expressed his unwillingness to contest the RAC Rally with Coleman in the Chequered Flag Stratos) seem to have been overcome and they will be teaming up again on the RAC Rally after all.

The event will be the most adventurous so far undertaken by the 'Flag team who, in conjunction with Fiat (England), are entering Timo Makinen, Simo Lampinen and Timo Salonen in Fiat 131 Abarths under their banner. This will mean the 'Flag providing the Fiat works team with a service crew, so that all six 131s can service together.

As well as this the 'Flag Stratos and the Alitalia Stratos of Sandro Munari will be sharing the same servicing facilities with Graham Warner acting as sweep car for the team in constant radio contact with both cars.

● The work load on David Sutton (Cars) for the RAC Rally has been lightened a little with the withdrawal of Gilbert Staepelaere's RS1800 from the event following an accident on the Warsaw Rally in Poland two weeks ago. Although his car is now at Boreham for repairs, there is no way that Gilbert will be able to start the event.

New A2

As we mentioned last week, an additional version of Dunlop's A2 rally tyre makes its debut for this year's defence of the Lombard RAC Rally. The modifications include a new sidewall and stepped shoulder, incorporating buttress reinforcement with a more open tread pattern. The stepped shoulder should help resist damage from rock and forest debris. A kerbing rib has been added to protect the rim and reduce the risk of punctures, wheel and sidewall damage. The A2 was first introduced for the 1975 RAC Rally where it helped Timo Makinen to his hat-trick of victories. In its new version it will have a softer compound to cope with a wider variety of conditions. This compound is in fact the now familiar 534—the Acropolis 'qualifying' rubber.

For those stages, notably in the Kielder complex, where MS tyres will still be needed, the 195/70-13 MS Mk2 in its Acropolis Rally form with reinforced, stepped shoulder buttresses, steel belts, and harder compound, is also being made available.

To cater for the requirements of top teams, along with 40 per cent of the total entry who are running on Dunlop, 2500 tyres will be required and that supply will be backed up by a 20-strong team from Dunlop's Competition Centre providing service throughout the

The RAC rivals?

RAC Rally latest....

Last withdrawals—and new sponsors

There were a total of 35 entries remaining for the Clubmans Trophy section of the rally when we made a final check before going to press on Tuesday. No numbers have been reallocated but the main event runners now finish at number 195 (Guy Lockwood). A total of 11 clubman crews have so far been accepted into the main event following the withdrawal of the Polski Fiats, Jacques Marchand from France (168), Glen Mitton (140), Anders Tunemar from Sweden (136), Tim Brise (123), Hans Lummert from Germany (102), David Grainger (64), Harold Demuth from Germany (61), and Gilbert Staepelaere (37). Thus out of an original total of 69 crews entered in the Clubman section, 23 had withdrawn and 11 had been accepted into the main event as we closed for press.

No Polskis

As we went to press on Monday, we heard that Polski Fiat had withdrawn their three entries from the Lombard RAC Rally which starts this Sunday from Wembley. These are Andrez Jarosiewicz (22); Thomasz Ciercierzynski (71) and Maeciej Stawowiak (76). No official reason was cited for the sudden withdrawal, but rumours prevailing suggest that there has been a reshuffle of the hierarchy within the team which may have led to a cancellation of any immediate plans. They have apparently paid their entry fee twice!

● Participants on the RAC Rally who find themselves short of any Ford RS parts only have to look for a Bristol Street Motors of Bromley van in all the main service areas. This van is apparently fully stocked with the necessary parts and will be present throughout the rally.

Falmers Jeans will be sponsoring all three DTV entries on the Lombard RAC this year—this sponsorship in addition to the Castrol/DTV tie-up. Airikkala has been associated with Falmers for some time now, and it is rumoured that the company may be involving themselves in the team to a greater extent next year.

Ford's sponsors for the rally are as follows: Bjorn Waldegaard—British Airways; Roger Clark—*Daily Express*. As we went to press negotiations were still under way with another national daily newspaper over Ari Vatanen's car—could it be the *Daily Mirror*?.

● This year, for the first time, the Lombard RAC Rally will have a computer at the headquarters dedicated exclusively to the rally. NCR are installing one of their 8250 interactive computer systems at the rally headquarters in York, which should provide the organisers with a faster, fuller, more accurate results service covering a wider range of information. NCR thermal printer terminals will also be providing a summary at the major service areas en route and NCR visual display terminals will be in the press room and the results room to provide information throughout the rally. Harland Data Systems are providing the necessary computer programmes.

● On page 38 of the Lombard RAC Rally supplement inserted in this issue, there is a crossword competition for which Terry Ogilvie-Hardy, of Griffin Helmets Ltd, has kindly agreed to award three prizes. The applicant with the first correct entry will win a Griffin Clubman helmet, the second a Griffin Speedstar helmet and the third a Griffin Jetstar helmet. Applicants should send their entries to Griffin Helmets Ltd, Highfield Road, Halesowen, West Midlands; closing date December 15.

These two cars (Vauxhall Chevette at left and RS1800 below) are expected to dominate the RAC Rally which starts on Sunday. While Ford team manager Peter Ashcroft has tipped Russell Brookes (below) as a possible winner this year, Pentti Airikkala (left) will be doing everything in his power to put the ill fortune of last year to rights, win the RAC championship and *the rally! Brookes must beat Airikkala,* and *be first British license holder to have a chance of the title; that may well mean that he must win the rally.*

RAC media coverage

Daily Mirror **Rally News Service:** Issuing hourly progress reports from 13.15 to 18.15 from Sunday to Thursday inclusive, to independent local radio. Also late night Round Up at 22.30.

ITN Not treating it as special feature. Will only carry 'newsworthy' items in news bulletins which are: Sunday 18.15 and 23.00; Monday to Thursday. 13.00, 17.45; and 22.00.

Radio Luxemburg 208 metres medium wave

Castrol *Rally Sport* show on Friday 18 November at 23.40—all devoted to RAC Rally Preview. Also Friday 25 November: programme at 23.40 devoted solely to the rally.

BBC TV

Saturday 26 November; Grandstand: 15 minutes at 13.10; and 20 minutes at 13.40.

Local Radio

Most local radio stations will be following the event with regard to local people

Regional TV

There will be coverage, but unable to advertise in advance.

Capital Radio 194 metres medium wave

Thursday evening round-up between 19.00 and 19.30 "London Today' and up to date information on news bulletins.

BBC Radio 2 1500 metres long wave

Sunday: 12.01—1 minute report; 17.02—2 minute report; 22.02—4 minute report.

Monday to Thursday: 14.50; 15.45; 16.45; 17.45; 18.45; 20.02—Late Sports Desk.

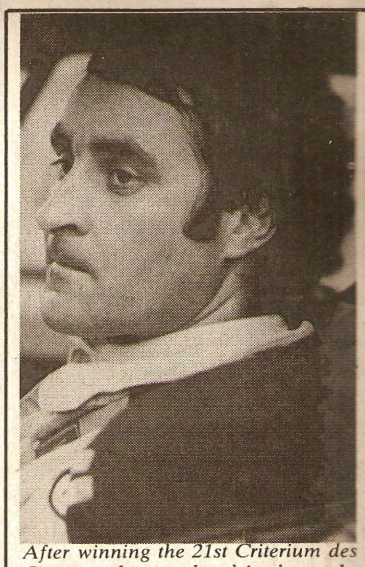
Monday: 13.50—Extended Sports Desk.

LBC 261 metres medium wave

From Monday to Thursday regular bulletins: 13.15; 14.15; 15.15; 16.15; 17.15; 18.15; 22.30. Plus any news that may arise on Sunday.

Local Radio broadcasting (medium wave) frequencies as follows: Downtown Radio Belfast: 293 metres; BRMB Birmingham: 261 metres; Pennine Radio: 235 metres; Radio Forth: 194 metres; Radio Clyde: 261 metres; Radio Orwell (Ipswich): 257 metres; Radio City (Liverpool): 194 metres; Capital Radio (London): 194 metres; LBC (London): 261 metres; Piccadilly Radio (Manchester): 261 metres; Radio Trent (Nottingham): 301 metres; Plymouth Sound: 261 metres; Radio Victory (Portsmouth): 257 metres; Thames Valley (Reading): 210 metres; Radio Hallam (Sheffield and Rotherham): 194 metres; Swansea Sound: 257 metres; Radio Tees: 257 metres; Metro Radio (Tyne/Wear): 261 metres; Beacon Radio (Wolverhampton/Black Country): 303 metres.

● For the Lombard RAC Rally Tony Drummond will be entering his car under the banner of Hepolite racing with Team Esso Uniflo. This follows a sponsorship deal he has fixed up with AE Auto Parts Limited for the event. The company is a member of the Associated Engineering Group, which is the marketing company for Hepolite and Powermax piston products and Glacier engine bearings. For this event Tony will be using his regular RS1800.



After winning the 21st Criterium des Cevennes last weekend in the works Alpine V6 A310, following rapidly after his success in the Warsaw Rally while Darniche was winning in Corsica, Guy Frequelin now stands a good chance of winning the French Rally Championship. However it looked very much as though Darniche was coolly driving away to another victory in his Chardonnet Stratos, when he was forced to stop during the third and final leg with differential failure. Frequelin will now be contesting a further round of the championship this weekend, which of course explains Jean Pierre Nicolas' appearance in one of the Regie's R5 Alpines on the RAC Rally.

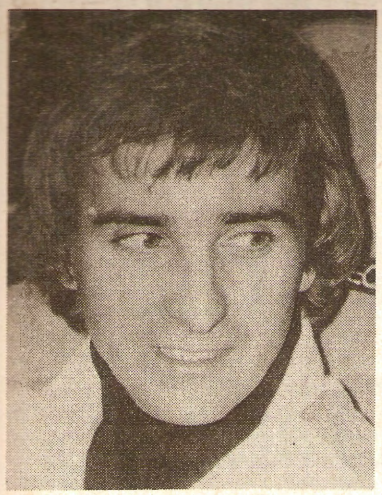
Marathon Circuit

Latest news on the progress of the 47th Circuit of Ireland, which starts on Good Friday, 24 March, indicates that we are likely to witness another marathon event. The ECR co-efficient 3, Open International and Tarmac Championship round starts in Bangor once more, while the 1400 mile route comprises a mammoth 550 miles of special stages, 99 per cent of which are on tarmac, and ten of which will be all new. The route goes anticlockwise toward Galway, where breakfast will be taken at 05.00 hours. An 06.30 restart leads competitors south to Killarney where they arrive at 15.30.

Details of the Sunday run in Kerry are scant at present. All that is generally known is that the day starts at 07.00 and finishes at 15.00. The return haul to Bangor is routed via Kilkenny for a 12.00 hours finish back in the north.

As usual there will be Tourist Board hotel deals, and cheap ferries available upon request. The prize fund is similar to last year with £1500 for the winner down to £100 for 10th overall. There is £250 for the first Group One car.

● With Century Oils withdrawal from the rally scene imminent, they have kindly agreed to release Tyreservices from their contract in order that they could obtain another oil sponsor for the Lombard RAC. Duckhams have made an offer, a one-off deal from which greater things could come next year. Therefore, Geoff/Alan Simpson and Chrissie Ashford/Mary Fullerton will be using the Alexander Duckham & Co products in both RS1800 and the Magnum. All join together in thanking Century for the help and interest shown this year. It has been a pretty happy relationship all round, for which Tyreservices would particularly like to thank Alan Richards.



Lars Carlsson—G1 for RAC.

Carlsson's hat-trick

It was a good weekend for Opel on the continent, as third place on the Belgian Condroz Rally means that for the third year running Lars Carlsson/Bob de Jong have won the Dutch Rally Championship. This is even more significant for Opel as it is the ninth time in the past 11 years that they have won this championship.

It seems that Carlsson was very lucky to finish the rally (which was won by another Opel Kadett driven by Jan van der Marel), as he had a potentially very serious accident at about 100mph. His service crew were able to keep the car going, however, and he had only to finish in the top five places to clinch the championship. Van der Marel finished second in the championship, the third time he has done so.

In demand

There has apparently been a phenomenal response to the Boreham-inspired Escort 1300 championship, which is to take place in the forthcoming year. We gather that there have been no less than 50 firm enquiries in the first two days of the news becoming generally known—all of which means that Graham Robson's letterbox requires an immediate rebuild and he will be unable to reply to each enquiry personally. Graham has, however, asked us to point out that all correspondents will be sent details of all aspects of the championship on 12 December when the complete technical specification of the eligibility will be available. The 'spec' of the cars is not finalised as yet, and current debate surrounds the use of 14-point roll cages and the use of LSDs; ie, it's a —ase of safety, strength and competitiveness. All details will be available on 12 December.

Graham would also like to draw attention to two Esso Uniflo/BTRDA Gold Star dates which were wrongly published in a recent advertisement. The Dukeries is, in fact, scheduled for 11 March, and the Bath Festival for 9/10 June.

● Another Englishman planning to visit Japan shortly, besides Andy Dawson, is Terry Oates of Oates Garages, Co. Durham, the enthusiastic sponsor of Fred Henderson's 16-valve Toyota Corolla this year. Terry, who recently changed over his franchise from Toyota to Datsun, and thus will not be running Fred in a Toyota next year, is hoping to secure a 2-litre Datsun for Fred to drive in the future.

Fiat reply to allegations

Our recent comments in relation to Italian efforts to have two Jolly Club entries added to the RAC Rally entry list after it had closed, plus the 'radio incident' alleged to have directly involved Alen during the Border Rally recently, have, naturally enough, not gone down well in Turin. Thus, we were more than happy to print a further side to the two affairs, as we have neither the intention nor desire to be seen to be 'knocking' Fiat. The Jolly Club entries for Lorenzelli and Bartolo, we are assured, were the subject of no pressure from Fiat themselves, but rather from the ACI (Italy's RAC), whose representative spoke to Dean Delamont at a convenient CSI meeting whereupon he was told in no uncertain terms that entries had closed, and that that was the end of the matter. We gather that this approach to Dean was *not* made at Fiat's request.

Meanwhile, Fiat (England) have just written a carefully worded letter to the RAC, denying allegations made against Alen during the course of the Border Rally, and in response to the RAC's strongly worded criticism of Markku, in reference to his conduct. This 'storm in a teacup' blew up following the rally when it was alleged that Alen had used the rally car radio to intimate that there had been serious injuries where none had in fact occurred. (In fact, Markku *did* dislocate his thumb!)

The Fiat (England) letter raises the following points: Egidio Fois and Mike Broad were collecting stage times at the finish of the second test, when the first car (the Samsons') acquainted them with Alen's firebreak incident. Egidio and Mike then tried to raise the stricken Fiat on their radio but failed to do so. However, the pair did manage to contact Fiat's service car waiting at Plashetts, which had already been in contact with Alen. Fois and Broad instructed the service car to remain at Plashetts. The two then drove round to the start of SS2 (which was off a forest drive) and discussed the matter with the start marshal concerned, as well as the stage commander of SS1 (which happened to finish a matter of 50 yards from the start of SS2).

In the meantime, the service crews of Donald Heggie and Bill Taylor had arrived (they also had radios) and informed Mike and Egidio that their cars were also off on the same corner, 1.1 miles into the stage. With the mutual agreement of *all* parties, Mike Broad then asked the start marshal to investigate the situation since there might have been injuries to any one, or more, of the unfortunates languishing down the firebreak. Since the car in which Mike was travelling was the only available spare, it was agreed that Egidio Fois should drive in, on the understanding that he was to take no longer than 10 minutes. He returned in about six with both Alen and Kivimaki, while Mike stayed at the stage start. Thereupon, other service crews walked into the stage while the test itself reopened for business. Broad then stayed at the stage start until it closed, whereupon with some very helpful members of the Scottish Motorsport Marshals' Club, he helped organise the recovery of the car. (Egidio Fois is now an honorary member of this revered establishment!)

Fiat (England) admit that Alen's radio *was* used to indicate that the crew were off the road, but deny that at *any* time *anything* was said about serious injuries. To substantiate their case with the RAC, they also point out that Alen's car was so far off the road that any attempt to recover it without a tractor (or the Marshals' Club) would have been quite futile and Alen naturally knew this fact as well as anyone. Fiat are now awaiting a reply from the RAC.

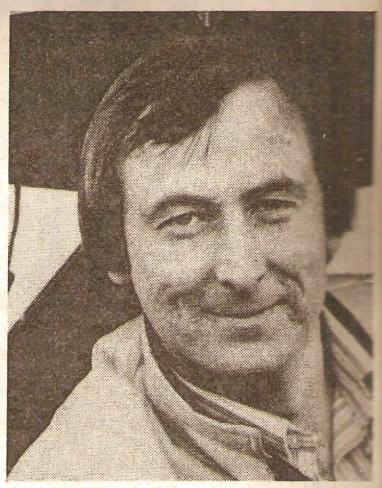
We trust the matter can be amicably settled, but it is certainly a very sensitive issue, especially occurring, as it did, so close to the Lombard RAC. A pity that the stage commander did not see fit to assert his authority and investigate the matter for himself.

● An incentive to crews on the 1978 Monte Carlo Rally to start from Lisbon is being offered by the Portuguese Automobil Club and the Portuguese Tourism Office in the form of three nights' free accommodation at the Lisbon Penta Hotel. The rally is due to start from there on Saturday, January 21 and they are hopeful that the thought of 1000 kilometres without ice and snow will help to persuade competitors to use this starting point.

● There are just a few places left for the Galloway Hills Rally (December 4) and anyone interested in contesting this most sociable Scottish event should contact Secretary of the Meeting, George Rutherford, Manana, 65 Cotton Street, Castle Douglas DG7 1DX. Tel: Castle Douglas (STD Code 0556) 2202. The event, which will be based on the Cally Hotel at Gatehouse of Fleet, includes at least 45 forest stage miles for an entry fee of £30.

We know that Andy Dawson is choosey about his employees round at DAD, but his latest recruit could well be as popular with the mechanics as she might be unpopular with his wife! At left is the new (and temporary) wheel w(r)ench, Miss UK, Madeleine Stringer, who has recently been taking in some Dawson instruction at the DAD premises. Madeleine is a rally fan from North Shields who will be spectating on the Lombard RAC if she doesn't get a top place in the forthcoming Miss World contest.

Andy, meanwhile, has been celebrating the confirmation of his new sponsors for the RAC Rally, Cariba (Schweppes) and Woolworths. Next year he is planning more diverse rally activities since we gather that the RS1800 has now been sold to a Greek buyer, and after contesting the Tour of South Africa in a Mazda Hatchback, Dawson plans to visit Japan, hoping to conclude some possibilities with regard to Datsun's return to regular WCR appearances. There are further 'irons in the fire' for the British scene, we gather.



George Hill—car rebuilt.

Martins '78 plans

While most competitors continue to work on their RAC Rally cars up to the 11th hour before the event, the Martin Group Vauxhall Chevette awaits the rally in a state of comparative calm. George Hill's car has missed a few events recently in order to arrive at such a situation! The car has been almost totally rebuilt since its last outing on the Telford Stages, a new rear floor and box section, plus the latest DTV (October) homologated axle location has been added (that is to say with bottom links and a bracket on the two top arms which acts as an antiroll bar for tarmac use) at Shepreth, and the engine has been substantially rebuilt by Blydenstein with the latest Cosworth cylinder head, etc. George remarked that the car is now better than it has ever been, and also has considerably more horsepower that he has been used to.

Next year's plans for the Martin Group include, a full assault on the Castrol/Autosport championship by which time George hopes to be in the happy position of having two engines, two gearboxes and two axles for the car—not to mention a spare shell.

Gillibrand gets DOT job

Close on the heels of the announcement that John Handley's Roller Chain Bearings firm has taken over Dealer Opel Team comes the news of the appointment of a General Manager who will be running all the team's motor sport activities from Tong Park. The man in question is Brian Gillibrand who took over his job on Monday morning

Although for the past three years Brian has been working on the fleet sales division of Clarks of Hinckley (yes, Roger Clark's garage) he has previously been involved in motor sport and was team manager for Vitafoam. On the announcement of his appointment Brian confirmed his belief in the potential of the Kadett as a rally car, but perhaps his most significant remark was, "we are not looking to rallying alone for the future and are looking into the possibility of spreading our involvement into other motor sport fields".

DOT will also apparently be expanding the sport parts side of their operation to help privateers running Opels in this country.

MOTOR/RAC RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP DRIVERS OVERALL

		Jan 09 Tour of Dean	Feb 25/26 Mintex	Apr 08/12 C of Ireland	Apr 23 Granite City	May 12/15 Welsh	Jun 03/07 Scottish	Jul 02/03 Jim Clark	Aug 19/20 Burmah	Sep 02/03 Ulster	Sep 16/17 Manx	Oct 01 Lindisfarne	Oct 15 Castrol '77	Nov 18/23 Lombard RAC	Total points
1.	Pentti Airikkala	-	10	-	9	10	-	9	-	8	10	7	10		73
2.	Russell Brookes	-	-	10	10	-	9	10	9	9	-	-	9		66
3.	Andy Dawson	-	7	8	-	-	7	7	8	-	8	10	7		62
4.	Hannu Mikkola	10	8	-	-	9	-	-	10	-	-	-	6		43
5.	John Taylor	9	?	-	4	8	-	8	-	-	1	8	-		38
6.	Nigel Rockey	8	5	-	5	-	-	-	7	4	1	-	4		33
7.	Paul Faulkner	7	6	-	7	-	-	6	-	-	-	6	-		32
8.	Jim McRae	4	4	5	-	-	-	5	5	2	3	2	-		30
	Chris Sclater	-	-	-	8	7	-	-	-	6	-	9	-		30
10.	Graham Elsmore etc.	6	-	-	-	5	-	4	6	-	-	4	3		28
Group 1 Drivers															
1.	Graham Elsmore	10	5*	-	9	10	-	9	10	6*	8	10	10		76
2.	Jim McRae	9	10	9	6*	-	-	10	9	10	9	8	3*		74
3.	Will Sparrow	8	6*	10	7	8	9	8	8	-	-	6	6*		64
	Malcolm Wilson	6*	9	8	8	7	10	-	-	1*	6	9	7		64
5.	Gavin Waugh	-	7	-	5	6	7	-	-	-	-	5	9		39
6.	Pat Ryan	-	-	-	10	9	8	-	-	-	10	-	-		37
7.	Chris Field	4	-	-	-	2	-	6	5	-	3	2	-		20
8.	Steve Smith	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	4	-	-	-	5		16
9.	Henry Inurrieta	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-	7	-	-		12
10.	David Robbins	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	2		8
		etc													

*Score to be dropped

RALLY OF THE PINES

Easy for Ronnie

Ronnie McCartney proved just why he is the 1977 Northern Ireland Special Stage Rally Champion on Saturday when he won the final round of the series in the UAC's Rally of the Pines.

Driving his ex-Mullenger Escort RS1800 on a forest event for the first time, he never really looked like being beaten, and totally dominated the largely Group One entry throughout the day.

He did have one anxious moment, however, when a rock damaged the rear axle on one of the afternoon stages, allowing oil to escape from the differential—shades of Brookes in Corsica—but happily, it was all 'fixable' and he emerged a popular winner.

The rally started in Ballymena at 10.30 in the morning, and immediately headed north into some very nasty weather. Last year's 'Pines' suffered from an overdose of fog. This year it was snow, gale force winds, and driving rain, all of which were in evidence at the first stage, Slievenorra, and before long many people were wishing they had stayed at home.

Several of the regular championship 'names' were, in fact, absent, the series having been decided a month ago on the Mourne Forest, but their absence did give some of the lesser known people a chance to shine. Through the Slievenorra snow Ronnie's Escort was 12secs clear of the rest, while McCartney's closest pursuers sorted themselves out into some sort of order. Fastest of these was former Autotest star John Lyons, driving the familiar ex-Pond, ex-everybody RS2000 Mk1. On the opening stage he tied with Derek Boyd's Saab 96, which was really revelling in the slippery conditions, and 'dark horse' Ken McMillen (RS1600) who really made people take notice from his number 23 seeding position. These three led the pursuing horde for the rest of the day and stayed quite close throughout.

The second stage, Ballypatrick, saw McCartney pull further ahead with John Lyons second fastest ahead of Robin Lyons, whose Avenger was suffering from a lack of power.

There were nine stages in all, leading north to the finish at Castlerock, and including such favourites as Gortnamoyagh, Cam, and Springwell, the latter attempted twice. But it was Cam which caused the most problem, the infamous ford drowning a lot of electrics, and putting paid to the chances of Fred Patterson's RS2000 among others. In fact RS2000s generally did not have a good day, John Scallon and Jimmy Logan both losing time when their gearlevers broke off, and others being delayed with a variety of problems, all of which meant that John Lyons' old car was the only example in the top five at the finish—quite a contrast to previous rounds!

