

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

Start Line

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www.wigtonmc.co.uk

January 2021

A Future Champion ?



George Russell in the Mercedes at the Sakhir GP.

Perhaps the most exciting race of the season?

Driving Motorsport Forward

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Talking Point

Topical Comment from the world of motoring

Have you ever had one of those nightmares when you are running along a tunnel and you can see daylight ahead, but all of a sudden the tunnel gets longer and you are still further from the end? That's a bit like the situation we are in at the moment. We keep thinking the end of the pandemic is in sight but then something pushes it further back. I reckon that there is no reason to try and speculate as to when "normal" life and motorsport will resume. With the schedule for the vaccine roll out it will certainly not be before April. Already there have been many rallies etc in the first three months of the year been called off as has the Isle of Man TT races in May.

Whatever happens, the safety and health of our members and participants is what is most important. If that means no events then so be it.

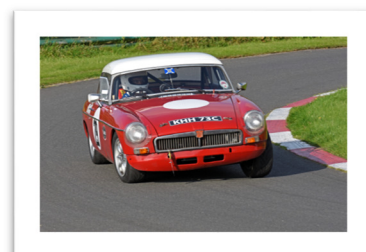
Will having a year or more away from normal life and hobbies have a long term effect? On the one hand there will be a group of people with pent up enthusiasm and spare cash keen to get going again. On the other hand there are those whose income, or indeed jobs have been lost and playing with cars is no longer a priority. A third group will be those who have found other things to do with their time and have taken up new hobbies. Last year saw a huge increase in the interest in gardening, The Hornby Group which makes model trains, Airfix kits and Scalextric saw sales go up 30%. There will have been many other changes as well and I am sure that as soon as it is safe to do so people will be desperate to catch up on holidays in the sun.

A club is a "body of people brought together by a common interest", it's not one organiser, or even a committee, it is everyone who joins and takes part in events. That is why clubs can exist because everyone plays their part. Everyone has their particular interest but by being a part of a wider club community we all support each other's interests.

You only have to look at the support we have had during the past year, the number of people who have worked on the Motor House and all those who have contributed to Start Line. That makes WMC a great club with our 750 members.

Finally I would like to thank all the contributors in this issue and over the difficult times of 2020. It certainly made my life easier and has provided some entertaining reading. Please keep those articles and photos coming!

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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Club News & Events

At the moment there is little hope of any events for perhaps the next two or three months sadly. Things will resume when it is permitted, safe and prudent to do so.

The Motor House is very close to completion! Perhaps another two or three days are needed on the final painting, carpets and lighting. Again that will resume on Wednesdays when it is permitted.

It's worth listing all the members who have contributed in so many ways. If I have missed anyone please let me know as there will be a dedication board going up at some point.

David Agnew, Ron Palmer, Jim Crockett, John Holliday, Steve Fishwick, Eddie Parsons, Mary Parsons, John Sloan, Marian Sloan, Alan Jackson, Roger Pope, Ed Glaister, Chris Bailey, Marcus Bewley, Charles Graves, Paul Cecchini, Rob Grant, Dave Nicholson, John Johnson, Peter Johnston, Chris Spencer, Adrian Hemingway, Keith Graham, Christine Agnew, Peter Garforth, Jack Bunting, Alan Hale, Warwick Bailey & Graeme Forrester.

We have also had some great donations of books, manuals, posters and pictures which we will be sorting through once the dust has settled (literally).

Does Rallying Have A Future?

Sadly the outlook for rallying is not that bright. In the past 30 years the number of events and competitors have dropped steadily each year. Whereas when many of us were competing, just about anyone could afford to do it but now the cost of preparing a car and just doing the odd event is beyond most people's budget. At the same time manufacturers are not seeing the benefit of running works teams, What can they prove and how much publicity can they gain? The answer to both being "not a lot".

The other challenges will be the long term environmental one and how that impacts on motorsport and there steady loss of venues that we can use, whether it be car park for an autotest or a forest for a stage rally. It seems fairly obvious that the three forest authorities in the UK don't really want forest rallies any more. Anyone who has walked or cycled through a forest after a rally will know current rally cars do far more damage to the tracks than they did 30 or 40 years ago. Fewer spectators also reduces the forest's income. Perhaps we need to look at the cars that we use? Lower powered but with less grip? As with F1, actually going faster does not make the action more spectacular, in fact often the opposite.

At club level we have to adapt what we do. The World is changing and we have to as well.

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when you do!

PG Tips

Peter Reflects On His Month

The first column of 2021 and obviously I'm writing it in 2020 so all is far from clear. Brexit is not properly sorted, a new version of Covid has popped up in the South East and the vaccine roll out is underway but not yet taking effect for most. So really 2021 is not yet looking too bright particularly as the R number for traffic lights is clearly above 1 locally as the bloody things seem to be popping up everywhere!

On the car front, my plans to supercharge the Astra Bertone are now well underway and a nice man in the US called Jeff sent me a kit comprising the inlet and the supercharger as well as some bolts and brackets. I could see the pound-dollar rate was likely to slip as we got nearer the end of the year if a deal with the EU wasn't sorted so I bought it all (and I was right) in November and the whole shipment landed in early December. DHL were a typically chaotic courier nightmare – failing to advise me it had arrived and that I needed to pay tax. I had expected to pay tax on it, but I thought DHL might bother to let me know. With the assignment stuck at Newcastle airport I spent more than a day, 4 phone calls and 2 emails trying, and eventually succeeding in paying the tax. The kit from the US isn't everything I need unfortunately, but everything else is available in this country – so I'll spend the next few months buying the other bits and bobs ready. Apparently in the US the standard GM supercharged cars had a fairly woeful 200bhp from the 2.2 supercharged engine – my version should be around 250bhp which seems much more acceptable given the capacity and forced induction. What has struck me is how superchargers seem to have fallen totally out of fashion again. I'm not sure if it's an eco thing or just that all the manufacturers are putting all their resources into turbos and electric cars, but 15 years ago there were loads of cars sporting superchargers – Mercedes nailed a 'Kompressor' (German for supercharger) to virtually its entire petrol range, the original new Mini also had superchargers on their sporty models and as you know GM bunged them onto quite a few variants of cars in the US, Jaguar supercharged their really fast cars and it seemed that a renaissance was happening. By 2010 they'd pretty much all been killed off and replaced with turbos. It's also odd that prior to the late 90s nothing had been supercharged for many years so I'm not at all clear why for that window in the late 90s until the late noughties so many cars were supercharged. Presumably supercharger manufacturers couldn't believe their luck for a while.

Barry the single seater goes in for its new engine in a few days time – I am still unclear what kind of motorsport season will happen this year, but I do intend to buy a licence and go to at least some events. God willing the world will start to return to normal after Easter and whilst I'm sure precautions will still be required, spectators and the like will be back at events and those precautions will be less extreme.



Anyway – here's a lovely picture of the supercharger for the new year.....if everyone keeps their fingers crossed everything may just be ok. Happy new year one and all!

Peter

Wigton Motor Club

Cumbria Classic Weekend

August 21st/22nd

Supporting Blood Bikes & Hospice at Home

The thirty second Cumbria Classic Weekend takes place this year over the weekend of August 21st/22nd.



We are repeating our successful format with a package of two events, which we hope will encourage you to stay in the Lake District and in the beautiful district of Eden in particular.

The Rose and Thistle Tour takes place on Saturday and visits some of the most interesting roads in England and Scotland. Sunday sees the Cumbria Classic Car Show staged in the spectacular setting of Dalemain Mansion by Ullswater.

As well as the usual club stands, autojumble, and hundreds of cars we will have arena action, autotests, motorsport display, a trade area, craft stalls, entertainment and toy and produce stalls.

This year we are have three featured marques: Cobra, MG & Toyota and there will be specific classes and club spaces for them.

In view of the current COVID situation we won't issue entry forms until such time as we are reasonably sure that it will be prudent to go ahead. If you would like to be place on the mailing list, please email:

contact@wigtonmc.co.uk stating whether you want Rose & Thistle, Club, Individual or Trade entry forms.

We look forward to seeing you in August!

European Tour 1968

In 1968 4 Lamplughians decided to do a Mini Euro tour. Myself, my wife Jacqueline (not long married), my late good friend Bob Marshall and his wife Betty. All the planning was done using the AA Continental handbook. At the time a limit of £25 per person was on plus extra for the car owner. Our transport was my red 1965 MG1100, EAO 253C, given to me by my grandmother as a 21st birthday present. The plan was to sail from Newcastle to Esjberg, tour Denmark, sail to Germany, do a bit of touring, then to Holland and sail home from Rotterdam to Hull.

The departure day duly arrived, and we stood on the quay at Newcastle and watched the car driven onto a net and hoisted onto the deck! Pleased to say it was well lashed down as the night crossing was very rough!

