

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

Start Line

Issue 05/21

www.wigtonmc.co.uk

May 2021

Return to Action



Autosolo Fun at Maryport

Get Involved!

Club Officials

OFFICIALS

<i>President.:</i>	<i>Charles Graves</i>	
<i>Vice Pres.</i>	<i>Ron Palmer & David Turnbull,</i>	
<i>Sec/Editor</i>	<i>Graeme Forrester</i>	gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk
<i>Treasurer</i>		
<i>Membership Sec</i>	<i>John Sloan</i>	wigtonmcmemb@outlook.com
<i>Social Sec.:</i>	<i>Charles Graves</i>	charles.graves@armathwaite-hall.com
<i>Child Protect.</i>	<i>Alan Jackson</i>	bigwalk1@gmail.com
<i>Equipment Officer</i>	<i>Graeme Mactavish</i>	gmact123@gmail.com

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

John Graham	jlg86mpa@hotmail.co.uk
Lynda Graham.	jlg86mpa@hotmail.co.uk
Andrew Graham	andy-lake3rec@hotmail.co.uk
Jim Crockett	jamesmcrockett@yahoo.co.uk
Chris Leece	chris_1lowtherview@yahoo.co.uk
Paul Eastwood	paul.eastwood@carrsgroup.co.uk
John Sloan	johnsloan02@outlook.com
Ron Palmer	ronpalmer777@hotmail.com
David Agnew	DAVIDWAGNEW@aol.com
Rob Grant	robincumbria@hotmail.com ,
John Holliday	johnholl403@gmail.com ,

Visit the Facebook page for the latest news, or the webpage at
www.wigtonmc.co.uk

Talking Point

Topical Comment from the world of motoring

I wasted an hour of my time a few weeks ago to watch “Extreme E” – this is another bright idea from Alejandro Agag who also runs Formula E. Basically it’s electric buggy racing in obscure places. The give it some credibility the cars are transported around the five venues by a boat with an eco-friendly engine and there are legacy projects in each country.

The actual format wasn’t explained and seemed complicated, each buggy has a mixed crew and there are timed runs at the course (in this case in a Saudi desert) and then three car races over a couple of laps. With the sand and dust the car that get away first won as the others could not see anything. Mr Agag had certainly brought out his cheque book as he had top names competing or “managing” in the case of Sir Lewis. We also had a five minute lecture on green issues halfway through. There was probably about fifteen minutes of actual racing in the whole hour.

The problem is that the whole eco and moral backdrop to the series does not add up. The drivers will have jetted in from all over the world and no doubt drove to the venue in the desert in fossil powered vehicles while the human rights record of Saudi Arabia is one of the worst in the world. They then head for Senegal, Brazil, Greenland, and finally Tierra del Fuego in Argentina. The events take place in fragile ecosystems and other than Greenland all the countries have human rights issues. I can see Greta Thunberg and every panda in the world sharpening their pencils.

Much the same can be said about Formula E – electric single seaters racing on artificial circuits built in cities. Yes, let’s have electric car racing but why not on proper circuits so they can pass and not hit the wall? Of course all the race cars are brought to the venue in transporters which I am sure not electric. No doubt they need generators to charge them before a race. Each circuit is created using several miles of plastic barriers, stands, pit garages and infrastructure. I bet they are all brought by lorry and put in place by diesel powered cranes.

As a sport we should take climate change seriously but the logic behind Extreme E and Formula E is a bit dubious to say the least. I would love to see MSUK run a race series for mildly modified electric saloon cars – an ideal way to prove to the public how far they can go etc.

GTF

Editor: Graeme Forrester

Email: gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk

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

Motor House Autotest/PCA

Sunday, May 16th

Entries are pouring in!

Marshals needed.

Entry forms on the web site.

June Scenic Tour

27th June.

It will be around 90 miles, starting and finishing at Houghton Hall Garden Centre

Entry forms will be sent out in due course.

Breakfast Meet

July 4th from 9-11

Lingholm at Portinscale

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PG Tips

Peter Reflects On His Month

This month I've cured a squeak and everything seems to be going swimmingly. Barry the race car is looking very shiny after I tidied up the suspension arms with spray paint and the nose cone and front wing have been to a professional place to make them beautiful. Not much else to say on that front other than I just need to add a couple of stickers and wait for mid May when the season starts. Seemingly scrutineering won't be happening at events this year and remote signing on before the event and self-declarations of compliance are the order of the day. I'm sure my car is fine but I wonder if there will be others that aren't so well maintained that will slip through and cause problems?