The remainder of the event was remarkably unspectacular in view of the weather and of the conditions of the stages. McCartney stayed ahead and, apart from his spot of bother with the rear axle, had a trouble-free day. John Lyons established himself in second place, Derek Boyd showing flashes of almost Nordic brilliance in the Saab, settled down in third, and Robin Lyons clawed his way past McMillen to take fourth by just two seconds at the finish.

The 'Pines' this year was a basically good event which, in view of some competitors anyway, was marred by little things like the incredibly rough and rutted route out of Cam forest (which had to be used in the interests of getting a few extra miles of stage), and, of course, the weather over which the organisers appeared to have no control.

Even if the championship was well and truly decided—not even minor placings were at stake—some new faces in the top ten bode well for the future of forest rallying in Ulster. I think we will be hearing a lot more about John Lyons and Ken McMillen, and for that matter Robert Copeland not to mention David Francis and . . .

RICHARD YOUNG

Rally of the Pines

1, R. McCartney/D. Smyth (RS1800) 48mins 33secs pens;
2, J. Lyons/T. Semple (RS2000 Mk1) 49.36;
3, D. Boyd/W. Parkinson (Saab 96) 50.49;
4, R. Lyons/S. McCanny (Chrysler Avenger 1800) 51.04;
5, K. McMillen/D. Bole (RS1600) 51.06;
6, D. Francis/D. Pinkerton (RS2000 Mk1) 51.59;
7, B. Law/J. Meeke (Vauxhall Magnum) 52.01; 8, R. Copeland/G. Campbell (Toyota Corolla) 52.10; 9, J. Logan/P. Irvine (RS2000 Mk11) 52.19; 10, T. Cathers/D. Wilson (Chrysler Avenger 1600) 52.44; 10, J. Davison/T. Harryman (Chrysler Avenger 1800) 52.44.

Group 1: John Lyons.

Belfast Telegraph/Pirelli Northern Ireland Special Stage Rally Championship—final positions: 1, Ronnie McCartney, 80; 2, Robin Lyons, 60; 3, Jimmy Logan, 43; 4, Bertie Fisher, 28; 5=, Robert McBurney, Derek Boyd and Sean Campbell, 21; 8, Fred Patterson, 20; 9, Jimmy Davison, 18; 10=, Tommy Reid, John Gilleece and George Robinson, 15.

RALLYE DO ALGARVE

Battle in the sun

Sun and dust were the main ingredients of the recent Rallye do Algarve held in that beautiful area of Southern Portugal where the sun always seems to shine, with temperatures well into the 80s. A literal translation of Algarve means the *land beyond*, and little seems to have changed here for centuries, fishing villages still nestle among rocky coves and golden sands, while their restaurants naturally serve the local speciality, fresh sardines.

Indeed one suspects that the locals come to this event as much for the continuous social rounds as for the rally itself, the bars seem to run along Irish lines and a Teachers whisky evening before the rally was followed by a disco until 4am during the 'rest' halt, only the Saturday evening seeming to be 'free'. . . . Well, the rally *was* still on at that time!

Starting from Aldeia das Acoteias at 9am on the Friday morning, 13 stages were to be competed before returning there for the night halt. The early stages led competitors to the ancient city of Silves before crossing towards the west coast and back through Portimao.

'Meqepe' was soon setting the pace with fastest times on the first three stages in his Opel Kadett GT/E, with which he finished sixth on this year's Portugal Rally and third in '76.

Stage four, a tarmac hillclimb, led to the highest point of the Algarve Foia, where competitors waited to repeat the stage downhill, but unfortunately this had to be cancelled due to spectators moving their cars on the stage. But on stage six the Opel developed a chronic misfire dropping 'Meqepe' over one minute and losing him the lead to the 'Group 1' MkI RS2000 of Giovanni Salvi, whose car soldiers on after countless rallies.

The following stage saw the demise of the immaculate Group 1 RS2000 of Frenchman, Roger Martin, his car developing a strange engine malady. The rock-based stages were rapidly taking a toll on suspension and tyres while the thick dust was an added hazard, despite two minute interval timing. Carlos Fontainhas, withdrew his RS1800 at the end of the first leg with rear shocker problems, and at this point 'Meqepe' led with almost one minute from Salvi, and Antonio Diegues, who was lying third in his Carrera with Paulo Lemos (Kadett GT/E) and Carlos Torres in his Mazda RX3 pressing him very hard.

The second leg, which started on the Saturday, contained only seven stages, but these were much rougher, in the hills to the north of Faro. Indeed this leg took the highest toll of the cars, Torres' Mazda succumbing to a broken driveshaft two stages from the end, Diegues too dropping out at the end of the final stage of this leg with two broken rear shock absorbers. Three more drivers retired at the same time, Jose Borges, the brother of Antonio who campaigned a Porsche for several years, also stopped was out with gearbox problems in his Opel.

'Meqepe' was now only 40secs ahead of Salvi with Lemos third, Amaral (Datsun 1200) fourth and Martinho fifth in his Porsche, but the Belgian Chavan was only six seconds behind in his Renault 5 Alpine with Carlos Peres in his Sutton built Group 1 RS2000 close behind him.

The final part of the rally, after a short halt, drove through the Saturday night over many of the stages of the first leg, repeating most twice and a couple three times. Only 34 of the 63 starters were still running, but the fight for the lead was far from over, 'Meqepe' being slowed by shock absorber problems; and just as it seemed certain that Giovanni Salvi must regain the lead he was forced to stop on a stage for two minutes with an electrical failure, leaving 'Meqepe' to win the rally on which he had had bad experiences in earlier years. Andre Martinho forced his Porsche up to third with five fastest times during the early morning stages, the Belgian, Chavan, having been forced out with a broken diff with just three stages to go, allowed Americo Nunes up into sixth. He is now lying second to Salvi in the Portuguese Championship with one final round to go.

Three British entries had been received but, as expected, the Withers entry for Chris Wathen never materialised and the unfortunate Terry Pond was forced to spectate; the lorry bringing his Porsche having broken down on its way across France. This left only the Peugeot of Clive Askey/Mike Hillier to uphold the Union Jack. They soldiered through to the end finishing a respectable 20th of 28 finishers in such a heavy car.

HUGH BISHOP

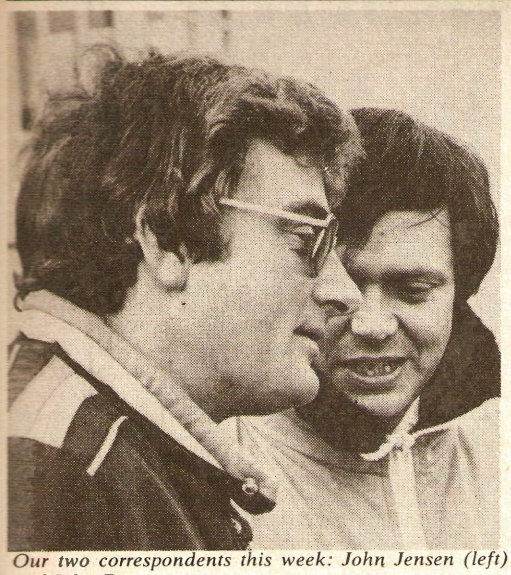
Rallye do Algarve

1, 'Meqepe'/M. Villar (Opel Kadett GTR/E), 4hrs 45mins 34secs penalties;
2, G. Salvi/J. Ferreira (RS2000 MkI), 4:49:13;
3, A. Martinho/A. Morais (Porsche Carrera RS) 4:50:43;
4, J. Amaral/L. Calafate (Datsun1200), 4:51:22
5, P. Lemos/J. Bessa (Opel Kadett GT/E), 4:54:08

WCR

	Monte Carlo	Sweden	Portugal	Safari	South Pacific	Acropolis	1000 Lakes	Quebec	San Remo	Corsica	RAC	Total points
Fiat	16	14	18	—	18	12	16	18	18	18		148
Ford	—	14	16	18	16	18	18	14	10	—		124
Opel	9	17	13	—	—	4	8	—	13	—		64
Lancia	18	—	—	14	—	—	—	—	12	16		60
Toyota	—	10	14	—	9	—	12	9	—	—		54
Datsun	—	—	—	16	—	14	—	10	—	—		40
Porsche	14	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	10	8		36
Saab	—	18	—	—	—	—	—	10	—	—		28
Chrysler	—	—	—	—	—	10	14	—	—	—		24
Mitsubishi	—	—	—	12	2	—	—	8	—	—		22
Peugeot	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	9		15
Seat	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		14
Citroën	—	—	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	—		13
Alpine Renault	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		10
Mazda	—	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	—		10
Volvo	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		8
Renault	—	—	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—		7
Skoda	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	—	—	—		7
Lada	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		4
Leyland	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	—		4

purely personal



Our two correspondents this week: John Jensen (left) and John Brown.

JOHN JENSEN is a familiar figure on both the national and international rally scene. A co-driver of some 17 years' experience, he has always gone rallying for enjoyment; an active alternative to his successful business interests in and around Maidstone. Best known for his associations with Swedish driver Per Inge Walfridsson, John's appearance in the '77 Toyota RAC team has coincided with a fee for his services. In a fit of abject euphoria, "J.J." finally completed the monologue he has been preparing for us since May last year.

With the RAC almost upon us it's time for me to finish a *Purely Personal* column that I started 18 months ago—such is the speed of the J.J. pen!

Looking back at the draft from May 1976 which I wrote immediately after the demise of the late Chequered Flag Stratos, it is amusing to glance over my notes and comments regarding that dreadful Brechfa incident to try and explore at some length the persons involved and the ensuing arguments and theories which at the time seemed so important and yet are now just bygone memories.

It is interesting though, as I stood and watched the car burning away, that I was going to pack up rallying altogether and yet within weeks I had signed up with John Taylor and those lovely four inches of headroom in the Escort, which I ended up needing on more than one subsequent occasion!

The one thing that that accident *did* bring to a head was the old chestnut of "information received". Of course the bend was notorious and even Walfridsson and myself nearly "stuffed" the same car on the same bend on our very first outing in the Stratos on the previous year's Welsh. After my move to Taylor, the subject became even more frequently discussed, because on our first event (the Scottish) we went charging over a brow 60ft into a bog, and his excuse was that everybody else knew about it (on looking back I am not so sure that he wasn't right!) Also, having navigated mainly for foreigners in the past ten years, I have heard a lot more innuendo about 'Brits' knowing where they're going in the forests. Finally, having something of a vested interest in the subject, I have kept my ear close to the ground these past 18 months and I have heard a lot of whispers, stories and rumours that have filtered down the grapevine—there is certainly no smoke without fire, and I think that the subject should be brought out into the open. It is unfortunate that it seems to have fallen at my feet to try and do so.

Brechfa prompted me into action, so for last year's RAC rally I contacted Jim Porter and made some arrangements that I would supply every competitor with a list of 'bad' spots. The list was to be collated by myself and as many 'helpers' as I could get. I wrote to John Brown, Martin Holmes, Peter Bryant, etc and having reached the half-dozen or so 'bad' spots that I knew of, regrettably only Mr Brown contacted me saying he didn't have the time to help. Now I really did not mind, and agree that that was a fair decision, and the fact that I heard from nobody else one cannot really complain about either, because had I spent years logging information, then I don't suppose I would want to part with it, or it's possible advantages lightly. But at least I can say that I tried to do something to help.

In any case, at that time I still firmly believed that it made little or no difference anyway, but after Taylor rolled on the 'Brookes/Alen' bend in Sutton Park, I wasn't so sure. Second overall in this year's Dean changed my mind the other way, and yet the bogey struck again on the Mintex and we smashed a new car to pieces on a bend that could have been called out from the map. So we decided to get involved in the dubious business of bend diagnosis and although it has been a frightening experience, having done seven years solid road rallying in the 50s and 60s, it *was* a bit like old times!

By the time we had the gremlins sorted (and believe me there are one hell of a lot of these—unless, and here's the crunch—you've had a proper look, bend-by-bend, previously) we had parted company, though still the best of friends!

Now, whether one would have us believe that other people's information has been achieved from previous rallies or not, doesn't really matter. What *does* are two other things: there is no doubt that like true Communism, some drivers are better informed than others, and what is a damn sight more important is that more and more of the "second eleven" are getting wind of what is going on and are getting into the marked map situation. If these people try to go bend reading in the forest, this will certainly manifest itself with even more problems. Firstly, we will get back to the old bend reading situation which of course is so bad for the natural advancement of forest racing; and secondly the more dubious element will no doubt go practising in every devious way possible and we will lose all credibility, not only with foreigners but with the FIA, that our forests are truly secret.

Now before you all start shouting: 'rubbish!' or start writing letters. I realise that there must be exceptions to the rule and let me give you four that spring to mind immediately:

1. Markku Alen and his Finnish co-driver's stage times on the Castrol 77—no further comment.
2. Even though the bend was quite visible on the map Peter Bryant couldn't stop Tatu Vatenen rolling on the same rally.
3. Even with the information that I gave Taylor, and presumably the better information he is getting from Phil Short he is *still* denting his machine.
4. Having got into this map reading situation, I pasted up all the Castrol 77 stages on cardboard and went to a great deal of trouble to call the roads very accurately to Per Inge; after two stages he reckoned it was slowing him down!

It isn't just the co-drivers who have this information to hand, Andy Dawson will tell you of any amount of bends, humps, dips, holes, with their distances, off the cuff, and I have often heard Russell Brookes discuss similar hazards in a knowing way. It was also interesting on the Castrol 77 that Hannu was showing Arne where the bad bend was in Hafren forest. Obviously there is no complete panacea, and experience will always play an advantage, but something *must* be done to arrest this ever growing problem. My solution is economic, popular with the majority, highly introduceable and quite simple: ban all maps on all forest rallies, except the old ¼" style.

Now having done that, something vital must follow. Because of the very high speeds in the forests I believe we could be in a potentially dangerous situation without further safety regulations. Some while ago the RAC issued a safety code for rally special stages, it was a check list for organisers of all rallies, from a safety and uniformity aspect, and it set out the aims and not the means of the RAC and it is important to note sections 2 (b) and (c) viz:

> "*Hazards on stages must be advised to competitors in advance, all fire-breaks should be arrowed and regarded as potential hazards. The object of the exercise is to test the driver's skill,* **not to trick him into making a mistake.** *All mandatory direction and hazard warning signs must be securely erected and placed so that they cannot be obstructed. . . .*"

Now whatever system is devised, the best idea would be to give the co-driver all the information and let him sort it out for his driver. This would thankfully take us back to team-work (which we seem to be getting short of) and it saves a great deal of burden on the organisers and the marshals. It could be done either with tulips, distances, marked maps, etc, it just doesn't matter, but any other way is not definite; and is complicated, expensive, manpower-consuming and potentially dangerous.

Of course it's going to be a hell of a problem dictating arbitrarily when a bend is 'bad' or otherwise. David Stephenson, the C-of-C on the Castrol 77 is without doubt a very fine organiser, but *even* he told a crowded audience that it took him three goes to find the notorious bend in Hafren. Well Mr S, I was told by a man who rolled there on your '76 rally that "20 or 30 went off there" and that the spectators told him that they always watch there because "some sucker always gets it". Now I realise that you are not *Superman* but if this bend is so notorious and so bad, so many people crashed there last year, all leading crews know of it and yet it took you three attempts to find it, then we most definitely need to come up with a new system. I would have thought that a co-opted committee of co-drivers would pool all their resources into Mike Greasley at the RAC, and then this information could be logged and passed on to clubs in each area who then add to it their comments from previous rallies, and we should end up with a stage-by-stage dossier. Of course it won't make any difference to the results, the fastest people always win, but what it will make is a sport that is becoming increasingly dangerous a damn sight safer!

Subjects lighter

To all those humble people who champion the lot of the British hotel chains let me say one word, "rubbish". In the past couple of years we have seen reports about cancelled bookings, broken glass, drunken behaviour, noisy goings-on and what have you. If you knew what happens when the Rugby Clubs move in, you would be amazed, there's all the previous; plus bun fights, beer balancing contests and the inevitable (and not too pleasant) bum flashing! The motor racing crowd are apparently no more sudued. Recently at a local hotel they threw broken glass into the pool, and race sponsors and party givers were rather surprised to hear that the bill came to £1,000 (the pool takes two days to empty and three days to fill up). Obviously I don't condone these hotel mêlées but let's not forget the 30p profit on a *Scotch and Dry* that helps to get these people where they are. Let's not forget the full or even half charges for unused rooms that we get

"The Toyota is four kilos lighter than the Stratos, and has more power yet we couldn't get nearer than four seconds per mile of the pace." Per on the Castrol 77.

increasingly charged for. Just because we seem to be involved with an anti-social type of sport plagued by Government legislation, the ever watchful eye of the Police, and not forgetting a recalcitrant Forestry Commission, Conservationists and Conservators, it does not mean that we should be expected to be pushed around by absolutely everybody else. Even in the highly receptive town of Bath the trend continued. I heard a number of stories that are too involved to repeat, but I am sure a lot of you who went out of the rally early had the same problem as John Taylor and myself did: ie picking up a large tab for unused hotel accommodation. Were it booked under normal commercial circumstances one would not have had to pay. Rallying brings in serious money to any hosting town, and that's just plain old fashioned commercial capitalism.

It is interesting to note the problems that Per Inge had during the Castrol 77 inasmuch as on his last forest event, which was the 1976 Welsh, he and Ari set the pace, and after the first few stages there was just a second between them. In the ensuing period he has been rallying and rallycrossing the Volvo 66 and 343 with a lot of success, and even with just 70hp has always been within a few seconds per mile of the pace, and that was against all types of opposition, on all types of events, including World Championship rounds. The Toyota Celica is four kilos lighter tham the old Stratos, and has more brake horsepower, and yet we could not get nearer than four seconds a mile on the pace, such are the ever quickening speeds of British forest rallying.

I have always championed the cause of checking other competitors' times, and since the first complimentary JJ/PIW check sheets on the 1974 RAC I like to think that some headway has been made. It makes the sport more interesting, increases competition and takes the trickery and "Blue Book bible punchers" rightly out of it. I was therefore pleased to see this has even escalated to one of the works teams (DTV) sending a man round whenever possible to the end of each stage to collect other competitors' times so that they have advance and accurate warning of their competitors. One only hopes that Mr Holmes and his colleagues do not try to withhold their own times from other competitors as a result, as this will surely mean that in the long term all the leading teams will be having these snooping "time checkers" with the obvious self-cancelling result.

After 17 years' co-driving, and 17 years' expenses with maps, hotels, petrol, help with purchase of cars, food, navigator's expenses, driver's expenses, hanger's-on expenses, etc, etc, without ever very much in return it was indeed a fantastic "high" to get paid four Sundays ago—yes actually paid with *real* money. At this rate I may break even by the turn of the century! ■

JOHN BROWN
who requires no introduction from us

I feel a word of explanation is due to Pat Pyne of Dublin, who had such a frustrating time spectating on the Castrol '77 (*Correspondence*, October 27). As one who was, for a time, closely involved with Police, Forestry Commission and organisers in evolving the ground rules for rallies in that area, I would like to give it.

Unfortunately, rallying is not universally liked by other road users and local inhabitants, objectors often living within the areas of forests or on the narrow roads leading to them. Rallying only survives in Wales because of the concessions made to local feelings, and because of the willingness of organisers to comply with requests made by the Police and the FC. These bodies are, naturally enough, very sensitive to local public opinion, and inevitably sometimes bend too far backwards (at least, in a rallyist's eyes!) to placate it.

As a result, many places are banned altogether to rallying, including some forest stages; while others are subject to restrictions on frequency and times of day (or of year), of use; to limitations on servicing; and to bans on spectators, at least officially. Those people closest to the local situation—organisers and the more knowledgeable competitors—understand and sympathise, and welcome the excellent relations which rallying enjoys these days as a result of being seen to be sensitive to local opinion. Some people further away, such as (understandably) Mr Pyne and (less so) some journalists, do not appreciate the problems, and air their frustration.

As Mr Pyne says, rallies are run primarily for competitors. This is especially true of the Castrol '77, which gives 100 miles of the very best stages in the land, unequalled not only for 'driver quality', but also for their sustained smoothness even after the passage of 360 charging rally cars. It is unfortunate that these magnificent stages do not enable organisers to provide much in the way of spectator facilities, but I for one do not believe that the Castrol should change its format for that reason. After all, its appeal to *competitors* is the reason for its success, and is why Mr Pyne was able to witness such a galaxy of stars on a mere National.

Although we are all glad to see them (especially when we need a shove!), spectators are privileged in rallying. They are not, by and large, asked to make a financial contribution, at least of any significant size, towards the running of an event, and none at all to the huge costs incurred by those individuals who actually entertain them. Rallying is mostly paid for by competititors, and *should* be primarily run for them.

It is sometimes argued that the spectators are the audience which justifies a sponsor's investment, either in a rally or in a team. Their value in this way is, however, limited: rally spectators, in marketing terms, tend to be a small, specialist group, with limited patterns of spending; and most of the huge variety of businesses which sponsor rallies or cars get their main payoff in other forms of publicity and exposure.

In the light of the above, it is a little unreasonable of Mr Pyne to carp at being asked to pay 50p. Does he think spectators should contribute literally *nothing*? I can tell him where his money goes: it buys just over *one* mile of Forestry road (out of 100) for *one* competitor (out of 180)—or not much more than *one eighteen thousandth* of the Castrol's Forestry charges alone!

Having said all that, he does have some valid points. He clearly *should* have been able to buy a programme at the start (but was all available manpower out marshalling the stages? If so, the organisers' priorities are right!) It *is* upsetting when marshals are unnecessarily rude, but did he or others invite rudeness by not complying with a more polite request?

Especially, though, I do feel that at least one, and perhaps two, more spectator stages ought to have been created. Clearly, this is out of the question at Pantperthog and the west side of Dyfi, where the main road goes up a narrow gorge, with virtually no parking at all, and where heavy traffic quickly causes big jams—and also where the PR situation is decidedly sticky. (Even here, though, I believe some offroad parking should be provided, possibly by starting and finishing the stage at the present entrance and using the exit road as a car park. This could also give a slightly longer stage.)

Myherin could and should be officially designated a spectator stage. There is reasonable public road access, along the B4574 and in at The Arch; excellent viewing at this spot and at a number of interesting bends close by; and good parking along nearly a mile of Forestry road running south-east from The Arch, parallel with the B4574. There is even the possibility of using the stage entrance as a spectator exit after the rally has gone through. Many people go to this point anyway and park on the B4574 itself, causing some congestion. If more parking space is needed, the stage itself could be diverted through 770766.

The remaining forest, Hafren, is more of a problem, there being PR difficulties, while the only access is off a narrow yellow road. Both the Forestry Commission and the Police are reluctant to encourage more traffic there, especially as jams easily and frequently occur already (as on the afternoon run of the Castrol '77). However, I believe this is one of those occasions where one should bow to the inevitable fact that spectators *will* find their way there, and set about creating a system to cope with them.

I would like to suggest the following: (i) The start/finish should always be as on the morning run of the Castrol, and competitors should never use the yellow road through the forest; (ii) a spectator car park should be created on the cul-de-sac Forestry roads to the east of the yellow at Nant Melen; (iii) spectators should be directed in via the Clywedog Dam road, to turn left and into the car park; but leaving, on their departure, down the valley to Llanidloes; (iv) spectators finding their way up the valley should also be directed into the car park; and (v) those finding their way in from Staylittle should park on the greensward immediately north of the Forest exit. The main car park would be very close to two separate viewing points on the long stage.

All of this might give people like Mr Pyne more choice; but the need to comply with organised traffic and parking schemes would still make it unlikely that he'd be able to get to more than two stages in a day. Frankly, though, it's better that he doesn't try, as rallying's image can do without spectators hurrying from one venue to another, often getting impatient and doing silly things in the process. Better for him to follow advice usually given, in quite different circumstances, to young ladies: stay put, relax, and enjoy yourself! ■

Maori Mazda

ROD MILLEN, New Zealand's Rally Champion is in this country to attempt the RAC Rally for the first time and discussed his career and plans with ANN BRADSHAW.

