

TRACK

June 2019



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Durham Automobile Club

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Its a thankless task running a club, any club, a motor club, an athletics club, a football club.

I must admit feeling a little foolish taking on this role, I have been down similar roads before, a trainer with nobody to train, a coach with no-one to coach, but whilst I was sat alone in my studio talking to myself, I thought, you know, at least someone in GCHQ is listening to me now...right at this moment.

You never know when your going to make a difference, a few years ago I was at a football match, one of our teams ex players was on the pitch, he had left to further his career and I hoped had grown into a far better adult than the snottie attituded boy I had so much trouble with as a child. This lad had an answer for everything, he could have gone into Golf or Cricket, but instead chose not to waste his talent and stick at the football.

He was a swine to train, always questioning every bit of non on the ball advice. I carry the damage of someone who was badly advised, my hamstrings are a problem, my calfs are a pr...lets just say club athletics in the late 70's and early 80's were very..amateur.

When I returned to the sport in the late 80's I had a proper coach, decent facilities and things were better, I learnt a lot, I tried to apply this to the youngsters I later coached and again when involved in youth football with my son, I was appalled at the way the kids were basically run into the ground by a bunch of foamy mouthed idiots!

I volunteered to help out more to safeguard my sons own physical future rather than some misguided ego or altruism.



Its difficult trying to harness the attention of small boys at the best of times, but I did try. We looked at their nutrition, their pre-match prep, and I looked at minimising the damage a quite punishing season and training regime would have on these not yet formed kids.

You always think you could do better, we got promoted 2 seasons in a row and even though it was always a battle I tried to instill a programme of warming up and down, stretching, eating the right stuff at the right time, hydration etc. I was no expert, but I didn't need to be to make a massive improvement in how these kids were looked after.

We moved town before the next season started, my son ended up in another club. I wasn't involved but his love had waned, drumming was his new love. He like many other kids, left a sport because they just fail, for whatever reason, keeping people engaged is difficult, in these modern times when all our heads are overwhelmed by stimulus, somethings have to give.

So there I was, sat in the stadium, a Premiership game, the lad I had so much bother with had left the kids club the same season we moved, gobbled up by the local academy.

I was pleased to see he had fulfilled his potential, quite proud that I had at least in a small way stopped him falling into the evil clutches of cricket or that golf thing. I had given up my season ticket a few seasons before, my son had grown himself, with a combination of part - time work even more part time study and touring Europe as a musician meant I only occasionally go to games.

This match the only seats left were by the tunnel on the touchline, just outside of the shelter of the roof. The players were

out warming up and that same lad was announced to the polite applause given to a local lad done good, even if he was a traitorous wretch sold off against his will to a rival.

As they trooped back off the pitch before kick off I heard a shout of my name, I didn't take any notice as who knew me there, a shout again looked up and there he was, all grown up, a bloke now, sweating and fit as a fiddle. I was amazed he recognised me, it was well over a decade since I last shouted at him. The only thing he said was "You were right" and pointed to the warm up gear.

The late Colin Wilson will I am sure have been unaware of how many people he motivated through his writing, many of us will never know if we have sparked something in someone as we drive through a village in our competition car.

The seeds that are sown may take decades to take root.

I was very lucky that in the days of the Ford Rally Search I ended up behind the wheel of a Ford Cortina Mk4 with a dish on its bonnet.

I had been there all day watching the grown ups have a go, yes I was 15 and could drive of a fashion, after many illegal...well best not go there.

So at the end of the day whilst I was watching them take down the PR stuff, and with my hands full of goodies I took the chance to speak to a hero., Jackie Stewart. I was amazed how small he was, but what a talker, he was genuinely engaging.

About half an hour afterwards he came back out in the Cortina, pulled up and asked me if I could drive, fighting the urge

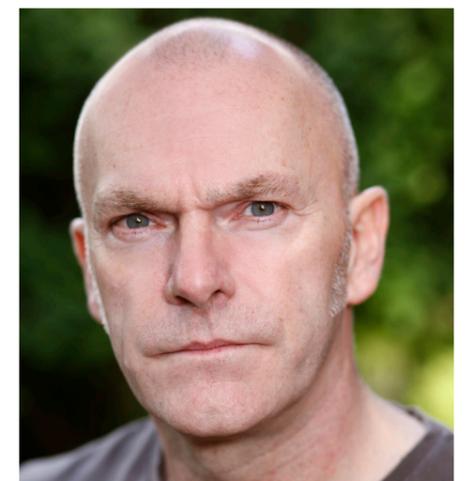
to tell the truth and risk making a fool of myself I lied.

They had cleared away the cones and there was just an empty car park, he plonked a tennis ball in the dish and told me to follow his instructions, I got lucky with the clutch, but I was also lucky that I had read his articles on smooth driving (after all when your driving illegally, its best to be as invisible). After several turns the ball eventually flew out of the dish, but it "wasn't bad" as Jackie said, from all the advice he gave me, one thing stuck out and came back to haunt me in years to come.

He asked me if I was dyslexic? I said no I'm not, its true I struggled at school, especially in maths and writing by hand but after early difficulties I could read fine. I had got my left and right mixed up when he was instructing me. It wasn't until my mid 40's that I was properly diagnosed as dyspraxic/dyslexic.

But you should never underestimate the impact small things can have on somebodies life, he remains a hero of mine and his advice that day has stayed with me.

Alan Hawdon
Editor



June will be a busy month for the club with almost something on every Wednesday and weekend. I have been sending all members a list of these events. I hope you find these updates useful. If you missed the emails then check Pam's report which includes more information on each activity this month. Also the calendar at the back of this magazine is a good list to visit if you want to know what is on.

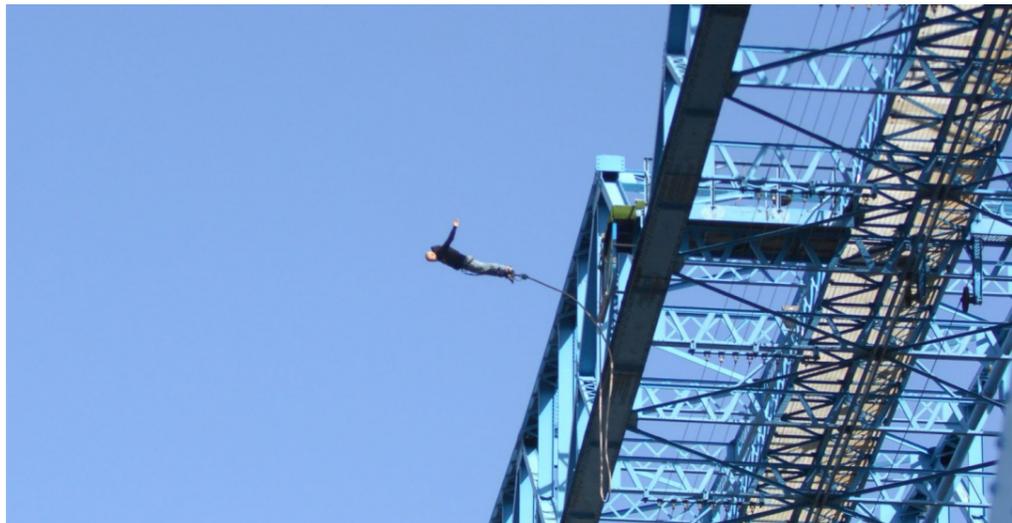
As we are nearing the middle of the club year I always start to ask for your support. This year is no different because we need your support at club events and we also need to know what you (the members) want from your club. I don't want to sit back and put on the same activities year in year out.