The squeak in question suddenly appeared in the Astra a week ago and drove me round the bend. It sounded like a trim part in the front cabin area of the car and despite spending a lot of time with my youngest daughter listening very carefully we could not locate it. Out of despair I went to the internet for answers and after posting a video of the squeak and many comments by people with no clue someone suggested the shock absorbers were wrecked. What an idiot....they were brand new last year I thought....and whilst he wasn't right, he definitely wasn't an idiot because I went to check just to make sure and found it was actually the adjustable strut brace channelling the squeak – a quick tweak with a spanner and no more squeak. I realise I sound a bit OCD but by god it was annoying and surprisingly loud given that it was under the bonnet.

I'm 50 next week – (last week when you read this!) and whilst it's not going to be the biggest of birthday celebrations we are at least now able to go out for a meal. Earlier in the year I had a mad idea that for my 50th I'd not buy a car for a whole year to celebrate this milestone in my life... however as an addict it's already proving hard to stick to. I've been reading too many car magazines and now have a bit of a hankering for a Rover 75. I guess it must be my age but as the last car Rover made, good ones are getting harder to find and the mags are talking about values starting to go up. Obviously that won't apply to me because I never make money on cars, but I still fancy trying one and they are cheap, reliable and a bit different. Trudy just rolled her eyes and said “so you weren't going to buy a car for a whole year and we've only reached April and you're going back on it”. Er.....no, yes – possibly! I'm in the research phase at the minute, checking out specs, costs, likely problems and looking at pictures of sumptuous leather seats and wooden dashboards. I may yet talk myself out of it as there is currently nothing significantly wrong with my old Mercedes (said whilst touching wood).

What I definitely won't be buying is a modern car, I like to tinker too much and I can't imagine going electric anytime soon either. I think as we head towards 2030 and the supposed end of new internal combustion engined cars there will need to be a re-think or some significant jump forward in technology because so many people and places are not ready for plug in electric cars. How on earth are people living in terraced houses with no parking or gardens going to plug in their electric cars being one of the main issues I can see. Whilst manufacturers seem to all be lining up on the EV front, Porsche are also investing a fortune in a synthetic fuel plant in South America and plan to build others in order to feed demand for green 'petrol'. Synthetic fuel is not a new thing for anyone and particularly not the Germans who created plants to make the stuff in Poland during WW2 to try and keep their tanks and planes moving. In fact it's fair to say that a significant cause of failure by the Axis powers was down to their lack of fuel (as well as many other things). The difference this time round is that the fuel is going to be carbon neutral as opposed to being made from liquified coal. It's going to be expensive

no doubt, but it shows there are still many decades of the combustion engine still ahead of us although as time goes on it will almost certainly become a leisure product for motorsport and classic cars in limited quantities. .

Peter

April Autosolo

Driver	Car	Class	Total	Pos	Class
Peter Wright	Mini	F	905	1	1
Chris Hunter	MX5	MX	912	2	1
Craig Stamper	Saxo	F	913	3	2
Tot Dixon	Mini	F	915	4	3
David O'Connor	MX5	MX	961	5	2
Dan Grierson	C2	F	975	6	4
Phil Hodgson	MX5	MX	985	7	3
Peter Masters	Alto	F	1003	8	5
Brian Bradley	Golf	F	1008	9	6
Fiona Tyson	MX5	MX	1019	10	4
Paul Grierson	C2	F	1044	11	7
Jack Long	Fox	J	1072	12	1



A great event by Steve and John and a host of marshals.

Super value as well with the winner getting 15 minutes of tests time for just £15! It was very close at the top!

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WWW.M-SPORT.CO.UK

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Rozalyn Howell, M-Sport Ltd, Dovenby Hall, Cockermouth, Cumbria, CA13 0PN

CEO's Message

And so, the lights have gone green, the flag has dropped and after some four months of interruption we're off and running again as motorsport begins to resume. Last summer does seem a long time ago, when we had a very successful resumption in most of the UK, with over 1,000 events and tens of thousands of competition starts across the entire diversity of our sport. We learnt a great deal from that exercise; successfully navigating the challenges of operating during the throes of a pandemic, and thanks to the diligence and care of our resourceful community we did not suffer any failures in the system during our 2020 events.

And so, for Easter 2021 there is something of a sense of déjà vu, but also a glimmer of a bright light beginning to shine, giving hope that this may just be the last time that we have to go through this. As the impressive vaccination programme rolls out with such speed and effectiveness across all of our communities, I think we should pause and thank those members of the motorsport community who are drawn from the medical and health care professions and who, in their working lives, have met these extraordinary challenges with such fortitude, and yet found the energy and time to continue with their passion for motorsport and enabling so many events to take place during these challenging times.