As the time for the RAC Rally approaches, Britain becomes a kind of rallying Mecca, to which rally crews flock from all over the world in order to compete on what many of them consider to be the 'ultimate' event. Foreign drivers are deeply envious of our loose-surface forest stages, which they believe to be the severest test of skill and endurance. For these drivers, Kielder, Dovey, Dalby and Clipstone are names to conjure with, only to be spoken of in hushed tones—for to talk of them disparagingly could be to incur the wrath of whatever demons stalk them on cold November nights. And we all know that the forest spirits, once roused, can play very cruel tricks on the unwary rally driver. This year, the ranks of the visitors have been swelled by a man who could just survive the rigours and torments of this rally, and come out smiling and happy on November 23. Rod Millen has travelled halfway round the world from New Zealand to fulfil one of his dearest ambitions.

Perhaps the most unlikely thing about Rod Millen's Lombard RAC Rally effort is the car he will be using—a Mazda RX3 saloon. Before anyone howls with laughter at the thought of this machine taking on the might of Ford's RS1800s and Fiat's 131s, time should be allowed to peruse the results of the Millen/Mazda combination to date.

To ardent rally fans in this country, Rod's name should not be unfamiliar, for he mixed it with the World Championship contenders on the Radio New Zealand Rally and by no means disgraced himself, or the car, by finishing sixth overall and first home-grown driver. Although Rod had been planning this British trip for about 18 months, it was after he did so well on his home international, against the might of the works teams, that he definitely decided to come.

Rod's rallying career started in 1972, when he did a rally at home in a friend's car and decided he liked the sport. Before then he had hill-climbed a Beach Buggy with a 3-litre V6 engine, but, as this proved unsuitable (and positively dangerous!) for rallying, he bought his wife a Mazda RX3 as a shopping car and borrowed it at weekends to rally. This car proved both successful and reliable, and Rod had to spend only a few hundred dollars on it. In 1974 he decided to take it across to Australia for the Southern Cross, and was lying fourth when the differential broke.

In 1975 Rod managed to win the New Zealand Rally Championship, and soon came to the attention of Mazda. As he puts it, "Mazda got to know about us—because we were never off their doorstep!" His persistence paid off and, since the beginning of 1976, he has run under the Mazda Dealer Team banner. Both sides have had a good deal from this arrangement, for Rod has now won the NZ championship for Mazda three years running, and has also won the Coca-Cola sponsored national rallycross championship in another three-year-old RX3.

Not only does Rod rally the car, but he also builds it himself as well as managing to do a full-time job as a surveyor. Fortunately, he has a very understanding boss who has (very sensibly) become a rally fan, and has even been known to be part of Rod's service crew on events.

Accompanying Rod on his trip here is his full regular crew. They are co-driver Mike Franchi, engine man Ron Kendall, panel beater Warren Priest, organizer Tom Priest (no relation to Warren) and Robert Harris who, Rod says, has the full-time job of changing the brakes! From the experiences they have had on events with the car, it seems that this is no exaggeration. The Mazda's biggest drawback is its lack of homologated parts and, in particular, the brakes. The car is equipped with drums at the rear and small discs at the front and, as might be expected, these do not last very long: on the Radio New Zealand rally, the car got through 16 sets. Rod is hoping that the problem will not be so bad over here, but has brought 20 sets with him just in case.

It is mainly due to this lack of homologated parts that Rod and Mike will be going home via the Mazda factory in Japan, hoping to persuade the Japanese to do something about the problem. As Rod said, "We must only be scratching the surface. You have only to consider what we have achieved in the car we have."

Although Rod has had a tremendous amount of help from the dealer team in New Zealand, he and the team are still footing half the bill for the journey here, coming basically as a private entry. Although his New Zealand sponsors, Philips In-Car Entertainment, have signed him up for next year, they were unable to help him for this trip. That Millen and his team are prepared to find half of what must be a considerable bill out of their own pockets is a measure of their remarkable enthusiasm.

The car itself was shipped off on August 23 with all the spares necessary for the event. Once here, it was taken down to the Mazda GB premises in Tunbridge Wells, where Rod and his team are being looked after. Although they have brought all their own spares they are being provided with service barges by Mazda over here and, perhaps even more important, being given help and advice on the rally itself. As Mazda's Press and Publicity Manager said, "there is no need to worry about the car and its preparation—Rod and his men have got that completely under control. But what they need is information about the British rally scene, and just how things are run here."

This is Rod's first visit to this country and, before he arrived a few weeks ago, all he knew about our rallying was what he read in magazines. However, it seems that New Zealand's special stages are very similar to our own, the main difference being that whereas ours are on Forestry Commission roads, theirs are on closed public roads. Rod is also used to unseen roads and very little tarmac.

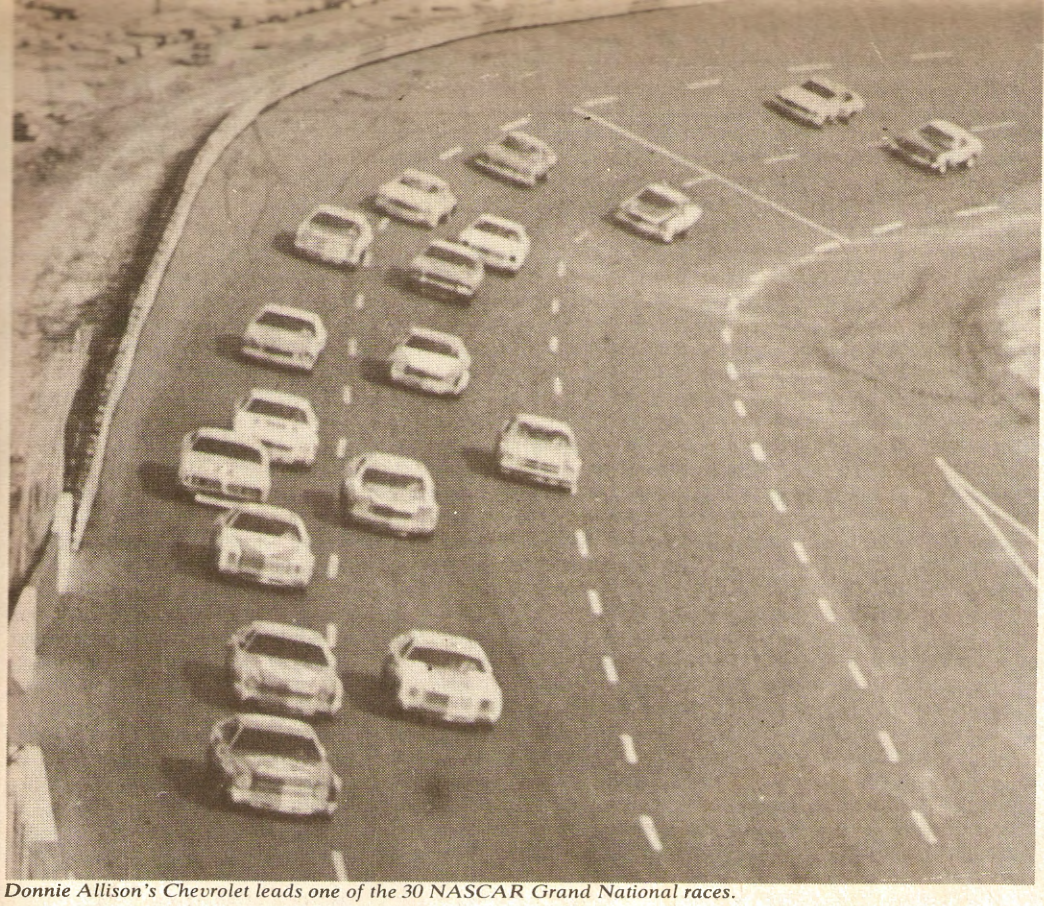
Although all seems to bode well for his first trip here, it could all so nearly have ended before the rally even started in the Forest of Dean on November 5. Unlike Markku Alen, who has been able to contest such events as the Castrol 77 and the Border Rally to get the feel of our forests, Rod arrived too late to actually compete on an event. He did, however, get a lot of co-operation from the Wyedean organisers, who let him act as a course car. Rod didn't take his car out until six stages into the event, and then promptly went off on the first corner of the stage. At first it seemed that he had just been over-exuberant on his first outing on A2s, but after the accident, when he inspected the tyres, he found that the pressure all round was 46psi and not the normal 26psi. Luckily there was only superficial damage to the Mazda and, after a week at Willie Rutherford's workshop, it was soon back in pristine form again.

Rod is an immensely likeable person with a ready wit, but he certainly takes his rallying seriously. Obviously, on the Lombard-RAC he will be gaining invaluable experience, but he is also looking into the possibility of doing a season over here. He appreciates that there is little to be gained just from being good on his home patch, and feels that Britain and Europe must be the place for him. It was refreshing to meet a driver who is so publicity-conscious, for his sponsors are very important to him. When he is not working on his car or as a surveyor, he spends a lot of time doing promotion for Philips on TV and radio.

There will certainly be no mistaking its high-pitched screech next week—although it cannot be described in quite such romantic terms as the sound of a Lancia Stratos, it does have a character all its own. The car is small and well-balanced, and Rod reckons it must be one of the most stable cars to rally, producing 192bhp at the rear wheels.

Rod's versatility in motor sport can be measured from the other machine in which he competes, 5-litre Holden Monaro which he uses on Saturday nights on oval dirt race tracks. . . . Obviously, time only will tell how competitive Rod will be in this country but, if enthusiasm and determination to succeed can help a rally driver, he certainly has a good start. ■

Millen's rapid RX3 saloon in action in New Zealand. Will it prove as quick in the British forests?



Donnie Allison's Chevrolet leads one of the 30 NASCAR Grand National races.

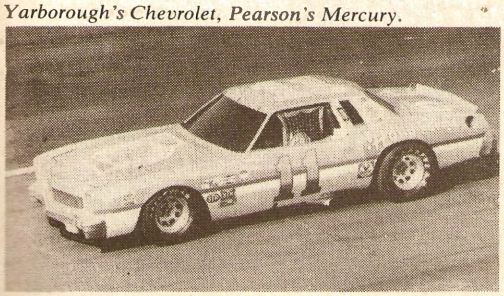
Four million dollar circus

Unlike in recent years, the 1977 NASCAR Grand National series has been dominated by one marque—but motor industry trends in the USA suggest that the future holds many more sweeping changes. GORDON KIRBY surveys the NASCAR scene.

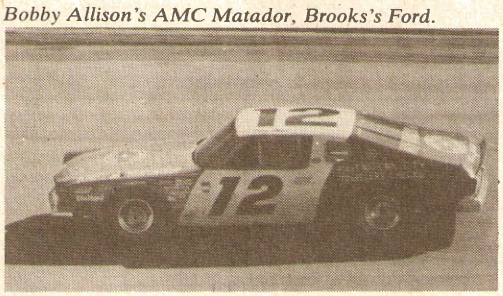
Cale Yarborough is a stout ol' boy. Short in stature but powerful of build, Yarborough is most certainly a man who radiates the finest virtues of the Grand National stock car driver. There's a rollicking confidence to the man's grin, a sense of hard yet fair play in the bends of his roundly tanned face and a deliberately wrought style in a selection of wide-brimmed cowboy hats which always shade Cale's stocky frame from the heat of the Dixie sun.

For two years now, his yellow-suited body bent purposefully about the wheel of a yellow and orange Chevrolet, Cale Yarborough has run off with the NASCAR-Winston Cup Grand National Championship. From time to time throughout those two years, just as he did two weeks ago at the North Carolina Motor Speedway on the day he won this year's NASCAR title, Yarborough has insisted, "I've run every lap this year just as hard as I could—just as if I was qualifying." And indeed, to look at his record over those two years and to watch him work his Holly Farms Chevrolet around a steep-banked whirlygig of a southern stock car oval, is to believe the man's words.

Yarborough's Chevrolet, Pearson's Mercury.



Bobby Allison's AMC Matador, Brooks's Ford.



Consider that in the 29 of 30 Winston Cup races run to date Yarborough, 38 this year, has come home the winner nine times and finished second or third nine more times. He has won on 190mph, 2.5-mile super-speedways, on rugged, bowl-like mile tracks and on frantic, 17 seconds per lap half-miles. He has established himself as the favourite, ahead of Richard Petty and David Pearson, for *any* NASCAR Grand National.

In a way it is curious that Yarborough should not until now have reached that level of reckoning. He's been at Grand National racing on a regular basis since the early sixties and it was 1966 when he got his big break with his joining the Wood Brothers' Ford team. Soon Yarborough was a frequent winner—in 50 starts over four years for the team he won 13 races. But then, as now, the Wood Brothers preferred to run only a limited schedule of races which meant that Yarborough was unable to challenge for the NASCAR championship.

Come 1971 and Cale was lured into USAC Championship racing for a couple of seasons which turned out to be difficult and unproductive. "I never got the equipment I was promised," he says of those years, "it was as simple as that."

In the winter of 1972 Yarborough was presented the opportunity to get back into stock cars when Bobby Allison split with Junior Johnson's Chevrolet team. Driving Johnson's car in '73, Yarborough finished a close second in the NASCAR-Winston Cup and he did the same thing the following year when he won ten races, the same number of victories as scored by the year's Champion, Richard Petty.

Although the Yarborough-Johnson combination did not have a good year in 1975 (their Chevrolet failed to finish in half its starts) they rebounded bountifully the following season. Johnson reorganised his team, the reliability factor improved markedly and Yarborough at last won the NASCAR title. This year has been even better. As well as winning nine of the 29 races already run Yarborough has never once failed to finish! "That part of it," he says, "is something we don't even like to think about. If we finish the next race it'll be The Impossible."

Given the expansiveness of Yarborough's current crest of success it is not surprising that next year his car will be sponsored by First National City Travelers Checks rather than longtime backer Holley Farms. "It's not," says Yarborough, "that Holley Farms wanted to pull out or anything like that. It's just that The Bank offered us a better deal."

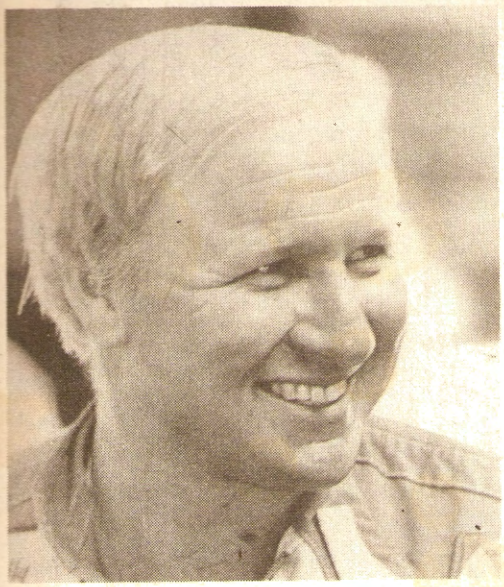
For Junior Johnson the success of his Chevrolets means he is the first stock car driver capably to make the transition to the job of team manager. Before his retirement in 1966 Johnson was one of stock car racing's most famous drivers. Although he never won the NASCAR Championship he did win 50 Grand Nationals in the course of his long career and the stories that colour his early days as a moonshine runner in the Carolina hills have become part of the legend of the American South and its unique form of motor racing.

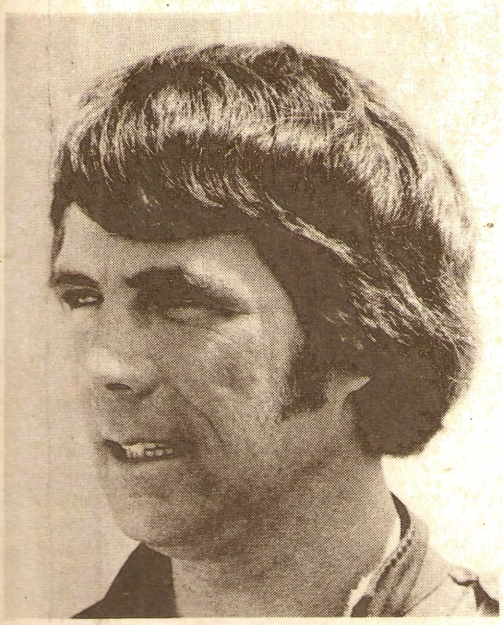
Today, of course, Grand National stock car racing is hardly a kind of renegade activity. It is a highly commercial, financially rewarding type of motor sport. Many of the races are televised and Winston cigarettes, series sponsor since 1971 (their contract has been and continues to be a yearly one) have bolstered the prize money totals so that this year more than $4,000,000 will be paid out to drivers and team managers. Next year will be the 30th season for both the National Association for Stock Car Automobile Racing and their Grand National division and given the remarkable breadth and degree of interest lavished on the races by the people of the Carolinas, Virginia, Tennessee, Alabama and Georgia it can only be another fine year.

Mind you, there are some problems on the horizon for Grand National racing. The very essence of NASCAR is big sedans and big V8s

Four million dollar circus

continued





Top to bottom: Cale Yarborough achieved another Winston Cup title in 1977, driving Junior Johnson's Holly Farms-sponsored Chevrolets. Richard Petty persevered with his Dodge, although he is said to be looking at a Chevrolet for 1978. Darrell Waltrip has established himself at the top of the NASCAR profession, one of the few men to have done so in recent years.

and over the next few years it is a sure thing that American manufacturers will be building fewer cars of that type and more cars of smaller dimension and capacity. Although NASCAR anticipate no major rule changes for next year it seems that in two to three years they may turn to an entirely new set of regulations. How the spectators will enjoy smaller NASCAR cars and how costly the change will be for the teams are questions not easily answered.

Meantime, while the current rules remain in effect (115ins wheelbase, 3,700lbs weight minimum and 350 cubic ins engines) the Chevrolet would seem to continue to reign supreme. There are two types of Chevrolets used in NASCAR. The first is the Chevelle chassis which is used on the faster tracks, while the second type is the bulkier Monte Carlo which, though less slippery than the Chevelle, is a quicker machine on short tracks because its engine can be mounted two inches further back in the chassis.

In addition to Yarborough, the major Chevrolet drivers are Benny Parsons, Darrell Waltrip and Donnie Allison. Parsons, NASCAR Champion in 1973, drives a pair of Chevrolets for a team owned by L. G. DeWitt and sponsored by the ubiquitous First National City Travelers Checks. Over the course of this year Parsons has become ever more competitive so that he can now be counted on to be as fast as anyone on all types of tracks. Thus far this year Parsons has won four races, more than ever before, and is locked into a close battle for second in the Championship with Waltrip and Richard Petty.

Now 30 years old, and into his fifth full year of Grand National racing Waltrip has established himself as a serious frontrunner. Five times this year he has brought his Gatorade-sponsored car home the winner. Little more than a year ago it seemed that Waltrip was younger than his years but today there's somehow a harder line to Waltrip's face and a duskier gleam to his complexion—it's as if his acceptance as a serious Grand National racer has suddenly added five years to Waltrip's age.

Donnie Allison meanwhile remains as the outsider of NASCAR. As fine an example as you might find of a Good Ol' Boy he is, at 37, two years younger than his more famous brother Bobby. Donnie has been winning Grand Nationals for as long a time as ten years but his career seems to have been curbed by his preference for saying precisely and simply what he thinks. Last year Donnie joined Hoss Ellington's team after the latter had a falling-out with regular driver A. J. Foyt ("AJ just wasn't prepared to do enough races," Ellington explains it, "I needed a driver who wanted to put some time into the team.") and almost immediately Allison gave the team a win. This year he has won twice more from the limited schedule which the team's budget allows and it begins to look as if he and Ellington have found a long-sought match in each other.

In addition to Yarborough, Parsons, Waltrip and Allison, some 60 per cent of the field for any Grand National consists of Chevrolets and, among this year's Rookie of the Year combatants, all three major contenders have used a Chevrolet. The final reckoning for Rookie of the Year honours has come down to a close fight between 21-year-old Ricky Rudd and 38-year-old Sam Sommers. Rudd is a former go-karter who seems to have all the markings of becoming a superstar while Sommers is a veteran Late Model Sportsman driver.

Then of course there's Janet Guthrie who has missed enough Grand Nationals to lose all hope of challenging either Rudd or Sommers but continues to both qualify and race in company with those two. Guthrie says her acceptance within the ranks of NASCAR was much slower than in USAC where she also raced this year. She adds that, "there is a lot of difference between the two organisations." When pressed for an explanation of that she rolls her eyebrows and asks courteously, "do we *have* to get into that?"

Leading the fight against the wash of Chevrolets is, of course, Richard Petty, the King of stock car racing. Forty years old this summer past and into his 20th season of Grand National racing, Petty continues, as ever, to drive a Dodge sponsored by STP. However the past two seasons have been a pair of the worst on record for the six-time NASCAR Champion (three wins last year, five this year).

The Grand National rules require all cars to be no more than four years older than the current model date and that means that Petty's team must at least change the silhouette of their 1974-spec Dodge Charger for next season. Certainly the chassis dimensions of the Petty Dodge are already very similar to a Chevrolet and it is known that the team have a Chevrolet chassis at their workshop. Finally the story is told that Petty and his men have done a series of wind-tunnel tests with various Dodge models and that the best drag figures they have recorded have been some 36 per cent *more* than that of their current car!

The only other competitive runner in a Dodge is Neil Bonnett. This has been but the second proper Grand National season for Bonnett who has shown considerable speed in Harry Hyde's Jim Stacey-sponsored Dodge. In fact the 32-year-old Bonnett won a race at Richmond in September and has otherwise qualified on the pole no fewer than six times.

Ford teams have been even less effective than their Dodge counterparts in competing with the Chevrolets. NASCAR's four-year rule forced the Wood Brothers to turn to a new Mercury silhouette for this year and even the combination of their own and driver David Pearson's experience has been unable yet to turn the new car into a competitive proposition. Pearson has won only twice this year (one of his victories being in the season-opening Riverside road race with the team's old car) and on many occasions he has had to plainly struggle to qualify well. Lately, however, there have been signs of progress and next year could well see the "Silver Fox" mixing it with the Chevrolet hordes.

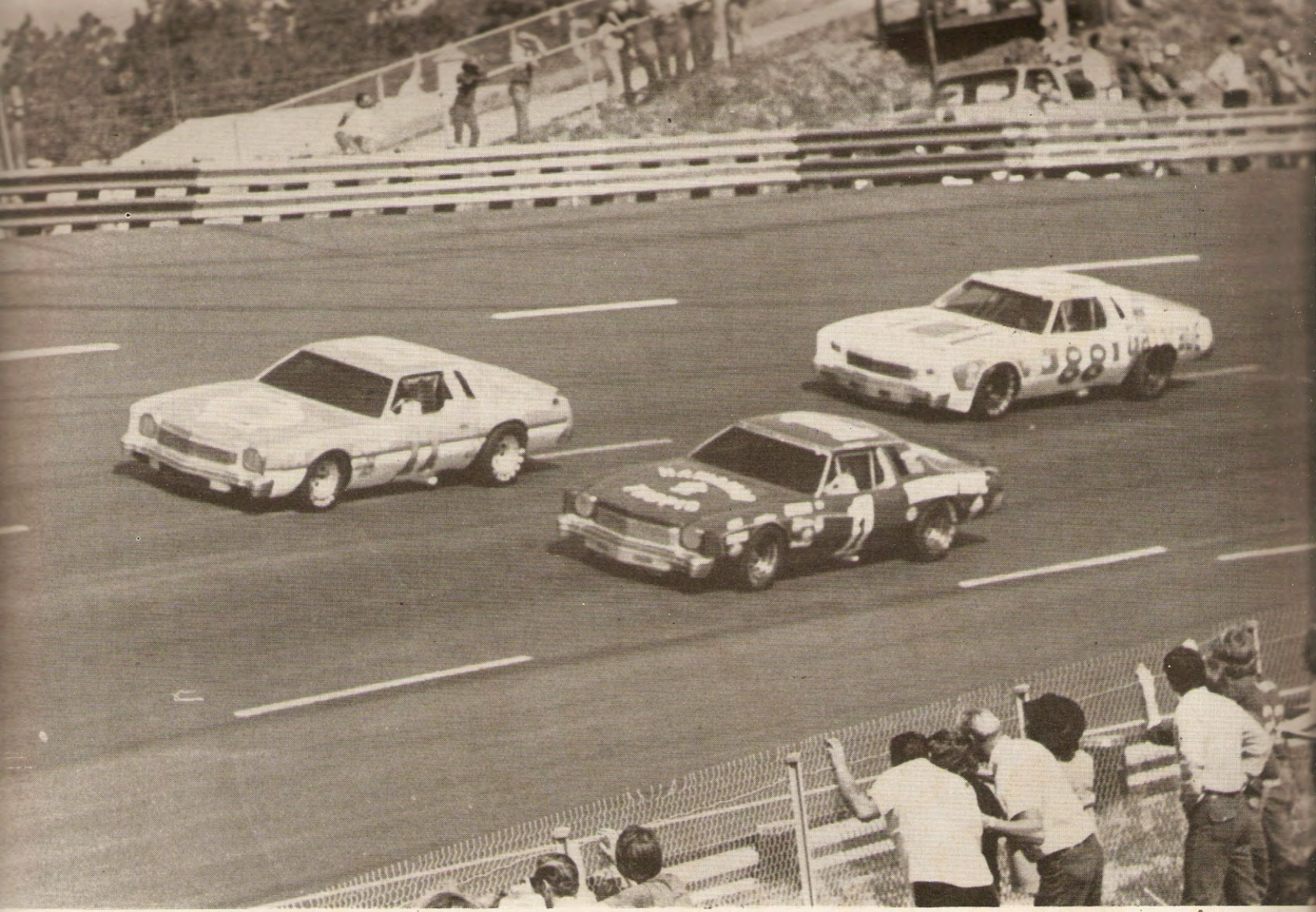
Other Ford teams include the Bud Moore/Norris Industries team for Buddy Baker and the Junie Donlavey/Truxmore Industries team for Richard Brooks. Both have driven Ford Torinos but neither has been much competitive, Baker failing to win a single race. Brooks has had a season of amazingly consistent fifth and sixth place finishes and looks like chasing Baker all the way home for fifth place in the championship.

