

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

Start Line

Issue 03/19

www.wigtonmc.co.uk

March 2019

Awards Night Success



Some of our major award winners at the Awards Dinner at the Skiddaw Hotel where we enjoyed an excellent meal and great craic!

Motorsport for All

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www.wigtonmc.co.uk

Talking Point

Topical Comment from the world of motoring

The history of motorsport in the UK is remarkably well documented in many books and publications. Motor Sport here has spanned two centuries and been in the forefront of technical and social change.

In the early days, the first event was at Bexhill in 1902 on a former cycle track. Events on the highway were popular but after some accidents they were banned, a situation that has lasted until just a year ago. The development of Brooklands made it the centre of British motor sport while other venues like Shelsley Walsh and later Donington appeared before the second world war. Rallies and trials were also hugely popular with many manufacturers having works teams. However, the cost of competing (and indeed even owning a car) meant that only the rich (in those days the gentry) and entry lists are littered with titled drivers from honourables to princes.

The Brooklands Racing drivers Club (BRDC) was rather exclusive with a members' enclosure and the policy of "the right crowd and no crowding". With no other circuits until Donington, private roads for hill climbs were popular and the Bugatti OC (the right type of people!) bought Prescott.

WW2 changed things though. Old money had less money or no money, young men came from the war with new ideas and new skills. Brooklands had gone. All sorts of motor sport appeared, old airfields became race tracks, car ownership increased dramatically and sports cars like MGs and Jaguars made performance affordable. Britain became leaders in design with inspirational figures like John Cooper, Colin Chapman and Eric Broadley right through to Adrian Newey who all started making specials from bits of other cars in their own chassis.

The golden age of Club level motorsport was from the late sixties until the nineties. There were lots of events and all were affordable. There were plenty of events to choose from as well. However, since the turn of the century things have changed, for the worse. We are heading back a hundred years to when only a few can afford to compete and the clubman, the man in the street, the enthusiast mechanic, the young professional who is a petrol head, cannot afford to compete anymore.

We see a new breed of competitors from the new rich, they may not have titles, but they have lots of spare cash and come into the sport later in life with open wallets. This has led to commercial races series, professional rally organisers and a whole industry of car preparation firms who provide cars and event back up for ever type of event from racing to historic endurance rallies. The drivers don't prepare the cars, they just turn up and drive them and at the end of the event they leave the car and drive home. Thus, lots of people make a good living from the sport.

However, it's the clubs whose members turn out to marshal as volunteers that allow all this to happen. What will happen when there are no clubmen enthusiasts?

GTF



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The opinions expressed in Start Line are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Club

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Forthcoming Club Events

Spring Autotest

April 14th

At Maryport Business Centre

Entry forms will be emailed out and on the website.

Marshals needed

Autotest and PCA classes

Strict noise test.

Drive It Day

April 28th

Dalemain

Come and go at any time between 11 and 2

Marshals needed

HAGERTY
CLASSIC CAR INSURANCE

Partners with Wigton Motor Club – please call 0844
824 1135 and don't forget to mention your club
when you do!

PG Tips

You'll be pleased to hear I've managed to get into another unlikely motoring based dispute...this time with Marks and Spencers! A couple of weeks ago we went to see Dara O'Briain the well known TV presenter and comedian at Carlisle and went for food in the centre before the show – we were running late so someone decided we should park at the rear of M&S in their pay and display car park. I'm not saying whose idea it was because I'm married to her but it seemed like a reasonable idea and the machine accepted our money and despite the ominous looking gates there were no signs warning that it was shut overnight. I'm sure you can guess the rest! At twenty past 7 when we went to get the car and move to the Sands Centre we found the gates very much locked with our car inside and no one around to speak to. We walked to the Sands Centre, watched the show and made our way home by taxi. After initially blaming Carlisle city council, M&S have now accepted it's their fault and are arranging to pay for the taxi. Hopefully they will put some signs up to warn people now.

Apart from that, all is well in car world (said touching wood) the Alfa V6 is still amazing me with its soundtrack and speed and Snotty is limbering up nicely for the new season. My engine issues seem to have been sorted and final preparations on the body for the season are going swimmingly. I got a pleasant surprise earlier in the month when the man from the Czech Republic, who bought my yellow Rapid last year, contacted me to say that the front spoiler he'd said he would bring with him last March had finally been delivered and would I still like it? I said I very much would and a few days later, a box the size of a coffin arrived for me with the spoiler carefully packed in metres of bubble wrap. What I deduce from that is that it takes the Czechs a year to make a very simple front spoiler for an old Skoda. Hopefully it will soon be attached to Snotty, thus saving me another couple of kilos from the overall weight and thereby guaranteeing significantly faster times (ha!).

