

# BRITISH MOTORSPORT



# MARSHALS CLUB

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SAFER MOTOR SPORT

MOTOR SPORTS ASSOCIATION RECOGNISED

FOUNDED 1957

Issue 4

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The ultimate SILVER ARROW 1936.

**NORTHERN IRELAND REGION MAGAZINE**

# Newsletter

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**With everything grinding to a halt and me and the wife isolated ( the wife was in early lockdown due to her diabetes ) the Mag will with Robert's help continue. The marshals like the rest of the population are not getting any younger , so please stay safe and hopefully we will resume our sport later in the year ! ROY.**

## **Cover Story.**

**By the early 1930's the British taxation classes for cars was seriously out of date. The Rolls Royce 20/25 was rated at 20 HP but in fact the Rolls engine was producing over 60 BHP. The average family car rated at 10HP was producing between 22 and 30 BHP and only Rolls , Invicta , Alvis and the like could boast 60+ BHP. The 4.5 litre Bentley and the Speed Six Bentley were capable of over 150 BHP to pull two tons of car along and cars like Bugatti and Alfa Romeo had over 100 BHP In much lighter cars.**

**In Germany a new industrial revolution was taking place with the 1930 Mercedes SSK , 7 litre supercharged engine and 200 BHP winning International races across the globe. ( See separate story on the Mercedes racing at the Ards T.T. race. ) With the full support of the German Government Auto Union started to build revolutionary racing cars with in 1934 320 BHP , 1935 370 BHP and in 1936 with a new 6 litre supercharged engine close to 500 BHP. ( Alfa Romeo had also built a Bimotore twin engined G.P. car in 1935 with 500 BHP but with Italian tyres only speed rated at 100KPH , 62 MPH , the car suffered massive wheel spin and shredded tyres within a few miles.)**

**Nothing could compete with the rear engine Auto Union B and C type but German Engineer Rudolf Uhlenhaut working with Mercedes had been so disappointed with the poor showing of Mercedes racing cars in 1935 and with their withdrawn from racing early in 1936 that he started in August 1936 in strict secrecy to design and then build a large but lightweight car with all independent suspension , a rigid chassis with engine and gearbox mounts acting as stressed members ( like Lotus 30 years later ) and a 5.6 litre 8 cylinder supercharged engine producing 646 BHP. This took the W125 Mercedes to a new level with the car taking the top 3 places at almost every 1937 International races. The W125 , the ultimate Silver Arrow. ( it would take another 48 years for a Grand Prix car to produce more than 600 BHP !**

## **New Car News.**

**All quiet on the car front except for Tesla scoring the ultimate PR scoop. In both the U.S. and Australia Tesla has challenged several supercars to run against its top of the range Model S 100D saloon car. McLaren MP4-12C stepped up to the mark but the Tesla was quicker both in a 0 to 60 and 0 to 100 drag race and was also just quicker over both a quarter mile and a half mile sprint. The McLaren 720S also had a run but the Tesla was quicker right up to the half mile mark where the superior top speed of the McLaren won out. The Tesla consistently ran 0 to 60 in only 2.5 seconds which neither supercar could match !**



**The Tesla S 100D A new type of electric supercar even if it looks like a Vauxhall !**

**Nice to note that not all car makers are obsessed with electrification.. The all new Genesis G80 not available here until 2021 is a large Mercedes E.Class size saloon. Substantially lighter than the current model clever design has resulted in both a lower centre of gravity and an almost perfect 50:50 weight distribution for enhanced handling. Adaptive dampers and running on 20 inch lightweight alloy wheels the car will come with either a 2.5 litre 4 with 300 BHP or a new twin turbo 3.5 litre V6 with 375 BHP.**





**Even more extreme Alfa Romeo celebrating 110 years of car making this year have taken their 503 BHP super saloon replaced body panels with lightened alloy / composite materials , boosted the engine to 533 BHP and rebadged it as a GTA. As if this is not enough a GTA-am version is on the way , even lighter , racing seats and harness and an alloy roll cage in place of the back seats !**