Next morning, we docked at Esjberg and made our way to our first stop at Odense. First thing to do "find somewhere for B/B" for a couple of nights, bearing in mind we only had about £150 between us! To go back whilst on board ship we met one of the Danish fishermen from Whitehaven, who banked with Bob, he was on his way to Aalborg to see his mother. His advice was buy some bottles of Scotch as the price in Denmark was over the top! Bob wasn't sure but I had a few extra notes that nobody knew about!! I thought "let's do it" which I did. Sure, enough the B&B owner asked the question, Have you any Scotch? Our 2 nights in Odense cost very little and still with a bottle left! Our evening meal was the biggest plaice any of us had set eyes on! And it was beautiful as was all the food.

After 2 days exploring, we headed across the bridge to Copenhagen. Here we sought help from tourist information for somewhere to stay. We chose an excellent motel very near the Carlsberg Brewery! But could hardly afford a bottle it was so expensive. If I remember correctly it was over £1 a bottle when it was 2/6d at home!! Copenhagen was a wonderful city, the biggest disappointment to us was the Mermaid. We expected to see something massive in the harbour, but it is such a small statue you could quite easily walk past and miss it! The Tivoli gardens was another enjoyable visit until I broke one of the games. Remember the one when you hit the base with a huge hammer to try and ring the bell about 20ft up. I was in my prime in those days and even though I say it myself, "a good hand with a hammer" I gave it what for and the piece shot up and went right out of the top taking the bell with it, Run!! No, the guy said it had never happened before. A very liberal place Copenhagen and a walk round to see the night life wasn't really for young Cumbrians!! We've seen bowler hats on heads but never where some of gentlemen were hanging them! Whilst there we visited Malmo, no bridge then, we went by high speed Hydrofoil.

Next, we had to plan our crossing to Germany. The routes were ferry from Gedser to either Warnemunde or Travemunde. We consulted the AA book and the Warnemunde ferry was far cheaper, according to the AA and both in W Germany. We drove to Gedser, bought our ticket and boarded a lovely new ferry. Both Bob and I noticed during the journey most of the vehicles on board had eastern European number plates but thought nothing of it. About halfway across the tannoy said any persons needing visas to go to the purser's office. We knew we didn't need visas! On docking we drove off into a compound and handed our passports to the officer. He looked handed them back and asked for our visas.

After a lengthy discussion Bob and I were marched at gunpoint into a room sat down at a table and waited ages. We looked at one another "gobsmacked" what the hell is going on. After a while a man in black with a briefcase came in and put a form and pen in front of each of us. He spoke decent English, so we asked him what they were, visa applications he said, we don't need visas for West Germany we said, his reply stunned us! Aha ziss is Est Germany. Bob grabs a pen!! We duly filled in the

forms; the alternative was back on the ferry to Denmark. It then transpired our insurance was invalid, so we had to pay “through the nose” for a 24hr pass” They searched the car and took the films from our cameras hence no photos. When we went outside the ladies were terrified sitting in the car with a couple of guards, but the compound was surrounded by hundreds of people all wanting to see this red car, we were told not the poor buggers in it who were terrified.

At last, they let us go and it was now dark ,we were lost and hadn’t a clue where to go. We asked a boy where the border was, he said Lubeck but wouldn’t tell us how to get there until we paid him, no chance!! We consulted the maps, chose what looked like a decent route and went for it. Luckily, we had filled up with petrol in Denmark. The main road we were on was cobbles and the noise was deafening, suddenly somewhere like Caldbeck common we came to a roadblock, “Achtung Controllen”, with a barrier across the road, all we needed. The guard was a huge guy in a motorbike and sidecar and a massive Alsatian. He unslung his rifle and held out his hand for our paperwork. Looked at them, had me open the boot then lifted the barrier and waved us through, Phew! All this and he never spoke. We then started meeting the odd military vehicles, then convoy after convoy, tanks, halftracks lorries jeep type vehicles etc. Next, we came to a town, the dreariest place we had ever set eyes on! Signs on buildings roughly translates “We work to feed our Industrial comrades” then guess what, a level crossing down! Whilst waiting people especially children were lining the streets looking at this red MG, couldn’t believe it. The steam train went through then the biggest woman we had ever seen dressed in a grey uniform came and straddled a stool and wound up the barrier, the mind boggles!!

In the distance we could see floodlight towers and searchlights so knew we were getting near the border hopefully. Sure, enough we had done it well within our 24 hour pass. No Man’s land seemed to be about half a mile wide with concrete bollards to slalom round. The East German border guards, one of which was a very officious woman, got us out of the car drove it over a huge mirror and proceeded to empty the boot , empty the cases and take out the seat squabs. They again looked in the cameras, and on counting our money finding out it tallied with the Warnemunde count wanted to know why we hadn’t spent any! On the bonnet was a Silver fox mascot given to me for my 21st by my father she got her eyes on it and tried desperately to get it off me, but I was having none of it!



Eventually we put the car together enough to leave East Germany and zigzag our way slowly to “freedom” which is what it felt like. We came into a control manned by Americans. We pulled up and a Marine with his peak on his hat nearly obscuring his vision greeted us with the words “ where the f...hell have you been”. We told him and he said I’ll have to get an officer to talk to you. He duly arrived and we all went into his office where he made us most welcome and produced a bottle of “Black and White” as he called it and 4 glasses. Remember the brand of scotch with a black and white terrier on the bottle. He then informed us “that those bastards over there invaded Czechoslovakia today” Hell’s fire! When we told him about the convoys, we saw he opened a drawer full of photos of Military vehicles and asked did we recognise any ! We explained it was getting late and we still had to find somewhere to stay. Don’t worry he said follow my Jeep to an excellent motel. On arrival he told us that Gedser

to Warnemunde is a recognised transit route between East and West, we just picked a bad day!! He booked us into the motel as Mr Bruschi, London and 3 guests. So ended our sojourn into Europe, note the DDR stamp.

Kendall Bruce PS: On return Immigration at Hull were very interested in the DDR stamp and asked a few questions!

First New Bentley Blower Since 1930 Released

Courtesy of Sports car Digest.



Bentley Mulliner finally completed the first new Bentley Blower in 90 years after 40,000 hours of meticulous work. Car Zero is the prototype car for the Blower Continuation Series.

This truly exclusive run of only 12 customer cars (which have all already been pre-sold) will be created from the design drawings and tooling jigs that were employed for the original four Blowers that Sir Henry 'Tim' Birkin built and raced in the late 1920s.

Chassis HB 3403, which is specifically Bentley's own Team Car provided the master model for the Continuation series. Every single part of the example was laser-scanned as part of a wheels-up, sympathetic restoration.

From the data collected, 1,846 individual parts were designed and meticulously hand-crafted to produce the new Blower.

230 of the parts are in fact assemblies, including the engine, meaning that the total part count is actually several thousand if you take into account the fixings and interior trim parts.

A project team consisting of Bentley Mulliner engineers, technicians, and craftspeople worked together alongside some British specialists and suppliers to create the parts and assemblies.

They then took the most valuable Bentley in the world, the #2 Team Car owned by Bentley, and did a piece-by-piece disassembly to do an extremely precise laser scanning of the frame and its components. The outcome was that they were able to create a complete digital CAD model of the Blower. They then hired a team of artisan specialists to manufacture the components that Bentley Mulliner would assemble to create the first Blower.

Initially, the first step in the construction of Car Zero was a comprehensive analysis of the original design drawings and drafts that were used to build the original Blower Team Cars. They also analyzed archived period photographs of the cars.

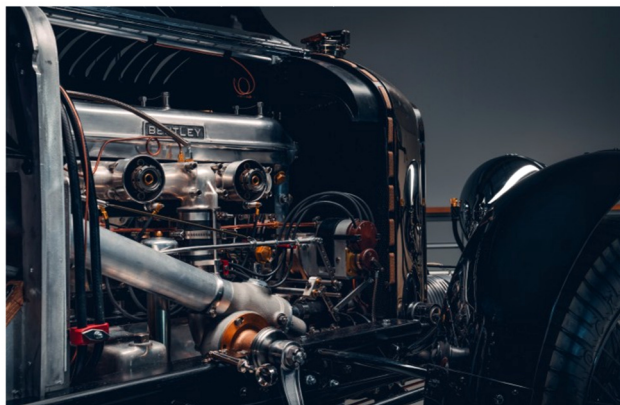


Derby-based specialists at Israel Newton & Sons Ltd created the hand-formed and hot riveted heavy-gauge steel chassis. The 200-year-old company traditionally makes boilers for steam locomotives and traction engines giving them the skills to forge and shape metal in the traditional way. Jones Springs Ltd, a West Midlands-based specialist with 75 years of experience under their belt were requested to produce the leaf springs and shackles following original specifications.

Vintage Headlamp Restoration International Ltd in Sheffield was recruited to create the Blower's iconic headlamps. They are a father

and son team that has built their reputation for their silversmithing and ability to produce vintage-design headlamps from original specifications.

Back in Crewe, in the bespoke Mulliner Trim Shop, the Ludlow-based Lomax Coachbuilders' new ash frame was going through final stages of carpentry under the watchful eyes of Mulliner's experts. The Bentley Blower Car Zero was created specifically to be a test and development prototype. It was made ahead of the 12 customer cars, and it will undergo months of durability and performance tests. The Blower has a beautiful gloss black finish and Oxblood red leather interior from Bridge of Weir.