I recently put my entry in for the Isle of Man classic speed event (in April as usual) and was dismayed to see that I had to pay £15 to join the Manx Motor Racing Club (the organising club) which is quite a lot considering they don't so much as send out an internet mag or organise other events for that cost. Previously it had been £10 and I also noticed that a variety of northern English and Scottish clubs had been added to the invited club list since I last went in 2017 – meaning their members didn't need to pay. I've been to the event a few times as has fellow committee member David Wiggins along with several other club members over the years so after a night out at the pub decided that rather than start looking at auctions on Ebay I'd email them and ask why Wigton wasn't on the list given our members support in the past. Much to my surprise they agreed to add us to the list of invited clubs retrospectively – so fellow club members, you can now enter the event without having to pay the £15 MMRC joining fee...which is a nice bonus for those of us going this year and could benefit you in future years. As the old saying goes – if you don't ask you don't get.

Peter

Championship News

2019 Club Championships – February Positions

Club Championship Overall

1. Peter Wright	49 pts
2. Phil Hodgson	41 pts
3. John Holliday	40 pts
4=. Peter Masters	38 pts
4=. Drew Maclean	38 pts
6. John Sloan	35 pts
7. Roger Pope	30 pts
8. Aidan Gregory	26 pts
9=. Willie Keening	25 pts
9=. Chris Hunter	25 pts

Ladies Club Championship

1. Fiona Tyson	19 pts
2. Bryony Garner	12 pts

Autotest Championship Overall

1. Willie Keening	25 pts
2. Peter Wright	24 pts
3. Geoff Rae	23 pts
4. Jack Palmer	22 pts
5. Nigel Moffat	21 pts
6. Craig Stamper	20 pts
7. John Holliday	19 pts
8. Peter Masters	18 pts
9. Phil Hodgson	17 pts
10. John Sloan	16 pts

Autosolo Championship Overall

1. Peter Wright	25 pts
2. Phil Hodgson	24 pts
3. Drew MacLean	23 pts
4. Chris Hunter	22 pts
5. John Holliday	21 pts
6. Peter Masters	20 pts
7. John Sloan	19 pts
8. Roger Pope	18 pts
9. Geoff Bateman	17 pts
10. Dave Agnew	16 pts

FWD Autotest Championship

1. Peter Wright	25 pts
2. Craig Stamper	24 pts
3. Peter Masters	23 pts

Autosolo Class A (FWD under 1400 c.c.)

1. Peter Wright	25 pts
2. Peter Masters	24 pts
3. Roger Pope	23 pts

RWD Autotest Championships

1. John Holliday	25 pts
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Autosolo Class B (FWD over 1400 c.c.)

1. John Holliday	25 pts
2. Aidan Gregory	24 pts
3. Dave Garner	23 pts

RWD PCA Championship

1. Phil Hodgson	25 pts
2. John Sloan	24 pts
3. Drew Maclean	23 pts

Autosolo Class D (RWD over 1400 c.c.)

1. Phil Hodgson	25 pts
2. Drew MacLean	24 pts
3. Chris Hunter	23 pts

FWD PCA Championships

1. Geoff Rae	25 pts
2. Jack Palmer	24 pts
3. Nigel Moffat	23 pts

Autosolo Class H (Cars built before 1980)

1. John Sloan	25 pts
2. Geoff Bateman	24 pts
3. Ian Cowan	23 pts.

Specials Autotest Championships

1. Willie Keening	25 pts
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Marshals Championship

1. Steve Palmer	20 pts	4. Eddie Parsons	10 pts
2. David Wiggins	20 pts	5. James Wiggins	10 pts
3. Mary Parsons	10 pts	6. Abby Palmer	10 pts

Late January saw the first Autosolo event of the year at Maryport on a good dry and bright day, if a bit on the chilly side. The course that had been laid out presented a nice open and flowing route to those taking part and was run 5 times in the morning and then a further 6 times in the afternoon, in the reverse direction, and then finished with a 2 lap run to round off the day. There was a good field of 15 entrants and a good diversity of vehicles on display. Peter Wright in his BL Mini once again came out on top overall with a total time of 750 seconds a good 30 clear of second spot Phil Hodgson in the MX5 with 750, which gave him first in Class D. Third spot was taken by Drew MacLean just 4 seconds adrift of Phil with Chris Hunter in fourth place a further 16 seconds behind Drew. John Holliday turned up in a BMW Mini to take fifth place with 823 which also gave him a win in Class B. A close day long tussle in Class H eventually saw John Sloan coming out on top in his "new" Mk2 Escort, 5 seconds faster than me in the MGBGT. Fastest lady on the day was Fiona Tyson in the MX5 with Chris in the passenger seat enjoying the sunshine.