Tell us what works, what you want to see more of, is there any activities you think we could do or you would like to run for the club. Ian and Nikki Burrows put on a couple of Treasure hunts which certainly tripped up a couple of experts leading to some unusual results. Do you want to run a quiz, organise a session at a local race

track, run a Radio Controlled rally at the club? If you have an idea, don't just sit back, let us know.

In the March edition of the magazine I asked the question about fully electric rally cars. Fred also picked up this topic in his report in last months magazine and went a lot deeper into the concerns with Electrification.

“got whipped on a Scatter”



For sure full electrification be a step too far to take for rallying at the moment. A lot more emphasis is being placed on Hybrid vehicles and if you look at the progression of hybrid technology in F1, maybe hybrid vehicles are the forward for rallying to progress from ICE (Internal Combustion Engine) to fully

Electric competition Vehicles. There are a lot of negative comments in social media whenever Electric Rally cars are mentioned, but with the discussions on climate change “heating” up, we may well be forced to toe the line.

The last month has been a mixture of fortunes for me. I had pull two rallies due to issues with a rally driver I sat with in Wales. Thirty years of rallying and every driver I have ever sat with has been amazing and I am still good friends with.

I suppose one in so many drivers is a small percentage of risk. It has certainly taught me a lesson which I will take into any future event I compete with a “new” driver. Anyway enough of my moaning ;0).....Because last month I also won one of the table top rallies then got whipped on a Scatter (report to follow).

I have also secured a seat on the returning Tour of Mull rally in October.

It was 2015 when I last competed on Mull and I am really looking forward to this event.

This rally shines out as one of the hardest and best rallies and considering I've never finished the Mull rally

1st year we went off the road and retired, second year was cancelled on the second day, I will only be looking for a finish and some great “craic” during the rally week.

I have already started to prepare for the event, 4 months in advance. I'm doing a pace noted tarmac rally and a recce to prepare for Mull with this “driver”, who is a good friend and “fellow” Co-driver.

“So until August I am Free if anyone is looking for a Co-Driver.”

Don't forget to let Gordon Dundee and Alan Hawdon know what you have been doing, for the club championship and club magazine.

Keep safe and let's see you all at our club events.



Andy Brown
Chairman



Hard Times for Britain's Largest Car Dealer

Pendragon, the biggest car dealer in the UK recently announced their 2018 financial results – a stonking loss of £44.4M. Revenues declined by 2.4%, but the company chose, or perhaps were forced by their auditors, to write down the value of their assets by almost £96M. In simple terms their dealerships both as businesses and as properties are simply not worth what they were. Pendragon has been pursuing a strategy of reducing the number of prestige franchise dealerships they have because of what they see as the excessive demands from manufacturers for very expensive facilities. In particular they have been moving out of Jaguar and Land Rover. They operate a total of 17 BMW dealerships currently and industry rumours say they would like to be rid of all of these. What putting that lot on the market would do to the value of BMW dealerships in the UK is pretty obvious!

Pendragon now operate a total of 32 used car only facilities under their "Car Store" brand.

This hasn't been entirely successful for them, profits for the first quarter

of 2019 were £1M below budget and the Car Store boss has been placed on "gardening leave".

Another large dealer group, Vertu Motors declared itself "pleased" that its 2018 profits were "only" 17% down on the previous year.



These results explain the gradual but continual reduction in the number of new car dealers in the UK. In particular the smaller rural dealers are either closing or walking away from the new car business. 20 years ago there were 12 Ford car showrooms in North East and West Cumbria operated by 7 different owners. Now there are 5 with 4 owners. Nationally most of the family owned and operated dealers have disappeared placing the lion's share of the business in the hands of the large groups, resulting in less competition, less consumer choice and many would say lower standards of customer service.

ELECTRIC CARS GOOD NEWS AND BAD

The University of Cologne has just produced a report that contends that electric cars won't in fact result in a reduction of emissions in Europe. In fact quite the opposite, the report says that electric vehicles "produce significantly higher levels of CO2 emissions than diesels"! This is due to the significant amounts of energy used in mining the lithium, cobalt

and manganese required to produce batteries. Producing the battery pack for a Tesla Model 3 results in between 11 and 15 tonnes of CO2 pollution, the pack will last for 10 years during which the car will travel on average 94000 miles so the result is 116-156 grams of CO2 per mile. Then of course you have to add the pollution from the power stations that generate the electricity required. Until all power is generated by renewable or nuclear the total emissions for the Tesla are actually 249-280 grams of CO2 per mile. This is of course far higher than most petrol or diesels!

The study concludes that the correct route lies in methane powered petrol engines and/or hydrogen motors. As both my regular readers know I've long contended that hydrogen is the correct answer and that electric is a very expensive blind alley.

Further bad news is another forecast

that the precious metals required to make the batteries for electric cars are in short supply and therefore will increase dramatically in price over the next few years. About two thirds of the cost of an electric car is made up by the batteries, so the results are obvious.

Meanwhile the environmental lobby are demanding the Government reverses the recent cuts in grants to customers buying hybrid or pure electric cars. These people either haven't read the University of Cologne report or have simply rejected it on the basis it doesn't agree with their opinions?

Finally don't get me started on our total inability to provide the necessary recharging network if electric cars take off as forecast.

The good news if there is good news is that order books have opened for what I judge to be the first REAL electric car, the VW ID. REAL because prices will start at around £23000 and have a range of 205 to 340 miles depending on which version you buy. The ID is just the start of a range of electric VWs based on the same technology, and of course we will see versions from Seat, Skoda and Audi fairly soon. So if electric cars are a good idea, which may be doubtful, here's the start of ones that tick all the boxes.

Next task is to convince motorists. A recent survey of 2000 car buyers showed that while concerns about range and costs continue to be common buyers have other worries. Almost 20% think they risk electrocution when driving an electric car, and a

similar number think you can't take one through a car wash. One in eight believe the car will fail in heavy rain and around 10% think they're banned from motorways in the UK!

Tesla

While political journalists must be very grateful for Boris and Nigel as reliable sources of something to write about, I feel the same about Tesla boss Elon Musk. In the last few weeks he's reversed his decision to close all Tesla's dealerships. Then having announced a tiny profit for the last quarter of 2018 and predicted that the company's loss-making days were over he was forced to report a thumping loss for the first quarter of this year.