Car Zero made its debut on December 9 to officially mark the creation of the new Bentley Motors campus in Crewe.

Bentley's address since 1946, Pym's Lane, was closed to open the new campus which will extend Bentley's headquarters to a newly expanded footprint.

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Motor House Visit

I visited the Motor House last Wednesday for the first time and was amazed at what I found. There have been many updates in Startline and on FB, but nothing beats seeing the real thing. I must congratulate Dave Agnew and his team for a wonderful job. I can't wait until it's fully completed and ready for the club to use and enjoy. I'm sure everyone will appreciate the work and effort that has gone into this project. Well done and thank you for all the hard work.

Eric Little

The Cunning Plan Works Out!

By Myke Pocock with Chris Veevers and Baldrick, 171

Baldrick, my Skoda Estelle trials car has blotted his copybook recently with my last three trials being DNF. Note my pathetic attempt to divert attention away from his owner and mechanic! Head gasket failure, fuel feed issues and a trick clutch friction plate that turned out to be not as promised by the suppliers were the issues so a run out to a classic car show and a couple of auto test runs there settled the concerns that issues still existed.

Final checking on the Thursday revealed an offside side light and nearside tail light not as required so I started to check the wiring until the penny dropped and I checked the fuses. The relevant fuse was AWOL and checking revealed that the competition number light that is wired into the rear light had a fault. Answer, disconnect it.

We set off from Castle Baldrick around 6pm, arriving at the Breakfast and Finish venue some 4 hours later. It was then time to offload and drive to Tamworth, a further 50 miles or so. Time to try and get some rest but it was half hearted as my nerves always get the better of me before a trial. Eventually off at 2:51, the last of 4 Fell Side Auto Club members running together then a bit of a delay at Carsington Water Time Control before we were off to Haven Hill with a further wait then an easy run to the end. It's always good to get the first one under your hat and everything running well.

Off to Cliff Quarry. This year Mark Gregg and his team had introduced some changes on a number of sections and us minions in Class 4 had a different deviation than in previous years and no Restart. There was reasonable traction up hill on the first part then bear right and start to go back down hill, making sure to recognize all the marker tape and arrows for our deviation. Fortunately the marshal was there to point us in the right direction. The last few feet are steep and we just stopped on the lip, Fail. Not enough commitment. Oh dear.

By the time we arrived at the Middleton Moor Observed Test it was light and we were informed by the start line marshal that the previous competitor had done the test incorrectly but "we would be OK". Better do it right then.

Haydale our next section with Nigel Hilling in charge was dispatched easily being a typical Derbyshire stone based track that litter the area.

My history on Calton, another stony track, has been chequered over the passed years. The Restart area is positioned about half way up the section and looks innocent enough. However the stones are nicely polished and resemble permanent marbles. I have failed more than cleaned it. This year Mark Gregg, the CoC, was good to us in Class 4 and it was another nice easy run to the section end.

After the breakfast halt we took a 12 mile run to our next section, Incline. Well that was the plan but we managed to miss what must have been one of the biggest road signs in Buxton and went miles out of our way.



Incline is one of my favorite sections. A long, virtually straight steep track with a muddy, peaty base within a wood. After a short delay due to a previous competitor falling off the access track we were off getting good momentum to our yellow Restart box, stop low then an easy pull away and a clean.

I hadn't done Brand Top before, once again one of those Derbyshire tracks. After a short delay to allow a horse and rider to exit we then had a few minutes to talk Skodas with Simon Robson, the Chief Officer on the hill. My passenger, Chris Veevers, had bought Simons Skoda Estelle, Excalibur, many years ago and it was this that got me into trialing and Skodas. In fact some parts from it are still doing sterling service in Baldrick. Another pleasing clean but on arrival at the Section End the clutch peddle went easily to the bulkhead and I had to pull the gearstick out of gear. Checking the fluid level told us nothing but a check of the peddle revealed that the clutch master cylinder operating rod had fallen of its pin on the peddle.

A circlip had disappeared, not to be found anywhere. Chris buried himself in the footwell with a handful of tie wraps but they proved unsuitable. Eventually, finding we had no suitable wire

to form a basic clip, the Raynet guy came to the rescue with a paper clip and it fulfilled the job for the

rest of the day. Mind you, recovery of my navigator from the depths of Baldricks foot well required a good tug of his feet until a plaintiff cry revealed that certain parts of his anatomy had come into contact with the gearstick and handbrake! Had his voice gone up an octave or so as a result?

Running now about an hour behind our expected time after our unplanned route deviation and slight delays at some previous sections we arrived at Litton Slack with around ten or so waiting for the fun.

What a section! Looking down in to the valley from above looks spectacular enough but dropping down to the start line reveals how awesome it actually is. I have known the start line actually in line with the section but this time it was some yards away at right angles to the section. Baldrick doesn't

really do tight right angle turns at any speed. On this years Northern Classic Trial too much welly at a turn saw the demise of the headlight, front wing and indicator courtesy of a nice stout tree so I need to take it with care. I wasn't contemplating getting very far but after gently negotiating the turn we built up speed with unexpected traction finally getting to an area where the tracks from previous runners widened out. We went right and eventually ran out of grip just before the large tree on the left. Cleaned? No. Fun? You bet. What pleasure to be able to use this iconic section. Full marks to those who have done so much delicate negotiating to allow us the use.

Booth Farm was up next and I had heard some stories of difficulties from previous years and possible issues this year. Accessed across grassy farm land, the section start is also on grass at right angles to the main section. As you know now we have to take turns easily and it looked like there was a large rock on the outside of the bend. Gently then, ease it round and then deciding we needed as much momentum as possible I gave it some. The section is rutted and muddy but we got excellent drive and as the section leveled out and turned left we cleaned it with ease. A fun section.

Time now for a welcome break at Hollinsclough Community Hall for a compulsory 20 minute break. It is rumored that this year will be the last time this facility is available which is a shame. The Edinburgh must have put many thousands into the community coffers over the years.

This year there was no Rakes Head which was just up the road so it was off for a seven mile run to another hill that I hadn't done before. An up hill, twisty and muddy section straight off the road side, we watched an X90 set off at a rate of knots so decided that if it was good enough for them then why re-write the script. And so it proved, running in deep bumpy ruts to the end.

Excelsior. I have consistently failed the Restart this year despite cunning plans to the contrary. Once again Marks plans gave us a different Restart so I was already planning a positive note in the Route Book. It all came to naught as I completely read the Restart box wrong, stopping high and although I got traction ground to a halt after some yards on the sharks teeth rocks of the usual Restart box area.

The long access track to our next two sections would make a good section itself. Clough Wood and Clough Mine are close together and to concentrate the mind I was being watched by someone who is planning to build an Estelle for trialing. The first, Wood, is an easy run of a few feet until it turned right up hill then curved round further to the right. I was planning a clean but spun to a halt before it leveled out. The next section I have cleaned and failed in the past, one year failing when I run up against a massive rock that had been dug out in the section by a previous competitor. The first few yards are down hill then through deep rutted mud, bearing slight to the right then steepening up hill on sticky mud. We got to the bottom of the last very steep bit then stopped. Not the best advert for my friends.

I was starting to get to the stage that tiredness was kicking in but we only had one last section and an Observed Test to go. Running up hill and twisting and turning on a soil surface, our class went straight to Dudwood 2. In 2017 we got within a sniff of the end so a possible clean was on the cards. The blueprint didn't however include the ignition lead falling off the coil! The lovely lady on the start line gracefully declined my request to give it another try once the offending item had been reunited with its correct place. All that remained was the second observed test, reminding myself not to stop on the incorrect line as I did once before.

A terrific Edinburgh Trial with some welcome changes. The sections were varied and a nice cross section of challenges. That's why we come back as often as possible.

To Mark Gregg, the Clerk of the Course and all his team and to David Malin, Chief Marshal I am sure all will extend their thanks for all the effort and long hours that are put in to allow us to go out to play.

Going Once, Twice....Sold.

Is it me, or are there others out there like me? Avidly reading lots of car mags and classic weekly, looking longingly at various cars for sale and reading the auction site results. Of course, I really need to know the worth of an Austin Seven, an Aston Martin DB5, and a Series One E Type. Yeh right, what a bloody dreamer. I wish I still owned the Porsche 964. Jeez! Look what it's worth now. Don't start on that conversation with your mates. Well, it is good to know what our lovely cars are worth if only to feel smug when you see the pathetic returns from your ISA's. If you own a nice classic sports car and you look after it, it should be a better investment than a quarter of a percent.

A good friend of mine had recently moved house and was not able to garage his rather lovely Mercedes 300 SL, so it joined my Morgan in the house garage. I became custodian of the 300SL for a year and a half. But recently, my pal said that circumstances had changed, and he now wanted to sell the car. "What do you think it's worth then Rob?". As I some kind of expert, I was able to say "Ah well, summer has passed and covid 19 has screwed the job and er, well maybe £28K???? But that would be on a good day of course and to the right buyer." Followed by a lifting of the flat cap and a head scratch. What was it really worth? And how am I going to advise my pal and to find the right buyer for this lovely car? I wrote what I thought was a good, honest report and took some pictures. I started by ringing buyers who advertise in the mags and emailing the information. I was not really making any good ground.

