

THE MIDDLESEX MAGAZINE



MIDDLESEX
COUNTY
AUTOMOBILE
CLUB LTD

July / August 2008



Langley Response

Crew Chief: Paul V. Duckmanton

The Bimonthly news, views and goings on of Middlesex County Automobile Club

MIDDLESEX COUNTY AUTOMOBILE CLUB LTD



THE MIDDLESEX MAGAZINE

www.mcac.co.uk

Number: 282 (Volume: 13; Issue: 13)

July / August 2008

CLUB NIGHT IS EVERY WEDNESDAY

AT

GERRARDS CROSS SPORTS CLUB

7 Dukes Lane, off Dukes Wood Avenue, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 7TZ
(off the A40, between the pillar box and pedestrian subway opposite The Apple Tree)

Map Reference: 176/000875½

Telephone: 01753 886610

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

20 th July	Autoshow	09.30	UXBRIDGE AUTOSHOW. Unfortunately, no Autotests again this year but we will have the Club stand. Contact Brian Catt to offer your car for the display
23 rd July	Club Night	20.30	VIDEO / DVD NIGHT. Catch up with the latest rally action from around the globe.
30 th July	Club Night	20.30	NATTER AND NOGGIN.
6 th August	Partner's Club Night	From 17.00	PARTNER'S EVENING – CLASSICS ON THE GREEN. Tonight, following the success of previous years, we return to the annual event on Croxley Green where we will have a display of Club member's vehicles. Lots of interesting cars – over 2000 last year – (and a couple of pubs) to keep you interested for the evening. Contact Peter Nathan (see last page) for details.
<u>Please note</u> <u>different venue</u>			
13 th August	Club Night	20.30	NATTER AND NOGGIN.
17 th August	Treasure Hunt	12.00	PHOTO GEN-IC FUN RUN AND BARBECUE. Our annual treasure hunt around Buckinghamshire and finish at White Mark Farm. Full details elsewhere in this issue. Make a note of the date for this day of family entertainment.
20 th August	Club Night	20.30	VIDEO / DVD NIGHT. What is the current situation on the rallying front? All the latest action and news from the WRC.
27 th August	Club Night	20.30	NATTER AND NOGGIN.

3 rd September	Partner's Club Night	20.30	PARTNER'S EVENING – BOULE COMPETITION. As the evenings are getting darker we will have our usual floodlit competition outside the Clubhouse.
10 th September	Club Night	20.30	NATTER AND NOGGIN.
17 th September	Club Night	20.30	VIDEO / DVD NIGHT. Now that the summer break is over, we can catch up with recent events in the WRC.
24 th September	Club Night	20.30	NATTER AND NOGGIN.
26 th September	12-Car Rally	21.00	CHILTERN 12-CAR RALLY. We have a date on the calendar but no organiser yet! If we have a volunteer details will be available at Club and on the net.
2 nd October	Partner's Club Night	20.30	PARTNER'S EVENING – MYSTERY NIGHT (at least it is at the moment!). Details next issue.

C h a i r m a n ' s C h a t

Already over half way through the year – it doesn't seem possible does it!

Have you bought your copy of Adrian's book, One Hundred Motoring Milestones, yet? If not, copies can be ordered direct from the publisher at mcacmilestones@btinternet.com for £22.45 (including £2.65 p+p) or I have a few copies that can be collected at Club to save the postage. Failing that, ask your local library for a copy, quoting ISBN 978-0-9558140-0-6.

Many congratulations to Christine, who celebrated her 80th birthday at the end of May. From all those at Club that night – thank you for the cake.

Mike's Meander around the grounds in June was won by Pete / Kirstin / Malcolm Farmer, after they managed to count all the wheels around the route – including those through the window of the storage shed! Once again, Chris was dispatched up north at the last moment, so the Spring Crossword Quiz had to be postponed yet again and it will now be rescheduled for later in the year.

Unfortunately, we found out just as the last issue went to press that we could not hold the autotests again this year, although the show organizers are hopeful that things can be sorted out for next year. We will, however, have the usual Club stand and hope that as many of you as possible will support the Club and display your competition vehicles –

contact Brian Catt to offer your vehicle for display.

The first Wednesday in August is the Annual Classics on the Green event at Croxley Green and we are again hoping that as many as possible will attend with their vehicles. Vehicles start arriving and Pete (Nathan) will be there from early afternoon, although most people and cars arrive early evening. Pete is hoping to organize a BBQ this year for all MCAC members and friends.

Also in August, we have the annual Treasure Hunt and Barbecue and, hopefully, details are elsewhere in this issue. Regulations will be available shortly at Club and on the MCAC website.

Our visit to Belgium for the Ypres Historic Rally was more rewarding than San Remo as, despite some minor problems on the first day, which we ended in 16th position, we managed to finish 7th overall, 5th in Class and Best Brit – beating Marc Duez in the process!

Our next event in the Championship is the Lahti Historic Rally in Finland in early August, so I am currently trying to work out the best (i.e. cheapest!) way to get there. Whichever way we go, it means a long drive and at least 2 ferries - perhaps 3.

Happy motoring.

Tony Phillips

WHAT'S ON ?

