Autosport

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Latest RAC Rally news



Tyrrell's new GP contender

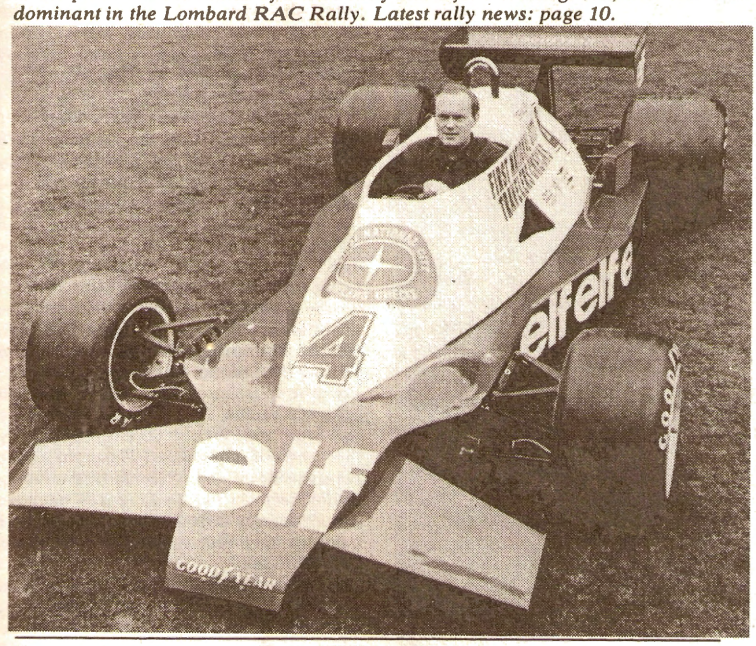
Autosport

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The week's two big news stories: the new Elf-Tyrrell 008 Formula 1 car is revealed to the press—in the hands of Ford's rally star Bjorn Waldegaard, who has been dominant in the Lombard RAC Rally. Latest rally news: page 10.



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Too many Grands Prix?

As we mentioned in last week's *Pit & Paddock,* Niki Lauda recently said that, in his opinion, the World Championship Grand Prix season was now simply too long. Seventeen races are too many. Whatever our feelings about Lauda's methods of shortening his own personal season—we say that his copping out of Mosport and Fuji was an extremely selfish decision—we find ourselves in agreement with his general sentiments on the subject. Seventeen *is* too many. Twelve would be about right.

In the past few years, of course, Formula 1 has grown and grown in popularity, a fact of which we very much approve. But, sadly and perhaps inevitably, its growth has been to the detriment of all other forms of international motor racing. When the World Champion makes comments like this about it, one wonders if Formula 1 is becoming the monster about to devour itself.

Niki feels that 17 Grand Prix races place too much strain on all members of the circus, particularly the drivers and mechanics, saying that such a busy schedule inevitably multiplies the chances that mistakes will be made. This problem could be considerably alleviated if the F1 teams' protracted pre-race test sessions were scrapped, but the basic problem will still remain. From May until September there is a race every two weeks, and this is simply too much. But if the number of races is reduced by, say, five, then which races would go? Lauda suggested Sweden and Canada, to start with.

The tragedy of all this is that, while the drivers of today make many more Grand Prix appearances than their predecessors (there were, for instance, only seven *Grandes Epreuves* 25 years ago), they actually appear before the racing public far less often. Gone are the days when the world's top drivers raced sports cars, saloons and so on. If a Grand Prix driver takes part in a formula 2 race these days, we get excited about it. It is an event. But only seven years ago, Rindt, Stewart, Hill *et al* were regular F2 contenders. When one of the new boys started to show well in that company, you knew that here was real talent. You went to Thruxton and Crystal Palace each year in the certain knowledge that you would see the world's top drivers. Formula 2 remains an excellent class of racing (see our Formula 2 review on page 16), but we lament the fact that its importance, like the overall stature of its participants, has diminished.

In Britain, of course, we would be in no danger of losing our Grand Prix, so it is easy to be glib about this. But what we would like to see is fewer Grand Prix races and more appearances by the drivers in other types of car and GP event.

Certain members of the Formula 1 Constructors Association have told us privately that we may very well see the former eventually, but the latter looks most unlikely, unfortunately. Recently we heard the fee demanded by one of the top drivers for an F2 appearance. The fee was of five figures, and the first was not '1'. . . . Thankfully, however, there are still individuals like Regazzoni, Mass and Laffite who like to race for pleasure, so Formula 2 is assured at least a sprinkling of stars in the future, we hope.

cover picture

Top: The early leader of the Lombard RAC Rally was Pentti Airikkala (DTV Chevette) who sprained a thumb when he hit a pothole in the Hafren Special Stage in Wales and later lost many minutes when he left the road two stages later. As we went to press, Bjorn Waldegaard was in a commanding lead in the works Ford Escort RS1800. Photo: Hugh Bishop. Bottom: Elf Team Tyrrell confirmed last week that the six-wheel project has been abandoned by revealing the new Maurice Phillippe designed 008 Formula 1 car, with which Patrick Depailler and Didier Pironi will contest the 1978 Grands Prix. Details: page 2.

next week

Peter Newton's complete illustrated report of the Lombard RAC Rally, the sporting event with the biggest spectator attendance in Britain—Our review of the Jaguar versus BMW battles in European Touring Car Championship racing—John Bolster tests the Datsun 260Z sports car*

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

edited by Nigel Roebuck

Phillippe reveals his Tyrrell 008

Yes, it *does* have four wheels! The new Elf-Tyrrell 008 F1 was unveiled last Thursday, and no one was really surprised to see that the P34 six-wheeled concept had been abandoned.

The new car is very much what one might expect from the pen of Maurice Phillippe. It looks extremely *light* (some cynical persons were even heard to mutter that it might need ballast to bring it up to minimum weight limit!). The 008's monocoque is extremely shallow, the driver appearing almost to sit *on* it rather than in it. Indeed, Patrick Depailler got in the car for the benefit of the photographers, and when the bodywork was lifted off, the shallowness of the tub was very evident indeed. At its highest point, it is approximately level with the driver's waist—rather reminiscent of Harvey Postlethwaite's Hesketh 308D design.

"My main objective", says Phillippe, "was a car suited to the pressures of the current racing environment, with 17 Grand Prix races during a season, a car that would be simple to build and maintain away from the factory. Reducing manufacturing time in the event of accident damage and reducing routine maintenance in the field or at base, creates less strain on the racing team as a whole and allows more time for development".

In May of this year, while working at Tyrrells as a design consultant, Phillippe was asked by Ken to produce a specification for a new Grand Prix car. "I was faced with a completely fresh start," recalls Phillippe. "I reviewed the season that the team were having with the six-wheelers, and while I regarded the design as an innovative concept, the sheer logistics of the layout and the amount of work necessary to re-engineer it went against my ideas of a car well suited to the present racing scene. It asks questions that are difficult to answer. And if you have a peculiar vehicle among Grand Prix teams you can never be really sure if you have an advantage. Take tyres, for example. You are unable to compare directly with other teams because you have a special vehicle with special requirements. My view in racing is to reduce the number of variables whenever possible. The new 008 design is deliberately simple as a basic prototype with plenty of scope for development".

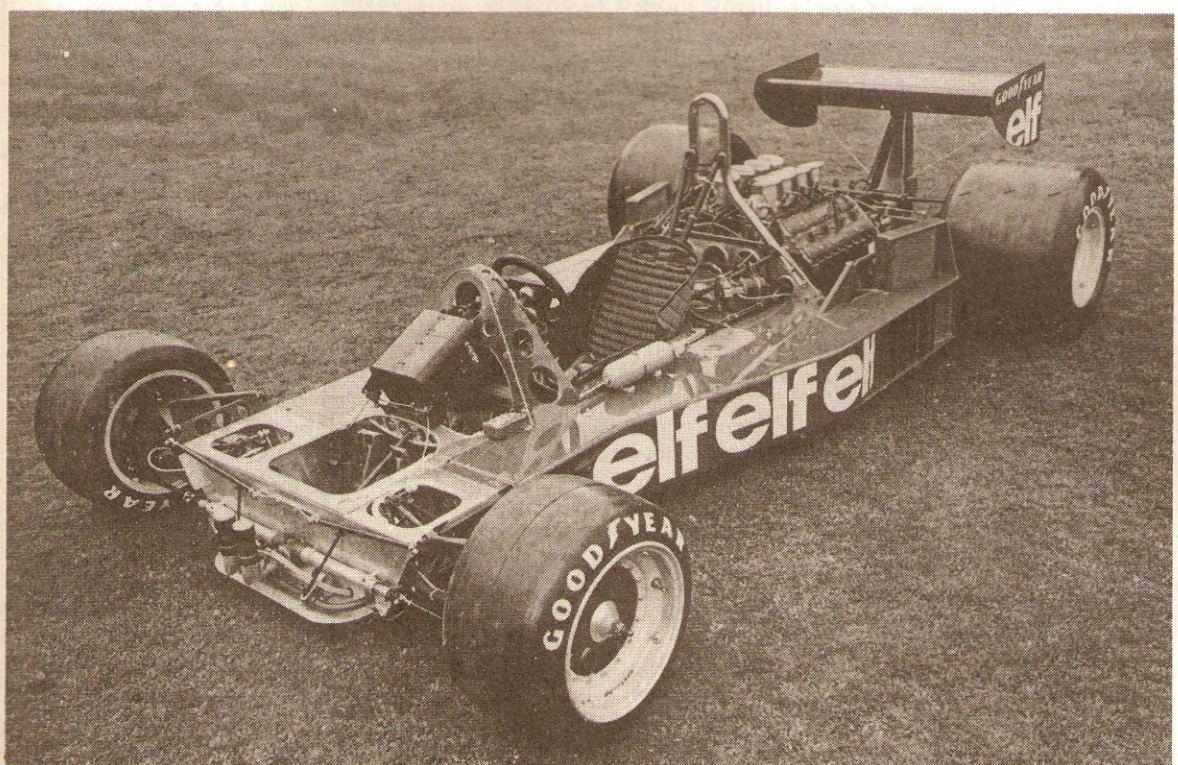
Design features of the new car include distinctive front wings which have a pronounced forward sweep to shift the centre of pressure to the lightly-loaded front wheel in yaw conditions during cornering. The special design of the front wheels produces the effect of an axial fan, improving the cooling for the outboard front brakes. Phillippe's last two F1 designs, the Lotus 72 and the Parnelli VPJ4, both featured *inboard* front brakes, of course, as well as torsion bar suspension, another system abandoned by Phillippe on his latest car.

Maurice is enthusiastic at the prospect of linking the design and development of his new car with Karl Kempf's computer-backed instrumentation programme. The electronic recording equipment will be fitted for official Grand Prix practice sessions next year. It is housed in a metal box weighing 6½lb, fully equipped, which is mounted ahead of the instrument panel. "Most of that weight is in the box to protect and package the electronics from vibration and electrical interference from the engine", says Kempf. "We will use only four channels for recording during official practice, and initially these channels will be used to monitor the four suspension units".

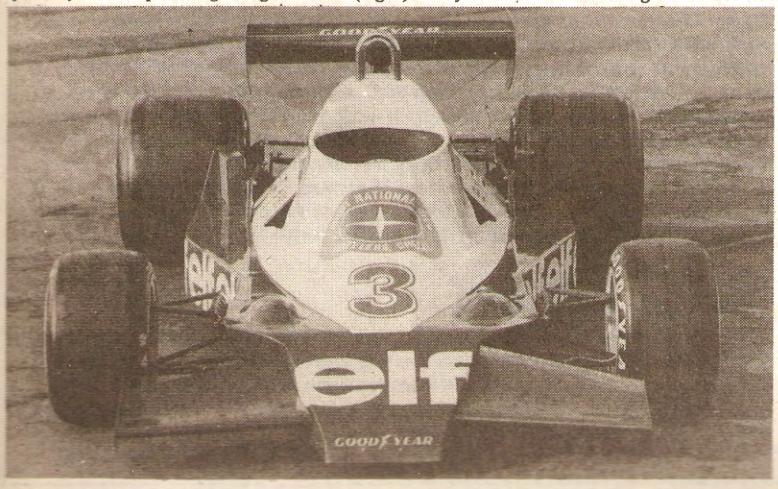
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Above: the monocoque of the new car is, as you will see, extremely shallow. Below (left): the Tyrrell 008's nosecone is noteworthy for its forward-pointing wings. Below (right): the front wheels are designed to act as an axial fan, helping to cool the brakes.





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G1 Ford for Gerry

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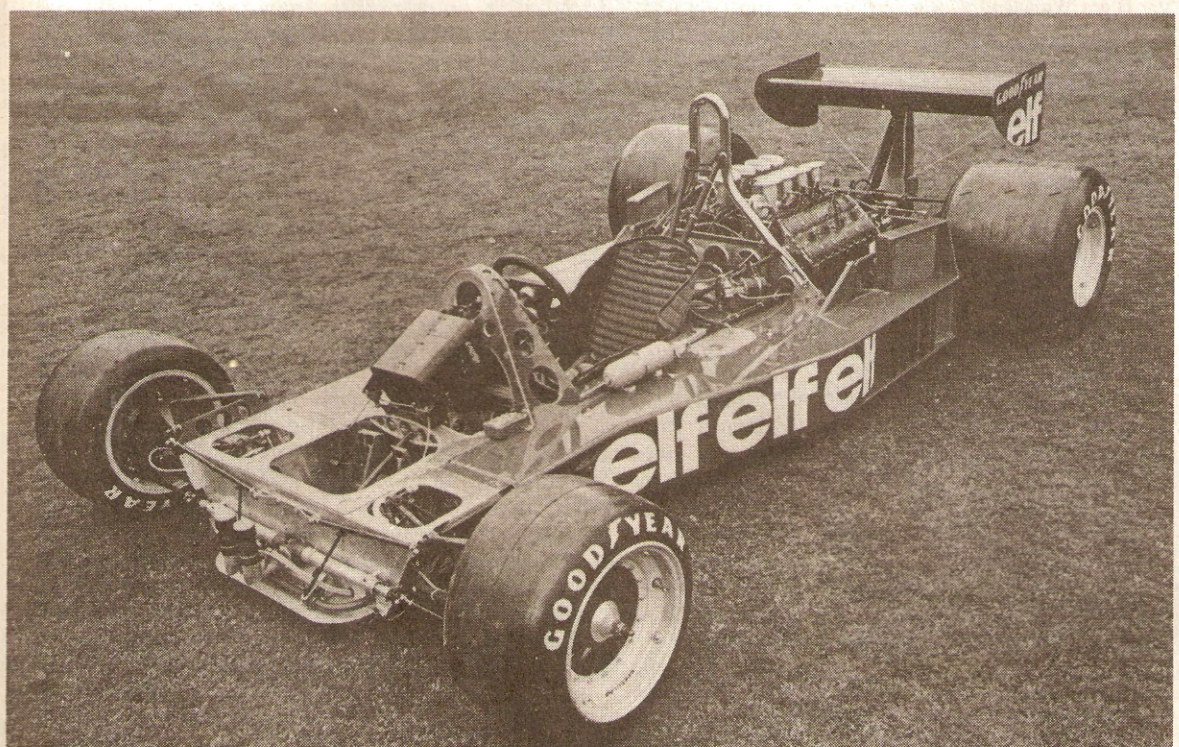
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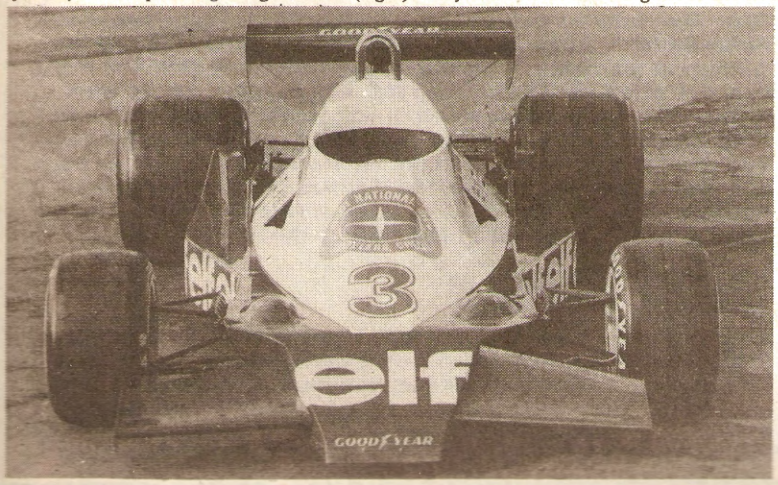
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Peterson confirmed at Team Lotus



Ronnie—a touch of déjà-vu *about the jacket. . . .*

At last it has been confirmed. Ronnie Peterson will definitely drive for John Player Team Lotus next year, as team-mate to Mario Andretti, The Swede's car is to receive substantial backing from Polar Caravans, long-time sponsors of Ronnie, but the precise colour scheme of his car has not yet been decided.

Peterson, of course, drove for Lotus in 1973-75, leaving the team after the Brazilian Grand Prix last year to rejoin March. At the time he was the team's number one driver, his team-mate at that race being, ironically, none other than Mario Andretti. Their roles are now reversed, for the American has made no secret of the fact that he does not particularly want Ronnie back in the team. It is clear that Peterson will be very much the number two.

This news, of course, means that one more of the names on Gunnar Nilsson's list of 'possibles' is removed. A couple of weeks ago, there were rumours that Gunnar would stay with Lotus after all. What happens now? Does he join Hans Stuck at Shadow or is he part of Jackie Oliver's new venture?



You rarely see British politicians smiling, but the Australian Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser, is very keen on cars and obviously relished his ride with Jack Brabham at Sandown recently.

Syrett back in racing

Excellent news comes this week from the Rivet Supply Company, the Chiswick-based outfit which sponsored a Porsche 935 (driven by Bob Wollek, Nick Faure and John Fitzpatrick) at Le Mans and Brands Hatch this year.

The news is good on two counts. First, the company is to sponsor 'a major international race meeting' at Brands next year, this almost certainly the Race of Champions (for Group 2 cars next year) on March 12. In addition, they are also to back 'a leading MCD championship'. Could this be the F1/F2 series?

The other good news is that the company's decision to become more involved in racing will bring back Nick Syrett to the sport. 'The Guv'nor', as he was affectionately known, ruled the roost at Brands Hatch for many years, in his capacity of Executive Director of the BRSCC, before leaving to join the GPDA and thence to open a restaurant in Surrey. A brave man, Nick. Remember when he black-flagged a very impatient Pedro Rodriguez at the waterlogged BOAC 1000kms in 1970? The brilliant Mexican scored one of his most glorious victories that day, but in the early stages Nick felt that he went through an accident scene just a mite too quickly, and he decided to stop him and tell him so! Yes, a brave man. . . .

The Rivet Supply Company has appointed Syrett to co-ordinate its public relations and press affairs with special responsibility for its increasing involvement in motor racing. Nick Rink, the Managing Director, says that his company looks forward to a long and mutually beneficient involvement in the sport. We welcome his decision, and also welcome Nick Syrett back into racing.

MacIntosh moves to Fittipaldi

After five years as Secretary to the F1CA, Peter MacIntosh has left to join Fittipaldi Automotive, where he has been appointed a director. At next season's races, Peter will act as Team Manager, for pressure of other business will keep Wilson Fittipaldi away from many of the Grands Prix.

MacIntosh tells us, however, that, contrary to the widely-held belief that the whole outfit was being moved to England, the component parts for all the F1 cars will continue to be built at Sao Paulo, and this includes the monocoques. The parts will then be shipped to England where the complete cars will be assembled.

Ralph Bellamy, of Lotus 78 fame, recently joined Fittipaldi Automotive, of course, and he will be responsible for the next F1 car. But Peter MacIntosh says that the company is not about to rush into anything, and the design work will not start until Bellamy decides what *sort* of car will be needed. There are many factors involved here. Is there to be another tyre compound war, for instance, which distinctly favours a particular concept of car? A new Copersucar-Fittipaldi could appear next season, but not before July or August at the earliest, according to MacIntosh.

In the meantime, various tweaks are to be tried on the existing Dave Baldwin-designed car, and Emerson Fittipaldi is expected to test at Paul Ricard next week.

Tim Parnell joins MCD

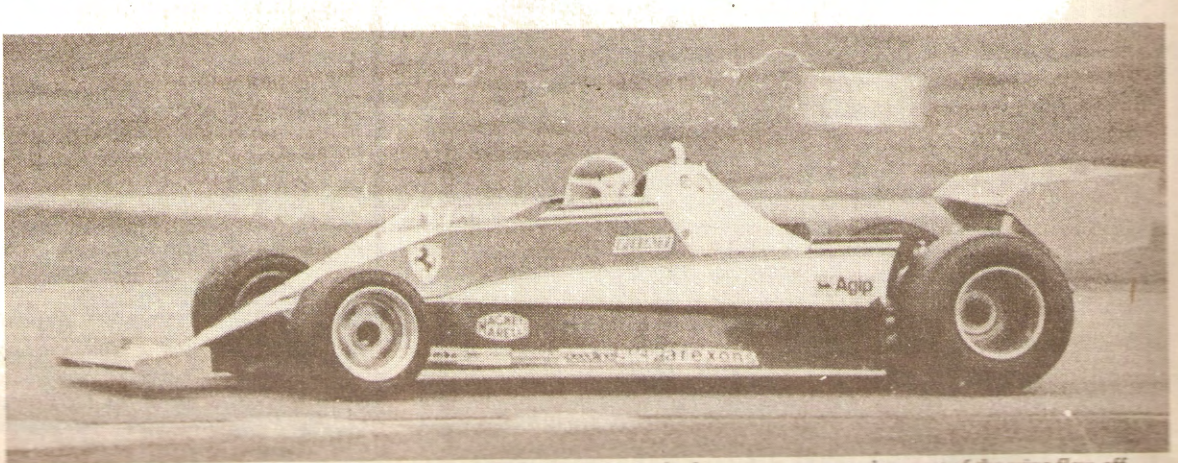
Familiar faces are starting to reappear. As Nick Syrett comes back to motor racing, so, too, does Tim Parnell, son of the great Reg, and former team manager of BRM (at a time when the team was winning races with people like Rodriguez and Siffert). Tim retired from the sport at the end of 1974 to concentrate on running his farm near Derby.

Now Motor Circuit Developments announce that Parnell is to join them as Regional Manager, responsible for the supervision and development of MCD's Midland and North Western racing circuits. Initially he is to concentrate on Mallory Park (still his favourite circuit), and late next year he will progressively take over Oulton Park, prior to Rex Foster's retirement early in 1979.

A nasty moment for Lole at Fiorano

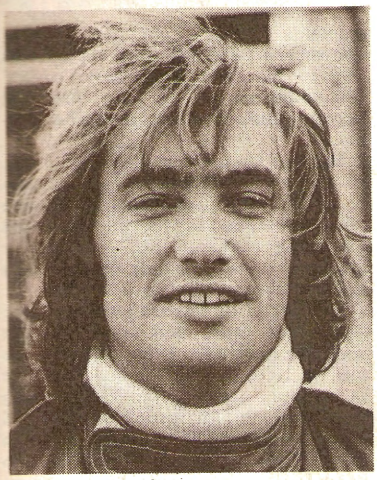
Last week Carlos Reutemann began testing the new Ferrari 312T3 at Fiorano. On Thursday, the weather was wet, and the Argentine only did about 20 laps, but the following day was dry. During the course of the session, a different rear wing was tried on the car—one which was tried two years ago and which has recently shown up well in wind-tunnel tests. A different flap was put on, however, and it was not secured properly. As Reutemann accelerated hard past the pits, the flap come off and the car suddenly turned sharp left.

There was little Carlos could do but wait for the inevitable impact, but miraculously the Ferrari finished up a few feet from the barriers after a long, long slide. Car and driver both undamaged, therefore, the test programme was scheduled to continue this



First test for the Ferrari 312T3. A day later however, Carlos Reutemann had a narrow escape when part of the wing flew off.

Keegan signs for Team Surtees



Rupert—appendicitis.

Pete Briggs of Team Surtees telephoned at the beginning of the week to confirm that Rupert Keegan would definitely drive for the team in 1978. There is as yet no word on sponsorship for the team, but it seems likely that British Air Ferries will be in some way connected with Rupert's car. An announcement about the team's number one driver will probably be made in a couple of weeks. We assume that Vittorio Brambilla will be staying on for a second season.

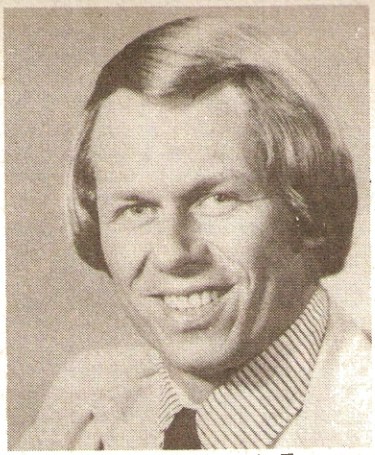
The team's new signing is out of action for the moment. It seems that Keegan began to feel ill while at Tramps last Friday night, and was taken to hospital with appendicitis. He should shortly be up and about again, and will resume testing. He has already spent four days at Goodwood with a TS19, during which time he greatly impressed the Surtees personnel.

Niki's BT45 record

"The chassis", said Niki Lauda ecstatically, "is fantastic!" The World Champion, driving a racing car for the first time in seven weeks, was talking after his first drive in the Brabham-Alfa Romeo BT45 at Vallelunga last week.

"After only two or three laps, I felt at home in the car. I knew there would be no problem in adapting to it. It really is extremely easy to drive". Lauda spent four days with the car, putting in a tremendous number of laps and finally getting down to 1m 6.69s, by far the quickest lap ever set at Vallelunga. As some sort of guide, the Austrian's best Vallelunga time in the Ferrari 312T2 was 1m 7.71s, set in January.

Lauda has tried several different Alfa flat-12s during the tests. According to Carlo Chiti, these vary between normal 'cooking' engines (about 515bhp!) and the very latest ones, the best of which was giving 545bhp—again according to Chiti. If these figures be accurate, the other drivers will be seeing little of Lauda and Watson next year. . . .



Paul Lauritzen—new man in Europe.

Goodyear change

Denny Chrobak, manager of Goodyear's European Racing Division since 1974, is leaving the post and will return to take up another appointment with the company in the States. By tradition, the men who hold this post have a tour of duty in Europe of about three or four seasons. Denny's predecessors included Fred Gamble, Leo Mehl and Ed Alexander.

Replacing Chrobak will be 32-year-old Paul Lauritzen, who has worked as chief compounder in the US Racing Division. Lauritzen, who was born in Denmark but is now a US citizen, has been involved in practically every form of racing, from USAC to road racing, and his wide experience should stand him in good stead for his new appointment.

Sports car prize money problems

In view of the forthcoming European Sports Car Championship and World Endurance Challenge, Sportscars International have proposed to the CSI that a fixed scale of travel expenses and prize money be drawn up for these two championships, bearing in mind the additional sea crossing which has to be undertaken by all British-based competitors. M Yvon Leon, Secretary of the CSI, has suggested that a proposal is made by Sportscars International through the RAC in London, and this has now been undertaken by Sportscars International secretary Paul Watson.

With the one-make situation prevailing in Group 5, and the astronomical costs in this formula looking likely to continue in 1978, Sportscars International see the inclusion of a multi-formula endurance championship as exactly the right way to go. Hopefully it might eventually lead to the establishment of just one major series at World Championship level for all types of two- and two/four-seater sports and prototype cars, says Watson. However, organisational points that need ironing out before this championship can be truly successful include the single scale of travel expenses and prize money; a re-arrangement of dates so as to prevent continual and expensive Atlantic crossings (at present a team competing in all events would need to cross the Atlantic eight times); and the encouragement and participation by world-class Formula 1 drivers so as to ensure maximum spectator appeal.

Briefly . . .

● Teddy Yip took no fewer than 26 guests to last weekend's Macau Grand Prix! Among their number were Al and Bobby Unser, Dan Gurney and Clay Regazzoni. . . .

● The Ensign campaigned this year by Patrick Tambay, and sponsored by Teddy Yip, was demonstrated at Macau last weekend by Alan Jones, who drove for Yip in the Macau GP. A F1 car round Macau. . . .

● Eje Elgh looks a good bet for one of Fred Opert's Chevrons next year, in both Formula 2 and Atlantic. The deal is apparently to be financed by Marlboro and Plastic Padding.

● The city of Hamilton, Ontario, will play host to a round of the Labatt Challenge Formula Atlantic series next year. The race, which will be run through the streets of the city, will be run on August 7. Street racing is really coming on strong in Canada these days, a development we very much like. Come on, Rochdale and Purley, what are you waiting for?

● Congratulations to Jacques Laffite, who last week married the beautiful Bernadette Cotin, his long-time girl friend. Bernadette's sister, Genevieve, is married to Jean-Pierre Jabouille, whose mechanic Laffite used to be!

● Between Ferrari F1 test sessions at Fiorano and Vallelunga, Gilles Villeneuve has been house-hunting in Monaco this week.

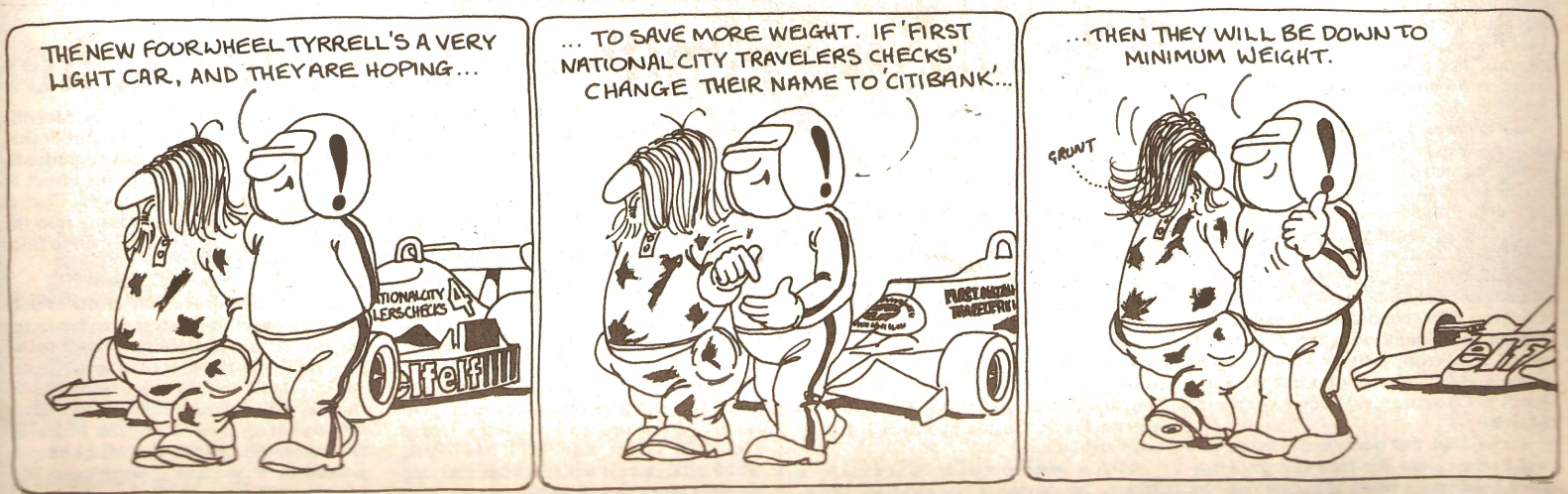
● Three months after Patrick Tambay agreed to drive for Marlboro McLaren in 1978, a press release has been issued to confirm it!

● Ron Tauranac moved his Ralt outfit from Woking to Weybridge recently. The company's new address is Ralt Cars Ltd., Weylock Works, Byfleet Road, New Haw, Weybridge, Surrey. Tel: Weybridge 54677.

● New Zealander Howard Wood will drive a works-assisted Lyncar in the five-round Peter Stuyvesant Formula Pacific series in New Zealand next January. The car is entirely new, and is aimed primarily at the Atlantic market, although F2 and F3 versions can be made available.

catchpole

by Barry Foley





Richard Petty's STP-Dodge hounds Benny Parsons's First National Chevrolet.

Dodge finish with a one-two

Dodge have had a thin time in the NASCAR Grand National Championship this year, generally being outclassed by the Chevrolets. The last race of the year, however, brought a welcome change of fortune.

Richard Petty, who normally doesn't worry too much about his qualifying speed, took the pole for last Sunday's *Los Angeles Times* 500 at Ontario, followed closely by Neil Bonnett in another Dodge. And the two of them completely dominated the race, Bonnett finally winning from Petty by just under a second. On the same lap, but not in touch, was Cale Yarborough's Holly Farms Chevrolet, which finished third, ahead of Buddy Baker's Norris Ford, David Pearson's Purolator Mercury and Richard Brooks's Truxmore Ford.

By finishing second, King Richard made sure of second place in the championship. Both Benny Parsons and Darrell Waltrip, contenders for the place, had troubled races at Ontario. Ricky Rudd, just 22 years old, finished eighth to clinch the Rookie of the Year.

The final points standings were: Yarborough (5000pts), Petty (4614), Parsons (4570), Waltrip (4498), Baker (3961) and Brooks (3742).

● After a season-long battle with Tom Bigelow, Sheldon Kinser has won the 1977 USAC Sprint Car Championship. Pancho Carter took third place overall.

Another for Patrese at Macau

Riccardo Patrese scored his second race victory in three weeks out east last weekend when he took his Bob Harper run Chevron-Hart to the chequered flag in the 24th round-the-houses Macau Grand Prix for Formula Pacific cars.

Macau, the Portuguese island colony 35 miles off Hong Kong, annually hosts this popular race, which is run on a 3.8-mile street circuit. The track winds through the harbour and streets of the town, and has a reputation for being dangerous despite its FIA approval. Patrese, driving the interim works Chevron B40/42 entered by Remy Martin Team Harper and fitted with one of Brian Hart's BDA engines, qualified on pole position at 2m 21.32s, and looked good to repeat his victory in the JAF Formula 2 race at Suzuka a fortnight before in Japan.

Following last year's race, in which Alan Jones established a new lap record of 2:21.44 at the wheel of a Theodore Racing March 722, Hong Kong businessman and enthusiastic motor racing supporter Teddy Yip put up a HK$10,000 prize to be awarded to the first man to get under that time at Macau. Patrese sliced 0.12sec off it in practice for the Grand Prix, so the cash was his. Ironically, the second fastest qualifier was Jones himself, this time driving Yip's Theodore Racing Ralt; Jones lapped in 2:23.22 to take up a position on the front row alongside his 1977 Shadow F1 team-mate.

The 1976 winner, Vern Schuppan, was third fastest with his John McDonald entered Ralt (2:24.37), just ahead of Kiwi Steve Millen with his Chevron B39. Next came Japanese ace Masahiro Hasemi with the Datsun-engined Chevron B40 pictured in last week's *P&P*, ahead of Graeme Lawrence's Chevron and Kevin Bartlett's March.

Jones had the best of the start, and led Patrese into the first corner. However, halfway round the first lap the leading Ralt's engine cut out, and Jones half-spun in front of the Italian, who tried to go between him and the barrier. He did not have quite enough room, and the Chevron clipped the Ralt, which spun on and into the barrier, damaging it too much for the Australian to carry on. Patrese continued to the pits with bodywork damage, losing 40secs before rejoining the race in 11th place.

The Japanese Hasemi now led (the first time a Datsun-powered car has led a Formula Pacific/Atlantic event), with Schuppan close behind and looking for a way past. However, Vern's metering unit belt then broke, and he had to stop out on the circuit to fit the spare carried in the car; but no sooner was the spare in place than it too broke, and Schuppan was out. Hasemi, for his part, only led for four more laps before he also retired.

Steve Millen—brother of Rod, who is competing in the RAC Rally over here with a Mazda—now took up the running, with Patrese charging very hard through the field after his pitstop. Millen had to call at the pits, and as early as the 15th lap of the 40-lap race Patrese was in the lead again. Thereafter, he simply drove into the distance, completely unchallenged.

Bartlett and Lawrence became engaged in a dice for second place, which was broken up when Lawrence drove into the pits. On the 27th lap, Patrese led Bartlett by 26secs, but then the Australian added to the list of retirements: six laps later, Patrese had lapped the entire field at least once. Riccardo ran out the winner at 90.46mph in 1h 40m 14.48s, around 80secs slower than last year's winning time. After several years of trying, entrant Bob Harper (the man who used to run David Purley in F2) had finally won at Macau.