In fact, I was becoming a bit disappointed thinking that we will have to wait until at least the spring and a vaccine or two. And now to the point of my story. Whilst I was last at the NEC Classic Car Show, I met a guy called Tristan Judge; he was on his stand The Market Classic Car Auction Site. I thought he seemed a genuine, decent guy and since then I have been following the cars for auction on his site and have been impressed by the full and fair descriptions of the cars and the prices they seem to get. I thought I could buy from this auction site and feel pretty safe doing so. Another attraction was the commission at only 5% from the seller. The buyer pays no fee; what they bid; they pay. So, I phoned Tristan for a chat and gave him the story.

He asked me to send him the report and some pictures. I thought that Tristan seemed very clued up about the Mercedes SL W107's and his advice convinced me that he was the guy to sell the car. He recommended several car transporter companies and after a few email and phone calls, we had the car loaded onto a covered trailer and off it went to Oxford at a cost of £350. I completed the on-line entry form and sent every scrap of history with the car. The reserve on the Mercedes was £20,000 which we felt a bit uneasy about, but we took Tristan's advice. The Market Team prepared a superb presentation, well written with good photos and full history details.

Well, I watched the auction nervously. It was sitting at just over the £20K for a while then, on the last day, it took off... Going, Going, Gone for £30,500. The car made top dollar. I'd like to think that some nice guy has bought the car for his lovely wife or perhaps his even lovelier mistress for Christmas. I thought that I might share my little story with you, and I hope you find it interesting. Now where did I put my Motor Sport Magazine? Ah! It's there under the Classic Car Weekly...

What a sado eh?

Rob Grant

MGB GT Historic Rally Car Build

After reluctantly selling my Chevette HS as the Motorsport UK would not allow me to use it on Historic Road Rallies I needed a replacement project.

I wanted to run in Historic Class 2 as there was more scope for cheap modifications than in Class 3 where everything had to be homologated and didn't want an Escort. (Too common, too easy, too expensive and had them years ago). RWD was a must as I wanted maximum fun so the shortlist appeared to be Viva/Firenza, Avenger, MGB or Midget. A bit of research revealed that you could get almost any part that you needed for the MGs at a reasonable cost and that parts for the Vauxhalls and Avenger (like the Chevette) were difficult to source. Midget or MGB? The Midget would be much more competitive and I would end up spending money chasing wins so I decided on an MGB and to try to build it to mix it with the Escorts and Avengers and Vivas.



After a bit of searching and looking at several cars that required a lot of welding I found a 1974 MGB GT in Ambleside in January that been off the road for in excess of 20 years and bravely drove it the 100 miles back up to Scotland. The only issue was the wipers failing on Moss Paul but it was an eye opener how slow and difficult to drive it was.

Even though I was working right through the lockdown I had a lot of time to spare at weekends and made good progress with the car. A rear roll cage was fitted along with full harness belts, MX5 seats and any excess trim was removed (Regulations state that the rear seat, carpets and major trim must be retained). All brake and suspension components were replaced with the only upgrades being brake pads, a hydraulic handbrake, thicker oil in the dampers and some geometry changes. These changes along with new wheels and tyres transformed the way the car drove. The electrics were then sorted out with a change to a single 12volt battery and electrical cut out, fuses and relays added along with halogen headlights and driving lights.

The engine is still in a relatively standard state of tune with only Lumenition ignition (correct period Optronic) and K&N Filters fitted but goes a bit better after setting everything up correctly. (I'm having to learn about SUs having been a Weber/Dellorto man for the last 40 years).

I managed to find a local Autotest to try it out on before everything closed down again and although I found the clutch to be weak the performance was promising finishing 3rd RWD behind 2 well driven MX5s and ahead of several others and an RS2000.

Plans for this winter and more power from the engine and an Lsd.

Ian Maxwell



Motoring Memories

From Stuart Turner:

* I am sure all those involved in the World Cup Rally have their memories - after all it was the longest and toughest ever rally. One of my lighter recollections is of a few drivers preening when they spotted autograph hunters at controls in one or two countries in South America. The preening turned to wincing when they realised that the hunters only wanted one person to sign - Jimmy Greaves. The locals understood football better than rallying.

Jimmy's presence on the event generated plenty of publicity which later helped me keep my job when it was found I'd rather blitzed my budget for the event.

* At a sports car day at Goodwood Stirling Moss asked me over lunch if "I'd like to sit in for a couple of laps". To be driven by Stirling...in a Ferrari he'd won in many years earlier...I'd have walked to the circuit for the joy of it. So...helmet on for my two laps. Ten glorious laps later he pulled in to let me out. He explained the extra laps: there'd been a D Type ahead which he was trying to catch. So ageing did nothing to dampen his competitive spirit.

* Graham Robson's new book 'RS200 - Ford's Group B Rally Legend' reminded me that we took the first prototype to the MIRA handling course and had great input on ride and handling from Jackie Stewart. Towards the end of the session he beckoned me to get in the car. When he winked at the engineers I knew what was going to happen - he was going to try to frighten me with some quick laps, not realising that as an ancient rally navigator I would happily have been driven round for hours.

The next day Stig Blomqvist tested the car round the rally handling course at Boreham and again I was given some onboard laps. So I was driven at speed by two world champions within 24 hours. Amazingly, my pay cheque came through at the end of that month as usual.

From Tony Waring:

A few years ago I was part of the support team for Eddie Farrell and Robert Gate racing Eddie's E Type at the classic races at the Daytona Raceway in USA. We were allocated a space in a large marquee in the paddock and one of the guest drivers in the marquee was Jochen Mass, ex formula one celebrity. Robert Gate had returned to the paddock from his first practice and Jochen came up to him and asked him how he had gone. Robert said that he was all over the place round the curves. Jochen asked him how fast he was going. Robert said that he thought that it was about 135 mph. Jochen put his arm around Robert's shoulder and said in his German accent, "you were not going fast enough". Robert went out and squeezed a bit more out of the car which made it stable on the curves but he had nothing left to manoeuvre if he came to pass another car.

Eddie's car was the oldest car in the event and flew the British Flag with honours by finishing well in front of most of the Americans.



**Recognised
Club**

More Motoring Memories

Graeme Forrester

Reading through the Club's minutes and magazines have brought back a number of great memories and one in particular refers to Sunday November 28th, 1976. For those who remember the end of November meant just one thing, the Lombard RAC Rally of Great Britain. All other motorsport stopped for the whole month so that a maximum effort was put into the rally.

In previous years we had run Setmurthy Forest, strangely just a couple of miles from where I live now and a regular dog walk. However regional organiser Bill Trougher rang me during the summer to ask for our help again and the conversation went a bit like this:

WST: I have a new idea; can you arrange for the rally to sue Kirkbride? GTF: OK will sort that.

WST: ETA first car about 0700 on Sunday so in the dark. GTF Err OK

WST: It will be a service area as well . GTF Errrrr Yes

WST: And the breakfast halt. GTF: Errrrrr

WST: Can be it a spectator stage please: GTF: ??

WST: It's going to be sponsored by Pirelli so there will be guests as well.

Anyway, we agreed to do it and Stuart Turnbull roped in his colleagues in the Wigton Round Table to do the spectator car parking. Marking out an airfield for a stage in the dark is not easy but in those days there we did not have huge number of fluorescent cones, arrows or tape, just a few hundred tyres.

The rally started in Bath that year on the Saturday morning, so they had been going for about 22 hours more or less nonstop before they got to us. We were stage 31 of 76. They had done six stages in Kielder and one in Kershope before getting to us. Most of the works teams had arranged for the dealerships in Carlisle to be opened up to allow for extra service time.

We got set up on the Saturday, taking about 40 people and assorted trucks and trailers to set the course out, involving taking down fences and moving cattle!



We were all on site by 0400 and the weather was dreadful, gales and wind playing havoc with arrows, tape and banners while the marquee the hotel had put up for serving food blew away, literally! We had a lot of spectators although many of those who were following the whole route went straight from Kielder to Wythop, Whinlatter or Greystoke.

We were using our clubroom on the top floor of the White Heather as our base and having done a final run round the stage and met the first course car I retreated up there where there was a wonder-

ful view of the whole airfield, the first cars going round the stage, the floodlit service area the hundreds of spectators in place and I thought: "I'm responsible for all this!"

There were no radio communications back then, so we just fired the cars into at the start and hoped they come out at the other end and any problems were sorted by the in stage marshals of which there were a lot more than you get these days. I did get down to the water splash just before the finish to see the Stratos go through.



Pirelli did do a film of the event including Kirkbride which is on You Tube.

Well, it all went well, and it did dry up a bit before we spent several hours moving the hundreds of tyres and replacing fences etc. The rally had 200 starters of which 71 finishers with Roger Clark/Stuart Pegg winning in the RS1800. There were 13 different makes of car in the top 20, including

five Escorts. Looking further down the list of finishers there was even more variety, Alfasud, Wartburg, Matra, Peugeot 504, FIAT 1208, a couple of Minis. Derek Skinner brought his much rallied MGB to 38th having been seeded 184 which was a good result from a car that was already outdated.