JULY

20TH	MIDDX COUNTY AC	UXBRIDGE AUTOSHOW	(-)
23/3rd		British Int Motor Show, Excel	(-)
26th	Tavern MC	Fat Albert Stages, Keevil	(B) ACSMC
27th		Brands Hatch	(I) WTCC
27th	Carmarthen/Epynt MCs	Coracle Stages, Sweet Lamb	(B) WAMC
31/3rd		Neste Oil Rally Finland	(I) WRC

AUG

2/3rd	Brecon MC	Harry Flatters Rally	(B) BHRC/WAMC
3rd		Hungarian Grand Prix	(I) WC
8/10th	Poppoo Team	Lahti Historic Rally, Finland	(I) EHSRC
9th	North Wales CC	DPS Trawsfynydd Stages	(B)
10th	Sutton & Cheam MC	Tempest Rallysprint	(B)
10th	Sheffield & Hallam MC	Centenary Twyford Stages	(B)
15/17th		ADAC Rallye Deutschland	(I) WRC
16th	Three Counties AC	Neath Valley Stages	(B) HRCR/WAMC
16th	Southern CC	Wuggin Colerne Stages	(B) ACSMC
17th		Knockhill	(I) BTCC
17TH	MIDDX COUNTY AC	PHOTO GEN-IC FUN RUN & BBQ	(E) MIDDX
21/23rd	Goodwood RRC	Goodwood Revival Meeting	(I)
22/23rd	Ulster MC	Ulster International Rally	(I) BRC
24th	Epynt MC	Event Signs Mewla National Rally	(A/B) MSA/BTRDA/WAMC
24th		European Grand Prix, Valencia	(I) WC
28/31st		Rally of New Zealand	(I) WRC
30th	60 & Worcs MC	Woodpecker Stages	(B) Eng/1st/WAMC
31st		Silverstone	(I) BTCC

SEPT

2/5th		Rallye de Espana	(I) WRC
6th	Wallasey MC	Promenade Stages	(B)
6th	Castle Coombe Circuit	Eurofest Action Day	(-)
6/7th	Wexford MC	Wexford Stages	(I) Evo
7th	Maplethorpe/Carlton MC	The Wolds Rally, Basingbourne	(B)
7th		Belgium Grand Prix, Spa	(I) WC
7th	West Essex CC	Cloverleaf Rally	(B)
7th-??	MIDDX COUNTY AC	BOMB ALONG STAGES, TBA	(B) MIDDX/AEMC
13/14th	Kings Lynn DMC	Richard Burns Memorial Rally	(B)
13/14th	AC Midden Vlaanderen	7th Omloop Van Vlaanderen	(A) BHRC
14th		Italian Grand Prix, Monza	(I) WC
20th	Knutsford DMC	The Plains Rally	(B) 1st
21st	Harrow CC	North Weald Sprint	(B)
21st	Tynemouth DMC	Lindisfarne Stages, Otterburn	(B)
21st		Brands Hatch	(I) BTCC
25/27th		San Remo Rally, Italy	(I) IRC
25/28th		Baja GB	(I) Baja
26TH	MIDDX COUNTY AC	CHILTERN 12-CAR RALLY	(E) MCAC
27th	Trackrod MC	Trackrod Rally Yorkshire	(I/B) BRC/BHRC/MSA
27th	Castle Coombe Circuit	Miniworld Action Day	(-)
27th		McRae Forrest Stages	(B)

Pete's Patch

Ramblings from the editor's chair.

Well here we are again, half of the year has now passed and we shall soon be seeing the shops full of Christmas goods. Soon it will be time to turn the central heating on and look forward to long winter nights, curled up in front of the fire watching television and dreaming of Summer and summer holidays. The Rockingham Stages will also be in everybody's minds, as will fond memories of the South of England Tempest Stages.

As I mentioned last time, Andy Greenland and I had to miss the Abingdon CAR-nival Rally Stage as we would be away defending our title of winners of the 2007 Trecker organised by Hants and Berks Motor Club. Job Done! Now we have to go and defend the title again in 2009. We were particularly pleased as we would have cleaned the event had the organisers not seen a cottage sign nearer to a junction than we did. Still a pleasing result after a tiring whole day event which finished in a rather nice riverside eatery.

Well done to all those members who competed on the Abingdon events with varying degrees of success.

It was touch and go whether there would be a magazine this issue as a serious lack of submissions meant that, once again, I was scrabbling round for things with which to fill the pages. Fortunately Tony Phillips sent me an email which was of many cartoons related to the price of fuel. Many of them were too 'American' to use but I have managed to use some of them as fillings in the mag.

I have recently received an invitation from Mike Hurst and Helen Halsey to attend the evening reception on their wedding day. Congratulations to them both and I am pleased to see that Helen is finally going to make an honest man of Mike!

The next item on the MCAC calendar is the Uxbridge Autoshow on 20th July which, once again, will only be a static display of cars as we have not secured permission to run the autotest. Perhaps next year, or should we start to look round for an alternative venue.

Closely following the Autotest is the now regular partner evening at Croxley Green for 'Classics on the Green. This is on 6th August when, for one night only, the club will meet at Croxley Green for an interesting motor show. Rumour has it that Peter Nathan will be organising an illicit barbecue on the club stand, so come along and fill your face while supporting the club.

Last but not least, the Photo Jen IC Fun Run and Barbecue will be taking place on Sunday 17th August, starting from Pinkneys Green and finishing at a secret location which will almost definitely be White Mark Farm where new club President will be waiting to welcome all finishers. This will be followed by the traditional barbecue and fun and games. Details from Rob Brook.

Well that's it for now, I am off to Barbados to relax and try to prevent my feet turning webbed. It is for another wedding and, once again, I could not manage to get it to coincide with the Barbados Rally. Still perhaps next time!

Take care and please do not phone me until the end of July as roaming charges are horrific.

Pete Farmer



Championship Update, June 2008

Well this year's championships are starting to hot up.

Richard Edwards / Paul Brown have taken a very healthy lead in the Stage rally championships with some huge scores. The overall championships may change this though, Paul is comfortably in the lead of the overall Navigator's championship, promoting David Axten to the head of the field.

Pete Farmer / Andy Greenland have taken healthy leads in the Night Trial championships.

In the Road Rally Navigator championship, Peter Cox is just 6 points behind me on 51 points, trying to stop me taking both the driver and the navigator's championships in the same year. I suspect this weekend's Ross Trader's event will change that...

I also have a healthy lead in the Off-Road Driver's championship, a class win at an

oversubscribed Abingdon Carnival autosolo making up for 2nd at the Brakefast.

There is a 2 way tie for the organisers championship, between Tony Phillips and Andy Greenland, whilst in the marshals championship, Darren Pike has a comfortable lead over John Brook.