Millen recovered to take second place, in front of Australian driver Andrew Miedecke in his March 76B, and the New Zealander thus clinched the Rothmans-sponsored Far East Championship, of which this was the third and final round following the cancellations of three events. Lawrence is the runner-up.

For British enthusiasts, the news of Derek Daly's fortunes at Macau is disappointing. The Irishman, due to race the modified March 722 used last year by Jones, was delayed (along with Sid Taylor) *en route* to Hong Kong at Bangkok, and almost missed the first practice session on Thursday. He only did a couple of laps with the car before engine problems intervened, and in the next session the clutch drive sheared before Derek could get dialled in to the circuit, and damaged the gearbox. The team had no replacement and Derek had to scratch, although one of the dozen laps he had managed to complete was fast enough to put him on the third row.

McCormack's third title

Adelaide driver John McCormack, known as a bit of a thinker, thought his way to his third Australian Drivers' Championship at the long, fast and bumpy Phillip Island circuit on November 13.

Six laps from the end of the 26-lap, 90-mile race, his aluminium Leyland-based V8 lost its water through a blown head gasket, and as McCormack nursed his ailing McLaren M23 on, smoke indicated signs of further distress, each lap then becoming a tortuous affair.

He pitted (the pits are just before the start-finish line), and spent 1½ laps watching the traffic go by. Then he was push-started to cross the line just after race-winner John Leffler (Lola T400) went through. McCormack took third place in the badly depleted field to score 19 pts in the four-round series to head Leffler, last year's champion, on 16.

Second over the line was Alan Hamilton, in the ex-VDS team Lola T430, who had managed to hold things together while others dropped out.

McCormack, who had set a blistering 1m 34.3s lap in practice to take pole (the record held by John Walker is 1:36.0), was pressed earlier by the gritty Italian-born Alfredo Costanzo (Lola T332), who was forced to turn off when his Chevrolet engine, rebuilt overnight after a practice problem, began to vibrate badly.

Jon Davison went out when his ex-Alan Jones Rothmans Series Lola T332 made expensive engine noises, and Kevin Bartlett went off the pace into sixth place when his Lola T400 disgorged its water. Elfin builder Garrie Cooper did not even make it to the start, as his Elfin MR8 ran the bearings in its Chevrolet during practice.

The result was a triumph for McCormack, who has been responsible for the bulk of the development on the Leyland P76 motor which he slotted into the ex-Dave Charlton McLaren more than a year ago.

● In the main supporting event at Phillip Island, Pete Geoghegan gave Laurie O'Neil's brand new Porsche 935 turbo a fine debut in the Australian Tourist Trophy for sports cars. Geoghegan ran away from the rest of the field to finish a lap clear of David Richardson, in an ageing Matich SR3A. Pete's main opposition was expected to come from Stuart Kostera's Elfin MS7 (with F5000-style Chevrolet V8), but the car caught fire when being fuelled in the Elfin factory and was badly damaged.

Smith wins at Pukekohe

Ken Smith (March 76B) won the 20-lap fourth round of the Union Travel Formula Pacific New Zealand Championship series at Pukekohe on November 13, from Ross Stone (Cuda TR-2) and Richard Melville (March 76B).

Consistent placings in the four rounds held so far have given Stone the lead in the series, with 39pts to Melville's 35. Next, on 30pts, is Robbie Francevic (Modus), the leader after the third round, who did not start at Pukekohe as he had blown his engine in practice. Second round leader (and another Pukekohe defector because of an engine blow-up in practice) Dave McMillan in his Ralt RT1 has 27pts, and Smith is next with 26 after contesting only two championship rounds.

Smith was hotly pursued by Melville in the early laps of the race, but Smith, who was really in the groove, gradually edged ahead. Melville, in his effort to drag him in again, spun at Castrol Corner, a right-hander leading into the long back straight, and dropped to third place behind Stone.

Melville made a terrific effort to take Stone, and set the fastest race lap in the course of his bid, but he had to be content with third spot. Norm Lankshear (Chevron B34) had transmission failure while lying fourth, and only a few hundred yards from the finish, as he coasted towards the line, he was passed by Reg Cook (March) and Eric Morgan (Chevron B29).

correspondence

the editor is not bound to agree with readers' opinions

RAC clubmen

The controversy over the treatment of British clubmen entries for the 1977 RAC Rally merely continues the saga from last year. Then it was obvious that preference was being given to foreign entrants, there being just one French entry in the 1976 clubmans section of the RAC. No amount of discussion with the organisers could make them reconsider, and so not only were many excellent British club drivers denied the full scope of the rally, but several sponsorship deals were withdrawn as a result.

If the RAC feels it can do without the British club driver, let it see how it can do without the British club to run its stages (free of charge!). Perhaps a bit of free collective bargaining might persuade the Belgrave Square reactionaries to look to their obligations to home-grown talent before outsiders. How many foreign entries are accepted on the San Remo, or the Sherry? Not as great a percentage as on the RAC!

It really is time the motor clubs of this country got themselves an organising body which will represent their interests, and not just an expensive rubber stamp which does exactly the reverse.

Drivers of Great Britain unite! You have nothing to lose but a lot of costly aggro!

WETHERBY, W. YORKS STEPHEN LLOYD

Winners

In recent weeks there has been considerable discussion in racing circles about the Formula 1 World Championship, and suggestions that it should be awarded to the driver who wins most races, rather than on a points system. It is interesting to look back over the years in which the championship has been held, and check the actual differences the 'winners' system would have made to the destiny of the title.

By my calculations, there are four years in which a different champion would have been crowned: 1958 (Moss instead of Hawthorn), 1964 (Clark instead of Surtees), 1967 (Clark instead of Hulme) and 1977 (Andretti instead. of Lauda). The effect of these changes is that the late Jim Clark would have won four Championships rather than two, surely a more genuine indication of his standing as a driver, and poor Stirling Moss would have won at least one instead of his totally unrepresentative none. Fangio would still have won five titles and Jackie Stewart his three.

In other words, the 'winners' system tends to favour those drivers whom most people would regard the best of their respective eras, a strong argument, surely, for its adoption in future.

It is also interesting to note that if the same system had been used in the Constructors Championship, Lotus would have won no fewer than nine titles between 1963 and 1977.

BRISTOL A. S. MAPSTONE

That incident

Forgive me for not writing sooner, but I really do think that James Hunt got the dirty end of the stick from the press about the marshal-thumping incident at Mosport. Consider this:

"I think you've maybe seen some drivers who have had spins or accidents . . . they get out of the car and they suddenly react completely crazy and they shout at people, they scream. And this is only because their mind and everything is still on racing through the accident or through the spin—suddenly everything has stopped. But the brain hasn't stopped, it's still thinking of driving, so he reacts from outside completely stupid, you know, because he doesn't understand that he's now back in reality. Walking back to the pits he shouts and screams, you know, and then it takes a while. Some drivers, it takes, I don't know—an hour to come back to the normal; another driver it takes 10 seconds, and he's normal."

That is a quote from Niki Lauda's book, taken from a BBC interview.

Hunt had spent a good many laps in intense pursuit of Andretti on a demanding track, perhaps under the additional strain of awareness of the rustic safety facilities at Mosport. Just having at last taken the lead, he was fouled by his own team-mate ("Sharper than a serpent's tooth . . .") and subjected to what he himself called "by far the worst accident of my F1 career". He was bruised and momentarily trapped in the wreckage before getting out. What his emotions were at this point only James could say, but they were all probably about 9.9 on the Richter scale.

At this point, I was two turns further on wondering where Hunt was, so I was not an eye-witness to the kerfuffle; I did, however, see it in living colour on the tube later. Hunt headed for the track (looking dazed, I thought), the marshal touched or grabbed his arm, and Hunt reflexively turned and punched in the same instant with no premeditation whatsoever. I think if the marshal had been Little Orphan Annie or King Kong, he still would have got tagged. James appeared immediately contrite and twice in the next minute or so approached the marshal and put his arm around his shoulder, presumably apologising.

Now I don't advocate marshal-bashing as a regular pastime, but under the circumstances I really think "temporary insanity" could have been a reasonable plea. It's a pity that your brethren of the popular press played the whole thing up so highly, but I guess it encourages the great unwashed to spend their dimes to soak it up.

I don't feel that James should have been fined for punching the marshal. The incident should have been quietly dropped.

KINGSTON, ONT, CANADA JACK M. HUGHES

This correspondence is now closed.—Ed.

Radio ham

Following your recent report about Radio Victory having just started a motor sport programme, I thought that you might be interested to learn that the Royal Free Network, London's Hospital Radio, has had a Motor Sport News programme for nearly a year now.

My engineer and I have been covering as many aspects of racing as possible, but due to the fact that Hospital Radio is entirely voluntary, our coverage has had to be, unfortunately, limited to distance; the furthest afield this season being the Grand Prix at Silverstone, and Brands Hatch receiving the most coverage.

So far this season, we have interviewed Jody Scheckter, Clay Regazzoni, James Hunt (three times), Derek Bell, Divina Galica, Gerry Marshall, Jackie Stewart, Stirling Moss, and the only interview of the day at this year's Race of Champions with Niki Lauda.

I would like, through your columns, to record my thanks to Mike Smith of Motor Circuit Developments for all his invaluable help this season at Brands Hatch and also to all who have helped bring motor sport to hospital patients.

LONDON NW1 MARC SINDEN

Winner

In connection with the AUTOSPORT/Winfield Grand Prix competition held earlier this year, in which I was very pleased to win the Runner-Up prize, I am writing to tell you how I fared.

The course was very interesting, and driving a Formula Ford for the first time was very exciting. It did not take long to get used to the right-hand gear change.

The two instructors, Mike Knight and David Cole, were always very helpful, assisting me all they could. The lapping sessions I thoroughly enjoyed, especially driving through the chicane, and I learned a lot about driving the correct way through the corners.

Altogether I spent four days at Goodwood and found everybody very friendly.

TAUNTON, SOM. ANN MAY

No loser

I would like to 'disclaim some fame'. Contrary to the opinion of the BBC's commentator on the FF1600 race at Thruxton on November 12, I was not lapped by the leaders after only five laps. Indeed, I remained unlapped, as my car's clutch had seized before practice! Therefore I was unable to participate in either the practice session or the race itself.

The BBC's confusion of someone else's car with my own Merlyn has led to considerable embarrassment for me with my current sponsors and prospective sponsors. I therefore wish to clarify the point.

CHARD, SOM DAVID WATERHOUSE

Relaxed efficiency

I would like, through your columns, to express my thanks and congratulations to the Coventry & Warwicks MC for the way in which they conducted their Donington sprint meeting on November 13.

Having broken a halfshaft on the start line at the end of the practice session on my Mallock U2, which involved a considerable amount of frenzied work to rectify by my dedicated helpers, it was very gratifying for myself and co-driver to be allowed to practise the car and to compete and defend my BTD from the previous weekend satisfactorily!

This was all done without the normal pleading and shouting matches that have taken place with other organisers under such circumstances.

The whole meeting was carried out with an air of complete relaxed efficiency despite several incidents by over-exuberant drivers. Everybody had two timed runs plus practice, and yet the whole meeting finished by 3.15pm.

COSTOCK, LEICS JIM ROBINSON

Then as now?

Twenty-five years ago this week (AUTOSPORT, November 21, 1952) we carried an extensive report of the MCC 'Daily Express' Rally which resulted in victory for Dr Charles and Molly Hardman in their Dellow from Ken Rawlings and Lew Tracey (Vanguard Special). The 1250 mile event attracted 431 starters of which just under 400 reached the finish. The LCC Parks Committee had announced their intention to reopen a circuit at Crystal Palace, their aim to bring car and motor cycle racing back to the South London Parkland circuit for the first time since 1939. John Bolster tested the potent Vincent Black Shadow motor cycle which was capable of a top speed of 125mph and 0-100mph acceleration in 21secs. The first BBC TV trial, held near Wendover in the Chilterns, proved a great success with three teams of three drivers competing for the TV Trophy. The South took victory in the team event with one of the North team members, Cuth Harrison (Lotus), putting up the best individual performance.



Bjorn Waldegaard has dominated the rally since the first stage in Wales on Monday.

Bjorn in the forests

As competitors on the 1977 Lombard RAC Rally drove towards York on Tuesday night at the end of 37 tough stages rallying, Sweden's Bjorn Waldegaard had put the works Ford Escort RS1800 into a commanding lead. After early leaders Pentti Airikkala and Hannu Mikkola had been overhauled by Waldegaard, the only serious challenge to his leadership came from Markku Alen, who retired with severe engine problems during Monday night.

A record number of spectators turned out to see the specially planned spectator stages during Sunday's run from the Wembley start up to York: more than 120,000 watched the Sutton Park stage near Birmingham and the reopened Donington Park race circuit attracted a larger crowd than it has done for any race meeting this year.

The stately home and leisure park stages of Sunday, however, were not the only venues to attract large crowds. In Wales on Monday night, a road section had to be re-routed through Llandovery as competitors could not reach the stages at Cwmhenog and Abernant because spectators were blocking a single-track road through the mountains. Despite these heavy pressures, however, the rally organisation has held up well.

On the tarmac stages of Sunday, quickest by far was Pentti Airikkala in the DTV Vauxhall Chevette, who held on to the lead until the final stage of the day—at Bramham Park—when Hannu Mikkola (Toyota Celica) took over. But, as soon as the rally moved into the forests—Waldegaard was 21secs quicker on the first forest stage—it was the Swede who firmly stated his intention of adding victory in the RAC to his wins in the world's other two prestige events, the Safari and the Monte Carlo.

Waldegaard increased his lead in icy conditions through the night into Tuesday while Airikkala dropped well down the field after a thumb sprain caused when he hit a pot-hole on SS20 (Hafren) resulted in an off-road excursion two stages later (SS22 Cyneiniog) which lost him 20mins.

The only man to seriously challenge Waldegaard through Monday was Markku Alen (Fiat Abarth 131 Rally), but his challenge failed after loss of oil from the engine resulted in piston damage and his retirement that night.

The leading British drivers have so far been Russell Brookes and Andy Dawson in their Ford Escort RS1800s. Both are driving quickly and skilfuly and both have figured in the top three during the first three days. Brookes's achievement is particularly praiseworthy as his rally up to Monday morning had been a catalogue of disasters with clutch and gearbox problems dropping him way down the field.

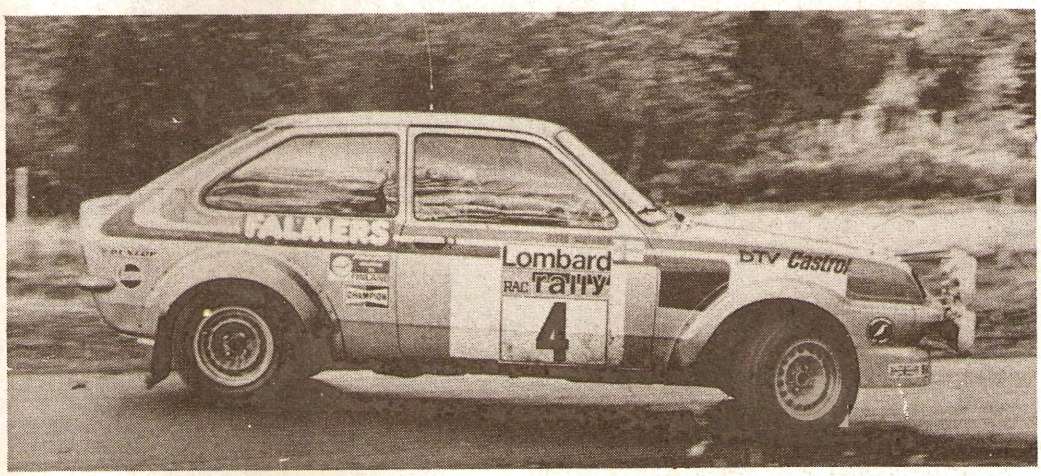
Top ten placings after SS37 (Clocaenog 3)

1. Bjorn Waldegaard/Hans Thorszelius (Ford Escort RS1800), 259m 55s;
2. Hannu Mikkola/Arne Hertz (Toyota Celica GT), 260:38;
3. Russell Brookes/John Brown (Ford Escort RS1800), 261:05;
4. Andy Dawson/Andrew Marriott (Ford Escort RS1800), 265:54;
5. Timo Salonen/Jaakko Markkula (Fiat Abarth 131 Rally), 268:29;
6. Roger Clark/Stuart Pegg (Ford Escort RS1800), 268:54;
7. Tony Pond/Fred Gallagher (Triumph TR7), 270:57;
8. Kyosti Hämäläinen/Howard Scott (Ford Escort RS1800), 271:06.
9. Jean-Luc Therier/Michel Vial (Toyota Celica GT), 271:43;
10. Per Eklund/Bjorn Cederberg (Saab 99EMS Rally), 272:38.

A superb drive from Mikkola kept him in second place after he lost the lead to Waldegaard.







Top: strongest challenger to Waldegaard was Alen until he retired. Above: leader for nearly all of the first day, Airikkala dropped down the field after he damaged his thumb. Below: after running in the top five, Munari was almost certain to retire on Tuesday evening after an 'off'.



Lombard RAC rally

Notes on the cars

FORD

Rally leader **Bjorn Waldegaard** has been well in command of the situation. The team changed the struts on his RS1800 as a precaution but there have been no other problems. Last year's winner, **Roger Clark,** moved into the top ten for the first time on Tuesday morning after a troubled early period. He broke a wheel coming out of the ford in Sutton Park on Sunday afternoon, which lost time, and the RS1800's gearbox was changed overnight Monday. **Ari Vatanen** retired on SS30 (Cwmhenog) after he rolled on the last corner of the stage, which was also the scene of accidents for Per Eklund (Saab) and Timo Makinen (Fiat). Vatanen's RS1800 was well beyond repair. **Kyosti Hämäläinen**, determined to prove that he is not frightened of British forests, pulled up to eighth by the end of Tuesday. Having run on A2s and M&S tyres on Sunday's tarmac stages, as he had never driven on racers, and having suffered an oil leak problem on the same day, he had started Monday well down the field and pulled up by virtue of his forest driving. **Russell Brookes** suffered a catalogue of disasters, losing his clutch half-way through Sunday and needing push-starts at the beginning of each stage. A new gearbox was installed at Oulton Park on Monday morning, but there was insufficient time to replace the clutch as well. When the work was finally done, on Monday evening at Machynlleth, the Brookes team came within 45secs of incurring road penalties. After that Brookes drove superbly. Also flying was **Andy Dawson** who, apart from bending one rear wheel had experienced no problems until Tuesday. **John Taylor** had front-wheel punctures on two successive stages in Wales and had been running slowly with the engine refusing to develop constant revs as a result of worn carburettor spindles. As we went to press, the team were intending to change the complete system on Tuesday evening. **Nigel Rockey** worked up to eighth on Monday with some fine driving in the icy conditions in Wales, but he lost 5mins on Dyfi (SS18) when he slid into a ditch, followed by three other cars, Rockey being the last to restart. Having dropped to 28th, however, he was soon going well again until he bent the steering late Tuesday afternoon on Clocaenog 3. **Tony Drummond** lost all his lights on Hafren (SS20) and had to follow other competitors out. The problem was the alternator and he retired. **Tony Fowkes** also retired, but only after pushing the RS1800 right round the Oulton Park stage and missing the Chester Time Control by merely a couple of minutes.

TOYOTA

One of the stars of the rally, up to Tuesday evening, was **Hannu Mikkola** who, having held the lead from Sunday night through to the start of the Welsh forest stages, drove hard and well to hold on to second, albeit around one minute behind Waldegaard. The Celica was giving no problems. **Leif Asterhag** surprised many with a top ten position on Sunday evening, but he dropped right out of contention with a long stop on SS14 (Beddgelert). **Per-Inge Walfridsson** suffered some road penalties and was running in the twenties on Tuesday. **Jean-Luc Therier** was ninth after SS37 on Tuesday evening.

VAUXHALL

Leader until the final stage on Sunday evening was **Pentti Airikkala** in the number one Chevette 2300HS. His performance on the tarmac stages was impressive and the Chevette gave no problems, Airikkala only losing the lead to Mikkola at Bramham Park. On Monday, he hit a pot hole on Hafren (SS20) which jolted his thumb, resulting in a sprain. The pain and difficulty of controlling the car resulted in an 'off' of about 80ft, which cost him 20mins and dropped him down to below 50th. The Chevette also had a new back axle as a precautionary measure after the 'off'. On Tuesday afternoon, Airikkala damaged the front suspension after two punctures on Clocaenog 2. **Chris Sclater** also had problems on Hafren, finding Markku Saaristo's rolled TR7 in the middle of the stage and having to ditch the Chevette to avoid it.

Lombard RAC rally

Notes on the cars

continued

After losing considerable time there, he lost out again on Cwmhenog (SS30) when he went off four miles after the start and co-driver Martin Holmes had to run one mile to get help from the finish. By the time the intrepid Holmes returned with a gaggle of spectators, Sclater had built up a runway of stones to get the car back on the road. It still cost 15mins, dropping him well down the order. **George Hill** was happy with his ex-works Chevette.

FIAT

Strongest challenge to rally leader Waldegaard during the Welsh forest stages on Monday came from **Markku Alen** in the leading works Fiat Abarth 131 Rally. On Monday evening, he had to cover about 20kms of Hafren (SS20) with very little oil in the engine after the scavenge pump to the dry sump system had broken. Efforts to repair and refill the system failed when more serious damage to the engine was found and Alen retired. **Timo Makinen** went well in the early stages, holding fifth or sixth, until he rolled on SS30 (Cwmhenog) as a result of a puncture on the same fast downhill right-hander that claimed Vatanen's Ford Escort. Makinen continued, but suffered a puncture on Clocaenog 2 which caused driveshaft replacement problems. **Timo Salonen** took over the challenge, with no problems on his 131. The Fiat team had experienced nine punctures, Salonen suffering two on one stage, the new compound of their MS35s proving troublesome. **Maurizio Verini** was running an experimental car with new brake calipers, which caused problems, and he was not at home on the ice. **Fulvio Bacchelli** was rather slow on the ice as well and **Simo Lampinen's** engine would not pull well, but all Fiats were in the top 20.

LANCIA

Maintaining a position in the top five until Monday night was **Sandro Munari** in the 24-valve works Stratos, which was ideal for the early tarmac stages. The icy weather in the Welsh forests, however, was not so suitable for the rear-engined sports car, which was also overheating, and Munari dropped down the order staying just inside the top ten. Munari later incurred maximum penalties on Radnor with a 52mins 'off'. **Billy Coleman** in the Chequered Flag Stratos didn't even reach Wales, being forced into retirement on the road section before Sutton Park when the distributor drive sheared. The distributor then seized and, as neither the 'Flag team nor Lancia had a spare for the 12-valve car, Coleman retired.

SAAB

After setting times in the top five on the first stage at Blenheim, the two Saab 99EMS Rallys of **Stig Blomqvist** and **Per Eklund** dropped down the order. Blomqvist managed to hold on to a top ten position, despite tyre compound problems until his transmission failed late on Tuesday. It was likely that he would retire. Eklund lost a couple of minutes with a spectacular accident in Wales on Tuesday morning to compound his loss of time after losing a wheel at Bramham on Sunday evening. He moved up to tenth by Tuesday evening.

LEYLAND

The four Triumph TR7s entered by Leyland Cars were having a chequered career up to Tuesday. The most successful was that of **Tony Pond,** who was running seventh after 37 stages. with few problems. By this time, **Brian Culcheth** had already retired after a rear wheel came off on SS18 (Pantperthog) as a result of stud failure. Of the two 'new boys' in the TR7 ranks, **Pat Ryan** was having the quieter rally, driving steadily, while **Markku Saaristo** rolled his brand new left-hand-drive TR7 on SS20 (Hafren), restarting in 107th position.



Above: Andy Dawson held fourth at the Tuesday overnight halt. Below: Russell Brookes was in third, the two Brits driving superbly. Bottom: Top Fiat driver at the end of Tuesday was Timo Salonen after Timo Makinen rolled.









On Sunday, Ari Vatanen lost a tyre in Sutton Park, breaking a wheel (above and below). Bottom: scrutineering took place in the warm in the Wembley Conference Centre on Saturday, with a good crowd of spectators looking on.



Lombard RAC rally

Notes on the cars

continued

OPEL

The leading Opels were experiencing problems in the first three days. **Walter Rohrl** never reached the top ten, his Kadett GT/E suffering a misfire from the very early stages. **Bror Danielsson**, after mechanics had rebuilt the engine before the start, started to have severe brake problems, as did **Anders Kullang. Lars Carlsson** retired while second in G1 after an accident on a road section severely damaged his Kadett.

OTHERS

The Renault 5 Alpines, making their debut in Britain, certainly impressed with their speed, particularly the mount of **Jean Ragnotti** who was leading his class on Tuesday, well clear of the Skoda of Haugland, which has traditionally sewn up this class. Ragnotti's team-mate, **Jean-Pierre Nicolas** was having rather worse luck, having to run on side-lights for three stages after the alternator had packed up and running out of petrol on another. **John Haugland** was having problems with his Skoda 130RS, also, a failed gearbox oil seal resulting in very slow progress for 1½ miles—and the loss of 10mins—before it could be repaired. This was followed by a distributor problem.

GROUP ONE

Leading the G1 battle on Tuesday was **Malcolm Wilson** (RS2000) who was really flying to keep well ahead of **Graham Elsmore's** similar car, **Jimmy McRae,** who was experiencing traction problems with the Magnum and **Terry Kaby,** who bent the steering rack and had a front-wheel puncture on the Dolomite Sprint on Penmachno.





Hettema and Boshoff in their factory Escort RS1800

Salora to Hettema

Van der Merwe's second series

Springbok Rallyists Jan Hettema and Franz Boshoff stormed to victory in their Southern Sun Ford Escort in the Salora Rally, which ended in Pietersburg, South Africa, recently. Hettema and Boshoff, who set a blistering pace of up to 200 kmh in the early stages, got bogged down briefly when a severe thunder and hail storm turned the rally route around Pietersburg and Tzaneen into a slippery mud bath which was mainly responsible for 29 crews failing to finish the event.

Kassie Coetzee and Vic Deiner in their Michael Angelo Datsun 140Y took second place with a total penalty of 18655 points, 661 points behind the winning team. Third was the Transvaal Production Car Champion, Giovanni Piazza-Musso and Dave Dusseljee in their Alfa Romeo, only 5secs behind Coetzee and Deiner.

Sarel van der Merwe and Richard Leeke in their Chevrolet Dealer Team Chevair had a troubled run and finished in sixth place, still high enough, however, to ensure the national championship for the team. Van der Merwe won it for the second time, and Leeke for the first. It is also the second time that Van der Merwe has started the championship in a Datsun-Nissan and finished winning in another *marque*. The previous time was in 1975 when he won most of his points in a Datsun and then switched to Alfa Romeo to win the championship.

With the results of the Asseng Rally still to be announced Van der Merwe should have a commanding lead on points. Even without the Asseng's results, he wins as he has achieved more higher placings in the year's national series than Hettema.

Improvements promised for '78 Welsh

The 1978 Welsh Rally to be run on the 11th-13th May, 1978 is being jointly sponsored by the Western Mail, the national newspaper of Wales and Phonepower Wales, the slogan of the Wales and the Marches Telecommunications Board. With the Western Mail increasing its sponsorship and the Wales and the Marches Telecommunications Board matching it, it has been possible to make many improvements to the 1978 event.

The Rally will start from Cardiff on the Thursday evening and will run through the night to a breakfast halt in mid-Wales. From the restart competitors will attempt stages in Mid and North Wales before the overnight halt in Aberystwyth. On Saturday morning stages in Mid and South Wales will be used before the finish in Cardiff on Saturday evening. Great care has been taken in selecting stages giving 225 miles of forestry stages and 25 miles of tarmac. The event will be a qualifying round for the European Rally Drivers, Sedan Products Open and Welsh Stages Championships.

Improvements have been made to prize money throughout the range with the first prize now standing at £850. Entry fee for private entries has been reduced to £95 and the entry fee for commercial entries has been set at £115. Regulations will be available in mid-December and entries will be accepted at the above rates from January 1, 1978 to March 31, 1978. After this entries will be accepted up to April 17 subject to a late fee of an extra £10. A maximum of 150 entries will be accepted. The Rally Secretary has a new address to which requests for regulations should be sent: Carey Edwards, 45, Allt-yr-yn Close, Newport, Gwent, NPT 5EE. Telephone: Newport 6285.

Mikkola to Ford

Third time lucky for Boreham

Amid all the bustle and gossip of Wembley last Saturday, there was but one really interesting piece of news not directly concerned with the rally that finishes in York this afternoon. Naturally enough, it surrounded the Ford Motor Company, who almost casually let it be known that their driver line-up for next year would include a man whom they have been trying to re-hire, almost since the day they dispensed with his services—Hannu Mikkola.

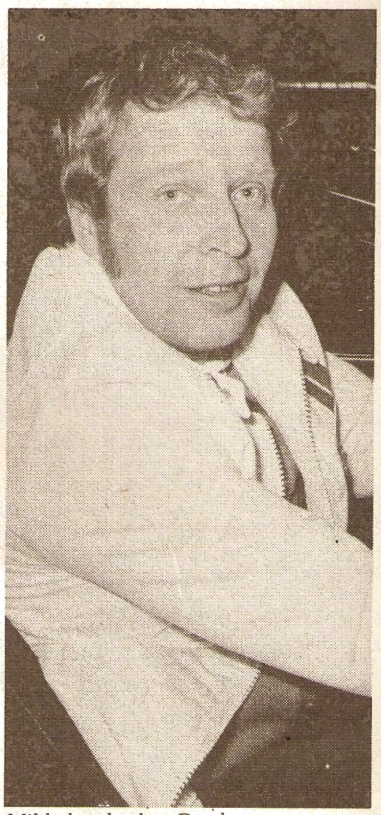
In fact the company have made at least two attempts to re-hire Mikkola since his departure from the team along with Markku Alen, and one suspects that they might not have been successful this third time had the situation amid Ove Andersson's Toyota team not looked so bleak for the immediate future.

Toyota's problem surrounds the homologation of the 2-litre Corolla into G4, and unless the Japanese decide to market such a car (for the road) in the very near future, TTE will be forced into a position where they either rally Celicas to '78 G2 regs (not a particularly competitive combination) rally the 2-litre Corolla in G5 (eg: the Castrol/Autosport Championship etc.) or not rally at all. We gather that the Japanese are considering marketing a 2-litre Corolla, but that plans are still not far advanced.

Thus Ford have added the vast talents of Hannu to the strength, a factor which besides anything else, indicates that next year they mean business once again on the international WCR scene, even though budgets for such a task have yet to be approved.

It also indicates the probability of the stories which have circulated widely in recent weeks concerning Roger Clark—namely that he will be employed to contest the International Open championship next season—perhaps run and managed from a source outside Boreham.

The dauntingly talented A team will thus be entirely Scandinavian for their major forays abroad—unless Russell Brookes or Roger himself are asked to join in. Ari Vatanen has not apparently signed his contract yet, although the feeling among the team is that he will do so shortly.



Mikkola—back to Boreham

It is certainly excellent news for those many British fans of Mikkola who follow his progress so closely. Hannu has been especially happy of late and, since he accepted this Ford offer nearly a month ago, perhaps this is not altogether surprising, Team Toyota Europe's plans had not be revealed at the time of going to press.

Splashing thro' Sutton Park, Mikkola's Toyota Celica GT



Great support for Ford series

Within a week of the announcement of Ford's Escort Championship for 1978, more than 140 people had contacted Graham Robson, the series Co-ordinator, for details. It looks as if this series, to be run as an integral part of the ten-event Esso-BTRDA series is going to be a closely-fought battle. We hear that some event organisers are already worried about the high proportion of their entries which might come from Escort contenders, and that a maximum 'quota' system has already been discussed. Anyone who hasn't already registered with Dee Green of the BTRDA is urged to do so without delay.

In the meantime, John Griffiths, at Boreham, is finalising the regulations, which will be extremely strict, and will be written with all the company's experience of the Mexico championships in mind. With limited-slip differentials almost certain to be banned, along with 'quick' racks, driving skill will be at a premium! Fears that the championship will be 'swamped' by the Escort 1300 entrants have, however, been discounted by series promotors and organisers. Neither is there any prospect of a 'Division 2' being created as a result.

. . . and for Mazdas

A new class of rallying for next year that seems to have captured the imagination of a great number of competitors is that for the 1300 Mazda Hatchback. Since Mazda announced a few weeks back that they have put together a package for a series for these cars to be run within the Castrol/AUTOSPORT Championship they have apparently been inundated with serious inquiries and have, consequently, allocated the 25 cars they intended to run in the championship. They have decided to keep the limit to 25 mainly because this will mean it is more likely that the drivers will be able to get entries in all the rounds.

Observers to improve Welsh PR

The Welsh Association of Motor Clubs is to take steps to improve organisation and public relations work on rallies and to this end has appointed observers for every event. Their function will be to report on all road and stage events with regard to route selection, organisation and general PR. Last Sunday's Autumn Rally was the first event to be watched. At a recent meeting of the Association, Chairman Dennis Cardell said that sanctions would be taken against clubs falling short of a minimum standard, and that in future only the best events would be included in Welsh Rally Championships.

Briefly . . .

● Any British competitors who are not doing the RAC Rally and fancy a trip to Turkey are being offered a good deal by the organises of the Bosphorus Winter Rally, which is an ECR round run in Turkey on November 26/27. The deal includes a certain amount of free fuel and free accommodation for six nights. Anyone interested in details should contact Jim Gavin at Hunt Cottage, Wisborough Green, Sussex.

● In recognition of the help received from some of the marshals on the recent Focal Wyedean Stages Rally, Forest of Dean MC will be striking a special badge to be distributed early next year. The club hope to encourage marshals for next year's event. Apparently, despite the problems suffered on the day, not least of which was the weather, the Forestry Commission were happy with the event and the club hope that the atmosphere is now right for the continuance of rallying in the Dean area.

● DTV/Castrol Roadshows will be starting again in December and running through to March with the shows including screenings of Vauxhall's new film 'Pentti', audio visual presentations by DTV's Gerry Johnstone, Castrol's Roger Willis and Sportparts' Peter McBride. There will also be a forum at each Roadshow featuring Gerry Marshall, Johnstone, Willis and McBride.

● Although it is quite some time still before the 1978 Snow Rally in Finland; an interesting prospective entry to come to our notice is that for 'Keke' Rosberg. It seems that the Finnish Formula 2 driver is going to contest the event and if his driving at the Donington F2 meeting is anything to go by, he could be quite a serious proposition for his fellow rallying countrymen.

● It seems that some of the lady drivers and co-drivers taking part in rounds of the Castrol/AUTOSPORT Championship have not registered for the Huxford Liberated Ladies section. All those who have taken part are eligible for a souvenir award at the Huxford presentation in London on December 4, but only if they fill in a registration form prior to that date. Any lady who has taken part in a round and not registered is urged to do so immediately and should contact Chris Ivill at Huxfords, Newgate Lane, Fareham, Hampshire, tel Fareham 82811. Huxfords have also produced some special T shirts based on their sponsorship of this championship for both adults and children and details of the costs of these can also be obtained from Chris.

● At two tribunals at the beginning of the month, the RAC have upheld appeals against decisions made on the Opel Wass Rally and the Welsh Border Stages. On the Opel Wass Rally it was found that an enquiry made by Mr Haygarth in car no 59 was not handled properly and that passage Control 2 was off reference. Therefore, all penalties at this control were to be deleted and fresh provisional results issued. The Rippon Motor Sports Club were ordered to pay £50 costs. On the Welsh Border Rally the tribunal found that a protest had not been properly heard by the Stewards, and so it annulled their decision returning the protest fee. They found that a hairpin on stage 14 had not been properly blocked according to RAC regulations, so the stage has been cancelled and deleted from the results. The appeal fee was refunded and the Welsh Border CC ordered to pay £25 towards costs.

● The unlikely combination of Southern Gas, Shaw Taylor and Jean Denton will be joining forces this winter to put on a series of motor sport evenings for motor clubs in the south called the Southern Gas Special Stages. Included in the entertainment will be a motoring mastermind quiz and special ladies competition. Tickets for the evenings will be 25p each, obtainable from Iain Sutherland, Senior Public Relations Officer, Southern Gas, 80 St Marys Road, Southampton. The dates for the shows are November 29 at the South Parade Pier, Southsea; December 5 at the Town Hall, Bournemouth; December 6 at the Maltings Great Hall, Farnham; December 13 at the Emperor Ballroom, Cowley, Oxford; and December 19 at the Turner Sims Theatre, University, Southampton.

