



Maximum Attack

January 2008

Dear Member,

Greetings one and all to the first newsletter of 2008. Is it just me or is the time going by really quickly!! Included in this months edition is an article from Andy Elliot telling of his exploits as a navigator with Wayne on the new Anglesey circuit in November last year. Also are the dates for the Dinner Dance and the North West Stages, so get your tickets / names for marshalling to the relevant person ASAP!!

As ever, I am struggling for articles to include in the newsletter as apart from Andy, no-one out there wants to share their experiences with anyone else!! That's why this months' includes Wheels magazine. This is a small publication covering various areas of motorsport.

Cheers,

Sparky

mike.sparke@tiscali.co.uk

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Membership forms were included in last month's newsletter. Don't forget to complete and return them ASAP. If you fill in the bit for your email address, you will get the magazine emailed to you in PDF format every month. Saves waiting for the postman to turn up!!!

DINNER DANCE

This years Dinner Dance / Awards presentation will take place at the Hollins Hey Hotel in New Brighton on Saturday 23rd February. See Nev or Alan for tickets @ £22.00 each - Guest speaker TBA – but we're trying to get Howard Davis – Gwydaff's co-driver. URGENT – *please* check under the bed, in the cupboard or on the sideboard if you have a trophy to return from last year! Please return to me a.s.a.p. in order that we may get it engraved in time for 23rd February.

Alan Smith

REVIEW OF THE GLYN MEMORIAL STAGES 17TH/18TH NOVEMBER

A tentative enquiry from Wayne (Twangy, to most of us that know him) invited me to sit beside him in his Sierra Cosworth for the Glyn Memorial Stages Rally, at the newly-revamped Anglesey Circuit. With it being the first time I'd competed there since some fellas with buckets and spades decided to dig up all but a small section of the old circuit and completely redesign it, it would be like learning the place from scratch all over again. After a fairly rapid journey to Anglesey, courtesy of Karl and his new Mondeo, we arrived in plenty of time to get everything set up. Unfortunately, the weather was determined to have its say and with it being Anglesey in November then not only was there the inevitable howling gale but also plenty of rain to boot.

Bainsey was doing his best to calm Twangy's nerves, given that it was only his second full event in the car, so I'd gone for a wander round the new circuit to familiarise myself with the new layout. Anyone that remembers the old place, with the broken concrete outer roads that – as a co-driver – did nothing for your back, will now be in for a dramatic change of heart about the place. Gone are said pothole-ridden concrete roads, to be replaced by nothing but the finest smooth tarmac, flowing corners and some mind-boggling landscaping. It's only walking round the circuit do you really come to appreciate the scale of what they've done there.

With all this shiny new tarmac to play on, the organisers were quick to point out that they didn't want anyone with a puncture trailing halfway round a stage on an empty rim and damaging the surface so the rule was that if you had a puncture you had to pull off onto the grass and change for a spare immediately – something Nev Astbury and Andy Creer decided to try out later on.

Suited and booted and ready for the off, our first couple of stages were as much about learning the circuit as they were about surviving the weather conditions, which seemed to be getting progressively worse as they day wore on. One particular tyre chicane became a bit of a favourite place for us, either fishtailing the car through it or ploughing through regardless. By the afternoon, the wind really was buffeting across the circuit and coupled with the rain made it an achievement to stay on the circuit. It was certainly one of those days to pity the marshals and time control crews who had little other choice than to do their jobs in the worst of what Mother Nature could throw at them.

We were gutted for Skilly when he was forced to retire with gearbox grief, having actually been leading the event at that point. As the Sierra didn't have a heated screen, this was making it harder and harder to see out as we were driving round to the extent where it was almost getting dangerous to be carrying any serious speed around the stages. In true rallying spirit, Skilly and Co mucked in to help us by Rain-Xing the windscreen, windows etc. in the hope that this would make a difference. Unfortunately, the darker it got, the more difficult it was to see and coupled with some electrical gremlins that were eating through the fuses pushed Twangy to the verge of throwing in the towel there and then. Fortunately, the last stage of the day was cancelled which was probably a blessing all round. Nev and Andy were still just about smiling by the end of the day, the Mini providing some quality entertainment both for those inside and outside the car.