**Classic Car News.**

**Can't use the car , can't even get it M.O.T.ed . Hope things improve by mid summer.**

**Starting to wonder if an early sign of Covid 19 , not yet recognised , is people rushing to blow money on cars which only a year ago would not merit a second glance. While the trade continues to look for , and sell at a profit one owner , low mileage cars with history the auction houses were in February shifting stock at prices above top estimate. Last month I noted that the last run of Saab cars models 9.3 and 9.5 2012 / 2013 were becoming collectable. This was very much a niche market which would not have any effect on older Saab models , but in spite of this Baron's put up for sale a `1992 Saab 900 convertible , 107,000 miles , autobox , worth maybe £5,000 last year , it sold for £10,120. Worse is another Audi Quattro 10valve , 90,000 miles on the clock selling for £32,000 why ? In contrast an Aston Martin DB5 with a mere 5 miles on the clock following a long and very expensive total restoration sold for £706,000 , well below estimate , and a car that in 2018 would have topped the million mark. Other cars showing decent increases in value over 2019 prices are Ford Cortina 1600E up over 30% from early 2019 Morris Minor Travellers and early MM Minors both up over 10%.**

**With several companies intending to run on line only auctions over the coming months it will be interesting to see results.**

## **ARDS T.T. remembered.**

**My father , working as a mechanic in Porter and Sons M.G. Dealers in what is now Oxford Street ( in 1929 it was called Sand Quay ) was one of many thousands who travelled by bus to Dundonald to watch the T.T. races. The 1929 race is according to the history books one of the greatest road races ever held in spite of heavy rain showers during the race which caused a number of incidents.**

**The entry in 1929 was very much an international affair with the U.K's top drivers Earl Howe , Tim Birkin , Goldie Gardiner , Sammy Davis , George Eyston and Brian Lewis faced professional drivers from Italy , Germany , America and Russian born Boris Ivonskey. The race started in sunshine with drivers racing across the road to undo their hoods and race away . First away was Rose-Richards in the Lagonda followed closely by Jack Bezzant in the works Aston Martin. Rose-Richards braked early for Quarry Corner and swept around Bezzant totally misjudged the corner and went straight on losing over 10 minutes getting the car off the bank. At the end of the first lap Kitson was leading on the road with German ace Carraciola second but due to the system of handicapping the little supercharged Austin's of Archie Frazer Nash and George Caldicutt were well ahead of the field. Kaye Don the 1928 winner had a engine blow up after a piston failed and had a walk back up Bradshaw's Brae to the pits.**

**At this stage Carraciola was 48<sup>th</sup>. Italian ace Campari 14<sup>th</sup>. And the rain started. Kitson staying close to Carraciola skidded off the road as did several other drivers. Major Hayes had a scary moment in his supercharged Bentley when on the fastest part of Bradshaw's Brae the front wheel broke away. At the end of five hours , and in spite of the rain Campari was leading and Carraciola was up to 4<sup>th</sup>.**

**Frank Clark in the Italian O.M. car crashed heavily at Ballystockert and a breakdown crew were sent to recover the car. R W G Grindley in the works Triumph came across the scene and unable to stop crashed into the scene killing Clark and local man John Kelly one of the breakdown crew. It was the first fatal crash in the Ards T.T.**

**With only 2 laps to go Carraciola passed Campari's Alfa Romeo to win the race Campari second and the tiny Austin of Archie Frazer Nash a fine third. Of the 67 starters only 22 cars managed to finish the race.**

**Today a six and a half hour race mostly in heavy rain would be unthinkable and in the days when only a few people owned a car the fact that over 400,000 yes , 400,000 people attended the 1929 race shows its importance in the history of the sport.**

# Robert's RallyBuzz

## Total Lockdown

All stage and targa rallies in the UK and Ireland have either been postponed or cancelled for the foreseeable future. Whether this means for the next few months or the rest of the year no one can tell. The WRC is also on hold as are all other major motorsport events world wide, all because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Here in Northern Ireland, the Circuit of Ireland Rally due to run at Easter (10/11 April) has been postponed as have the next two scheduled rounds of the NI Rally Championship. The Maiden City Stages which was planned for Saturday 25th April and The Tour of the Sperrins (6th June) have both been called off.

As it stands at the moment, all Motorsport UK permits are suspended until 30th June 2020 and Motorsport Ireland has a ban on all their events until 1st June 2020. These dates may of course be extended. In addition to this, forests in Northern Ireland will not be available for any motorsport events until at least 1st September 2020.