On Good Friday I attended one of the first events of the new season, the Masters Historic Formula One Weekend at Donington. For the domestic scene this is in the upper echelons of the sport both in terms of the cars being used as well as the sophistication that the professionals of MSV and the Masters team bring to their events. It was perhaps no surprise that given this enormous knowledge and skillset the event ran so smoothly and efficiently. And when an event does run like clockwork it allows everybody to relax and soak up the thrill of hearing Lola T70s fire up in the garages and watching a phalanx of Lotus Cortinas four-wheel drifting through the Craner Curves. As you could see by the smiles on their faces this was the reawakening of the sport and the release of the pent-up excitement we've all been holding on to for so long this year. One of the aspects of motorsport that is always such a joy to experience is the warm welcome and camaraderie of the community, with everyone happy to chat about their cars and the challenges they face, or a Marshal or a Volunteer recalling their favourite moments in the sport. I spent time with the Stewards and the Clerks, observing the calm and focused way in which they ensure that everything behind the scenes is kept scrupulously fair, allowing the competitors to simply enjoy the fun of a great day's motorsport.

Two days later, on a crystal clear but freezing Easter Sunday morning, we assembled at a farm hidden in the folds of the countryside close to Milton Keynes. As the vehicles lumbered into view up the broken farm track and gathered in the grassy field, one could again hear the familiar chatter of old friends and colleagues reassembling, comparing stories and looking forward to the day ahead. One of the amazing aspects of motorsport is the sheer diversity of the community and the disciplines that are all bound together by their love of the motor car. The Historic Formula One cars of Donington and the modified cross country Land Rovers of Whaddon in Buckinghamshire, could hardly be more different in terms of their mechanical ability and genealogy. The team from the Anglian Land Rover Organisation offered the warmest of welcomes to me and my colleagues from Motorsport UK and immediately set about explaining the finer nuances of navigating a perilous slope awash with mud and full of ravines in order to achieve the highest position and gain the maximum points. The relaxed nature of the whole event belied the seriousness required to extract performance from the machinery, with only the most technically skilled able to coax these machines through the mud. All the while, family and friends gathered around to watch as each competitor took it in turns to take on the challenge before moving on to the next test.

An important part of these type of events are the road registered vehicles and the Tyro classes. The first of these are for road registered off-road vehicles that can be driven to the competition and then embark upon a series of tests that are somewhat more moderate than the full Cross Country trials machines will tackle, but nonetheless a challenge for the driver, and in normal times the passenger or co-driver. It was noticeable that there was disappointment that family members could not be in the cars, but they fully appreciated that

this was the small price that must be paid for unlocking the sport at this stage whilst remaining within government guidelines. The Tyro category is aimed at the beginners and in particular the youth competitor, with those as young as 13 years old able to tackle the tests in full size off-road machinery. I know that when I was that age it would have been the thrill of a lifetime to be let loose in this type of free environment to tackle the twists and turns of competition.

This type of event with road registered vehicles is very much in line with our thinking for the new Street Car classes that will be promoted to attract newcomers to the sport. As we progress through the summer and can start to welcome more people to the sport for the first time, these are key entry points that require little extra equipment or the need to tow the vehicle to the venue. All Motorsport UK clubs can offer expert advice on how to start a new journey into motorsport.

Back at Donington on Easter Monday, the 750 Motor Club began their season. This Club is perennially the champion of affordable motorsport, promising a great atmosphere in the paddock and a warm welcome. One new innovation from the 750 Motor Club that has caught my eye is the new Foundation Programme based around the Tegiwa Type R Trophy. The Club have got together with a number of preparers to provide a fixed cost race-ready Honda Civic Type R with all the necessary modifications to comply with Motorsport UK regulations and pre-pack preparation to compete in a series of double-header race meetings (as well as a pre-season track day) and all for the price of £10,495. I admit this isn't true grassroots level competition as some people would define it, but the residual value on these cars should be extremely strong, and the running costs very reasonable, given that all the modifications focus on suspension and brakes with the engine in standard tune. It is this type of thinking that makes it easier for people to have clear sight of their budget commitments, with the series heavily monitored to ensure equal machinery right down to a rolling road to check on the power output at the wheels.

I think most people would agree that the most exciting racing is where the machinery is equally balanced and everything comes down to the skill and experience of the driver against their fellow competitors. The one element that I would like to see more of, if possible, is a pool of vehicles that would be made available so that a true Arrive and Drive offer could be presented for those that do not have the logistical wherewithal to store a race car or transport it to and from the circuit. This of course happens on an ad-hoc basis all over the country, but to have more series offering that type of resource would I'm sure be extremely popular for many people.

So, as we conclude the first weekend of motorsport in England, and with the prospect of the restart gathering pace across the whole of the UK, I'm filled with gratitude for the enormous effort by the entire community to get things running again. I am also excited at the prospect of a long summer ahead filled with the amazing diversity of our sport that brings together such a wonderful warm and inclusive community all sharing their passion for motorsport.

I hope that all of you are keeping safe and that you may soon enjoy the return to motorsport yourselves.