Next he promised to produce a fleet of taxis by the middle of 2020 that won't need a driver. Independent experts responded that neither the technology nor the regulatory framework would be remotely ready until years later. Finally last week having promised investors Tesla was now cash positive with no further need to raise additional funding he was forced to go to the markets for a mere \$2.7 BILLION of fresh capital.

I was recently talking to a company with a large fleet of cars who are considering going electric. They made it clear that they wouldn't consider Tesla's, simply because they felt they couldn't trust Mr. Musk. Not surprising really?

Changing Face of Vehicle Auctions

I recently enjoyed a long lunch (thankfully I was travelling by train!) with an old friend who's just retired after over 30 years in the vehicle auction business. His reflections on how things had changed in that period I at least found very interesting. When he first started everything was sold as seen and it was up to the buyer to decide if the vehicle was right or wrong. Now almost all cars and vans are offered with a full description, service history etc, and buyers demand they are "graded" in terms of quality and the amount of remedial work that may be required before they can be offered for retail sale.

This has enabled the growth in online auctions where a buyer can sit in his office hundreds of miles from the auction site and bid on his computer. One of the results is a significant reduction in seasonal trends. Whereas 4x4s were worth much more in winter and convertibles more in summer that is much less the case now. Also regional differences in values are less pronounced now buyers can bid from Scotland at an auction in London and vice versa. However some truths remain. Small automatics still make more money in the South East, diesels in the North and rural areas. And electric cars are very much in demand in London, but not elsewhere.



My friend predicted that by 2020 80% of vehicle auction transactions will be completed online. Like many other effects of the internet, many will regret the loss of the physical part of the process.

Remember Road Tax?

This was first imposed to do what it says, be a tax designed to raise money to be used to provide new and improved roads. Of course that was a long time ago. Now it's called Vehicle Excise Duty and the money just goes into the vast Government pot to be spent on goodness knows what. NOT potholes, that's for sure!

Recently Highways England quietly announced that 10% of the road building schemes they had promised

as part of the biggest upgrade of the network for a generation could be scrapped for financial reasons.

A further third of planned improvements are to be delayed, some by as much as 5 years.

Official MPGs Still Inaccurate

What Car recently reported that the average car now consumes around 5% more fuel than the new WLTP figures suggest. Worst offender is the Volvo V60 D4 which consumes over 23% more fuel than the official figures suggest with the Ford Fiesta 140ps at 21% more.

Ⓜ "Dieselgate" Rumbles on

You might be forgiven for thinking this was all over a long time ago but sadly not. Recently Porsche were fined 535M Euros by German prosecutors for neglecting its legal duties to comply with emissions regulations. Meanwhile former VW Chief Executive Martin Winterkorn has been charged with fraud in Germany on the basis he was aware of the cheating 16 months before it became public.

Ford Announce European Job Losses

This one was no surprise, perhaps most people expected the numbers to be bigger, but there is almost certainly more to follow. Ford of Britain are to cut about 550 managerial jobs at their Essex Head Office and 400 production jobs from the petrol engine factory in South Wales. In addition Ford will cut around 5000 jobs in Germany which is still the major centre of their European car manufacturing plants. There is no doubt that as a car business Ford of Europe is in big trouble, yet they have

a great van and pickup operation. In my view (and I still talk to some senior Ford people) there is more bad news to come, a reduction in dealer numbers almost certainly part of it. Ford currently have well over 500 UK dealers and sell as many cars as VW who have less than 200 dealers – unsustainable?

Meanwhile Ford in the US (where they are still making loads of cash) has announced that they are to drop all passenger saloons and hatchback from their US range. So previous top sellers like Taurus will go, as will European designs Fusion, Focus, and Fiesta. Fiesta is just too small to find acceptance in the US (fine car though it is) which basically explains Ford's unwillingness to invest in a WRC programme centred on the Fiesta.

HONDA CONFIRM SWINDON PLANT CLOSURE

Again this was sadly no surprise to anybody. Having flagged the probability some time ago Honda have today confirmed that their Swindon car production plant will close in 2012. For reasons nobody, least of all Honda, can understand, they are doing very badly in Europe, and have done for some time. Last month Tesla sold more cars in Europe than Honda, and (see above) Tesla aren't doing that well. So far this year Honda have "sold" just over 18000 cars in the UK down over 13% on last year.

Take out various dealer and factory demonstrators, some pre registrations, and the Motability and big fleet business the dealers make little or no margin on and the average Honda dealer is actually selling maybe around 25-30 new cars a month or if lucky one a day?

Less and Less Petrol Stations

Of course we've all seen our local petrol stations close in droves over recent years. I don't have the numbers to hand but we all know it's a fraction of what it was. Which does cause inconvenience and "planning" issues for those who live in rural areas. It's not apparently just down to the basic economics of operating these sites.

An increasing number of motorists are deciding to reduce their fuel costs by the simple expedient of filling up and driving off without bothering with that tiresome and expensive "paying for the fuel" bit. The average forecourt is now losing almost £150 a month in this way and that is over 20% up on this time last year.

At least 8 UK Police Forces now refuse to investigate these crimes. Forecourt operators can install pre pay machines to avoid the problem, but at £15000 a time which is not affordable for the smaller ones.

So we'll need to get used to less forecourts like less banks and less new car dealers?

MAJOR DEALERS SELL WRITTEN OFF USED CARS?

The BBC, as ever the fair minded guardians of the consumer, recently broadcast on their "Rip Off Britain" programme that major dealers like Pendragon and Arnold Clark were involved in selling used cars that



were in fact insurance write offs. The truth if you bothered to watch (I did) and not simply read the sensational headlines is that the fault lies with the Government and the insurance companies. There is no legal duty (amazingly) on the insurance companies to report a write off. The trade mainly uses Hire Purchase Information (HPI) to check is a car is written off, on finance or showing doubtful mileage information. But if the insurers don't tell HPI the dealer has no way of knowing. Needless to say the dealers not the idle insurers got the BBC flak.....

BUT THERE ARE STILL DISHONEST DEALERS

Whilst defending those I think wrongly attacked by the BBC, I have no time for those who simply flout the law.

A used car dealer in Keighley trading as Motorhub was recently successfully prosecuted by Yorkshire Trading Standards for a variety of offences including selling cars with covered or disconnected warning lights, incorrect mileages, undeclared accident damage and failing to disclose that a car had previously been used as a taxi..

Directors Mohammed Shabir and Naveed Balal Bahar were fined

£53567 and ordered to pay £13798 in prosecution costs and £170 in victim surcharge.

The fines were reduced to that level on the basis that the directors entered a guilty plea. It appears the innocent members of the public who were in effect defrauded received no compensation.

Caveat emptor!

ASTON MARTIN NIGHTMARE

Last October Aston Martin floated their company on the London Stock Exchange for a total value of £4.3 Billion. As I've reported previously their CEO Andy Palmer was gifted £60M of shares by the company. Half of which he immediately sold. Perhaps he knew what was coming? Since October the shares have halved in value and the company that was (allegedly) worth £4.3 Billion is now worth £2.14 Billion.