The Autosolo results have made some difference to the overall championship positions with Peter Wright moving up in to the lead position with Phil Hodgson 8 points behind in second place. With only three points separating 2nd to 6th places the top of the leader board is quite tight at the moment. Fiona Tyson has increased her lead in the Ladies Championship to 7 points.

The Marshal's championship is jointly led by Steve Palmer and David Wiggins who have officiated at both counting events this year with all other participants being level on 10 points.

There has been no change in the autotest championship tables this month but this will get a lot more interesting once the grass autotests get under way later in the year.

The PROTYRE challenge registrations are coming in a steady trickle and the car stickers are being sent out to those registering as they come in. It was decided that due to the cancellation of the White Heather Tests a further qualifying event later in the year would be added. That event is to be the Stocktonian event which is currently scheduled for the 15th September, so remember to add that one to your diaries. The event has not been held for the last couple of years due to venue problems on the ranges but this year they have a new venue so it's looking hopeful that it will be going ahead as planned. The first counting event for the PROTYRE challenge will therefore be the Berwick Classic on May 4th and 5th.

Geoff Bateman

Our friends in **Spadeadam Motor Club** are celebrating their 60th anniversary this year. We have been invited to their:

60th Anniversary Road Run

Based in Brampton Cumbria

on the 2nd June 2019

Entry Fee of £50.00 to include

Sausage/Bacon Roll-Tea/Coffee at the start

Light Lunch-Rally Board & Road Book

For an entry form email:- smcroadrunba@aol.com

Cumbria Classic & Motorsport Show

August 18th

At Dalemain

11 - 4

All the usual attractions: traders, food,
autojumble, autotests, club displays

Free entry to Dalemain Gardens and reduced
House entry.

Featured marques: Ford Capri, Citroen, Mini,
Bentley & Mazda MX5

Entry forms on the website.

Club forms will be issued next month.

Hugh Chambers Interview Part 2

In this third part of the interview we moved on from future plans and strategies to a variety of more general topics ...

Q: It's not just new competitors we need, we need more Scrutineers and Marshals, and organisers are getting fewer in number (and getting older) and we need to address that, as well as lowering the cost barrier for newcomers coming into the sport.

I think that's whether it's competitors, or officials or marshals, we need to be going to where the young people are and I think frankly, probably people of our sort of age are not the right people to talk to the people who are the kids! We need to, and we've got some great young people working at Motorsport UK. I can name half a dozen of them that immediately spring to mind who are the right side of 30 and have got a vibrant excited attitude towards motor sport.

Those are the people we need to reach out to, from schools to universities. Also, getting out to local motor clubs and attracting young people.

I actually think that motor sport engineering courses in this country are an extremely fertile area for us to forge a much closer partnership with those academic institutions. There are hundreds and hundreds of students each year now doing motorsport engineering degrees and yet there is no formal linkage between those courses and Motorsport UK. I'm not just talking about endorsement or ratification, I'm talking why wouldn't you have everybody that's on a motorsport engineering course, or similar, has to be a marshal at least once a year, why wouldn't you make them take a base level scrutineer's course? There's lots of things that I'm sure we can do working with the educational establishments to start to feed people into the sport, but to make it work, we've got to reduce those barriers to entry. We've got to reduce bureaucracy, reduce the form filling and make it more transparent. I think the problem with bureaucracy is that it can lead to a lack of transparency because people like to hide behind 'the system' – "That's the way it is done, if you don't like it, go and play somewhere else".

David and myself work on a transparent basis – if you can't tell the world about it, it probably is not right. We've got to be able to have everything set out that everybody knows the way it works, and I think Scrutineering is in that particular area. John Ryan and his team do a particularly fantastic job but I think Scrutineering overall is a fairly loveless task because they've got a hell of a job to do depending on the category of racing. It's a hell of a responsibility in the time they have got to evaluate a vehicle, I think it's extremely difficult.

Q: Scottish Motor Sports has spent a lot of time and effort time visiting universities and colleges to attract students, what other ways can we reach, entice and encourage youngsters.

The 'Rallye Jeune' programme in France is something we are looking at very carefully. I had no idea until recently that Sebastien Ogier and Sebastien Loeb both came out of the Rallye Jeune programme which is extraordinary. It is actually based on an 'autotest' format in car parks and I think that's a fantastic way to get started.

