

**TRACKROD**

**MOTOR CLUB Ltd.**



**SEPTEMBER 1998  
MAGAZINE**

**THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF TRACKROD MOTOR CLUB Ltd.  
RAC MSA Affiliated, No.1230**

## CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

I know this will be a condensed version of the magazine but I guess we'll let Jim get away with it this time and let him enjoy his honeymoon. Congratulations to him and Michelle on their recent wedding and also to Andrew Apperley and Vicky who got married last month as well.

Well we have a new committee and the first meeting has already been held - you will see the various "jobs" the committee have agreed to - no doubt they will be asking for your help!! As agreed at the AGM we will be publishing in the magazine a brief outline of the key issues discussed at committee so nobody will feel left out! Running a motor club with the range of activities planned will be no easy task but I am confident that with the expertise and dedication from the new committee we will have a very successful year.

As soon as we have been able to finalise all the various accounts we will, again as mentioned at the AGM, be calling an EGM to present the financial status of the club - also on the agenda will be the subject of whether or not to invite a President and Vice Presidents to guide and assist us. If you have any views on this new venture please feel free to discuss at club nights and/or if you prefer write something in the magazine - that will at least please Jim!!

Remember we still need your input and assistance in organising venues and events. New ideas are always welcome as well - provided they are legal and physically possible of course!

By now we will have got over the Bank Holiday weekend and taken in the Hill Climb at Harewood, and no doubt you will be preparing to help on the Forest Rally - we still need help around Rally H/Q especially Saturday evening - and if anyone fancies selling programs - well surprise, surprise - we need that vacancy filling as well - we can arrange it so you can still see the rally! Please let Russell Holdsworth know regarding H/Q and Nigel Cordingley re programs.

Venues for the Tuesday meetings is also being discussed - so again ideas welcome - especially if we can have a private room. ALSO we urgently need a new Equipment Store - we have been very fortunate with our current location and our thanks are due to John and Victoria Renny - but times move on and so must the equipment - all we need is a large, dry, secure room with 24 hour access, heating and light - all for free of course - not much to ask really is it??

Seriously we need some ideas on this one so please think hard, and we do have a small budget to cover storage costs!!

Have fun and remember - "if you can smile when things go wrong its because you have someone in mind to blame"

Rod Parkin

## SOCIAL CALENDAR

### September

- 1st. Gildersome Con. Club
- 8th. Admiral Hawke, Boston Spa
- 15th. Crown Wetherby
- 22nd. The Beehive, Thorne
- 29th. To be announced

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# Wheels

A SUPPLEMENT FOR MOTOR CLUB MAGAZINES PRODUCED BY THE RAC MOTOR SPORTS ASSOCIATION

**T**HE more expensive our sport gets at the top, the more we need to protect the future by making sure there are still low cost ways of getting started. One of the cheapest ways has to be through autotests and it's not surprising that there are around 460 such events a year, some 80% of them of clubman status.

That means there are about the same number of autotests as kart meetings but if you consider that there are well over 700 clubs, that's still less than one autotest each so there's surely scope for growth, particularly as this branch of the sport has so many things going for it. Low entry fees for a start while if you decide to take part, you'll find the cars cost a heck of a lot less than for most other disciplines, say £1500 or so for a secondhand autotest special.

But the joy of autotests is that you can run your everyday car (you will tell your Fleet Manager won't you?) especially as Production Car Autotests were introduced in '95 for 'normal road cars, taxed and with an MOT'. There are three classes depending on size rather than capacity because this is one area when size really does count — *against* you when trying to get in and out of 'garages'. Incidentally in this category you have to carry a passenger, just like rallies, so there's no excuse for getting lost.

The tests are invariably laid out using pylons and the layout drawings look rather like those join-the-dot puzzles which you always hope will turn out to be a glamorous film star like Liz Hurley or, if you're on the Ecurie Cod Fillet committee, Lassie.

Precision is perhaps the most needed quality when trying to beat the field, usually of between 20 and 40 cars. The cars use road tyres and mucking about with pressures (unlike

trials, there are no restrictions) may pay off; some people run them hard — up to 40 to 50!

The events were called 'driving tests' until the early '70s when the name was changed to avoid confusion with the MOT exam, but I reckon if a club autotest was included in the official test today, driving standards generally would be higher and parking in multistorey car parks would be less like destruction derbies.