Will we be seeing Mr Baines on Masterchef soon? If his performance here was anything to go by, then the BBC are beckoning! Chicken Tikka Massala with rice was served, and was definitely what we needed at the end of such a cold, wet and windy day. Having been up early that morning and with a long day just over, a quick drink in the circuit bar was all I was ready for before crashing out on an airbed on top of the spare wheels/tyres in the back of Twangy's van.

After being rocked to sleep by the van swaying around in the wind in the night, the next morning dawned calmer and drier than the previous day, although that probably wouldn't have taken much. The electrical problems were still plaguing us, to the extent that we had to do a couple of stages with no power steering at all. Having completed a few stages in the morning, we were forced to admit defeat to the electrics which seemingly warranted further investigation that we simply didn't have service time for.

So, a shame to end on a disappointing note. The tale of the rally was probably the contrast in fortunes between Skilly and Karl, who were leading the event when their gearbox let go and went from a euphoric high to an absolute low in the space of 5 minutes, and Nev and Andy whose "slow and steady wins the race" attitude saw them make it to the finish – albeit in the final finishing place.

Thanks to Wayne for the opportunity to navigate for him, Bainsey and the others on our service crew, and to Skilly and Co. who mucked in and helped us out before trying to retrieve their own car from the side of the circuit and the remnants of the gearbox from the grass with a metal detector.

Andy Elliot

NORTH WEST STAGES 2008

We are running the Lytham Hall stage again as we did last year. There will be 2 pairs of stages through the venue, stages 15 + 16 then stages 21 + 22, first course car due at 13:48, which gives us plenty of time to prepare the stage – most of the equipment will have been delivered on the Friday. It's an excellent short stage through the farm and then the fast private roads of the Hall estate.

As ever we need bodies to make this happen and fly the flag for Wallasey and to make it as successful as last year. There are no spectators allowed into the stage so the best and only way to see the action is to sign on as a marshal. For those that wish (a must really) we will be staying as usual at Pontins – Rally HQ – with the liquid refreshment at the Queen Vic.

Remember this is not a spectator stage so marshalling is easier than normal and you can enjoy the event. Contact me by phone, text or email.

Graham Williams 07746 245421 or minimoo@fsmail.net

AutoGlym Inter-Club Quiz Final

As you will have read last month, Wallasey made the final of the first national AutoGlym Motor Club Quiz. At late notice, the final venue was changed from the Honda F1 factory to the Motor Heritage Museum at Gaydon. Although not so "special", it promised to be a good day out. The Club team was limited to 3 members, and supporters to 9, but in true Wallasey fashion we blagged our way in, and a coach trip of – well, err 12 of us made the trip. It must have been the 06:30 departure that put some off, as we had to be there for a 09:30 start. A smooth trip, courtesy of Pete "the bus" Bark (ARK Coachline – 0151-638-9033 – "Google" It!), saw us there with 5 minutes to spare. It's a very impressive place the Gaydon Heritage Museum, and on the day we were in the company of Jaguar who were introducing the new XF to their dealers (*sadly Gary couldn't blagg a test drive!*). We were drawn for the first semi-final against Bristol-Pegasus, with a very knowledgeable quizmaster and motoring author Graham Robson asking the questions. Our team of Mike Harris, Harry Cabot and Tony King, were carefully and democratically selected as we entered the Museum car park. As can be seen in the picture, sophisticated battery "buzzers" and electronic timing apparatus were the order of the day, and the first heat of 20 minutes commenced. As well as reading out the questions, Graham supplied the selected answers A, B or C, and then gave a background history of the question! There was no "conferring", and a point would be deducted for incorrect interruption – so the pressure was on. Didn't help neither, that Mr Robson was a bit "mutton-geoff" to his right, and kept picking "the other side" first! Us supporters tried our best to spot the miss-timed buzzers but despite a gallant fight we were up against some very knowledgeable motor-sport enthusiasts (*anoraks*), and we just got beaten 21 to 16 points – 1st round to Bristol-Pegasus. That was to be our moment of fame, as the team were presented with a glass trophy and a goody handbag (*mmm suites-you*), of AutoGlym products. A break for ½ hour and a first look around the museum exhibits. It's a really great place with great variations and contrasts from the British motor industry. As usual, I got "distracted" and wondered off, missing the 2nd round between Oxford & Stockton & District motor clubs. The victors were Stockton, and the main museum viewing then commenced until the 1:00pm buffet lunch. We had a good chat with Mr Robson who has not visited "the Prom", so we gave him an overview of our exploits and history. The buffet lunch was superb and the final commenced at just before 2:30 pm. We were joined by the big boss-man of AutoGlym (*I've forgotten his name*), who had arrived in a Pagani Zonda – on loan as part of a publicity deal. An intense and exciting ½ hour final ensued, with a few interruptions from the audience to get the quizmaster to pick the 1st buzzer pressed! The chaps at Bristol need to get out more as they stormed to a 41 to 22 point victory. More goody bags and glass trophies given out, and congratulations and commiserations given to one and all.