Q: One make championships and formulae provide a good introduction to motor sport but how do we control costs? The Peugeot 205 Challenge was one of the best with a good supply of affordable cars and spare parts, but modern cars have a shorter production life and as each new model is introduced it has an impact on previous model performance and the availability of parts. Richard Burns and Louise Aitken-Walker came through the 205 programme and so to a lesser extent did Colin McRae.

In actual fact I've just come out of a technical meeting with manufacturers, about single seaters, and we were having exactly that same conversation about that. That also has to be our responsibility to manage, whether it's to do with sporting regulations or technical regulations, to contain costs. Cost is the biggest enemy of all of this and but we need to make it sensible otherwise the thing is going to shrink and shrink, and you're going to end up with tiny grids at circuit racing or tiny fields in rallies if you don't make it accessible and fair. It's just obvious. It's in all our interests to control it.



We're looking at it very closely. Obviously in Wales you've got 'Rally4Wales' in terms of the contracted party and we've got a meeting with them this afternoon. It's a massively important thing for us to figure out

a way through this because it's going to kill forest stage rallying unless we get it right. The reality is, to quote one of David's speech comments is that we only use around 5% of the actual forestry routes in this country – if that, and I'm sure it's even less than that. It's something we've really got to look at very, very carefully.

Once again my thanks to John Fife for allowing me to use this interview. Read more of this reports and articles at: www.jaggybunnet.co.uk/

How the motoring scene has changed, not always for the better

Part 2

If I had been going to do a rally such as the Safari rally or a London to Sydney marathon I would have chosen a 240 Volvo, earlier ones took at the most an hour to replace a timing belt, it didn't even bend valves if the timing belt snapped, the water pump was a separate component not even required at a timing belt change, also very easy again to replace. The alternator brushes could be replaced in less than 10 mins as could the Bosch points and condenser, a clutch could be done at the side of the road in under two hours. When we went to the continent on holiday towing our caravan, I took all these parts as spares with me, only once did I need to fit a set of alternator brushes, after that we replaced customers brushes as a preventative service operation just as we did with timing belts.

My current D5 V70 Volvo does almost 50mpg on a run, almost double the mpg of the petrol 240s, it has lots more power at 185BHP and far more torque. I really love it but all the jobs such as clutch, alternator and timing belt are major jobs just like all modern cars are these days and without all the diagnostic equipment and my two post lift it would be impossible to do many minor jobs let alone the bigger ones.

How can this be progress when it was possible to replace a complete clutch assembly on an early model front wheel drive Vauxhall Astra in about 30 mins at the side of the road. Today on most cars it requires lowering of subframe and a serious amount of other equipment is required to reset steering angle sensors and suchlike. I really despair at so called progress, sustainability and legislation forcing older cars off the road and replacing them with electric or Hybrid vehicles that can't even get to London from Cumbria without recharging a couple or more times never mind the pollution caused when building the car in the first place or lack of generating capacity for these electric "wonder cars" that were supposed to save the planet.

When I worked at the steelworks they had the capacity at Workington to melt scrap cars or any other scrap steel in an electric arc furnace, pour it into an ingot mould that had been made at Chapel Bank works half a mile away near Workington docks, roll it into rails, girders or any other product or sell the newly rolled "bloom" to other manufacturing companies such as Fords in order to be made into a new cars. These days scrap goes all the way to China on polluting ships, converted into steel blooms in China's vast steelworks then sold back to our country again travelling in polluting ships. This is a crazy situation supposedly to keep our counties carbon emissions low.

No wonder many of us get a great deal of enjoyment by rebuilding and competing in cars such as my Buckler or Austin 7s. An Escort MK2 would be a great choice being simple, easy to work on and fix but their values are stratospheric these days which is a great pity. MX5s have taken over from the MK2 Escorts as a really usable clubman's motorsport vehicle but it would be nice to have a bit more variety, fortunately MGBs are in plentiful supply and at least parts for these 50-year-old vehicles are still widely available.

Building cars bought from scrapyards gave people lots of cheap fun, increased their general skills and breaking down in the middle of the night in Kielder or other forests in the north of Scotland or in deepest Wales usually meant the cause could be found enabling us to get home under our own steam so to speak. If it was a head gasket, we left off the radiator cap put sealant in the system if we had any, failing that you broke raw eggs into the radiator from the nearest farm and limped back to civilisation. How much longer will the average person be able to compete in cheap motorsport, that question remains to be answered.