Penske Racing started out this year with a Ford for Dave Marcis but the difficulty in making the car competitive and Penske's increasingly full commitment to USAC meant that the operation was stopped around mid-season. Since then, Marcis, who carries the reputation of being a very fast driver, has found a new team owned by a certain L. C. Osterlund. Osterlund has since bought Penske's Mercurys.

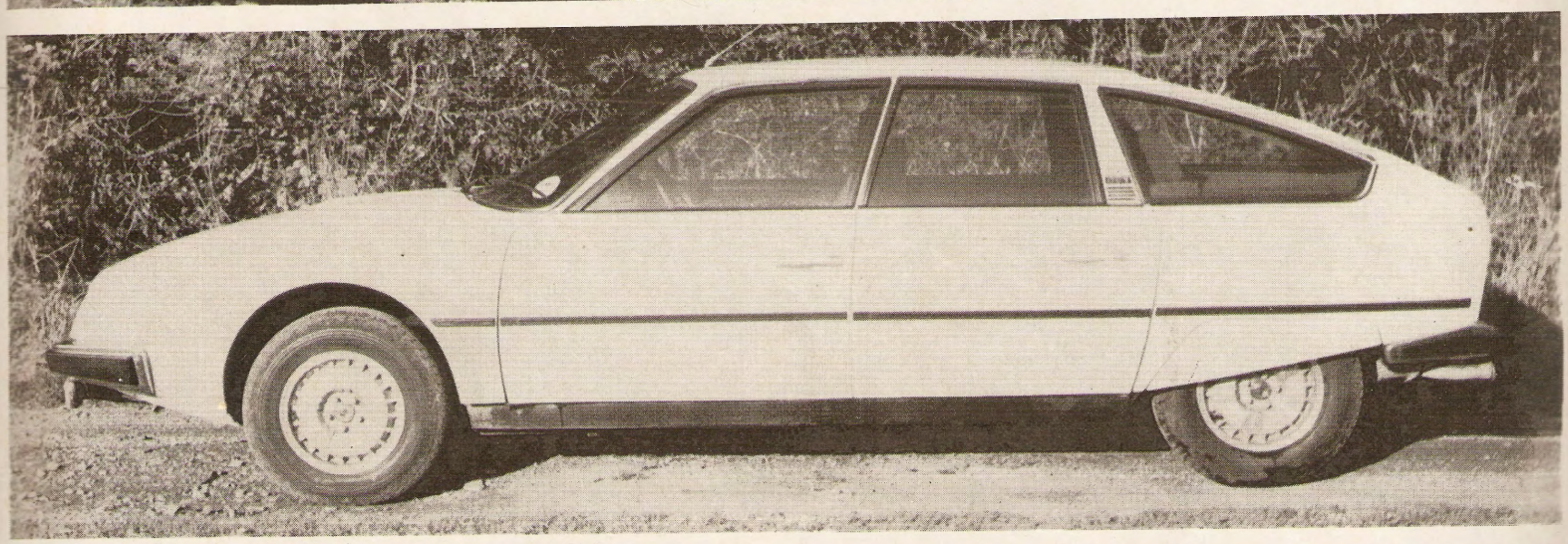
Last winter Bobby Allison left Penske Racing after two years to go his own way with an AMC Matador. The season has subsequently proved a difficult one for Allison who has struggled with both inconsistent handling and slightly uncompetitive straightline speed. Allison himself has also been affected by an hiatus hernia which disrupts the digestive system and has badly affected Allison's intentions. It looks as if this will be the second consecutive season in which Bobby has failed to win a race.

It looks then also as if Cale Yarborough will again be a difficult man to beat in next year's NASCAR-Winston Cup Championship. Junior Johnson's team is on the crest of an infectious run of success and reliability and Yarborough's driving is as sharp-edged and aggressive as any man in Grand National racing. As Cale himself says, "We got ourselves a real good team now and The Bank has got a lot of money to spend. Soon as I get in some huntin' this winter an' relax a bit I'm gonna be more ready than ever to go for number three." ■

Facing page: Donnie Allison in the Hoss Ellington car makes a pass down the inside of Cale Yarborough as Darrell Waltrip follows—the three fastest Chevrolets in NASCAR racing. Bottom: Yarborough and Waltrip lead Richard Petty round the banking: the STP Dodge has been one of the few cars to have challenged Chevrolet supremacy during the long Grand National season.



by John Bolster



As good as it looks

The performance and stamina of Citroën's new fuel-injected grand touring car was recently demonstrated by Paddy Hopkirk's magnificent performance, battling against the Mercedes-Benz, in the London-Sydney rally. Indeed, if one section had not been deleted, Paddy would have won. It's likely that the Mercedes, with their larger 6-cylinder engines, had more performance, so the result speaks volumes for the roadholding, handling, and sheer unbreakability of the French car. This test report concerns the recently introduced right-hand drive version.

As I have already described the basic CX in detail, I beg leave to mention only the special features of this new, high-performance model. The venerable 4-cylinder engine has been still further developed and though it is derived from the power unit of the fuel-injection DS, the installation is now far neater and less complicated. It is, indeed, sufficiently compact to allow the spare wheel to be carried under the bonnet, which permits the boot to have a remarkably low floor level and no sill to impede easy loading.

The fuel-injection engine gives a useful power increase and peak revs are reduced from 5500 to 4800rpm, with more torque in the middle ranges and outstanding flexibility. The Hydropneumatic self-levelling suspension has increased damping and slightly greater roll-resistance. Attractive light-alloy wheels enhance the beauty of the aerodynamic body shape, while the Jersey cloth upholstery is as attractive as it is comfortable. The typical Citroën single-spoke steering wheel controls Varipower steering, giving only 2.5 turns from lock to lock, and powered self-centring. Also unmistakably Citroën are the illuminated lenses for the speedometer and rev-counter.

Having little personal upholstery, I found the very soft seats greatly to my liking and a shorter driver reported that the position suited her too, without any need to use the extra lever for raising the cushion. The good all-round view makes parking easy, especially as the scuttle is not too high, and the steering gives maximum assistance at low speeds. Considering the relatively long wheelbase, the steering confers an astonishingly small turning circle, which contradicts the old theory that front-drive restricts the steering lock. The comfort of the front seats is equalled by those behind and the four doors give easy entry.

On moving off, it is at once obvious that this car has more steam than the other CX models. Indeed, a 0-60mph acceleration time around 9.0s would be possible if first and second gears were a little higher. Because of the torque characteristics, there is no need to use high revs on the gears in normal driving, to the benefit of fuel economy.

Both the remarkable low-speed flexibility and the smooth running during moderately fast driving seem more typical of a six-cylinder status when accelerating hard through the gears. The behaviour of the Bosch fuel injection is excellent, with instantaneous cold starting and good throttle response if one drives off immediately. The gearchange is quite light and accurate, with fifth out to the right and forward, but the clutch pedal seems rather high off the floor. The other pedals are well arranged and heel-and-toe is easy, which should reassure some drivers who found this manoeuvre difficult with the old DS "button".

As I have said before, the big Citroëns have such a special character of their own that people either become addicts or completely fail to get the message. The GTi, with its greater power and different suspension, is perhaps even more individual than the others, but it's abundantly worth persevering. Those of us who have driven Bugatti, Alfa Romeo, or Lotus racing cars have nothing to learn as far as this quick steering is concerned, but the power return gives a new dimension which would be an improvement on almost any car.

Perhaps the easiest way to drive is to pretend that the CX is a motorcycle and treat the wheel as handlebars. Personally, I like to let the wheel play back to the centre after a sharp corner; it will do this too quickly for smoothness if completely released, so I brake the wheel rim with the palms of my hands and let it centre itself at the ideal speed. That's only one way of driving, of course, and plenty of enjoyable techniques can be developed.

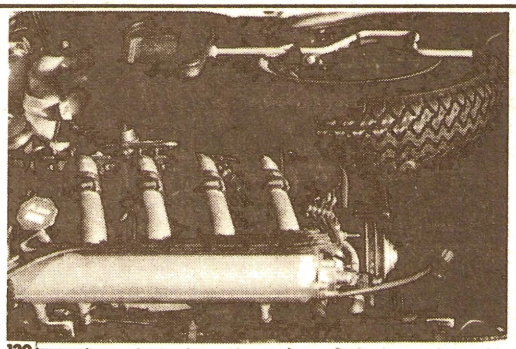
The stability in side winds and on wet roads is up to the legendary DS standards. The car always understeers, but it can corner exceptionally fast, the tyres becoming noisy when the driver is trying hard. Though the stronger damping is noticeable and there may be a little more road noise on certain surfaces, the ride is still outstandingly comfortable. There is some initial roll on entering a corner, but thereafter the angle is less conspicuous than on the other CX versions. Although the alterations are comparatively slight, the GTi is more rewarding as a driver's car, and if the ride feels slightly less like a magic carpet, I think that the overall suspension behaviour is an improvement, and I was never able to catch it out.

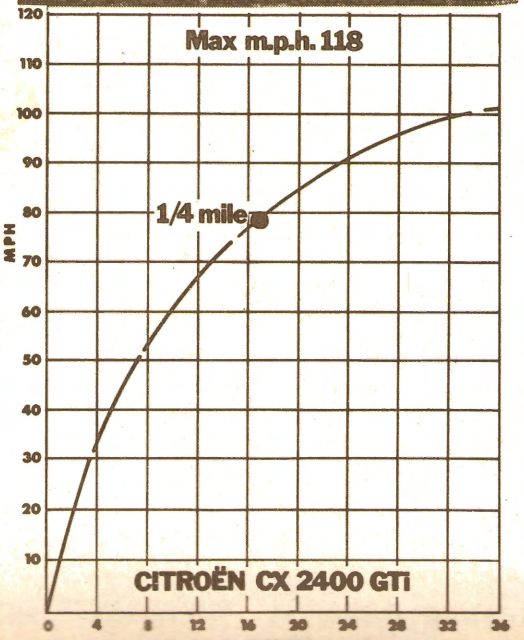
The efficiency of the body shape permits the car to cruise quietly at 110mph with the throttle three parts closed; at this sort of speed, few cars indeed are as economical. The large disc brakes, ventilated in front, make fast driving safe, and the handbrake, working on the front wheels, will hold the big machine on any gradient.

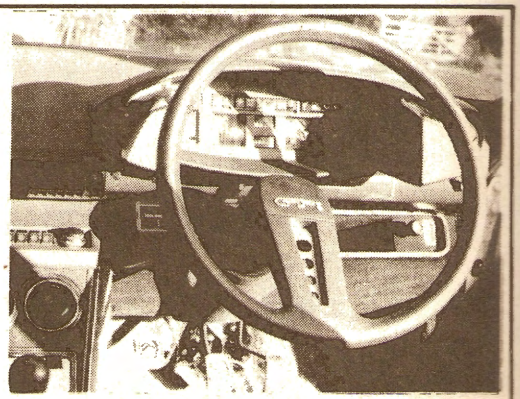
Curiously enough, I found the ventilation inferior to that of the DS and I failed to achieve warm feet with cool breathing air. The instruction book states that the eyeballs on the ends of the instrument panel are independent of the heat control and will always furnish fresh air, but this was certainly not the case on 'my' car. The heating is effective and while some people have criticised the illuminated lenses, through which one reads speed and revs, I found them easy to use although I have always liked proper round dials. I greatly appreciated the excellent foglights during those rather trying early morning mists that we have been suffering lately, and once again I must praise the logical location of the fingertip controls for lights, windscreen wipers, and direction indicators—so much nicer than the usual stalks.

Always an attractive and refined car, the Citroën CX is really brought to life by the fuel-injection engine; in addition, the suspension tweaks give the handling a taut feeling which is very pleasant. As an effortless, long-distance touring car with a moderate appetite for petrol, the GTi is as good as it looks, which is saying a great deal.

Facing page: three views of the Citroen's attractive aerodynamically-efficient bodyshell.







Above the control centre: Left: Bosch Jetronic fuel injection system.

Specification and performance data

Car Tested: Citroën CX 2400 GTi 4-door saloon price £6530.
Engine: Transverse, 4 cylinders in line, 93.5 x 85.5mm (2347cc). Compression ratio 9.1 to 1. 128bhp DIN at 4800rpm. Pushrod-operated overhead valves. Bosch L-Jetronic fuel injection. Electronic ignition.
Transmission: Single dry plate clutch, 5-speed all-indirect gearbox with central remote control, ratios: 0.73, 0.94, 1.25, 1.83, and 3.17 to 1. Helical spur gear final drive, ratio: 4.77 to 1. Driveshafts to front hubs.
Chassis: Combined steel body and chassis with insulated subframe. Hydropneumatic self-levelling independent suspension by double wishbones in front and trailing arms behind, with engine-driven hydraulic pump. Rack and pinion steering with power assistance and self-centring, plus speed-sensitive governor. Disc brakes all round, ventilated in front, with rear load correction, operated from main high-pressure system. Bolt-on light-alloy wheels, fitted Michelin 185 HR 14 XVS tyres.
Equipment: 12-volt lighting and starting. Speedometer. Rev-counter. Voltmeter. Water temperature, oil level, and fuel gauges. Clock. Heating, demisting, and ventilation system. Electric window operation. 2-speed windscreen wiper and washer with intermittent setting. Flashing direction indicators with hazard warning. Reversing lights. Fog lights. Map reading light. 17 warning lights.
Dimensions: Wheelbase 9ft 4in. Track 4ft 10in/4ft 5.5in. Overall lenghth 15ft 3in. Width 5ft 8in. Weight 26cwt 80lb.
Performance: Maximum speed 118mph. Speeds in gears: fourth 100mph, third 75mph, second 51mph, first 30mph. Standing quarter-mile 17.2s. Acceleration: 0-30mph 3.5s, 0-50mph 7.4s, 0-60mph 10.0s, 0-80mph 18.1s, 0-100mph 34.5s.
Fuel Consumption: 20-25mpg.

by John Bolster

Quieter Passats

The new Passat—more economical, quieter and faster.

The Nürburgring is the ultimate in genuine road circuits. It may be too good for modern Formula 1 cars, which are more suited to smooth, artificial tracks, but it is ideal for good roadgoing cars, and merciless in exposing any faults in roadholding or handling.

I was therefore delighted to have the opportunity to try the new Volkswagen Passat on those immortal slopes, and to sample some of the other models. First, however, I drove the latest Golf from Lochmühle to the 'Ring, over winding, mountainous roads through beautiful country, passing the vineyards where the celebrated Ahr wines originate.

The Golf S, LS, and GLS models have a new, short-stroke engine and, while the fuel -injection GTI retains its 1588cc capacity, these carburetter types are now of 1457cc. The smaller unit shows a useful improvement in fuel economy and it is also quieter than its predecessor. At peak revs, a drop from 75 to 70bhp has been accepted, but the overall performance is scarcely affected. Other improvements include softer rubber for the suspension strut mountings, front and rear, which reduces road noise transmission and slightly softens the ride.

I thoroughly enjoyed driving the new Golf, which is now quite outstandingly refined for a small car. The handling is excellent, too, and though there may be a fractional reduction in maximum speed, the acceleration is, if anything, better than before. On arrival at the circuit, I took over a new Passat, in this case with automatic transmission.

The Passat has undergone a very large facelift, with a new body shell. A far better aerodynamic shape, especially for the all-important nose section, has reduced the drag by 12 per cent. Practical improvements include a deeper tailgate, eliminating the sill over which luggage had to be lifted. Greater rigidity and less weight are other advantages, and there are many safety features. Detail changes in the suspension characteristics result in less roll and more precise handling, and a lot of work has gone into noise insulation.

The result of all this is to bring the Passat more into line with its refined, transverse-engined sisters. It's quite a big car for a 1600cc engine to pull, so it isn't as nimble as the Golf, but the rather sloppy handling, which I have criticised in the past, has been eliminated. I found that the automatic transmission can be treated like a manual box and if I broke no lap records with the Passat it was certainly more controllable than its predecessor. The greatest improvement in the new model is its lower sound level, which used to be somewhat elevated, and its appearance is more impressive. a slow-speed head-on accident was staged for our benefit, which proved that the energy-absorbing, plastic-covered bumpers can save a lot of money in traffic accidents.

The Golf GTI is one of my favourites and I made haste to grab one for an onslaught on the Nürburgring. Surely no car could be more forgiving of an excess of enthusiasm! The 'Ring was damp and slippery in places but the little machine never put a foot wrong. It's a long time since I last tackled those fantastic curves and one's memory can become rather rusty, but the excellence of the car disguised the fact that the driver was not always on the classic line.

Various competition cars had been brought to the circuit and I was interested to find that I was able to out-corner a race-prepared Golf when I was driving the standard GTI, for the road tyres afforded a better grip than the wide ones on patches of damp surface. Subsequently, I drove the 'Group 1½' version, which is popular with amateur drivers. It had a tubular roll-over cage, heavier dampers and harder springs, wide wheels and tyres, and a tiny steering wheel. I felt a bit of a boy-racer with all those garish advertisements, more so when I heard the raucous, straight-through exhaust.

Under the prevailing conditions, the "racer" proved less effective than the standard car. Quite apart from the tyre equipment, the harder suspension tended to make the car slide on slippery patches. Another disadvantage was the reduced radius of the low-profile tyres, which lowered the effective gearing and made second just too low, so it was necessary to remain in third on quite slow corners. In dry weather, the story would have been different, no doubt, but I greatly preferred the standard GTI.

It was a privilege to drive again on that incomparable circuit, where so much racing history was made, and we spoke in hushed tones of Nuvolari, Caracciola, and Rosemeyer. I thought, too, of my friend, Dick Seaman, who won the German Grand Prix for Mercedes-Benz, at a time when British drivers were not taken seriously on the Continent. Perhaps it was presumptious to try to follow in the wheel tracks of those masters, but if there's a better place for testing cars, or for sorting out the men from the boys, I'd like to know about it.

Specification and performance data

Car tested: Volkswagen Passat four-door saloon, price: LS £3803, GLS £4068, automatic + £259.

Engine: Four-cylinders 79.5x80mm (1588cc). Compression ratio 8.2 to 1. 75bhp at 5600rpm (GLS 85bhp). Belt-driven overhead camshaft. Solex downdraught carburetter.

Transmission: Single dry plate clutch. 4-speed synchromesh gearbox. Hypoid final drive. Driveshafts to front hubs. Extra: 3-speed automatic transmission.

Chassis: Combined steel body and chassis. Strut and wishbone front suspension, with coil springs and anti-roll bar. Rack and pinion steering. Trailing dead axle with coil springs and anti-roll bar. Servo-assisted disc/drum brakes. Bolt-on steel wheels, fitted 175/70 SR 13 tyres.

Dimensions: Wheelbase 8ft 1.2in. Track 4ft 4.8ins/4ft 5.1ins. Overall length 14ft 1in. Width 5ft 3in. Weight 17cwt 43lbs.

Performance: Maximum speed 102mph (GLS 107mph). Acceleration: 0-50mph 8.4s (GLS 7.9s). 0-62mph 13.0s (GLS 11.8s).

Fuel Consumption: Over 30mpg (maker's figures).

New oriental for England

Subaru, the car division of Fuji Heavy Industies, is the fifth largest importer into the USA. Now, Subaru (UK) Ltd has been—formed as a subsidiary of Britcar Holdings, who previously handled Jensens. A dealership network has already been established and the cars will be in the showrooms on December 1, when firm prices will be announced, but these will be in the £2,500 to £4,000 range.

All Subaru models have a flat-four light-alloy engine of 1600cc, with dry cast-iron liners and pushrod-operated valves. In standard form, the over-square unit has a compression ratio of 8.5 to 1 and develops 70 bhp on low-octane petrol at 5200 rpm. This is with a single Hitachi twin-choke carburettor, but the GFT coupé, with two such instruments and a ratio of 9.5 to 1, gives 81 bhp.

The short, horizontally-opposed engine is mounted ahead of the transmission, which drives the front wheels. Independent suspension is used all round, by MacPherson struts and lower wishbones in front and semi-trailing arms behind and the steering, unusually for a Japanese car, is by rack and pinion.

The bodies are 2 or 4-door saloons, and two coupés with the standard and twin-carburettor engines respectively, the latter being mated with a 5-speed gearbox. A very attractive estate body may have either the normal front-wheel drive or power transmission to all four wheels. This will create enormous interest, as there is a great demand for a 4WD vehicle without the high price and heavy fuel consumption of existing models.

The front-drive and 4WD estates are almost indistinguishable in appearance, though the cross-country version has greater ground-clearance and protective undershielding. Heavy-duty hub bearings and oil seals are also part of the 4WD specification, while both belt-driven and electric fans look after the cooling under extreme conditions. The drive to the rear wheels can be engaged or disengaged at speeds up to 50 mph, the propeller shaft connecting a power take-off at the rear of the gearbox with a chassis-mounted hypoid unit, which has articulated driveshafts to the rear hubs.

I have examined this newcomer and am impressed with the high standard of engineering and the quality of the light-alloy castings. I shall carry out a road test as soon as a well run-in example is available.

The Subaru 1600GFT—an 81bhp coupé.

Specification and performance data

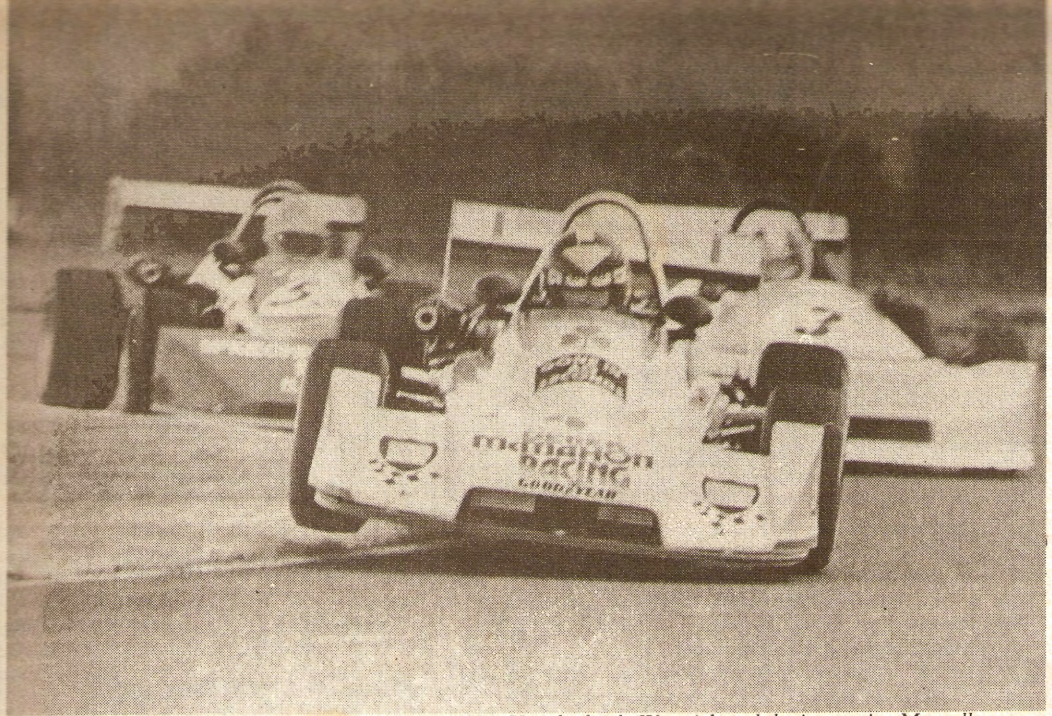
Cars Described: Subaru 2-and 4-door saloons, 2-door coupés, and 5-door estates.