I think it too a few weeks to get all the equipment sorted and dried. We won't see the like to that again.

There is a most detailed website of results which also includes how to get models of the cars and where the cars are now. [Final results Lombard RAC Rally 1976 \(ewrc-results.com\)](http://ewrc-results.com)

GTF



Sadly Rally Sweden is already cancelled.

Elderly Utterances

The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say

Our home for the last 31 years has been on the Solway Plain west of Carlisle which has a landscape totally different from the hilly Lake District. Those who enjoy cycling will know the easy, quiet roads in that flat area west to Silloth and from the Solway Coast south to Wigton and Aspatria. In the period leading up to World War 2 our government recognised that the large expanses on both sides of the Solway Firth would be ideal for the construction of airfields which became very active in wartime but fell largely into disuse after 1945. In the post war period some became playgrounds for local motor clubs and the best used one coincidentally lies a mere two miles from our house. Formally known as Great Orton Airfield it became a huge burial ground for almost half a million cows, sheep and pigs - casualties of the Foot and Mouth crisis of 2001. Of course it is 75 years since the war ended and almost 20 years since Foot and Mouth blighted the land and these things recede into history. An email from Jim Stairs in November reminded me of the post F&M development at Watchtree, the renamed Great Orton Airfield, which has become an exercise venue for those seeking release from lockdown so we joined the throng for some walking having found the last available parking space. My first experiences here were from 1960 with 750MC Driving Tests (Autotests these days) which were great fun and I recall after one such event visiting a hedge with my Morris 10 in a fit of exuberance on the way home to Carlisle, all part of my driving learning process.

I have attached a period photo, probably by Jim Turner of the Cumberland News, of a group of competitors from about 1963 and for those with long memories they are from the left :-Robin Murray, Rob Little, John Taylor, John Harkness (in the hoodie) Willie Dawson RIP, Malcolm Wright (Malcolm Wilson's father in law) me (the organiser on the day) and Des Potter. Fifty seven years on its nice to know most are still with us.



The ladies from HERO have once again kept me entertained for the past three weeks with their Winter Table Top Rally which followed the popular five week springtime Table Top from Lockdown One Period. Modesty should prevent me from recording my 100% result from both series but I will anyway. They were both interesting and involving for the 200+ entries and served to sharpen my navigating skills when they popped up on the email from Monday to Friday each week. The final answer involved unscrambling some words an exercise for which Christine is better equipped than me. The entry fees were modest and went to deserving charities.

Are you someone who feels nauseous when navigating? Many do and that included me when I first started rallying when still at school so I took some guidance from a contributor to Motoring News. His advice was to read a newspaper when travelling on a bus and so I did this on my way to school,

when I wasn't cycling – obviously! I also learned the hard way by controlling what I ate before an event and declining to take alcohol with some crews who met in the pub for a couple of rounds before an event, usually those from north of the Border. Even so the odds against me were stacked when with some drivers and I recall starting The Lightning Rally from the Prizet Filling Station near Kendal on 16th September 1967 navigating for Les Cowen in his Cooper S, a pretty competitive driver and good company. All went well on the early controls except for a strong smell of petrol which wafted through the cabin. This was followed in fairly short order by smells from a slipping clutch and a leaking exhaust all of which made for a fairly toxic mix. After an hour the engine developed a misfire and first gear failed. Needless to say after emptying the contents of my stomach out of my door we made our way back to the start and headed for home, me to Carlisle and Les to Manchester.

My first driver from 1960 was John Butterworth a butcher with George Rigg in Denton Home who liked his food. He had a two door Black Minor 1000 – XRM721 – at the time and carried his sustenance for the event, a French baguette well filled with cooked meat and held together with elastic bands, in the door pocket and he munched his way through it well into the night. This was another situation which left me queasy, as if navigation when a novice wasn't difficult enough.

Stay Healthy in the New Year and may our sport return to full health soon.

Ron.

Sensible Thinking In F1?



Toto Wolff believes Formula 1 must consider what it can learn from the 2005 Renault R25 show run in Abu Dhabi, but called the car "a relic of the past".

Ahead of Renault's final race before its rebrand as Alpine for 2021, F1 arranged a celebration of the French manufacturer by reuniting Fernando Alonso with his 2005 title-winning Renault R25.

Alonso completed runs in the car on all four days of the Abu Dhabi race weekend, with the V10 engine and light, agile nature of the car impressing much of the paddock.

Alonso said the test showed F1 what it is missing with the sound of the V10 engine, and that people "miss the Formula 1 that we got in love with when

we were kids".

Outgoing Renault driver Daniel Ricciardo said the test showed how F1 was now missing "wow factor" and that the older cars also had more "fear factor" than the present machinery.

Asked about the show run, Mercedes team principal Wolff said that F1 had to work out the factors that made the car look so impressive on-track, but made clear its V10 engine simply would not fit into modern-day motorsport.

"The car with the V10 engine, on the one side is a relic of the past when reducing CO2 emissions wasn't on the cards, and electric mobility didn't exist," Wolff said.

"We're just moving into a new era, and that also means making compromises. But I agree that the car looked spectacular. It was very agile, very small, 150kg lighter, a screaming engine.

"When you look at the TV pictures, it looked like they were going much faster [than the current cars]. So there is something to learn. I believe there is always something to learn.

"I don't think anybody regrets from Formula 1 to have had the car out there, because we need to analyse now that we saw it live what is so attractive?

"Is it the audio and visual experience that makes it attractive? But then I saw the pictures without the



sound, and it still looked great, so why is that? We need to analyse that.

"We are stakeholders in the sport, and we need to improve everywhere. But I think all of us, including F1 and the local guys, will look at it and see what we can do."

Renault's Esteban Ocon grew up watching cars such as the Renault R25, and agreed with Wolff that while they are impressive, the world has since moved on.

"It's true that we are missing that sound clearly," Ocon said.

"I think if people think about Formula 1, that's what they think about. The cars that we have nowadays

are better to drive, are quicker to drive, have more power, have more torque.

"They are just the best cars and the quickest of all time but if they were sounding like this, it would probably be better.

"But we need to live with our time. That's how it is. The world is moving, and I think it's the same in the car industry. The cars are sounding less and less, so you lose a bit of the emotion there.

"But they are fast and they are more efficient and they are more reliable, as simple as that."

Is Lewis a SPOTY GOAT?

Lewis Hamilton cruised to his seventh WDC title on 2020 but created a huge amount of discussion both for his views and how good he actually is. As usual the truth is somewhere in the middle of the views being stated. You can't really compare drivers from different eras because the cars are so different and the skills have altered accordingly. The number of races held has grown steadily so the nearest figure would be a percentage of wins per races started. So deciding the Greatest Of All Time is a pretty pointless exercise.

As for SPOTY, The wokes at the BBC produce a list of six candidates without even asking their permission. Why there can't be an open vote I don't know. With so little sport in 2020 the possibilities were a bit thin but what about Jonathan Rea, six times World Super Bike Champion?

Some might question the use of the word "personality" when it comes to Lewis but the same could be said for Andy Murray and some of the jockeys who have won in the past. Perhaps it should be Sports Person of the Year?

Some of Lewis's utterances have been a bit daft and caused some fairly caustic comments, not without justification in some cases. Commenting on the environment while jetting around and driving powerful race cars is a bit hypocritical. Making your dog a vegetarian equally so, no wonder Roscoe looks unhappy! Perhaps we should do some crowd funding to send him a few packs of pedigree Chum! At the moment he does come over as a lost soul, most of his contemporaries have wives and families and he doesn't seem to have any real friends either, so I feel quite sorry for him in some ways other than his £140m bank account! Perhaps he continues to race because it is all he knows?

Economic and environmental impact of the historic and classic motor industry in the UK announced

It's a well preserved secret, just like the historic and classic vehicles the industry services, that this heritage motor sector turns over £18.3 billion employing 113,000 people across the supply chain. A surprise boost to the UK economy just when it is needed.

A new report released this week by world leading economics agency Cebr, commissioned by HERO-ERA, shows that the sector is comparable in the scale of its economic impact to all of the UK's ports, to the arts sector including theatre, publishing and music and is a fifth of the size of the huge UK built heritage sector of historic buildings. It is around half the size of the projected offshore wind industry or the whole industry of coffee and coffee shops. It is approximately twice the size of the whisky, literary, publishing and bookselling industry.

Employment is spread across the UK, helping in areas of low economic growth. London represents just 5% of its activity with the Midlands and East Anglia both double that. Craftspeople and conservation specialists prevail with a healthy line of apprentices in training to help keep the future of industry safe. Contrary to perception, the industry emits miniscule carbon by comparison to the weight of other industry emissions. Heritage vehicles cover very low mileages through limited use whilst the industry as a whole generates 53% less emissions than compared to spending the same money on a typical basket of goods. Classic cars are only driven an average of 1,200 miles a year. The average user of a classic car produces 563 kg of CO2 equivalent emissions in a year. This is still too much, and the industry is working to bring it down. But it needs to be seen in context. It is around half the emissions from using a computer, a mobile phone, going on a week's holiday in the Mediterranean, and it is a sixth of the impact of using a modern ICE car regularly or taking a return flight to the Far East.