The company admits it is now for just about the first time ever building unsold cars for stock. The DBX SUV which is supposed to rescue the situation won't start production until the end of this year even if targets are met.

Loyal Aston Martin owners were given first chance to subscribe for shares when the company floated last October. They must be very grateful for that.

Lotus On The Up

Since being taken over by Chinese Automotive Group Geely (who have done an outstanding job with Volvo) there are great signs of a promising future for Lotus at last. A racing version of the Evora has been revealed and Lotus has genuine plans to build a pure electric hypercar at £1.5m a time.

Lotus are working with Williams Advanced Engineering who will bring to the project their knowledge

of electric powertrains gleaned from supplying battery systems to Formula E since 2014. The hypercar is expected to have over 1000bhp and a range of at least 250 miles.

They realistically say they're not going back to F1 but for the first time in a long time they seem to me to have a bright and credible future.

Peugeot and Tata Both Deny JLR Takeover

Rumours continue to circulate that Peugeot/Citroen (PSA) are in discussions with Tata to take over Jaguar Land Rover (JLR). They have now become so public that both sides have issued formal denials.

However PSA's denial was pretty unconvincing and the rumours show no signs of going away. PSA boss Carlos Tavares has successfully turned around the performance of Peugeot, Citroen, and now Vauxhall/Opel on the basis of pretty brutal cost cutting. JLR's 40,000 UK employees are rightly worried about what might happen next.

Paul Gilligan
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07785 293222



We have moved!

After years of planning and a hectic week of unloading office supplies, Great North Air Ambulance Service's new HQ is open for business!



The move to Progress House in Urray Nook, Eaglescliffe, has brought fundraising, lottery and admin teams together under the same roof for the first time. Office staff are excited to welcome the operational team based at Durham Tees Valley Airport to the new headquarters later in the year, while our Cumbrian base in Langwathby will continue to operate in the West.



£120,000

each year

is how much we will save on rent and other expenses by moving to our very own headquarters



395

cubic metres of concrete

has been poured to make the base of the hangar as we get ready for the helicopter to join us

Our new address:

Progress House
Urray Nook Road
Eaglescliffe
Stockton-on-Tees
TS16 0QB

HONEST LAWYER HOTEL

The hotel's renowned AA rosette awarded Baileys Bar and Restaurant. Food served all day, offering a quality combination of locally sourced food, a relaxed atmosphere and friendly service.



Menus change seasonally, created by respected Executive Head Chef Harry Bailie, with inspired dishes and hearty classics.

Bailey's Bar offers a more relaxed dining option, where dishes such as the popular Homemade Classic Steak Burger; Fish and Chips served, along with an extensive selection of beers, wines, spirits. Speciality teas and coffees are available throughout the day, along with a lite-bite lunch menu. We look forward to seeing you.

The Honest Lawyer Hotel,
Croxdale Bridge, Croxdale,
Durham, DH1 3SP

Tel: 0191 378 3780

Email: enquiries@honestlawyerhotel.co.uk



A few weeks ago I sent out emails to remind various 'Owners Clubs' and other organisations about "Classics at the Castle". I asked them to share our information and remind their members to get entries in to me before closing date.



I got an almost instantaneous auto reply from a club stating "I try to respond promptly to queries but I do have a life outside of the Club and therefore aim to reply within three days. Thanks for your patience."....



I have to say I was a bit put out upon first reading, but as these last few weeks have progressed I can see the guys point. Club events can take over one's life and there is never enough time. Like many, we have to balance work, hobbies, home etc and sometimes it's not easy.



DAC has a reputation of being a friendly club with many active members which is great, if only more 'active' members would come forward and help promote the Club!



It was a suggestion from members some time ago that the Club went out and about to promote motorsport and DAC to the general public, in doing so potentially encouraging more new members, particularly younger ones.



The Club has invested in a Gazebo, display boards, promotional items and more and has already attended various events/shows.

We have tried to attend 3 or 4 events each year for the past couple of years. The same few club members have given up their time to attend these shows and it is not always easy to fit in around having a 'normal life' but it has been done.

However some of those members, whilst willing to man the gazebo and set things up and talk to the public, do not have competition or show cars to display on the stand, it would be great if we could have some help here!

Saturday 6th July we have a stand at the prestigious Great North Car Show at the Aston Workshops, again we need 4 cars, thankyou Bob 'the log' for offering 2 cars, however at time of writing we still need 2 more.

Anyone willing to help us please get in touch with either myself pam. broom@btinternet.com or Andy Brown durhamautomobileclub@gmail.com

Wednesday 15th May saw a slightly disappointing turn out for the first Navigation event of the year but a great route provided a very enjoyable evening, with everyone finishing back at the Cross Keys Hamsterley for food and results.

The night showed the importance of the need for everyone to read instructions properly, even if you think you know what you are doing.

Not realising there were some extra points up for grabs caused consternation for some crews at the finish and had bearing on the results!! Thanks Peter for organising this

events with luck summer will have arrived by then!

Pam (07733 243842 or pam.broom@btinternet.com)

We've also had round 4 of the Table Top Navigation Challenge.

Wednesday 19th June sees round 5 of our Table Top Challenge, a start time

I must admit I have not been finding this very easy but I am learning, I am still a long way off being confident in my 'plotting' and waste time going back over several times, that said I did find this last session a bit easier fluke or improvement I don't know, but will probably find out in Round 5 which is on the 19th June.



Classics at the Castle is then on Sunday 14th July.

anytime between 7pm and 8pm at the Honest Lawyer.

Club members can bring cars along to the Club Stand, it won't cost you the public £6 entry fee, unless you choose to pay, in which case it goes to Air Ambulance.

We are all learning, even our experts are honing their skills. It's never too late to start come along and see for yourselves! A big thank you to Colin Fish for doing the routes and marking.

We need marshals for the day, you don't have to stay all day as just a couple of hours would allow those that are there all day to have a break.

MAP number 87 (latest version if possible) pencil, eraser and roamer needed though these also available on the night if you don't have them.

Please contact Gordon Dundee, Chief Marshal for the day. gandjdundee@gmail.com Hope we will see plenty of members coming forward either to help at or participate in some of these

Give me a call or email if you have any questions or to let me know you are joining us!

Wednesday 26th June sees another Social and Activity night at Fury Events.

Location: Broom House Farm, Witton Gilbert, DH7 6TR

START: Arrive 6.30 for a prompt 7pm start, if you are late you will have to walk down the fields and find us or call Pam's Mobile 07733 243842 or follow the sound of shotguns/buggies.

Ed Todd has been extremely generous in offering the venue and two free activities, Clay shooting/Axe throwing, possibly archery for DAC members to have a really fun night, and anyone that came along last year will confirm that!