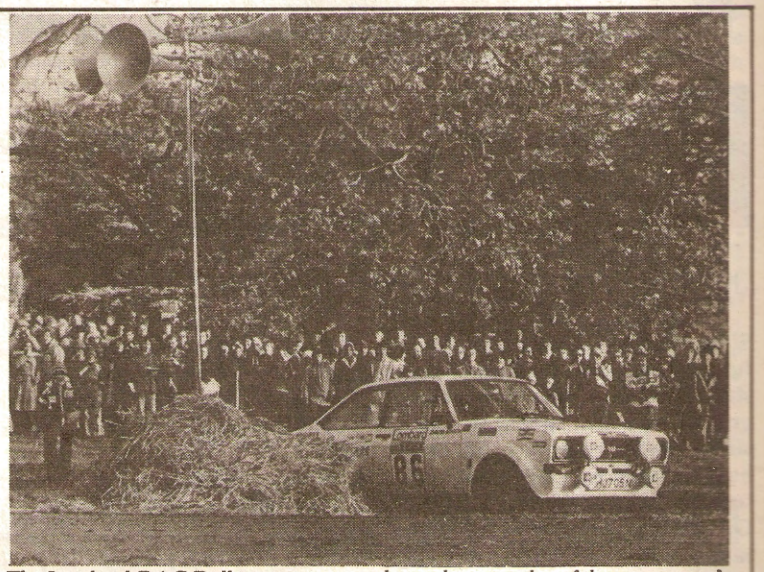
● One of the most unpleasant rallies upon which to marshal this year was the Wyedean Stages, and the organisers, the Forest of Dean Motor Club, are anxious to show their appreciation to those who braved the elements. They are, therefore, having a special medal made for all those marshals who turned out, and they hope that these will be available early in 1978. Joint Clerks of the Course for the event, Philip Turley and John Thurston, who work so very hard for the event, are also anxious to express their own thanks for all the marshals who stood out in the rain all day.

● Regulations are now available for the '78 Benson and Hedges Circuit of Ireland which takes place on 24/28th March. All enquiries to Ulster Automobile Club Ltd, 3 Botanic Avenue, Belfast. Phone: 0232-618353.



Grand Prix driver Jody Scheckter is to go rallying for the first time . . . in his home country of South Africa. Co-driven by fellow-countryman Stuart Pegg, who sat beside Roger Clark on the RAC, Scheckter will contest the Tour of South Africa in the first week of December driving, we understand, a Ford Escort.

● Following on from the recent announcement concerning their rally rescue vehicle, the progressive Sixty & Worcs MC intend to form a marshalling unit to back-up the vehicle. Their aim is to buy sufficient fire extinguishers to be able to man at least a five mile stage with an extinguisher and trained marshal at half-mile intervals. Anyone wishing to consider donations should get in contact with Roger Chedgzoy at Worcester 421100 (evenings).



The Lombard RAC Rally presents many hazards, a number of them man-made. In Blenheim Park on Sunday morning, drivers who did not quite make the hairpin, had the commentator's speakers to contend with. Here, Hans Gustavsson (above) and Christa Herrmann tackle them from different sides.





René Arnoux, runner-up in 1976, went one better this year, wins at Silverstone, Pau and Nogaro clinching the European title for France yet again.

René and Renault

JEFF HUTCHINSON reviews a super-competitive season of Formula 2 in Europe.

Since the establishment by the FIA of a fully fledged international status championship ten years ago, Formula 2 has steadily grown into indisputably Europe's leading single-seater category outside Formula 1. It has become exactly what was intended: a training and proving ground for would-be Grand Prix drivers. This is where the new talent gets its chance to compete on level terms with established GP stardom.

Its success as a formula in its own right and as a breeding gound for new GP drivers speaks for itself. Currently Formula 2 enjoys oversubscribed entries for every race, top-line equipment, and ultra-close competition with plenty of works support and good crowd attendances. Nine out of ten of the GP drivers racing today have come up through F2.

A good percentage of those drivers past and present—names like Jean-Pierre Beltoise, the late François Cevert, Johnny Servoz-Gavin, Jean-Pierre Jabouille, Patrick Depailler, Jacques Laffite, Henri Pescarolo, Patrick Tambay and this year's European F2 Champion, René Arnoux, are all French. And, like the formula itself, they owe much of their success to a common influence: Elf petroleum.

Elf is a name which, over the past ten years, has become synonymous with F2. No review of the formula without specific reference to the company's effort would be complete, such is their influence over the championship and its results to date. Elf were influential in getting the current six-cylinder engine rules pushed through two years ago and this, contrary to popular opinion at the time, has made F2 more competitive and technically interesting than ever before.

Through their direct sponsorship of Formule Renault (and more recently Super Renault in Europe) and of drivers in those championships, Elf have harvested an annual crop of fresh driving talent who, driving for Elf-backed teams, have virtually dominated the F2 championship in recent years, and have set the standards for which every other team has aimed. Less well-known aspects of Elf's influence over the success of F2 include the promotion of the formula as a whole, and in particular the filming of every race as a free service to any television station throughout the world which cares to take a copy. Also, from the technical point of view, Renault Gordini would not have developed their CH1B V6 engine without Elf backing, and consequently the Elf-Renault turbo F1 project, using essentially the same motor, would not have happened.

Naturally, Elf do what they do for the publicity they receive, but their involvement in the sport is carefully planned to put back more into the sport than they ever take out. This is objective sponsorship at its best.

This year sees an end to what one could call the Elf 'Master-Plan' in F2, a plan to put French drivers at the top, taken there by French cars powered by French engines, and with French team managers directing the operation. They have been successful on every count. Last year, Jean-Pierre Jabouille won the F2 title for the Jean Sage managed Elf-Renault F2 team, and this year, René Arnoux was the series winner for the Hughes de Chaunac managed Martini team. In 1978, Martini will be following Sage and the Elf team into Formula 1, where Elf hope to mount the same operation with the same results.

It is the end of and era of F2, but the French have left behind an example which others (hopefully British) might follow, and the motor racing has never been better.

While this year's results might show René Arnoux a clear championship winner, having led the points table from the first to the last of the championship's 13 races, his title was a hard-earned one, both by himself and the whole Elf-Martini team. Having taken the runner-up spot last year, he and the team started out firm favourites for the title this season but, unlike last year, it was not an exclusively French battle but a really open affair. There have never been so many different engines and chassis so closely matched, each of them scoring at least one victory throughout the season. It was the most consistent team and the most consistent driver that came out on top, and in the main the end-of-season points totals are a fair gauge of the way it really was.

The Martini men, 29-year-old René Arnoux and his 25-year-old team-mate Didier Pironi, both successive champion graduates of Formule Renault in 1973/74 and then Formule Renault Europe 1975/76, might have been the only two Frenchmen seriously contesting the championship, but by the end of the season they had first and third places in the top ten points scorers, among whom there were six different nationalities.

Arnoux, a short, shy, Frenchman with a down-to-earth character typical of the mountain people of his native Grenoble, fought his way to the top the hard way, first as a mechanic and then as a driver. His shyness off the track is opposite to his hard aggressive driving style on the track, a style developed to a fine degree by the close knock-for-knock racing of Formule Renault. In 1976 there were several occasions when his natural instincts got the better of his common sense. When his mistakes cost him dearly by the end of the season, losing the title by just one point to Jabouille, he must have spent the winter thinking long and hard about not making the same sort of mistakes this year. It was a much more circumspect Arnoux who drove in the races this year, but for a first-corner incident at Misano where, with the championship in the balance and after a bad start, the sight of a nice flat expanse of grass over which to cut the first corner and gain several places proved too much of a temptation. He crashed into another car on rejoining the track, putting himself and two others out of the race. It was the only blot on what was otherwise a clean copybook. Two other start-line crashes which put him out of the races at Rouen and Thruxton were not his fault, while a holed oil radiator at Vallelunga and a gearbox problem in Mugello were the only other occasions on which he failed to finish in the points. When he did finish, wins at Silverstone, Pau, Nogaro and another nine points behind Jochen Mass at Hockenheim helped him home to a comfortable title which he clinched at Estoril, the penultimate round of the championship, with a second place behind his team-mate Pironi.

This was Pironi's only win of the season, but it was nevertheless an impressive first season for him. His results were spoiled by mechanical problems, although he still managed to finish the same number of races as Arnoux (eight) and, like him, finish in the top six every time. Two engine and two gearbox failures caused his retirement on four occasions, while a bumping session with Bruno Giacomelli at Thruxton caused the other.

Unlike Arnoux, Pironi has all the *savoir faire* off the track that one would expect of the son of a wealthy Parisian building contractor. He has the build of a sportsman and the manner of somebody who is used to doing everything well. He takes failure with a shrug of the shoulders and success the same way, with a smile thrown in. On the track he also has an aggressive style and a maturity which his smooth baby face and 25 years help to disguise.

The 'man' who came closest to beating the French national team was the 19-year-old Italian/American Eddie Cheever. Ron Dennis's Project Four racing team ran a pair of Ron Tauranac's Ralt chassis for Cheever and a third car for the Brazilian Ingo Hoffman, who finished joint seventh in the placings.

If you look at Cheever's track record this season it is, to say the least, erratic. He scored a fine, well-judged victory at Rouen and another, perhaps even finer, maximum nine points following close on the tail of Jochen Mass's works March at the Nürburgring, two of the toughest tracks on this year's championship trail. At Misano he went from a lowly 18th on the grid to finish a fine second overall, while at Enna he threw away a certain win trying to take the second heat victory when he already had the aggregate lead by a comfortable margin. Another mistake passing a slow backmarker at Mugello cost him another good placing, as did a minute's penalty at the opening race at Silverstone when he got the start confused, and a spin while leading the next race at Thruxton.

Taken on its own, his record could come in for a lot of justifiable criticism, but taking into account his age and his lack of experience he did a great job coming in second place, two points clear of Pironi despite missing the final round at Donington because of an injured hand caused in a Group 5 BMW crash a week before. Of the eight races he finished, he only failed to score points once, while a driveshaft breakage was his only mechanical failure of the season, which is its own testimony to the Dennis team's ability. Eddie was backed up by works Rosche engines from BMW, Cheever being, of course, a member of the BMW Junior Team.

Perhaps wisely, Cheever has decided to spend another season in F2, staying on with Ron Dennis who also acts as his personal manager. With a season of good experience already under his belt and another year on, Cheever (who with his father, his constant companion, shares a deep concern for animals to the point of being a vegetarian) will be one of the favourites for the 1978 F2 title, and could quite possibly become the youngest ever World Champion.

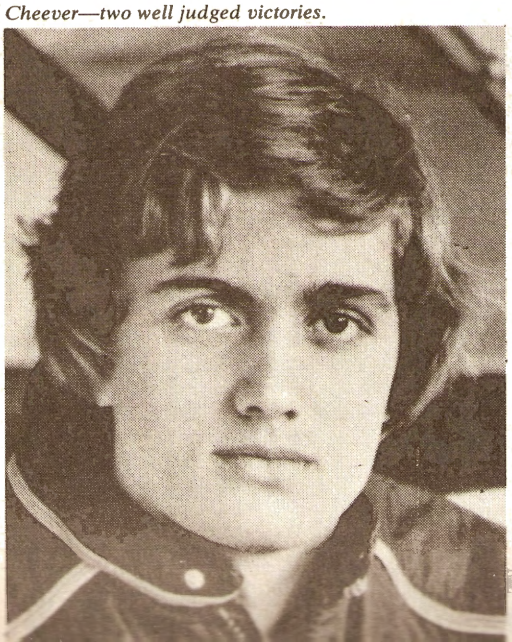
Ingo Hoffman, the blond, quitely spoken Brazilian who raced alongside Cheever this year, did not show the 'star' potential of his team-mate, but nevertheless drove some good races, three consecutive third places at Nogaro, Enna and Misano being his best results. His early season performances were not helped by an engine installation problem, giving him less power from his Heini Mader built BMWs than he should have been getting. He blotted his copybook by causing the chain reaction accident at the start of the Rouen race, although as it happened this helped to pave the way to Cheever's victory and fired up Hoffman enough to set fastest lap and climb from 16th to fifth place by the finish, one of his best drives of the season. With the right motivation Hoffman could also be a winner, but his worst enemy appears to be himself, for when things do not go well for him he makes matters worse by worrying too much.

There was a strong Italian challenge for the F2 crown this year, jointly led by Shadow F1 driver Riccardo Patrese, driving the quasi-works Chevron-BMW run by the Italian Chevron importer Pino Trivellato, and by Bruno Giacomelli driving the works March-BMW. Although Giacomelli and Patrese tied for fourth place in the overall points placings, it was Giacomelli who had the better season in terms of wins, scoring two victories at his home Mugello and Vallelunga tracks with the March 772P chassis, and a third runaway win at the final race at Donington with next year's prototype March 782. Of all the driver/chassis combinations, Bruno was perhaps the quickest, his prototype 772P (based on the lighter, more streamlined Atlantic chassis) proving to be much quicker than the regular customer 772s, and with Robin Herd present at most of the F2 races the car was usually at its best. But a bad finishing record, either because of mechanical or 'brain' failures, saw him finish only five out of the season's 13 races, his three wins backed up by a fourth and fifth at Nogaro and the 'Ring. His season got off to a bad start with

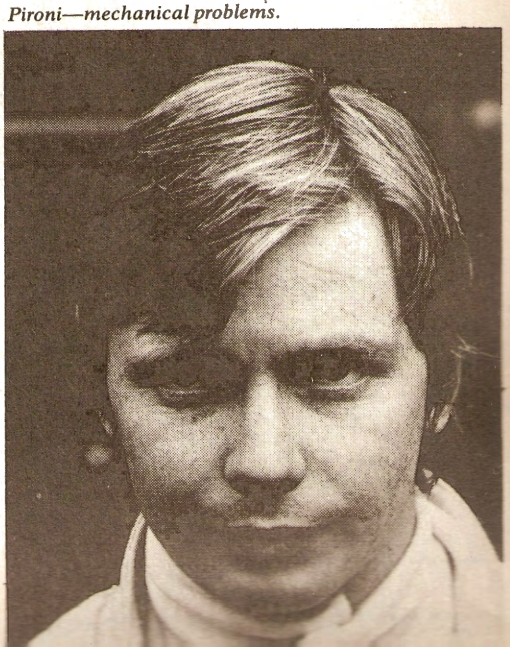
Arnoux—shy, down-to-earth Frenchman.



Cheever—two well judged victories.



Pironi—mechanical problems.



EUROPEAN FORMULA 2 CHAMPIONSHIP 1977

Position	Driver	Nat.	Car	Mar 06 Silverstone	Apr 11 Thruxton	Apr 17 Hockenheim	May 01 Nürburgring	May 15 Vallelunga	May 30 Pau	Jun 19 Mugello	Jun 26 Rouen-les-Essarts	Jul 10 Nogaro	Jul 24 Enna	Aug 07 Misano	Oct 02 Estoril	Oct 30 Donington	Total points
1	René Arnoux	F	Martini-Renault MK22	1	R	2	5	R	1	R	R	1	2	R	2	6	52
2	Eddie Cheever	USA	Ralt-BMW RT1	7	2	16	2	3	R	R	1	5	13	2	3	—	40
3	Didier Pironi	F	Martini-Renault MK22	R	R	R	4	2	2	R	3	R	4	5	1	3	38
4	Riccardo Patrese	I	Chevron-BMW B35	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
			Chevron-BMW B40	—	5	3	R	8	3	2	2	2	R	17	6	—	
			Chevron-BMW B40/42	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	R	32
	Bruno Giacomelli	I	March-Hart 772	R	R	14	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
			March-BMW 772	—	—	—	—	1	R	1	R	4	7	10	14	—	
			March-BMW 772P/782	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	32
6	Keijo Rosberg	SF	Chevron-Hart B35	R	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
			Chevron-Hart B40	—	R	8	3	12	11	R	—	R	1	—	4	2	25
7	Alberto Colombo	I	March-BMW 772	5	4	6	11	5	4	3	6	6	15	18	13	13	18
	Ingo Hoffman	BR	Ralt-BMW RT1	4	R	R	7	R	8	9	5	3	3	3	15	R	18
9	Alessandro Pesenti-Rossi	I	March-Hart 772	—	DNQ	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
			March-BMW 772	—	—	4	17	4	R	4	14	R	11	4	—	—	13
10	Brian Henton	GB	Boxer-Hart PR276	DNQ	1	5	9	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
			Chevron-Hart B40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	12
11	Lamberto Leoni	I	Ralt-Ferrari Dino RT1	—	R	DNQ	—	R	DNQ	7	DNQ	9	—	—	—	—	
			Chevron-Ferrari Dino B40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	1	9	—	9
12	Ray Mallock	GB	Chevron-Hart B40	2	R	9	—	—	—	11	—	R	—	—	—	—	
			Chevron-Swindon BDX B35	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	DNQ	6
13	Marc Surer	CH	March-BMW 772	9	7	17	—	7	—	5	R	7	—	—	—	—	
			March-BMW 772P	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	5
14	Patrick Neve	B	March-BMW 772P	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4
	Alex Ribeiro	BR	March-BMW 772P	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	
			March-Hart 772	—	—	—	—	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
			Chevron-Hart B40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	—	—	DNQ	—	—	4
	Gaudenzio Mantova	I	March-BMW 762/772	—	—	DNS	—	10	5	14	R	R	5	R	—	—	4
17	Gianfranco Brancatelli	I	Ralt-Ferrari Dino RT1	DNS	R	—	—	13	R	8	4	R	R	R	DNQ	—	3
18	Derek Daly	IRL	Chevron-Hart B40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	—	
	Danny Sullivan	USA	Toj-BMW 202	—	—	DNQ	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
			Boxer-Hart PR276	—	—	—	—	—	—	12	DNQ	11	—	9	11	5	2
20	Hans Royer	A	Chevron-Hart B35	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
			March-Hart 762	—	—	—	—	—	—	R	—	—	—	—	—	—	
			Chevron-Hart B40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12	1
	Luciano Pavesi	I	Ralt-Hart RT1	—	—	—	—	6	—	R	—	—	—	R	—	—	1
	Ricardo Zunino	RA	March-Hart 772	—	9	—	14	11	6	R	10	R	R	14	DNQ	R	1
	Bernard de Dryver	B	March-Hart BDG 778	DNS	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
			March-BMW 778	—	R	10	R	9	DNQ	6	11	R	—	R	16	1	
	"Gianfranco" Trombetti	I	Chevron-BMW B35/40	—	R	R	—	DNQ	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
			March-BMW 762	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	DNQ	—	—	1
	Patrick Bardinon	F	March-BMW 772	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7	—	R	1
	Michel Leclere	F	Kauhsen-Renault 2J	R	R	R	—	R	R	DNS	DNQ	R	—	DNQ	10	—	
	Giancarlo Martini	I	Martini-Renault MK22	R	R	R	12	R	R	R	—	8	R	16	12	R	
	Klaus Ludwig	D	Kauhsen-Renault 2J	R	R	R	8	R	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
			Chevron-Hart B40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	R	
	Alo Lawler	IRL	Lola-Swindon BDX T462	DNS	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	DNQ	
	Freddy Kottulinsky	S	Ralt-BMW RT1	8	R	15	10	15	R	10	8	R	9	15	7	—	
	Norman Dickson	GB	March-BMW 772	10	R	21	15	—	DNQ	—	13	—	—	—	—	9	
	Bob Evans	GB	Wheatcroft-Hart R26	R	R	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	Wink Bancroft	USA	Chevron-Hart B40	R	8	13	18	DNQ	DNQ	R	DNQ	DNQ	14	DNQ	DNQ	—	
	Derek Cook	GB	Chevron-Smith BDG B27	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	Willi Deutsch	D	March-Hart 762	R	R	11	16	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	Iain McLaren	GB	Chevron-Swindon BDX B35	R	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	Valentino Musetti	GB	March-Swindon BDX 762	12	DNQ	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	Roberto Marazzi	I	Lola-Holbay Abarth T560	DNQ	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	Andy Sutcliffe	GB	March-Swindon BDX 762	—	DNQ	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	Jochen Mass	D	March-BMW 772P	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	Harald Ertl	A	Chevron-BMW B35	—	—	18	R	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	Jacques Laffite	F	Chevron-Hart B40	—	—	7	—	—	10	—	—	R	—	—	—	—	
	Hans-Joachim Stuck	D	Ralt-BMW RT1	—	—	R	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	Helmut Bross	D	Chevron-BMW B35/40	—	—	12	R	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	Laurent Ferrier	CH	March-BMW 732/742	—	—	DNQ	—	DNQ	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
			Chevron-ROC Chrysler B40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	R	—	
	Heinz Hagenbauer	D	Toj-BMW 201	—	—	DNQ	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	Gerd Biechteler	A	Toj-BMW 201	—	—	DNQ	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
			March-BMW 752	—	—	—	—	—	—	R	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	André Chevalley	CH	Chevron-BMW B35	—	—	DNQ	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	Clay Regazzoni	CH	Ralt-BMW RT1	—	—	—	R	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
			Chevron-Hart B40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	
	Alan Jones	AUS	Chevron-Hart B40	—	—	—	R	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	Markus Hötz	CH	March-BMW 762	—	—	—	R	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	Guy Edwards	GB	Chevron-Hart B40	—	—	—	13	DNQ	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	Roland Binder	D	Lola-BMW T450/460	—	—	—	R	—	—	—	—	—	—	DNQ	—	—	
	Maurizio Flammini	I	March-BMW742	—	—	—	—	R	—	R	—	—	10	DNQ	—	—	
			Chevron-Hart B40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	
	Xavier Lapeyre	F	Martini-BMW Mk19	—	—	—	—	DNQ	R	—	DNQ	12	R	DNQ	—	—	
	Patrick Tambay	F	Chevron-Hart B40	—	—	—	—	—	R	—	R	—	—	—	—	—	
	Michel Pignard	F	Chevron-ROC Chrysler B40	—	—	—	—	—	DNQ	—	DNQ	DNQ	—	—	DNQ	—	
	Lorenzo Niccolini	I	Chevron-BMW B35	—	—	—	—	—	—	R	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	Gregg Young	USA	Chevron-Hart B40	—	—	—	—	—	—	13	—	—	12	—	—	—	
	"Gimax"	I	March-BMW 752	—	—	—	—	—	—	15	—	—	—	DNQ	—	—	
	Carlo Giorgio	I	March-Hart 742	—	—	—	—	—	—	R	—	—	R	DNQ	DNQ	DNQ	
	Guido Pardini	I	March-Lancia Brambilla 752	—	—	—	—	—	—	R	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	José Dolhem	F	Kauhsen-Renault 2J	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	R	—	—	—	—	—	
	Jean-Pierre Jaussaud	F	Chevron-ROC Chrysler B40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12	DNQ	—	—	—	—	
	Pierre Maublanc	F	March-BMW 772	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	DNQ	—	—	DNQ	—	DNQ	
	Alain Prôst	F	Kauhsen-Renault 2J	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10	—	—	R	—	
	Jimmy Mieusset	F	Martini-BMW Mk19	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	DNQ	—	—	—	—	
	Francy Jerancic	YU	Surtees-Hart BDA TS15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	DNQ	DNQ	—	—	
	Arturo Merzario	I	Chevron-Hart B40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13	—	—	
	Elio de Angelis	I	Ralt-Ferrari Dino RT1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	R	10	
	Vittorio Brambilla	I	Kauhsen-Renault 2J	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11	—	—	
	Charly Kiser	CH	Osella-BMW PA2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	DNQ	—	—	
	Stanislao Sterzel	YU	March-BMW 742	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	DNQ	—	—	
	Ariel Bakst	RS	Ralt-BMW RT1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	DNQ	DNQ	
	José da Silva	P	Kauhsen-Renault 2J	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	DNQ	—	
	Marc Sourd	F	Martini-BMW Mk19	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	16	17	
	Eje Elgh	S	Chevron-Hart B40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	—	
	Tiff Needell	GB	Chevron-Hart B40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	R	
	Piercarlo Ghinzani	I	March-BMW 772	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11	
	Divina Galica	GB	Chevron-Swindon BDX B40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15	
	Kim Mather	GB	Chevron-Richardson BDX B35D	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14	
	Adrian Russell	GB	March-Swindon BDX 762	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	DNQ	

This table shows the officially classified positions of every driver who competed in the European Formula 2 Championships in 1977.

René and Renault

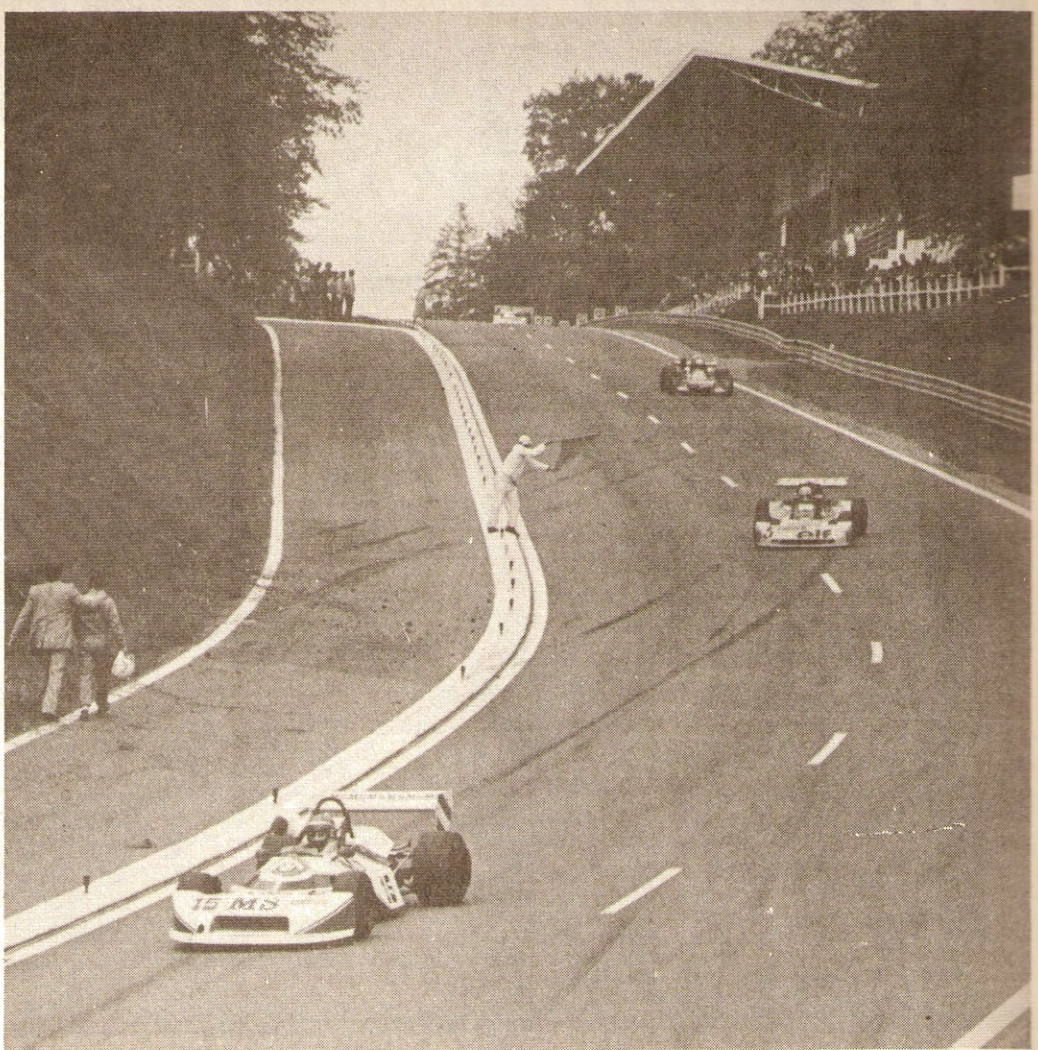
continued

clutch, throttle cable and then engine failures putting him out of the first three races, while comings-together with Jacques Laffite at Pau and with Pironi at Estoril did not help his points total, either. He also got a reputation as a crasher mid-season when he managed almost to wreck his car in practice at Vallelunga, for which he made up by winning the race, while at the very next race he badly shunted the brand new replacement car in the opening laps of practice.

However, if his end-of-season performance at Donington is anything to go by, when the Scaini-backed March led from start to finish and Bruno never put a wheel out of place, he should be another joint favourite to win the title next year. The 782, which features a modified stiffer monocoque with front-mounted radiators, was very fast indeed, and could well be the mount chosen by Dennis for Cheever next year, which should make it an even more interesting match for the title.

Patrese, considering the form he has shown in F1 with Shadow, could only be described as disappointing in F2 this year. He was constantly among the front runners with his Chevron-BMW, which was treated by Chevron as the works development car, but he failed to score a single win (other than the non-championship Suzuka race right at the end of the season). He was often involved in bumping sessions, particularly at Misano where he pushed off Arturo Merzario's Chevron and later Sandro Pesenti-Rossi's March. Pole position at a stunning 7m 15.3s at the Nürburgring was overshadowed by a crash in practice and then another in the race. Mechanical failures saw him fall out of four more races, otherwise he finished in the points every time he finished, including four second places but no elusive win. One sometimes got the feeling that, with a steady F1 drive already under his belt, he put more effort into that than he did his F2 programme, especially towards the end of the season when the title was already out of his grasp.

Sixth place in the series went to the Finn Keijo Rosberg, star driver for American Chevron importer Fred Opert, who ran two and often three Hart powered cars at every F2 event this year. Rosberg scored a fine win at Enna and two good second placings at the Nürburgring and Donington, but other than that it was a sparse year, with only a fourth and sixth place to add to his score. When, by round 8 of the championship, 'Keke' had amassed no more than seven points, he chose to miss two other rounds at Rouen and Misano in order to concentrate on his Formula Atlantic commitments in Canada, where he was also driving for Opert.



Cheever leads Pironi past the debris on the second lap at Rouen. Arnoux walks disconsolately back to the pits after his crash with Tambay.

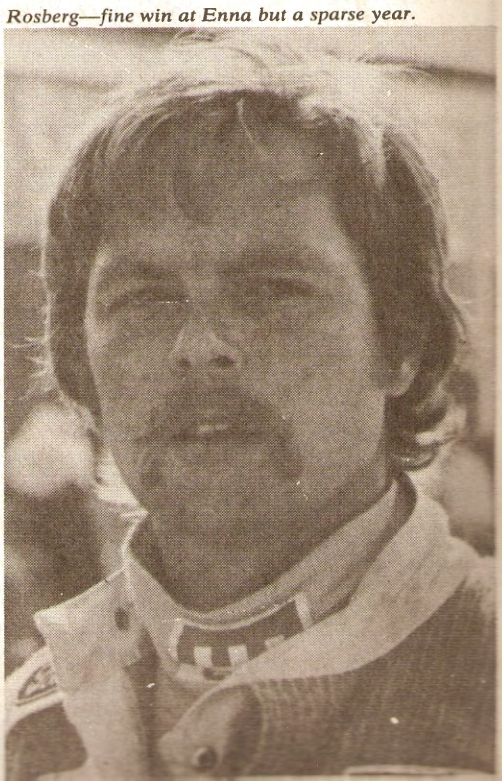
Patrese—constantly a front runner.

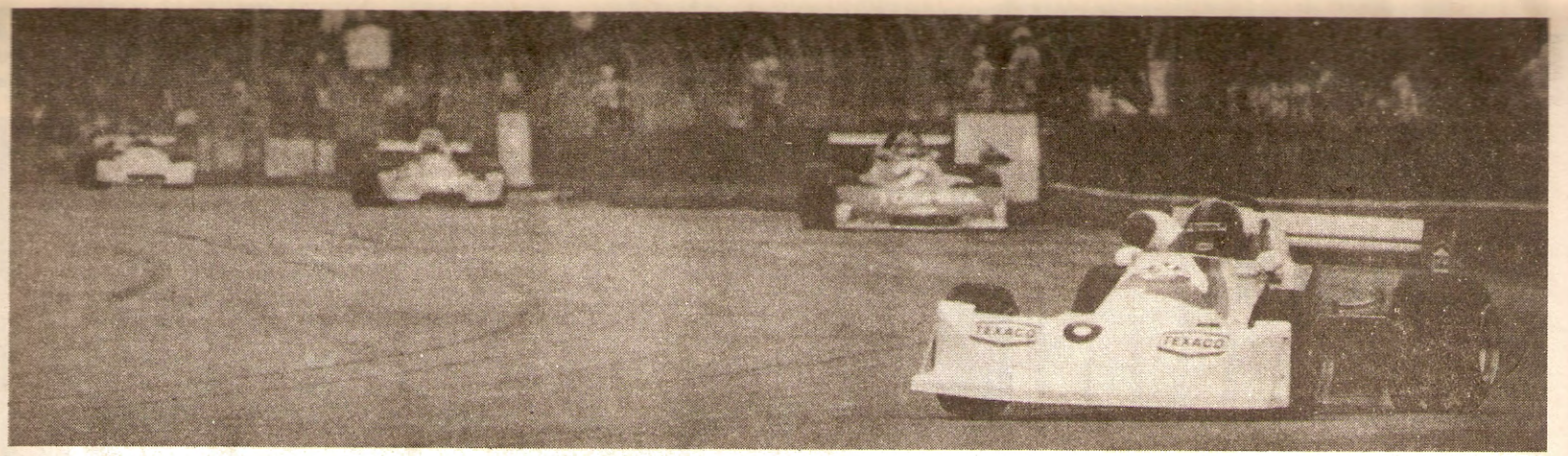


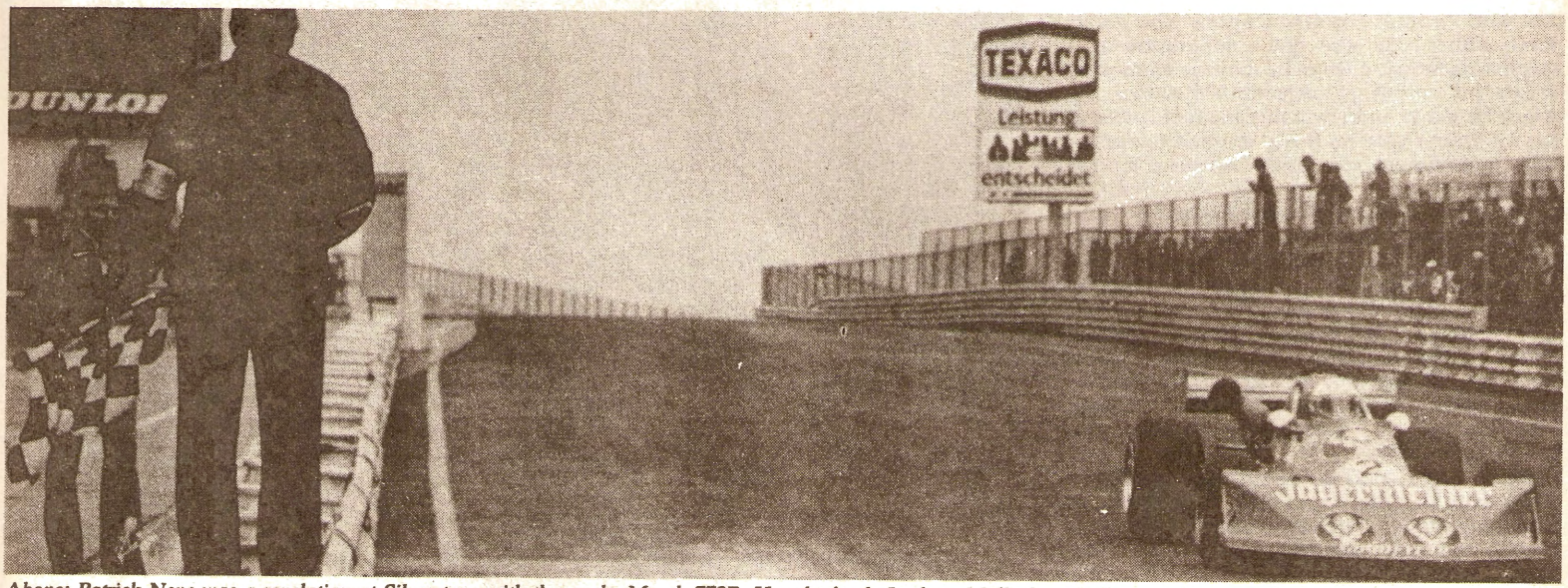
Giacomelli—runaway win at Donington.



Rosberg—fine win at Enna but a sparse year.







Above: Patrick Neve was a revelation at Silverstone with the works March 772P. Here he leads Leclere, Mallock and Cheever. Below: Jochen Mass crosses the line for his second German win in two races at Nurburgring.