In the Service Championship, Michael "Pipe" Edwards has a comfortable lead, whilst we have no claims in the Junior championship... Hopefully we'll see a few of you youngsters out on the Photo-Genic?

Don't forget, to qualify for a championship you must have marshalled /organised one event each year, and written a magazine article. Don't leave it too late...

Keep those claims coming in,
Rob Brook

Photo Jen IC Fun Run and Barbecue

Sunday 17th August 2008

Starting at Pinkneys Green

Finishing with a BBQ at White Mark Farm

**Details from Rob Brook,
or see the web site**

Life as an Assistant Safety Officer.

The other night at the club meeting I ran into Pete Farmer, not the usual slightly happy Pete, no this time he had a big smile on his face, now call me a cynic but when people come up to me with big smiles it normally means they are after something and good old Pete didn't let me down. After a couple of minutes chatting he asked me to write an article for the magazine about being a safety officer on a rally. Quick as a flash and keen to squirm out of it I pointed out that Mike was the safety officer and I was only his assistant and that was only on rare occasions.

"So write an article about that then" was the reply so here goes.

As an Assistant Safety Officer I sit in the back of Mike's Range Rover, drink his tea eat his sweets and pray that he doesn't hit any more solid concrete posts!

Sorry Mike. Ok joking apart I am slowly learning the ropes of being a safety Officer and all the various complexities it involves. Mike first got me to be a safety officer at Rockingham in 2004 (I think that's right it was a long time ago) and I was tasked with looking after the inner circuit. It seemed quite an easy task; I simply sat there with Roger and relayed any queries that came up to Mike. This important role that Roger and I had been assigned to was to go further to bond our friendship beyond even that of a driver and his co-driver. We had one flask of tea, 10 mint sweets and No central heating on what was a rather cold December weekend. Towards the end of the day I was concerned that the day would end as an adult version of the Lord of the Flies, our hunger was getting the better of us and a couple of the marshals were starting to look like walking steaks! I did however learn a few good lessons from that day. Firstly in an event like that where you need to keep the service tunnel clear you don't make friends when you tell a competitor that even though he had nursed his broken car to the finish we couldn't risk him entering the tunnel and breaking down thus throwing off all the timings for the event, such decisions aren't nice to make but it's also always worth trying to find a solution to the problem that keeps everyone happy. The second point was one that I hadn't considered, As Roger pointed out if we were cold in our vehicle even with the engine running, how were those crews that had been stuck on the circuit for a couple of hours fairing up, especially as a lot of them couldn't have their engines running.

Being a safety officer requires you to try and look at every situation from everybody's point of view, you have to ensure that not only do the rescue crews know the Clubs operating procedure and safety policies for a particular event but that you also know and understand their operating procedures and policies. It always helps to also have an understanding of the equipment they use,

how it is operated and any special requirements needed to operate it safely. It is a known fact that rescue crews know how to perform a rescue and how their equipment works but if a safety officer has a basic knowledge of how they work then he can look at ways of helping them manage the situation and let them concentrate on performing the rescue. After all rescue crews are there to carry out a rescue, Safety officers are there to risk assess what is happening around them while they work and try to prevent a bad situation becoming worse.

Of course this is not the only role they play, safety officers are there to try and spot any potential threat to life on the venue, not only to competitors but also to service crews and spectators alike. Take the Tempest Rally a couple of years back. Before the event started one of the service barges caught fire after an electrical failing in the generator stored in an under vehicle floor space to the rear of the barge. The service crew attempted to fight the fire with Carbon Dioxide extinguishers aimed at the flames underneath the vehicle; all this achieved was to spread the flames as the extinguisher acted as an air jet fanning the flames in front of the extinguisher. Soon after a marshal appeared with a Powder extinguisher, carefully opened the hatch to the generator enough to get the hose in and put the fire out. (Just as the local fire station arrived). When Mike and I arrived we confirmed that the situation had been dealt with and then thanked whichever God was watching over us for there in front of the barge but still rather close was a large amount of fifty gallon drums all filled with petrol and a couple with the caps off just waiting for an ignition source.

I must admit on those occasions I've been part of the safety team I have enjoyed it and hopefully it will be a role that I will continue to perform when I'm not too busy competing, but I also understand that sometimes decisions must be made that will upset a few people and maybe even be considered as being a killjoy. The role is pretty much the same as that of a Fire Safety Officer, perhaps that's why Mike keeps taking me along, I spend most of my days at work trying to keep the majority of people happy while making sure they're safe as well.

I find myself in a rather solid position for this role, having trained first as a Paramedic, then as a Fire officer and mix into that the fact that I compete then I find myself able to look at a situation, from the competitors point of view as well as the safety and rescue crews points of view and hopefully be able to give some useful input into decision making. Does all this mean I want to take the job away from Mike...NO WAY!! I'll stick to sitting in the back drinking tea, eating his sweets and occasionally grabbing some shut eye when he's not bouncing us off posts.

Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre

for cancer support & information at Mount Vernon Hospital

... working to improve the lives of people affected by cancer...



Members of Middlesex County Automobile Club have generously supported the Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre (LJMC) for many years. I am delighted to have this opportunity to express our sincere thanks for this support and to tell you a little more about the work that goes on at the centre.

A diagnosis of cancer can lead to a range of emotions such as fear, anxiety and stress. The Lynda Jackson Macmillan Centre (LJMC) provides a service that supports patients and their families and helps them cope with all aspects of the disease from diagnosis, through treatment and beyond.

The LJMC was opened in 1993. It was the first centre of its kind to offer a full range of support and information services to cancer patients and their carers.

The LJMC forms part of the Mount Vernon Cancer Centre with a large catchment population encompassing Herts, Beds, parts of Bucks and Berks, Middlesex and North London. Since opening, the centre has won many awards for its innovative work and the quality of the information it provides.

At the heart of the LJMC's work is the Drop-in centre at Mount Vernon Hospital in Northwood. This is staffed by specially trained volunteers and healthcare professionals who respond to approximately 15,000 requests for help each year.