If you spend on classic cars rather than spending the same money going to the pub, or eating restaurant meals, you halve your environmental emissions. If you spend on classic cars rather than spending a similar amount on short haul holidays, you cut your emissions by 90% and compared with flying to the Far East you cut your emissions by as much as 98%. Another reason the industry is more environmentally friendly than most consumer expenditure is that the sector is essentially based on the use and repair of existing materials, rather than the fabrication of new items. This means a high labour and skills content and low materials and energy content. The UK's stock of historic vehicles is estimated to be worth £12.6 billion, a major contributor to UK's heritage compared with the 400 historic buildings and sites looked after by English Heritage which are worth an estimated £30 billion to the economy.

The historic and classic motor industry sector which generates 113,000 jobs, is a fifth of the size of the entire UK heritage business in terms of jobs. We estimate that the historic buildings sector generates 564,000 jobs measured using the same techniques. A similar calculation for the coffee industry and coffee bars is that the sector generates 210,000 jobs. The offshore wind sector in the UK is projected to generate 174,000 jobs by 2030.

The arts sector comprising music, publishing, and theatre generates 137,000. By comparison, the entire UK Ports industry generates employment for 115,000 people. On the other side the books and related sectors generate 46,000 jobs, while the Scotch whisky sector generates 42,000 jobs. As well as the normal expenditure of 700,000 historic and classic vehicle owners, a host of associated industries also contribute.

Historic Racing contributes £371 million a year, Owner Clubs £111 million and Historic Rallying, where HERO-ERA the commissioners of this report are the leading global company, contributes £253 million. Vehicle museums £62 million and historic vehicle magazines contribute £59 million. In total these businesses contribute £502 million in Gross Value Added to the economy. Historic and classic motorsports events are highly popular at two levels, as great spectator events and for participants who chase a prized entry.

The UK company HERO-ERA's headline event, the historic Peking to Paris Motor Challenge which first ran in 1907, attracts competitors from around the globe. The 2022 event is eight times over subscribed. Historic rallying is a growing sport with an estimated 200 -250 classic car rallies held in the UK alone in a non COVID year. At Bicester Heritage, historic buildings and historic vehicles coincide in an innovative and highly successful development of the Bicester WW2 RAF bomber station into a site restored and updated for modern purpose creating a thriving hub of industry supporting the wider motoring community.

The economics of the cluster of diverse specialist businesses operating from Bicester Heritage means there is the ability to minimise costs. Obtaining and ferrying specialist parts is a major cost driver for those restoring or maintaining classic and historic vehicles. The co-location of so many different spe

cialists on the same site greatly reduces these costs and boosts productivity. Bicester Heritage is a component of Bicester Motion, a more extensive development which plans to create the UK's principal destination for anyone who wants to experience motor cars and historic aircraft from all eras.

They plan to provide an important visitor experience in the future in four key areas; Innovation, Heritage, Experience and Wilderness. In total the historic and classic vehicle industry contributes £8.6 billion to the UK economy in Gross Value Added (GVA). The sector and its supply chain comprises; historic vehicles, preparation, repair, parts, events, insurance, clubs, accessories, classic vehicle rental, media and magazines plus transport, hospitality, computer programming and consultancy.

It continues to provide jobs, skills, heritage preservation, pride and job satisfaction which also contributes to well-being. Most importantly for continuity, it provides training with 665 apprentices employed in 2019 and many schemes in place to bring more into the skilled trade where technicians in the sector typically earn a premium of 70% to the average wage. Conservation practice creates more skilled jobs. In summary, the economic and environmental impact of the historic and classic motor industry in 2019 has proved to be a larger than expected, 'well preserved' secret, with a tiny carbon emission in comparison with general motoring and consumer item spending. That is contrary to perception.

The UK Heritage Motor Industry is a European market leader and now seeks recognition and protection in order to nurture the future of UK's motoring heritage in all its forms to cherish and preserve for future generations. The industry also seeks further assistance from government and industry to bring more apprentices into the business so that vital skills can be passed on.

Synthetic Fuels

For those of us not ready to switch to electric cars and particularly those with a classic or modern-classic car, synthetic fuels seem like the dream. They replace petrol or diesel without modification, can be made in an almost carbon-neutral way and can be dispensed using the same infrastructure we have today. But practical hurdles remain.

Those hurdles are being evaluated in multi-million pound research and development programmes, with the most high-profile being run by Porsche, Siemens and the German government. The trio recently announced the Haru Oni project in southern Chile, betting that synthetic fuels could be a viable, ultra-low carbon alternative to fossil fuels. At the same time, Bill Gates, the Microsoft founder, is partially funding Carbon Engineering in Canada.

Already, authorities across the Britain and Europe are preparing to roll out E10 fuel, petrol with a 10% bio-ethanol mix. Synthetic fuels are for further down the road. Taking an optimistic view, availability could be widespread by 2030.

Synthetic fuels, also known as e-fuels, could enable classic car and motorcycle owners to continue to enjoy and drive their vehicles in decades to come. But what are they, how much might they cost, will legislators allow them, and will any car be able to use them? Here's everything drivers should know about synthetic e-fuels.

What are synthetic fuels?

Petrol and diesel fuels are hydrocarbons – they are composed of hydrogen and carbon atoms. But while such conventional fuels are derived from oil, synthetic fuels or e-fuels get their hydrogen from water and carbon from the air, with these elements then combined to mimic the structure of petrol, diesel and other oil-derived fuels.

They're close to being carbon neutral and because they can be a direct replacement for petrol or diesel, they'll work with existing combustion engine cars and existing fuel stations. Which means they could be the key to keeping vintage, classic and modern-classic cars on the road for future generations to enjoy.

The reason the newly announced Porsche project is situated in southern Chile is down to the local climate. Plentiful and reliable wind is a crucial source of renewable energy for the electric-intensive process of splitting water into hydrogen and it means that, even after shipping the resulting synthetic fuels back to Europe in a diesel-powered tanker, the final product is close to carbon-neutral.

Why are they important?

Porsche argues that synthetic e-fuels are essential to lowering CO2 emissions of legacy cars (70 per cent of Porsches are still on the road, according to its figures), current cars and even future plug-in hybrids, which could alternate between electric in cities and e-fuel outside.

Although Porsche's direction of travel is electric propulsion, it believes that synthetic fuels could extend the life of combustion engines in countries such as the UK, where they're banned from 2030.

"Whether e-fuels will lead to regulation to allow us to sell such cars later than 2035 I don't know, but

if you don't have such technology you can't prove it, so we'd like to show what's possible and have the discussion at a later date," Michael Steiner, head of research and development at Porsche told Hagerty.

Who is championing e-fuels?

Porsche's stablemate Audi has been working alongside partners to produce e-methane and e-diesel in low volumes since 2009. Others are keen to see it progress. McLaren has said it supports synthetic e-fuel growth, while Aston Martin has called for the synthetic fuel to form part of a "technology neutral approach" to decarbonising road transport, leaving room for legacy engines to survive. Even Bentley, which has declared it will go EV-only after 2030, has said e-fuels could allow the production of limited "continuation" combustion engine vehicles after its self-imposed deadline.

One of the loudest advocates is German super-supplier Bosch, whose CEO Volkmar Denner has implored legislators not to ignore synthetic fuels. He claimed the push to electromobility was driven on the "misunderstanding...that diesel and gasoline-powered cars can never be climate neutral". He decried the "short sighted" legislation that hasn't yet pressed for oil companies to fulfil an e-fuel quota. "Half of all the vehicles that will be driving on our roads in 2030 have already been sold and most of them have gasoline or diesel engines," he wrote. "These cars will also have to reduce their carbon footprint, and renewable synthetic fuels will allow them to do so."

Don't we already have biofuel?

Fossil fuel substitutes have been a holy grail for car makers and their suppliers for more than two decades now. Biofuels made from crops showed early promise but despite becoming widespread in some areas, for example Brazil, the competition with food supplies ultimately scuppered their cause, barring those created from farming or food waste.

They do form a portion of the fuel we pump into cars, with British petrol containing five percent bio-ethanol, rising to 10 percent in 2021 as part of the move to the new E10 formula. It does reduce CO₂ but it's not a substitute for carbon neutral alternatives, and 100 per cent biofuel is not a straightforward alternative. Cars running on ethanol in Brazil for example require engine modifications.

Biofuel created from algae was the great hope for a while and in 2008 the government-funded Carbon Trust even invested £26 million into schemes, predicting that production could hit 70 billion litres by 2030. But it proved too costly and by 2011 that funding was cut.

How much will synthetic fuel cost?

Synthetic fuel will be expensive, at least initially. Porsche estimates that e-petrol synthesised from e-methanol using the hydrogen and carbon-capture process right now would cost over 10 euros a litre. However, Steiner, Porsche's head of R&D, predicts that will eventually drop to match today's fuel prices as more refineries are installed. Bosch's Denner forecasts that e-fuels could reach 1.20 euros per litre by 2030 – and even fall below one euro by 2050.