FORMULA 2 RESULTS 1977

VENUE	FIRST	SECOND	THIRD	FOURTH	FIFTH	SIXTH
Mar 06 Silverstone	René Arnoux (Martini-Renault MK22)	Ray Mallock (Chevron-Hart B40)	Patrick Neve (March-BMW 772P)	Ingo Hoffman (Ralt-BMW RT1)	Alberto Colombo (March-BMW 772)	Riccardo Patrese (Chevron-BMW B35)
Apr 11 Thruxton	Brian Henton (Boxer-Hart PR276)	Eddie Cheever (Ralt-BMW RT1)	Alex Ribeiro (March-BMW 772P)	Alberto Colombo (March-BMW 772)	Riccardo Patrese (Chevron-BMW B40)	Hans Royer (Chevron-Hart B35)
Apr 17 Hockenheim	Jochen Mass* (March-BMW 772P)	René Arnoux (Martini-Renault MK22)	Riccardo Patrese (Chevron-BMW B40)	Alessandro Pesenti-Rosi (March-BMW 772)	Brian Henton (Boxer-Hart PR276)	Alberto Colombo (March-BMW 772)
May 01 Nurburgring	Jochen Mass* (March-BMW 772P)	Eddie Cheever (Ralt-BMW RT1)	Keijo Rosberg (Chevron-Hart B40)	Didier Pironi (Martini-Renault MK22)	René Arnoux (Martini-Renault MK22)	Bruno Giacomelli (March-Hart 772)
May 15 Vallelunga	Bruno Giacomelli (March-BMW 772P)	Didier Pironi (Martini-Renault MK22)	Eddie Cheever (Ralt-BMW RT1)	Alessandro Pesenti-Rossi (March-BMW 772)	Alberto Colombo (March-BMW 772)	Luciano Pavesi (Ralt-Hart RT1)
May 30 Pau	René Arnoux (Martini-Renault MK22)	Didier Pironi (Martini-Renault MK22)	Riccardo Patrese (Chevron-BMW B40)	Alberto Colombo (March-BMW 772)	Gaudenzio Mantova (March-BMW 762/772)	Ricardo Zunino (March-Hart 772)
Jun 19 Mugello	Bruno Giacomelli (March-BMW 772P)	Riccardo Patrese (Chevron-BMW B40)	Alberto Colombo (March-BMW 772)	Alessandro Pesenti-Rosi (March-BMW 772)	Marc Surer (March-BMW 772)	Bernard de Dryver (March-BMW 778)
Jun 26 Rouen	Eddie Cheever (Ralt-BMW RT1)	Riccardo Patrese (Chevron-BMW B40)	Didier Pironi (Martini-Renault MK22)	Gianfranco Brancatelli (Ralt-Ferrari Dino RT1)	Ingo Hoffman (Ralt-BMW RT1)	Alberto Colombo (March-BMW 772)
Jul 10 Nogaro	René Arnoux (Martini-Renault MK22)	Riccardo Patrese (Chevron-BMW B40)	Ingo Hoffman (Ralt-BMW RT1)	Bruno Giacomelli (March-BMW 772P)	Eddie Cheever (Ralt-BMW RT1)	Alberto Colombo (March-BMW 772)
Jul 24 Enna	Keijo Rosberg (Chevron-Hart B40)	René Arnoux (Martini-Renault MK22)	Ingo Hoffman (Ralt-BMW RT1)	Didier Pironi (Martini-Renault MK22)	Gaudenizio Mantova (March-BMW 762/772)	"Gianfranco" (March-BMW 762)
Aug 07 Misano-Adriatico	Lamberto Leoni (Chevron-Ferrari Dino B40)	Eddie Cheever (Ralt-BMW RT1)	Ingo Hoffman (Ralt-BMW RT1)	Alessandro Pesenti-Rossi (March-BMW 772)	Didier Pironi (Martini-Renault MK22)	Clay Regazzoni* (Chevron-Hart B40)
Oct 02 Estoril	Didier Pironi (Martini-Renault MK22)	René Arnoux (Martini-Renault MK22)	Eddie Cheever (Ralt-BMW RT1)	Keijo Rosberg (Chevron-Hart B40)	Derek Daly (Chevron-Hart B40)	Riccardo Patrese (Chevron-BMW B40)
Oct 30 Donington	Bruno Giacomelli (March-BMW 772P/782)	Keijo Rosberg (Chevron-BMW B40)	Didier Pironi (Martini-Renault MK22)	Marc Surer (March-BMW 772P)	Danny Sullivan (Boxer-Hart PR276)	René Arnoux (Martini-Renault MK22)

*Graded drivers ineligible for points.

René and Renault

continued

The only other drivers to feature with any sort of regularity in the points where the Italian AFMP Euroracing pairing of Alberto Colombo and Alessandro Pesenti-Rossi, running a pair of March-BMWs. What had started off as the Italian half of a four-car, semi-works customer team set up by Sandro Angeleri soon ran into problems when Angeleri disappeared from sight because of personal problems, and money became short to run the cars. Some sponsorship was found from Sarea, manufacturers of TV parts, but they pulled out before the end of the season and Pesenti-Rossi did not appear in the final two races. Colombo struggled on with remarkable consistency for the whole season, ending up joint seventh in the points with Hoffman, while Pesenti-Rossi still managed to end up ninth, his best placing of the year (like Colombo's) being a third. Both Pesenti-Rossi and Colombo often showed good turns of speed, and Colombo an impressive reliability, with finishes in the points eight times during the season. Alberto's placings would almost certainly have been better had the team, managed by Paulo Pavanello, had more money to invest in engines and testing time, like the other front runners.

Another team which would also have benefited considerably from in injection of cash was Brian Lewis's little Boxer-Hart outfit, which started off the season in fine style with a win at Thruxton thanks to Brian Henton. He followed that up with a fourth place at Hockenheim, but at the next race, at the 'Ring, Henton had a difficult time with the Boxer (which was being run on a small budget with limited, but enthusiastic, backing from Netherton & Worth), and Brian once again dropped out of the championship after a promising start; he did return at the final race at Donington, where he drove a 'borrowed' Chevron-Hart B40, but failed to finish in the points. Perhaps had Henton concentrated on a full season of F2 rather than F1 he would have been nearer his ultimate goal of a regular Grand Prix ride, but as Henton points out, "It's all a question of money. Believe it or not, it was cheaper to do F1 than to try to pay my own way in F2. In F1 the trade help is better, and it is easier to find some sponsorship. I was able to afford F1 more than I could F2!"

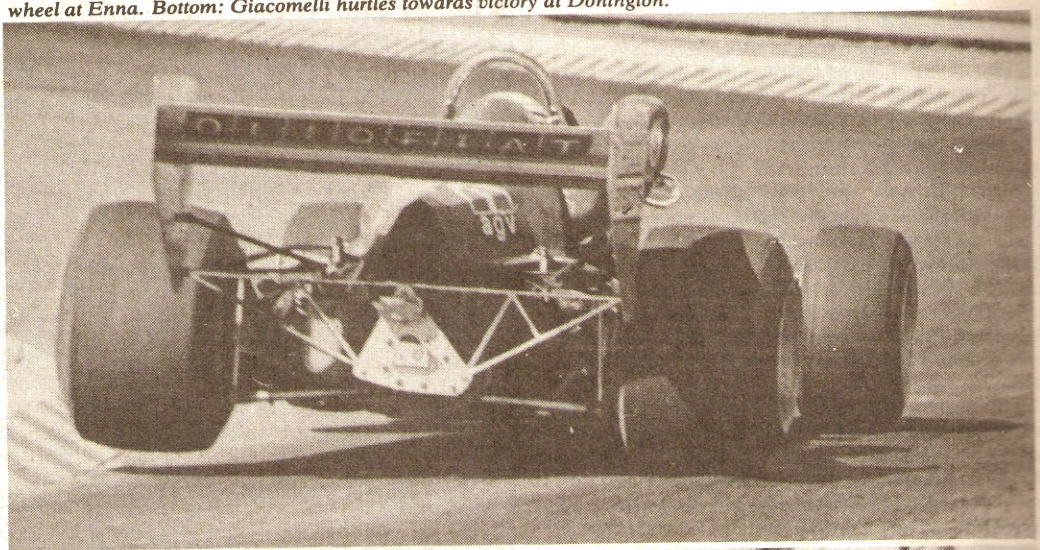
Despite his abbreviated season, Henton still ended up tenth in the Championship, the best-placed British driver in a formula that was once dominated by British teams and drivers and now, sadly, has no regular all-British entry. Lewis was forced to take on the talented young American Danny Sullivan, who was able to help out the ailing finances by attracting several small sponsors for the team. Sullivan made a good job of his limited resources, and put up his best performance in the final race of the season at Donington, where he scored his only points of the year with a charging fifth place.

The only other winning driver of the season was Italy's Lamberto Leoni who, after a disappointing season, trying to race the troublesome Minardi Scuderia Everest Ferrari-powered Ralts, finally gave Ferrari, himself and Trivellato their first victory driving the original Chevron-Ferrari development car at Misano. By that time, there was a revised oil pump system, lightweight titanium connecting rods, and a Ferrari-modified oil sump.

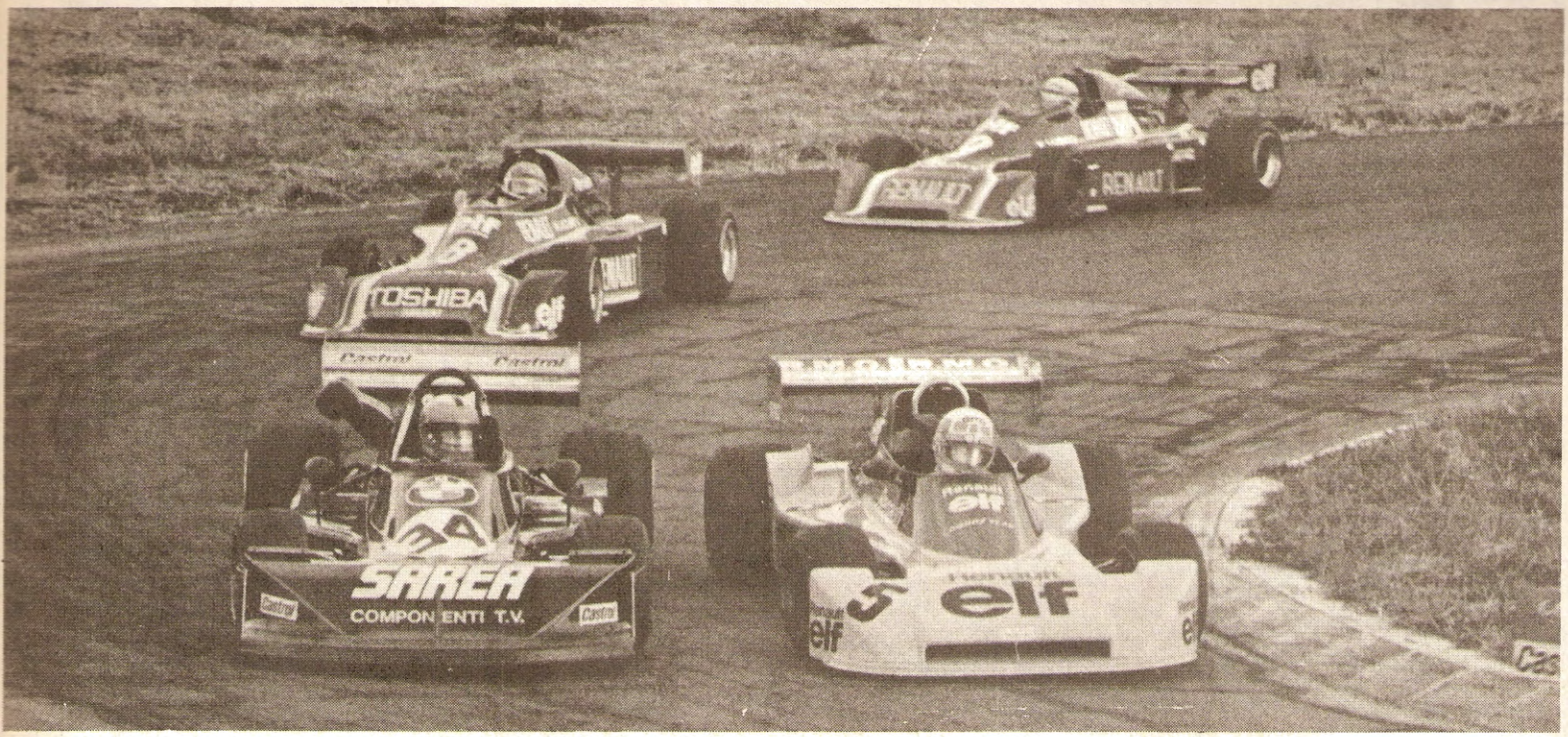
It was among these teams and drivers that the main battle for this year's title was fought, but there were also many other regular and 'guest'



Above: Ingo Hoffman holds off Pesenti-Rossi, Regazzoni and Brambilla at Misano. Below: Patrese cocks a wheel at Enna. Bottom: Giacomelli hurtles towards victory at Donington.







*Above: Pironi dives inside the consistent Colombo with the Kauhsens close behind. Below: Tambay drifts the ICI/*Newsweek *Chevron at Pau, where the F1 driver qualified the Ardmore car on pole position.*

René and Renault

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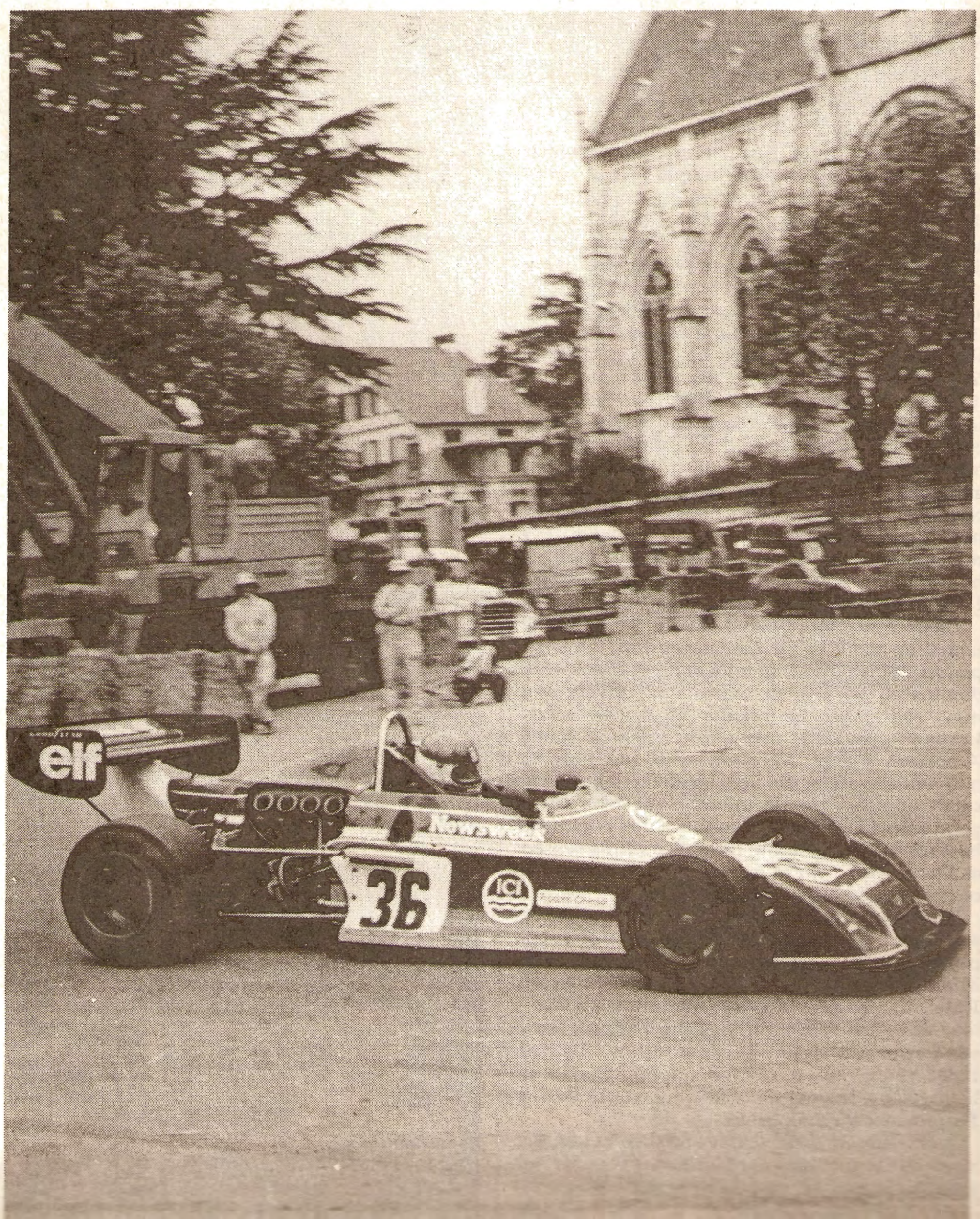
drivers who added further interest to the series. Formula 1 drivers like Clay Regazzoni, Arturo Merzario, Jochen Mass, Jacques Laffite, Patrick Tambay, Vittorio Brambilla and Alex Ribeiro helped to swell the entries at many of the races and provide an interesting challenge for the regular F2 runners.

Mass showed the way around his home Hockenheim and Nürburgring tracks, winning both races in the works March 772P, while Tambay took two rent-a-rides in Guy Edwards's ICI/*Newsweek* Chevron-Hart, taking pole position at Pau and a front row place at Rouen only to have both his only F2 races come to a dramatic end a few yards from the startline when he was involved in crashes.

The same Chevron was also shared by Ray Mallock, who scored his only placing of the season with a second at Silverstone, by Clay Regazzoni, who came in sixth at Misano, and by Henton at Donington. The car also gave F3 star Derek Daly his first taste of F2 at Estoril, where he showed that he is more than ready to take the next step up the ladder with a fine fifth place and fastest lap of the race.

Another F3 man who got a chance to show his talents in F2 was young Elio de Angelis, who made an equally impressive debut in a Ralt-Ferrari at Misano, when he led the race in convincing style at one stage before tyre problems spoiled his chances of a win. At Donington, things did not go so well for Elio following a pre-race testing crash in the Trivellato Chevron-Ferrari (the car with which Leoni had won). Patrick Neve got one ride in the works 772P March at the beginning of the season, and proved so impressive (he was all set for an easy win before a loose wheel nut dropped him back to third place) that it landed him an F1 contract with Frank Williams for the rest of the season.

Other regulars included the Belgian Bernard de Dryver, running all the races with the Gublemann/Gerard March 778 Atlantic car, which was converted to F2 with BMW power



De Dryver showed considerable improvement over his previous year's form, although he was still unable to show the sort of consistent speed needed to be a serious challenger for the points. Neither did the latest F2 driver from Argentina, Ricardo Zunino, who ran the season with a March-Hart looked after by Tony Harvey, who managed the operation following the collapse of the English half of the AFMP programme. Despite the fact that Zunino, like de Dryver, only managed to score a one solitary point all season, it was a good season for the likeable Argentine, who had never even driven a single-seater before. So close and numerous was the opposition at most of the races that even to qualify on a regular basis, as Zunino did, was a good effort.

BMW Junior Team driver Marc Surer of Switzerland showed a handy talent at the wheel of a March 772 at odd races throughout the season, and at the final race of the season got a ride in the works 772P prototype. He then showed why he has been included in next year's works team with a front-row practice time and fourth place in the race despite a bad start.

Luciano Pavesi managed to afford to do most of the Italian rounds of the championship with his shoestring budget Ralt-Hart operation, and he once again showed that (contrary to his slow, country-bumpkin appearance and advancing years) he can be extremely quick. Unfortunately, he has never had the chance to prove it in a well organised, well financed team with luxuries (for him) of things like spare engines and several sets of tyres.

Gianfranco Brancatelli was another driver whose talents were certainly understated by his results after a similarly miserable season with the Scuderia Everest Ralt-Ferraris, while Giancarlo Martini's efforts for the same team with a private Martini-Renault MK22 were no better. Martini's performances were often fast, but wild at the same time which usually ended up with a spin or a crash and no points at the end of the day. On two occasions, though, his was the fastest Renault-powered car in qualifying.

Fred Opert's second Chevron-Hart was the regular seat of the likeable American racer Wink Bancroft, but his season tells a disappointing story of non-qualifying at most of the races, Wink unable to come to grips with each unfamiliar circuit in the short time available for practice at most of the races.

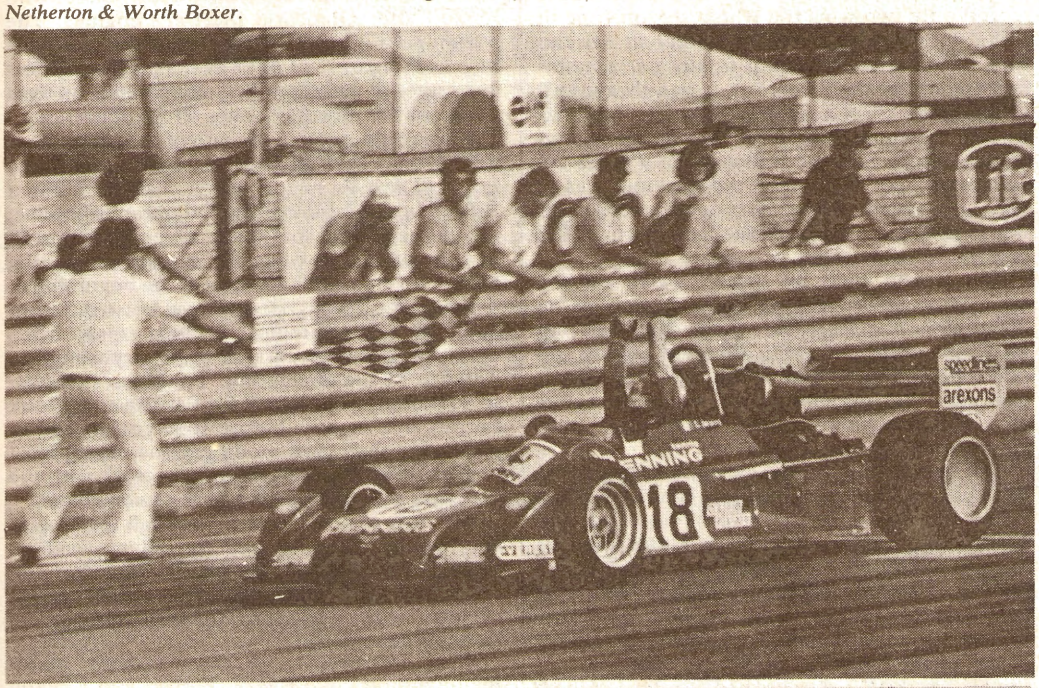
The ROC/Chrysler-powered Chevrons of the ROC racing team made only token appearances, the engine simply unable to cut the pace with the others. Gaudenzio Mantova put up some promising performances with his March-BMW, finishing twice in the points with fifths at Pau and Enna. Surprisingly, Maurizio Flammini, who featured so prominently with a works March in last year's championship, was hardly seen at all this year having lost his Scaini sponsorship to Giacomelli. He attempted a couple of races with an old March-BMW 742, but without the latest equipment and backing of the works BMW engines and mechanics he become a back-of-the-field runner, and was unable even to qualify at Misano.

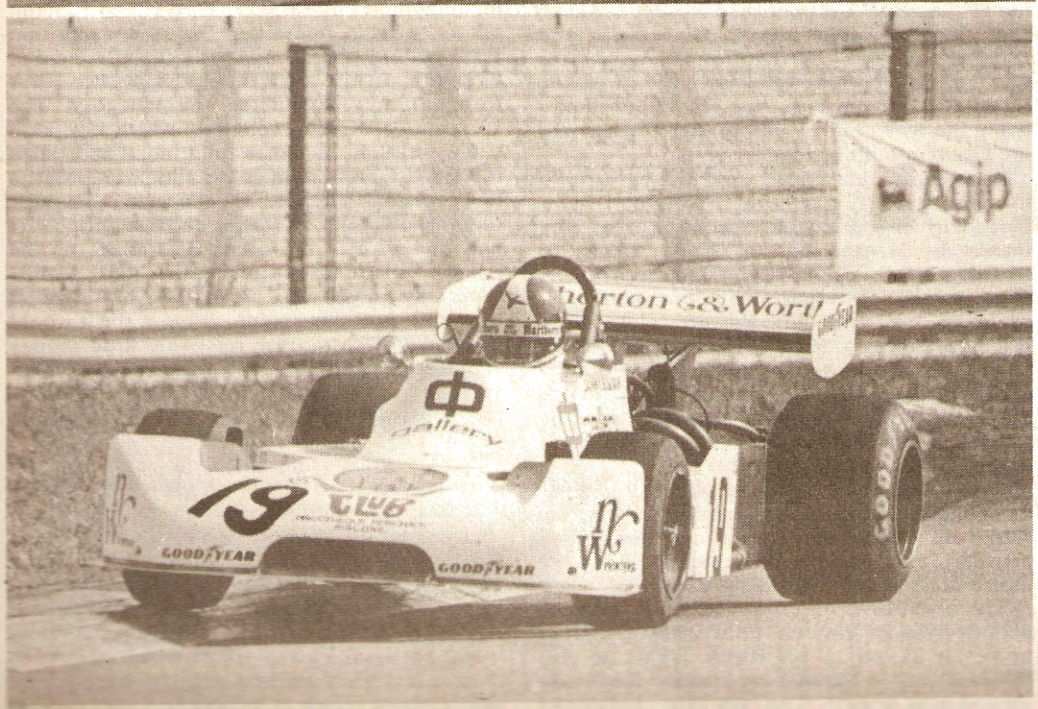
Another sad tale of fallen heroes concerns the Willi Kauhsen racing team, who bought out last year's championship-winning Elf-Renault 2J team including one of its drivers, Michel Leclere, who had finished fourth in last year's championship. One would have thought that with proven cars and a proven driver plus the additional talents of Klaus Ludwig, the Championship would have been plain sailing for the Kauhsen team. It wasn't.

As the season progressed, the team's competitiveness got worse and worse. Leclere constantly changed the cars in a bid to get them faster, but the lap times got slower and slower. Without Jabouille (who helped to design the original chassis) and the Alpine mechanics to look after them, the team was a shambles. The complicated chassis were a constant source of problems and reliability was poor. Leclere, for various reasons, managed to finish only one race all season, and then out of the points. Ludwig got out of the team by mid-season, having had enough, and put together his own deal for a Chevron-Hart which he brought out for the first time at Donington.

The only driver to ever get any sort of reasonable performance from the Kauhsen-Renaults all season was Vittorio Brambilla at Misano, by virtue of the fact that he got in the car and drove it without complaining—until in the race the brake pedal collapsed, that is!

Below: Lamberto Leoni scored the Ferrari engine's only win at Misano. Bottom: Sullivan uses the kerbs in the Netherton & Worth Boxer.





A difficult choice

Trying to make any sort of a choice between chassis or engines for this year's championship was remarkably difficult. March, Chevron, Ralt and Martini, the 'big four' chassis, and the BMW, Renault, Hart and Ferrari engines were all desperately close-matched.

Counting all the wins scored throughout the season, including those by graded drivers, March had the most successful chassis, although all their victories (Giacomelli's three and Mass's two) were with factory cars which bore little resemblance to the ones sold to March customers. Right from the start, the little streamlined 772P chassis, and the prototype for next year's 782 in which Giacomelli scored the final win of the season, proved to be far quicker than any of the wide-bodied customer 772 chassis. The 772P chassis, based on March's Formula Atlantic, and the eventual 778 production car, which was a stiffened and tidied up version of that with the radiators moved to the front, was perhaps the best of all the different chassis. No matter which driver—Giacomelli, Mass, Neve, Ribeiro or Surer—the works 772P was always well up the grid and well placed to win the race.

It was surprising that the 'customers' running March 772s did not have more to say on the subject of being regularly beaten by the works car, which they could not buy even if they had wanted to do so. Bernard de Dryver got around the problem by running a similar car converted by Bob Gerard, the proof of its advantage being that de Dryver, who was struggling to make the grids last year, was a regular runner in 1977 and more often than not ahead of the other 'normal' March drivers on the grid.

The Martini MK22 chassis, a lightened yet stronger development of Tico's previous year's MK19 chassis, was also successful, scoring four outright victories. But it proved much more of a job to dial in to the individual needs of each circuit. On fast circuits, but with some slower

The man from Nazareth

He won the Daytona 500 in 1967, and at Indy two years later. Following the two American classics came the first Grand Prix win, at Kyalami in 1971. But only this year has the world's greatest all-round driver achieved consistent Formula 1 success, and many consider him morally the 1977 World Champion. Mario Andretti talked things over with NIGEL ROEBUCK.



"I don't read the magazines myself", said Jody Scheckter at Monza, "but my wife does, and she read a bit out to me the other day. Why do you write so much about Andretti? Always it's Andretti, Andretti. . . ."

There are, I suppose, two main reasons for the amount of ink devoted to Mario in this season past. First, he and the John Player Lotus 78 have undeniably been the yardstick of the 1977 World Championship. And second, when you ask him a question, you tend to get an answer rather than a scowl and a monosyllabic grunt.

In fact, there are times when you would swear that Andretti and Bob Hope share the same team of scriptwriters. At Monte Carlo, the black car was understeering badly during practice, particularly at the Station Hairpin, where the ritzy, high-rolling Loews Hotel is to be found. The Balenciaga brigade, it appears, very nearly had themselves a surprise visitor. "Man, I'm not sayin' it's pushin', but every time around there, it feels like it wants to go into the lobby. . . ." Another driver would have said that the car was understeering a bit. And *that* is why Mario Andretti is quoted all the time. All right, it may be unrealistic to expect great doses of wit from men whose job is the driving of race cars, but Andretti's happy knack of combining the two guarantees that the John Player Team Lotus motorhome is invariably a journalist's first port of call.

As well as that, there is about Mario Andretti none of the boorishness apparently considered almost a prerequisite for superstars in any activity today. Tennis has its Jimmy Connors, and you have no need of me to tell you that racing also has its share of people like that. But Andretti made it years before the advent of the anti-hero. He is outspoken when he feels the occasion demands it, but sees no merit in being rude for the sake of it.

At Anderstorp, for example, several of the drivers attended a post-qualifying press conference. While James Hunt contented himself with giving facetious answers to an interviewer struggling with a language not his own, Mario did everything that was expected of him, giving straightforward replies, laced with humour, relaxed and unforced. It may have been a drag, probably was, but Andretti recognised that it was a part of the modern racing driver's life. OK, ten years ago, you didn't have to go through that sort of thing. Ten years ago, you didn't get telephone number retainers, either. You take the one, you should take the other. It's showbiz money, so provide the showbiz.

Andretti's position in Grand Prix racing this year has been an odd one. With more poles, fastest laps and wins than any other driver, he has emerged, finally, as the man to beat. In terms of total competitiveness, however, it is almost forgivable to regard him as a newcomer. As long ago as 1968 he made his Formula 1 debut for Lotus at Watkins Glen (taking the pole, no less!), and he has been in and out of European racing ever since, driving March, Ferrari, Parnelli and, finally, Lotus again. Throughout that time there were flashes of what he might achieve, odd moments of triumph, but somehow it seemed that real Grand Prix success would always elude him.

Part of the problem was his erstwhile unwillingness to reduce his commitments in the States. "Well, Formula 1 was always very strongly in the back of my mind", he says, "but, you know, when you've got a thing going like I had over there, it's difficult to quit. I was about ready to do it properly in the early 'seventies. In fact, I remember saying to Peter Revson that I really envied the hell out of him. He was just doing a couple of 500-milers in the States, and spending the rest of his time in Grand Prix

racing. That was exactly the programme I wanted".

The problem appeared to be resolved when Andretti signed a USAC contract with the Vel's Parnelli Jones team. Mario prevailed upon Parnelli and Vel (Miletich) to build up a Formula 1 car for him. After all, the team's resident designer was Maurice Phillippe, and when the Parnelli VPJ4 Formula 1 car appeared, at the end of 1974, it was very obviously a refined and updated version of another of Philippe's designs, the immortal Lotus 72. The car's initial form could hardly have been more promising, Mario qualifying third at Watkins Glen. There was every reason to feel optimistic about 1975, but the year in Europe was a total disaster, Andretti's one moment of glory coming at his beloved Barcelona, where he led for a long way.

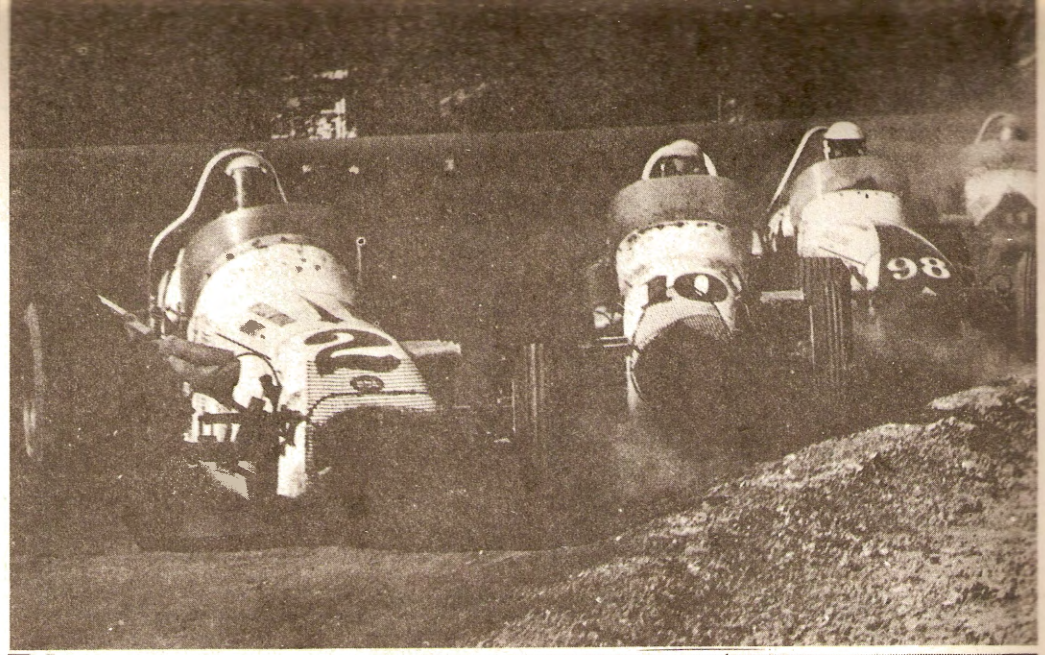
"I think that programme could really have got off the ground if there'd been as much enthusiasm on the other side of the water as there was in England", recalls Andretti. "I found myself the only one really pushin' to inject the fever that a programme needs. Vel had the intention to go with me, but neither of us got any psychological support from Parnelli. And when they didn't get the sponsorship the way they wanted it, they just used it as an excuse to pull out". His voice hardens: "The thing that upset me, they strung me along until the '76 season was well under way, when I'd had several good opportunities to go elsewhere which would have gotten them off the hook. But no, they strung me along because they wanted to do Long Beach, and after that they just put me out on the street. They expected that I would continue with their Indy programme, but there was just no way. And I just cut everything off with them".