Engine: Four-cylinders, horizontally-opposed, 92x60mm (1595cc). Compression ratio 8.5 to 1. 70 bhp at 5200 rpm. Pushrod-operated valves from central camshaft. Twin-choke Hitachi carburettor. **GFT Coupé:** compression ratio 8.5 to 1. 81 bhp at 5200 rpm. Two twin-choke Hitachi carburettors.

Transmission: Single dry plate clutch. 4-speed all-indirect synchromesh gearbox with central remote control, ratios 1.029, 1.464, 2.157, and 3.666 to 1. Optional automatic with torque converter and 3-speed box, ratios 1.0, 1.505, and 2.600 to 1. **GFT Coupé:** 5-speed synchromesh gearbox, ratios 0.942, 1.156, 1.518, 2.157, and 3.666 to 1. Hypoid final drive, ratio 3.700 to 1. **4WD** 3.889 to 1.

Chassis: Integral steel body. Independent suspension all wheels, Macpherson in front and semi-trailing arms behind. Rack and pinion steering. Servo-assisted dual-circuit disc/drum brakes. Bolt-on steel wheels, fitted 155SR 13 tyres, with inner tubes for 4WD.

Dimensions: Wheelbase 8ft 0.9in. Track 4ft 2.2ins/4ft 1.6in. **4WD** 4ft 1.8in/3ft 11.8in. Overall length 13ft 1.7in, **Estates** 13ft 2.5ins. Width 5ft 1in. Weights from 16cwt 38lbs to 19cwt 22lbs **(4WD).**



Derek Daly won his fifth British F3 race in succession. Here he leads Warwick and the impressive Mansell.

Daly gone in 60 seconds

Daly repeats his Thruxton triumph after challenges from South and Warwick fail—Mansell impressive in Lola—Delta take one-two in FF2000—Report: MARCUS PYE.

Last Sunday's Brent Walker-sponsored 'Gone in 60 Seconds Raceday' at Thruxton rounded off another successful year of BARC motor sport at the club's home circuit. Unfortunately the bitterly cold conditions, coupled with squally showers throughout the morning and the BBC television coverage of three races, contrived to keep the crowds away—many preferring the comfort of an afternoon at home with the family in front of the box to the thought of braving the elements at the bleak Hampshire circuit. Those who did come were rewarded with some good racing and the opportunity to see several new driver and car combinations in action for the first time. After early challenges from Derek Warwick and Stephen South had faded, newly-crowned BP Formula 3 Champion Derek Daly won his fifth F3 race in succession, while Nigel Mansell impressed greatly in both this event and the earlier FF1600 scrap. For Nick Crossley, his first season as an FF2000 manufacturer had a fairy-tale ending; after a year of mixed fortunes with the superbly-engineered Delta cars, morale hit an all-time high when they scored a resounding one-two victory in the hands of Richard Wills and Mike Quinn. All in all the racing was entertaining, although it must be said that the standard of driving, especially in the production saloon race, left much to be desired. The BARC, as organisers of the event, and the RAC as the governing body must clamp down much more tightly on drivers who persist in using the kerbs and grass at the chicane and the complex in an effort to go faster. Surely the purpose of motor racing is to see who can drive quickest on the circuit and not who can use the grass most frequently.

The major race of the day was the 15-lapper for F3 cars and of the 23 entries only 17 were to practice. With Giordano Regazzoni non-starting, it was a rather meagre number of cars which finally appeared for the start. Local man Derek Warwick had annexed pole position with the Warwick Trailers-supported Ralt, Derek appearing much more at home in the new car than he had for some time with the older Chevron chassis. Like everyone else, Warwick's greatest problem in practice was the treacherous track surface. As usual the approach to the chicane was awash with rivulets spanning the circuit in numerous other places also. Indeed it was a credit to the drivers that the cars survived the two qualifying sessions intact despite their being a good eight or nine seconds off the pace. Alongside the Alresford man would be the other Derek, Mr Daly slotting his Derek McMahon Chevron onto the first row 0.1sec slower than his old FF1600 rival. 'Little D' had to contend with a broken splitter in the first session and was one of eight to improve at the second attempt. Like Daly, relieved to be free of championship pressures, Stephen South completed the front row with the smartly-presented BP VF7 March, South being down on 1:24.1 and unable to improve in the second session.

The second row contained the two 'dark horses' of the race, Geoff Lees and Nigel Mansell. Lees, having become a father on the previous day, was benefiting from a little Denim sponsorship, renewing their ties from the GP meeting in July. Geoff really has been supremely erratic this season, happily not a reflection on his driving talent but more a question of his lack of finance so it was pleasing to see him so well up on Saturday and displaying much of his old fire again. Mansell, on the other hand, has taken to F3 like the proverbial 'duck to water' and once again looked capable of an excellent result with the solitary Lola chassis. Sadly Nigel's main problem appeared to be a marked lack of straight-line speed which is, of course, so essential at a circuit like Thruxton.

Geoff Brabham headed the third row having suffered a tyre problem in the first session and hoping this had been rectified in time for the race. Next to the Australian sat Frenchman Patrick Gaillard who has improved immeasurably throughout the season, improving late in the second session to 1:25.8, 0.2sec quicker than David Kennedy making one of his all too rare appearances in England, this time in one of March Reading's 773s, the car usually pedalled by Aryon Cornelsen Filho. The red-headed Irishman had brought along his Findus/Group Waterworks Accessories and was looking for a good showing in front of the same appreciative crowd which saw him go so well in his FF1600 days. David complained about the awful weather but was enjoying himself nonetheless.

Ian Flux slotted his Ockley Ralt onto the inside of row four just ahead of the number 13 car driven by Divina Galica, the works-run Chevron decked out in the attractive blue livery of Olympus Cameras. Divina looked relaxed in the car although she was unable to improve her time in the second practice period and was certainly not going to disgrace herself in the race.

Huub Rothengatter, the widely-travelled Dutchman, was the first man on row five and he managed to equal Divina's 1:26.4 in the second session for his grid position. Alongside him sat F3 debutant Philip Bullman who was having a trial run in James King's March with backing from BP. Phil lost most of the first session when the car was put onto slicks so his performance was even more creditable, bearing in mind his lack of experience in an F3 car, especially as Bullman is still only in his second year of motor racing. The remaining runners were all struggling off the pace, Ian Grob having handling problems with the well turned-out KVG Chevron, Phillippe Colonna also having a similar story. 'Dodo' Regazzoni would have been next so the last row comprised poor Paul Bernasconi who really has had a rotten year in his underfinanced Ralt, his engine sounding rough and tired throughout the day, and Wyatt Stanley, the ex-kartist whose ex-Silverstone March has been updated progressivily this year although it is being run on a shoestring budget. At least this car now looks smart in a new black and ochre colour scheme and Wyatt does enjoy his racing.

South made a splendid start in the BP March to grab the lead but even this was overshadowed by that of young Mansell, whose getaway was nothing short of phenomenal. Indeed, at the end of the first lap as they filed into the chicane, it was South, Daly then the amazing Mansell from Warwick, Gaillard, Brabham and Lees, recovering from a mediocre start. Warwick usurped Mansell second time round and Nigel was demoted to fifth, then sixth on succeeding laps by first Gaillard and then Kennedy. Both Daly and Warwick passed the BP car on lap 5, Warwick towing his way under the Chevron's rear wing in an effort to wrest the lead. Sadly the lead battle was only to last a couple of laps as Warwick spun exiting Club and retired soon afterwards as a result of his *faux pas*.

South was now promoted to second again although Gaillard, Lees and the impresive Mansell were all closing on the Englishman in the latter stages. Several times Mansell tried to pass Lees, but on each occasion his bravado in the corners was unable to compensate for his shortage of speed on the straights which hampered his progress irretrievably. Brabham dropped out of the fray for a while near Kimpton and, after a couple of minutes as a spectator, decided that it was more fun to take part and rejoined. However, Geoff was only able to pass Stanley although he gained dramatically on Colonna in the closing stages.

With Warwick out of the way Daly assumed control of the situation with consummate ease and drew away to win comfortably from South, with Gaillard third and being reeled in by Lees who drove very well throughout. Mansell finished fifth despite a late charge by Flux who set fastest lap in his vain pursuit. Philip Bullman drove smoothly and sensibly, well within himself, narrowly failing to catch Rothengatter on the line for seventh and Divina, after a spirited dice with Bullman earlier in the race fended off Grob who eventually fell foul of wet patch at Church a lap from home. Kennedy dropped out of a strong fourth place on lap 8 after the nosecone became frayed causing the car to vibrate badly, Kennedy stopping at the complex, at one stage suspecting a crack in the chassis.

Gone In 60 Seconds Formula 3 Trophy (15 laps): 1, Derek Daly (Chevron-Toyota Novamotor B38), 19m 24.5s, 109.25mph; 2, Stephen South (March-Toyota Novamotor 773), 19m 26.9s; 3, Patrick Gaillard (Chevron-Toyota Novamotor B38), 19m 28.6s; 4, Geoff Lees (Chevron-Toyota Novamotor B38), 19m 28.8s; 5, Nigel Mansell (Lola-Toyota Novamotor T570), 19m 30.4s; 6, Ian Flux (Ralt-Toyota Novamotor RT1), 19m 30.8s **Fastest lap:** Flux, 1m 16.5s, 110.87mph.

SUPPORTING RACES

The first race, the Formula Ford 1600 Minute Stakes, started promptly at 1pm, a busy schedule being necessary firstly as the BBC were to record the first three races for *Grandstand* and secondly to beat the impending dusk at 4.30pm. It was the reigning BARC FF1600 champion, David Leslie, who put the familiar Crossflags Motors (Dumfries) Royale on pole, his time of 1min 38.1s being 12secs off the lap record (due to abysmal weather in practice) but still a full second quicker than Mike Blanchet, having another run in the promising new Lola T540. Completing the front row was Birmingham's Nigel Mansell in his McKechnie Wines-entered Crossle 32F with circuit specialist David Heale (Reynard) and Canadian Nigel Gough (Van Diemen—sporting Sari Specials logos in the absence of regular driver Mark Syms) lining up behind them to make it five *marques* in the leading

five positions. A welcome addition to the race, and sixth fastest in qualifying, was Kenny Gray pedalling a Scorpion-Royale just ahead of Bernard Devaney (Hawke). David McClelland (Crosslé) and Trevor van Rooyen who had chassis problems with his immaculate SDC-backed Royale.

Mansell it was who rocketed from the outside of the front row to lead into Allard for the first time with Leslie, Blanchet and Heale right in his slipstream and the rest, as one, in a swarm behind. Round the fast sweeps these two concentrated on building up a slight cushion but the Jerseyman's red Lola was not allowing them this luxury. Over the line at the completion of lap 1 Mansell and Leslie rubbed wheels in a dramatic side-by-side manoeuvre, which must have made superb television footage, Blanchet and Heale heading McClelland, van Rooyen and the rest onto the second tour. Leslie, driving with great confidence, seized the initiative this time to outfox Mansell, who was then demoted to fifth next time round following a large moment. Blanchet now led the pursuit of Leslie then, with Heale and McClelland hot on his heels before the recovering Mansell. Just as Leslie had established a respectable lead, on lap 5, Mansell had fought his way to second again, and was then presented with the lead when Leslie, too, spun back to fifth a couple of laps later. Not wishing to take this gift lightly Mansell then rushed off to a well judged, if fortunate, 3secs win over Heale who passed Blanchet at half-distance with the irrepressible Leslie a fighting third from the works Lola driver. Such was Leslie's determination after his incident that, had the race been two or three laps longer, the outcome would almost certainly have been settled in his favour.

Surprisingly neither an Opel nor a BMW sat on pole position for the production saloon thrash, for Mike Smith proved 0.6sec faster than Jock Robertson in the pouring rain. Smith's Century Oils Capri revelled in the conditions with Mike once again proving what a rapid and spectacular Capri-pilot he is at the fast, undulating track. John Brindley, guesting in Graham Miles's regular Manitou-LE BMW sat outside Jock's Peter Hall-owned Commodore on the front row with the similar BMWs of Gerry Marshall (the ex-Lanfranchi Monorep example) and Derrick Brunt just behind ahead of Barrie Williams in Alan Foster's Capri and the fastest Vauxhall, Malcolm Prior's Strand Garages Magnum. Robertson judged the start beautifully to head the fast-starting Brunt, Brindley and Marshall up the hill towards the complex. These stations were held until Kimpton on lap 2 when the St Albans farmer passed the ICS Opel, Brindley also taking advantage on the way up to the chicane. Smith, meanwhile, had fought his way ahead of Gerry and farther down the field, in the baby class, a battle royal had begun with Keith Newland-Hodges (Renault 5), Peter Buxtorf (Honda Civic) and Juliette Slaughter (R5) all in contention. Graham Geldeard (Magnum) and Ian Deavin (Mazda RX3) both strayed onto damp patches at Club on lap 4 and revolved, fortunately escaping bodily contact although the people huddling in the stands were to see plenty of this three laps later. Smith and Marshall had a coming together under braking, the nerfing match being highlighted by perhaps the most perfect example of 'synchronised spinning' to be witnessed this season. Alas the battle could not be resumed as Mike's Capri refused bluntly to restart and Marshall's car had received a hefty blow in the suspension/handling department, Gerry pirouetting again 100 yards later as a result. Seconds later Buxtorf lost the, by then, class-leading Civic after a fine drive, relinquishing the lead to Newland-Hodges in the process, Juliette dropping behind after an excursion of her own at mid-distance.

Robertson forged ahead of Brunt and Brindley in the middle of the race but on the ninth lap succumbed to continuous pressure from the latter, his team-mate retiring to a safe distance as if he could foresee the final lap already. As the Opel hustled up alongside the under-rated Brindley through Brooklands one could sense a dramatic scramble through Club and indeed we were not to be disappointed. Robertson made his last-ditch outbraking effort just that vital fraction too late and, in an instant, the big blue car was backwards into the bank with a thud. In the excitement, with flags waving gaily from the surrounding marshals' posts, Brindley was also off, coming to rest inches from the armco but the wily Brunt was through in a flash, the Millcars of Mill Hill-sponsored BMW finishing 15secs up on Brindley who had another spin in front of Newland-Hodges and Buxtorf on the exit of Club. All this commotion allowed Williams to inherit third after a quiet run from the similar Capris of Hugh Wheldon and Rod/Mike/Hugh Birley, still racing under appeal. Eric Cook narrowly failed to beat Prior in class B after a race-long battle; Hamish Irvine (Triumph Dolomite Sprint) scored an excellent win in the 2-litre category over Deavin while the tiddlers were led home by Buxtorf after a splendid outing in his ex-Alderton machine.

The Big Banana Feet modsports race followed, for which Alec Poole qualified the Janspeed Datsun Netherlands 290ZG on the premier position. This potent machine is driven in national events by Datsun's Dutch star Han Tjan although Alec would love to drive it over here next season. Mike Donovan put Barry Eggleton's Midget alongside him while Jon Fletcher was next up in his ubiquitous Elan. Other interesting cars to appear on the grid included Steven Roberts's fast Mini Marcos, Rob Haigh's bulbous MGA, Mark Hales's neat Turner and, lurking near the back and destined not to start, Paul Pycroft in his fabulous De Tomaso Pantera. At the drop of the flag Poole hurtled off and was away round Allard when the two 10secs men started off. Fletcher battled gamely with the Datsun for the lead, attaining it on one occasion but, in the end, power was bound to tell as the Irishman tweaked his car to victory. The major interest of the race, though, concerned the whereabouts of the incredible Bob Jarvis who, from his delayed start, sped through to eighth overall on lap 3, seventh the following lap, then fourth before reaching third at the end after a brief squabble with Dave Mercer's ex-Jenvey Elan.

A very representative grid assembled for the final race of the day, the Carson City Car Chase for Ford 2000 and, as a prelude of better things to come, Richard Wills planted his superbly-turned out Delta on pole position by a stunning 1.2sec over Kenny Gray (Scorpion Royale) and the similar car of Peter White (the ex-Dougall works development model). Amiable Aussie Mike Quinn was a strong fourth quickest in practice edging Frank Sytner onto the outside of row 2. Simon Kirkby drove Richard Dutton's Crosslé to sixth-best time ahead of Jim Walsh, who sadly couldn't start Andy Peach's Ray when the brakes disappeared in practice. Philip Bullman was was down in 23rd place having concentrated on his F3 drive and had only a brief run in what was the wettest session of all.

As Sid Offord dropped the flag for the final time this year at Thruxton it was the Delta of Wills which put its power down best, catapulting the Bucks driver into an immediate lead from Gray and White. Sytner got the jump on Quinn from the second row but, to the unconcealed delight of the Horseless Carriage Co team, Quinn appeared third from the chicane at the completion of the lap, Gray having damaged the nose of his car and retired to the pits. White was the next to go for, as Quinn was closing in, part of the suspension failed, possibly a legacy of many testing miles, and Mike, now being caught by Rob Wilson's ICL/Royal Grafton China Reynard, was second behind his team-mate. However Wilson's challenge was not to materialise fully as a nasty top-end misfire set in (a similar problem occurring in practice when the carburetter iced up!) leaving the New Zealander a good third. Behind Wilson, Rick Gorne had fought his way courageously through a bunch comprising Sytner, the duelling Peter Argetsinger and Nick Foy and Kirkby who was very smooth throughout.

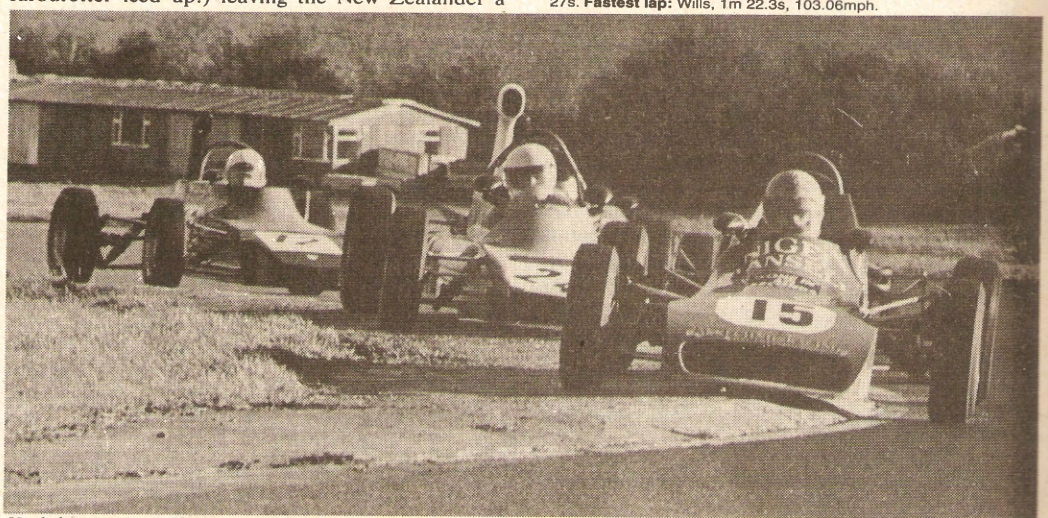
There was no way that Wills, having established a huge lead, was going to risk losing the first win for the Patrick Head-designed *marque* so his pace slackened off towards the finish allowing the sister car of Quinn to gain ground slightly. Sadly, the season was rounded off with a serious accident to Jeremy Turner who crashed his Dulon into the marshal's post at Church causing the race to be stopped with the results declared at eight laps. An emotional Wills leapt from the winning machine not knowing that Quinn had finished second ahead of Wilson, Sytner, Kirkby, Foy, Gorne (having spun at the complex) and Argetsinger in what had been one of the most dominating performances in the formula this year, and one which certainly puts Delta cars on the map for major honours in 1978.

The Formula Ford Minute Stakes (10 laps): 1, Nigel Mansell (Crosslé-Minister 32F), 16m 45.7s, 84.34mph; 2, David Heale (Reynard-Rowland 75FF), 16m 48.1s; 3, David Leslie (Royale-Scholar RP24), 16m 48.8s; 4, Mike Blanchet (Lola-Minister T540), 16m 51.6s; 5, David McClelland (Crosslé-Minister 30F), 16m 58.3s; 6, Kenny Gray (Royale-Scholar RP24), 17m 8.6s. **Fastest lap:** Leslie, 1m 37.2s, 87.26mph.

Eleanor's Chase for production saloons (11 laps): Overall and 2501-3000cc: 1, Derrick Brunt (3.0 BMW Si), 19m 19s, 80.50s; 2, John Brindley (3.0 BMW Si), 19m 36.9s; 3, Barrie Williams (3.0 Ford Capri), 19m 54.6s; 4, Hugh Wheldon (3.0 Ford Capri), 19m 59.3s **Fastest lap:** Brindley, 1m 42s, 83.15mph. **2001-2500cc:** 1, Malcolm Prior (2.3 Vauxhall Magnum), 20m 10.4s 77.08mph; 2, Eric Cook (2.3 Mazda RX2), 20m 10.8s; Graham Geldeard (2.3 Vauxhall Magnum), 20m 44.3s; no other starters. **Fastest lap:** Prior, 1m 46.3s, 79.79mph. **1501-2000cc:** 1, Hamish Irvine (2.0) Triumph Dolomite Sprint), 20m, 25.7s, 76.12mph; 2, Ian Deavin (2.0 Mazda RX3), 20m 39.6s; 3, David Wood (2.0 Mazda RX3), 10 laps; no other starters. **Fastest lap:** Irvine, 1m 47.7s,78.75mph. **Up to 1500cc:** 1, Peter Buxtorf (1.2 Honda Civic) 10 laps, 71.77mph. 2, Keith Newland-Hodges (1.3 Renault 5TS), 10 laps; 3, Juliette Slaughter (1.3 Renault 5TS), 10 laps; 4, John Spiller (1.3 Hillman Avenger GT), 10 laps. **Fastest lap:** Buxtorf, 1m 54.2s, 74.27mph.

Big Banana Feet modsports race (8 laps); overall: 1, Alec Poole (2.8 Datsun 290ZG), 12m 5s 93.59mph; 2, Jon Fletcher (1.7 Lotus Elan), 12m 6s; 3, Bob Jarvis (1.1 Davrian-Imp Mk6), 12m 21.2s; 4, David Mercer (1.8 Lotus Elan), 12m 28s. **Over 2000cc:** 1, Poole; 2, Tim Goss (3.5 MGB GT V8), 12m 39.2s; 3, Mark Niblett (2.7 Porsche Carrera), 7 laps; no other finishers. **Fastest lap:** Poole, 1m 28.6s, 95.73mph. **1501-2000cc:** 1, Fletcher, 93.46mph; 2, Mercer; 3, Rob Haigh (1.9 MGA), 12m 37.7s; no other starters. **Fastest lap:** Fletcher, 1m 28.7s, 95.62mph. **1151-1500cc:** 1, Keith Ashby (1.5 MG Midget), 12m 48.9s, 88.25mph; 2, Mike Donovan (1.5 MG Midget), 12m 56.1s; 3, Steven Roberts (1.4 Mini Jem Mk2), 13m 12.2s; 4, Martin Wilson (1.3 MG Midget), 13m 34.2s. **Fastest lap:** Donovan, 1m 33.8s, 90.42mph. **Up to 1150cc:** 1, Jarvis, 91.54mph; 2, Geoff Lynn (1.1 Davrian-Imp Mk7), laps; 3, Richard Oliver (1.1 MG Midget), 7 laps; 4, Bill Sheppard (1.1 Austin Healey Sprite), 6 laps. **Fastest lap:** Jarvis, 1m 27.4s, 97.04mph.

Carson City Car Chase for Ford 2000 (10 laps): 1, Richard Wills (Delta-Nelson 77), 11m 7.5s, 101.65mph; 2, Mike Quinn (Delta-Nelson 77), 11m 14.8s; 3, Rob Wilson (Reynard-Racing Services 77SF), 11m 16s; 4, Frank Sytner (Royale-Fewkes RP25), 5, Simon Kirkby (Crosslé-Neil Brown 33F), 11m 25.3s; 6, Nick Foy (Reynard-Nelson 77SF), 11m 27s. **Fastest lap:** Wills, 1m 22.3s, 103.06mph.



Kerb-hopping at the chicane was the order of the day. Above: Mansell leads David Heale and McClelland. Below: Derrick Brunt ahead of John Brindley and Mike Smith.