That's unlikely, argued environmental pressure group ICCT in a June report written in reply to Denner. The figure would probably be more like 3 or 4 euros per litre by 2030, it said. "If we can provide e-fuels so cheaply, why would we bother with transitioning to electric cars?" the report asked. ICCT agreed that synthetic fuels were beneficial to reduce carbon levels but pointed out that the electrolysis needed to create hydrogen are "notoriously expensive" and that the whole process is wastefully inefficient. "The vast majority of the energy from the sun or wind is lost," it said. Ultimately whether it's cost effective or not depends whether governments apply a penalty to the price of fossil fuels to reduce their use, Porsche's Steiner argues: "What price tag for CO₂? The higher price tag, the better chances for renewable e-fuels."

Will e-fuels win against electric power?

Their inefficiency at converting renewable power into motive force, suggests synthetic fuels won't unseat electric power, at least for new cars. A report by European environment group Transport & Environment published in 2017 claimed that only 13 percent of the energy used to make e-fuels ends up driving the vehicle, against 73 percent for a battery electric car.

Even those advocating e-fuels admit that it's not a great use of electric energy when applied to cars. "If you produce renewable electricity in Europe, you're better off putting it into the grid, but it's a good substitute for exporting energy from abroad," Porsche's Steiner said.

And while synthetic e-fuel can use the existing distribution infrastructure, you still need to build refineries. "I think building an electric infrastructure – charging etc and the distribution of energy – is

far more feasible and likely to happen in the 2030 timescale than a whole new infrastructure for e-fuels,” Adrian Hallmark, Bentley CEO, said.

However, Bosch points to the rate of adoption for clean renewable energies such as wind turbines, and says it believes synthetic fuels could become viable by 2025.

The primary customers, at least initially, will be transport that won’t be able to transition to electric power for a long time, including shipping and aviation.

What about tailpipe emissions?

Porsche claims cars using the fuel will emit the same or fewer tailpipe emissions compared to regular fuel. That might not be good enough. The Euro 7 emissions standard coming within the next five years (the exact timeframe has yet to be determined) will impose brutal new restrictions on cars’ tailpipe emissions. That will require ever more expensive control devices, making internal combustion engines more expensive and therefore closing the price gap with EVs. As batteries become cheaper, EVs are expected to undercut internal combustion engine cars on price.

Who else is working on synthetic fuels?

Spanish fuel company Repsol has begun work with partners on a 60 million euro refinery in Bilbao that’ll begin production in 2024 and eventually produce 10,000 litres of synthetic fuel a day. Porsche and its partners are promising 550 million litres of e-methanol per year by 2026 from its Chile refinery, of which 40 percent will be e-petrol.

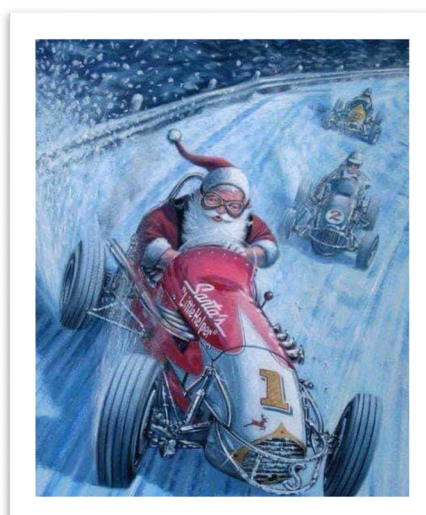
Will e-fuels become a reality?

Regulators in Europe aren’t thought to be keen. The suggestion is they’re worried that it sends the wrong signal that the internal combustion engine is fine again just as the industry pivots to electric. The UK of course could make its own rules, but for the price to come down it needs Europe to engage as well. “The most important factor will be the willingness of regulators to give it a chance. There’s a lot of discussion in Europe whether it will be allowed for cars at all,” Porsche’s Steiner said.

But there is momentum. Formula One has pledged to move to e-fuels as part of its commitment to reach a net-zero carbon footprint by 2030. Pat Symonds, Chief Technical Officer at Formula One, acknowledges it won’t be simple. “I think it’s important to say that I don’t think it will be easy, but anything of value requires ingenuity, commitment and the will to make a change. And if we can do it, I think there’s another great contribution story from motorsport to the world at large.

“What we can do is we can show the world that there are alternatives to electric power and there are alternatives to storing electricity in heavy and, I have to say, somewhat dirty batteries,” says Symonds.

Internal combustion engines are unlikely to die completely. Just like the high-end watch industry kept analogue movements alive, the sports car brands in particular will want to monetise our enthusiasm for a finely-crafted engine. Synthetic fuels, even if regulated and costly, might allow them to continue to produce them, and power existing classics long into the next decade and beyond.



EARLY DAYS

Mike Kirk reflects on his early days of motorsport with KLMC

In the mid 1960's KLMC had slumped a little from its early enthusiasm of the 50's.

At this time Peter Kirk moved to Kirkby Lonsdale to take up management of Kendal Road garage, which developed from a roadside 'shack' to the modern facility now known as Kirkby Motors. Peter had started rallying in Kendal with the 'Blue Ramblers' motor club, an offshoot of the local Police Social Club. Their events were regarded as very complex treasure hunt/navigational events and Peter navigated for his wife in a brand new Ford Anglia 105E. He decided to take over the driving when one night she took off over a hump-backed bridge and landed facing the way they had come!

On his move to Kirkby Lonsdale, Peter joined KLMC, and the office of Kendal Road garage became like the 'ACE CAFE' as the local youths, mainly young farmers, would meet there in an evening in their Mini Pickups, Morris 1000 vans and A35's. The talk obviously got round to driving and motorsport and Peter realised there was a whole new 'market' for the motor club, and so began to organise 12 car rallies on a Thursday evening. They soon became very popular and the cars inevitably became a little more competitive, especially as Mini Coopers and Cortina GT's became more affordable.

(I am not sure whether it was because of this initiative with the 12 cars that Peter became Chairman, or because he was already Chairman he could take this initiative, whichever, it proved the making of KLMC at the time).

My first ever rally was navigating in a Mini Van driven by Oxenholme farmer's son, Alan Bell – our late president's wife, Mary Capstick's brother. We finished 2nd overall and Alan went on to build a 1293 Cooper 'S' in which we won the 1970 Club Championship.

Other competitors on those early 12 cars included obviously, the Capstick brothers, Gordon and Mal, in a variety of Minis, Coopers and later Escorts. As mentioned most of the competitors were farmers sons and their vehicles were initially just what was available on the farm at the time, but as things got more serious so did the cars.

Mini Coopers started to fill the entry lists with, George Bell from just up the road at Biggins Hall (Grey and white Cooper), Bill Braithwaite from Whittington (Green and White Cooper), Alan Bell as mentioned (Blue and White 'S'), Gordon Capstick (Grey Cooper), Mal capstick (I think it was an olive green Cooper?), with the exceptions being Paul Burrows from Fleet Farm, several Cortina GT's including an unusual very nice pale blue one, and Richard Burrows from Cowan Bridge who had an usual choice of car in a Morris 1300.

There was also a rapid 105E Anglia fitted with a bored out 1300 engine and unusual (for a Ford) twin SU carburettors. I had the dubious distinction of navigating this car to 3rd overall on my second 12 car. It was driven by a local 'hooligan' called Tom Clark, and he certainly lived upto the name – whether it be Jim or Roger! He had a lot of local knowledge as his day job was delivering cattle feed around the farms and his party piece was to leave the forecourt of Kendal Road garage with the wheels spinning ---- on his 10 ton Commer 2 stroke truck!!

Perhaps the most notable, and I think the first Mini Cooper in the area, was that of Mike Paget-Tomlinson who wasn't a farmers son, but his father did own most of the farms! Mike's car was an 'apple' green/yellow Cooper with a black (or maybe white?) roof. One of my other early events was sitting in the back of this car but that is a whole other story.

The original 12 cars carried on with I think 2 series a year through the seventies.

FIRST ENCOUNTERS

My very first memory of rallying was listening to Raymond Baxter's radio commentary of the Monte Carlo Rally sometime in the late fifties, early sixties. It filled my head with pictures of Sunbeam Alpines driven by Stirling Moss hurtling over snow covered French mountain passes. I barely knew what a Sunbeam Alpine looked like and confused the Sunbeam Talbot Saloon with the later Alpine sports car, which I don't believe was used on the Monte Carlo, let alone driven by Stirling Moss! However

I preserved that image for many years and eventually, some 30 years later, bought an Alpine of my own.

A couple of years later, when my elder brother, Peter, started to get involved with local rallying, it didn't take much persuasion for me to accompany him, albeit only marshalling at that stage. I was still in my early teens, I still had the aforementioned pictures in my mind, it was still the 60's, and the idea of spending the whole night out of bed seemed an incredible adventure!