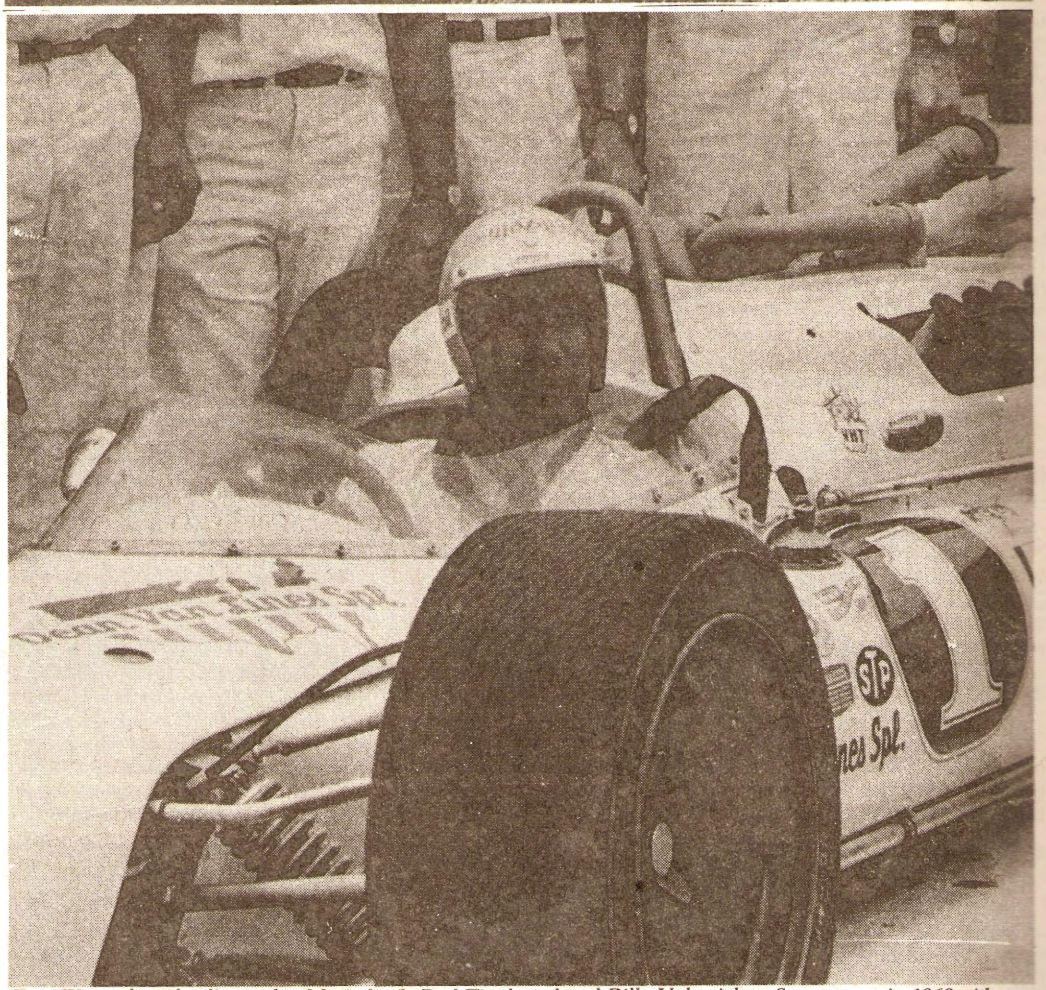
At the beginning of April 1976, therefore, Mario was looking for work, and he wasn't long finding it. Roger Penske got his name on a USAC contract, and for Formula 1 he finally came home to Lotus, this time to live rather than visit. "At the beginning of '76, I had a one-off drive for Lotus in Brazil, when Parnelli decided not to run. This was the first race for the 77 and, man, there are no words to describe how bad that car was. It was like a kart—you just couldn't get any precision at all".

After Interlagos, team leader Ronnie Peterson decided that he'd had enough and quit, an ironic move bearing in mind the negotiations of the past few weeks. And Mario went off to drive the Parnelli in its last two races, followed by a one-off drive for Frank Williams in the International Trophy at Silverstone. "Nilsson went really well in the 77 that day", Mario comments, "and it was obvious to me that they'd made quite a lot of progress with the car since Brazil. Chapman and I had a talk, and I decided to accept his offer. The thing is this: Colin builds cars that win. I'd always had tremendous faith in him, right back to '68, when I first drove for him. When we did the deal last year, he was down and I was down. It was a good place to start, I guess".

People close to Chapman are in no doubt at all that it is the presence and drive of Andretti which has brought back all Colin's old enthusiasm for racing. "I think there's no question that we work well together", Mario allows. "We get on fine, for one thing, and we seem to understand the way the other works and thinks. There's no emotional block between me and him—in fact, there's no emotion at all, which is just the way I like it. Perfect. It was a big factor in my decision to stay with the team for 1978. I drove the 78 at the end of last year, and knew right off it was going to be a fantastic car. I mean, it was better than the 77 *immediately*, much easier to drive, much more forgiving. And I'm confident that next year's car, relative to the competition, will be just as good".

Much of the taping for this story was done at Monza, at a time when Mario had the whole world on his back, when everyone who passed by had questions for him. Or, to be precise, one question: was he going to Ferrari? Was it not, after all, his spiritual home? He had driven for them before, so why not now?





Top: Weaned on the dirt tracks, Mario leads Bud Tinglestad and Billy Vukovich at Sacramento in 1968. Above: Preparing to qualify the Dean Van Lines USAC car at Indy in 1966. Below: Winning at the Brickyard for Andy Granatelli in 1969.





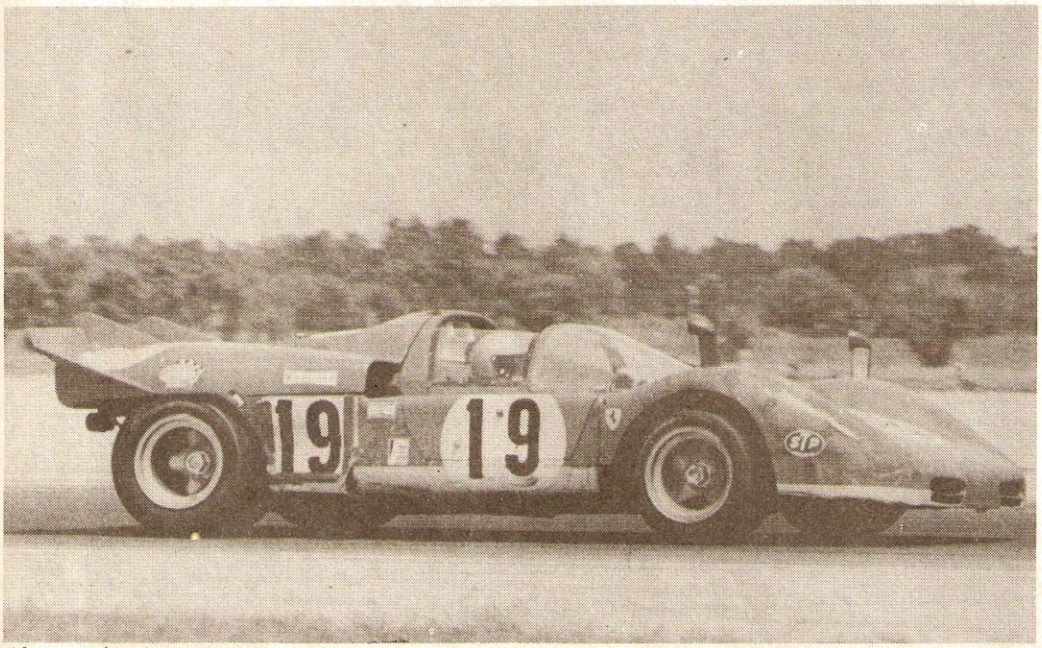
The man from Nazareth

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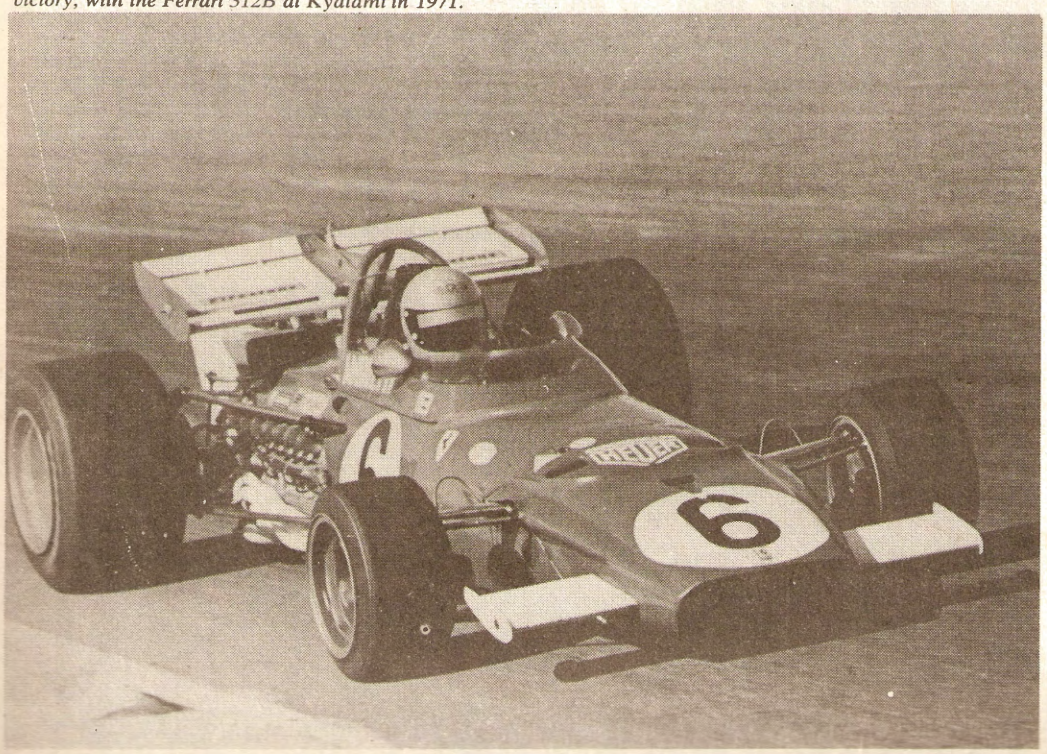
"Well, to start with, I wouldn't want to live anywhere in Europe. Don't get me wrong, I was born in Europe and I love it, but my home is in the States. It's too late to change. I'm too established there. If I'm away from Pennsylvania too long, I miss it. I wouldn't want to live away, not even for the summer. I don't think it's necessary for a grand Prix driver to live in Europe, but Mr Ferrari does. And, you know, the man doesn't change very easily in his ways. . . . A couple of other things, too. Exclusivity is one. That I would never accept. If I want to do Indy, I'll do it. A championship dirt race some place? Right, if it appeals to me, I'll do it. The Ferrari people don't like that. What they *do* like is for you to test constantly. I mean, they just run and run. That's the only pleasure he gets, just watchin' his cars run, even if it doesn't accomplish anything".

After Andretti turned Ferrari's offer down, it is said that the Commendatore was prepared to back down, that he told Mario that he could continue to live in the States, and that exclusivity to Maranello was not essential. But Andretti's mind was by then made up: he would stay put at Lotus.

"I must say I was very tempted to go there. Who wouldn't be? Jesus, with *their* reliability record? You know, Niki and I were about equal on points after Dijon. The next four races, he has two wins and two seconds. Me, I have four engines blown to hell! And no way do I abuse engines. Hell, I was leading in Austria, and it was like I was on an economy run. . . . Oh, I was tempted by Ferrari all right. We've had a good season, I guess, but without those blow-ups. . . .



Above: After his own Ferrari 512S had retired from the 1970 Sebring 12 Hours, Andretti took over the Giunti/Vaccarella car and scored a narrow victory—the only one ever scored by a 512S. Below: First Grand Prix victory, with the Ferrari 312B at Kyalami in 1971.



Andretti's decision to keep his home in America does, of course, have its drawbacks. His travel schedule would make you and me blanch. After every race he immediately heads back to Nazareth. Right after winning the French Grand Prix on July 3, he rushed off to the airport and was actually back home in time to see his victory on the TV news! "I had to be home for the Fourth of July celebrations; I had a commitment there'". A day later, he was back in England, testing at Silverstone for the British Grand Prix!

"Yeah, I do get tired of the travelling. I manage to rest quite well on aeroplanes, but the hassle at the airport, the customs and all that . . . it does get you down a little". But what about jet lag? "Well, I tell 'ya, I can cope with that better than anyone I've come across, only because I set my mind to it. I've been doin' it for quite some time. Even when I was racing only in the States, I always drove for a West Coast team. It's a five-hour flight out there and there's a time difference of three hours, so after all these years I've gotten used to it".

As well as this extraordinary travelling schedule, Andretti's racing programme is a rigorous one. Formula 1 only is not for him.

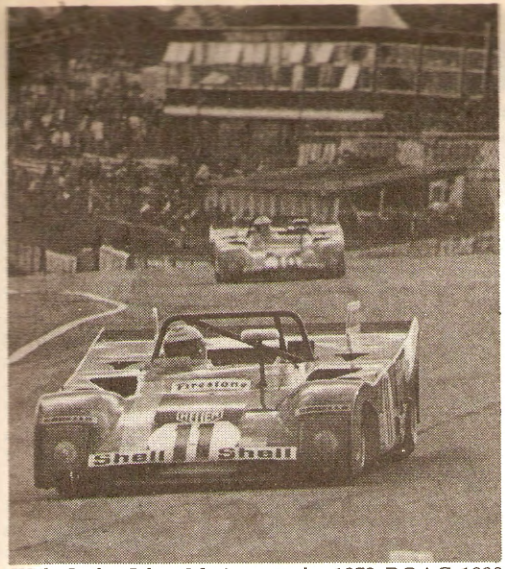
"If I didn't enjoy Formula 1 so much, I wouldn't be here, I tell you that. All the travel and the sacrifices I have to undergo to do Formula 1 . . . well, it's not pleasant. But the satisfaction I get out of it more than makes up for the inconvenience, and that's what keeps me going".

As well as undertaking a full Grand Prix season in 1977, Mario has also driven in many USAC races for Roger Penske and in the IROC series. "Even so, I've probably turned down more rides this year than ever before", he laughs. "My wife always says 'you just don't know how to say no', and sometimes that's true. At the beginning of the season someone will suggest a very interesting deal, and I'll say 'yeah, it looks like I have a weekend off'. And then it comes round and I think 'Christ, why did I agree to that?' But there again, I'm the one who works out the schedule so I can't blame anyone else. I have to live with it. I'm not complaining. After Zandvoort I was back in the States, up at my place by the lake, just playing tennis and enjoying myself. I was really sure that I had a weekend free between Holland and Italy. Except that somebody told me it's Ontario . . . I could have died! 'Hey, you goin' to Ontario next weekend?', the guy says. . . . Aw, man, that really hit me wrong".

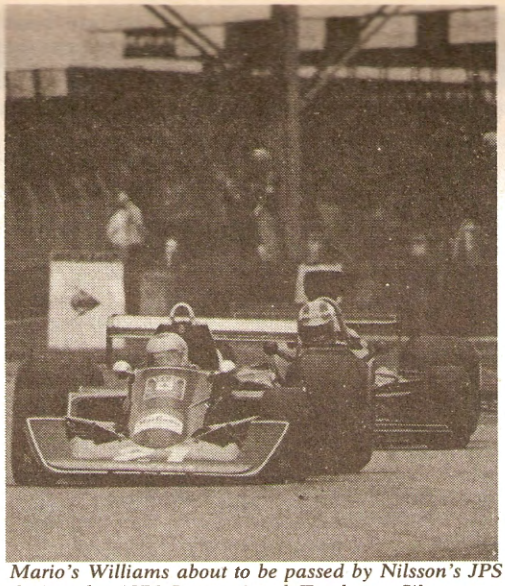
The conversation shifts to other things, lighthearted things, away from the problems of being a commuter living 3000 miles from his work, and from thoughts of a World Championship lost. Mario Andretti's record for versatility is unequalled in the history of the sport. He has won Grands Prix, NASCAR races, countless USAC races (including Indy), Formula 5000 races, World Championship sports car races; he has won in sprint cars, midgets, championship dirt cars. Hell, he even won the Pikes Peak 'hillclimb' one year! So, having sampled virtually every kind of automotive competition known to man, which does he enjoy most? He draws on his cigarette, his mouth set in a broad grin.

"Well, from the standpoint of pure fun, sheer pleasure in racing, I must say that championship dirt racing is what I really get a kick out of most. I used to enjoy sprint cars a lot, too, but the champ cars are a little bigger, with 6-litre engines instead of 5-, and we run them on the longer tracks, you know, like Du Quoin and Syracuse. To broadside those things at over 130mph is just somethin' else. Somethin' incredible. Unfortunately you'll never be able to make a living at it, but I really enjoy it".

Andretti's appearances in the rarefied world of NASCAR were comparatively few, but the plunder was good. As a virtual unknown in the South, for example, he turned up to drive a Ford in the 1967 Daytona 500—and won it! To grasp the importance of those words, you must



With Jacky Ickx, Mario won the 1972 BOAC 1000 Kms at Brands Hatch in this Ferrari 312P, pictured at Paddock Bend leading one of its sister cars, driven by Tim Schenken.



Mario's Williams about to be passed by Nilsson's JPS during the 1976 International Trophy at Silverstone. The Swede's performance in the 77 impressed Mario enough for him to return to Team Lotus.



One happy JPS driver on the victory rostrum at Dijon last July, having scored a lucky win in the French Grand Prix at the expense of John Watson. Usually this year, Mario's luck went the other way. . . .

equate it with victory at Wimbledon for a member of Luton Tennis Club. Well, almost. NASCAR racing is very, very specialised, and success for an outsider is almost unknown. Andretti smiles at the memory of Daytona.

"Oh, NASCAR was very appealing, but only when the factory teams were involved. Since I had an association with Ford, for instance, I could pick up a winning ride—just on a part-time basis. Today, unless you do the usual thing and arrive with a sponsor under your arm, you don't have a chance. The factories are out of it officially, so it's not like it was".

In 1972, five years after Andretti's win, I went to the Daytona 500 and found that people still shuddered at the mention of that hectic ride. I told him about it and he began to laugh—"Is that right? Five years later? Jesus. . . .

"Yeah, it's true, right enough. I had it set up very loose. The car seemed to like it, you know? That was kind of a new trend. Everyone in NASCAR used to run a lot of inside weight, so I decided to try somethin' different. I went to outside weight, which I'd run a lot on the dirt. I figured, well, it worked there so we'll try it here. With outside weight, you really had to run up high on the wall . . . and all of a sudden, I really started runnin' quick because I kept the car very loose, with the tail way out of line, keepin' the revs very free comin' off the turns. With the car like that, I found I could run five miles an hour quicker. So I figured that's gonna be the way to go.

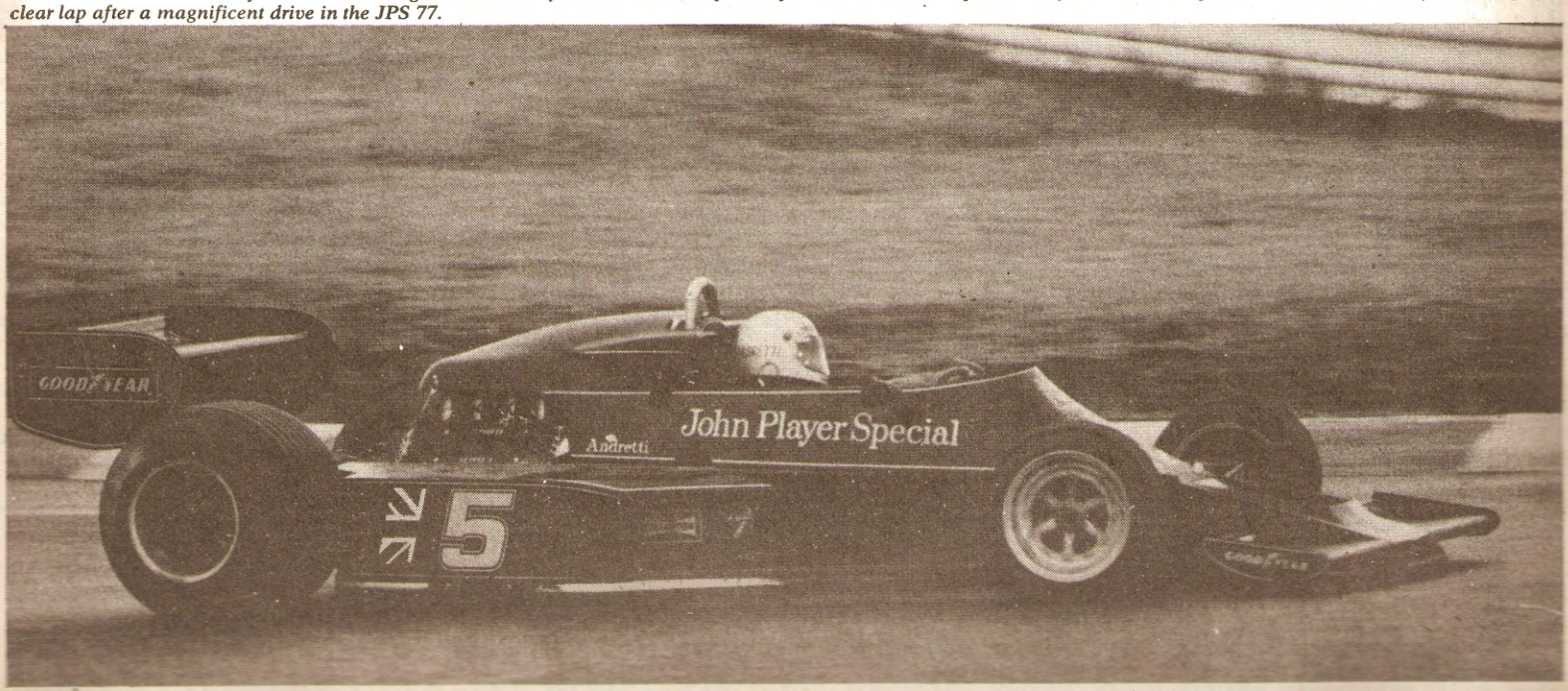
"In the first part of the race, it was a real battle out there, with Richard Petty, Curtis Turner, Fred Lorenzen and the rest. But my car was fantastic. It was really workin'. I could work it on the outside, the inside . . . I could dive around and over those guys. Towards the end, it was obviously between Lorenzen and me for the win, and we both made our final stops together. Lorenzen was the golden boy of NASCAR at that time, and there's no doubt that Ford wanted him to win. I was deliberately kept in the pits for about 10 seconds longer than him. I was fit to be tied. . . ." His face lights up—"And then I just tore away there, and I still caught him and won by about 14 seconds. I proved something. And when I got him, you know, I wouldn't even let him draft me! I got on the grass, pulled out in front of a lapped car and cut the draft off. And then I just motored on and away. . . ."

The depth and breadth of Andretti's motor racing experience makes him a man apart in Grand Prix racing. A constant source of amazement to me is that his 'desire' remains as strong as ever. There is never a time when Mario seems to be having an off-day, not really bothering himself. Always it seems that the only thing in his mind is getting past whatever is in front—and that sooner rather than later.

Some drivers are like this, putting it to the wood from the very start, picking up place after place in the early laps before others, less quick off the mark, have played themselves in. Inevitably, perhaps, this early charge sometimes ends disastrously, and Mario has been involved in many accidents soon after the start. It happened as recently as Fuji, He *hates* to have a car in front of him. At Dijon this year, for example, he followed Watson's Brabham for lap after lap, finally coming through to win with a mile left to run. As the Lotus took the flag, someone commented that Andretti had merely been playing with Watson, but there was no way. Mario flat couldn't get by. If that had been possible, he would have been long gone. There had to be a problem with the Brabham, and so it transpired. The difference, however, between Andretti and some drivers is that he never relaxed the pressure, and consequently was set fair to take Watson when the BT45 hesitated momentarily. John, remember, was not very far behind at the line. If Andretti had resigned himself to second place and rolled it off during the last few laps, the troubled Brabham would probably have got there first.

The Lotus 78 has rarely been able to hack it on the straights this season, although Monza was a notable exception. Through any kind of turn, though, it has been in a class of its own. To witness Andretti's tormenting of Reutemann through the Hockenheim stadium, for instance, was to feel almost embarrassed for the Ferrari driver. There he was, working away, doing his best, and Mario was all but going over the top of him. Out of the right-hander before the pits, down with the throttle, and the Ferrari simply blew the black car away. Out and back down the *autobahns* which make up the major part of this mindless circuit . . . and Reutemann pulled away all the time, only to be chopped about again when they got back to the stadium. This went on until Andretti's engine

Almost unnoticed in the hysteria surrounding the outcome of the World Championship, Mario scored a superb victory in the 1976 Japanese Grand Prix at Fuji, winning by a clear lap after a magnificent drive in the JPS 77.





The man from Nazareth

continued

blew up. Visibly the quickest thing through the turns, the Lotus had nonetheless been fighting only for fourth place. Its lack of straightline pace had seen to that.

John Watson recently made an excellent point when talking of Andretti's problems, commenting that, if once the Lotus got away from the field, Mario was home free. But let him get bogged down in traffic—such as happened in Japan—and the problems were immense. Simply, the car's straightline performance makes overtaking difficult.

The most celebrated coming-together of the Grand Prix season, of course, occurred at Zandvoort. Mario, starting from the pole, was beaten away by a simply stunning start by James Hunt. "I couldn't run with the McLaren on the straightaways there. The only place I was gonna get by was at Tarzan. In fact, I tried to get him there on the first lap, but I wasn't close enough and he quite legitimately put me over on the grass. You know, last year he had that run-in with Watson at Zandvoort, so he knows all about keepin' people back there. Nothin' wrong with that. The obvious place to overtake was down the inside at Tarzan, but I was never close enough at the end of the straight to try that. And, anyway, he had it worked out and was using the tight line himself. So I had to try somethin' else".

It was at this point that Mario rode the high line through the turn, round the *outside* of the McLaren . . . and the two cars touched and collided on the exit of the corner. A little while later, holed up in the JPTL motorhome, he was very angry and bitter about the incident.

"I guess it's unfortunate that Hunt and I couldn't just have sat down some place and talked the thing out—something we have since done", he reflects now. "The problem is that you hear things the other guy is supposed to have said, and then you flare up and say things you don't particularly mean, maybe. Like I said he thought he was the King of the World and things like that . . . I don't like to do that. What got me really flared up at the time was him sayin' that overtaking on the outside is not done in Grand Prix racing. I mean, that was a ridiculous statement, and I think he realises that now. Unfortunately, these things happen sometimes, and I'm afraid they may happen again. It's important for him to win, and it's important for me to win. You try to go about it as professionally as you can. You don't want to spoil anyone's chances, least of all your own".

Professional. Mario Andretti is that, in and out of a racing car. You can see it in his practice routine. During the final hour, you will not find him flogging round and round, hoping that pole positon might magically come from one of those laps. No way. He decides what he wants, does three or four laps, comes in. There are brief words with Colin Chapman, tiny adjustments to the car, and out again for three more laps. When everything is right, he sets a time, comes back, gets out. Andretti has become exceptionally good at setting up a Formula 1 car. At Zolder he took the pole by a second and a half. At the time, we doubted our stopwatches, but there was no mistake. "The car", Mario recalls ruefully, "was dialled in better at Zolder than anywhere else this year. Man, it was goin' like it was painted to the road. . . .

And he is professional in other ways, too. You want him to sign his autograph? Fine. To pose for a photograph? No problem. He knows exactly what his public wants—and deserves. But they must not disturb him. When he's talking to Chapman, that's it. And during our conversation at Monza, autograph hunters were out of luck. They were not ignored or simply dismissed, but Mario's expression made it clear that he was busy and they should come back later. One thing at a time.

"Yeah, this is where it all started for me", he drawls, gazing across at the high fences around the paddock, which on race day resemble nothing so much as a POW camp, with guard dogs everywhere and people hanging on the wire, striving to get to their heroes, waving banners, calling out their names. "Mario! Hey, Mario!" is like *muzak*, steady and relentless throughout the tape.

"You know", he goes on, "my family moved to the States in 1955, the year after I came to Monza for the Grand Prix. And my brother and I were really disappointed. We thought 'well, this is it; there's no more Monza, no more Ascari, no more *racing*!' We knew only of Indy in the States, so we figured we could kiss racing goodbye. We had been in Nazareth only a few days when this guy pulls up at my uncle's filling station in a pickup truck. On the back is a trailer with a sprint car on it! Oh man . . . you know, it was like it had been a Mercedes W196! 'Jesus, where's the track?' we said to the guy, and he tells us it's right over there, a couple of miles away. Holy Mackerel! It was a whole new life, you see. . . ."

It is obvious that he loves to talk about his beginnings in racing, of the people against whom he has raced. The name of Don Branson, for instance, will mean nothing to most Europeans, yet this man is considered by many to have been the greatest sprint car driver of all time. When Andretti was getting started in sprint car racing, in the early 'sixties, Branson was at his peak, the archetypal grizzled veteran with a heart of gold. "Sprint car racing, you know, is dangerous", says Mario. "It's much safer now that roll-cages are mandatory, but in those days we didn't have them. It's really hard, fierce racing, and a new guy breakin' in there takes a few chances, right? It's always been that way and it always will. And, of course, when a newcomer starts goin' quick, some of the older guys jump on him and tell him he's drivin' over his head. I had a real problem with Rodger Ward (twice winner at Indy) in the beginning. But Don was different. I mean, he bawled me out a couple of times, but the criticism was constructive and he was trying to help me".

Branson was killed at Ascot, California, late in 1966, two weeks away from retirement. "I was really broken up when that happened", remembers Andretti. "It happened right in front of me. He very obviously just had a stuck throttle, hit the barrier and flipped. And my team-mate, Dick Atkins, went over the top of Branson's car, and he died a few minues later. A very sad evening".

What, I asked, ever decided him to tackle Pikes Peak, the 12½-mile dirt hillclimb in Colorado's Rocky Mountains? This, after all, is not your standard hillclimb. You start, usually, in blazing sunshine, and you finish at the peak, which is snow-covered. And there are no guardrails. Traditionally, the Unser family has reigned supreme at 'The Peak'.

"There's a long story to that", chuckles Andretti. "Bobby Unser and I used to be quite good pals, you know. We used to race sprint cars and midgets together, and now and then we'd split. I'd say 'OK, we'll go and do these two midget races this weekend, and we'll split whatever we make'. We had a lot of fun with that. If one guy dropped out, he'd really root for the other. Money in the bank, right?

"Anyway, I was just about to start Formula 1, and I tried to talk Bobby into it. He said he would give it a try if I would do the Peak. I said OK, but I knew the only way I was gonna win the goddam thing was if he didn't run in my class. There was no way I could beat him up there. So we made a deal in '69 that he would run a stock car and I would run a championship car. So that was OK. That left Al, his brother, as my only real problem." His face breaks into an evil grin and he nudges my arm. "And guess what? Luckily, Al goes and breaks his leg, so he can't run, either! I figured I could take care of the rest of those guys, and so I won and set a new record and . . . well, that was the story of the Peak!"

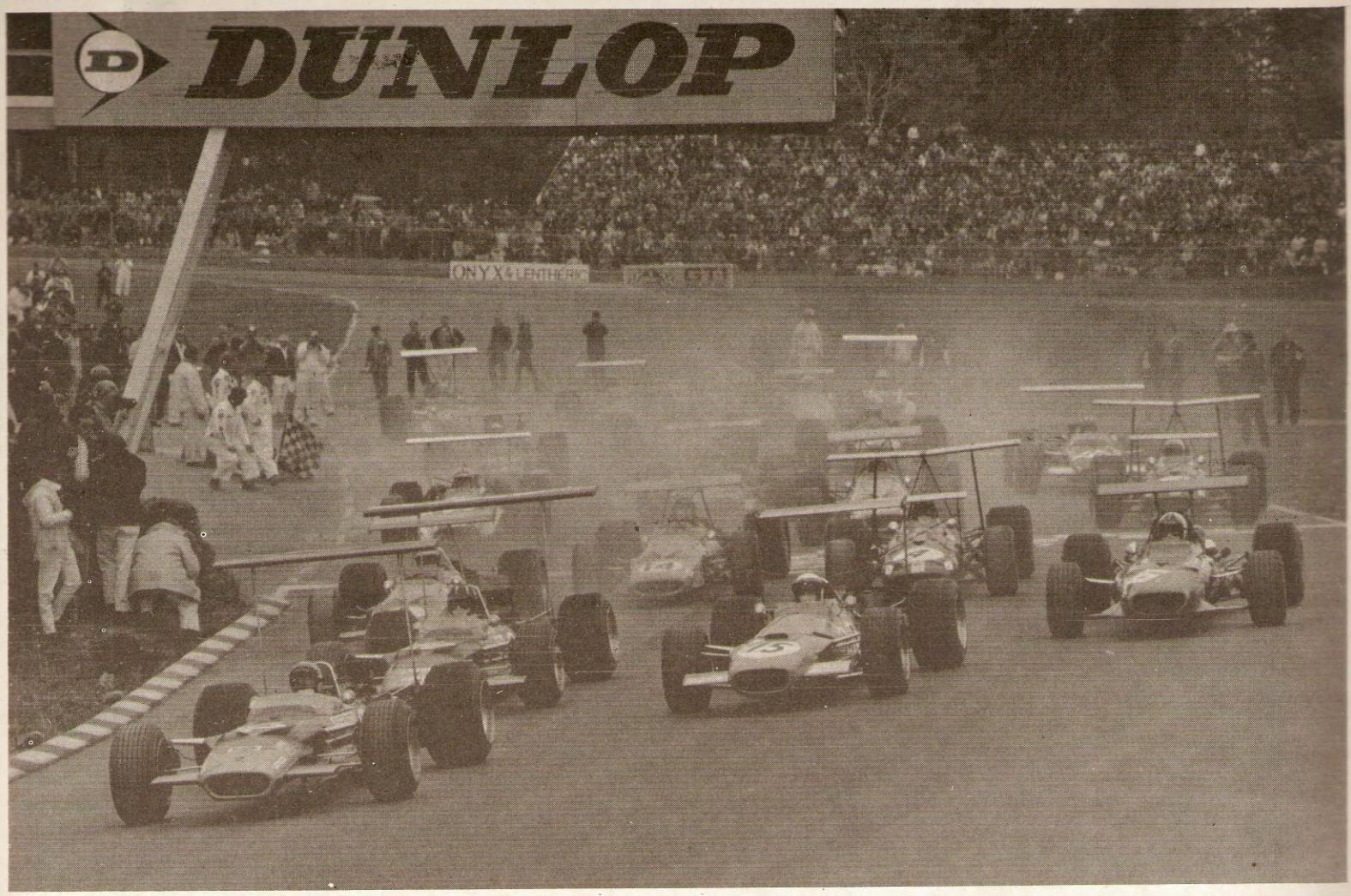
Few would argue that only bad luck has kept Andretti from the World Championship this year. But a few wins will always mean more to him than a lot of places. He is not the type to be satisfied with 'another six points towards the title'. Each race is there to be won, as his fantastic late charge at Watkins Glen showed. He has, however, won more races in 1977 than the man who won the title, and must take pleasure in that. As well as those, he should have won at Anderstorp and Mosport, could have won at the Osterreichring and elsewhere. Conversely, of course, he was fortunate at Long Beach and Dijon. But, overall, he emerges as the star of the season. Formula 1 remains his first love, but there are some reservations.