Trevor van Rooyen

After one of the most successful Formula Ford seasons on record, in which he equalled Richard Morgan's record of 33 wins, popular South African driver Trevor van Rooyen now approaches a major crossroads in his racing career. As he prepares for 1978, he knows that it will be perhaps the most important single year if he is to reach the pinnacle of the sport. Aged 26, and born in Capetown, Trevor has this year raced a Royale-Minister RP24 in the livery of SDC Ltd, the Bedford building consultants. He hopes to move into Formula 3 next year, once again with SDC backing.

A dedicated professional, Trevor has just completed his fourth year in FF1600, and has the unique experience of two years' racing in both his native country and Britain. He ended the 1977 season with an impressive set of results in the major championships, and lap records at the Silverstone GP circuit and at Oulton Park—one of his favourite circuits and the scene of his most cherished win. With victories at both Silverstone tracks, Thruxton, Brands Hatch, Oulton Park, Donington and Mallory Park under his belt, Trevor is surely an outstanding prospect for the future. MARCUS PYE spoke to him about his motor racing career.

Briefly, Trevor, when did you first become involved with motor sport?

Well, initially I raced a Micro-Midget in South Africa, starting when I was ten. These were small racing cars with rear-mounted motorcycle engines, and I was quite successful. My real love though, at that time, was motor cycle racing. I did my first race on a bike at 16 and was offered a works ride as a result of my first appearance. As it turned out the deal was to last for four years and I was able to open my own Yamaha agency during that period.

Having done so well on two wheels, what prompted you to switch to the four-wheel side of the sport?

I'd been in bike racing for a few years, graduating through 250 and 350cc machines, and had decided, for 1974, to order a new Yamaha TZ700 for an assault on the 750cc class. However, fate stepped in and I had a serious motorcycle accident which made me decide to switch to cars. My first season in South African FF races, 1974, was a year of 'learning the ropes' in a Dulon chassis, preparing myself for a full-scale sponsored season in 1975. That year I was unlucky to lose the National championship to Bobby Scott by only one point. I was always a front runner, in fact most of the races ended in either victory or retirement—and it was the latter, due to clutch failure, which cost me the championship.

Having done so well in the South African series you must have been tempted to progress to a higher formula over there for 1976 but, as we all know, you decided to come to England to do Formula Ford once again. Why was this?

Well, at the time there was a possibility of a season in Atlantic over there—but only if I could find something in the region of £15,000 for the drive. I had always been successful in the past and of course there was the danger of being labelled as solely another good FF driver. I needed to diversify if I was to remain there, and Formula Atlantic is South Africa's premier formula. The big danger if I was to opt for Atlantic was that I might have a bad year and so lose any chance of racing internationally in the higher formulae, so the decision was made to come to England for a third season in FF1600.

My wife and I sold everything we owned and arrived over here with enough money to buy a car. David Minister supplied an engine although all maintenance was left to me.

The first thing which overwhelmed me when we arrived was how helpful everyone was. We could not have hoped for greater assistance and all the clubs and individuals too could not have helped us more. Through lack of finance I decided to stop in September, basically to concentrate on my 1977 programme, once again in FF1600 unless a major sponsorship deal could be concluded.

You were on the verge of giving up altogether at the end of last year and yet here you are, with 33 wins to your credit in 1977, having won the RAC FF1600 championship, been voted Allied Polymer Driver of the Year, finished second by a narrow margin in the Brush Fusegear series, and fifth in the Townsend Thoresen championship. How did this come about?

At the beginning of the season I was offered a choice of three works-assisted chassis and, having been impressed with the RP21 last year and doing a lot of testing with the new RP24, I decided to remain loyal to Royale for the season, although I had no money to run the car. My personal finances had slumped and I had only £160 in the bank with which to pay the rent and support my wife and myself before even thinking of racing. Without sponsorship it seemed that my racing programme would be very limited! Fortunately for me a journalist on the *Bedfordshire Times* had seen me drive and was impressed, and it was he, after a great deal of persistence, who had me introduced to the Managing Director of SDC, who already sponsored a motorcycle racer. Fortunately, both sides could see mutual benefit from a sponsorship scheme and a deal was tied up at first acquaintance. This financial support, of course, must be the biggest single factor behind my success this season and I will be eternally grateful to the company for all their assistance, without which my racing would have been impossible.

Do the works prepare the car for you with all the latest tweaks, as you have obviously been their leading customer this year?

No, I have prepared my own car at Royale's workshops throughout the year, although their technical back-up has been first class. This is another thing I have always insisted upon—even if I could afford a full-time mechanic I am much happier preparing the car myself. It's been bloody hard work this season—I arrive at the team's base between 9 and 9.30 am and have worked solidly until 1 am the following morning to keep the Royale in tip-top condition five days per week. When I have not been racing at the weekend, every minute has been spent working on the car, and this is why reliability has been so good. It has been stripped down after every race, whether a fault has occurred or we have won, and has been rebuilt with any slightly suspect component replaced. That's one thing which I learned when I was in the motorcycle business—the necessity of meticulous maintenance to go with sympathetic treatment of machinery. People moan about the reliability of the SDC Royale, but if only they knew how much effort went in to preparing it (and we leave nothing to chance), then they would realise why we are so consistent.

How much importance do you place on your engines, and how regularly are you rebuilding or replacing the engine, tyres etc for maximum reliability and confidence at a meeting?

David Minister's units have been extremely good throughout the year and he has always done his utmost to assist me at meetings. As all the engines are basically alike, it is necessary to keep yours in peak condition if you are to win. David has rebuilt my engines after every third meeting (normally the tuners recommend a rebuild every eight to ten events) for peace of mind, and certainly we could not have asked more from him. Similarly I sold my tyres every two meetings to make sure I had the best available equipment all round. Once I am sure the car is perfect, then it is entirely up to me alone to make the most of my chances.

You mentioned the factory interest in your progress, but how much development has been carried out on your chassis during the year?

Actually my car has remained unchanged throughout the season, although Rory Byrne, the designer, did offer me the revised front suspension system as adopted by David Leslie and Yves Sarazin. Rory has been particularly helpful to me, but as I was happy with the original geometry I saw no point in altering a proven set-up.

How do you think FF1600 in 1977 has compared with previous years, both in England and in South Africa?

The standard of driving in FF1600 has definitely improved greatly this year, and consequently the number of needless accidents has been reduced over last season. You could say that I have written off two chassis this year, but neither of these incidents was my fault: the first was at Snetterton, where Chico (Serra) went sideways off the startline and barged me into the armco just after I'd got second gear; the second was in testing, where a novice moved over to let me pass on the exit of Paddock in a test sesion at Brands Hatch and, as I drew alongside, he inexplicably drove right into me, putting me off into the bank again. Both these incidents left me with a great deal of graft to rebuild the car for the next championship round. Don't get me wrong, though; there are now a lot more good drivers in the formula then before, and not just a bunch of lunatics in racing cars. Racing in Britain is much tougher than back home, and it did take me a while to adjust when I first came over—everyone is so desperate for success.

Why do you think this is so in Britain, and not so predominant in South Africa?

Because England is the home of motor racing. Drivers from all over the world come to England to compete because British FF1600 events

are a recognised step into international racing, namely Formula 3. If you make it in FF1600 in Britain, where the racing is most competitive, then it would be nice to think that, should the all-important finance be available, you could progress up the ladder to F3, as people like Derek Daly have done this past year.

You have been very fortunate to attract a sponsor. Why is it that many of the leading British FF drivers have problems in this department?

That's very interesting—in fact I feel rather bad about coming to this country and gaining a sponsor while many of the Britons struggle on with little money year after year. I think, though, that many drivers do not aim high enough and are content to stay in the formula too long. Without knowing it they become an accepted part of the FF scene, and get to be taken for granted by both the public and the promotors. When a new driver comes over from Canada, Australia or in my case South Africa, and shows good form, the attention of the media is immediately focused on him, and companies begin to take notice. This is perhaps the fault of the media, but the drivers themselves can take some blame for not going all out to project an image in front of people who matter. Ultimately many are unwilling to put anything in themselves before a sponsor can be persuaded to foot the bills for their racing ambitions.

What do you think of prize money scales in the major Formula Ford series? Are they sufficient to encourage people to sink capital into racing?

While you are winning regularly, the money situation is not too bad—of course there is room for improvement in the prize fund, and this would obviously help to attract more competitors and sponsors to the sport. With trade bonuses (I have received help from Shell this year through their ShellSport Stars scheme) it is possible to win £74 at a national meeting, and it is nice to have some grass-roots support from the oil companies and other suppliers. I would estimate that a full season of FF1600 racing could be done more than adequately on £7000, but you must bear in mind that if your sponsor wishes to make the most of his involvement a budget must also be allocated for promotional activities. It is annoying to some people, though, that promoters like MCD are prepared to pay £300,000 to import the USAC cars for two races in England, and yet the mere mention of a slight increase in national championship prize monies is quickly dismissed, Basically it must be important to look after the national drivers if motor racing is to prosper and more industrial support is to be found.

What races stand out in your mind as you look back on your season?

Without a doubt the RAC round at Oulton Park in August was my best race of the year. I had had a superb battle with Serra at the previous round at Brands Hatch, where I led for most of the final until Chico punted me off at Surtees on the last lap and I had to make do with sixth position. I was so furious that I approached him afterwards and just told him to wait until Oulton Park, four weeks later. I just can't understand the Latin American temperament, and to be pushed off within sight of victory was a major disappointment. However, at Oulton I beat Serra in the heat and gained pole for the final. For 14 laps I was unable to pass him—along with Nigel Mansell and David Leslie, Serra has been my toughest opponent all year—but I finally attacked him up Clay Hill on the penultimate lap. As I got alongside Chico, he moved over, putting me on the grass: for one horrifying moment I thought I had lost the race. From the spectator enclosures everyone thought that I had had it, but I somehow kept it all together, made up the few lost yards (I was so angry) and promptly went sailing past him at the very same spot on the last lap! It was easily the most satisfying win of my career.

Of course, the major question which all AUTOSPORT *readers will be wanting you to answer concerns your plans for 1978 which, one way or the other, must surely be the decisive year for you. Everyone knows that you have the ability to be a front-runner in F3, but obviously a lot will depend on money?*

I realise that this will be my most difficult decision yet. Yes, I would dearly love to be in F3 next year. My sponsors are backing me to the hilt, and they have agreed to go along with my decision as far as they are able, financially. The problem is that, for both SDC and myself, being a front-runner in whatever formula we do is not good enough. They are a young, progressive company, for whom only winning will be sufficient. Of course, to win in F3 is going to cost a lot of money—more, in fact, than their advertising budget will allow. So SDC, who have been absolutely fantastic with their professional and realistic approach, have ageed either to back me for a full season in FF2000 (probably with a Royale-Minister combination again), or to co-sponsor me in an extensive F3 programme next year. Amazingly enough, SDC are actively engaged in trying to find another company keen enough to benefit from a motor racing promotion to help me on the way to the top.

The main choice to be made at the moment, though, is whether to be a leading contender in the FF2000 championships next season or whether to accept a Formula Atlantic drive back home in South Africa, all expenses paid. Obviously I would prefer to go F3, in which case the money would have to be behind me for me to do a Daly: where Derek has scored above the other FF graduates this year is that he will be out of the formula and into F2 within a year, effectively putting him far more than one step ahead of his contemporaries—which is what matters most these days. If I was to do the Atlantic series and have a bad year, then I may never be offered a decent European drive again; if, however, I was to win the series—who knows? At this stage, anyway, the only thing which can be regarded as definite is that I have backing for FF2000 if F3 proves beyond our finances.

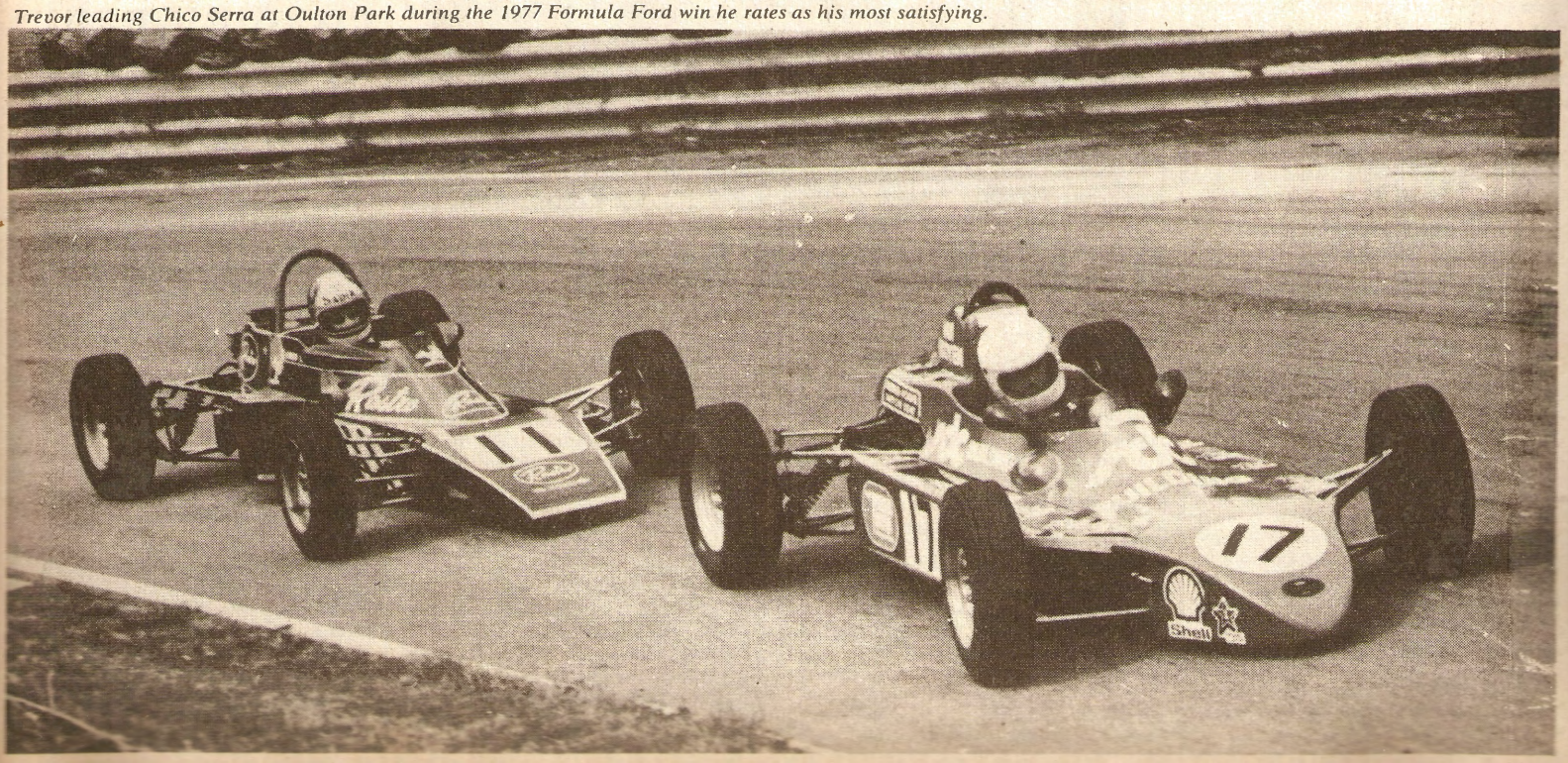
You have been extremely fortunate with your tie-up with SDC. How have they reacted to your successes this year?

They have been as pleased as I have—otherwise they would not be continuing next season! Motor racing is a prestigious business with which to be associated, and it has the right outlets at which to project the company image. SDC often bring along several clients as guests for the weekends when I am racing, which they regard as a necessity to gain the right publicity for their projects. They are in racing both to gain valued exposure for themselves and to promote me although the enjoyment of being involved with a successful outfit which, they have found, has also been highly beneficial to company morale this year.

Finally, have you any final thoughts on the past season?

Yes—I'd like to thank everyone who has contributed to my success this year: the organising clubs (particularly the BRDC, who have done their utmost to promote me and my sponsors); the championship sponsors for some excellent races; Royale cars for a fine racing car; Minister engines, the motoring press for their support, British racing fans who have offered encouragement—especially my following at Silverstone (I only hope that Britons can be as well received if they should go to my country). But most of all, Survey, Design & Construction Ltd of Bedford—without whom my season would only have lasted a couple of races! ■

Trevor leading Chico Serra at Oulton Park during the 1977 Formula Ford win he rates as his most satisfying.



edited by Robin Bradford

Pennine dropped by BTRDA

The BTRDA have dropped the Pennine Trial from their list of qualifiers for the 1978 Trials Championship, but this is the only difference in the series which will once again be sponsored by Semperit.

There is no explanation of why the event has been dropped but it might be a step towards cutting down the number of qualifying events organised by one club. This move leaves the Yorkshire Sports Car Club with two events still in the calendar with only the Peterborough Club having more Trials to organise. The only other oddity is finding the November Sporting Trial in October!

1978 qualifying events: Jan 8, Warco (Peterborough MC); Jan 15, Harrison (Sheffield & HMC); Jan 22, Brian Lewis (Maidstone & MKMC); Jan 29, Kitching (North Midlands MC); Feb 5, Geoff Taylor (Hagley & DLCC); Feb, 12, Walsingham (750MC); Feb 19, Charles Pollard (Peterborough MC); Feb 26, Wiltshire (Mid-Cheshire MC); March 5, Colmore (SYNBAC); March 12, 4/44 (Yorkshire SCC); March 19, Derbyshire (Lancs & Cheshire CC); March 26, Jacobean (London MC); April 9, MAC (Midlands AC); April 30, Maybug (Tunbridge Wells MC); Sept 10, Robin Jager (Cumberland SCC); Sept 17, Stone Trough (Yorkshire SCC); Sept 24, Derngate (Northampton & DMC); Oct 1, Roy Feddon (Bristol MC); Oct 8, Harold Biggs (750 MC); Oct 15, Bossom (Maidstone & MKMC); Oct 22, High Peak (Sheffield & HMC); Oct 29, November Sporting (Kentish Border MC); Nov 5, Shell (SUNBAC).

1979 Qualifying events: Nov 19, John Bull (Leicester MC); Nov 26, Johnson (Peterborough MC); Dec 3, Gloucester (London MC).

British Experts Trial: Dec 9.

Bad day at Brands for Nolan

The Plymouth driver Nolan Pitts (*Sports Extra* November 10) probably wishes he had never embarked on a 600-mile round trip to Brands Hatch for last week's BARC meeting. Intending to drive his rare Gropa in the *Formule Libre* race, Pitts had dire problems with the car in practice which prevented its completing even one flying lap. Things looked a little more promising when the race started but, like the apocryphal story of the hairy Formula Ford driver who crashed at Clearways because he had never got that far before, Pitts came to grief on his first racing lap at Clearways and skated into the barriers.

All legal in Sports 2000 series

Following the final round of the Soda-Stream Sports 2000 championship at Snetterton last month the first three drivers had their engines stripped by the RAC and all were found to be completely legal. John Cooper used an Alan Smith engine, Divina relied upon Titan motivation and John Webb had Nelson-power in his car. Of the three it would appear that only Webb will compete in this up and coming formula in 1978, the other two concentrating on other commitments, although nothing has been confirmed.

● Gary Charlwood should be out again this weekend at Brands with his 3.8-litre Janglia. Charlwood appeared in the Jaguar-powered device last weekend and finished fourth in class.

Bigger Silver Star series

There are two new events in the 12 rounds chosen for the BTRDA Silver Star Rally Championship next year. These are the *Cambrian News* Trophy on June 10/11 and the Eagle Rally on July 8/9. For next year the scoring system will revert to that already used on the Esso/BTRDA Gold Star series, with 15pts going to the highest placed registered contender irrespective of overall position.

Regulations are available either from Mrs D. Green, 5 Cambridge Avenue, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5JX or Mike Sones, championship points scorer at Flat M, Mellish Court, Mellish Road, Walsall.

The full list of events is:

January 7/8	Karebrand Rally	West Essex Car Club
February 18/19	Welsh Mermaid Rally	Birmingham University MC
February 25/26	Agbo Rally	Owen Motoring Club
April	Servias Rally	Roding CC Cheshunt CC
June 10/11	Cambrian News Trophy Rally	Aberystwyth and District MC
July 8/9	Eagle Rally	Newtown and District MC
July 22/23	Calderford Trophy Rally	Wakefield and District MC
September 9/10	Cilwendeg Rally	Reify Valley Motor Club
September 23/24	R. L. Brown Trophy Rally	Furness District MC
October 14/15	Bartley Rally	Chester Motor Club
October 21/22	Red Dragon Rally	Port Talbot Motor Club
December	Taunton Rally	Taunton Motoring Club

In Saturday's prodsaloon thrash at Thruxton, which 'featured' a number of examples of kerb-hopping tactics and other less than subtle driving, poor Jock Robertson, who had led in the early stages, finished up in the chicane barriers (above). It is worth noting that the rear bumper went between the two layers of Armco, and the car took about 20 minutes to move.

Accidents case heard

Following Phil Winter's tragic accident in the Isle of Man in June, Jack Roberts of Ossett, Yorkshire, has been found guilty of causing death by dangerous driving and of being unfit to drive through alcohol at the court case at the Isle of Man General Jail, Douglas, on November 3. Phil was exonerated from all blame at the hearing at which 19 witnesses testified in favour of the prosecution. Roberts was fined £300 and £100 respectively on the two charges and lost his licence for periods of 5 years and 1½ years on each count. The licence ban only applies to the Isle of Man. The case now rests pending an appeal from the prosecution.

Father Jack Winter has now almost fully recovered from his injuries and mechanic Chris Darley, who was very badly hurt in the accident, is now well on the road to recovery. The Winter family would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the Phil Winter Memorial Trust, both sponsors and members of the public, who have raised over £700 and enabled them to present the Phil Winter Memorial Cup for the first time to Gerry Marshall on Thruxton Finals day in October. This will now become an annual award at Phil's home circuit. Anyone still wishing to send a donation to the Phil Winter Memorial Trust, National Westminster Bank, West Moors, near Wimborne, Dorset, may still do so. The money will be used to further the enjoyment of motor sport at circuits in the south. The family were overwhelmed by the turnout at Phil's funeral (over 160 people were in attendance) and by the many messages of sympathy received following their loss.

Turner recovering well

Jeremy Turner, who smashed into a marshals' post at Village during Saturday's FF2000 race at Thruxton, suffered a broken arm and leg. His condition is described as satisfactory by Odstock Hospital in Salisbury.

Turner was driving the ex-David Macpherson Dulon MP20 which had recently been bought by modsports driver Dave Mercer, who was due to have been racing the car at Brands this weekend. Although he was not communicating with too many people earlier in the week, Turner did ask for his thanks to be passed to the marshals who extracted him from his car.

Magee out for two in a row

The Sevenoaks and District MC have attracted some interesting entries for their David Perkins *Formule Libre* race at the second of the Brands Hatch winter clubbies this weekend. Heading the entry is last weekend's *Libre* winner, the Len Gibbs-entered Lola T332C of Damien Magee. The Irishman has a selection of FF2000 cars to deal with including Tony Halliwell (ex-Puerta Crosslé 33F), Bill Taylor (works Delta), John Poxon (Setyres Osella), Stephen Eldred and Wil Arif (Reynards). Other challenges could come from Olly Hollamby's FSV Crosslé, Peter Argetsinger (Racecare Crosslé), Ronnie Grant's Taurus and the man who led last weekend's race for two laps David Orbell in the Stallwood U2.

Gillett out of Monoposto championship

At an extraordinary Committee Meeting of the Monoposto Racing Club, held on November 3, Peter Gillett was disqualified from the 1977 Varley Batteries Monoposto Championship because it was resolved that he had received sponsorship which is expressly forbidden by the Club Rules. Accordingly the revised championship positions are as follows: the winner is "The Streaker" with his Stockbridge Racing Lotus; second is Julian Pratt in the JPS and Ray Thomas is now third in his Revoray.

● The BMRMC Midlands Region are staging the 3rd Akeley GP Pram race starting at the Bull & Butcher, Akeley, on Sunday, November 20 at 10am. Rad Dougall has agreed to act as Clerk of the Course and all proceeds from the event will go to charity.

● One of the slowest and quietest 'events' ever organised at Brands Hatch was held last Wednesday when a group of scientists visited the Valley in the GP loop to try their hand at driving Land-Rovers over rough terrain. Leyland instuctor Ben Sherlock showed the young University graduates the ropes before letting them loose in the vehicles!