Kind regards,

Hugh Chambers

CEO, Motorsport UK

Team Wigton News



Sam Kirkpatrick scored a double win at Brands Hatch last weekend in his Team Wigton/Wheatsheaf Garage MGZR. In the first race Sam had a close battle for the lead but was never headed and won by under a second.

In race two twenty year old Sam broke away to score a clear win .The championship is for MG ZRs in three classes. This made the longest trip of the year worthwhile. The next round is at Oulton Park next month.

Events of Interest

Spadeadam Motor Club

are holding there 2nd Classic Car Run

On 11th July Entry forms can be obtained from

smcroadrunba@aol.com or phone Brian on 07810460982

The run is also open to performance vehicles



Product review R Tech 180amp Mig welder

Every now and again a tool or product comes along that is either fantastic value or does a job way beyond one's expectations the R Tech 180 Mig welder I bought recently fits into both these categories.

My Snap on Tools MIG and SIP arc welders had given great service over a number of years but were getting old, so I felt I needed new ones, so I sent an e mail around to a number of skilled people who are into restorations and building competition cars asking for recommendation for new welders. Immediately I had two or three replies all recommending R Tech and telling me to look on You tube at some videos, they also offered to allow me to try out their 180 MIGs and said the R Tech MIG will also act as a manual arc welder, this seemed too good to be true, two for the price of one generally is a poor compromise because I wanted top quality machines and expected to pay top money again to get what I wanted. With lockdown in place due to Covid trying out someone else's welder wasn't really viable before purchase.

I checked out the videos which were a revelation, some from R Tech themselves were professionally made and excellent but a number from a mechanic called John Mills a Geordie who is a motor mechanic in the Newcastle area showed him using the equipment in his own workshop doing various jobs like those that arise every week in a business like mine which is running a small village garage. One such job was welding a rusty exhaust flange back on a rusty exhaust pipe without cleaning up the parts to be welded as sometimes there is just not enough room to clean up parts in real life situations.

He has had so many views R Tech now send him various R Tech products for reviewing, he shows how to set up the various machines and use them, it's not a slick PR job but a really down to earth demonstration and appraisal, view the videos for yourself and you will see what I mean.

The R Tech website says their machines come with a three year no quibble warranty, In the unlikely event that a problem arises but they accept occasionally it can happen R Tech send UPS the day after you report a fault to collect the machine, the fault is sorted and R Tech return it to you free of charge, this fact alone puts R Tech way above all other firms I deal with in my business I have to say.



Still being a "doubting Thomas" I rang R Tech a couple of times where very helpful people answered any queries I had, they confirmed the warranty details and explained their machine I was interested in can be used as a gas or gasless MIG, a manual arc welder and with the optional extra of a spool kit and a bottle of pure argon it can weld aluminium. If a flow meter was added it can be used as a TIG welder, quite unbelievable from a single machine that is not expensive, the chap I was talking to stressed these two additional uses gave decent results but obviously were not as good as using one of their proper TIG welders with foot control and other refinements.

They told me any orders received before 3pm would be dispatched the same day from their factory near Tewksbury in Gloucestershire and would arrive the following day, they were so helpful and reassuring on every point I raised I placed an order and sure enough my welder arrived exactly as they said it would. It not only arrived on time, but it was in a specially made protective box that in itself is a work of art that really protects the contents from damage.

The machine is very lightweight as it uses inverter technology and can be carried just as easily as you would a bag of shopping, but the gas bottle is heavy of course and as we use our MIG in various locations I ordered a trolley from them too, this was superb value at £75 very well worth the money I have to say and once again the protective packaging was a work of art.

I have used the MIG repairing the thick metal on the bucket and front blade on my Kubota tracked excavator and we also used it on some very thin metal on a broken exhaust pipe flange on a catalytic convertor on a BMW X5 an almost identical repair to the job John Mills did in his video, both jobs were done with ease.

It's been used as a manual arc machine to weld some girders, again it was superb, it took me very little time to adjust to the infinitely variable voltage and wire speed controls rather than the six very distinct amperage settings on my previous Snap On machine, but a truly clear chart is provided giving all details of the thickness and type of steel to be welded, nothing is left to chance.



As yet I haven't used the spool kit to weld aluminium, but I am looking forward at some stage to using it, I'm now 74 years old, originally, I served an apprenticeship as a structural plater so fabrication and welding with oxy acetylene and electric arc has always been part of my life, my hobby involved building and restoring cars which is how I ended up running a small village garage of my own.

The first two replies to my initial enquiry for recommendations for new MIG were answered by Ian Cowan and Dave Smith, both are highly qualified engineers but more importantly both are very practical guys also into building and restoring cars. Ian has built a replica GT40, and Austin 7, restored his E Type Jag, and built loads of Escorts

and other cars too. Dave Smith recently built a Mini Marcos fabricating lots of brackets etc for that car as well as restoring and developing their 1930s Alvis 12/70 for speed hill climbs, these guys can handle machines I assure you.