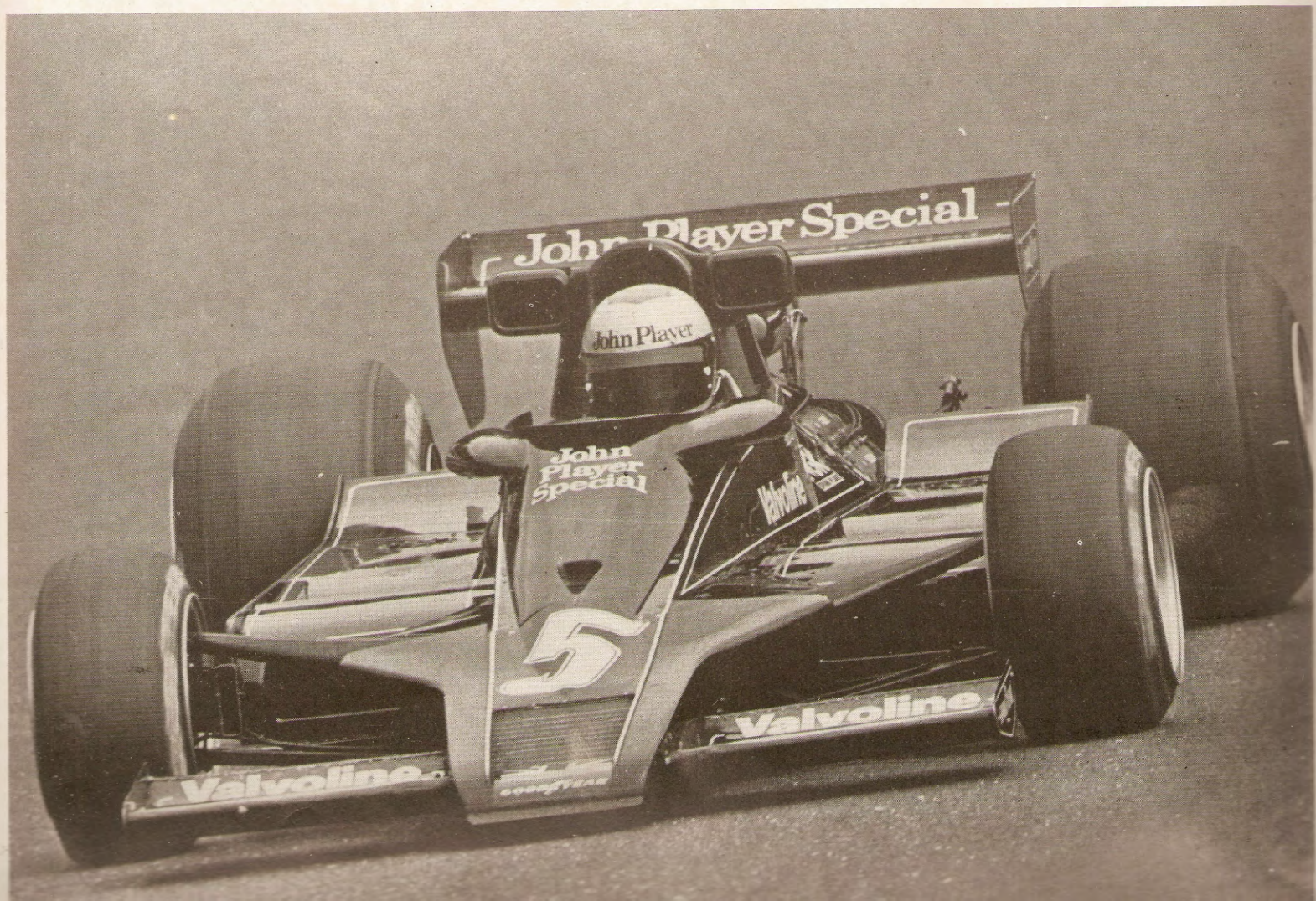
"First of all, I'd like to see all pre-practice testing abolished. It will cut down wear and tear on everyone, improve the preparation of the cars and cut down everyone's budget by a third. The same drivers will still be up front. And the other thing is this: I've always maintained that there isn't enough restriction on new drivers coming into Formula 1. It's tough to say you have to meet certain requirements because there's so many different ways to arrive in Formula 1. You can't say that a guy has to win so many races or a championship or whatever. You just can't do that. What you can do, however, is give the opportunity on a limited basis. That's one of the things that's good about USAC. If a guy over there wants a championship licence, he gets a temporary one, and we all watch him very closely. If, in three races, he gets a necessary degree of criticism from established drivers, then he gets reprimanded. And we tell him that he isn't ready and should come back next year when he has more experience. Formula 1 should be like that. At it is, a guy gets a graded FIA licence and he's in. Nobody can stop him. You can't say that's right. I mean, you're doin' the *guy* a disservice as well. But anyone with the right degree of credential should be given the opportunity to try."

So now comes 1978. The latest John Player Special is to be launched shortly, and Andretti has high hopes of it. He is less happy, however, at the prospect of having Ronnie Peterson as a team-mate—"Tell me where it's written that we need two stars on this team!" Mario perhaps feels that *he* has made Lotus winners again, that *he* went there when times were bad, when Peterson had deserted a sinking ship. Andretti has refloated it, and now Ronnie wants to come aboard again. Whatever happens, though, it is a certainty that Mario will be intensely competitive next year. For the American to win the World Championship, his final ambition, would be great for him, and the best possible thing for the sport.

And it could so easily happen, should he get the breaks. "I always figured I was put on this earth to drive race cars," he said that day at Monza, "and I still feel the same way." ■

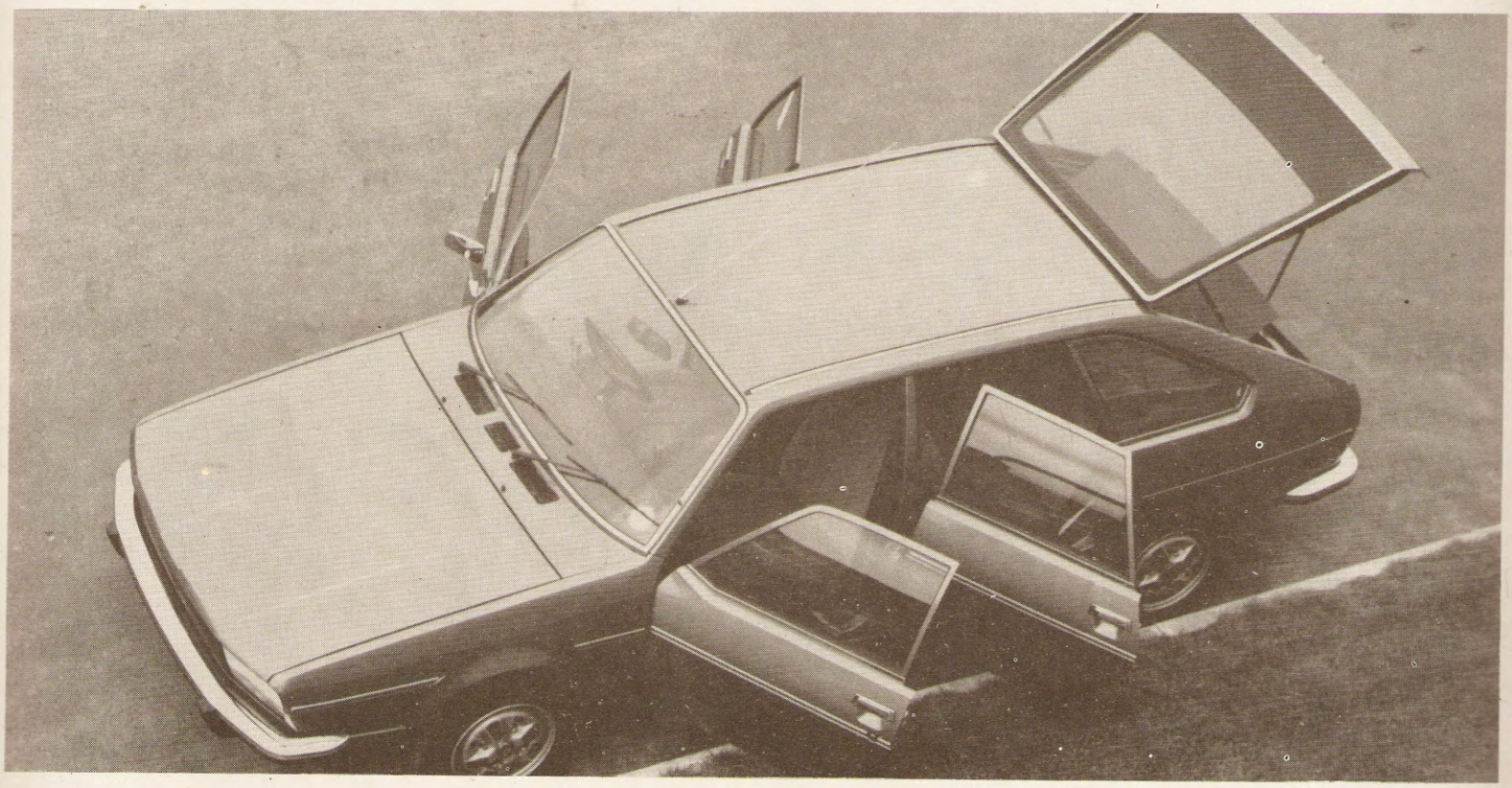
Facing page, top: On pole position for his first Grand Prix, Andretti takes his Gold Leaf Lotus 49 into the lead of the 1968 United States GP at Watkins Glen, from Graham Hill (Lotus), Jackie Stewart (Matra) and Chris Amon (Ferrari). Bottom: Although the World Championship eluded him, Mario was the quickest man in formula 1 in 1977.

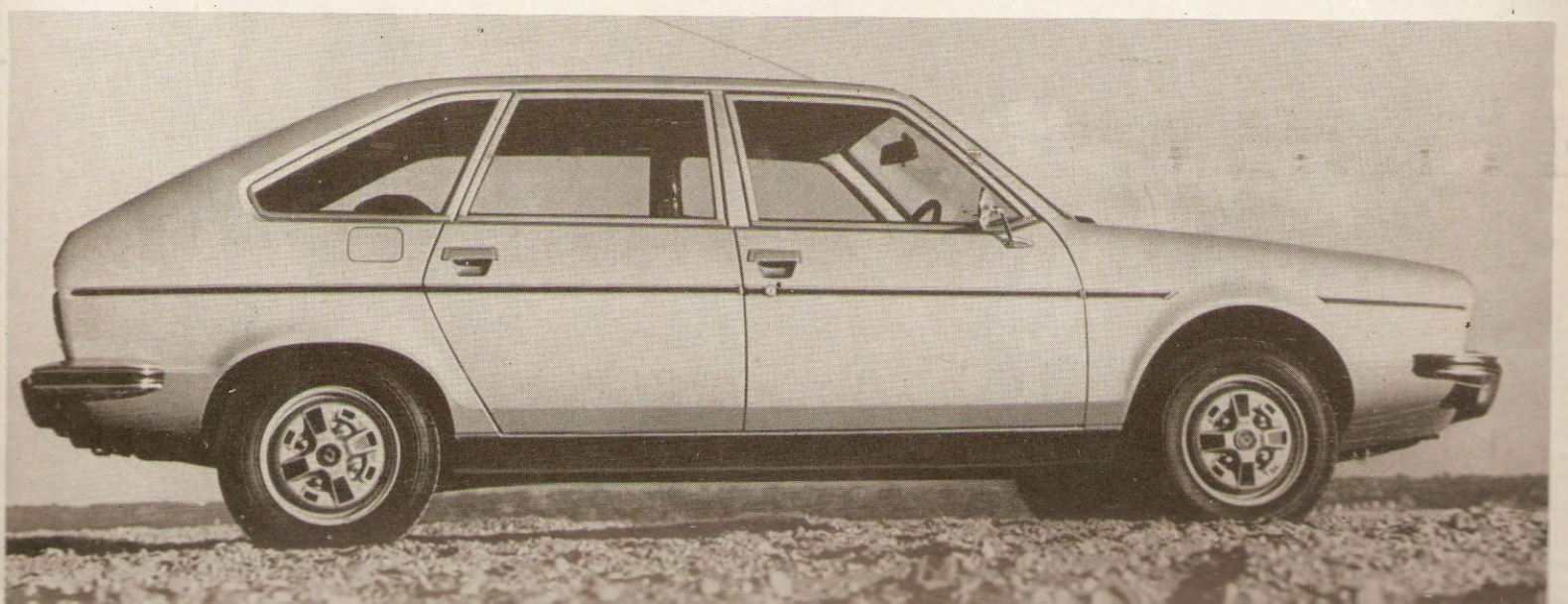

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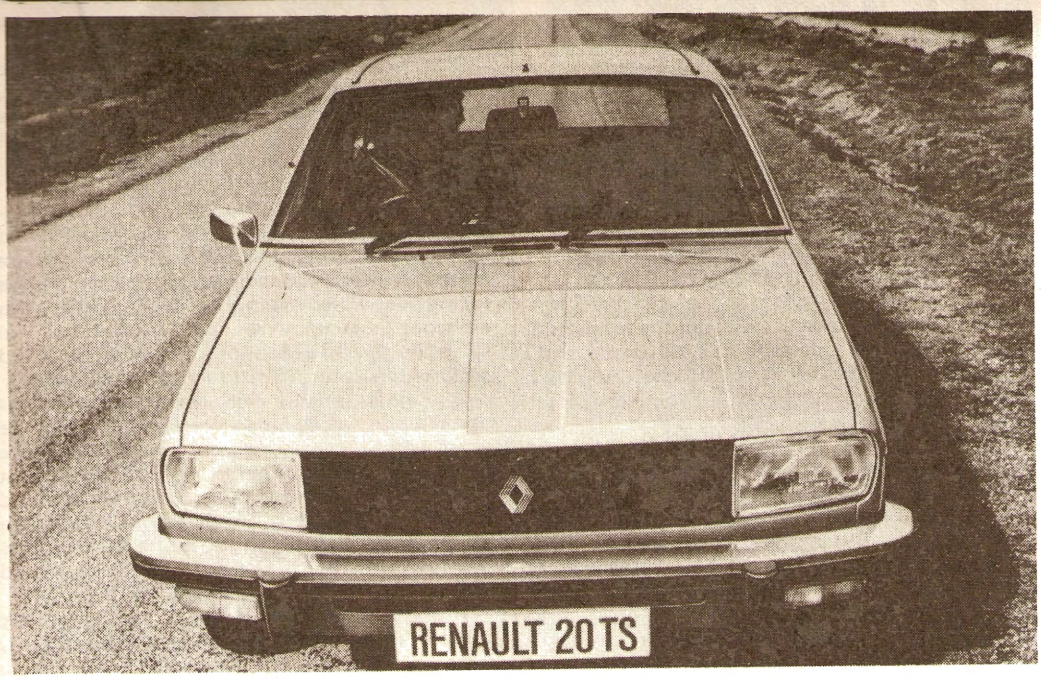

John Player Special
John Player
John Player Special
5
Valvoline
Valvoline

by John Bolster









Renault 20TS; a great success

A new 2-litre overhead-camshaft engine, developing 110bhp, has been added to the Renault range of power units. It propels a TS version of the Renault 20, which fits in between the existing 20TL, with 1647cc and 90bhp, and the 30TS, which has a V6 engine of 2664cc, giving 125bhp. Incidentally, a Formula 3 adaptation of the new engine will be racing next season, of which more anon.

The light-alloy cylinder block has wet cast-iron liners and carries the crankshaft in five main bearings. Also in light-alloy, the cross-flow cylinder head supports a single overhead-camshaft, driven by a toothed belt; this operates inclined valves, with stellite protection, through rockers. The carburettor is a twin-choke Weber, with thermostatic control of air temperature, and the sparking plugs are of the washerless type, with conical seatings.

In addition to its extra 20bhp, the 2-litre engine gives 27 per cent more torque at 3000 instead of 3500rpm, compared with the smaller unit of the 20TL. The engine is inclined at 15deg to the left and sits ahead of a new light-alloy four-speed gearbox, which drives the front wheels. The electronically-controlled Renault automatic transmission is also available.

The body shell is that of the 30TS and 20TL, with independent suspension and anti-roll bars at both ends. Power-assisted rack and pinion steering and ventilated front brake discs are standard. As this is an up-market model, the equipment is generous, including electro-magnetic locking of all doors, with automatic unlocking under impact.

facing page

Top: the only external difference to the 20TL is the wheel trims. Centre: the 20TS shares the same four-door bodyshell as the 20TL and 30TS. Bottom: the sleek 'wedge' silhouette of the Renault. Below right: the attractive tail of the 20TS with its 2-litre badging. Right: the 1995cc engine fits snugly into the bay.

ROAD IMPRESSIONS

I was able to drive the new 20TS under various conditions, including town traffic, motorways, and country by-ways, the weather alternating from sunshine to heavy rain. I sampled both manual and automatic cars, but as I shall be carrying out a full-length test shortly, brevity is in order.

Obviously, the extra power and torque make the TS a much faster and livelier car than its smaller-engined sister, the performance being more akin to that of the 30. What is much more striking, however, is the silence of the new engine, for the pushrod job, though a willing worker, always let you know when it was fully extended. At 30mph, one can tell that this is a four-cylinder car, but at an easy 100mph cruising speed, it's as quiet as the V6, and conversation in quite low tones suffices.

The makers claim a 106mph maximum and I saw an indicated 110mph, so they are not overplaying their hand. Although this is a big, spacious car, with luxurious accommodation for the rear passengers, it handles like a smaller machine, partly because the steering is unusually high-geared, thanks to a moderate degree of power-assistance, which is appreciated during fast driving on wet roads. In this respect, the soft ride certainly helps, for hard-sprung cars are usually pigs in the wet.

Driving the manual car fairly hard, I averaged over 23mpg, and a more gentle colleague registered 27mpg, so perhaps 25mph would be a fair average. I also drove an automatic car, which seemed almost as quick as the manual, but I didn't go far enough to carry out a reliable fuel check. I must mention that the latter car had an annoying brake whistle, and if my road-test car is similarly afflicted, you will hear all about it!

The Renault 20TL is a great success, because it provides exceptional riding comfort with a moderate consumption of fuel. The 20TS adds speed and silence to that equation.

Specification and performance data

Car tested: Renault 20TS four/five-door saloon, £4724.

Engine: Light-alloy four cylinders in line, 88 x 82mm (1995cc); compression ratio 9.2 to 1; 110bhp DIN at 5500rpm; single belt-driven overhead-camshaft; Weber twin-choke downdraught carburetter.

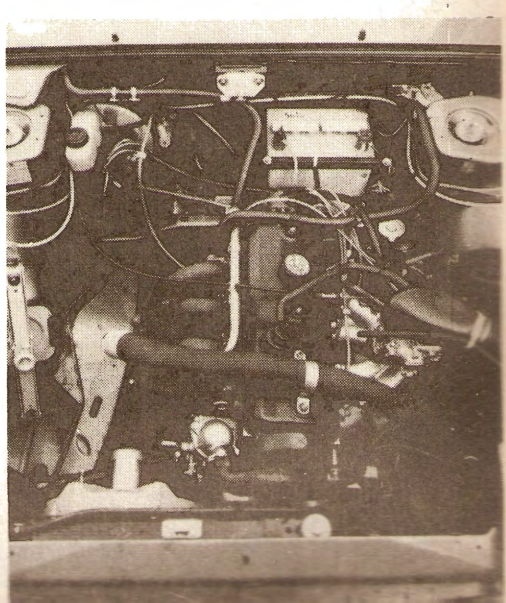
Transmission: Single dry plate clutch; four-speed synchromesh gearbox with central change, ratios 0.93, 1.32, 2.06, and 3.36 to 1; hypoid final drive, ratio 4.125 to 1; homokinetic driveshafts to front hubs. Optional—Renault automatic transmission with fluid torque converter and electronic control.

Chassis: Combined steel body and chassis; independent suspension of all four wheels by coil springs, double wishbones in front, struts and lower wishbones behind, both with anti-roll bars; power-assisted rack and pinion steering; servo-assisted ventilated-disc/drum brakes, with dual circuits and rear control valve; bolt-on steel wheels, fitted 165SR14 tyres.

Dimensions: Wheelbase, 8ft 9in; track, 4ft 9in/4ft 8in; overall length, 14ft 10in; width, 5ft 8in; weight, 2778lb (2822lb auto) .

Performance: Maximum speed, 105.6mph (102.5mph auto); standing 400m, 18.2s (19.7s auto). Maker's figures.





The ultimate supercar?

Lamborghini claim their £30,000 Countach will do 195mph. After trying the rare machine, who is RICHARD FEAST to argue?

Hands up all those people who have actually seen a Lamborghini Countach on the road! If you have, the chances are it was foreign-registered, because no more than a dozen have been sold in Britain. Most of those have been re-exported, which makes the car pictured here about as rare as a Group 1 championship without protests.

And at a smidgen under £30,000, is it really surprising? The Countach's list price is undercut by £4000 by its most obvious rival, the Ferrari 512 BB—or the price of an Alfasud Sprint. By comparison, the Porsche Turbo looks a snip at £23,200.

No doubt in these heady realms a car's price is of transitory, trifling interest to a potential owner. He, or she, has got to be spectacularly wealthy by most people's standards. Blowing this sort of money on a flamboyant plaything—by no stretch of the imagination could such an illogical device be termed practical—is simply part of a Martini good life that embraces pearly white teeth, bronzed bodies and *Costa Smeralda* weekend homes. Unreal.

Yet even in this super-taxed nation, the queues form outside the Lamborghini, Ferrari and Porsche showrooms. To a man, the importers say their sales are limited only by factory supplies, and certainly not by public apathy. Order your Countach now, and you should have it by early summer. It's the same with Ferrari and their BB. The Porsche importers are quoting about a year for delivery of a Turbo.

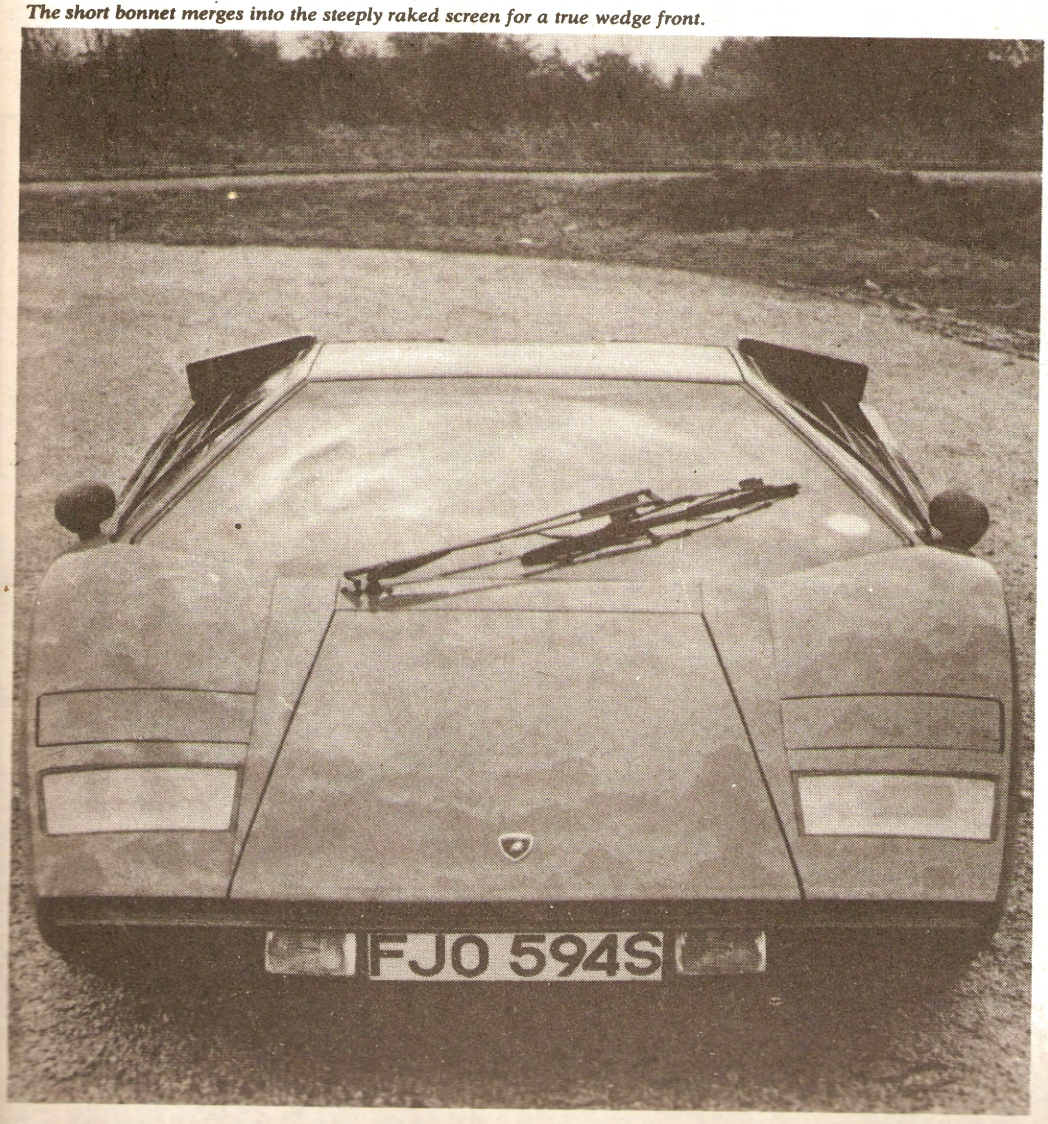
By the time any of these is delivered, chances are the price will have edged up once more. . . .

But who buys stunningly fast cars like these? Maranello Concessionaires have sold 39 BBs since the model went on sale about a year ago. Porsche sell a similar number of Turbos each year, making about 80 sales so far, and Lamborghini have clocked up their dozen.

According to Ian Webb, a director of Autosearch, they fall into two categories. The first is the arch-enthusiast, the person who has had a string of such cars and likes to drive quickly. Such a car is often regarded as a collector's piece, used only in fine weather and preserved during the winter.

The other category is from the entertainment industry—pop stars, starlets and the like who have suddenly become very wealthy. For them, it is not so much speed as style. To be able to pose outside a fashionable restaurant at the Cannes Film Festival for press photographers—what more could one ask of one's publicity agent?

The short bonnet merges into the steeply raked screen for a true wedge front.



Autosearch, the organisation which let me sample the Countach, are brokers of quality cars. On behalf of clients, they buy and sell anything remotely rare, from vehicles like Alfa Romeo and Jaguar to the distinctly exotic like Ferrari, Aston Martin and Rolls-Royce.

The S-registration Lamborghini was just one that happened to be passing through. It is, incidentally, for sale—instant delivery and for a grand under the list price of £29,950. "Suit professional collector or *poseur*," as the advertisements might say.

Stationary and silent on a cold, still November morning, the Countach still manages to look breath-taking. I hadn't even seen one on a motor show stand, let alone on the road. It was racing red, long, low and wide and covered in air scoops, black louvres and NACA ducts. The short bonnet merges into the steeply raked windscreen to form a true wedge-shaped front.

The next surprise was when the door, was opened, forwards and upwards. Hardly the most practical (how do you get out if you are unlucky enough to put it on its roof?), but guaranteed to impress customs officers and *autoroute* toll-takers on the Continent. "An uncompromising car", I thought as I slid across the pontoon fuel tank and into the scalloped seat.

It was a description that kept coming into my mind in an all too brief encounter with the car. This embraced a sprint across the Continent to a press conference in Deauville, a test that provided plenty of fast, open roads as well as some hideously deformed *chaussées* for which the French are famous.

The Countach is a two-seater with surprisingly good luggage space in the tail. But its mere location near a big engine, with lots of metal thrashing about, means luggage gets gently warmed. It certainly precludes returning from France with some tasties from the *charcuterie* or *patisserie*.

The driving position is virtually a racing one. The seats adjust a small degree fore and aft, but the adjustable steering column is the thing that ensures comfortable seating. It is very cosy when the doors have chunked shut. There is thick carpet, leather trim, air conditioning and full instrumentation in a typically Italian sports car interior.

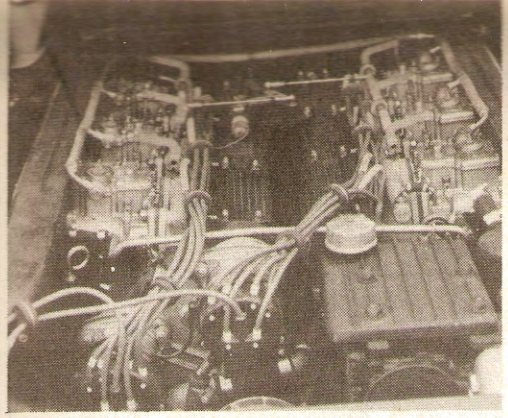
But there's hardly enough head room, and a 6ft driver simply would not be able to drive the car comfortably. It may also account for the Countach's popularity in Japan. Forward vision is perfect, although the sharp drop of the nose means it is difficult to judge the front's overhang.

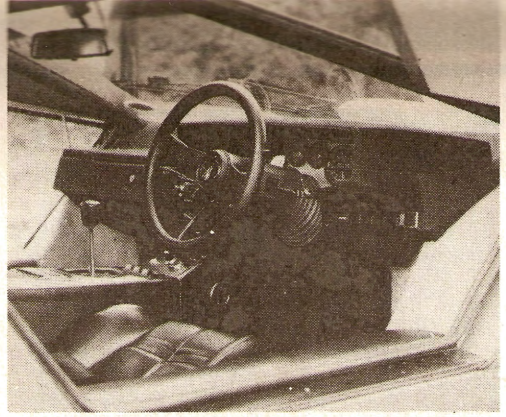
Sideways vision is impaired by the windows' narrowness and the struts that run across them. The windows themselves retract only a matter of 3ins. The interior mirror looks through a strip of rear screen, but the exterior mirrors generally manage to look over the huge air scoops on the car's flanks. For all practical vision purposes, though, the Countach must be treated as a van, and reversing is a question of sitting on the side pontoon, with the door open and stretching for the pedals and steering wheel. The stylist has simply over-ruled any protests about practicality.

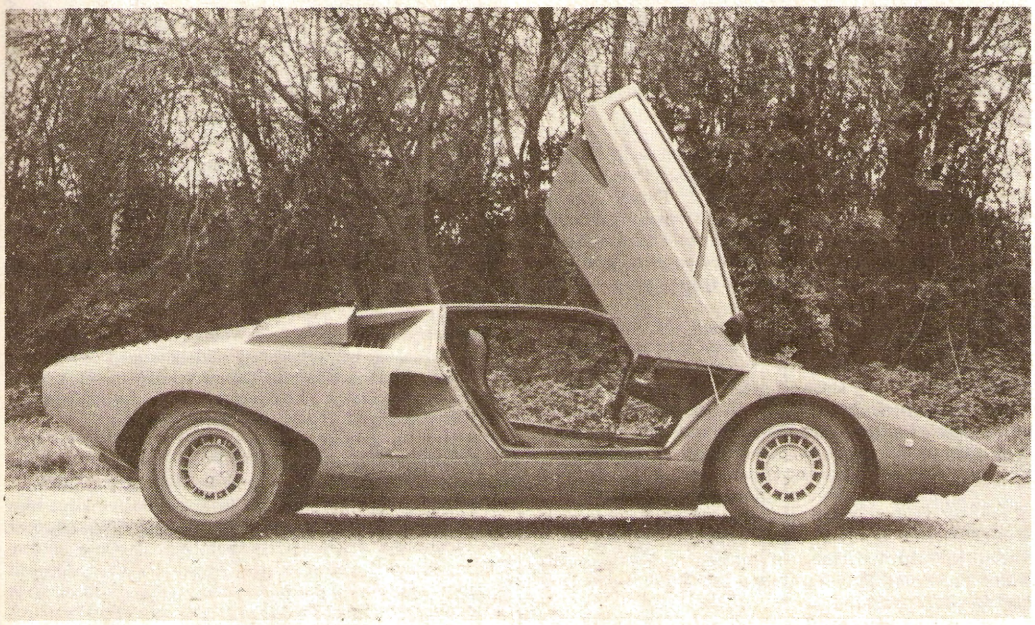
The power unit is a 4-litre V12 with 60deg included angle. It is, in effect, the Miura engine, this time mounted longitudinally. It has four overhead camshafts, dry sumping, and is fed by six Weber 45 DCOE carburetters, all of which adds up to a power output of 375bhp at 8000rpm. Combined with this mass of power is a very peaky torque pattern. Engine speeds up to 5000rpm—when most production engines are running out of breath—are for stooging around.

Peak torque (266lbs/ft) comes in at 5500rpm, which, odd as it may seem, means the engine has to be revved hard and the gearbox used frequently for maximum performance. Again, uncompromising. At a time when demand is for more flexible, torquey cars (even Ferrari's Boxer makes concessions in this department), the Countach V12 is an unashamed racer.

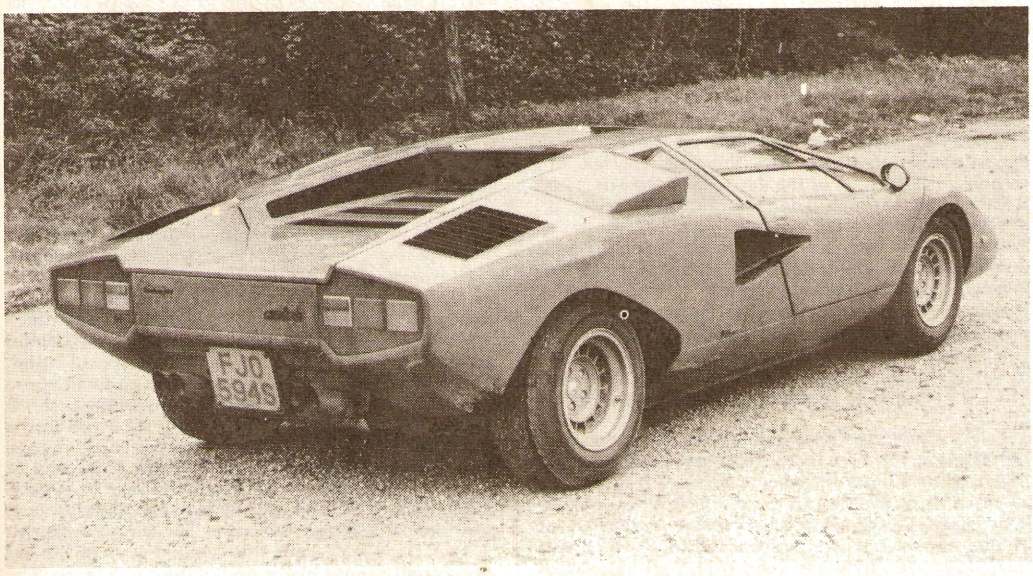
There is an odd location for the gearbox, too. It is to the front of the engine and drives the rear wheels via a prop shaft running alongside the engine. There is, naturally, a limited slip







Top left: a massive 375bhp and lots of torque. Top right: the driving position is virtually a racing one. Above: the unusual doors certainly attract attention. Below: the Countach looks breathtaking even when stationary.



differential. The open gate gearbox has five forward speeds, with first away from the driver and back. The gearbox's location gives a good, positive change, but it is extremely heavy.

The chassis is a strong and complex tubular steel one, clothed with a spectacular aluminium alloy body. All-independent suspension is by coil springs, wishbones and anti-roll bars, and brakes are ventilated discs front and rear. And the kerb weight of less than 24cwt, is nearly 20 per cent less than a Ferrari BB and about the same as a less powerful Porsche Turbo.
Turbo.

Given that the Countach produces more power than its nearest rivals, the Ferrari (360bhp) and the Porsche (260bhp), it is clearly the fastest thing on four wheels currently available. Enthusiasts might build strange specials, and Panther may try to take the title with their frivolous six-wheeler, but the Countach must be the fastest car made by a reputable manufacturer which has been tested, developed and offered to the public.

It is geared to pull a shade under 25mph per 1000rpm in top gear. And it revs to 8000rpm. . . . Lamborghini claim a top speed of 195mph, and who am I to doubt them? I saw an almost casual 160mph, and the Countach was still surging forward with nearly 1500rpm to go. I chickened out. Events take place too quickly. At that rate the car is covering nearly 400yards in five seconds, so road and traffic conditions have to be perfect.

These speeds require total concentration, tunnel vision focused on possible harzards way in the distance. Muscles become tense, the heartbeat quickens, and in my case, the nerve fails. Flying on the ground and still accelerating hard just makes me feel giddy.

It is all accompanied by a glorious growl from the V12, located a few inches behind the occupants' ears. It is always noisy, although not proportionately more so at 150mph than at 50mph. In any case, it must be part of the car's attraction for some. Again, little compromise in the way of sound deadening material.

But perhaps the most impressive feature is the car's stability. It feels good and solid at 160mph, though I can only speculate about speeds beyond this. Furthermore, on indifferent road surfaces it sticks commendably well to the driver's chosen line. I had expected a stiff racer like this to dive about across bumpy surfaces looking for the smooth bits, so its flat, fast progress round rough corners came as a pleasant surprise.

Whether it oversteers or understeers, I have no idea. It's very, very fast, and the rack and pinion steering is precise and accurate, certainly. But with such high cornering potential, one can only really find out on a test track. Try it on the open road, and it will probably be for the last time.

Acceleration is not something I was able to measure properly, either. A check with a stopwatch against the speedometer gave 100mph in 13s—better than John Bolster achieved with the BB and Turbo, but by no means a truly accurate reading. Even so, a fair indication of the Countach's knuckle-whitening acceleration.

Count six seconds on your watch, and you will get a better idea of just how quick it is. By that time the Countach is past 60mph and well on its way to Britain's legal speed limit. A sub-10s time for the same test (achieved by cars like the Alfetta GTV, Triumph TR7 and BMW 528) is reckoned to be pretty good, so performance like this adds a whole new dimension to road car acceleration.

First gear takes the car to 65mph. Second is closer at 84mph, but third is good for 113mph. Fourth can easily double the legal limit at 150mph, and the quoted top speed is 195mph.

Yet even the most spectacular car acceleration cannot compete with a motorcycle's. A Suzuki 550—by no means a powerful or expensive bike at £1100—can match the Lamborghini's acceleration to 60mph. And a Laverda Jota, reputed to be the fastest motorcycle available, can get to 60mph in well under 4s. It has a three-cylinder engine which produces 90bhp, and costs £2465.

What they cannot match, though, is the Lamborghini's crowd-pulling ability. It gathers open-mouthed, incredulous spectators wherever it goes. Only the rare schoolboy enthusiast even knows what it is. The raked windscreen and curved side screens make the occupants feel like goldfish, stared down at from every street corner.

Gnarled old dockers at Dover, who have seen it all before, even gave it preferential treatment. The Townsend Thoresen crew provided a safe position on the boat—important with the sea heaving and the juggernauts towering above the car. (We were even invited on to the bridge to marvel at the intricate night docking arrangements of the *Free Enterprise VII*, but that's another story.)