The LJMC maintains a vast library of information resources about all aspects of cancer and its treatments. Requests for information range from leaflets about treatments and side-effects to travel insurance and wigs.

The explosion of the Internet has led to a bewildering array of information and many of the publications available at the LJMC have been specially produced by our Information team in order to ensure that patients receive information that is both relevant and accurate.

The LJMC also provides a safe haven where patients will find a listening ear or a shoulder on which to cry. It is recognised that many find it difficult to talk about their fears and anxieties to those close to them and the face-to-face contact with an impartial but caring individual is of inestimable help in coping with a difficult situation.

As well as answering questions and providing information, the Drop-in staff are able to refer patients for other support services including counselling and complementary therapies (including relaxation classes).

One of the aspects of treatment for cancer which has received increasing publicity is the cost of living with the disease. For those on low incomes, the financial implications of a long-term illness can be massive and our Benefits Advisor is able to help them with claims for their entitlements.

It costs in excess of £550,000 to run the LJMC each year. We receive partial funding from the NHS and rely on voluntary donations and fundraising activities to meet the remainder of our costs. We are therefore indebted to everyone at the MCAC for their magnificent support – on behalf of all those who use the centre's services – thank you!

Drop-In centre opening hours: Monday – Friday (9.30 am – 1.00 pm & 2.00 -4.30 pm)

Telephone Helpline: 01923 844014

Website: www.ljmc.org

Buzz Coster
Marketing Manager, LJMC

Richardson's Ramblings - RBSI Manx 9-10 May 2008

The defence of our ANCRO / MSA Gravel Championship / HPM Motorsport 2WD title (pew what a mouthful!) hadn't got off to the best of starts. Our loss of rear brakes on the Sunseeker was traced to rocks knocking the union loose, if at least not breaking the pipe. That didn't show up on the Riponian – no doubt due to the way Sunseeker stages cut up and allow the front wheels to dig up bigger rocks! That said, at least the Bournemouth stages are a lot better than they used to be, due to a huge program of re-building by Southern Car Club and the landowners. The Border Counties shall go unmentioned – for reasons I'm still too embarrassed to recount here! Although Kielder did prove the new under floor shielding at least cured the brake problem. Hopefully this will fill some of the gaps you didn't read in the Muttering Newts reports.

Manx Tails

The Manx was slightly more successful – the Punto just loves tarmac! I suppose that's what it was built for after all? After 2 days of intensive recceing, it was almost a relief to be sitting in the start queue for Special Stage 1, Port Erin, bathed in the last of the late evening twilight on Friday. Harry Dodd (Marcus' dad!) with Richard Skinner on the notes (son of Manx Nat CoC John) was just a few places ahead in his Hy-n-dri WRC. Pop, bang, bang, poppety bang! As the silver black car goes onto launch control with 6 seconds to go. Then it all smoothes out nicely as Harry drops the clutch and off go he and Richard like the proverbial scalded cat, leaving just a cloud of black smoke from the partially burned fuel (under launch control conditions). The now traditional (for the "Wee Manx") SS1 runs down through Port Erin town and up the hill to Cregneash. 1.4 miles just to get you into things. Then just before we reached the start line the stage was stopped – Harry had landed badly after the famous Cregneash yump and taken a rear wheel off against a rock, blocking the stage until enough bodies were on hand to manhandle the car back into line. No other injuries, thankfully.

We were wondering if we would make as clean a start, as the last time we sat in this car for a stage start on tarmac was at a wet Croft circuit for January's Jack Frost Rally. And we don't have launch control! The little Punto revved up to around 7000 then just lit up its front tyres like a Max Power boy racer and off

we went – just as the evening sea mist rolled into the Port Erin harbour area. A little more understeer than we would have liked (tyres still cold) through the open hairpin left, briefly onto the prom, then off up between the houses. Up the steep hill out of town like a rat up a drainpipe! Through the fast sequence of medium right, left, right, left, right again as we crest the brow Then "60 keep right, flat over crest, go for it, 80 through dip, medium left". Reasonably big air over the jump, thump on regaining land, a quick squirm left and right among Harry's skid marks as the suspension settled, then immediate turn in for the medium left as we approach the finish. No sign of Harry as he'd already limped away on three wheels. His management crew miraculously had him back on four wheels in time for stage 2, just dropping 5 minutes road time! That's professionalism!

"Do you want to know how much faster that 1.4 miles was than last year in the Stilo?" "OK" says Rod". "A full 20 seconds" says I. "That'll do nicely". To say we were smiling would be doing Cheshire Cats an injustice?

Stage 2 was nine miles of "St Marks", still keeping to the south of the Island up via the Eairy ponds to finish just short of St Johns. Two miles in and we were approaching St Marks village for the first time. HpR round bale as you enter the village green, then off on a two mile loop before you come back onto the same green for another HpR about 40 yards further up from the first. Rod hit the gear change lever into first as we rounded the first bale. Then when he went to pull it back for second it just plopped back against the handbrake – bust! We were stuck in first! "Pull over at next junction 100 yards" says I. "Oh muck" (or some closely rhyming Viking word – well this is loM?) "If we can force it into second on the box we can probably complete the stage?". "No" says Rod – "We'll change it. There's a spare linkage tied to the cage in the back!" "What?" Now I've heard of carrying a few spares like drive shafts perhaps – but a complete spare gear linkage? Turns out unbeknown to me, Steve Smith had acquired for us a demon linkage from Italy that contained a sensor that blipped the throttle automatically as it changed down. Easier on the gearbox and makes for a faster change – to help resolve the problem we had on Jack Frost getting the sequential gears down the box fast enough to stay ahead of the brakes

and avoid stalling the motor. Trouble was this was designed for delicate Italians – not Hampshire farmers? It had necked off at the rose joint on top of the gearbox itself. The original straight rod from cockpit to gearbox was tied to the cage “just in case”.