We made our departures, and got piccy's of us all at the Museum entrance and the bossman's Zonda.



A smooth but subdued return home with a short ale-break at Calverley, saw us back home for tea-time. Great day out, many thanks to everyone who made the effort, and hope we can do the same if not better next year!

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Wallasey Motor Club currently meet most Monday evenings at The Ship Hotel, The Parade, Parkgate, starting around 9:00 p.m. – but please check on the Club website in case of any change!

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT CLUB ACTIVITIES, VISIT www.wallaseymc.com

DAZE OF OLD

Go to a club dinner celebrating a significant anniversary and you'll find a crowd round any display of archive photographs. But as well as studying historic pictures, a browse through old committee minutes can provide an intriguing insight into earlier times, as I found when going through the records of the BTRDA, which for the benefit of racers stands for the British Trial and Rally Drivers Association. This was formed in 1938 by a bunch of trials drivers who wanted to improve the standard of events – an early pressure group I guess – although in fact the Association has always had a positive influence on our sport.

Their records throw a different light on some of the commonly held views of the Good Old Days, maybe because there's a tendency to look back in a hazy daze through wearing rose tinted glasses. For instance, the 50s are seen as the glorious days of rallying when everyone behaved impeccably and spats meant gaiters not fisticuffs. Not quite so according to this minute from 1953: "during the RAC Rally examples of extremely bad and dangerously forceful driving had been experienced, slower cars

having actually been rammed by faster vehicles." And I know from nearly ending in a ditch that around that time some rally competitors had cut-out switches for their brake lights to "discourage" following cars...

Minutes about dangerous driving on the Daily Express Rally of 1953 record that "several competitors were excluded on the evidence of one *female* (my italics) observer." At least we've become a shade more politically correct since then, as I was only saying to my wife the other day as she was ironing my shirts.

Regularity events are popular today so you may think that they were all the rage back then. Not so. Another quote, from 1956 "The event had not been up to standard as it had been in the nature of a long distance regularity test, competitors were not tested as to their driving ability." This reflected the fact that regularity events were regarded as something of a joke and not "proper" rallying. Mind you, it was easy to adopt that lofty approach when every Saturday night the hills were alive to the sound of cars going flat out on plot and bash events, although the writing was already on the wall with a minute recording that "The whole future

of rallying is in serious danger because of the growing amount of public hostility".

Don't let my extracts from earlier years lead you to think that the BTRDA is a bunch of old fogies. Anything but, as you'll see from their website www.btrda.com.

In fact just as they were ahead of the game with their major rally series, which predated the British Rally Championship, they are once again in the lead with the formation of a Motorsports Future Group, full of under 25 year olds, tackling an issue which could be a greater threat to clubs than even the mounting greenery – ageing. One major club with a five figure membership has recently surveyed its membership and found 91% are males over the age of 55, with only 3% under 35! That's seriously scary.

It's probably illegal under the Freedom of Information Act or the law against wearing clogs on Ash Wednesdays but I think all clubs should chart their average age every five years. If the figure goes up by five every time, you won't need an actuary to work out exactly when the club should book a trip to the seaside to hold a Closing Down Sail.

Stuart Turner

Looking to the Future: When off-road since renamed cross country first appeared in Wheels back in 2002, the discipline was just starting to recover from the 2001 foot & mouth. Tyro trials were taking off and the Junior Off-Road Trials were set to be introduced.