## PILE ON THE PYLONS

As well as all the advantages for competitors, there are some for organisers too. For instance, venues are relatively easy to find. Yes, I know all things are relative in motorsport and some clubs have suffered because autotesting on supermarket car parks was killed by Sunday trading, but from the many club magazines I see, venues are still out there somewhere. Grass is an alternative to tarmac of course, but only at certain times of the year.

All a club then needs are fire extinguishers, cones and some flour to mark out the lines. Oh, and a few marshals (some with stopwatches) but far less of them than for most other branches of the sport, not least because it's joyously unencumbered by rules to squabble over. About the only significant stipulations for organisers are that production car people must be able to do a test with

only four selections of reverse — to avoid transmissions going into remission — and drivers must be able to see the whole test from the start line.

It's very satisfying motorsport. My cup for a class win years ago still has pride of place (visitors often comment on the revolving plinth and strobe lighting) while any club or competitor involved in autotests is actually following a very noble tradition because tests really sprang from rallies — one of the first recorded examples appears to be the Ulster Rally in 1934 where tests were held at T junctions.

With their heritage it's perhaps not surprising that the Irish fared so well when for a while driving tests were a significant television sport with the Ken Wharton Memorial event. In fact Paddy Hopkirk was part of their winning team in '59 in a Frog-eye and even today he still champions the cause of autotests and passionately believes they should be even more popular. Hear, hear.

*Stuart Turner*

## COD FILLET QUIZ



1. To which driver are the Tribunes at Reims dedicated?
2. Who won the very first Motoring News rally and when?
3. When did A.J. Foyt win his first Indy 500?
4. Who won the inaugural Birmingham 3000 super prix?

ANSWERS ON PAGE 14

# NEWS FROM THE RACMSA

## New name for governing body

Following the decision of The Royal Automobile Club to 'demerge' and sell its RAC Motoring Services interests, a number of technical changes have been made to the structure and title of the governing body of UK motor sport.

An extraordinary general meeting of The RAC Motor Sports Association Ltd took place on 28 July 1998. In order to avoid possible confusion with RAC Motoring Services, it was agreed to change the company name to The Royal Automobile Club Motor Sports Association Limited. The frequently-used abbreviation "MSA" will therefore continue.

The General Assembly of the FIA (the international governing body) has already approved the process for the formal transfer of the sporting power for the United Kingdom, from The Royal Automobile Club to the MSA.

The MSA, as the recognised ASN for Great Britain and Northern Ireland, is required to establish a sporting commission, a rôle previously fulfilled by the RAC Motor Sports Council. The constitution of that body has therefore been changed slightly: instead of being a committee of The Royal Automobile Club, it becomes a committee of the MSA, to be known simply as The Motor Sports Council.

None of the Council's specialist committees are affected in any way, although some detailed amendments will be presented to the Council when it meets in September.

The Chairman of the Council, currently appointed by The Royal Automobile Club, will in future be appointed by the Board of MSA. To ensure continuity, it has already been

agreed that Mr Michael Southcombe will continue in this rôle.

As the UK governing body, the MSA is also required to have a national court of appeal, which rôle has been fulfilled by The Stewards of The Royal Automobile Club. The Club will continue to appoint Stewards to undertake this important judicial rôle and maintain the established and vital link with the British judicial system.

The MSA will enjoy a licence from The Royal Automobile Club to incorporate the full King Edward VII club badge into its logo for use on stationery and other approved materials, thus visibly maintaining the traditional links with The Royal Automobile Club.

Commented MSA Chief Executive John Quenby: "I sincerely believe that these changes will maintain a strong and fair foundation for the continuing independent governance of motor sport, while retaining important traditional ties with The Royal Automobile Club."

It is stressed that the MSA organisation based at Motor Sports House in Colnbrook remains essentially unchanged. The new arrangements are not expected to have any material impact on competition licence holders or registered motor clubs.

## Fire extinguishers

As promised in the previous edition of *Wheels*, we offer the following advice on the purchase and use of fire extinguishers.

As a result of European legislation, new extinguishers are red, not colour-coded according to type. Identification is now by either a descriptive label alone, or by an additional coloured band. Extinguishers purchased before the legislation do not need to be painted red.

Extinguishers should be checked by ensuring that the nozzle is clean and clear and that – if the extinguisher is of the stored pressure variety – the reading on the pressure gauge is comfortably within the green

sector.