Keith Thomas

Autojumble

Cars for sale:

Ford Pilot V8; 3622cc, 28/09/1950 £9,000 ono

Daimler 2548cc: 09/08/1968 Racing green, spoked wheels £16,000 ono

Riley 1.5: 1947 red £6,500

Rover 80: 2286cc, 1962 Black £8,000

Land Rover Defender 110: 07/02/1996, 2495cc. Ex mountain rescue, low mileage, complete restoration, many extras, lights, seats, winch & roof rack. Offers.

Phone David Wilson on 01461338314 (Gretna)

Fuchs Silkolene 20w/50 Oil: 4 litres for £14.50. Lots of new and second hand MG B parts. Contact Graeme Forrester on gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk

Diversions

Motoring Which reports that expensive cars and SUVs are the most unreliable over the first three years following a members' survey. In almost every case the faults were on the many extra "gizmos" so called luxury cars now have. Meanwhile **What Car** says "Nothing much goes wrong with a Dacia as there is nothing much to go wrong!" Perhaps a lesson to be learned there?

KLMC are not running their **Devils Own Rally** this year. Martyn Taylor and his team have run a super event in recent years, as near as possible to a "proper" rally of the 70s but it must have involved a huge amount of work and the team have stepped down.

Most stolen and recovered cars in 2018: 1, BMW X5; 2, Mercedes C Class; 3, BMW 3 Series; 4, Mercedes E class; 5, BMW 5 Series; 6, Range Rover Vogue; 7, Land Rover Discovery; 8, Range Rover Sport; 9, Mercedes S class; 10, Mercedes GLE. Several of the Range Rovers were recovered when they broke down!

From The Top

News from UK Motorsport, Regions and the WMC Committee

There is good news from **SACC** as the Scottish Government report of closed road events looks very positive and will hopefully get government approval.

Motorsport UK want to know what could make the Wales Rally GB better and invite members to do this survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2019WRGBSurvey>

WMC Committee News:

Work on the Classic and Motorsport Show is going well. Trade and vehicle entry forms have gone out and all the food and drink outlets have signed up. Club stand entry forms will go out next month.

The Training Day was cancelled due to lack of interest.

There is a need to reduce noise levels at the autotest venue at Maryport. Noise tests will be strictly enforced and 360 degree turns will not be included due to "tyre squeal".

Plans for Drive it Day are well advanced.

We are seeking nominations for our two local charities for 2019.

Membership at the end of January was up by 81 compared to the same date last year. Final reminders will go out to those who have not renewed.

Work at Moota should start shortly as the ground has now dried up.

Sadly we have lost some venues on the LDC> If you know of any within 20 miles of Penrith please contact any committee member ASAP



**Recognised
Club**

Welcome

Welcome to the following new members and we hope that you will enjoy our events and social activities.

Phil Howarth of Wallasey

Robert Cook of Hetton le Hole

Alan and Linda Baverstock -

For most of you this will be your first magazine and we really hope that you will enjoy reading it.

For any changes or queries about membership please contact

Maggy Bateman on 01697349919

or by email at wmcmemsub@outlook.com

Marshal Force

Marshals are the life blood of our activities

March	9th	Malcolm Wilson Rally	David Agnew
April	5th	Flying Scotsman at Rowrah	Graeme Forrester
April	14th	Autotest at Maryport	John Holliday
April	28th	Drive It Day (Dalemain)	Graeme Forrester

Elderly Utterances

The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say

The Midweek Meander was well supported on 20th February with a surprising 32 entries of which 29 started - significantly more than last year. It just proves that members can take a Wednesday out occasionally for some motoring. Starting from Dobbies Garden Centre the 73 mile route headed south and east into the Eden Valley before turning west to the fell road at Mungrisedale and up to Hesket Newmarket before finishing at Moota Coffee Shop. It was a mild wet day and not a sign of ice or snow. The County Council created a surprise road works diversion at Southwaite and we created one of our own to avoid a potential problem at the ford at Calebrack but otherwise no problems with the route. Thanks to all the entrants.

The Awards night at the Skiddaw Hotel at Keswick was ably organised by the enthusiastic Marian Sloan and attended by 48 members and guests who were well fed and looked after by the hotel staff to the usual high standard. Although we had a good night there was a dramatic fall off in attendance compared to previous years and 60% of the awards winners weren't present to collect. I believe this no-show of winners indicates a disrespect for the organisers and the club in general. I fully understand that holidays and work sometimes prevent attendance but unfortunately the absence of one person often leads to a cluster of several people in their social group not attending. On a positive note we did have awards winners who travelled from Hull and Lancashire for the evening and very welcome they were too. Some soul searching will be necessary before next year's event is arranged otherwise we may as well plan for it to take place in the club caravan.