The Tyro is now firmly established, introducing many new younger competitors into the sport. The JTV has not to date been so successful, but is slowly becoming more popular with the younger children. Cross Country is in a much stronger position than 6 years ago, overtaking Rally as the largest discipline in Motor Sport, by the number of events run annually, but is still behind in the numbers of competitors. The Baja GB is now an established round of FIA International Cup for Cross-Country Baja's and looks set to be even better and bigger in 2008. Cross country motorsport has a much wider audience, thanks to TV coverage, with both the MSA British Off Road Championship and the Baja GB being shown (repeatedly).

Baja GB 2008: Baja GB will be once again a round of the FIA International Cup for Cross-Country Baja's and takes place on the 25th – 28th September. Along with a date change the Baja will now be based at Aberystwyth on the Welsh coast. Further details to be announced see www.bajawales.com for information up-dates.

AUTOSCENE



REVIEWS FROM



PEKING TO PARIS – THE ULTIMATE DRIVING ADVENTURE

ISBN 978-1-84584-120-1
Philip Young, Veloce Publishing, £29.99

This effort by organiser Philip Young bills itself as 'The Official Book of The Centenary Event', no doubt as a pre-emptive strike against the inevitable participant memoirs. As a result, what you get is one man's view of the transcontinental undertaking but, with Young being an ex-Fleet Street man, it's well written with superb pictures liberally dotted throughout. After a brief intro on the motivation for the event – and the 1907 rally it echoed, albeit via a different route – it is a brutal diary full of anecdotes and drama. That's followed by a well-illustrated list of competitors with

their own recollections, plus awards and split times. If anything is missing it is more in-depth tales from entrants to give readers the sensation of what it was like to drive a classic in such inhospitable, often inhumane, circumstances. A DVD of the event is also available. See www.endurorally.com

ECURIE ECOSSE

David Murray and the legendary Scottish Motor Racing team
ISBN 978 09550102 2 3
Eric Dymock, PJ Publishing, £60 (49.95 if ordered direct from www.pjpublishing.co.uk)

This story had to be written by a Scot and Eric Dymock has done a super job, ably aided by team member Bill Connie. From the equipe's bankruptcy in '69,

Dymock flashes back to early days at Merchiston Motors and the arrival of ace tuner 'Wilkie' Wilkinson. The XK120s driven by Stewart, Dobson and Scott-Douglas, plus sponsorship from Esso, kicked-off an epic association with Jaguar that climaxed in two Le Mans wins. The Race of Two Worlds and all the key cars including Monzanapolis Lister, Tojeiros, plus the famous transporter, are covered in depth with plenty of photos. An important and highly readable history.

MONTE CARLO RALLY THE GOLDEN AGE 1911-1980

ISBN 978 1 906133 00 9
Graham Robson, Herridge & Sons, £35

This seems pretty pricey at first glance, for less than 240 pages and with no colour pictures barring those on the dust jacket. Also, with 70 rallies to cover, all you get is a brief overview of each. That said, if you want an introduction to this most enigmatic rally, or an easy-to-navigate, well-written and

nice illustrated book that gives you all the essential facts at your fingertips, then this is still a key purchase. Plus there is rather more depth to it than you might initially think, Robson, typically packing it with panels, graphics and illustrations that really bring the story to life. Excellent picture selection ensures that you get more variety than just the winners and the famous shots that you've seen so many times before. Well worth a punt.



COD FILLET QUIZ

1. How many points did Lewis Hamilton score in the 2007 F1 World Championship and how many races did he win?
2. Give the title of Sir Jackie Stewart's new autobiography
3. In which part of the world is Hardknott Pass?
4. Who is the winner of the 2007 MSA British Autotest Championship?

ANSWERS ON PAGE II

2008 Yearbooks

For 2008, the *MSA Competitors' Yearbook* (known as the Blue Book) and the *MSA Officials' Yearbook* (the Red Book) have been combined into one publication. The 2008 *MSA Competitors' & Officials' Yearbook* contains the regulations for UK motor sport and is included free with a competition licence. Similarly, the 2008 *MSA Kart Race Yearbook* (the Gold Book) contains information on kart specific regulations, kart venues, ARKS clubs and kart race fixtures and is included free with kart competition licences.

Both publications can be viewed online in the Members Section of the MSA website.

Each can be purchased online via The MSA Shop on the MSA website. The 2008 *MSA Competitors' & Officials' Yearbook* costs £24.00; the 2008 *MSA Kart Race Yearbook* is £8.50. www.msauk.org

New Forestry Commission charges

The MSA and the Forestry Commission have a new three-year Master Agreement to provide access to the Forestry Estate for MSA-permitted rally events.