The marshals at the junction where we pulled over were just as surprised as I was! Having enquired the nature of our problem, they had (quite correctly) reported this to the nearby radio car – who assumed we would be retiring and had transmitted such to HQ. Hence that’s what you may have read in MN? This was a farmer’s car though (yes I do have a length of baler twine in my bag – came in useful once to operate the wipers on a Skoda!). In just over six minutes we had the old linkage back in place and were strapping ourselves back in the seats! The gob-smacked marshals, trying to be helpful of course - closed the bonnet for us – just before I could remove the prop! Result: one buckled bonnet and a few more seconds lost getting the pins to line up before we could close said lid effectively. We got going just ahead of the main class rival Citroen C2R2. Didn’t see him again till daylight though!

More Dark Required!

We dropped just under seven minutes on the stage, taking a maximum which was just a few seconds less than our actual time. Now “angered up” – we were on a mission. A quick spanner check in St. Johns then SS3 through the ford and up onto Staarvey yumps as darkness proper fell. Next up was a 10 miler taking in most of the north end of the island. During the recce for this we had added several “dark notes” of our own – like “SqL at gate” to give a few extra reference points to help judge braking distances and such in the dark. One of these was “SqR at house” – just up near John Maddrell’s farm at the lovingly named “Kerroo Garroo” junction. Trouble was in the real dark the house on the left wasn’t so visible. So we were up onto the big black lines on the tarmac before either of us realised the junction was “Here!!” A rather untidy scrabble round with two wheels up the bank – thought we might be joining the Holsteins in John’s field for a brief moment – then a “Come on – that won’t do!” from my driver as an exhortation to keep my act together. Slow away onto the next 300 straight then, but back tidy and on line through “Flat over first crest, 80, braking over second into SqL round bale at X-roads”. 6 miles more without incident to finish just north of Ramsey.

We discovered while waiting to take the start of stage 5, that in the dark, we were gaining back 15 to 20 seconds per stage on our immediate 2WD class rivals, despite moments like the Kerroo Garroo one. More dark required then! But there remained just the final run up Druidale to the cottage hairpins and out down the B-road to finish some way short of the TT course at Brandywell. Another useful chunk of time clawed back, but now down to the TT Grandstand for overnight service and a few hours sleep (at least for us, even if the organisers were up all night sorting out problems at the head of the field).

Dawn in MG Territory

Saturday morning saw us taking the re-start just behind our team mates for this event – Neil Dodd (no relation to Marcus) and Val Thompson (who normally acts as championship registrar for ANCRO), in their ex-Steve Graham MG ZR 1400. First stage was one of our favourites – the four mile “Baroose” that starts across the tram lines just north of Douglas on the Laxey road and finishes in the car park (literally!) of the Cregny-Baa pub on the TT course. The stage where Nik Elsmore had the most spectacular accident of the event last year, when he discovered “200 KL/crest 80” wasn’t flat after all. We stopped the clocks just 40 seconds after Neil and Val crossed the line. For the next stage Neil & Val insisted we run in front of them, as Neil put it: “I don’t want to be keeping one eye on the mirror all the way through the Curraghs. Besides there’s nowhere to pull over through there”. – which is true enough! A clean and tidy run through that one for us, but not before an hour wait at the start as the stage was cleared from someone else who unfortunately hadn’t managed the “tidy” bit.

We were due next for another run up Druidale, this time linked on to go down the infamous Injebreck Hill and West Baldwin, then over to the daunting East Baldwin, Mark Lovell’s famous corner, Abbeylands and a finish right on the outskirts of Douglas. However, it was apparent all was not well by the queue at the start and the fact a second rescue ambulance came past us even before we reached the arrival. News came though that the Norwegians with unpronounceable names had put their Evo off on the Druidale section. Nothing worse than a broken collar bone as it turned out later – but that’s bad enough! So a subdued group of cars were turned around and followed the ever-present assistant CofC

Guy Woodcock for a “touring assembly” up the lovely Tholt-y-Will road. Not often I get to enjoy the view of the valley from the top of its hairpin sequence. Back to Douglas via the TT course for a 20 minute service then out to stage 9.

Ellerslie Farm

SS9 start line was right outside the entrance to Ellerslie farm (turn left in Crosby, up the hill and you're there!). Owned by Willie Christian and family (related to the Bounty/Pitcairn Christian) and the spot where Willie had kindly let us park our truck and rally car during the recce period (which might have caused a problem about illegal recceing had we not fore-warned John Skinner and Guy W that we would be using that road frequently). The downhill “KR KL 150 ML > HpR rnd bale” used to be notorious when Willie's cows used it regularly to get from field to milking. You know what cows do to the coefficient of friction between tyre and tarmac! But the family sold all the Holsteins a few years ago and now run cereals, beef and sheep – that don't need to come home to be milked twice a day. So the “green lubricant” is no longer so prevalent! This stage ran by the ultra fast road up to Braaid, where rally cars go HpR round a bale placed right on the white blob of the mini-roundabout, before looping back round to St Marks and a near repeat of Friday night's route up through Eairy to St Johns. No problems for us this time – but in the daylight we were only able to snatch a couple of seconds here and there against the times set by our class A6 2WD rivals. Locals Nigel and Michaela Cannel in their 1600 Corsa were flying, and leaving the rest of the class way behind – including us!

Next up was Garey. Also named after the farm near its start, but utilising the Glen Rushen mines then the famous “Round Table” road. Flat in 6th for nearly 2.5km with just a sprinkling of FL, FR to avoid boredom and the odd “FML – Keep it flat” to get the adrenaline pumping! HpL at Round Table x-roads itself then another extremely quick 3km downhill to the HpL at Ronague. All through this we were holding the Punto against its rev limiter in 6th. No idea what mph that is – but not enough as it could do with either another gear or higher (lower numerically?) diff for this sort of work. No surprises we actually dropped few seconds here to the better geared class rivals.

Marine Drive off

The stage run along the Marine Drive up to Douglas from the south was much anticipated. The fact the road exists at all is another testimony to Victorian ambition and engineering, like the Laxey wheel. “Don't go over the edge here Rod (drop on my side!) or our overalls will be out of date by the time we hit the sea!” However, the earlier delays plus another stage stop for a higher running car meant this too had to be cancelled for us later runners – before the event ran out of road closure time.