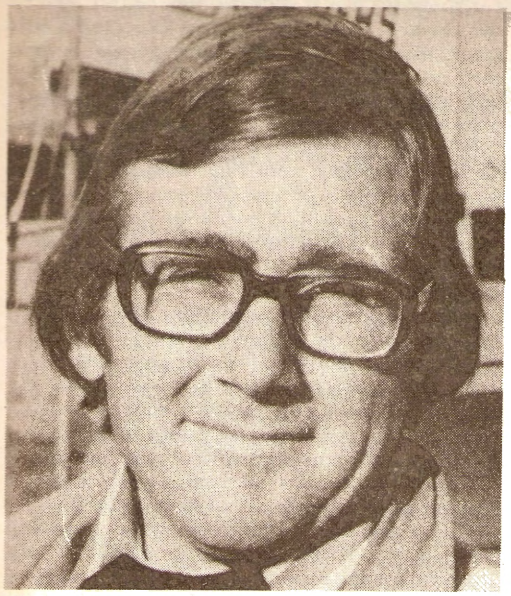
It therefore makes it a perfect ego-tripper for a pop star. But equally, because it is such a uncompromising racer with its peaky engine, excellent road manners and stunning styling, it is every bit an enthusiast's car.

Depending on which category the potential owner falls into, the annual insurance bill will cost anything from £250 to £1000, according to specialist broker Richard Eastmead. Mr Eastmead, a director of John Scott & Partners, of Hampton Wick, Surrey, has thousands of historic and specialist vehicles on his portfolio.

He finds that cars like this often belong to a stable of half a dozen or so. And as a husband and wife can only drive two cars at a given time, many spend a lot of time in a garage. They clock up only 3000 or 4000 miles a year, and an all-inclusive premium makes individual insurance distinctly cheaper.

Looked at logically, cars like the Lamborghini Countach are ludicrous machines. They may be fast, but virtually every other car on the road carries more, is quieter and more comfortable, and certainly a lot cheaper to buy, insure and fuel. The Countach gollops fuel at 10mpg, for instance.

But if you have the money, all reason disappears. You buy the car because you want it, and that's all there is to it. ■



CHARLES BARTER

In only his third full season of hill climbing Dorchester driver Charles Barter has won the Guyson/BARC Hill Climb Championship for the second successive year, an achievement which Charles himself would not have believed possible at the start of the season.

The Barters are a motor sporting family for father Len (who, sadly, died last year) was an enthusiastic rally driver and production car triallist, and brother Robert shares the all-conquering Hartwell Imp with Charles and, in fact, finished seventh in the Championship. Charles is now 33, married "with one of each", and suffers numerous 'witty' remarks on account of the family business—Golden Springs Watercress. For years the Barter family's fleet of Ford Populars were a familiar sight among the PCT fraternity (Charlie first competed 17 years ago—virtually as soon as he obtained his driving licence) but it was not until 1973/4 that Charlie dabbled in autocross and the odd sprint and hill climb. This was in an old Anglia, with a friend, Alan Pearce. However, in '74 Charlie and Robert decided to "have a go" in hill climbs the following year after spectating at a meeting at Shelsley.

The present Imp, which at one time was campaigned by David Franklin but which had been lying around unused for a couple of years, was bought from Richard Guy (who used to enter John Turner in Special Saloon Racing). Apart from giving it a set of wheels (!) and an LSD little was done to the car in '75 but a class win came at the RAC Gurston meeting and "quite a few" sprint successes were achieved at places like Yeovilton and Newquay. The Barters learnt by experience and by the end of the season the experience included a blown engine with a ruined crankshaft.

For 1976 the engine and 'box were placed in the capable hands of Hartwell's Ray Payne who also advised on the suspension, while some fibreglass panels were obtained from John Homewood. However, the car still had much bracing (a relic of some autocross preparation) and weighed around 11¼ cwt. For this season much successful lowering and lightening was carried out. With much careful preparation work done by John Frampton and Roy Kellaway the Barter/Imp combination has been a revelation, breaking the 1000cc Special Saloon records at most hills and actually recording an unofficial BTD at the 1976 Novices Harewood. Why so much success in "two fantastic years"? The engine is certainly very good, the chassis is rigid and handles well, and there has been some fairly substantial weight-saving this year.

CM





DAVID TAYLOR

Originally from Bolton, 25-year-old David Taylor now resides in Loughborough where he is the managing director of his own company, David Taylor Automedia Ltd, which produces all types of promotional material with the accent on motor-racing 'gear'. Taylor is single and enjoys squash, golf and keeping fit in between his motor sport commitments which date back to 1971.

He first became involved through the Jim Russell School at Mallory and, in fact, took part in their first ever school race there. From the third row of the grid David immediately showed great promise by rocketing through the field to lead until the penultimate lap when lack of experience saw him spin into the bank right outside the medical centre. Here he was to meet two of the most pleasant people in his career who checked him over before proffering the inevitable cup of tea and a Capstan full strength! His racing that year was restricted to a few school outings at Mallory and Snetterton through lack of money and it was this which prompted David to buy a 210 Villiers-powered kart for 1972.

The karting went well with wins at Kimbolton and Fulbeck among others and also his first races at Brands and Cadwell Park. It was at the latter where his most bizarre incident occurred—a rabbit ran out in front of him as he came through the Gooseneck and weeks were spent extricating the unfortunate animal from kart, leathers *et al.* However, progress at art college was suffering so a year's 'retirement' ensued.

David was lured back to racing after a go on the Escort simulator at the 1974 Showboat netted him second quickest time of the day behind the late Tony Brise and so, through Brian Jones of MRS, a season of school Escort racing was arranged, a series of top three placings with several wins convincing Taylor that he should re-enter serious competition the following year in the Renault 5 series.

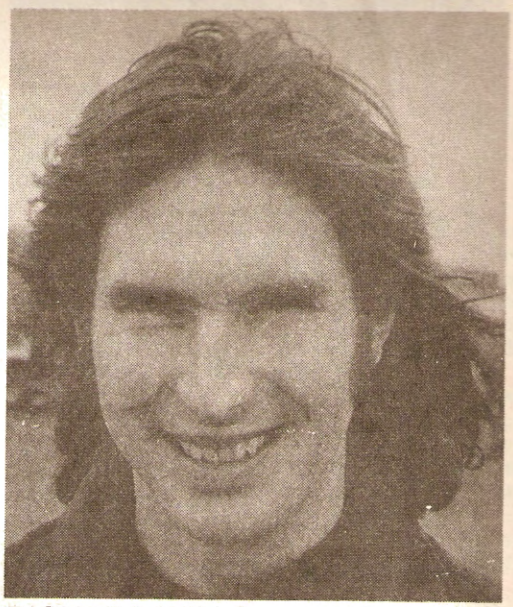
David's was the oldest car at most meetings and was driven to the circuits as well which explained a lack of results before the car was bored into the side of the bridge at Cadwell and replaced for 1976 with Mike Freeman's championship-winning Escort Mexico.

David established links with PAO of Swindon who ran the car for him in the Mexico Challenge and Britax rounds before a mechanic wrote it off on the way to Oulton Park and the rebuilt shell was sold to Win Percy. Gerry Marshall sportingly agreed to let Taylor borrow the ex-Lanfranchi BMW which was then driven to circuits in road trim, had its exhaust removed and the then-legal Klebers fitted, for racing. In its last ten races David was never out of the top three and established the current class record at Oulton with the car.

Having returned the BeeEm to Gerry in unmarked condition last winter David was out of a drive once more for this season until he met the enthusiastic Manitou team-leader Graham Miles who agreed to run him in the four-car Manitou-LE team. To his delight Gerry offered to loan the BMW again and throughout the season David has undoubtedly been one of the most spectacular and entertaining drivers in the team, netting four wins and a second place in the British Radio series behind team-mate Derrick Brunt. Sadly the car was severely damaged when Jock Robertson nerfed him off at Oulton Park in October but a successful season was greatly enjoyed by the intrepid Taylor.

For next year it would be nice to see David in FF2000 or Sports 2000 which is his immediate ambition but this will be dependent on finding the necessary finance to do a championship properly. Let's hope David Taylor can find the money in time for a serious crack at one of these formulae in 1978.

MAWP



RICHARD WILLS

Few people who have followed FF2000 this year can have failed to be impressed with Richard Wills, the 27-year old Beaconsfield driver whose development of the works Delta 77 netted the company its first win in the formula at Thruxton a fortnight ago.

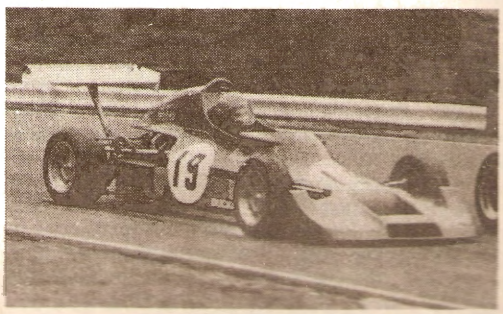
Richard's driving career started in 1974, the first year he drove a racing car, with an MRE in which he finished fifth first time out. Sadly the car was put into a bank fourth time out and lack of finance kept him away from the tracks until September when the car was rebuilt on a tight budget. An accident in the paddock at the end of the season further delayed Richard's plans, a couple of broken bones in his foot effectively putting him out until the following season.

The yellow MRE was retained for the 1975 season but with engine preparation entrusted to Oselli. This move Richard rates as the best thing he ever did, the almost standard engine from the previous year now proving a front runner. Mid-season Wills had a large shunt at Mallory, injuring his hand, although two wins had been notched up prior to the enforced layoff. The car was rebuilt and sold to Paul Jackson, and Jim Gleave offered Richard an up-to-date MRE for the remainder of the season, a seventh place at the FF Festival despite a stone in the carburettor being a good pointer for the future.

The following year would have been a good season for Richard had it not been for the Irish invasion and the superiority of the new Hawkes and Royales. Wills was invariably a 'top ten' runner throughout the year, thanks again to Oselli, although his chassis became outdated but he still managed a couple of race wins.

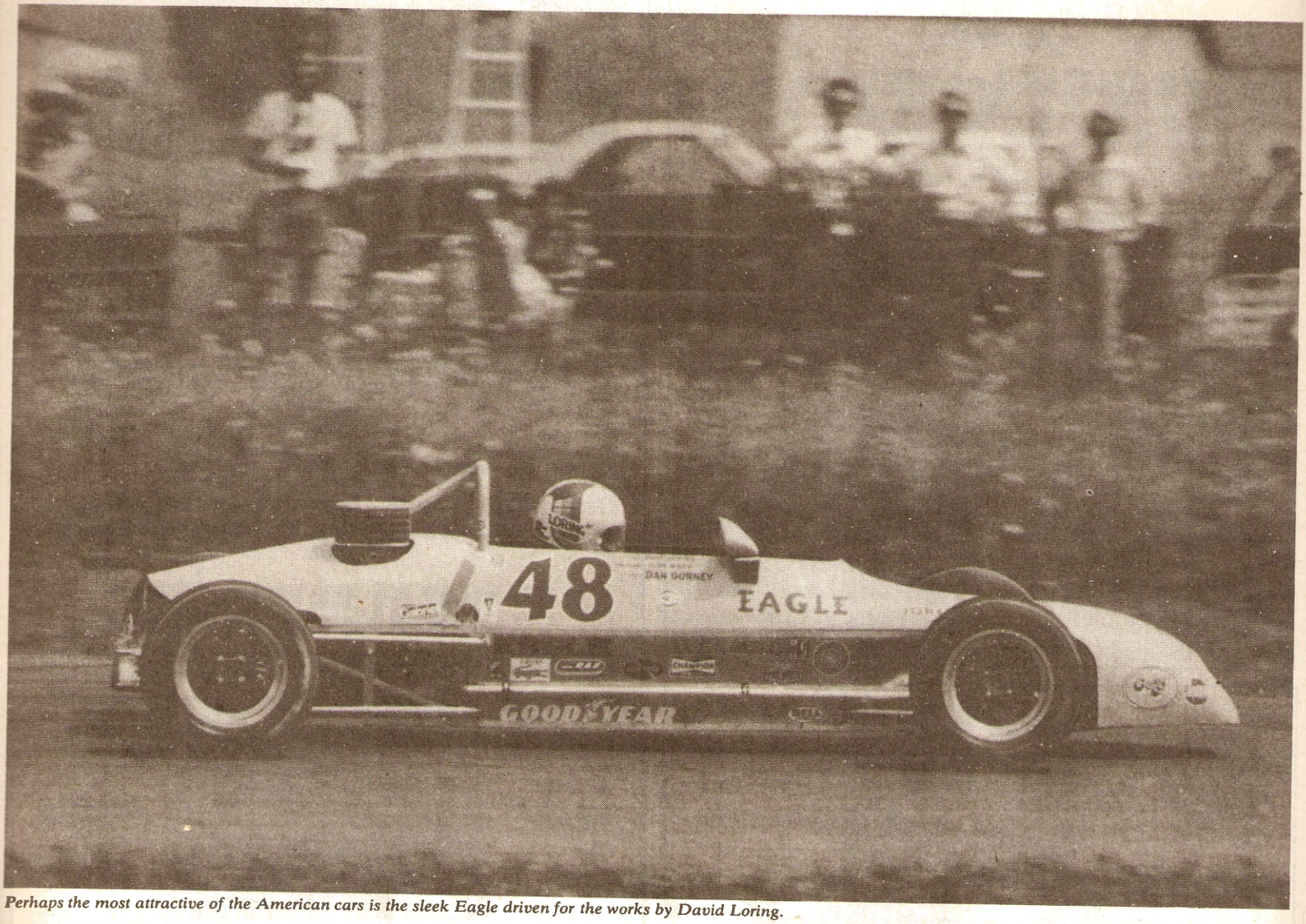
Having been in FF1600 for three years Richard decided to convert the car to FF2000 specification, working on the car himself due to lack of finance and Racing Services loaned him an engine for the first few outings. After some very promising showings in the old MRE Richard scraped together just enough money to run the Horseless Carriage Company of Hove's new Delta for the rest of the year, the MRE still being for sale. A series of excellent placings, pole positions and fastest laps were his only reward, his finishes improving with the development of the car into a front runner by the end of the club season. The elusive win finally came at the televised Thruxton meeting, Mike Quinn's sister car finishing second. But what of the future? Richard, self-employed in the garage business, still has no money for a full FF2000 assault next year despite his recent showings although he would like to remain with Deltas in 1978 with a view to some F3 in the future. Whatever the outcome of his financial problems we hope to see him out again next year although without money the plans will sadly have to be abandoned.

MAWP



Formula Ford USA

With Formula Ford celebrating its tenth anniversary in Britain this year its popularity is now reflected on the other side of the Atlantic where great technological advances have been made—HENRY KIM JNR looks at the top chassis Stateside



Perhaps the most attractive of the American cars is the sleek Eagle driven for the works by David Loring.

Though the dominant Formula Ford chassis being raced in the United States have their origins in Great Britain, there are more and more American built Fords being raced in the States with considerable success.

Big deal, right?

Well, yes, it is a big deal. While some of the principal constructors of these American-built Formula Fords are sticking with more traditional methods, others are taking a long hard look at the rule book and using 'yankee ingenuity' to design their cars.

Automotive Development, a small firm in Southern California quickly earning a world wide reputation, is not the oldest manufacturer of American built FFs, but they are responsible for the sudden upsurge of interest within the motorsport design community.

Their ADF Mk11, designed by David Bruns, features such concepts as inboard rising rate front suspension, inboard front and rear brakes, side mounted and totally enclosed radiators, fabricated front uprights and cast rear hub carriers for reduced unsprung weight and an engine used as a fully stressed member of the chassis.

The chassis made from 4130 chrome-moly tube, round, square and rectangular steel with a fully stressed undertray and firewall is put together with immaculate workmanship. A computer analysis was used to study camber curves and roll centre curves and the aerodynamically shaped body was designed with the help of a wind tunnel and a ¾-scale model pushed around Ontario Motor Speedway by another FF.

The first ADF Mk11, with only one day's testing, won the very first race it entered—which happened to be the SCCA National Championship Run-off—with a driver who at the time had never won an SCCA National Championship race! Since then, every ADF Mk11 owner has earned enough points to 'qualify' for the National Championship Run-offs.

Unlike other race car manufacturers, Automotive Development do not 'mass produce' their cars: only ten have been built. Instead, when a customer's order for a car is finalised, it is literally hand built over a period of three months with the same care as the firm's own team cars. There are no options, as the car is sold complete and fully set-up (steel braided lines and all) and before the new owner takes final delivery he will track test the car with its designer to ensure that everything is in order.

Though the ADF Mk11 is expensive—costing almost as much in the States as a Formula Atlantic car—it is the only contemporary race car allowing its owners to actually sell their cars for more than they paid originally.

All American Racers is, of course, synonymous with Dan Gurney, and Dan Gurney has always been synonymous not only with fast cars, but with cars of extraordinary strength and quality. It was, therefore, quite a treat for FF competitors when Dan Gurney announced that the efforts behind the successful USAC Champ Cars were going to be focused on building a Formula Ford.

Unlike the complicated ADF, the new Eagle is a very straightforward and conventionally built car (though some competitors—already tired of seeing its rear—are wondering if the car may be a little *more* straightforward and conventional than their own car!). It is what designer John Ward likes to call a natural car: uncomplicated, strong, easy to work on and *fast!*

With the aid of a digital computer, and using their extensive knowledge of aerodynamics gained at Indy, the AAR crew put together a car with excellent wind penetration capabilities.

A fabricated top rocker arm actuating the inboard front suspension, a narrow track, a frame two inches narrower than other FFs and a cockpit allowing the driver to sit very low within the confines of the slippery bodywork have resulted in the car being, as works driver David Loring says, "especially good in high speed turns", which account for most of the turns on California road racing circuits.

Made from mild steel square and rectangular tubing with cast aluminum rear hub carriers and fabricated steel front uprights, the car and its

driver had a good (or bad) test analysis as Loring, after having made contact with another car while running third in the Eagle's maiden race, hit Riverside's turn six guardrail head on. Though the car was damaged, the footwell area remained intact and the driver unscathed.

Chick Gladding and Bob Campbell are the brains and force behind actor Gene Hackman's attempt at joining the FF manufacturers fraternity. Though the car, called a Carom, has yet to race, there is little doubt that when the heavy testing is completed, the car will be super competitive.

With a front track of only 49¼ins, a rear track of 50¼ins and an overall height of 31ins, the car has one of the smallest frontal areas of any race car around. (The narrow track has required the inboard mounted front springs to be considerably heavier than that of a standard FF.)

The pontoons on the side of the car (making it look very monocoque—though plastic will replace the sheet metal in the production versions) carry within its deformable structure, the fire extinguisher and fuel tanks. These (along with the floor pan and firewall) are mounted as a stressed member of the chassis (perfectly legal say the SCCA's West Coast technical wizards—though they do expect a rash of protests once the car enters its first race).

With the engine acting as a stressed member of the chassis and overall workmanship done with extreme quality, the Carom can be expected to be one of the safest and strongest cars around.

Unlike the advancements found in the ADF and Carom, or the sleekness of the Eagle, the Zink is a very basic car which seems to do the job of winning quite nicely. Though the chassis is a bit larger than most FFs (probably to counteract America's junk food habits), the aerodynamics of the car do a nice job at moving the air around its body with minimal fuss.

In an effort to keep maintenance costs low, VW front uprights, calipers and discs are used in conjunction with a fabricated steel rocker arm mounted to an in-board spring/shock/sway bar layout. The rear uprights are fabricated. The car is available in various stages of kit form, or as a rolling chassis or complete and ready to race.

The Legrand Mk21 is an evolution of the firm's original 1968 Mk10. Though the car features side mounted radiators and an aerodynamically designed body, it is a very simple and basic car, allowing most people to work on it with basic hand tools.

Like the Zink, the Legrand can be purchased as a ready-to-race car, or as a roller or in kit form. And for the enterprising soul who likes to do everything himself, a set of full scale and ¼-scale drawings can be purchased from the firm for $40 (around £18).

Which car is better?

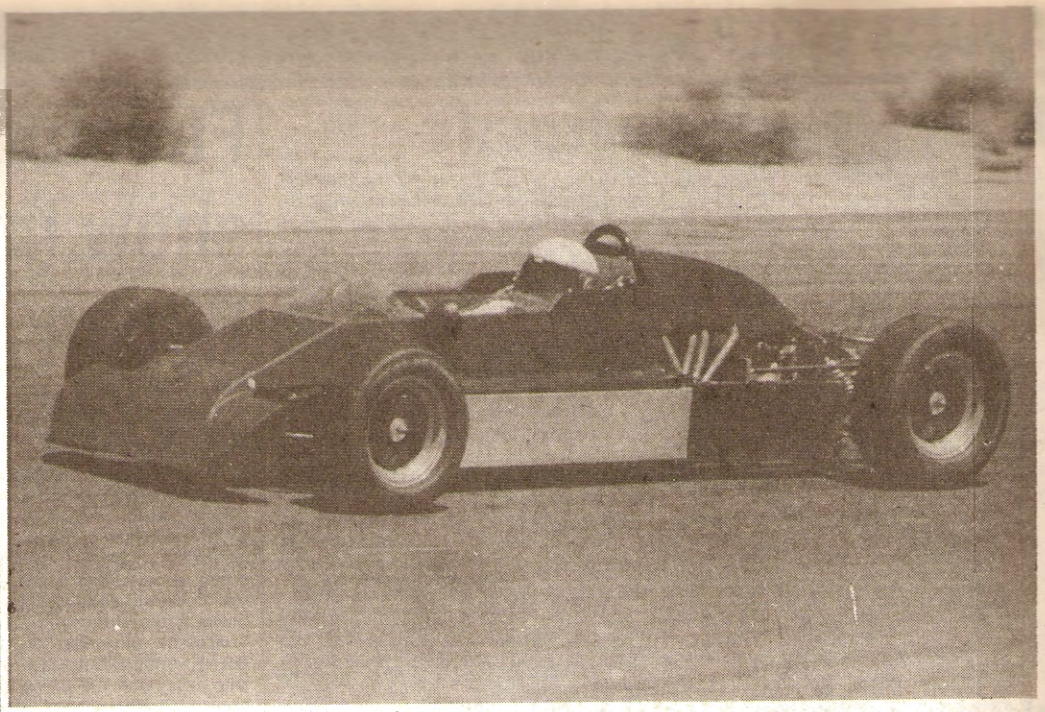
For $17,000, mediocre drivers west of the Mississippi River have become competitive drivers, and good drivers have become consistent winners with the ADF Mk 11. East of the Mississippi and the $10,000 Zink has proven that it is as good as the person driving it: if you're good, you'll win.

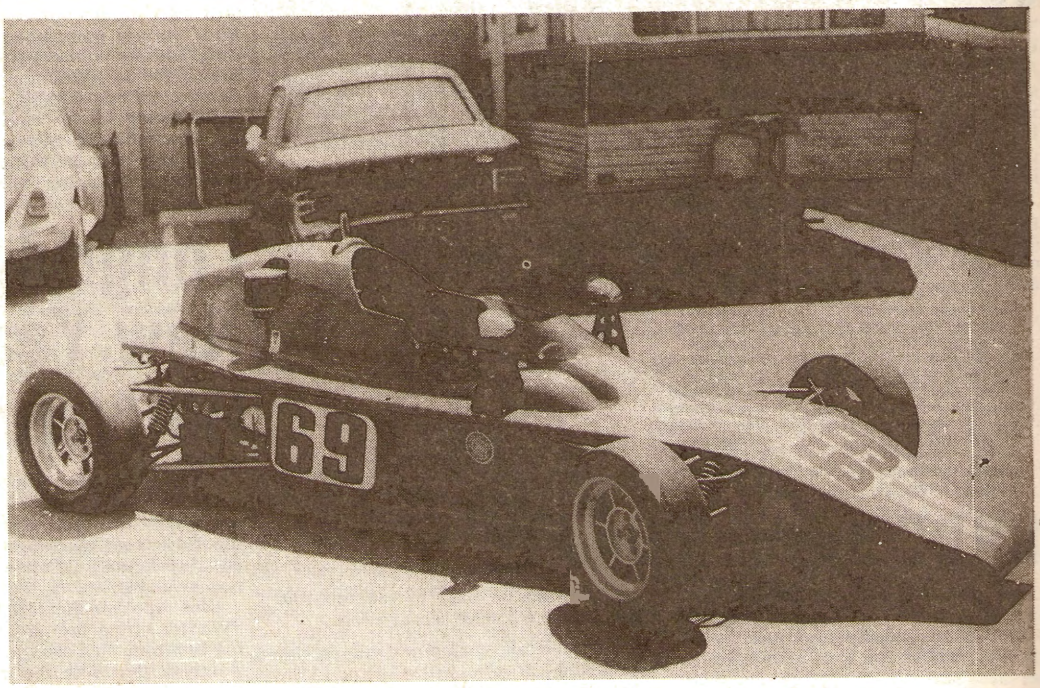
The Eagle, with less than a handful of races in its portfolio, has shown tremendous potential, and knowing Gurney's reputation, the only difference between the team's car and a customer's car will be that the customer's car will be newer.

The Carom has yet to race, but with 'French Connection' money backing the project and with the very competent members of the team determined to thoroughly test and sort the car before debuting it, there is little doubt that the car will prove itself to be competitive.

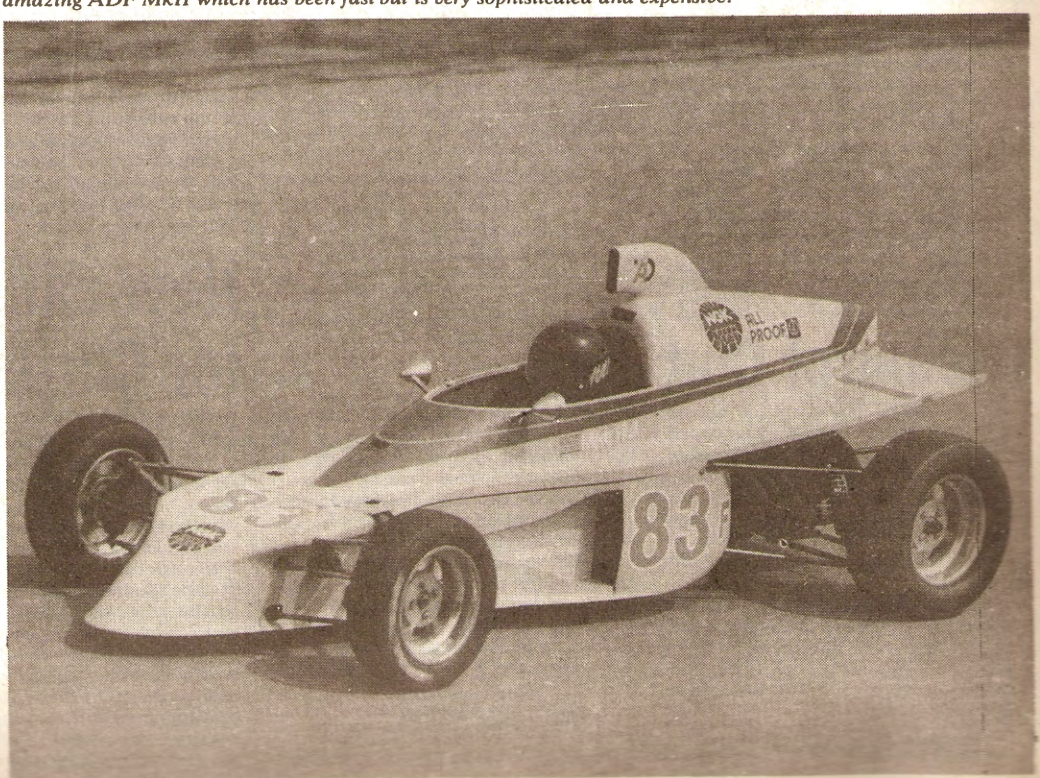
The Legrand has been suffering from the lack of a good team/driver combination, and has therefore been subject to mid-field mediocrity. It has, however, been proven that it is capable of being first under the chequered flags.

With a hotter climate and a greater liberalisation of the rules, North American drivers are looking towards the American manufacturer for an alternative to overseas built cars, and the American designers and builders are working hard to meet the challenge. ■





Three of the more radical chassis designs, top: the Carom marketed by actor Gene Hackman, above: the do-it-yourself LeGrand which can either come as a rolling chassis, in kit form, or as a set of plans, below: Mike Hull's amazing ADF MkII which has been fast but is very sophisticated and expensive.



edited by Robin Bradford

D. B. Motors prodsports

D. B. Motors of Leicester—who sponsored Howard Johnson, winner of the first BRDC Production Sports Car Championship this season—are to support the Silverstone-based series next year. There will be eight rounds at five circuits, with prize money for each round totalling £120.

Race prize money of £20, £12 and £8 will be awarded to the first three finishers in each of three classes, with the class divisions again determined on the relative performance of eligible cars. Overall winner will receive £100 and the D. B. Motors Trophy, with the class winners claiming £50.

Championship points will be scored on a new system: 5-4-3-2 to the first four finishers in each class, with an additional point awarded to each other classified finisher. There are *no* points for fastest lap.

D. B. Motors are specialists in American car components and accessories and have already announced their intention to run a Group 1 Chevrolet Vega in next year's British Saloon Car series. The Austin Healey Sprite in which Johnson won last year's prodsports series, entered by Positive Performance of Indiana—for whom D. B. Motors are European distributors—will be run again in 1978 to be raced by invited jounalists and selected guests.

Monday, May 1	Silverstone
Saturday, May 20	Oulton Park
Sunday, June 18	Silverstone
Sunday, August 13	Mallory Park
Saturday, August 26	Donington Park
Monday, August 28	Silverstone
Sunday, September 10	Thruxton
Saturday, September 23	Silverstone
	Formula 3 International
	Championship Meeting
	Championship Meeting
	Championship Meeting
	Formula 3 International
	Formula 3 International
	Formula 1 International
	Championship Finals Meeting

Jaffa Cakes modsports

The 1978 BRSCC Modified Sports Car Championship is to be sponsored by McVities Jaffa Cakes. The sponsorship—the first in motor sport by a major food manufacturer—will involve lively and novel promotion by the company's cartoon character 'McV' on behalf of Jaffa Cakes.

The 12-round series carries increased prize money with £25, £15 and £10 to be awarded to the first three finishers in each class and end of season awards of £100 to the overall winner and class awards of £50, £30 and £20 to the top three in each of four classes.

Championship points will be awarded on the same basis as this year: 4-3-2-1 to the first four finishers in each class, with one point for fastest lap.

In line with the plans announced recently by the BRSCC and MCD, this championship will feature a Super Round at Croft on October 8 when double points will be awarded for the aggregate result of two 15-lap races.

Good Friday, March 24	Snetterton
Easter Monday, March 27	Castle Combe
Sunday, April 16	Silverstone
Sunday, May 7	Brands Hatch
Monday, May 29	Oulton Park
Sunday, June 25	Brands Hatch
Saturday, July 1	Castle Combe
Sunday, July 23	Cadwell Park
Sunday, August 27	Snetterton
Sunday, October 1	Donington Park
Sunday, October 8	Croft
Sunday, October 29	Donington Park
	Formula 3 Meeting
	Bank Holiday Meeting
	Championship Meeting
	Tony Lanfranchi Benefit
	Sports Car Festival
	Sports Car Festival
	Championship Meeting
	Championship Meeting
	Championship Meeting
	Championship Meeting
	Championship Meeting
	Championship Meeting

BRDC Super Saloons

Super Saloons rule ok! Official. Yes, Super Saloons are back, with a nine round championship organised by the BRDC, whose aim is to revive interest in these spectacular hybrids. The series does not start until Easter Monday, the late start intended to encourage the construction—and probably renovation—of as many Super Saloons as possible.

Prize money of £500 will be offered in each race: with between £50 and £20 paid in a sliding scale to the top ten, £15 from 11th to 15th and £10 from 16th to 20th. Separate awards of £16, £12, £9 and £6 will be paid to the top four finishers in a 2500cc sub-division.

The overall champion will receive £100 and a trophy, with £50 and £35 to the second and third; in the 2500cc class, the winner will receive £50 and a trophy and the runner-up £25.

Championship points will be awarded on the 20-15-12-10-8-6-4-3-2-1 system with two points for the driver setting fastest lap; in the 2500cc class, points will be awarded on the World Championship 9-6-4-3-2-1 system with two points for the driver setting fastest lap.

Sunday, March 5	Silverstone
Easter Monday, March 27	Silverstone
Monday, May 1	Silverstone
Saturday, May 20	Oulton Park
Monday, May 29	Silverstone
Sunday, June 18	Silverstone
Sunday, August 13	Mallory Park
Saturday, August 26	Donington Park
Monday, August 28	Silverstone
Saturday, September 23	Silverstone
	Championship Meeting
	Championship Meeting
	Formula 3 International
	Championship Meeting
	Saloon Car International
	Championship Meeting
	Championship Meeting
	Formula 3 International
	Formula 3 International
	Championship Finals Meeting

Tricentrol Clubmans

The Luton-based Tricentrol Car Group are to sponsor the BRDC Silverstone Clubmans Sports Car Championship for the seventh year with ten qualifying rounds announced for 1978. The series will visit four circuits, with seven rounds at Silverstone and one each at Oulton Park, Mallory Park and Donington Park.

The championship regulations remain the same, with two classes: for fully modified 1600cc engines and for Formula Ford engines. Points will be awarded on the same basis as last year: 4-3-2-1 to the first four finishers in each class, with an additional point for the driver or drivers setting fastest lap.

End-of-session prize money of £150 complements the figure of £175 which will be paid at each round.

Monday, March 27	Silverstone
Monday, May 1	Silverstone
Saturday, May 20	Oulton Park
Monday, May 29	Thruxton
Sunday, July 30	Brands Hatch
Sunday, August 13	Mallory Park
Saturday, August 26	Donington Park
Monday, August 28	Silverstone
Saturday, September 23	Silverstone
	Easter National Meeting
	Formula 3 International
	Championship Meeting
	International Meeting
	Saloon Car Festival
	Championship Meeting
	European F3 International
	Formula 3 International
	Championship Finals Meeting

Firestone show in Wigan

This Sunday sees perhaps the largest gathering of competition vehicles to be assembled under one roof in recent months when the Firestone Racing Car and Speed Show gets under way at the tyre company's premises, Wallgate, Wigan on Sunday. Mike Stevens, the show organiser, has informed us of some exciting exhibits which must be worth going to see. Stars of the show must be the updated Shadow DN8 which will make its first appearance. John McCartney's superb Marlboro-liveried BRM P160, a Lotus 18, James Hunt's (the other one!) March Atlantic car and Lawrie Curtis's Chevron B23 will form only part of the motor racing section while several powerboats, some dragsters and some bikes will also be on show. Other attractions include the Texaco GP hospitality unit, a *free* beadblasting service courtesy of Guyson International and a Custom Car Show (over 100 cars) organised by the Pennine Drag Racing Club.

Longridge New Year Rallycross

There is a prize fund of just over £700 on offer from Longton & District MC when they run their first rallycross of the New Year at Longridge on Bank Holiday January 2, for which regs are now available.

Club spokesman Jeremy Seal said "We are hiring the circuit entirely for the first time. It's a bit of a gamble but we think that with the experience we have behind us we shall be able to put on some good sport".

The event will run on the usual Longton lines with three timed runs for the maximum of 50 competitors, the best two aggregated times determining which of the four finals competitors go forward to. Prior to the start of the actual runs John Taylor has promised to give a demonstration in his Escort.

Entry fee is £7 and details are available from Michael Hayhurst, 74 Beechwood Drive, Feniscowles, Blackburn. Tel: Blackburn 21614.

New car for Curtis

Bradford hillclimber Ian Curtis has recently purchased a brand new Mallock U2 Mk18B which has been fitted with a Davron engine maintained by Bob Speak, himself no slouch behind the wheel. Although Ian has owned a variety of older U2s in the past this is his first new car which he and old friend Martin Leather have built. This year has been far more successful than Ian had dared to hope resulting in two BTDs and several class records. For next season the Mallock will probably be brought up to 1978 specification, Ian continuing in the clubmans class only because he cannot afford to run a competitive single-seater.