Under the terms of the agreement, prices will rise by just 4.2 per cent (in line with the Retail

Price Index (RPI)) for the use of Forestry Commission roads from 1 January to 31 December 2008. Fees will rise in line with the RPI in 2009 and 2010.

National Motorsport Week

In 2008, National Motorsport Week will run from 9 August to 17 August. In due course, more information will be on www.nationalmotorsportweek.co.uk

MSA Championships

Information about MSA and other British Championships, including links to championship websites, can be found on www.msauk.org

Seminar dates

The annual series of MSA UK-wide seminars is ongoing. For 2008, they are primarily open to unlicensed Club and Event Officials and letters of invitation were sent out during October 2007 for Clubs to nominate up to five individuals per club to attend. Late places can be reserved via Richard Nunn at the MSA on 01753 765000 (email: rnunn@msauk.org).

The seminars taking place from 16 February are as follows:

Saturday 16 February
South West England (Exeter)

Sunday 17 February
Wales (Llandrindod Wells)

Saturday 23 February
Northern England (Brighouse)

Sunday 24 February
Midlands (Birmingham)

Sunday 2 March
Northern Ireland (Aldegrave)

e-Wheels

As advised in a previous issue, because most motor clubs use digital forms of communication, *Wheels* in its present form is shortly to be superseded and this is the penultimate paper-based issue.

On 10 March 2008, and monthly thereafter, a page of MSA News only will be emailed to the *club contact person* for those clubs registered with the MSA for 2008. He or she can then circulate it directly to club members or forward it to the club webmaster or newsletter editor. *e-Wheels*, (as it will be called) will also be posted on the MSA website.

Technical advice

The following extracts are taken from

MSA SCRUTINEERS E-BULLETIN #25.

List 1A Tyres

Please note that Stunner Scudo and Torneo have now been re-entered to tyre list 1A for the 2008 MSA Competitors' and Officials' Yearbook. Notification will also be published in the spring issue of *Motorsports Now!*

New Youth Helmet Standard

You will be aware that the FIA has developed a new helmet standard designed for youth competitors. This is Snell-FIA CMR2007. Helmets of this standard will be acceptable under MSA regulations with effect from 1 January 2008, for karting events only.

People can be a pain

Drivers, cars, fellow marshals, tyre walls, trees, ditches and even team members and the press. They're the things marshals are reasonably happy to deal with.

But spectators, people who aren't that interested in motorsport – and, worst of all, those who rather wish it would go away so that they can get on with their lives in peace – surely we didn't sign on to deal with them?

Maybe not, but you can't ignore them and hope they will go away.

Smile, be polite and interested and make every effort to answer any questions or pass on appropriate information.

Advise people, don't tell them and be sure of your ground. On most rally stages, you can't tell people not to walk or cycle down the stage or across it, but you can warn them of the risks they face if they do.

Restraining someone – even just putting a hand on their shoulder – can be seen as assault. Meanwhile, crossing your arms, clenching your fists, narrowing your eyes, frowning and speaking with a "You can't do that here" tone is guaranteed to have the opposite effect from the one you want.

So hold your arms loosely away from your body and make "open" gestures, smile, say "hello" and "excuse me," make suggestions instead of giving instructions. "I wouldn't go down there at the moment, because..." is far more likely to encourage someone to do what you want them to do than a peremptory "Hoy, you!" or "Don't!"

Even on circuits, where there are definite "no go" areas, explain, rather than instruct – and keep smiling through the abuse, if you find you are dealing with the shallow end of the gene pool.

If you are marshalling on a closed road event on the Isle of Man, the chances are that you will end up with a temporary Warrant Card.

Remember, it's there to help you. Don't go arresting anyone. It will upset the local constabulary – mainly because of the paper work involved in extracting you from the mess you have got yourself into.

At the end of the day, if you can't persuade a spectator or a passer by to do the sensible thing seek the help of the organisers, security or the police – or ask the individual if they would care to give you their name, address and details of their next of kin; that sometimes works a treat!

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. 109 points (4 wins at Canada, America, Hungary and Japan)
2. 'Winning is not enough'
3. English Lake District
4. Paul Swift



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