Not again Harry?

After 30 minutes at the Grandstand service are, the final loop was a near repeat of Saturday morning. Baroose, Kella/Currags, then Druidale/Injebreck and a slightly modified version of the Baldwins. A couple of seconds here, a handful there on the C2R2 and everyone but the Cannell's. Then two miles into Druidale the car in front (not a Toyota but Harry Dodd again) is parked up ahead. As we near, over a fast “300/bumps, KL through dip, 80 MR over crest” we see the Hyundai has clearly got out of shape through the dip, leaving lurid black marks criss-crossing up the hill. Instead of being “parked” as it seemed from a distance, the car is facing the right way, parallel to the road, but sitting atop about 15 yards of demolished post and wire fence with a wisp of steam from its front. Richard holds up the OK board – so we report his location to the finish – but as that's still nearly 10 minutes away for us, they've already heard by phone and radio.

When we see Harry later at the prize do, I offer him the name of a good fencing contractor in Lancashire. But he reckons that Richard already has it sorted with a mate near his home on the island. Richard's version of events is “We proved one thing conclusively this weekend – braking with two wheels on the grass just doesn't work well – even in a WRC!”.

We don't pick up any prizes this year – normality resumed then! But we did manage to finish just two minutes behind that C2R2 and without the six lost on Friday night would have cleared everyone in sub-two litre front wheel drive apart from the amazing Cannells. More importantly we did pick up maximum ANCRO class points as the C2 was using this event to test his BRC tarmac spec ahead of the Jim Clark, so wasn't registered in “our” championship.

Richardson's Ramblings

Severn Valley Rally 31st May 2008

Builth Wells is allegedly about as central in Wales as you can get. That's why they sited the Royal Welsh Showground there. Now developed into a superb venue that rivals any similar agricultural exhibition site in Britain for the quality and extent of its facilities, if not sheer acreage. Thanks to an enlightened management it has been made available (at a price naturally) to motorsport events for many years. Proper RAC rallies used to service here during the overnight trek south through Wales. The modern Severn Valley Rally, formerly Mutiny, Kerridge and a bunch of other names, has used its excellent position as rally base for a number of years. It's a real one-stop shop, providing covered scrutineering, overnight secure parking in the cattle sheds, ample service space, café, bar, prize venue, all in the one spot, with a wide variety of accommodation close by. Plus occasionally even a special stage round the tarmac and gravel roads. If you are forced to compete on a modern stage event with no service crew, this is the event where it is (normally) feasible, as we proved last year when we won our class in the Stilo with just the two of us fulfilling multiple functions.

This year though our regular duo of Giles and Dave were on hand to see to the jacks, spanners and stuff. Plus crucially this year, act as mobile fuel pump on the long final leg.

Esgair Dafydd revived

I'm sure I've not been in ED for at least 10 years. The last time in fact putting a Skoda Trophy Felicia onto its side for a couple of minutes at the bottom of the hill. This year it was used twice as stages 1 and 6, "normal" direction each time. Five and a half miles, initially up a near endless series of hairpins to "Three Counties Corner" (at 500m above sea level according to O.S.), before the long descent down through a challenging series of sweeping bends that favour the brave. The last two of which tighten, unexpectedly if not in tune with the notes. In contrast with the rest of the stage, these remained hidden under a covering of trees. First thing on Saturday morning, these also hid a treacherous area of still wet, slippery mud, unlike the dry stage surface elsewhere.

There were only 40 entries in the National event, half as many as the Histerics and 20-odd down on the Clubmans (swollen here by

the Fiesta ST championship). Without the Mitsi Evo Challenge runners the Nationals would look rather thin indeed. Is this a sign of the times, or simply a reflection of today's forest charges? Both Historics and Clubmans were running a shorter and hence less expensive route. Six of the 40 were front wheel drive only, so four of those were all amalgamated into a single super-class, that almost created a fourth separate event within the one rally. Just Kit Leigh's B11 Fiesta remaining in a separate class with Alex Hack. Our stage 1 time laid down a marker for the day. 15 seconds slower than Harry Dodd's Hyundai WRC, and 5 down on Nathan Crewe who took fastest 2WD. But still up on at least two N4 Evos and two seconds faster than our ANCRO A6 championship class leader Andrew Coley (Pug 206).

Nine miles through a shorter version of Crychan (5-6 miles of which identical to WRGB route), were next. The finish pattern repeated but just six behind Nathan here, despite the greater distance.

Classic Radnor (with added Kite)

A swift service and re-fuel back at Builth before 18 miles of Radnor – Yum! The only opportunity for "regular" rally cars (as distinct from Baja off-road 4x4 machines) to sample the classic stage this year – so it is claimed. Up at the head of the field Andy Burton sets an amazing time. Almost in his own back yard and with the light weight (only in kg terms) Shelly Rogerson from Bentham on the notes, AB beats the bogey time, along with championship leader Jon Ingram, 20 seconds up on notables like Roger Duckworth and Marcus Dodd. An awesome driving master class! "Shel" punches well above her weight in every other respect!

Our own charge through the first half of the stage is blunted by a couple of minor overshoots and a spin at an acute hairpin that requires a brief call for reverse. Easy as with an "H-pattern" box, but more time consuming for us, as you have to bang the sequential cogs into neutral first, then engage a separate reverse lever down by the bottom of the main stick. Same procedure reversed when you want to go forward again (if that's not a contradiction?). Trying too hard? More like still exploring the characteristics of the Punto near the limit and all part of the learning curve!

As you draw nearer the stage finish, you pass through about a mile of semi-open fell, not unlike the open section of Langdale in both flavour and speed. Big gonads required if you want to claim a good time. I call “150, easy right keep flat over crest, easy left thru gate, 170, Fast Left, 200 down”. Looking up to check the gate (and breathe in!), I surprise myself by noticing a huge bird of prey swooping over our path, likely a Red Kite in this vicinity and by its colour. No doubt sizing up the Punto to see if it is edible? Someone should tell him “never eat things that are blue”? I don’t mention this Rodney though, as I don’t want to distract him from the “KL though gate” that follows, very shortly now as we are quite steep down hill.