Though we will ask all participants to make a donation to our Charity Great North Air Ambulance - A tin will be available on the night)

Optional Additional Activity
For those wanting to have a 'play' on the buggies there is a £10 charge and we are limited to 14 so book your spot.

Chris and Stuart will be cooking up a storm with one of their legendary BBQ's

BBQ cost is £5.00 per person.

SPACE IS STRICTLY LIMITED AND MUST BE BOOKED IN ADVANCE.....

SUMMARY:
2 activities will cost you a donation to GNASS

BBQ will cost you just £5.00

2 Activities PLUS Buggies will cost you just £10.00

Contact: PAM by email pam.broom@btinternet.com or telephone 07733 243842 to BOOK YOUR SPACE

Looking ahead and of course weather permitting we have a Grass Gymkhana planned for

Wednesday 7th August at Witton le Wear... more details to follow, get the date in your diary!

Pam Broom
Social Sec

As ever watch your inboxes for more updates as they become available.



This is your club, we use it or we lose it.



If it looks right, then it probably is!

That doesn't translate to everything, certainly its not the best advice when contemplating a long term relationship, but within the mechanical world, Ferrari Dino, Spitfire (Supermarine, not Triumph), The Chrysler Building (but not the Horizon) are all design classics, much imitated but not very often eclipsed.

With the current round of Automotive mergers and takeovers, brands being gobbled up, spewed out and then gobbled back up, its hard to know who owns who these days.

Design languages changed on the whim of a new head of design before the previous one was given a chance to flourish.

Sometimes it works, who would have thought that Volvo would become so damn sexy under Chinese ownership, yet Land Rover have become so odd looking under Gerry McGovern regardless of the Indian ownership.

The Volvos are right first time whereas the often challenging Land Rover designs look like they would bat away every attempt at a facelift with a stern, I yam wot I yam.

Ford know how to facelift, as do most of the VAG empire.

Both almost get the first editions of a car about right, they are generally good enough... Just to replace the previous generation, yet they apply the word incremental in its most cynical fashion. No if you want the best they can offer you have to wait until the mid term refresh, then they put all the stuff on it was originally designed with.

I remember sneaking into Neashams Ford in Thornaby a couple of days before the Sierra was announced.

In the service bay was a brown base spec 5 door, with the grey bumpers and grill, it was light years away from the Cortinas still clogging up the showroom, but in its basic trim level, it was just bloody awful, wilfully, shamelessly low rent, the first rung of a ladder of aspiration.

When that car was facelifted we had then already had the XR4i, the XR 4x4 and of course the original Cosworth, some of that trickled down to the rep fodder, the second generation was a genuinely decent car, it felt more expensive, the basic ones were less basic....they kept the interest up.

VW and Audi had been doing the same thing, who can forget the upward mobility of the Golf Gti, each cycle of development designed to wrestle away your cash with the merest of struggles. Audi have always left the best till last, often the most desirable models being in the last couple of years of production, incremental gains.

I am a sucker for those little touches, my first Escort, I had a choice between a road rally prepped 1974 Mk1 RS 2000 in Olympic blue, a late Mk 1, or a Mk2 1978 facelift 1.3 Pop Plus, the year they brought out the Ford oval on the grill, a massive improvement over the previous grill.

Ultimately with both cars being £1500 it came down to insurance, the RS quote was £1500, the Pop Plus was £65 on my dads policy, they wouldnt allow the RS on his!

The Italians however, they get things right first time and should never be allowed to tinker with the design, no they should put all their efforts into the bits that go wrong... all of them. The styling is rarely an issue and they will singularly get it wrong.

They succeed more with competition derivatives, I personally loved every addition they made to the Integrale for instance, but every cooking model that had the desperate facelift for sales treatment was at best a gilded lily, but more often a scatter gun approach of Richard Grant proportions.

The Fiat 127, Uno, Punto, Panda, Strada, 500, Alfa Spider, Alfa Sud and thats before you add in the ones they didn't get right first time, like the Lancia Y10, Dedra and Kappa were turds rolled in increasing cheap glitter.

Nobody did the facelift better than the Yanks, that is until the early 70's, when I really can't explain why they so unsuccessfully failed in coping with a raft of new legislation. We all remember the big bumpered Volvo's which were optically challenging, but Porsche made a styling virtue of those big bumpers.

Most US makers however just got the ugly sticks out and took car design down such a dark hole that its influence crept in everywhere especially in the brutalist taste free world of the latter half of the 20th Century where almost every fashion coming across the pond was awful, from shoulder pads to Shell suits, it was horrific.

Nowadays the styling of a car is almost the only thing that differentiates them, with so many shared platforms, engines popping up in the most unlikely of shared areas its now about the little things, the bells and the whistles.

Iam still victim of this. For many years I was an Audi stalwart, bludgeoned by the real world effectiveness of the Quattro system I would either have to spend more or drive slower, they had me.

In my youth, despite a love of music, I would often drive in relative silence, window open, redundant radio, the only sound was the pitiful roar of a 1.3 Kent engine with a Cosworth 4 branch and 28/36 carb.

But Audi gave me such things as a cassette player, headrests, switches that worked all the time and didn't snap off, later air con, climate control, electric windows, sat nav, MP3 players.

I had had some of these before, mainly on French or Italian rubbish, but the bells stopped tinkling and the whistles often lost their pea. But Insurance issues always kept me from what I wanted.

My Escort remained a 1.3 Pop Plus, even when it was a 1.6, then 2.0, then 2.1 and then back to a 1.7. No mention was ever made to the insurance company of the change in seats, harnesses, firewall, cage, arches, spotlights, suspension, turrets....non of it, simpler times.

But the vagaries of the insurance game lead me to the cheaper alternatives. Not for me a Golf Gti, nope I had a Jetta, then an Audi 80 Sport. Not for me the 205 Gti when the Visa Gti was so much cheaper and much much noisier. Citroen BX 16V, Maestro Efi, Renault 18 Turbos were much cheaper than the 5's Granada 2.3, Avenger 1500 Gls all paved their own ways to push me into the arms of Audi, solid, dependable, repairable. I was driving them when all the BMW drivers drove BMW's.

BMW I would never consider, I wasn't a proper enthusiast, no my shunning of rear wheel drive for all wheel drive sneered on by those who seemed to like wheelspinning away from every junction and roundabout during a typical English summer downpour.

Then came along dieselgate, Audi took my lovely A4 Quattro and destroyed it, they removed its economy, its power and reliability with the implementation of the modern facelift, the software upgrade. Then they lied and lied, and then called me a liar. And they are still doing it now.

25 years of brand loyalty gone, I sold it. I was lucky and I bought a BMW X5, I had little expectation of it, it was a steal, too good a deal to turn down. Yes it had some issues, but mainly it was too big a car, too expensive to run for how my lifestyle changed the week after buying it. So recently we sold that and then I found myself looking at the ex again, those interiors, that all wheel drive seducing me yet again. We met up a couple of times, they say you should never go back, it looked right, but it wasn't. So on the way home from seeing a bit of a four ringed nail we spied a littler non facelifted car that fitted what we wanted from our main car, it was pretty, of course it wasn't the base trim, its a BMW X3 M-Sport.....FFS!