As part of our club resolution to plan events well in advance I have posted details and entry forms for the Rose and Thistle – 17th August to be followed shortly by the Coast to Coast – 20th September in the events section of the club website. Be sure to put the dates in your diaries and study the details. We look forward to the usual great support for such events.

A strong contingent of club members turned out to marshal the Fellside Trial sections 2 and 3 at Fletchertown in glorious weather. We started at 8am and were finished by 10.50. All good fun, good company and not too wet and muddy. Club members have also been asked to help marshal sections on the forthcoming Flying Scotsman vintage reliability trial which is organised by The Endurance Rally Association and takes place on 5th to 7th April. The Kart Circuit at Rowrah will be a busy place on Friday 5th and volunteers to help there will be most welcome. North of the Border we will be manning controls on the Ministry of Defence Dundrennan ranges near Kirkudbright the following day. All of the cars taking part will be of a model type produced prior to 1948 ranging from a 1911 Knox R of 7.2 litres to a 1948 HRG 1500. The ninety five cars will have a value of many £millions and it's a credit to their owners that they are used in a competitive manner – 'don't spare the horses Jeeves'. I last competed in the Flying Scotsman with Mike Thompson eight years ago in his 1928 Chrysler 75 which was great fun. Since then I have marshalled on every repeat event that has passed through our territory but this year I'm pleased to say I will be navigating for our club President in his 1937 Bentley Derby of 4250cc. Also competing will be members Keith Graham and Sue Hoffmann in their 1935 3.5 litre Bentley VDP of 3500cc who will no doubt keep us on our toes.

Ron.

Classic Column

News from the Classic and Historic Scene

SUNSHINE AND MOTORSPORT STARS BRING RECORD CROWDS TO RACE RETRO, POWERED BY *MOTOR SPORT*

Visitors to this year's Race Retro, powered by *Motor Sport*, were treated to motorsport stars, rally legends and glorious sunshine at Stoneleigh Park over the weekend, bringing a record crowd to the show.

Some 24,212 enthusiasts attended over the three show days, an increase on 2018's 23,100 attendees, to see the mix of rally and racing cars as well as special guests including British racing drivers John Watson and John Fitzpatrick along with 'Rally Professor' Rauno Aaltonen.

Event Director Lee Masters said: "This is the third year the show has been under Clarion Event's ownership and to 'buck the trend' and increase the audience in the current climate is testament to all those who have helped and supported not only our vision for the much loved event but their own passion for the future of Race Retro and historic motorsport."

The *Motor Sport* Live Stage also played host to F1 engineer Frank Dernie, rally drivers Rosemary Smith, Russell Brookes, Jimmy McRae, and Willy Cave as well as racing pundit Tony Jardine and BTCC driver Antony Reid to name a few.

On Saturday and Sunday, visitors were treated to two new Live Rally Stages with over 120 Group B and WRC cars in action under the watchful eye of Rallying with Group B. The existing stage had been forced to move due to the construction of HS2 and, despite a steep learning curve on the first session on finding the prime viewing locations, the new layout proved very entertaining for both the drivers and spectators.

Rauno Aaltonen was the first across the start line after being reunited with the original Mini he drove to victory in the Monte Carlo Rally, with owners Patrick Walker acting as co-driver. Jimmy McRae lined-up alongside him in his late son Colin's Subaru.

The number of rally stars must have inspired a new generation as HERO events offered driver and navigator training to over 150 novices and rally crews looking to hone their skills. HERO also offered 'Arrive and Drive' opportunities to go behind the wheel of one of their classic fleet while on Sunday 30 cars took part in the Retro Classic Tour.

Photos by Graeme Forrester - many more on the Face Book Page.,

Rallying Call



Social Scene

Social Night at Paul Benn's Garage at Cockermouth Auction

From 7 pm on Wednesday, April 10th

Views his collection of WRC cars,

films , refreshments

All members welcome!

Diversions

I've always wondered about **how electric cars cope in the winter** when the battery is powering the lights, entertainment and heating without being recharged. Well a recent report rather proves my point in that in low temperatures electric cars lose 40% of their range. As well as the use of power for lights and heating, the actual battery becomes less efficient at lower temperatures. Just imagine that you are coming up the M6 with enough range to get you home and you end up at Shap with the road blocked for hours. You just have to switch everything off and wait until the road opens!

Another factor for electric cars is their **overall environmental impact** which is much greater than for a conventional car. It's not just how the electric is produced by fossil fuels, but the actual vehicle makes use of special materials to reduce weight which are more difficult (or impossible) to recycle. Lithium itself is a finite resource it is likely that the battery will wear out before the rest of the car with a replacement costing several thousands of pounds, leading to the car being written off. Disposing of the old battery is another issue that has yet to be fully resolved.