The clocks say the 2WD National rally pattern of times is repeated again, despite our early moments. We’re a little disappointed with this, as we had hoped to be quicker though a stage Rod likes well. “Lost some time early on when I just wasn’t on it!” comments Rod back at Builth, in complete honesty, to Amanda Cornforth, who is collecting notes for Larry Carter’s ANCRO round up. Still 14 up on that red 206 though, and up to 26th overall from the 35 still running. Indeed, the low number of retirements is notable, for the Nationals at least. No doubt assisted by the fact the stages are truly “mint”, some of the best road conditions encountered since – last year’s Severn Valley in fact.

Half the rally in one leg?

The dilemma after second service was that the single final loop back to Builth may contain just four stages, but that was some 32 stage miles and 65 road. A distance that would require our little Punto to squeeze over 60 litres of Sunoco from a 50 litre tank. Not normally a problem – except that carrying fuel containers in “Management” cars was forbidden in this event’s regs. “Get some Super Unleaded from the Murco garage in Llandovery” was someone’s recommendation. Problem with that was how do you fill from a roadside pump through FIA spec, dry-break safety couplings? We were not alone with a similar problem, but our solution was to run a half drum of Sunoco out to the Murco in my car on Friday evening. So all the Management car needed to carry was the hand pump and couplings. The irony of this rule in safety terms though, came when some of the WRC and B13 cars, fuelled to the brim on leaving service, were then pumping fuel out through the tank’s breather when sitting in re-group at

the showground. Something that did not escape the notice of the officials present.

Epynt but on gravel

Two excellent stages along the western edge of Epynt included the famous Halfway, run the opposite direction to WRGB for this event, and using some of the legendary tarmac range roads for access. One of my personal favourite stages in Wales, especially when it runs in conjunction with the adjacent “Route 60” across the open moorland near the famous Dixies x-roads. Only four seconds down on Nathan on this one. “We’ll beat him one of these times” was the personal challenge we set ourselves! Our second run though Esgair Dafydd was not helped by a tight road section where we had to get that fuel in, then a frustrating time at the stage start, when I got my belts all crossed up, to the extent of having to call them unparliamentary names at one point. This contributed to a “not together” run, actually slower than our morning trip and our poorest relative position of the day.

Cracking Crychan

That spurred us both up for the last stage of the day – a cracking 15-mile long version of Crychan. It was clear Rod was on a mission from the start of this one. Growing ever more confident of the Punto’s handling, now that we seem to have its gravel settings sorted to his liking. I was thinking I needed to call these corners a little faster than normal, and nearly got too far ahead of us about 7 miles in. A fast downhill sequence of sweeping corners included a fast left off camber. As I looked up, my side rear wheel was hanging over the edge of an uncomfortably large drop and my door was travelling towards some stout saplings at a rate of knots. Emulating Terry Harriman’s moment with Ari Vatanen on the Isle of Man, an “Oh Dear God!” passed my lips in a sort of reflex reaction, as the car sprang back onto the road, just brushing my window against the outer branches as it did so. “Where did that come from?” shouted Rod. “That was the FL I called before this Kaaaaayyy Shit Right” replies I, as Rodney applies 2WD driving theory into practice and simply ignores what angle the back end is trying to reach, while pointing the fronts in the general direction of where we need to go and keeping his right foot planted. No time to even think of a Phil Short style “Keep it tidy” exhortation, as the next “60, HpL & HpR>” needs to be called immediately, on grounds of self-preservation more than anything else.

The next few miles disappear in a blur at similar speed but slightly less drama. With about three miles to go it is evident that something unusual is going on. Running behind Andrew Coley now, thanks to our extra fuel stop and a slow horse box (is there any other kind?) all the way up the 'Sugar Loaf' hill road, we begin to encounter some hanging dust. Thankfully absent till now although threatened all day in the dry conditions. The dust gets worse and begins to resemble driving into fog in some places. Other stretches remaining clear where the breeze can drift it away. Then just as it threatens to cause us to back off, the flying finish yellow board appears. We round the final "K right long" before the finish red boards, to see Andrew's 206 pulling up at the distant stop line. 40 seconds faster than the 206, who posts a similar time to Nathan's rapid MG! Andrew Kellitt observed back at the finish that the Tynemouth results software had alerted

our time as a possible anomaly. "Not from where I was sitting" was the explanation. Everything hangs together to yield 23rd overall on the event. Just four seconds and one place behind Miles Johnston's Evo (OK – Miles had a problem on that last stage). Not quite enough to overhaul Nathan in the standings for event 2WD honours, but ample to score maximum ANCRO Gravel A6 class points for the second event in a row. Well pleased! In the ANCRO "Old Stagers" category, John Lloyd's Focus WRC has beaten us again (fair do, well driven!) but it appears he's not qualified as old enough this year? So we've claimed more points than Harry Dodd's Hy-n-dri. The last three events of the season are going to be interesting. Trackrod will be one – where BRC meets ANCRO! Mmmmmm!

Next Event:

Swansea Bay Rally (more WRGB stages in the summer!), SAT 19th July.

Our Supporters

The team would gratefully like to acknowledge the tremendous and essential support of the following:

GLE COURSES – Need a horse "event" course constructed?