We were to marshal a Checkpoint high in the Pennines on a rough cart-track known as Mastiles lane, above Malham Tarn. We spent most of the night watching the car headlight beams wafting across the sky like World War 2 searchlights looking for enemy bombers, as the cars made their way from valley to hilltop and back into the next valley. By the time the first car reached us it was dawn on a beautiful summer morning and we had already witnessed a spectacular sunrise over the Pennines. It wasn't Stirling Moss and it wasn't a French mountain, but it was enough to get me 'hooked' for the rest of my life.

The rally was Kirkby Lonsdale Motor Club's Devils Own road rally, which was later to become famous as a Motoring News championship event which attracted future stars such as Tony Pond, Russell Brookes, Gwyndaf Evans and even Prince Michael of Kent. Both Peter and myself eventually became responsible for organising the 'Devils', Peter in the early seventies, and myself from 1995 onwards when the event was resurrected as an Historic Rally.

Even more ironically, that first car to reach our Checkpoint was the Wolseley 1500 of the Crabtree brothers, well known members of Kirkby Lonsdale Motor Club. Some 30 years later I was driving on an event with Geoff Crabtree, the son of Brian, one of those same brothers, navigating for me. When I related the above story to him, he described his first memories of rallying to me. "My father used to get me out of bed in the middle of the night to watch rallies going past the house – and one of the first cars that I remember was you in your Mk1 Escort G.T." It was at that point that I realised just how long I had been involved in the sport – never mind how old I was getting!

Mike Kirk

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Andy's Armchair

Andy Armstrong takes an irreverent look at motoring and motorsport

With Lewis Hamilton securing his seventh World Title there have been several articles in the none motoring press trying to decide the leading driver of all time. Needless to say the regular names keep cropping up but no one, as far as I'm aware, has mentioned any of the pre war protagonists, who, even though the world championship didn't exist at that time are surely worthy of consideration.

Again the usual names would crop up, Nuvolari, Rosemeyer and Carraciola spring to mind but one name that's rarely mentioned is that of Jean Pierre Wimille who both before and after the war shone as a true superstar of that era.

His career began in 1930, and he became a regular winner and front runner in Grand Prix, including finishing second to Nuvolari in the Vanderbilt cup in New York. On the sports car front he won the Le Mans 24 hours race in 1937 and 1939, before his career was interrupted by the Second World War. During the hostilities he joined the Special Operations Executive and worked with the French resistance losing many colleagues and fellow racing driver friends.

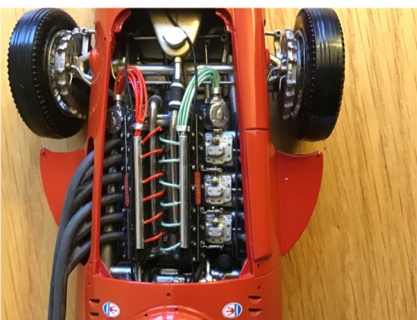
Post war he won his second French Grand Prix as leading Alfa Romeo driver and even found time to design some very futuristic road cars. One of looks to me to have heavily influenced the timeless shape of the Citroen DS series of cars built throughout the 50's and 60's.

His career blossomed and he mentored Fangio as he moved from long distance road racing to circuits, no doubt helping him to achieve his future successes. Wimille himself died practicing for the Buenos Aires Grand Prix in 1949. Legend has it that a lady pushing a pram was crossing the circuit and in avoiding her he crashed into a trackside tree and was fatally injured. At the time of his death he was considered the finest driver of his generation and yet he is seldom remembered in the list of "Titans" most people consider mentioning when thinking of the best of the best.



It's nice to see that at least one other club member is into model car building, the Alfa Romeo that Jim Hendry has been working on is superb, and a credit to his skills and patience. For years I've dabbled in this hobby but was put off somewhat when I had a 1:24 scale Maserati 250F built by a professional and the detail and finish he achieved in a relatively small model simply made me realise how pathetic my own attempts had been. Now I buy them ready made, it's safer than relying on my own clumsy efforts.

The photos accompanying this article are of the above car, and the details never fail to blow me away, look at it and see there're even springs on the carburettors and then remember the whole thing is 7 inches long.



Car models generally are getting scarily expensive at the moment with new CMC releases up around the £500 mark. These have doubled in the last 10 years or so, and even 1:43 can get to silly prices. The well known Minichamps Mansell Williams giving Senna a ride back to the pits "Taxi for Senna" is on offer at anything from £90 to £140, a 400% increase on the original asking price. None of these prices get anywhere near the dear stuff of course where many thousands are charged for a custom built model. Oh by the way always keep the boxes as without them prices drop off the proverbial cliff.

Ends.

MS UK CEO's Message

I doubt that any F1 fans that were watching their screens at 14.15 on the 29th of November will ever forget the shock of seeing a fireball explode moments after the race start, followed by the conspicuous absence of any follow up footage. We have all got so used to the idea that modern racing cars do not burst into flames, and if they do it is a small localised flareup that is easily extinguished. We racked our brains to think of the last time an F1 car had literally exploded. We feared the worst.

I vividly remember as a child reading my weekly Motoring News (as it was then) and being numb with shock at yet another of my heroes perishing. Attending the 1969 Tourist Trophy at Oulton Park with my parents, I still can see the plume of black smoke rising above the trees from Paul Hawkins' Lola T70, and the hush that settled on the circuit. This is not to be macabre, but rather to celebrate how far we have come with safety in our sport.

The relentless pursuit of safety has had many champions, and perhaps most celebrated is Sir Jackie Stewart, for every cause needs a powerful leader. But it has been the tireless work of countless people of whom we know so little - the designers, engineers, medical staff, equipment suppliers and research boffins that have implemented the small, incremental steps that have resulted in the quantum shift. The FIA, led by Jean Todt, has a clear mission to eradicate fatalities from motorsport, and as steep as that mountain is to climb, they have scaled some amazing heights.

Romain Grosjean is the first to acknowledge that if it was not for the Halo on his Haas car, he would not have survived. The details of the accident are being forensically examined by the FIA Safety Department, and they will piece together just how the car penetrated the Armco with such force as to peel back the rigid layers of steel like a can opener. Modern racing cars have aircraft grade bag tanks and fuel lines that self-seal, but something happened here that did not conform to all of the predictions. And that is the point - an accident is 'an unfortunate incident that happens unexpectedly and unintentionally, typically resulting in damage or injury', so what we have all done in motorsport is to minimise the chances of it happening, and then if it does, minimise the consequences thereof.

And when a serious incident of this nature does occur in motorsport, we rely on an extraordinary band of people who give up their time at weekends in order to intervene and minimise the impact of what has just happened. Our marshals, rescue and recovery teams and all of the medical crews are simply extraordinary in their dedication and commitment to ensuring motorsport is as safe as it is. We were all struck by the profound bravery of Dr Ian Roberts and Alan van der Merwe, who confronted the flames head on to help rescue Romain, who was invisible in the inferno. And they symbolise what an amazing community of experts we are so fortunate to have, and for everyone in these roles we offer our gratitude. Later in this issue we highlight the career of Martin Shalders, a volunteer marshal with over 45 years of marshalling experience, and that is real commitment.

In the UK we have well over 4,000 events in any normal year, and they range from autosolos on airfields to the Grand Prix at Silverstone (another airfield). Our mission is to make motorsport safe, fair and fun, the first being the imperative. But we also need to be mindful that there should be a proportionate response to risk and the environment that the activity is taking place in. Our 60,000+ licence holders, volunteers and spectators need to be protected, but we have become pretty good at recognising that for events such as autosolos you don't need a crash helmet or flame proof overalls. We extended the life service of seats and seat belts as there was no evidence that the limit was based on hard facts, and since then this has been vindicated. For the vast majority of our community the sport is a hobby and good fun, all done with a very limited budget, so we need to be especially careful when we make any changes to the rules and regulations on the grounds of safety that they are really needed, and that the most cost-effective solution is found.

A week later in the Bahrain desert we caught a glimpse of what George Russell will be capable of when he gets a slot in one of the front-running teams – and who would bet against that being Mercedes in 2022. On the same day, on a snow strewn mountain in Italy, we saw another of our young stars, Elfyn Evans' hopes slide away in agony. We have a lot to be excited for with those competing on the world stage, and yet another generation of junior champions nipping at their heels.

I would like to say a very big thank you to everyone in the UK motorsport community for everything that you have done for the sport this year. Whether it is creating competitions, running venues, sponsoring teams, managing events or simply taking out a Motorsport UK licence – we owe you all our gratitude.

I wish everyone a safe and secure Christmas, and hopefully the chance to spend time with loved ones and enjoying a brief respite from the challenges of the virus. But there is a light beginning to shine with the vaccines being rolled out – and I am quietly optimistic that we will have a great season of motorsport in 2021.

Kind regards,

Hugh Chambers CEO, Motorsport UK

Events 2021

Given the ongoing pandemic, we are not planning any events for the next few months. We have a draft programme based on past years plus monthly Breakfast Meets. However it is pointless at this time in publishing anything for the first three months of the year until we see how things are going.

Hopefully April will see the first Breakfast Meet, an autotest and Drive It Day.