Thanks also to Graham Millar who also recommended R Tech he has a TIG welder and he says it is a fantastic piece of kit, his normal job is building the gearboxes for the works WRC cars for M Sport as well as the gearboxes for the works Bentley race cars, when guys like these give a product their seal of approval it is very reassuring to hear and their praise couldn't have been higher which is why I felt compelled to share it with others that may be thinking about purchasing equipment.

My machine is so versatile and of such quality I am delighted with it, amazingly the price of their equipment is so reasonable that I intend to buy some more things from them, the 180 amp MIG was £415, the manual arc cable was £28.95 spool kit £133, trolley £75 and a flow meter is £7.50 all plus vat of course, fantastic value indeed.

Keith Thomas.

Welcome to New Members

We hope that you enjoy Start Line we look forward to meeting you at an event soon.

Mark Milne and family,	Carlisle.	Andy and Janine Walsham,	Corney.
Malcolm and Ruth Monkhouse,	Nealhouse.	Duncan Petty,	Dumfries.
Steve Odams and Clare Benham,	Penrith.	Stuart and Linda Cariss,	York.
Paul Tyson and family,	Wigton.		
Norman and Susan Hamer,	Preston.		
Richard Benson and family,	Wigton.		
Richard and Kay Chalmers,	Wigton.		
Dave and Jocelyn Morris,	Nottingham.		

From The Top

News from UK Motorsport, Regions and the WMC Committee

Thanks to all those who responded to our members survey as it gives us some idea of what events are popular and what to plan in the future. 100% of you said that the club represented excellent value for money. The concept of the Motor House was also well received as a base for our activities. The overall programme of activities that we put on is popular and the survey did produce good responses to things that we don't currently do. The committee will be looking at this in coming months.

The annual accounts have now been audited and when we are permitted to do so we will have an AGM to approve them.

Forest rallying in England will restart with a trial event in Yorkshire in September. There will be though two events in the private Greystoke Forest this summer. The situation in Scotland is still uncertain. To be cynical I reckon the Forestry authorities don't actually want rallies but don't want to give a complete "no" but will confine events to remoted forests and up the costs considerable so the events die out. I hope I am wrong!

As always we are on the look out for new venues for events in the north and west of the county. Areas for autotests, on tarmac or gravel or grass. Special tests venues. Fields or land suitable for car trials. Our members are our eyes and ears!

Drive It Day

Not our usual gathering at Dalemain sadly.



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UK

Recognised
Club

News Snippets

I've mentioned "**Round To It**" cars a few times over the years. A quick count up recently and I reckon I know of about 40 cars tucked away waiting for their owner to have time to work on them. It's still remarkable what pops up on the internet, the FB page "UK Barn Finds" regularly brings up perfectly restorable projects - not the piles of rust that some of the "Rust In Peace" columns in some magazines produce. Of course for cars like Minis and MGs getting parts is easy but for more obscure cars it's almost impossible. Recently there was, what looked like a very sound, Austin Shearline from 1954, the sort of limousine used for weddings and funerals for many years. It would take a lot of work to restore and I wonder how many people would want to.

I was sorry to read that Vic Elford, one of the great allrounders with success in rallying, sports cars and single seaters was quite poorly and that a Go Fund Me collection had been established to pay for his medical care in the USA. We are so lucky to have the NHS here.

The Yorkshire Motorsport Festival

will be held over the weekend of 25th to 27th June near Holmfirth, West Yorkshire. The competition element will be the Wolfstones Hillclimb over a 0.8 mile closed public road to the west of Holmfirth. Friday will see Bentley's compete with two practice & two timed runs.

There are a number of 'star cars' doing demonstration runs, or on display. These include an 1930s ex-Le Mans Aston Martin team car; the 1980s, ex-Gerry Marshall Aston Martin V8; the 1970s ex-John Pope Vauxhall Viva GT Aston Martin-engined Special Saloon; an ex-works Sunbeam Tiger rally car, plus a number of others.

The weekend has mostly pre-1986 saloon & sportscars competing - again over two practice & timed runs. The exact entry will be confirmed closer to the event. A whole array of displays & activities will support the hillclimb, from Hot Rods, car clubs, vintage tractors - over the hill from the David Brown factory; bulldozers & classic plant plus food & music festivals, fashion shows, shopping, kids activities & competitions.