Beauty and the Beasts! Sixteen-year-old Llanelli student nurse Megan Melly is flanked by Leyland's bachelor rally drivers Brian Culcheth and Tony Pond after winning the Miss Motor Club contest which 60 & Worcester MC ran at their headquarters the Bank House, Bransford, last Saturday. Susan Taylor, from Lydney, representing the Forest of Dean MC, was runner-up and Mandy Hall, of Leominster, from the Hereford MC, third. The other judges were Miss Lyn Bowen of Ludlow Castle MC, winner in 1975, Rob Golding, Motoring Correspondent of the Birmingham Post *and Rob Lyall.*

Briefly. . .

● The BRSCC Midland Centre have invited Bert Baldwin, until recently Goodyear's racing tyre specialist, to be their guest speaker on Thursday, November 24 at the Swan Hotel (Westminster Suite), High Street, Coleshill, near Birmingham. The main topic will of course be the development of racing tyres and the social night (admission free) begins at 8pm.

● The Southern Region of the BMRMC are holding a Grand Prix Organisation evening in the Brands Hatch clubhouse on Wednesday, November 23, at 7.30pm. It is hoped that Bernie Ecclestone will be on the panel with Basil Tye, John and Angela Webb and Peter Browning. As usual the gathering is open to everyone, with a raffle at the end.

● Peter Argetsinger would like to thank the Scorpion team for the loan of a couple of wheels at Brands last Sunday. Peter damaged his own in a moment during practice so Scorpion's gesture was gratefully accepted enabling him to finish second in the FF1600 race with his Race-Care Crosslé.

● The One-Eleven MC of Sheffield promote their 1977 Bentleys Rally over a 150-mile route around the locality on December 10/11 with generous sponsorship from Bentley Bros (Sheffield) Ltd the local DTV Sports dealer. Regs are available from Christine Humphrey, 31 Cockshutt Road, Sheffield 8. Tel: 0742 749643 or 50394.

● Maidstone & Mid-Kent MC are promoting their Championship Trial, exclusively for the top 50 BTRDA points scorers, over 24 hills at The Larches, Detling, near Maidstone, Kent, on December 10.

● Quinton Hazell Ltd, Britain's largest independent supplier of automotive spares and components, is to present a 1925 Lea Francis 12/22 J-type to Coventry's Industrial Museum Store. The car is valued at over £3000 and has belonged to the company for the past five years.

● The London Car Club are organising their annual motoring film show on Thursday, November 24 at the Old Cholmondlians Sports Club, Hendon Wood Lane, Totteridge, commencing at 8.30pm. Admission is free and the films will include 'The Flying Finn', 'Ringmasters' (1967 German GP), 'La Ronde Infernale' (Le Mans) and for historians 'The Titans 1930-34'.

● Good things come in twos in Sunday's modsports race at Brands with a pair of the pretty Ginetta G4s on the entry for John Woods and John Wilmshurst, Davrians of the inimitable Bob Jarvis and Pat Longhurst and a couple of G15 Ginettas driven by David Beams (his prodsports car) and Ronnie Woods.

● BARC volunteer marshals are to man the club's VW LT rescue unit on motorway duty on the M4. The unit will be based at Reading and will be assisting the police on the stretch between Reading and Slough during the fire services dispute. The club stress that this is a life-saving exercise and not an attempt to break the firemen's picket lines.

● The Europat Rally, due to have been staged by the Mid-Thames CC on December 3/4, has been cancelled as the first 30 miles of the route clash with the route of a hike which will bring 300 walkers to the area. The hike has traditionally been held on the first weekend in December and, despite many efforts, the club could not find sufficient new loops to make up the lost mileage.

● Some of the country's leading sprint and hill climb exponents—including RAC sprint champ Dave Harris—threw a party (and most of their dinner) in Bristol at the weekend. Everyone appeared to have a great deal of fun, although one or two did become a trifle sticky, a situation hardly helped by one leading lady's special wine shampoo!

● Tavern MC have announced that John Brown Wheels are to sponsor their Omega Rally on the night of December 17/18, starting and finishing at the Gordano Service Area on the M5. JBW are particularly keen to support the event as they have recently opened a rally department at their premises in Bristol. Anyone wishing to enter the rally should contact Mrs L. Houlden, 34 Dunster Gardens, Nailsea, Avon, enclosing a large SAE.

BRANDS HATCH

The Sevenoaks and District MC promote the second of the 1977 series of winter clubbies on Sunday and, as is customary in these 'friendly' meetings, a varied and interesting entry has been received. The six-race programme includes no less than three special saloon events for tin-top fans, interspersed with a modsports bout, the inevitable FF1600 race and the David Perkins *Formule Libre* race with some unusual entries (see *Sports Extra*). Racing starts at 1.30pm following morning practice.

RAC

Motor Sport Division Official announcement

No. 4—1977

1. This form of Official announcement is being used quarterly formally to advise of rule changes and amendments to RAC Motor Sport publications.

2. Motor Sport Division—Christmas Holidays

Motor Sport being an all year Sport, the Division finds that Staff Holidays do affect the operating effectiveness of the Division and it is announced that in order to keep the Staff effectiveness to an optimum through the normal Summer Period, the Division will close completely for the Christmas Holiday period.

For 1977 the Division will be closed from 24th December until the 3rd January.

3. Noise level set for 1978

At the September meeting of the Race Committee it was agreed that as from January 1st, 1978, the maximum noise level shall be RAC Noise level 1, which includes 90 dbA at 10 metres, for the following formulae—Mini 850, 1000 and 1275; Escorts; Renault 5; Prodsports; Production Saloons and Formula Vee.

This figure is the equivalent to that used for RAC kart racing and also that adopted by the FIM and ACU for motorcycle road racing. For ease of measurement, noise levels at other distances will be available to scrutineers. Wherever practical, standard silencers will be employed and the help of the Ford Motor Company and British Leyland in this respect is gratefully acknowledged.

4. RAC helmet stickers

Competitors and Scrutineers are reminded that as from January 1st 1978, all crash helmets used in motor sport must bear an RAC helmet sticker. Code A stickers cover BS 2495:1960 and Snell 1970 and because testing to these standards was discontinued earlier this year, these will always bear "1978" irrespective of the year of inspection and attachment of the sticker. BS 2495:1977 and Snell 1975 helmets will have code B stickers and those applied by scrutineers (25p each) will bear the current year date whilst those purchased in bulk by manufacturers or importers will have a date one year in advance of purchase.

Competitors should contact their nearest listed RAC Scrutineer, or Club Secretary, who will advise him of local arrangements for certification of helmets prior to January 1st.

The danger of painting helmets constructed from certain materials with unsuitable paints has been well illustrated by a BSI test on a particular full face model constructed from thermoplastic ABS. The standard unpainted version was satisfactory but a decoratively painted type of the Ca Ber SRL "Gemini" and "Caberg" all failed with shells often disintegrating, having shock absorption or penetration failures and with all failing the harness test.

With GRP helmets, scrutineers should be careful to distinguish between a reasonable amount of crazing of the decorative outer gel coat that frequently occurs without any reduction in strength, compared to the starring or cracking that might indicate that the surface had been subjected to an impact, rendering the helmet unacceptable at scrutineering.

5. Group 1 Rally Lights

Following problems in defining the number of headlights fitted to cars running in the Group 1 section of rallies, the technical Committee have issued the following definition:

A headlight will be defined as the individual bowl i.e. two bowls behind one lens will be considered as two headlights.

6. 1978 Regulations

A summary of the important rule changes for 1978, both technical and administrative, will be published in a special Official Announcement in this magazine in the second week of December.

edited by Robin Bradford

Orbell's clubbie class

Mother Nature spread icy fingers over the first of the 'winter clubbies' at Brands Hatch on Sunday. The BARC London and Home Counties Centre worked quickly through the six events, with races for modsports, classic saloons, Formula Ford, special saloons and *formule libre*. For the handful of spectators it was a smoothly run, enjoyable meeting, finishing just as the sun began to set with a prospect of frosty Sundays to come.

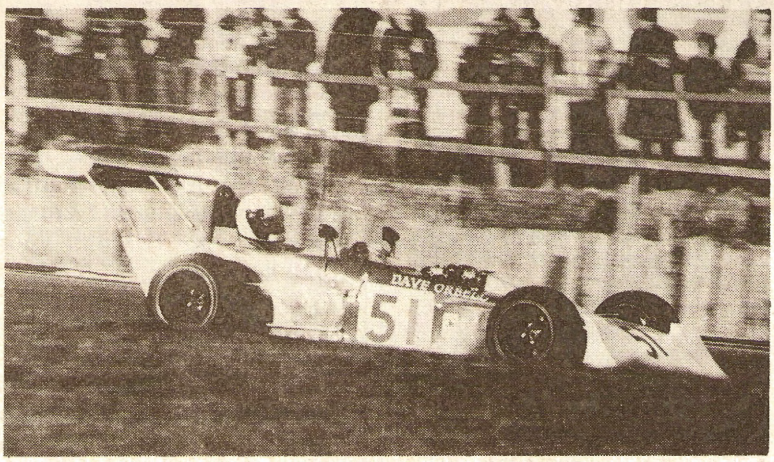
Bob Jarvis wasted no time over the opening race, obviously being keen to find a warm place in the bar or at home in front of the fire, and the Davrian ran out the easy winner of the modsports race. Fellow Davrian pedaller Pat Longhurst was less lucky, because after holding second place for much of the distance he got rather tangled up with backmarkers, and Paul Berman's Elan was able to sneak past. Ian Bax this week drove the Whitegates Ginetta and netted yet another class win, although he had a hard time fending off the advances of Steve Everitt's Midget.

Bill Pinckney (Jaguar) and Andy McLennan (Austin A35) both won their classes in the classic saloons' championship round, thus maintaining the status quo in the championship points, but, although that much was predictable, the race held plenty of interest. Pinckney, Mike Bennion (Zephyr) and McLennan were well spaced at the finish and Martyn Marshall led the rest in his class-winning Borgward, but less than 9secs separated Marshall from the tenth finisher. Geoffrey Scott Williams had been part of this jostling bunch with his Jaguar, which moved up to threaten Marshall's place until a moment near the end.

The previous weekend's Formula Ford Festival brought little but disappointment for Bernard Devaney but the Hawke works driver this time enjoyed better luck and was never challenged on his way to victory. Equally safe in second place was Pete Argetsinger (Crosslé), but third was the subject of a hectic set-to involving a number of cars. Roger Pedrick (Hawke) was favourite for a place in the top three, but a bump at Paddock on the first lap, a couple of spins and a crunch along the barrier when trying to get back into contention put paid to his efforts. One of the spins could be blamed on an oil leak from Ted Whitbourn's Crosslé which eventually ended the race for this leading contender, so it was the unknown Roger White in Mike Taylor's Fulmar Royale who took third place. The Edinburgh driver Bernard Hunter (Van Diemen) was in the thick of the action but spun in company with Pedrick and Len Greeney (Royale) at Graham Hill Bend.

Nick Whiting (Escort) and John Homewood (Imp) in first and second places was the unsurprising outcome of the special saloon event, and only these two went the full ten laps. Jon Mowatt (Mini) was third and won his class after Steve Smith (Escort) had an adventure. Smith nevertheless recovered to take the 1300-2500cc class, and yet another class was taken by David Enderby's 850 Mini which also had a spin.

The Len Gibbs Lola of Damien Magee was given an unexpectedly close run in the *formule libre* race by fellow Irishman Jim Kelly's old Trojan. They finished only a length apart as Damien nursed a dodgy pinion, and he missed a gear mid-race which enabled Kelly to stay on his tail. Undoubted star of the early laps was Dave Orbell (Stallwood U2), who shot into the lead at the start and, although passed by the Lola on the straight, astounded onlookers by passing Magee round the outside of Paddock. It couldn't last, however, and both F5000 cars passed once their tyres started to work properly. Fourth for all but the last few yards was Jim Ravenscroft (Surtees), but Ronnie Grant is not a London taxi driver for nothing, and he timed his move to perfection and dodged the Supervee Taurus past Ravenscroft right on the line.



Above: the hero of the Libre race, Dave Orbell, who held off Magee for two laps. Below: Classic saloons ran twice in the day. Here, Bennion leads Pinckney.

A second Classic Saloons race ended the programme and, without the pressures of the championship, allowed drivers to switch cars among themselves and lend their mounts to friends and helpers. This gave us Andy McLennan in Mike Bennion's Zephyr, none other than Gerry Marshall in McLennan's A35 and Bennion in another A35, Roger Andreason in Judy's MG Magnette and unfamiliar faces in Bill Pinckney's Jaguar and the Marshall Borgward.

McLennan put his Zephyr into the lead and held it until taking to the grass at Clearways, which allowed Michael Adlington in the Pinckney car to take a lead which was never challenged. David Dees (Zephyr) was a steady third and John Hillsdon (A35) drove very well to take his class, helped by Bennion and Gerry Marshall (clutchless on the first lap) dropping out. Steven McHale spun the Borgward at Graham Hill Bend, which fired him up to set a new lap record during a vain but gallant effort to catch Roger Andreason for the 2-litre class. Andreason was later excluded from the results following a protest by McHale.

PAULINE PHILLIPS

results

Modsports race (10 laps). Overall: 1, Bob Jarvis (1.1 Davrian Mk7), 8m 45.8s, 82.41mph; 2, Paul Berman (1.6 Lotus Elan), 8m 55.9s; 3, Pat Longhurst (1.1 Davrian Mk7), 8m 56.2s; 4, Ronnie Woods (1.0 Ginnetta G15), 9m 18.9s. **Fastest lap:** Jarvis, 51.0s, 84.96mph. **1501-2000cc:** 1, Berman, 80.85mph; 2, Keith Norris (1.6 Ginetta G4). **Fastest lap:** Berman, 52.0s, 83.33mph. **1151-1500cc:** 1, Ian Bax (1.5 Ginetta G4), 75.80mph; 2, Steve Everitt (1.4 MG Midget); 3, Lawrence Cutler (1.3 Austin-Healey Sprite). **Fastest lap:** Everitt, 54.5s, 79.50mph. **Up to 1150cc:** 1, Jarvis; 2, Longhurst; 3, Woods. **Fastest lap:** Jarvis, 51.0s, 84.96mph.

Classic Saloon Car Championship race (10 laps). Overall: 1, Bill Pinckney (Jaguar 2.4), 10m 33.9s, 68.35mph; 2, Mike Bennion (2.5 Ford Zephyr), 10m 40.2s; 3, Andy McLennan (1.0 Austin A35), 10m 48.6s; 4, Martyn Marshall (1.5 Borgward Isabella), 11m 02.9s. **Fastest lap:** Pinckney, 1m 01.2s, 70.80mph. **Over 2700cc:** 1, Chuck Nicholson (3.4 Jaguar Mk8), 65.27mph. No other starters. **Fastest lap:** Nicholson, 1m 04.8s, 66.87mph. **1902-2700cc:** 1, Pinckney; 2, Bennion; 3, Geoffrey Scott Williams (Jaguar 2.4). **Fastest lap:** Pinckney, 1m 01.2s, 70.80mph. **1252-1901cc:** 1, Marshall, 65.36mph; 2, Judy Andreason (1.5 MG Magnette); 3, Dennis Carter (1.5 MG Magnette). **Fastest lap:** Marshall, 1m 04.9s, 66.76mph. **Up to 1251cc:** 1, McLennan, 66.80mph; 2, Tom Hinds (1.0 Austin A35); 3, Mike Cox (1.0 Austin A35). **Fastest lap:** McLennan, 1m 03.6s, 68.13mph.

Formula Ford race (10 laps): 1, Bernard Devaney (Hawke-Minister DL19), 8m 51.8s, 81.48mph; 2, Peter Argetsinger (Crosslé-Auriga 32F), 8m 55.7s; 3, Roger White (Royale-Minister RP24), 9m 18.4s; 4, Michael Reynolds (Royale-Minister RP21), 9m 19.4s; 5, John Ayres (Rostron-Scholar CT3), 9m 21.5s; 6, David Wigdor (Van Diemen-Minister RF77), 9m 22.1s. **Fastest lap:** Devaney, 51.4s, 84.30mph.

Special Saloon car race (10 laps). Overall: 1, Nick Whiting (3.4 Ford Escort V6), 8m 20.7s, 86.54mph; 2, John Homewood (1.0 Chrysler Imp), 8m 59.4s; 3, Jon Mowatt (1.3 Mini Cooper), 9 laps in 8m 24.8; 4, Barry Holdsworth (3.0 Ford Capri), 9 laps in 8m 39.4s. **Fastest lap:** Whiting, 48.9s 88.61mph. **Over 2500cc:** 1, Whiting; 2, Holdsworth; 3, Dave Wilson (3.0 Ford Escort). **Fastest lap:** Whiting, 48.9s, 88.61mph. **1301-2500cc:** 1, Steve Smith (2.0 Ford Escort), 74.71mph; 2, Alan Smith (1.7 Ford Escort). **Fastest lap:** Smith, 54.1s, 80.09mph. **1001-1300cc:** 1, Mowatt, 77.25mph; 2, Reg Powell (1.3 Mini Cooper); 3, Clive Sparkes (1.3 Mini Cooper). **Fastest lap:** Mowatt, 54.3s, 79.80mph. **851-1000cc:** 1, Homewood, 80.33mph; 2, Alan Smith (1.0 Chrysler Imp); 3, Bryan Helyar (1.0 Ford Anglia). **Fastest lap:** Homewood, 52.5s, 82.53mph. **Up to 850cc:** 1, David Enderby (850 Mini), 71.75mph; 2, Simon Lee (850 Mini). **Fastest lap:** Enderby, 56.6s, 76.55mph.

Formule Libre race (10 laps): 1, Damien Magee (Lola-Chevrolet T332C), 7m 58.4s, 90.57mph; 2, Jim Kelly (5.0 Trojan-Chevrolet T101), 7m 58.7s; 3, Dave Orbell (1.6 Stallwood U2-Ford), 8m 11.8s; 4, Ronnie Grant (1.6 Taurus-VW M24), 8m 26.3s; 5, Jim Ravenscroft (2.0. Surtees-Ford TS15), 8m 26.5s; 6, Jean-Pierre Debecker (Crosslé-Scholar 30F), 9 laps in 8m 06.2s. **Fastest lap:** Magee, 46.1s, 93.99mph.

Classic Saloon Car race (10 laps). Overall: 1, Michael Adlington (Jaguar 2.4), 10m 40.4s, 67.66mph; 2, Andy McLennan (2.5 Ford Zephyr), 10m 44.7s; 3, David Dees (2.5 Ford Zephyr), 10m 53.7s; 4, John Hillsdon (1.0 Austin A35), 11m 14.1s. **Fastest lap:** Adlington, 1m 02.2s, 69.66mph. **Over 2700cc:** 1, Peter Deffee (3.4 Jaguar Mk8), 60.81mph; 2, Mike Sherwin (3.4 Jaguar Mk8). **Fastest lap:** Deffee, 1m 07.0s, 64.67mph. **1902-2700cc:** 1, Adlington; 2, McLennan; 3, Dees. **Fastest lap:** Adlington, 1m 02.2s, 69.66mph. **1252-1901cc:** 1, Steven McHale (1.5 Borgward Isabella) 64.18mph; 2, Phil Smythe (1.5 Wolseley 15.50). **Fastest lap:** McHale, 1m 03.2s, 68.56mph **(record)**. **Up to 1251cc:** 1, Hillsdon, 64.28mph; 2, Marc Lawrence (1.0 Austin A35); 3, Bryce Pickering (1.2 Morris Minor). **Fastest lap:** Hillsdon, 1m 06.1s, 65.55mph.

Big margin puts Todd well ahead

Nelson Todd has maintained his firm grip on the STCC Championship by winning the third round at Seaforde, Co Down, by the largest margin so far (27 points) from Liam Scott with father Wilbert keeping his third position among hot competition.

The Todds actually made this trial possible for Liam Scott, because they came upon him on their way to the venue, with his tow-car broken down and Wilbert promptly towed both his own trials car, Scott's tow-car and his trials car the last ten miles to the event. With this and sundry other problems in mind, it is amazing that Liam, accompanied by wife Jenny, even felt able to tackle the hills at all.

This was a new site and Willie McVicker had set a course using three tests on a very steep grassy bank and a fourth at the top close by a "fairy ring" which proved to be its undoing as the farmer insisted after two laps of this test that the "wee people" had suffered quite enough and it was abandoned—so much for Irish superstition!

By the end of the second lap a clear pattern was emerging with N. Todd 16 points clear of Scott who in turn had 11 points lead over Brian Emerson, but a determined effort by W. Todd got him back to third place at the finish.

With tests favouring the more powerful cars, Class II entrants all expected cricket scores but Jack Keatley managed a fabulous round on 52 marks lost. Meanwhile double victor David McQuaid was fighting to hold second place which he eventually lost to Mervyn Johnson.

Mervyn Glover using B. Emerson's car in preparation for a trip to England came a brilliant fifth, while Clive Gracey in no less than the eighth new Concorde finished sixth in his first outing with the new car.

Class I: 1, Nelson Todd, 22; 2, Liam Scott, 49; 3, Wilbert Todd, 53; 4, Brian Emerson, 54; 5, Mervyn Glover, 60; 6, Clive Gracey, 61.

Class II: 1, Jack Keatley, 52; 2, Mervyn Johnson, 71; 3, David McQuaid, 75; 4, John Miller, 81.

Championship after three rounds: Class I: 1, N. Todd, 36; 2, W. Todd, 27; 3, D. Wylie, 25; 4, L. Scott, 23. **Class II:** 1, D. McQuaid, 33; 2, J. Keatley and M. Johnson, 30.

● British Leyland cars, old and new, won places in five of the eight national title races in which they were entered in the 1977 Champion Spark Plug Road Racing Classic at Road Atlanta in the last week of October. Sprites came first, second and third in the H-Production race, Spitfire 1500s repeated the same 1-2-3 victory formation in the F-Production event, the E-Production race was won by an MGB and TR7s took second and third places in the D-Production event. A Spitfire Mk I took third place in the G-Production race.

● Run specially for newcomers and beginners the Autumn Leaves Trophy for the winner of last Sunday's Dudley and Halesowen CC production car trial went to William Taylor in a borrowed Skoda. Loaned the car by Stephen Courts, Taylor went on to take the trophy on 36 marks while Dave Smith, in the same car, was overall winner with a score of 30 marks. Thirty two entries turned up at Franche, near Kidderminster for the 38 section event and the class winners were: Rob Norton (Mini), 42 marks; Gwiliam Jones (Escort), 81 marks; Andrew Hazlewood (Sprite), 55 marks; Brian Owen (Imp), 80 marks.

Varsity match to Bengry

Although basically staged for beginners only 24 of the 90 crews came into that category on the Birmingham University MC November Rally over a 150 mile route in Herefordshire last Saturday night. The winners of this class were Peter Holden and Nigel Drake in an Imp who dropped 64mins. Up front the six leading crews were all experts and the winners, by 2mins, were Theo Bengry and Paul Watkins (Opel Kadett) who dropped 25mins on the 40 control event. By petrol they had opened up a 2mins lead over Glyn Hall and Bob Lumley (Imp) and they maintained this to the finish.

Third, initially, were Don Day and Mick Jones (Mexico) on 17mins with John Price/Mike Sones, making a rare appearance in a Simca Rallye, fourth. The Simca retired midway through the second half when it drowned after a ford and other notables to go out early on were Andy Taylor who had the alternator pack up on his RS 2000 and Tony Jacks who modified his Escort after striking an electricity pole.

1, Theo Bengry/Paul Watkins (Kadett), 25m; 2, Glyn Hall/Bob Lumley (Imp), 27m; 3, Keith Gibson/Paul Price (Escort 1700), 27m; 4, Frank Morgan/Roger Fildes (Escort Sport), 28m; 5, Don Day/Mick Jones (Mexico), 31m; 6, J Allright/T Daniels (BMW 2002), 32m. **Novices:** Mike Ammonds/Colin Ellis (Saab 99), 38m. **Beginners:** Peter Holden/Nigel Drake (Imp), 64m. **Best Birmingham University:** Gerry Hiam/Alan Pickford (1275 GT), 39m. **Best Combined University:** Richard Potts/Nigel Phillips (Simca), 85m. **Ladies:** Sheila Smith/Mrs Jean Appleton (Midget), 1f 50m.

No more problems for Parsons

After building up a 2mins lead in the first third of last Saturday's Phoenix Rally, run by the Sporting Car Club of Norfolk, the exhaust system dropped off Tim More's Mexico and he was forced to retire. This left Neil Parsons and Tim Harber (RS 1700) in control and they went on to win the 144 mile event by 18mins. Second were Des Wenn and Felicity Kerr (Escort GT) who beat third placed Neville Skeet and Terry Davis by less than a minute. The event, which included three selectives, was sponsored by Phoenix Self Adhesive Co.