Lotus are now part of the Chinese Geely company who have turned around Volvo's fortunes and Lotus will at last have the investment they deserve after a series of owners who did not make much progress.

Sales of **MG Motor** vehicles have doubled in the last year and in 2018 outsold Subaru in the UK. I must admit to not being an enthusiast of the current range of SUVs they produce but worldwide MG now sell many times more cars than BMC/BL did in the 70s with plant in China and Thailand churning out thousands of cars a week. In China many are badged a Roewe, originally badged on defunct Rover models but now on the same chassis as the MGs. There isn't a current MG dealer in Cumbria, the nearest being either in Durham or Preston.

Inside The Industry

Paul Gilligan has his say

Electric Cars Make Sense At Last – And VW Make Most Sense

As my regular reader knows I've long been a critic of electric cars and I still believe hydrogen power is better in the long run. However I've now changed my mind about electric versus internal combustion (IC). I've been working on a report for one of our corporate clients who are considering switching 20 sales force cars from diesel to electric. When I started I was sure I knew what the answer will be, but in the end I'm suggesting to them "Ditch the Diesels" – but not until next year.

To date there have been 4 basic problems with electric cars in a company fleet where they will be often driven over 200 miles in a day. The first is range, they simply couldn't do half of that distance unless they cost over £70000. Second is cost, well over the price of a similar petrol or diesel. Then recharging infrastructure, and finally battery life and the possibility of a very expensive battery pack replacement before it's time to get rid of the car.

Things change and technology advances very quickly. Hyundai and Kia are in the process of launching VW Golf sized cars that will cost just over £30000 and have a genuine real life range of over 250 miles. VW themselves will later trump this in the biggest possible way when they launch a similar size car called I.D. This will start at £22500 for the basic version which will have about 120bhp and a real life range of over 200 miles. Pay a bit more and you can get bigger batteries to increase range to 250 or even 280 miles. Because most of the space taken up by the conventional powertrain is freed up although the car is Golf size interior space rivals the Passat.

Costs vital to fleet operators like my client are about a lot more than purchase price. Going electric means a big reduction in the fuel bill. In this case the company will save almost £2000 per car each year = £40000 a year. Servicing costs are lower because there is so much less to service. We don't know about the VW yet but the Hyundai and the Kia offer a 5 year unlimited miles warranty. Except for the batteries I hear you say – well they are warranted for unlimited miles and 8 years. All because battery technology has moved on tremendously. Then we come to depreciation, the biggest single cost in running most cars. Forecasting the residual value of a car several years ahead is a black art and not an exact science. I should know I spent years doing this when running a leasing company. What I've suggested to my client is that in 3 or 4 years time electric cars will be much more common than currently and people's trust in them will have increased dramatically. Diesels and perhaps petrols will have been banned for many city centres, or where not banned at least heavily charged for entering. The used car buyer is very conscious of fuel costs which is why they are still strongly buying diesels except in cities. All of these factors lead me to forecasting strong demand for used electric cars in a few years' time, and strong demand means higher prices and lower depreciation for the first owner

Before leaving costs it's important to say that there are significant tax advantages for both employer and employee in moving to electric, I'll not bore you with the details, suffice to say they add up to significant money.

Which brings me to the last problem, the recharging infrastructure. In this case the sensible route is to have a recharging point installed in the homes of the employees driving the cars. This costs about £1000 a time, but grants of around £800 are available leaving a net cost of £200, and the employees will save that and a lot more on the cost of the fuel they use for private miles. These grants apply whether you are a private owner or are provided with an electric company car.

When I'm doing this sort of exercise for a client only one thing is important – the numbers. They don't lie and I'm sure not in this case, so I'm converted. Circumstances alter cases and electric isn't going to be right for everyone, but it will be right for an awful lot of fleets in particular. VW are confident, they plan to be selling over 1 Million IDs in a few years. I think it could be a lot more!

Which all leaves one problem, and it's potentially a big one. Will there be sufficient power generation capability to provide the necessary power to recharge all these cars?

Will SUVs Ever Stop?

From the mid 1970s onwards there were two car body styles which dominated the market, hatchbacks in the small and medium sectors and saloons in the large sector. There were sports cars of course but low total volumes and estate cars which took less than 10% of sales. In 1970 the Range Rover started a revolution, but it was a slow start because it was an expensive car and Land Rover couldn't remotely keep up with demand. However the body style acquired a name – SUV being Sport Utility Vehicle. More followed gradually then rapidly. Land Rover's own Discovery, Jeep Cherokee, then in 1994 the first smaller SUV the Toyota Rav4. The gamechanger came in 2006 from Nissan. Remember the Nissan Almera? A little loved and slow selling hatchback. Nissan put an SUV body on the Almera underpinnings, called it the Juke and had a roaring success on their hands almost overnight.