Free camping is available for officials. If you're volunteering for the event, please contact Chief Marshal : Karen Spencer at Karen.spencer@buccaneermssc.co.uk or Tim Bendelow at tim62cb@gmail.com

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 [Westcoasttrailerscumbria](https://www.facebook.com/Westcoasttrailerscumbria)  07725653398

 Steve@westcoasttrailers.co.uk

Adverts



1959 Sunbeam Rapier Rally Car MOT'd until 16/12/2021 No Advisories.

Specification: Tuned 1900 cc Holbay Engine, twin 40 Webbers, Aldon Competition Distributor, twin ignition coils, 5.1 ratio Roots Limited Slip Differential, Electric power assisted steering, control

adjustable from dash, twin electric fuel pumps, centrally boot mounted 12 gallon fuel tank,

Firewall, laminated windscreen, internal and external battery master cut offs, boot mounted

new heavy duty battery, twin spare wheels in boot, uprated radiator and expansion tank, oil cooler, high power alternator conversion, vertical hydraulic handbrake and separate original mechanical handbrake, in line brake bias adjuster, professional FIA MSA spec weld in H/D steel roll cage, alloy sump guard, choice of 13" and 14" wheels including 2 x 13" Minilites with 185/70/13 forest tyres, spare engine and gearbox.

£10,000.

Joe Norman 07889 607547 G63 0YE Central Scotland



Fuchs/Silkoline 20/50 oil. 5 litres for £25

Also lots of MG B parts.

Contact Graeme on gtfmg@yahoo.co.uk

What Our Members Did on Drive It Day



David Agnew (left) took part in Fellside AC's Trial near Alston

Mark Milne (right) went down to Shelsley Walsh for MAC's Sporting Trial



“Electric cars have zero emissions, but we must consider how we generate electricity for them”

Widespread adoption of electric vehicles can be good for the environment and for the UK’s economy, but former Aston Martin CEO Andy Palmer thinks they may not be the only solution

Throughout the arc of human history, there has been one constant that determines a people’s success or failure: the ability to capture and harness energy. From early homo sapiens, who learnt to control fire for warmth and food, to the Georgians’ reliance on steam power to usher in the Industrial Revolution, history is defined by the progress made in sourcing and deploying energy. Today, we find ourselves at the crossroads of history once again as we grapple with our own generation-defining relationship with energy.

As humanity becomes more aware of its impact on the environment and planet earth, the past decade has seen an intense acceleration towards net-zero transportation, with electric vehicles becoming the default and most understood emerging transport mode of choice for many. In 2011, just 1,082 electric vehicles were registered on Britain’s roads. At the start of 2021, that figure stood at more than 150,000.

Not only are consumers opting for electric in their droves, the push towards [EVs](#) is also being advocated for heavily by governments around the world, who are under pressure to meet their own self-imposed deadlines to protect the environment. In the UK, the aim is to reach a net-zero economy by 2050. To help reach that objective, the government has mandated that no new internal combustion engine vehicles will be sold from 2030 onwards (although hybrids can continue until 2035). Last year, I wrote for this magazine with my reaction after this move was announced, and ultimately it’s something I welcome. Big, bold and ambitious were the words I used to describe the policy announcement at the time, and I stick by them. However, since then the UK has negotiated a new trading arrangement with the European Union, which throws a sizeable spanner in the works.

The ‘rules of origin’ component of the negotiated UK-EU deal stipulates that, by 2027, battery packs for electric vehicles will only be allowed to contain 30 per cent international content (materials and components sourced from outside the UK and European Union), or 35 per cent at the battery cell level, or face substantial tariffs, ramping up the cost of the finished vehicle when exported. This dictates the need to build battery giga factories across Europe, including the UK. The EU has already nominated this as their second Important Project of Common European Interest (IPCEI) to support research and innovation in the battery value chain. It will provide up to 2.9billion Euros of public funding, unlocking an expected additional 9billion Euros in private investment.

Without electric vehicle batteries made in the UK, this country’s auto manufacturing industry risks being enticed away to China, Japan, America and Europe. This would risk the 800,000 British jobs linked to the UK automotive sector. Business sense dictates that the automotive industry will move to where the batteries are (to avoid long logistic chains of heavy and expensive inventory), and without batteries made in the UK it is unlikely that EVs assembled here will be economically viable.

Something called Moore’s Law helps explain why. It is a widely accepted principle in computing, theorising that computer processor speeds will double every two years because computer manufacturers can double the number of transistors on the motherboard. Ultimately, it’s Moore’s Law that led to computers becoming faster and cheaper, and widely available to consumers. One transistor cost roughly £6 in the early 1960s, when computers were in their infancy. Today, billions of transis

tors can be squeezed onto a chip roughly the size of a five-pence coin, and the cost of these transistors has dropped to no more than fractions of a penny.