Do not break or remove safety seals unless you are about to fight a fire. If a seal is removed, it indicates that the extinguisher is no longer serviceable. If you remove seals, there may be Health & Safety implications or the owner is faced with the expense of having extinguishers serviced unnecessarily.

A high proportion of extinguishers used in motor sport are charged with BCF (otherwise known as Halon). The use of this extinguishant in this country continues to be acceptable until 1 January 2000, but may not be acceptable in certain other countries.

Manufacture of Halons should have ceased world-wide (while it is an excellent extinguishant, it has an effect on the atmosphere and is thus environmentally unacceptable).

If you have a BCF extinguisher, you may continue to use it for UK national events, but if purchasing a new extinguisher, ensure it is charged with one of the approved alternatives listed in the *Motor Sports Yearbook*.

When purchasing extinguishers, it is recommended that you consult one of the specialist manufacturers who produce plumbed-in systems for motor sport.

If purchasing a handheld extinguisher, you should ensure that the model you select meets or exceeds the minimum capacity requirement and is manufactured with BS4123/EN3 approval, with a fire rating of at least 34B.

Securely mount the extinguisher, taking into account any high loadings which may be applied to it. Mount the extinguisher so that there is minimal chance of the nozzle becoming dirty; prior to each event, it is wise to check that the nozzle is clean and undamaged.

If a stored-pressure design, check that the pressure gauge reading is comfortably in the green sector. The same checks should be made in respect of plumbed-in systems, being particularly aware that underbonnet nozzles may be vulnerable to becoming dirty.

Facts about...

## THE BEAUJOLAIS CHALLENGE

- The Challenge involves finding the shortest route via a couple of en-route checkpoints from Lacenas in the heart of the Beaujolais region to Tadworth, Surrey.
- Starts at midnight on Wednesday 18th November and aims to raise considerable funds for the Children's Trust, Tadworth and their Hand of Hope Appeal.
- Organised by Classic Motoring Organisation Ltd in association with the BARC and open to anyone with a car who wants the opportunity of bringing home the Beaujolais!
- Cost is £475 for a vehicle and crew of two; this includes – Eurotunnel and return, travel insurance, Shippers Party, Beaujolais Lunch, rally plates, commemorative awards and finishers' certificates.
- There are many awards to be won: Best in challenge, Team, Inter-Marque and classes, the latter includes: best Motor Club, 4-wheel-drive, Media, Classic Cars, Exotic cars, Marques, HM Forces, Sports people, 2-seater sports and motor-trade.
- Accidents on the road and at home are now the biggest single child killer. The Children's Trust is there for children who survive but are left severely disabled. It specialises in the care, treatment and education of children with brain injuries, profound disabilities and terminal illnesses, working closely with their families.
- The Hand of Hope Appeal is an initiative to raise \$5.5 million for expansion to create 30 additional places for children who are in desperate need of the unique care and rehabilitation available at The Children's Trust, Tadworth.
- Regulations, Entry Form and Sponsorship Form are available from: Classic Motoring Organisation Ltd, The Old Bakery, 55a Belmont Road, Wallington, Surrey SM6 8TE. Tel: 0181 773 3404, Fax: 0181 773 3704, e-mail: rick@xenogamy-plc.demon.co.uk

# AUTOSCENE

**AUTOSPORT** REVIEWS FROM **CLASSIC**

**FORMULA ONE THROUGH THE LENS, Nigel Snowden, Hazleton Publishing, ISBN 1 874557 18 7, £25**

Packed with black and white photographs, this handsome new book from the publisher of *Autocourse* is fantastic value.

Nigel Snowden and his wife Diana Burnett have covered more than 450 Grands Prix since he left the aircraft industry for photography in 1963. His dramatic action studies, candid paddock snaps and haunting portraits of racing greats are superbly reproduced and full-colour printing gives the monochrome works real depth. The action shots are top class but the portraits are really special. The wicked smile of Rodriguez, the mischievous grin of Innes Ireland and the arrogance of Rindt are caught by Snowden's masterfully aimed Nikons. As a bonus, the pictures are enhanced by an anecdote or personal observation about the subject or incident. A 'must have' for all F1 fans.