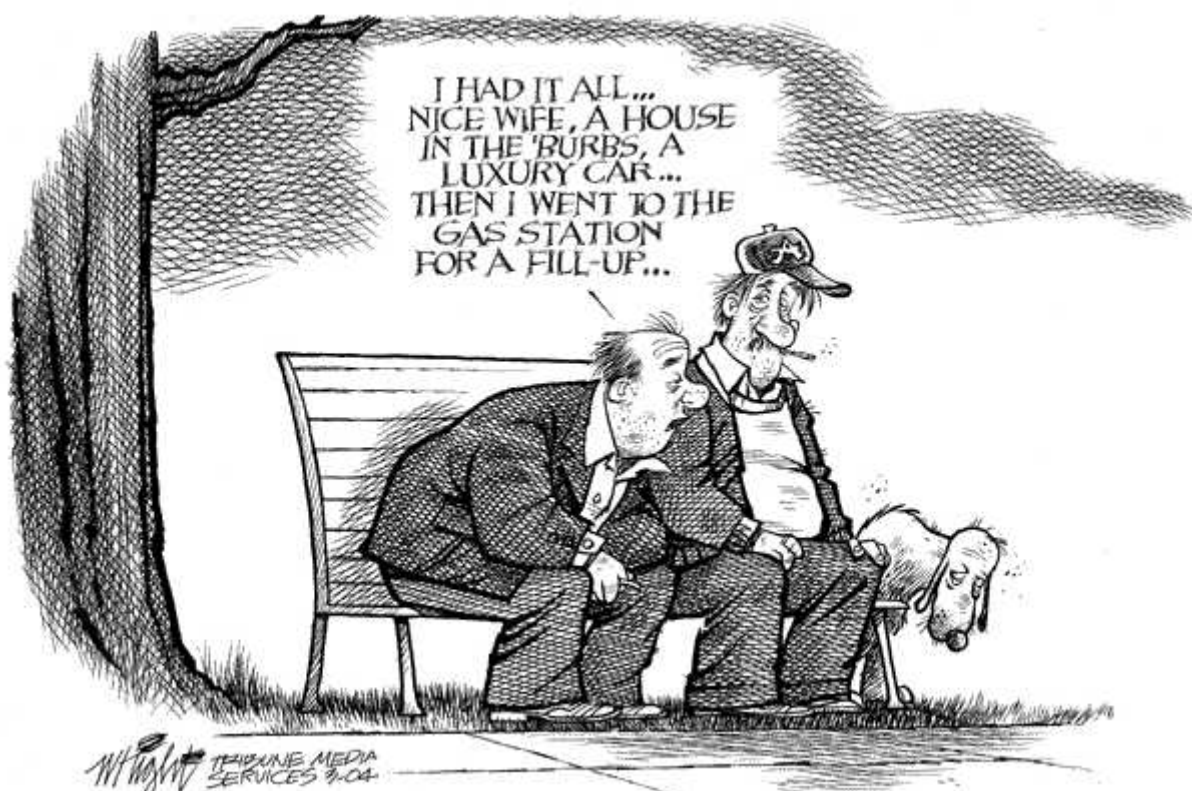
KUMHO TYRES and **Tyres (South Shore) Ltd** – essential rubberware. They work!!!

TECNO 2 Performance Products - (lots of really useful lightweight bits!)

WALKERS RADIATORS – Right where you need them – in the front!

SELENIA OILS – the hidden fluids we try not to lose!

And last but not least: **WALKERS GARAGE** (Steve Smith, Ben, Steve, Andy, et al, plus Giles Hopwood (electricrery!), and Dave ("The Management") McGrath!



The New Look Langley Response June 2008

Member Of Southern Rescue Group

Just had the paint work done on the roof as it was in a bad state and the checker plate on the doors & sills to make it look the part expensive but worth it.

The unit has come a long way from the basic vehicle having spent a small fortune on it to get it to its current state Thanks to Steve Bristow who helps with the maintenance.

Up-rated springs all around to give it a 2 inch lift Old man emu on the rear, as it carries a lot of weight in the rear compartment as I have it racked out & kept the 4 seats in place for extra crew.

Just been Re-licensed as a MSA Medical Response unit, it carries the extra medical kit including a Defibrillator which will need updating soon. Runs Blue & Amber Strobes. Just need to put the Ambulance Response signs on, as it's now Taxed as an Ambulance.

The unit has been busy so far this year helping to pay for the up-upgrades etc so look out for us on the Rally & 4 x 4 Stages i.e. Sunseeker ,Tempest , Rockingham, Severn valley, Swansea Bay, GTI International, London to Brighton Run and say hello.

A full list of equipment can be found on my website below and it's a nightmare keeping up with replacing out of date medical kit i.e. **Burn dressings** '£64.00 a go having the **fire extinguishers**' serviced, **02 & Entonox cylinders** replaced, Just had my **Jaws of life** serviced ouch" lots of money, and **general vehicle servicing** as we cover a lot of miles off road on events.

All the above has to be funded out of my own pocket.

The donations received on events go into keeping the vehicle on the road

Paul V Duckmanton *Crew Chief*

07767797379 or 01753 671575 <mailto:paul@duckmanton.com>

Web Site www.duckmanton.com/langley_response.htm



London Motor Show

Excel Docklands

July 23rd -- Aug 3rd

Press Day 22nd July

Preview Day 23rd July 10am -- 6pm

Weekdays 10am -- 9pm

Weekends 10am -- 8pm

Chief Marshal Darren Pike will be at the London Motor Show, helping out on the BEN stand.

BEN is the Automotive Industry Charity, the only occupational charity for those who work or have worked in the automotive and related industries. Founded in 1905, the Charity provides practical help, support, advice and friendship to more than 15,000 men and women and their families every year. In addition BEN provides a home to over 350 individuals who reside in one of its four residential centres in the UK and offers day care facilities at its centre in Coventry. Website: www.ben.org.uk

providing care and accommodation for more than 100 people with a wide spectrum of needs. The principle buildings provide residential and nursing care, with 48 additional flats within the grounds offering sheltered accommodation. Opened in the 1940's it is located in its own extensive grounds near Ascot, Lynwood provides nursing and residential care, sheltered housing and a specialist unit for the Elderly Mentally Infirm (EMI). The range of services is extensive and includes a salon, launderette, licensed bar, library, chapel and visitor accommodation.

Lynwood, in Sunninghill, is both BEN's national headquarters and a residential centre

And Finally