Many in the auto industry are applying Moore's Law to the evolution of electric cars, arguing that batteries improve (faster charging, longer-lasting) by around three per cent each year. When I began developing the Leaf at Nissan a decade ago, it was the first generation of advanced batteries used in the vehicle. We used Lithium Manganese Oxide (LMO) 10 years ago and today the batteries found in the Leaf are Nickel Manganese Cobalt (NMC), a much more efficient and effective battery that lasts longer and charges faster. Many vehicles in the early years opted for LFP (Lithium Iron Phosphate) batteries with lower costs, but lower energy density. The evolution of the lithium-ion battery will continue down the Moore's Curve, reducing the reliance on cobalt and deploying silicon. With this roadmap, it's not unrealistic to predict that by the end of this decade we could see commercially viable solid-state batteries, and that will herald the maturity of battery tech. So, the batteries used in cars are coming down in price significantly, whilst simultaneously being generally better at what we are asking them to do. For governments, this can't come soon enough. The UK government recently announced it'd be cutting the grant for electric vehicles from £3,000 to £2,500; too early in my opinion, with a more sensible approach being to offset the costs of EV grants with a rise in fuel duty. In time, however, these grants will be rendered obsolete and electric vehicles will be readily affordable to the masses, without the need for expensive subsidies.

That's all well and good, so long as the government can deploy a strategy that enables the UK to manufacture batteries domestically using our own chemistry. This is one of the key challenges for the politicians to get their heads around – and they need to do it soon.

Their starting point should be to define the problem they are trying to solve. Are they trying to reduce CO₂? Or are they chasing clean air? If it's the latter, then clearly electric vehicles are the obvious solution because tailpipe emissions are eradicated, despite the legitimate environmental anxiety around how the materials for the batteries are mined and sourced, and the CO₂ that's produced in the manufacturing process. If it's the former, then they should be focusing their energy and brainpower into hydrogen, fuel cells or synthetic fuels. Whilst synthetic fuels burn carbon, the CO₂ is captured in the manufacturing process, thereby becoming 'net zero'. It may be that, actually, politicians are trying to capture CO₂ and chase clean air, in which case they (and we) must be prepared to pay the premium, because the only viable option currently is to look at fuel cells from a clean hydrogen source, which are notoriously scarce.

The truth is that we should not legislate to make electric vehicles the only solution to reaching net zero, but adopt a Darwinist approach and enjoy the best of all. Hydrogen, for example, could outshine batteries for efficiency when it comes to heavy goods vehicles and long-haul transportation. Synthetic fuels may well continue to provide the drama, noise and excitement that we associate with sports cars, not to mention the convenience for manufacturers, who'll be able to convert traditional internal combustion engines to work with synthetic fuels relatively easily. And there is no doubt in my mind that engineers and scientists are working on technologies right now that could result in the application of an environmentally friendly fuel that no one previously thought possible.

It is no exaggeration to say that the decisions made over the coming years will define the next era of human advancement. We must get the economics of batteries and other net-zero fuels right and, with all the upheaval we are seeing in the modern world, this is far from certain to happen seamlessly.

As we find ourselves in the fourth iteration of the industrial revolution that started 260 years ago through the power of steam, the fifth iteration could well be powered by our ability to identify multiple net-zero modes of transport that work across land, sea and air.

Courtesy of Auto Express

2021 WMC Historic & Targa Challenge

The Awards is open to cars as categorised below. All cars must comply with relevant requirements of the Motorsport UK Yearbook 2020/1 e.g. Sections J and R, particularly R18 & R19, together with the Supplementary Regulations issued by organisers of events selected as qualifying rounds of the Awards. For all Historic and Classic cars as defined below, all major components, e.g. engine, gearbox, axle must come from the car's manufacturer unless the car is a period kit car.

Cat 1.1	Pre-Historic:	(pre 1960)	Class F
Cat 1.2	Historic:	(1960-1967 inclusive)	Class H
Cat 2	Post Historic:	(1968-1974 inclusive)	Class P
Cat 3	Classic:	(1975-1981 inclusive)	Class C
Cat 4	Post Classic:	(1982-1985 inclusive)	Class D
Targa	FWD:		Class T1 up to 1400cc Class T2 over 1401cc
Targa	RWD		Class T2R

NB. Targa cars will be eligible to compete for Overall Targa and Class Targa awards only.

Classes T1 & T2 may be merged depending on the number of registrations in each class within that category.

The best five scores to count from the events run.

Scoring for overall awards will be allocated on each round using a descending scale from 25 to 1 point. Class awards will go from 10 to 1 point. Additional awards may be presented at the organisers' discretion.

Sat 22nd May	KLMC Targa	Kirkby Lonsdale MC Historic/Targa	
Sun 23 rd May	William Paterson	South of Scotland CC	Cancelled
Sun 6th June	Rallye East Yorkshire	Yorkshire Wolds MC Historic/Targa	
Sun 20th June	Lake District	Wigton Motor Club	Cancelled
Sun 18th July	Northern Dales	Hexham & DMC	Historic/Targa
Sun 1st August	Pennine Targa	Airedale & Pennine CC	Historic/Targa
Sun 15th August	Blue Streak	Spadeadam MC	Historic/Targa
Sun 5th September	Wearside	Durham AC	Historic/Targa
Sun 19 th September	Doonhamer	South of Scotland CC	Historic/Targa
Sun 3rd October	Solway Coast Targa	Solway Car Club	Historic/Targa
Sun 17th October	Solway	Wigton Motor Club	Historic/Targa
Sun 24 th October	Lindisfarne	Tynemouth MC	Cancelled
Sat 13th November	Saltire	Saltire Rally Club	Historic/Targa

BOLD Dates are 2021 confirmed. Those not in bold are not confirmed.