SUVs in the Golf size segment of the market now represent as many sales as hatchbacks and estates combined, and the share they take is increasing every year. The same is happening the next size up with cars like Audi Q3 and Volvo XC60 talking sale from for example BMW 3 Series and Audi A4. In the large car market two thirds of sales are now cars like Ranger Rovers, one third large saloons.

It seems only one thing can stop the growth of SUVs and that is the pressure now growing to reduce car emissions. SUVs are less aerodynamic and heavier than a hatch, but people love them and the industry feeling is they won't easily give them up.

The Full Monte

As mentioned last month all Startline contributors are now limited to 1200 words. There are 4 other magazines that take my articles and all asked me to continue with the full version which one of them wittily termed "The Full Monte". So that version continues, this one I file as "The 12 Car" to remind me of the 1200 word limit, and to emphasise it's a lot less time consuming and arduous for the "participant". Many WMC readers have already asked to receive the Monte which I find very gratifying, just email me as below if you'd like to still see it also. This month it covers around 8 more subjects.

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Andy's Armchair

Andy Armstrong takes an irrelevant look at motoring and motorsport

I see in the national press that local driver Paul Bird has received an 8 year ban from taking part in any sport having refused a drug test last year on a stage rally in Wales. Sad really, he's obviously a talented driver and has the wherewithal to buy the very best kit in which to express what he's capable of. I don't know about you but 20 or more years ago I'd probably have done a "Dr Faustus" to be in such a privileged position and done everything humanly possible to make sure I didn't jeopardise it. Maybe I'm a bigger enthusiast than some other people.

As many of you will know, one of Stirling Moss's greatest drives was on the 1955 Mille Miglia, where, accompanied by Dennis Jenkinson on the notes, he completed the 998 miles of the event at an average speed of 98.5 mph. Now this was on closed public roads, over mountain passes with 1950's technology and has always struck me as a great achievement, but I think I've now found another one more or less it's equal. In the 1957 event Belgium journalist Paul Frere drove a Renault Dauphine saloon to win the up to 1000 cc class. This car had an 845cc engine which in standard trim produced 27 hp, but after Gordini waved a magic wand at it it had grown to 36. Frere drove single handed so had no notes to help, a lot of his event was in the dark unlike Moss who started after dawn, and even after suffering a slipping clutch and being held up at a level crossing for nearly 2 minutes he still completed the course at an average speed of 71.9 mph which to me seems incredible.

Of course you then start to look for other unlikely speeds achieved by small engined cars. I've scanned through a few books and up to now the quickest I've found (excluding pure built record breakers) was a 750cc supercharged MG (that'll please our esteemed editor) driven from a flying start round the outer circuit at Brooklands on August 6 1937 at an average speed of, wait for it, 122.40 mph. Remember that's 750 cc and it's nearly 82 years ago, hard to comprehend to be honest. Well done to the intrepid driver G P H Noble.

The new look "Motorsport" magazine arrived today and thank goodness the pages of expensive wrist watches have vanished, long may it last. If you're inclined to spend thousands on a glorified "Timex" why not read watch magazines and stop inflicting your interest on car lovers? By the way, can anyone tell me why the minis that race at Goodwood always seem to have strange front number plates.



They're obviously smaller than they should be and just don't look right. There's one in a photo on page 20 if you want to see what I mean.

In closing, it was embarrassing to see one of my paintings in last month's edition. It was done many years ago and I like to think I've improved a bit since then. I'm still into car pictures but have been selling aviation paintings of late and even had success with landscapes which have found homes all over the country, I suppose I'm lucky to have the Lakes and the Yorkshire dales to get inspiration from.

Ends.

AA.

What's On

WMC events and other events of interest

March

2nd	Sat	White Heather Tests Canceled for this year only)
3rd	Sun	Penrith Autojumble
9th	Sat	Malcolm Wilson Rally
16th	Sat	Wh&DMC Border Counties Stages
21-23		National Restoration Show (NEC)
23rd	Sun	North West Stages
22/23rd		YMC North Yorkshire Historic Rally

April

7th	Sun	MG Cumbria Roof of England Challenge
14th	Sun	Easter Autotest at Maryport
22nd	Mon	D&DMC Sprint at Croft
28th	Sunday	Drive It Day at Dalemain

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