Alan the fowl mouthed Fox



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Durham Auto Club

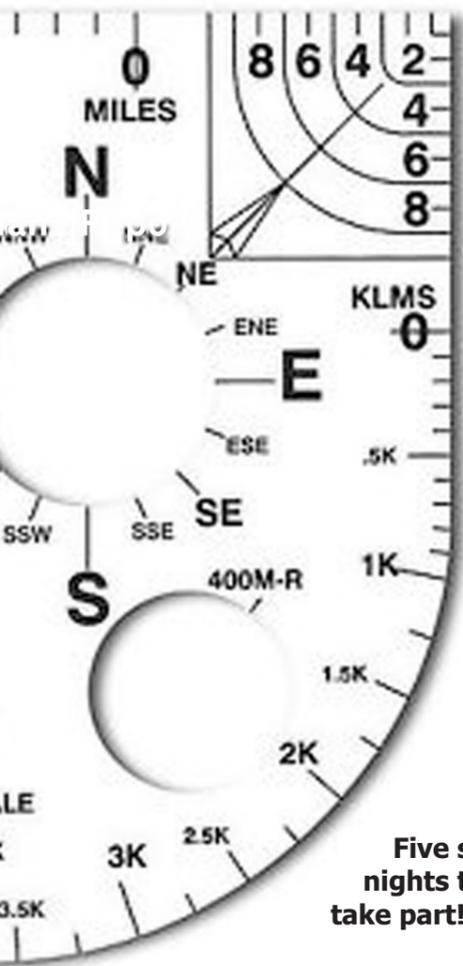
Back in the good
 Old days of road
 rallying and
 12 car rallying map
 reading was a real skill

It was only possible to win events if you knew
 your way around an Ordnance Survey map.

Well this year we plan to take you back to the
 grass roots of motor sport with our DAC Table Top
 Challenge!

You're not going to need the fastest car! (or any
 car for that matter)

You're not going to need a bulging wallet!



All that you're
 going to need is:

**A pencil (and
 sharpener)**

**A rubber (you
 will make
 mistakes)**

**Map 87
 (available for
 around £8.00)**

Enthusiasm!

**Five spare Wednesday
 nights to come along to
 take part!**

Some sort of illuminated magnifying device

THE 2019 DURHAM AUTO CLUB TABLE TOP CHALLENGE

So what's involved?

We've devised seven rounds of the DAC Table
 Top Challenge and it's been designed to walk you
 through the process of how to read and navigate
 your way around a map from the basics in round
 one to more advanced techniques in the later
 rounds.



If you're interested in taking part in a 12 car rally
 or road rally then this is the best way to learn the
 necessary skills.

The challenge is open to any Durham club
 member and you don't need any previous
 experience of map reading to take part. We're
 going to teach you the skills that you'll need along
 the way from basic map references through to
 herring bones and some other funky stuff that you
 may not have seen before!

The challenge is suitable for beginners and
 experts alike so don't be afraid to have a go!
 There will also be help and advice on the night to
 guide you along the way. It's a challenge so if you
 like puzzles and logic you're going to enjoy the
 events.

There will be seven rounds, between February and
 December on a Wednesday evening at the motor
 club venue. You'll have to complete five of the
 seven rounds to have a chance of becoming the
 2019 DAC Table Top Champion! (And there'll also
 be a Novice award too)

Well how your
 fortunes can
 change from one
 event to another.

Table top rallies (TTR) are
 a great way to hone your
 navigation skills so that you
 can amaze your driver with
 your ability to not get lost, on
 Navigation events.

It's just a shame that
 sometimes you don't practise
 what you preach. D'oh.....

Colin Fish, a Wickham member, has kindly
 agreed to run his TTR for us. It is great to see
 a good number of DAC competitors at each
 table top rally. Colin has a trick of adding
 his "dirty dogs" into his instructions which
 are there to trip up the experts and they are
 certainly doing that.

For the first section of TTR3 Colin gave us a
 string of numbers which appeared to work
 out as grid line references until you got 3/4s
 through the line of numbers.

Then it wouldn't work
 and I overheard many
 competitors saying its wrong
 and it wouldn't work. Simon
 Jennings had worn out his
 map by rubbing his attempts
 out. I also have to agree it
 took me some time to work
 this out. But I said "read the
 question carefully" to try to understand what
 Colin is asking you to do.

Oh how I wished I had listened to that
 when a few weeks later I sat alongside
 Roger Broom on Gordon Dundee's
 Scatter. In a small railway station car park in
 Wolsingham we signed on, plotted the map
 references and sped off into the sunset to
 look for clues.

For Scatters, Roger reads out the map
 references (giving away our tricks here) while
 I plot them.



Then I plot the route and off we go.

So we headed from Wolsingham to
 Tow Law, then south to Hamsterley,
 west to Eggleston, north to
 Frosterley, before heading back
 down south to Hamsterley village
 for the finish at the Cross keys. We
 had visited the maximum allowed 15
 locations in 100 of the 120 minutes
 allowed.

On the way back we passed a yellow
 MX5 with the bonnet up (later we
 found out this was Amy Brown).

Gordon and Janelle were already in the pub
 tucking into their evening meal.

When the results were read out we had got 17
 points but only achieved 3rd overall. Huh!!!!
 How is this possible? How did we get 17 points
 from 15 clues? What had we missed, as Amy
 and her navigator plus Gordon and Janelle
 both got 18 points and tied for 1st overall?

Then the penny dropped. Some of the clues
 were further away and the points were
 weighted.

Because we had gone for the maximum
 15 clues we had missed that some
 of the clues scored 3 points. D'oh. I
 hadn't noticed that some of the clues
 had higher points.

So we were beaten by Gordon and
 Janelle rushing to the pub for their tea
 and Amy and navigator who had cooked
 their engine, limped to the finish and later
 needed recovery to get them home.

Well done to Amy, her Navigator (sorry I don't
 know your name), Gordon and Janelle on
 reading the clue sheet correctly and beating
 those who didn't and decided to fly around
 the Weardale country side. Well-deserved
 win, although Amy didn't deserve the cooked
 engine.

Also big thank you to Peter for organising and
 running the Scatter.