Bob Hargreaves
2021 NESERO Challenge Co-ordinator

WMC Speed Challenge

As we revive the Speed series, the results of WMC members whose cars have Team Wigton stickers on, on the best four results from the following six events.

June	12th	Barbon
July	3rd	Barbon
July	25th	Three Sisters
September	16/17th	Harewood
October	2nd	Kames

Please note that places on these events will be in demand so enter as soon as the forms appear.

Overall Championship event scoring will be on ranked best time, with the highest placed driver awarded Twenty Five (25) points, and subsequent ranks scored on a diminishing integer scale. Event drivers who are not registered Championship entrants will be ignored.

Championship Class event scoring will be on ranked best time with the highest placed driver awarded Ten (10) points, and subsequent ranks scored on the following diminishing scale : 8, 6, 4, 3, 2, 1. Event drivers who are not registered Championship entrants will be ignored.

Championship Classes

Road Going Production & Road Going Specialist Production Cars

R1	Saloon and Sports Cars up to 1400cc
R2	Saloon and Sports Cars over 1400cc
R3	Saloon and Sports Cars over 2000cc
RS1	Road Going Specialist Cars up to 1400cc
RS2	Road Going Specialist Cars over 1400cc
C1	Classic Cars up to 1500cc
C2	Classic Cars over 1500cc

Modified Limited Production & Modified Specialist Production Cars

M1	Modified Saloon Cars up to 1400cc
M2	Modified Saloon Cars over 1400cc and under 2000cc
M3	Modified Saloon Cars over 2000cc
M4	Modified Sports Cars up to 1400cc
M5	Modified Sports Cars over 1400cc

Competition Cars

S0	Sports Libre Cars
S1	Racing cars up to 1100cc
S2	Racing Cars over 1100cc

Classes will be merged to suit the number of competitors.

Andy's Armchair

Andy Armstrong takes an irreverent look at motoring and motorsport

I read recently that MSV are hoping to open all their tracks to spectators again in the near future and as a regular attendee it was really quite exciting until that is, I carried on reading. The paddocks will not be open, only spectator areas on the trackside. Now you might think so what, you go to a race meeting to watch races but I'm sorry to say that in my case that's not what it's all about.

My first visits to tracks were about 60 years ago and ever since then I've actually got as much pleasure, probably more in fact, by mooching round the paddock looking at racing machinery in various states of undress. I enjoyed the old Formula Ford days when you could compare a Merlyn to a Royale, a Dulon, PRS, Crossle etc. I loved the sight of a mighty V8 nestling in the back of an F5000 or the imagination and skill in building some of the super saloons and mod sports cars. The noise, the smell, the general feel to me it was a car show within a race meeting.

Occasionally things got even better like when I helped to push Rob Walkers Lotus 49 across to the transporter or when I stood close enough to eavesdrop on Bruce McLaren having a natter with Bob Anderson, somehow you were more a part of it much more so than sitting in a grandstand waiting for the start. Hopefully we'll get back into "gasoline alley" eventually.

Until recently I hadn't realised you needed to demonstrate your ability to use a Satnav in order to pass your driving test nowadays, I'd fail by the way! The question here is if it's vital to use the above piece of kit nowadays why wasn't it deemed necessary to be able to use a map/road atlas in days gone by, I'd have passed that one. Likewise you're required to answer a few technical questions in a modern test which when you consider modern cars are 90% more reliable than old ones it seems a tad pointless. It would have made more sense to ask such questions years ago when breakdowns were a lot more common, and yet at that time no one was asked about topping up a battery or checking oil on a dipstick.

Having watched the first Grand Prix of the year it looks like things could be a good deal closer at the front than they have been for ages. As usual Sir Lewis will be there or thereabouts but Max Verstappen will, if the first race is anything to go by, be able to push him every inch of the way. This will be Honda's last season as a works engine supplier and so in an attempt to go out in a blaze of glory they've allowed their research and development team to bring out the new engine that would have originally seen the light of day next year. From all accounts it's actually more powerful than the Mercedes power plant and absolutely tiny allowing much more freedom in packaging it into the chassis thereby giving more scope to refine the aerodynamics around it. Maybe it'll be these areas that'll give Red Bull and Verstappen their best chance to take over at the top. It's going to be interesting.

Ends

AA.