Basil Wainwright of Comlec Racing has announced some interesting plans for 1978 in both the racing and rallying spheres. Son Wayne is testing the new Lola T492 Sports 2000 car at Snetterton this week with a view to running a pair of chassis in next year's SodaStream Championship. His team, with backing from Comlec Racing, Leader Automotive, BRMB Radio and the Engine House Club of Bromsgrove, may well have additional support from Carroll Shelby. Shelby is known to have shown a great deal of interest in young Wainwright and will be coming over to discuss the Sports 2000 programme with a possibility of a graduation to F3 in 1979. Negotiations are in hand to run Neil McGrath in the second car but as yet nothing has been decided. Regarding plans for F3 Wayne has tested a Ralt chassis with promising results in recent testing sessions although it is now too late to start organising a professional team for next season. As for the rally plans it appears that Wayne will drive a Group 4 BMW on occasions when racing commitments permit, on the major national events. Comlec Racing are also retaining one of their familiar Escorts to run in the Debenhams series on a 'guest drive' basis; the pilot once again being Wayne who appears to have a busy year on his hands.

Off-road series to Savage

Winner of the Kirkby Lonsdale MC Off Road Championship is Kevin Savage, who scored 67 points. In a tight run up to the title he beat Tony Garstang and Phil Wright by two points, Garstang taking second overall and first in the front wheel drive class by virtue of three maximum scores to the two of Wright.

Club stalwart Carl Taylor takes the rear wheel drive class on 63 points well ahead of Sam Turner and John Gibson.

Winner of the club's Victor Ludorum trophy is Clive Sissons who takes the drivers award with his navigator Kevin Savage taking the other. Although there is one round in the series still to be run, they are uncatchable. Leading novices, and currently fifth overall, are Phil Wright and Ian Keywood. Last event is the Rally of the Dales this weekend.

Awards for all championships will be presented by Chris Lord, who is chief guest at the club's dinner dance on Friday December 2.

Ellis just ahead for honours

After eight rounds of the ANECCC Road Rally Championship John Ellis is the leading driver with 133 points from scores on six events but he is closely followed by John Saint who has 125 and has scored on all events.

There is an equally close struggle in the navigator's section where Alan Hill, on 118 from seven rounds, is under pressure from Ian Irivine with 112 from five rounds. Penultimate round is the Durham Dales this weekend and the final event is the North Star on December 10/11.

In the newly introduced club section, for the winners of which Tyre Experts (Darlington) Ltd are providing a cup, Stockton lead with 375 and it looks as though only Whickham can catch them for they have a total of 320. In the battle for third place, however, Hexham (204) could be overhauled by Durham or Tynemouth, both with 145.

Very close finish in Wales

Winner of the Welsh Speed Championship which this year comprised 12 sprints and a hillclimb is Elwyn Evans from Llanbradach near Caerphilly. In one of the closest finishes to the championship in which the first four finishers were separated by just over 1sec in terms of time, Evans (3.0 Capri) scored 76.17pts.

Robbie O'Brien, from the same town, was runner-up in his Elan with 76.00pts and he and Evans both had three class wins and established three class records in their best nine scores. Nigel Rees from Newport, Monmouthshire, finished third in his Barnet-BMC with 75.19pts while Tim West came fourth in his Lotus Elan on 75.11pts.

Of the 15 drivers who scored points Roger DuCroq-Slip was fifth in his Elan (46.91pts) and Colin Boon in his Escort finished sixth with 31.92pts. One definite point about the Welsh scene in 1978 is that Pontypool is now out of the championship owing to adverse public pressure on the local council.

New club for Loton marshals

Hagley & District LCC are to form a Loton Park Marshals' Club so that registered helpers at the club's events at the Shropshire venue can be kept right up to date with the happenings on the hill. With helpers coming from a widely scattered area including not only Shrewsbury, but also North Wales and as far as Liverpool, John Dorsett, the former President, is looking for a central venue for social gatherings such as film shows and talks. If you would like to join the club contact John at Lamorna, Middlefield Lane, West

Briefly . . .

● Existing and potential Sports 2000 drivers and entrants are requested to contact the drivers' representative, John L. Webb, (01-570 0259), so that the 1978 SodaStream Sports 2000 register can be formed. Over 40 people connected with the formula attended the BARC dinner dance as an indication of the interest shown in the '78 series.

● The Sevenoaks & District MC, together with the Tunbridge Wells MC are promoting a production car trial at Layhams Farm, Keston, Kent on December 18. The event is a round of the LCAMC and ASEMC championships and regs are available from Chris Judge on Orpington 32144 ext. 418.

● Surrey Sporting CC members make up a fifth of the modsports race at Brands this week. The amiable Lawrence Cutler drives his 1310cc Sprite in the company of Colin Charman's 1293cc Midget.

● The North Devon MC are organising their annual Ilfracombe Rally on December 3/4. It is the penultimate round of the ASWMC Road Rally Championship and starts from Barnstaple taking in a 120-mile route. Regs are available from Mrs Moira Horne, 16 Russell Close, Lankey, near Barnstaple, North Devon.

● The MGB GT V8 entered at the Donington Six-Hour Relay was not, in fact, Bob Neville's old car as stated in our report (*Sportscard*, October 20) but the Stratstone-owned and sponsored machine built in mid-1976 for Tim Goss and Mike Gidden to use in modsports. Bob Neville did race his own car occasionally last season but then sold it to Malcolm Beer who has used it in MGCC events this season. Gidden and Goss built their car with assistance from Stratstone Ltd, the chain of Leyland dealers, who then bought the car from them as a 'sponsorship deal'. It was used in the recent Brands Hatch G5 race where Neville shared the driving with sports car ace Goss. The car is prepared at the Stratstone Willesden Lane depot to whom the credit is due for the car's recent reliability.

● For two weeks running Damien Magee and Jim Kelly have been led for the first few laps of *Formule Libre* races at Brands Hatch, firstly by David Orbell's Stallwood U2 a couple of weeks back and then, last weekend, by Wil Arif in his Reynard FF2000. Arif qualified on pole after a very wet practice and rushed away until the F5000 monster's tyres warmed up properly in the race where Magee scored his second victory in as many weeks.

● Auto-Power Services, a small company in Daventry specialising in supercharging and turbo-installations, have recently been engaged on some interesting competition cars. They have prepared a supercharged 3.5-litre Rover/Buick-powered Kitchener single-seater for hillclimbs, a blown Rover-powered Viva for drag racing and a 7-litre Chevrolet-engined F1 stock car. They can be contacted on Daventry 76161.

● First winner of the Longton rallycross championship, Richard Painton from Oxford, received his £150 cheque at a presentation ceremony recently. The series last year was run over four rounds at Longridge and one each at Lydden and Knockhill. Second place man John Butterfield from Milnthorpe received £100 and Mal Woodhouse from Lancaster collected £80 for third spot. All three gained their successes in Minis and of the 42 registered contend-



Well-known Norfolk circuit racer Dick Adams tried his hand at Rallycross at Snetterton on Sunday. Using a basically unsorted 1-litre Mini previously autocrossed by Paul Brunton, Adams took to the slippery sport well finishing a creditable 15th overall after retiring in the Run-off finals and being close to winning two of the qualifying races. Having decided not to sell his special saloon Vauxhall Chevette, Adams is now working on improving the racer's braking and suspension departments as well as hoping the finance will allow for a more potent engine to be fitted before next season.

● Speed Promotions Ltd, the motorsport orientated promotions set-up allied to Ken Hensley Racing, are offering a full administration service to FF1600, FF2000 and F3 competitors for next season. The company will arrange entries, hotel bookings, test dates, etc, and more information is available from Richard Tucker on 01-485 0386.

● Tony Hill's Triumph Dolomite Sprint engine, which has proved so effective this year in the Britax production saloon series, was deemed completely legal following a check by RAC scrutineers a couple of weeks back.

● This year's Unipart calendar takes the era of the Silent Screen as its theme. It has a strictly limited circulation of 15,000 copies and will be released in four three-month sections, thus retaining its appeal throughout the year. In the four years that it has been produced the calendar has received a National Business Award and has even been hung in the Victoria and Albert museum as an outstanding example of calendar art.

● An RAC Tribunal, held at Belgrave Square on Monday afternoon, rejected Roger Turner's appeal against the disqualification of his Lada from the results of the Britax Production Saloon Car Championship round at Silverstone on September 4. His appeal fee was returned. This now means that Derrick Brunt, driver of the Manitou-LE BMW 3.0Si can be confirmed as winner of the Britax prodsaloon series. A final points table will appear next week.

● The annual FF2000 competitors' dinner will be at the Centre Hotel, London Airport, on Saturday, January 14 (7.30 for 8pm). Tickets are £8.50 single or £16 double and application should be made to Jane Hartop on 01-405 7841 (day) or 05827-3032 (evenings); or Frank Bradley on 01-890 4352, except between December 15 and January 5. The hotel is also offering a special rate of £11.50 for a double room for the night. The price of the tickets includes wine, disco, cabaret and, of course, food.

● Dinner Dance and Presentations time is here again. The British Women Racing Drivers Club's variation on that theme will be at the Skyways Hotel, Heathrow, on January 28, 1978, with tickets costing just £8.50 each. Application should be made to Judy Andreason, 51 Chalk Hill, West End, Southampton SO3 3BY, and the club would be interested to know before December 31 the likely numbers.

● Sunderland & District MC promote their 1977 North Star Rally, sponsored for the second year by Cliff House Garage Ltd of Seaham, County Durham, on December 10/11. It is the final round of the ANECCC championship and copies of the regs are available from Malcolm Lanes, Stotfold Farm Cottage, Seaton, Seaham, Co. Durham.

● After three seasons of motor sport sponsorship, Century Oils, as part of a planned programme strategy, is to withdraw from the sport for a minimum period of 12 months to concentrate on new point of sale promotions. Since its debut in production saloon racing the company has extended its interests to Sports 2000, prodsports and special saloon racing as well as rallying.

● TVR Engineering Ltd has appointed two new dealers to its UK network. They are Roseland Motors, Ltd, of Veryan, Truro, Cornwall—the family business run by Gerald Morse, son Gary and daughter Janice, all of whom compete regularly in many branches of motor sport—and Dearne Valley Motors Ltd, of Bow Bridge Garage, Sheffield road, Rotherham, Yorks, under the management of Len and John Hull.

BRANDS HATCH

The Rochester MC hosts this Sunday's 'winter clubbie' at Brands Hatch which features a seven-race programme comprising Mini 7s, MG Midgets, FF1600, special saloons, *Formule Libre*, COMCC handicap and modsports events. The meeting starts with morning practice, racing following at 1.15pm.

Sports car for Hough and Ark

After supporting cars built by Ark Racing of Willenhall for eight years, mainly in modsports racing, Arthur Hough & Sons Ltd of Essington, Wolverhampton, joined forces with Ark Racing as joint entrants of the Elans driven by John Bury and Max Payne this season. Arthur Hough Pressings, manufacturers of wire and strip formed components, was rewarded with 11 outright wins, 16 class victories and 21 fastest laps. Bury's Elan, the ex-John Evans car powered by a Phil Marks-tuned 1.8 Lotus twin-cam unit, scored 10 outright wins (11 class firsts) and now holds class lap records at Aintree, Oulton Park and Snetterton. Payne's machine is an all-new lightweight car built by Derek Matthews in the early part of the year and won its class on its debut at Aintree in May. Max has an outright victory, five class wins and seven fastest laps to his credit. His ultra-low Elan has been fitted recently with an 1800cc Paul Ivey-built twin-cam unit. For next season Arthur Hough Pressings have acquired the first of the new side-radiatored Lola T492s for Bury to run in the Soda-Stream Sports 2000 series, John having competed in the final round this year to acclimatise himself to his new mount. The Lola is finished in the white livery of the company and also has support from Castrol.

Four round rallycross at Lydden

TEAC are once again organising a four-round rallycross championship at Lydden this winter but, unlike previously, it will be compacted into four months. The dates are as follows: December 4, February 5; March 5 and March 27. The overall championship winner will receive £200, the winner of each round £50 and the total prize fund is well over £1,000. Entry forms are available from Mrs D. Webb, 8 Heathleigh Drive, Langdon Hills, Essex at £7 per round or £25 the series. Leading names already entered include Castrol International winner Gordon Rogers (Mini), Trevor Reeves (Mini), Barry Lee (Burton Escort), John Greasley and John Clark (Porsches) and Colin Slaughter (Skoda).

Turner is on the mend

Out of hospital and recovering quickly, it seems, is Jeremy Turner, who broke his right arm and leg in a nasty crash at the televised Thruxton meeting a couple of weeks ago. Turner hopes to be up and about in three or four weeks (although his medical advisers are not in total agreement!) and asked us to thank all those marshals and fellow FF2000 competitors who wrote to or visited him in hospital. He can't do it himself, you see, 'cos he's broken his writing arm! Get well soon, Jeremy.



While Bill Riddle was proving that his purchase of George Warren's Mk2 Escort-BDA (above) was a shrewd one by winning at Snetterton many onlookers thought that the car was still Castrol sponsored. In fact his entry was from Dudsbury Car Club and Riddle is still looking for a backer. One who has found one is Ian Semple who travelled down from Merseyside with his RoadRunner Express Delivery Service backed 1300 Escort for his first taste of Snetterton's bumps, bringing with him the firm's principal Ged Mason for his first ever event in a 1-litre Imp, Mason having a debut win in a qualifying race. Ian Hall had a brand new Mk2 Escort shell on his 2-litre Escort but retained the Mk1 running gear, in fact he decided not to participate after realising that the eight cars were to leave the grid together, not in two groups of four. Also with a Mk2 shell on the way is Colin Page.

Two car team for Unicorn

Unicorn Transport Ltd, a small London based road transport/shipping company, are undertaking their first ever motor racing season in 1978 by sponsoring special saloon drivers Michael Law and Reg Lewis in the 1-litre class. Both drivers will be out in George Bevan-powered Chrysler Imps; Law (ironically a policeman from Upper Norwood) having competed in 1976 with an Imp and Lewis embarking on his first year of racing under the Unicorn banner. Both cars will be decked out in the red, white and blue livery of the East London sponsors—several of their competitors are known to be considering sponsorship in '79—so emphasis is being put on promotion and appearance of the Unicorn Transport Racing Team with a view to encouraging others to enter the sport in the future.

Good old faithful

Graham Hathaway's faithful old ex-Formula 3 Novamotor Ford Twincam just back from a rebore and re-build really showed the BDAs the way round the Snetterton Rallycross track on Sunday. Now boasting 1650cc the David Rowe Racing Escort seemed very quick off the line as confirmed by its driver. The next power increase should come from the fitting of fuel-injection in time for next month, then the tidy-driving Essex Rallycrosser should be well to the front of the forthcoming BTRDA Rounds. Brother Barry meanwhile has longer-term plans of building up a 1700 BDA-engined Ford Fiesta.

Bennett in the Shadows next year

What must be one of the most exciting snippets of news on the club scene this week comes from Leeds driver Phil Bennett. He has purchased what amounts to an amateur Grand Prix stable from Aim Racing's Roger Springett: three ex-works/Team P.R. Reilly Shadow DN3s and a stock of spares to run them. Spearheading the team will be the ex-Pryce/Wilds DN3B/5A chassis which has been reassembled around Brian Henton's current F1 DFV engine. Phil hopes to run the car in club *Formula Libre* events next year unless sponsorship enables him to field it in the newly announced F1/F2 series "with a really good driver in the cockpit."

The second chassis (ex-Redman/Pryce DN3/3A) may be built up as a lightweight hillclimb car when a second DFV is obtained while the third car, the one badly damaged by Mike Wilds at Mallory last year (DN3/2A), has not yet been rebuilt. Bennett has raced and hillclimbed since 1966, first with a Triumph TR2 then in a series of E-type Jaguars before some occasional outings in the Patrick Head-designed Scott F2 car now owned by Warren Booth. Phil has long held the ambition to try F1 machinery but, owing to business commitments, will be competing "purely for the fun of it".

● Jeremy Rossiter's Piper FF2000 unit, sealed at the Thruxton finals meeting last month, was stripped and found completely legal by RAC

Briefly . . .

● Following their most successful year's hillclimbing to date, in which Alister Douglas-Osborn and Malcolm Dungworth finished first and seventh respectively in the RAC Championship, the Waring & Gillow team are building two new cars for next season. Team Manager Dungworth will once again drive alongside ADO taking in all the RAC rounds and as many others (including a couple on the continent) as possible.

● Philip Guerola heads the *Formule Libre* list this week at Brands with his unique Wimhurst F2 now in Atlantic trim. Other notable entries include Dick Penney's neat March 713S F4 car and Linda Elmes in her husband's Lotus 41C.

● Tim Davies, the 26-year-old Welshman who has driven Brands Hatch Racing's Rolatruc Elden Opportunity Car capably of late, is to have a session in Divina Galica's F1 Surtees TS19 under her direction at Brands on Thursday. This is the top award given annually by BHR to their most outstanding pupil.

● The third annual Akeley Pram Race at the Bull and Butcher, Akeley was ably won by Andy Gibbs and Graham Warner in their Lotus Peewee Special after a startline shunt had delayed several 'drivers'. The race, organised by the South Midlands region of the BMRMC, was completed in record time and Clerk of the Course, Rad Dougall, excelled himself at the drivers' briefing and the start and finish ceremonies. Over £30 was raised for local charities and 'Mine Host', Geoff Creber finished a creditable last on the event.

● The 218 MC are holding a co-promoted production car trial at Frylands Wood Scout Camp, Featherbed Lane, New Addington on Sunday, November 27. Entries are available now from Mike Reed, 298 Malden Road, Cheam, Surrey. Tel: 01-644 0745.

● Apologies to Formula One Racewear who generously sponsored the Brands Hatch Formula Ford Festival earlier this month which we omitted to mention at the time. Chris Steyne, who runs the successful business, explained "we have been approached by several drivers in the past for sponsorship but of course we cannot sponsor everyone so this was our way of putting something back into the sport which we have made our profession", and very well-received it was too!

● Tavern MC's Omega Rally, sponsored this year by the expanding John Brown Wheels concern, will take place near Bristol on December 17/18. Regulations are available from Mike Drawneek, 161 Rodway Road, Patchway, Bristol. Tel: Bristol 696989.

● A pair of neatly turned out Firenzas are entered for Sunday's special saloon race at Brands, these being the Team Castrol car for Tony Whibley (last weekend's winner) and Mike Newman's magnificent Holden & Hartley (Burnley) machine which, sadly, rarely ventures down south. also out should be Tony Long in a Triumph Dolomite Sprint and the rapid John Davies in his smart Transpeed Cooper S.

● Jon Reichelt, who used to campaign an elderly chassis in FF1600 a couple of seasons back, is out again at Brands on Sunday but in a Reynard 77. Other interesting entries in the race include the incredible old Royales of Tom Whiter and Peter Lawrence (both Mansell Builders-sponsored) and the Scorpion Royale of Marshall G. Bush

edited by Robin Bradford

Second Libre win for Magee and Lola

The second Sunday meeting in the popular series of Brands Hatch winter clubbies was organised by the local Sevenoaks & District MC, who ran smoothly through their programme of six races to finish well in advance of nightfall. Rain during practice resulted in some unusual grid positions which added to the fun of the day.

Doctor David Enderby took his 850 Mini to a flag-to-flag win in the opening ten-lapper for fully modified and 850 Formula Minis after Michael Holland—who had driven through the field from a 10secs penalty grid position—suffered an engine blow-up in his Imp. Eddie McLurg was another to start from the back, but his Imp lasted only three laps before taking to the grass on the inside of Clearways and retiring with no oil pressure.

Bob Jarvis (Davrian) was set to repeat his easy victory of the previous weekend, but Mike Chittenden in Dave Mercer's Elan put an end to that plan, Jarvis following the larger-engined Elan for the full ten laps. He was badly baulked just after mid distance and could not make up the lost ground. He was, nevertheless, well clear of fellow Davrian driver Pat Longhurst, who in turn had a healthy advantage over the class-winning Ginetta of John Wilmshurst. Rob Haigh (MGA) threatened the leaders before spinning on lap two but retired two laps later.

The Len Gibbs team thought *Formule Libre* practice came later than it did and they missed it. Damien Magee, therefore, had to start the F5000 Lola from the back of the grid with a penalty. Philip Guerola (Wimhurst) shot forward early and then stalled as the lights changed, but everyone got round him. Wil Arif (FF2000 Reynard) set the pace ahead of Jim Kelly (Trojan) while Damien was already with the backmarkers by Druids. Kelly took over the lead at the end of lap three and Magee was through midway round lap five. Kelly took advantage of Magee's problems with back markers and dived ahead again on lap eight, but his glory only lasted a lap, and Magee was then ahead again for good. Behind this pair, Arif fell into the clutches first of Ronnie Grant's Taurus, then of Olly Hollamby's smoky Crosslé and, by the finish, was not far ahead of FF2000 debutant Tony Halliwell (Crosslé).

Barry Holdsworth put his roadgoing Capri on the front row for the second saloon event which could have been his last race with the car, and even held the lead for 2½ laps before Tony Whibley (Firenza) took over. Edward Punt (Escort) started right at the back but quickly drove through the field and was reeling in the leader at the finish. David Wilson (3.0 Escort) made a lightning start, also from the back row, challenging Whibley for third place through Paddock on lap one, but he spun and stalled late when trying to stay with Punt. On a dry track, Holdsworth had a hard time keeping Terry Harmer's Mini at bay, but he managed it and was rewarded with third place.

The Bristol Street Motors (Bromley) sponsored FF1600 event provided Bernard Devaney (Hawke) with his second win on the trot, helped by Roger Pedrick (Hawke) having his inevitable spin at Paddock on lap two. Peter Argetsinger and Bill Shepherd (Crosslés) were left to squabble over second place, finishing in that order. Murray Dudgeon, in his ex-van Rooyen Royale, and Peter Lawrence (Royale) completed the top six.

After romping away from the 1000 cc saloon car field for a couple of laps, John Homewood throttled back into a dice with John Schneider, the two Imps performing the rare feat of a complete lap side-by-side before Homewood established the necessary winning margin. Another Imp gave Trevor Gibbs third place on his first visit to Brands, but second fastest man in practice, Reg Lewis, never left the line because his clutch broke as the lights changed.

results

Special Saloon Race (10 laps): 1, David Enderby (850 Mini), 10m 01.3s, 72.06 mph; 2, Eddy Arscott (850 Mini); 3, John Bailey (850 Mini); 4, Peter Daniels (850 Mini). **Fastest lap:** Michael Holland (850 Imp), 56.7s, 76.42 mph.

Modsports Race (10 laps): 1, Mike Chittenden (1.6 Lotus Elan), 8m 42.9s, 82.86 mph; 2, Bob Jarvis (1.1 Davrian Mk7); 3, Pat Longhurst (1.1 Davrian Mk7); 4, John Wilmshurst (1.5 Ginetta G4). **Fastest lap:** Chittenden, 50.9s, 85.13 mph.

Formule Libre Race (15 laps): 1, Damien Magee (5.0 Lola-Chevrolet T332C), 11m 57.5s, 90.58 mph; 2, Jim Kelly (5.0 Trojan-Chevrolet T101); 3, Ronnie Grant (1.6 Taurus-VW Supervee); 4, Olly Hollamby (1.6 Crosslé-VW Supervee). **Fastest lap:** Magee, 45.6s, 95.02 mph.

Special saloons Race (10 laps): 1, Tony Whibley (2.3 Vauxhall Firenza), 9m 13.6s, 78.27 mph; 2, Edward Punt (2.0 Ford Escort BDG); 3, Barry Holdsworth (3.0 Ford Capri s/c); 4, Terry Harmer (1.3 Mini Cooper S). **Fastest lap:** Punt, 52.7s, 82.22 mph.

Formula Ford Race (10 laps): 1, Bernard Devaney (Hawke-Minister DL19), 8m 41.3s, 83.12 mph; 2, Peter Argetsinger (Crosslé-Auriga 32F); 3, Bill Shepherd (Crosslé-Minister 30F); 4, Roger Pedrick (Hawke-Auriga DL15/19). **Fastest lap:** Pedrick, 51.0s, 84.96 mph.

Special saloon Race 10 laps: 1, John Homewood (1.0 Chrysler Imp), 9m 28.1s, 76.27 mph; 2, John Schneider (1.0 Chrysler Imp); 3, Trevor Gibbs (1.0 Chrysler Imp); 4, John Drew (1.0 Mini). **Fastest lap:** Homewood, 53.8s, 80.54 mph.

For sale—and still winning. David Enderby's special saloon Mini.





The new champion—Julian Fack with regular passenger Meg Marrion.

Fack clinches title

The Sporting Trials world saluted a new Champion on Sunday as Julian Fack clinched the RAC title when he won the 28th John Bull Trial at Clipston. It was a triumph well deserved as runner-up Gordon Jackson was the first to admit. Fack has always been noted as one of the great Masters-of-the-Light-Foot but on the day he excelled himself. Many of the eight sections were straightforward muddy blasts but at the far end of the course were two more grassy sections. On the last of the three rounds when leading Gordon Jackson by 11 points Fack trickled his way oh so slowly right to the very top. "Well, that's all over—I just cannot do that," said a rueful Gordon Jackson but he really tried hard.

The trial was organised by the Leicestershire CC who were somewhat stymied by the growing habit among the drivers of arriving late. This time nearly half the field were overdue for signing on and it can only be a matter of time before a club applies the letter of the law. This meant that the morning two rounds were not completed until after 1pm. By this time, though, the issue was fairly clear at the top with Fack 12 points ahead of Jackson. But behind the battle was a close one, with Dennis Allen third and Lee Chappell, Ivor Portlock and Richard Allen tying for fifth behind Lol Hurt.

In the afternoon round Ivor Portlock consolidated his position and nearly overtook Jackson, only failing by four points. Lee Chappell also improved, in spite of his usual passenger, Lindsay hurting her shoulder and having to be replaced by Ann Shanks. Lol Hurt was fifth and Tony Harrison sixth as the Allens faded from the picture. Further down the field there were battles galore and there was even a real to-and-fro for last of the 35 places as Roy Lane and John Hollman eventually finished equal. David Bache finished ahead of several more illustrious names as did an on-form Bob Furness. Once again Tom Stevenson had a fine result finishing just behind John Benson. The less said about John Ward and Bob Dayson the better as they both finished behind Production Trial Champion Roger Bricknell.

So the heat is off for the time being but the fraternity will still gather next weekend at Twywell near Kettering for the Johnson Trial but, until then, the toast of all is to a very worthy Champion.

1, Julian Fack/Meg Marrion (Impunity), 63 pts; 2, Gordon Jackson/Tony le Gras (Ibex), 79; 3, Ivor Portlock/Jill Portlock (Facksimile), 83; 4, Lee Chappell/Lindsay Chappell/Ann Shanks (Ibex), 90; 5, Lol Hurt/Betty Sheldon (Imp Special), 92; 6, Tony Harrison/Peggy Harrison (Kincraft), 94; 7, Dennis Allen/Joyce Allen (Kincraft), 95; 8, Charles Pollard/Margaret Pollard (Kincraft), 97; 9, Richard Allen/Tim Crow (Kincraft), 101; 10, Jack Pearce/Brenda Pearce (Kincraft), 101.

VW on top in Trial

North Cornwall's Road Trial, held over a 57-mile route and involving 14 sections, was won last Sunday by the Bodmin driver M. Bray. Driving a VW in the class for cars with grip tyres he dropped only 10 marks to collect the Tamar Trophy.

The standard car class went to another VW driver, Alan Penhale on 28 marks, who beat Tim Cookman in an NSU Prinz by 17 marks. In the class for standard cars on grip tyres Graham Carlyon (Popular) dropped 16 marks to beat the VW Variant of Duncan Maunder by 6 marks. In the last class for specials Don Statton's Ford-engined Imp and the similarly powered Midget of Ken Bassett both dropped 16 marks but Statton took the class on a tie decider.

Weather problems in Kent

Heavy overnight rain made conditions extremely difficult for Boro 19 MC at Bexley, Kent, last Sunday when they ran their production car trial, many of the 36 sections becoming almost impossible. Star of the day in terms of lowest score—there is no overall winner—was Duncan Welch (Sprite) who dropped only 24 marks to take the specials class where he beat the Beach Buggy of Guy Piejus by 10 marks. There was a close finish in the RERWD class where Tony Booth beat Roger Priddaux by 11 marks in an all-Imp battle.

Class winners: P. Davies (Mini), 157 marks lost; C. Ayres (Escort TC), 198; M. Kemp (Fairthorpe), 138; T. Booth (Imp), 158; D. Welch (Sprite), 24.

Riddle Rules OK!



Graham Hathaway's Escort (above) went well all day while (below) Graham Standage's similar car examined a rather solid bank.



Once again the weather played a key role in a Snetterton Rallycross, the October dust having been replaced by November mud in time for Sunday's meeting with resultant modifications needed to the chalky infield. Fastest man by far in the qualifying races had been Graham Hathaway with his David Rowe Racing Escort TC but he was boxed in at the start of the Final giving a second time out victory to a delighted Bill Riddle in his ex-George Warren Escort-BDA.

West Suffolk MC and Sporting CC of Norfolk had a few surprises for the crowd at their last event in 1977: not only had they a new and enthusiastic sponsor in the Thetford Motor Company, but also for the first time they were starting eight cars at once over four laps of the 0.75-mile track. The latter was received with mixed feelings by the drivers but the spectators certainly approved. Perhaps a longer run to the first bend is called for.

Qualifying for the run-off races for the fastest 24 was by way of three timed runs. David Watson avoided the traffic jam at Paddock bend in the first of these eight-car runs to circulate with a clean screen on his Mini throughout, setting an unbeatable 1300 class time in the process. Next Barry Hathaway made a demon start from the second row in his Ripspeed Mini using grass as well as tarmac and so surprised the rest of the pack that three cars tangled at Paddock and the race needed a re-run. Hathaway again got away first but Pete Simpson's Mini was soon passed as the yellow car slowed and finally stopped. The impressive Dave Stephens in the Blue Line Escort took second.

Max Caston's 1-litre Mini led for an incredible two laps of the next race leading the likes of Riddle and Les Lock in their Dudsbury Car Club-entered Escorts. Sadly he became the first victim of the very slimy tarmac Hairpin and ended his race in the bank, Riddle winning with Chris Gamble (Escort) recovering to take second from a spining Lock. Race Four was the best to date with all eight cars safely negotiating the first corner; Peter Harrold's Autocavan/Team Castrol VW had to fight off a strong challenge from Barry Crump (1500 Mini) before winning, with Paul Northall (TR7) seizing the chance to sneak past Ian Semple (1300 Escort) before the flag. The first runs ended with a fabulous win for Graham Hathaway, his Escort being some 19secs faster for BTD than Derek Scarrow's Mini which took second in this race.

Circuit-racer Dick Adams led for most of Race 7 but the race itself only lasted one lap as the timing gear had failed. The race was re-run after Barry Hathaway had shown his expertise by winning race 8 and Graham Standage's Escort had been removed from the Hairpin bank. In the re-run George Hodge (Mexico) battled the lead out with Adams, once nudging the Mini on the approach to the Hairpin and seeing the Norfolk driver bounce off the bank across the pack. With Gamble winning the next race it was time for a race between Graham Hathaway and Harrold. Again it was the Escort driver who simply flew off the line to be unchallenged while Crump was again pressing Harrold, but the VW vanished from view straight on at the Hairpin with apparant brake failure. Riddle passed Crump but then threw away his second place by sliding into the mud at Paddock on the last lap.

With fewer and fewer cars remaining there were only three races to comprise the third qualifying runs. In the first of these Adams again impressed by leading for most of the race before a spin at Paddock leaving Ged Mason to take his Imp to a win on his Rallycross debut. Melvyn's Smith (1300 Escort) took his first win of the afternoon in the next and Barry Hathaway simply flew away with the final run despite a rear tyre puncture on the last two laps. Crump's ailing Mini was next home but a moment at the Hairpin prevented Riddle from catching Lock.

So to the finals. With only 17 fit cars remaining Roger Frere only needed to leave the grid to qualify 17th and this he did, retiring at Paddock after a spin. To sort out ninth place downwards a full grid lined up. Colin Page roared into Paddock first and left it last after taking the sticky line. Fellow Blue-Line driver Stephens restored the honour by winning the race from the amazing Stan Rolfe and his ever-sideways Capri 3000 who saw a deserved second place reappear as Smith's Escort spun at the Hairpin. Graham Hathaway was on the second row of the grid for the top eight final and just couldn't make it to the front by Paddock. He was further hampered by a leap over a small bank and a a collision with Chris Gamble's Escort which spun in front of him. At the front Brundle led temporily until Riddle's power told. Barry Hathaway drove brilliantly passing both Northall and Lock on consecutive laps underbraking for the Hairpin. The TR7 was third from the spectacular Lock with Crump next after he found out his Mini wasn't going to overheat.

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Overall: 1, Bill Riddle (2.1 Ford Escort-BDA); 2, Barry Hathaway (1.5 Ripspeed Mini); 3, Paul Northall (2.0 Triumph TR7); 4, Les Lock (1.6 Ford Escort); 5, Barry Crump (1.5 Mini); 6, Graham Hathaway (1.6 Ford Escort TC); 7, John Brundle (1.6 Toyota Celica GT); 8, Chris Gamble (1.7 Ford Escort-BDA); 9, Dave Stephens (2.0 Ford Escort); 10, Colin Page (1.9 Ford Escort).
BTD: Graham Hathaway, 4m 32.8s.
Class Winners: Rally Car Class; Gamble, 4m 54.8s; **Rallycross cars, up to 1000cc;** Roger Frere (1.0 Mini), 5m 02.6s; **1001 to 1300cc;** David Watson (1.3 Mini), 5m 12.0s; **over 1300cc;** G. Hathaway, 4m 32.8s.

Frylands Trophy to Ibex

John Hopkins won the Frylands Trophy trial on Sunday, for the second year running, in convincing style. The event was organised by the 750MC and took place at Frylands Wood Scout Camp, New Addington, Surrey.

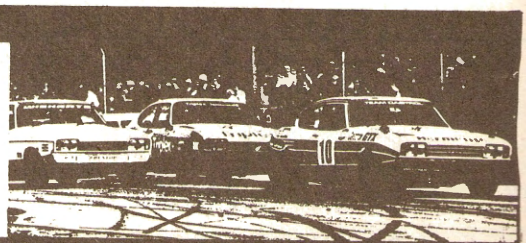
Hopkins led from the start, his second round score of 4 putting him in a commanding position at the halfway stage. At lunch the scores were Hopkins 31, John Higgins 58, Brian Morris 61 and Bill Hicks 62 with Higgins going surprisingly well in his 1300 Trialsmaster which was to stay in contention throughout, finally finishing third (and first in the 1300cc class).

Hopkins dropped only ten more points to win on 41; Allan Brunning moved up to second with a fourth round of 14 ahead of Higgins, Hicks and Morris. Ted Minter and Paul Liddiard finished behind Higgins in the 1300 class while Alan Gisby dominated the 950s all day to finish seventh overall.

1, John Hopkins (Ibex), 41 pts; 2, Allan Brunning (Trialsmaster), 100; John Higgins (Trialsmaster), 105; 4, Bill Hicks (Trialsmaster), 107; 5, Brian Morris (Dryad), 115; 6, Ted Minter (Mintersport), 116; 7, Alan Gisby (AEG), 118; 8, Paul Liddiard (PAL), 124.

International events

Date	Venue	Event
Nov 27	Hockenheim, Germany	F3, F Super Vee, G1-5
Nov 27	Fuji, Japan	G6
Nov 27/28	Turkey	Bosphorus Rally—European Rally Championship for Drivers



British events

Date	Venue	Event	Status	Club	Start	Details
Nov 26/27	Sharmans, Melton Mowbray, (MR129/750¼192)	Rally	R	Loughborough CC	23.00	Sharmans Rally
Nov 26/27	Crawley, Surrey	Rally	CP	CSMA (S. London)	—	Autumn Rally
Nov 26/27	Anso Motors (MR88/306¼443)	Rally	R	Durham AC	23.01	Rally of the Dales
Nov 26/27	Aberdare	Rally	R	Aberdare MC	—	Nutcracker Rally
Nov 27	Brands Hatch, nr Dartford, Kent	Race Meeting	R	Rochester MC	13.30	FF1600, F Libre, Special Saloons Modsports
Nov 27	Twywell, Northants	Sporting Trial	R	Peterborough MC	10.30	Johnson Cup—RAC & Semperit/BTRDA Trials Championship
Nov 27	Frylands Wood, Featherbed Lane, New Addington (MR187/379617)	Prod Car Trial	CP	218 MC	10.00	—
Nov 27	Cuerden Park, Bamber Bridge (MR102/565245)	Prod Car Trial	CP	Preston AC	10.30	—

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



Winner of the Vandervell Formula 3 championship.

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