1, Neil Parsons/Tim Harber (RS 1700), 70m 19s; 2, Des Wenn/Felicity Kerr (Escort GT), 88m 17s; 3, Neville Skeet/Terry Davis (Escort 1600), 88m 54s; 4, Paul Carlier/Chris Towers (Mexico), 89m 19s; 5, John Harmer/Ray Crowther (Mexico), 90m 10s; 6, Richard Pearce/Dave Walden (Mexico), 95m 46s. **Experts:** Keith Farley-Pettman/Tony Shepherd (Magenta), 105m 25s. **Novices:** S K Gurnett/G Blackwell (Escort), 105m 15s.

● Chairman of the Lincoln & Louth MC, Tony Newsum took his road-going RS 2000 to victory on his club's Spire Trophy Rally last Saturday night. Navigated by Derek Brader they lost 37m on the 95 mile route which attracted 33 crews.

1, Tony Newsum/Derek Brader (RS 2000), 37m; 2, Alan and Trevor Faulkner (Mexico), 42m; 3, Dave Golightly/John Dawson (Mini), 2F 39m; 4, Keith Wilkinson/S Wareham (Avenger), 2F 51m; 5, A and D Barho (Mini), 2F 58m. Novices: Riley/P Carlisle

Jackson opens it up

Gordon Jackson closed the gap in the RAC Trials Championship to just two points when he won the Harold Biggs Trial last Sunday. Organised by the 750 MC, the event comprised three rounds of nine new hills on the well trodden slopes of Boxley near Maidstone. The hills, mostly on dry ground, were very tightly marked and proved a fine test for driver and car. It was a challenge that Julian Fack could not accept as he posted a rare retirement as the A frame pulled out of its mounting. But he was not placed well at the time anyway.

The placings after one round depended somewhat on the starting position with Hills 6, 7 and 8 being a little damp for the early arrivals. Jack Pearce, for instance, dropped his only points of the morning at his first two hills, as did John Hopkins. On the other hand some were rather luckier and after the first circuit the surprise leader was Tony Mitchem in his Cannon who had scored 3, ahead of Chris Highwood on 9. Gordon Jackson had 16, Colin Taylor was on 17—one point ahead of Pearce and Brian Morris in the Dryad.

The second round saw Jackson, Pearce and Hopkins go clear so that at the lunch interval the scores were—Jackson 16, Mitchem 17, Pearce 18, Highwood 20, Hopkins 22, Dennis Allen 23, Morris 26 and Fack 28. Taylor had faded a little to 29 but was to go well in the afternoon. Allen was being passengered by his (very) large Australian friend Cohen. He comes across once a year seemingly just for a ride in a Sporting Trial—that's real dedication.

For the afternoon the real hero was Mitchem who suffered the tragedy of having his Panhard rod break so that it had to be tied up with string. He soldiered on and somehow salvaged a great third place from the wreckage. Taylor picked up at least 10 points over his near rivals to grab fourth spot ahead of Hopkins and Allen. But neither he nor Mitchem could shift the front two who maintained their lead with Jackson easing round the course with just 3 points lost. Behind the top few it was good to see a few familiar names having good days. In particular—Colin Walker in eighth, Brian Morris in ninth and Ted Minter in tenth all impressed.

And so to the John Bull Trial at Clipston with all to play for. If Julian Fack wins it is all over but if Gordon Jackson could pull it off the Championship could stay open until the very last event.

1, Gordon Jackson (Ibex), 19pts; 2, Jack Pearce (Kincraft), 33; 3, Tony Mitchem (Cannon), 37; 4, Colin Taylor (Cannon), 38; 5, John Hopkins (Ibex), 46; 6, Dennis Allen (Kincraft), 48; 7, Chris Highwood (Ibex), 50; 8, Colin Walker (Mudsport), 60; 9, Brian Morris (Dryad), 63; 10, Ted Minter (Mintersport), 66.

Moonraker to Smith

With such notables as Dennis Pelling retiring with back axle problems on his Kadett and Ron Shipp's Firenza suffering a broken distributor drive, both going out in the first half, the North Humberside MC's Parish's Moonraker Rally last Saturday night was won by Peter Smith and Jeremy Matthew.

In their Opel Kadett they dropped 41m 10s on the 200 mile route in the old East Riding of Yorkshire and they were more than 8 mins ahead of the rest of a field of 60 crews who attempted to tackle a route which included six selectives and had icy patches on it early on Sunday morning.

1, Peter Smith/Jeremy Matthew (Kadett), 41m 10s; 2, Stuart Barrow/Chris Helliwell (RS 2000), 49m 30s; 3, Terry Lucas/John Tyzack (Escort TC), 49m 50s; 4, Mike and Paul Stephenson (Escort TC), 50m 49s; 5, Graham Burton/Alan Hill (Viva GT), 52m 41s. **Novices:** Graham Twiddle/John Williams (Firenza), 62m 34s.

The FF2000 season ended on a high note for Nick Crossley in his first year as the manufacturer of Delta Cars. Richard Wills (above) and Mike Quinn scored a fine one-two in the Carson City Car Chase at the Brent Walker-sponsored "Gone in 60 Seconds Raceday" at Thruxton, beating regular front-runners.

Robinson well ahead in Mallock

With eight cars on the circuit at a time Coventry & Warwickshire MC managed to get through a long entry list with time in hand at Donington last Sunday when 103 entries turned up for only the second sprint meeting on the new track. A second run time of 1m 31.5s gave Jim Robinson BTD in his Mallock U2 and he was streets ahead of the opposition.

The biggest class, for standard cars over 1300cc, produced 27 entries and a close battle between David Fuller who defeated the redoutable Colin Spence. Fuller's Mexico did 1:43.9 to Spence's best of 1:44.7. In the smaller capacity class for road going cars Phil Wilcox did 1:55.0 in his 1293 Cooper to beat Robert Pinches in his similar machine by 0.9sec.

There were a couple of close calls in the sports racing and clubman classes. Alan Staniforth managed to get the better of John Corbyn in their Terrapin struggle by just under 1sec while Bunny Kyd's U2 was beaten by the Chrysler Special of Maurice Starbuck by 0.4sec.

BTD: James Robinson (Mallock U2), 1m 31.5s. **Class winners:** Phil Wilcox (Mini), 1m 55.0s; David Fuller (Mexico), 1m 43.9s; Richard Ames (Imp), 1m 42.1s; Greg Masters (1275 Mini), 1m 47.7s; Jim Gathercole (Elan), 1m 37.6s; Brian Jackson (Fairthorpe), 1m 40.9s; Alan Staniforth (Terrapin), 1m 39.0s; Maurice Starbuck (Chrysler Special), 1m 38.1s.

New car's debut win for Lyon

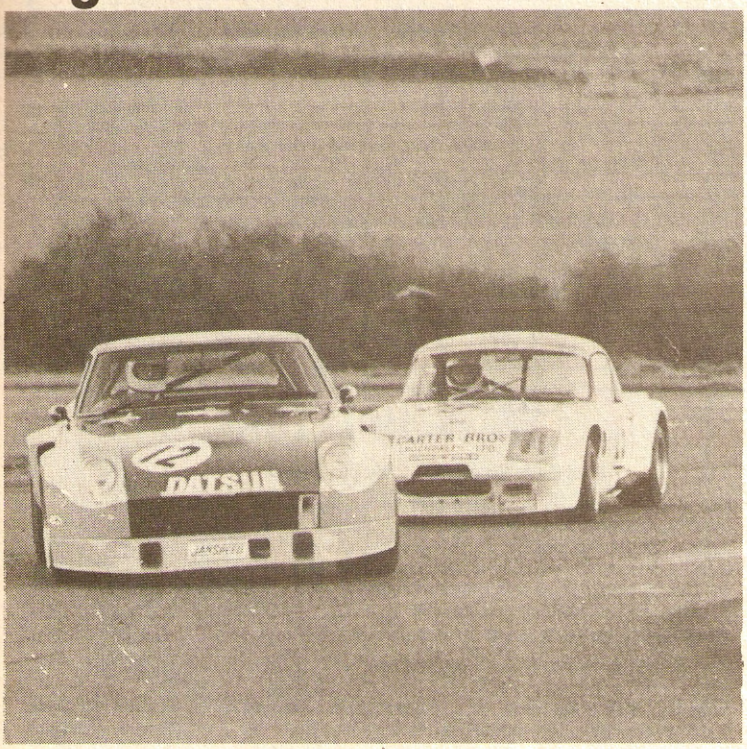
Driving his brand new RS2000 and competing in his first competition in a rear wheel drive vehicle, Peterborough electrical engineer Alan Lyon scored a fine victory on his club's Starey-Crighton Rural Ride Rally last Saturday night.

The 170 mile route in Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire attracted 42 crews of which only ten failed to get to the finish. There were two selectives and in a close tussle at the front Lyon and Terry Schraider held off Graham Parkinson and Thelma Pack to win by 43s. A very fine third was Mike Hutchinson in a Ford Popular 1300 who would have been much closer but for dropping 4 mins with a puncture in the second half.

1, Alan Lyon/Terry Schraider (RS 2000), 46m 0s; 2, Graham Parkinson/Thelma Pack (Avenger 1600), 46m 43s; 3, Mike Hutchinson/Pete Halkyard (Escort Popular), 51m 17s; 4, Mick Bennett/Dave Ashurst (Escort 1600), 52m 30s; 5, John Taylor/Steve Wright (Magnum), 53m 9s; 6, David Williams/Richard Boon (Alpine Renault), 54m 13s. **Experts:** Terry Cammack/Pat Long (Maxi), 61m 50s. **Novices:** Alan Hudson/Barry Harrison (Cooper), 73m 25s. **Best Peterborough:** Peter Martin/John Hayton (Mexico), 62m 48s.

● Our report of the first club meeting on the resurfaced Silverstone circuit (*Sportscard*, October 27) omitted to record one of the new lap records established that day: Chris Lewis's 1m 15.2s in his Mini 850 was 0.6sec quicker than Bob Addison's existing record.

Big Banana Feet Poole



Having driven both a 120A Cherry and a Sunny for the Janspeed team in the past few seasons, Long Crendon-based Irishman Alec Poole caused a stir among the modsports ranks by arriving at Thruxton on Sunday armed with Han Tjan's Datsun Netherlands 290ZG. The talented Poole, who is best remembered for his drives in a variety of saloons (Bill Shaw's amazing Rover V8, Derek McMahon's fabulous Skoda BDG and G2 Escort springing to mind) qualified the Datsun on pole having never raced it before and won Saturday's race in great style despite the attentions of genial Jon Fletcher whose Elan was never further away than this, even seizing the lead for one lap.

High standard at damp Autumn trial

Dudsbury CC held their Autumn Trial at Barfoot Farm, Melbury Abbas, on November 6. After very hard rainfall on the Saturday it looked as though the event might have had to be cancelled, but the Sunday dawned bright, clear and warm and, despite being very slippery, the tests were within the capabilities of most, in fact Clerk-of-the-Course, Norman Hisscock found it neccesary to tighten them up slightly for the afternoon runs which consisted, as before lunch, of two runs at each of ten hills. Although rather low on entries, the event was made up of most of the high standard drivers now competing in this area, the most notable exception being Dudsbury's own Richard Acres who plumped for a higher graded event to achieve points in the ACSMC Trials Championship, something which he managed with his usual show of skill.

Pete Higgins, Salisbury and Shaftesbury CC member, maintained his usual composure to find himself among the top runners at lunch, by having dropped just one penalty during the morning, the only other person to achieve a similar score was Paul Prescott, in a special as opposed to Pete's 1275cc Mini. In the afternoon runs with the tests tightened, even Pete was to drop a 14 followed by a 17. Blue smoke was to be seen billowing from the exhaust of Bournemouth MC member Frank Wilson's now 1500cc Special but he managed to end the day as a classified finisher as did John Forsyth despite his diff disintegrating during the final runs.

West Hants and Dorset member Graham Hoare and Chris Parrot in their Minis made an excellent showing to gain first in class, a not unusual position for any of the Hoare family. The man of the meeting, another WHDCC member, just had to be Chris Parrot making an excellent return to competition in his wife's Imp Californian; he managed second overall, first in class and 1st novice.

1st Overall, P. Higgins; **1st Novice,** C. Parrott; **Best Dudsbury,** G. Flippance; **Class winners,** G. Hoare; H. Sibley; D. Hanley; G. Wiltshire; P. Prescott.

No sticky problems for Thorpe

With sponsorship from Arno Adhesive Tapes, Southampton MC attracted a full entry of 90 crews for their Solent City Rally last Saturday night with Garry Thorpe and Alan Woodridge emerging winners by almost a minute at the end of a 180 mile route in Hampshire and Wiltshire. There were two selectives, one in each half, both of about 11mins duration.

1, Garry Thorpe/Alan Woodbridge (Escort 1600), 40m 29s; 2, Pete Johnson/Geoff Richards (RS 2000), 41m 14s; 3, Paul Syrett/Geoff Willis (Morris Mascot), 43m 54s; 4, Roland Shepherd/Mike Wise (RS 2000), 44m 59s; 5, Ian Pettie/John Jones (Ford Fiesta), 47m 9s; 6, Graham Parker/Nigel Evans (Kadett), 49m 31s. **Novices:** Phil Collins/Bob Barham-Hall (MGB), 71m 55s. **Best Southampton:**

RAC Production Car Trials

Roger Bricknell, the 31-year-old Cornish stationer is the 1977 Production Car Trials Champion. He started his motor sport career in 1963 with a Ford Popular and stayed locally initially achieving "moderate success". He changed his allegiance to a Morgan Plus 4 in 1966 and, two years later, achieved a rare distinction by winning the Triple Baddeley award only given to drivers who had cleaned every section on the three classic trials, the Land's End, the Exeter and the Scottish.

Bricknell later turned his hand to sporting trials with a Cannon but disposed of the car when interest in sporting trials died out in the South West. He returned to production car trialling with an Anglia variant (a van with windows) and again did well, mainly in the South West.

Last year he won the South West Association Trials Championship, beating Mike Hinde with his present Anglia Estate. His success this year, in winning seven of the 17 rounds has made him RAC Champion at his first attempt. However, he won't be returning to the championship next year as sporting trials seem to be gathering favour again in his home territory and he will be out and about on the hills with another Cannon.

BARC Presidents Cup

Birmingham saloon car racer Tony Hill has won the coveted BARC Presidents Cup for 1977 as the registered BARC Racing Member scoring the most wins in BARC Championship racing during the season. Tony—from Coleshill, sponsored by Tyreservices Great Britain—has campaigned his Triumph Dolomite Sprint throughout the season in Britax prodsaloon races, gaining more points than any other member registered in the Presidents Cup series.

1, Tony Hill (2.0 Triumph Dolomite Sprint Production Saloon), 53pts; 2, Bob Jarvis (1.0 Davrian Imp Modified Sports), 43; 3, Tony Sugden (2.0 Ford Escort BDX Special Saloon), 37; 4, Martin Pearson (1.3 Datsun Cherry Janspeed Special Saloon), 35; 5, Alan Minshaw (2.8 Opel Commodore GSE Production Saloon), and Eric Cook (2.3 Mazda RX2 Production Saloon), 28.

Dunlop Sexton Trophy

David Hall has won the Dunlop Sexton Trophy for the Irish speed season of races, hillclimbs and sprints. His very special 1.2 Hillman Imp—which raced in this country at the Thruxton finals meeting—is now for sale, as David is going into Formula Atlantic next year.

Dunlop Sexton Trophy: David Hall (1.3 Imp), 250 points; 2, Derek Shortall (Chevron B29/March 73B & Audi 80GTE), 245.75; 3, Fintan Cunningham (1.3 Mini), 235.50; 4, Frank O'Rourke (2.8 Opel Commodore GS/E), 268.25; 5, Vivian Candy (Crosslé 30F), 218.75; 6, Liam Plower (1.3 MG Midget), 217.75; 7, Conor Nolan (1.3 MG Midget), 163.75; 8, Dermot Faulkner (BMW 2002Ti), 156.50; 9, Simon Broadhead (Ford Escort RS2000), 150.25; 10, Larry Mooney (Audi 80GTE), 138.00.

Irish racing series

All the Irish Racing Drivers' Association championships have now been settled with Patsy McGarrity (above) the winner of the premier Equity Bank Formula Atlantic series. Details are as follows:

Equity Bank Formula Atlantic: 1, Patsy McGarrity (Chevron B39/Modus M3); 2, Derek Shortall (Chevron B29); 3, Eddie Jordan (March 74B); 4, Bill Gowdy (Chevron B25); 5, Des Donnelly (Modus M3); 6, Harold McGarrity (Chevron B27).

Castrol Formula Ford 1600: 1, Joey Greenan (Royale RP24); 2, Trevor Templeton (Crosslé 32F); 3, Gary Gibson (Crosslé 32F); 4, Vivian Candy (Crosslé 30F); 5, Kenny Acheson (Crosslé 32F); 6, P. J. Fallon (Crosslé 25F and 30F).

Duckhams Modsaloons: 1300cc: 1, David Hall (Imp); 2, Fintan Cunningham (Mini); 3, Mick Dillon (Mini); 4, Cyril McCabe (Mini). **1000cc:** 1, Dan Rooney (Imp); 2, Eddie Murray (Imp-Ford); 3, Donal Carroll (Imp).

Duckhams Modsports: 1, Morgan Dempsey; 2, Conor Nolan; 3, Peter Fitzpatrick; 4, Brian Tuite; 5, Liam Plower; 6, Stee Griffin. (All driving 1.3 MG Midgets.)

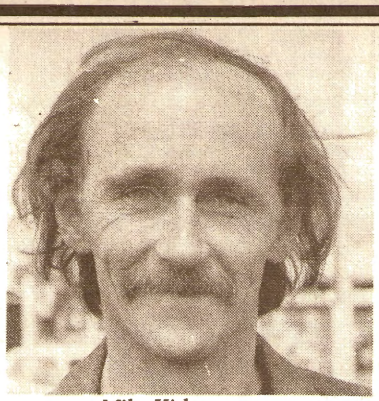
Hollywood Chewing Gum Prodsaloons: Overall: 1, Ray Moore (2.8 Opel Commodore Coupe GS/E); 2, Frank O'Rourke (2.8 Opel Commodore GS/E); 3, Larry Mooney (Audi 80GTE). **Class 1:** 1, Moore; 2, O'Rourke; 3, Russell Connell (3.0 Ford Capri GT). **Class 2:** 1, Simon Broadhead (Ford Escort RS2000); 2, Dermot Faulkner (BMW 2002Ti); 3, Mike Hassard (Mazda RX2). **Class 3:** 1, Mooney; 2, Derek Shortall (Audi 80GTE); 3, Conor Linehan (VW Scirocco). **Class 4:** 1, Ken Fildes (Citroen GSX2); 2, Sean Connaughton (Mini Clubman GT); 3, Gordon Fildes (Fiat 128 Sport).

Leyland Ireland Mini 850: 1, Eamonn Corrigan; 2, Cliff Dempsey; 3, Colin Craig.

Motor Distributors Formula VW: 1, Ned Dickenson (Sheane-VW); 2, Ivan Sheane (Sheane-VW); 3, Mick Merrigan (Sheane-VW); 4, Ed. Rynhart (Sheane-VW); 5, Shay Lawless (All-Mac); 6, John Alvey (Sheane-VW); 7, David Sheane (Sheane-VW).

Albert Gubay Ladies Award: Gloria Kissane (Austin-Healey Sprite GT).

Forward Trust Special Saloons



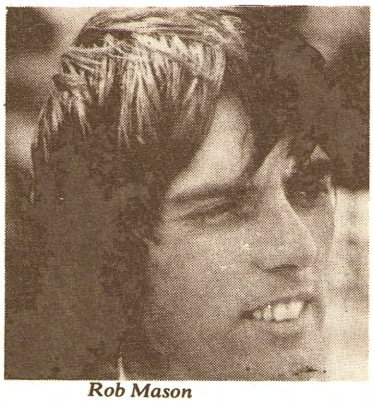
Mike Kirby

Richard Long

Forward Trust 1000 Special Saloon Car Championship

		Class/pos	Apr 03 Silverstone	Apr 17 Cadwell Park	Apr 24 Croft	May 01 Silverstone	Jun 07 Donington Park	Jun 19 Thruxton	Jun 26 Brands Hatch	Jul 31 Donington Park	Aug 14 Brands Hatch	Aug 29 Thruxton	Sep 04 Silverstone	Sep 11 Brands Hatch	Oct 02 Snetterton	Oct 08 Oulton Park	Oct 23 Mallory Park	Oct 30 Thruxton	Total points
1.	Mike Kirby	B1	1			3	4	3	4	5	4	5	5	2	2	4		3	45
2.	Richard Long	A1	5			5		2	1	4	3		5		2	5	3	2	37
3.	John Homewood	A2					5	5	3			3	3	5			5	5	34
4.	Chris Roberts	B2	3				3			3	4		4		1	4	3		25
5.	Brian Prebble	A3							5		5	5	3					3	21
6.	Malcolm Johnstone	A4	3	5	4	2													14
	Peter Knipe	B3	2			2			4					3	3				14
	Peter Harding	B3	1					2	1	1		2	1			2	2	2	14
9.	Fred Hendy	B5									3	3		5					11
10.	Peter Day	B6	4								1				5				10
	Bill Richards	B6		4	2		2					1					1		10
	Reg Ward	B6				5											5		10
	Basil Dagge	A5				3	2	1		4									10
	etc																		

Peter Baldwin



Rob Mason

Nick Whiting

Forward Trust 1000 Plus Special Saloon Car Championship

		Class/pos	Mar 13 Thruxton	Apr 03 Silverstone	Apr 24 Croft	May 01 Snetterton	May 22 Mallory Park	May 29 Brands Hatch	Jun 07 Donington Park	Jul 10 Cadwell Park	Jul 31 Donington Park	Aug 07 Snetterton	Aug 14 Brands Hatch	Aug 29 Thruxton	Sep 04 Silverstone	Sep 24 Oulton Park	Oct 16 Donington Park	Oct 30 Thruxton	Total points
1.	Peter Baldwin	C1		5			5	5			5		5		4	5	5		39
2.	Rob Mason	B1					3		5			1	5	4	5	2	5		30
3.	Martin Pearson	C2	3	2	3	2	3	1		1	1			4	2	2	2	3	29
4.	Nick Whiting	A1					4	3			3	2	2		5		4	4	27
5.	Tony Sugden	B2	5		1				3	5	3		3		2	2			24
6.	Jon Mowatt	C3				1		2		3	2	4	3	4	1	1			21
7.	Derek Walker	B3							2	3	2					3	3		13
8.	Tony Dickinson	B4		3		2						3	2	2					12
9.	Colin Hawker	A2					1		5								4		10
	Jim Evans	B5		5	5														10
11.	Richard Oliver	C4		3		4	2												9
	Steve Smith	B6		1		1	5										1		8
	Graham Goode	B7									5				3				8
	Alan Humberstone	C5						3	5										8
	etc																		

International events

Date	Venue	Event
Nov 20/23	Wembley, England	Lombard RAC Rally—World Rally Championship for Makes/Motor/RAC Rally Championship
Nov 20	Ontario, USA	Ontario 500—NASCAR
Nov 20	Phillip Island, Australia	F5000, G1

British events

Date	Venue	Event	Status	Club	Start	Details
Nov 20	Brands Hatch, nr Fawkham, Kent	Race Meeting	R	Sevenoaks & DMC	13.30	Special Saloons, Modsports, F Libre, FF1600
Nov 20	Snetterton, nr Thetford, Norfolk	Rallycross	R	W. Suffolk MC	13.30	—
Nov 20	Frylands Wood Scout Camp, Featherbed Lane, Addington, Surrey	Sporting Trial	C	750 MC	11.00	Frylands Trophy Trial—750MC Trials Championship
Nov 20	Clipston, nr Market Harborough, (MR133 701831)	Sporting Trial	R	Leicestershire CC	11.00	John Bull Trophy—Semperit/BTRDA Trials Championship

Secretaries of the Meeting are requested to send details of all forthcoming events to Miss Linda McRae, Autosport Editorial, Haymarket Publishing, 76 Dean Street, London W1A 1BU

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Manta Berlinetta illustrated £4048 excluding fog lights and metallic paint. Other Mantas from £3601. Prices correct at time of going to press. Delivery and number plates extra.