**THE MAD MOTORISTS/NOT THE FULL MONTE**

Available from WASP (01606 888718) at £16.59 inc p&p each. If you know Philip Young's globetrotting tours, you'll know that a poodle through some pretty scenery they ain't. And if you're thinking of embarking on one of his forthcoming capers (Around The World in 80 days for example), you'd best watch these videos first. Both *The Mad Motorists* (chronicling last year's re-enactment of the 1907 Peking-Paris Motor Challenge) and *Not the Full Monte* (following a virgin crew on the annual trek through France) are littered with people who have suffered a rude awakening to the rigours of rallying. The quality of the videos is variable but both provide fascinating insights into the camaraderie, the joy and the tragedy of classic runs that can stretch you to

the limit. Tough they may be, but that just makes them seem all the more appealing.

**COLIN McRAE RALLY FOR PLAYSTATION AND CD-ROM**  
Codemaster, £44.99 (PlayStation)/£34.99 (PC CD-ROM)

'Colin McRae Rally' takes virtual reality to a new extreme. Put simply, it is the best rally game you can buy by a long way.

You have the choice of 12 rally cars, both front- and rear-wheel drive, whose individual handling characteristics are faithfully reproduced. You can then drive a total of 48 stages in eight world locations, all of them heart-stoppingly authentic.

A measure of its sophistication is the fact that the game is endorsed by 1995 World Champion McRae himself. The realism is awesome. Your car gets muddier and muddier as the stage goes on and you have to be careful not to damage it too much, as you can only do so many repairs during the service breaks between stages.

**THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE AMERICAN RACING CAR,**  
ISBN 0 7680 0023 8

Griff Borgeson, The Society of Automotive Engineers Inc., \$29.95. Anyone who has marvelled at Miller engineering at Goodwood Festival of Speed will enjoy Borgeson's history. This meticulous writer tracked down key figures like Leon Duray, Tommy Milton, Fred Offenhauser, Leo Goossen and many more including a board track constructor, thus saving their memories from extinction. These first-hand accounts, combined with Borgeson's special passion for the subject provide a marvellous insight into American racing and recordbreaking between the wars. Borgeson was working on updating his second edition when he died last May, but his friends, Michael Rosen and Fred Usher ably completed the task. Very highly recommended.

## Uplifting thoughts for rockers and mods

**A** **READER** from Norwich writes asking about 'high lift' rockers and how they alter the cam timing of an engine. Strictly speaking the actual cam timing remains exactly the same, but the valve lift is increased. Since the new, higher, maximum lift has to be obtained within the same number of camshaft degrees of rotation, the valve

acceleration must be increased.

Most engines seem to like a lot of valve acceleration. However, there are limits to what you can get away with mechanically. Much depends on the lubrication system of the engine and if a unit is known for knocking out cams, then higher valve accelerations are more likely to make it unreliable.

If you have a very 'hot' cam grind and then increase the valve acceleration still further with higher ratio rockers, you may well get into the region of broken valve train parts. You also have to watch out for valve spring crush and cap-to-guide clearance when you start lifting the valve higher than it is used to going.

Although cam grinds these days

are tending to go for higher lift and shorter duration, much depends on what you want from the engine. Short duration/high lift cams will deliver excellent power and flexibility, but if you want the engine to really rev then there still does not appear to be any substitute for duration.

## QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Jean Pierre Wimille
2. Michael Sutcliffe/Phil Crabtree, Mini — Yorkshire Rally 1961.
3. 1961.
4. Luis Sola (rain stopped the race after 24 laps).

**CARS**  
and CAR CONVERSIONS

# TOMMY GUN

Flat out in radical Tommy Kaira ZZ

• RAC Champion of the Year 1991

• Rallycrossers track tester

• Building a track car

• Arrive and Drive - CEC flags a Ferrari 250 GTD

# KEEP UP TO SPEED WITH

**CARS**  
and CAR CONVERSIONS

## THE MONTHLY MOTORSPORT MAGAZINE WRITTEN FOR ENTHUSIASTS - BY ENTHUSIASTS

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Steve Rathbone

1953-1998



# 1998 MOTORSPORT CALENDAR

## September:

5/6 Woodpecker  
 11/13 Manx Int.  
 13th F1 Monza  
 18/20 WRC Rally Of Indonesia  
 26th Trackrod Forest Srages Rally  
 27th F1 Nurburgring

Ile Of Man  
 Italy  
 Luxembourg

## October:

3rd Cambrian  
 3rd Bulldog  
 9/11 Tour of Mull  
 10/14 WRC Rally Sanremo  
 11th F1 Kayalami  
 18th Premiere Stages

Italy  
 S/Africa  
 Dukeries

## November

1st F1 Suzuka  
 5/8 WRC Rally Australia  
 21/23 RAC Rally

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