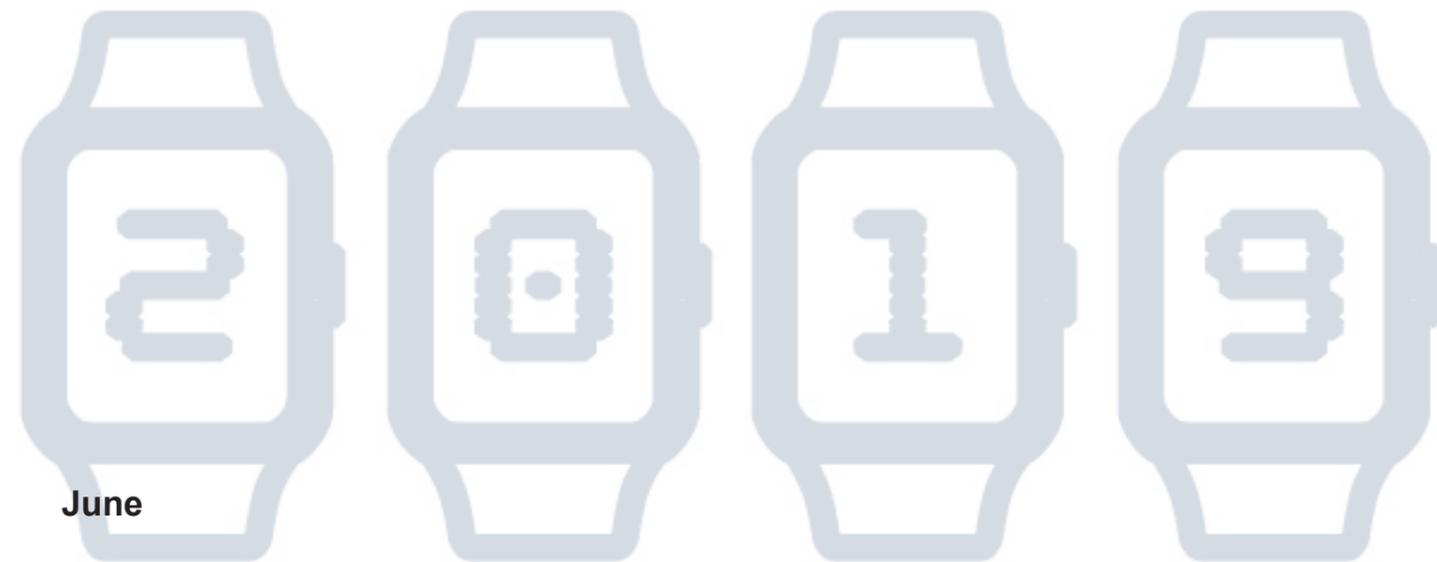
Andy Brown

THE 2019 DURHAM AUTO CLUB TABLE TOP CHALLENGE AFTER ROUND 4

Competitor	Class	TTR1	TTR2	TTR3	TTR4	Total
1st Andy Brown	Expert	20	14	20	20	74
2nd Michael Benn	Expert	16	20	16		52
3rd Gordon Dundee	Expert	14	12	12		38
4th Pam Frankland	Novice	4	8	8	16	36
5th Simon Jennings	Expert		10	14	1	25
6th Owen Frankland	Novice	8	4	1	6	19
7th Alan Hawdon	Novice	1	8		7	16
= Lynn Hawdon	Novice	1	8		7	16
9th Chris Thirling	Novice	6	3	5	1	15
= Stuart Anderson	Novice	6	3	5	1	15
= Steve Wilkinson	Expert		1	6	8	15
12th Paul Patterson	Novice	5	1		5	11
= Hannah Powell	Novice	5	1		5	11
= Pam Broom	Novice	1	1	2	7	11
= Roger Broom	Novice	1	1	2	7	11
16th Lindsay Burnip	Novice	6				6
17th Mick Stead	Novice		2	2		4
= Peter Master	Expert				4	4
19th Julia Little	Novice	1				1
= Chris Clement	Novice		1			1
= Ben Marsh	Novice	1				1

STOP PRESS

**ROUND 5
WEDNESDAY
19TH MAY**



June

15th Rally van Wervik NTRC
 15th Summer Stages ASP, STRC
 21 - 23rd Donegal Rally ITRC
 22nd Argyll Rally SRC, SGP
 23rd Lake District Classic NESCR0
 28 - 29th Ypres Rally BRC

July

7th Greystoke Stages SGP
 13th Nicky Grist Stages BTRDA
 13 - 14th Mach 1 Stages STRC
 14th Classics at the Castle
 14th Northern Dales Classic Trophy NESCR0
 20th Down Rally NTRC

- DAC - Durham Club event
- WRC - World Rally Championship
- BRC - British Rally Championship
- ITRC - Irish Tarmac Rally Championship
- BTRDA - BTRDA Rally Championship
- SRC - Scottish Rally Championship
- NTRC - National Tarmac Rally Championship
- ASP - AS Performance North of England Tarmac Rally Championship
- SGP - SGP ANECCC Stage Rally Championship
- STRC - Scottish Tarmac Rally Championship
- NESCR0 - NESCR0 Classic and Targa Rallies



Duration - From **1 st Jan 2019 to 31 st Dec 2019.**

Points will be published in the club magazine, if you have results that are missed please contact Gordon Dundee at gandjdundee@gmail.com

Stage Rally

Eligibility
Open to all paid up members of Durham Automobile Club Ltd, points will not be awarded retrospectively.

Scoring
Points are awarded for the driver or co-drivers position in class on any event they compete on: - 1 st in class = 10 pts, 2 nd in class = 9 pts, 3 rd in class = 8 pts, down to 1 point for 10 th , and all other finishers. Best 6 results to count.

Awards
Stage Rally – Driver.
Stage Rally – Co-Driver.

Clubman Rally

Eligibility
Open to all paid up members of Durham Automobile Club Ltd, who are members before 1 st August 2019, points will not be awarded retrospectively.

Scoring
Counting events are those listed in the NESCR0 calendar, and the points calculation is those used in the NESCR0 Challenge

Awards
Clubman Rally – Driver.
Clubman Rally – Navigator

Navigational Rally

Eligibility
Open to all paid up members of Durham Automobile Club Ltd, points will not be awarded retrospectively.

Scoring
Points will be awarded 1 st = 10 pts, 2 nd = 9 pts, 3 rd = 8 pts, down to 1 point for 10 th , and all other finishers, for all navigational events run on club nights, Treasure Hunts, Scatters and 12 Car Rallies etc.

If 5 or less rounds are run all rounds will count, if 6 or 7 rounds are run worst score will be dropped, if more than 7 rounds are run worst 2 rounds will be dropped.
10 points will be awarded for organizing or marshaling on one or more rounds (max of 10 points available for organizing/marshaling)

In the event of a tie the result of the first event both people competed in will decide the winner.

Awards
Navigational Rally – Driver.
Navigational Rally – Co-Driver

Autotest

Eligibility
Open to all paid up members of Durham Automobile Club Ltd, points will not be awarded retrospectively.

Classes are
A – Mini and Mini variants (Produced pre 2001) and Autotest Specials
B – Rear Wheel Drive Saloons and Sports Cars (MX5, Midgets etc.)
C – Front Wheel Drive

Scoring
Points are awarded for overall and class positions: - 1st = 10 pts, 2nd = 9 pts, 3rd = 8 pts, down to 1 point for 10th, and all other finishers

Events
Dates of counting rounds will be published in the club magazine, website and Facebook at least 4 weeks before the event. All rounds count in the final result

Awards
Overall Autotest.
Class Autotest.

Marshals Award

Eligibility
Open to all paid up members of Durham Automobile Club Ltd, points will not be awarded retrospectively.

Scoring
3 Points per day for signing on as an Official on any of the following events. Classic at the Castle, Wearside Classic/Targa rallies. Club Autotests, or any other weekend event organized by DAC

1 Points per day for signing on as an Official (or organize) in any of the following events. 12 Car Rally, Scatter, Treasure Hunt, Gymkhana, PCT. Quiz, Table Top Rally or any other club night event.

Awards
Marshals Award.

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

REGULATION CHANGES FOR CONSULTATION

Proposed Regulation

18.6.3. Brakes are free but must comply with Construction and Use Regulations. A hydraulic handbrake is permitted where a functioning mechanical system is also present. The hydraulic handbrake lever shall operate in an arc not exceeding 50 degrees from the horizontal.

This must incorporate the existing manufacturers handbrake lever, mounting position and pivot point. Implementation date: 1st January 2020

Reason: The current regulation was intended to stop the proliferation of vertical WRC style handbrake levers in Road Rally cars. Trying to operate two different handbrake systems from a single lever is not without difficulties. This proposal ensures the retention of an operable mechanical handbrake, thus retaining compliance with legal requirements and limiting the nature of the operating lever for the hydraulic handbrake to an arc similar to that of most OE mechanical handbrakes. Since existing systems will not be rendered ineligible early implementation is sought for 2020.

HOW AMATEUR MOTORSPORT WILL DIG IT'S OWN GRAVE by Maurici Revilla-Vazques

I don't normally write full letters in English as it is not my mother tongue and I find them really hard to write. I will make the effort that time, as I want this post to have as much distribution and shares as possible. Please, make yourself an effort too, to understand it.

This is going to be a pretty long read, so grab a beer and sit comfortably, you will need it.

As many of you may already know, 4 Westfields were excluded in a targeted action against this kind of cars by the Chief Scrutineer in Longton's April Anglesey sprint, celebrated as opening event of most of the sprint championships in the north including the British Sprint Championship, SD34, & ANWCC. Please, allow me to talk you a bit about it.

First of all, the facts, and the rule that was applied to exclude these competitors:

"J5.16.7. Exhaust catalytic converters must be fitted to all petrol engine production based saloon, touring and sports cars, including specialist production and kit cars, manufactured after 31/12/99. They may be specified for certain other formulae. Competitors are reminded of their obligation to maintain such equipment on a vehicle used on the high-way where government legislation requires it."

3 of the 4 Westfields were correctly excluded as they were manufactured post 2000 and they didn't have a catalytic converter. The 4th (myself) was excluded using the wrong technical grounds for it as it is a 1999 car. However it was registered and put on the road (as it was a roadgoing class car) in 2001, and this is the date the Chief Scrutineer used to exclude the car, which is wrong and the manufacturing date should have been applied.

I didn't appeal to the decision at the time moment for several reasons:

1st. I was terribly upset. The Chief Scrutineer treated us like shit during the whole weekend, and he refused to debate the rule with me 3 times, and he was extremely rude and unfriendly. It was more the behaviour of a sheriff in front of a group of thieves rather than a technical guy in charge of the safety compliance of the cars of an AMA-TEUR competition. He wanted us excluded, and appealing wasn't giving me the chance of competing the next day either, so... what was the point?

2nd. At that moment, I wasn't in the right state of mind to clearly think about what to do, I wasn't entirely sure about the rule itself to be able to make my case, and I didn't want to risk 260 quid with no warranty to have the times restored, 3rd and most important, after being treated like shit, the safest option for me was to leave the premises before engaging in a very nasty argument, and who knows if now we would be talking of how a competitor ended in court rather than ended excluded. So, I took the right decision on leaving.

More facts:

The catalytic converter rule, has been in the rule book for at least 7 years, and it's NEVER been enforced in an amateur level, this has been the first time since then that a sprinter or hillclimber has been excluded due to this rule.

In a short walk I took around the paddock on Sunday morning (it was a 2 day event), I could count AT LEAST 15 more cars post 1999 without catalytic converters, and none of them were excluded. Some of them were S2000, MX5's, Lotus, two modern compact rally cars, Audis... well the list was long. It is important to remember that this was a 100% amateur event. Normally characterised by people with very limited budgets, doing real finance engineering to be able to afford the competition, and that the catalytic converter rule, isn't actually safety critical. And at the end of the day, most of cars don't use them in the track anyway. In my case, it has meant a loss of OVER £2000 to prepare the car for a season that I won't do after all, and another £1000 of losses straight related to that weekend.

Now let's talk about the victims:

1st victim. The organising club itself. Only with me they have lost about £1000 on entry fees as I was doing most of my events organised by them for rest of the year. They have also lost a membership renewal and all the successive entries in the next years. Along with me, I can count at least other 6 or 7 drivers that won't be out with this club in the near future. Some of them fast and well known. If you add all of it, the club will be missing about £10k at the end of the present year; which is probably the cost of running few events. I may seem insignificant, but £10k in amateur

motorsport can made a huge difference at the end of the year accounts. Last year they struggled quite a lot to fill some of the events so surely this won't help. It is a real shame. Despite that I think they have managed the whole situation pretty poorly, a hit to grassroots motorsport is NEVER a good thing...

2nd victim. Amateur competitors and the sport itself. Because... as said before, nobody has a catalytic converter in a pre-2000 kit car, because you don't actually need it for an MOT for the road. So why you do for competing? Who knows, but nobody is going to throw a grand in the car only to be compliant with an stupid rule. (Cat, engine mapping, fabrication..).

Now that the facts are public domain, there is a lot of people scared in several disciplines and pulling entries. The fact that a car was wrongly excluded doesn't really helps to clarify and understand the actual situation of a rule that has never been enforced before.

Who wins?

Well, unless the (well-known trouble maker) Chief Scrutineer enjoys the fact of being under the spotlight of the social media, NOBODY wins.

MSUK loses

The club loses

The competitors lose

And the sport takes a hit.

Now, several enquiries are being done to the MSUK, to the organising club, and the intention is to try escalate the issue to the top of MSUK management... following last year's declaration of intentions of "apply rules sensibly in grassroots motorsport and only take

actions if safety critical". I'm really pessimistic about this as I don't really expect any positive outcome.

I won't name and shame the individuals names, nor directly point to anyone, but these facts are in the public domain, so you won't have too much trouble trying to find the information, just in case there is a particular team of "event organisers" you want to avoid until there is a clear direction of what is going on.

Maurici Revilla-Vazques

Thank you to the following contributors to this months Torque Talk

Andy Brown

Pam Broom

Paul Gilligan

Gordon Dundee

Colin Fish

Maurice Ellison

Maurici Revilla-Vazques

Next issue will be with you sometime in July, content dependant.