The last stage rally to be held in Northern Ireland was the Ballynahinch and District Motor Club's Bishopscourt Stages on Saturday 7th March. Derek McGarrity in a Fiesta WRC was the victor as he led the McGrady Insurance sponsored second round of the NI Championship from start to finish. This was McGarrity's umpteenth win on the event. Second was Derek McGeehan's Mini WRC with Kieron Graf-fin third in a Fiesta R5. Well done to our marshals who covered timing and other duties on what was a very cold but dry day. There were 64 starters and 53 finishers.

Derek McGarrity leads the Championship on 57 points with McGeehan second on 56. Emma McKinstry who was fifth at Bishopscourt in her Fiesta R5 is joint third on 50 points with Jason Mitchell. Who knows when or indeed IF the 2020 Northern Ireland Rally Championship will resume. Watch this space!

## Looking Back

Marshalling memories

### 40 Years Ago.....1980

I cannot believe that it has been 40 years this month since I first officiated on the Circuit of Ireland Rally. We were on the stop line of Stage One in Belfast's Ormeau Park. Then we would spectate on some of the other stages before marshalling at the final parc ferme at the Europa Hotel in Belfast.

Jimmy McRae in his Vauxhall Chevette HSR won the event from Ari Vatanen's Ford Escort Mk.2. The battle between these two drivers was intense. Both drove flat out and had huge incidents with Vatanen's roll on the last leg finally deciding the outcome in McRae's favour. The Chevette and Escort arrived at the finish battered and bruised. Munsterman Ger Buckley was a distant third in his Escort after all the other leading competitors had dropped out.

There were no less than 139 competitors on the 1980 entry list and a total of 56 special stages which were all used just once. The Circuit was a round of the European Rally Championship, the Sedan Products Open Championship and the Irish Tarmac Championship.

The rally started and finished in Belfast running for five days from Good Friday 4th until Tuesday 8th April. There was an overnight halt in Belfast on Friday and then two nights in Killarney before the home run to a Belfast City Hall finish at 10am on the Tuesday.

Russell Brooks started at number one in a Sunbeam, Jimmy was 2, Billy Coleman's Escort at 3, Stig Blomqvist in his Saab 99 was 4, Vatanen started fifth and Timo Salonen's Fiat 131 sixth followed by Henri Toivonen in his Talbot Sunbeam. Malcolm Wilson's Escort was number 8 and Roger Clark completed the top 9 in his Triumph TR7.

The 1980 Circuit of Ireland was sponsored by the Gallaher brand, Benson and Hedges. There was a huge row when Vatanen's Escort appeared covered in rival tobacco company Rothmans livery. This would be the last time Gallaher would sponsor the Circuit after 16 years involvement. Two years later Rothmans began a successful six-year association with the UAC event. I have been lucky enough and privileged to have worked as an official on ALL editions of the Circuit of Ireland or Easter Stages since that classic event in 1980!

### 30 Years Ago.....1990

The NI section of the BMRMC celebrated their tenth birthday in the Wellington Park Hotel in Belfast. Among the principal guests were National Chairman John Felix, ANICC President Ronnie Trouton and Ian Lynas, motorsport journalist. There were 70 guests and hosting the proceedings was NI Chairman, Colin Rossborough. Many former and founder members were present as well as new recruits including Patrick Cavan and Philip Bryans. We had 50 members on our books in 1990.

### 20 Years Ago.....2000

Comber driver Robin Phillips won the one day "Circuit 2000 Easter Stages Rally" in his Toyota Celica. He had a titanic battle with Castlederg's James Gillen who was in a Ford Escort Cosworth. At one point Gillen led by 3 seconds but Phillips fought back and finished 5 seconds in front. Kieran Shaw was third in his Escort.

The rally started and finished in Bangor Co.Down. There was no full Circuit of Ireland that year due to a clash of dates with the Rally of the Lakes In Killarney (Easter was late). Phillips now had a clear lead in the Northern Ireland Rally Championship as closest rival Denis Biggerstaff did not score any points. The Metro 6R4 driver went off on the short stage one in Castle Park and then lost 15 minutes on SS2.

I was Chief Timekeeper on this nine-stage event and had around 12-14 club members helping me on the closed-road rally. The Easter Stages was round 3 of the 2000 NI Championship. The organising UAC held a great post event dance in Bangor that evening.

### 10 Years Ago.....2010

Derek McGarrity won the McGrady Insurance Bishops court Stages, round 2 of the Hankook NI Rally Championship. The Glengormley man was driving an ex. Eamonn Boland Subaru Impreza S12B/C WRC. This was McGarrity's seventh victory on the airfield type event since it started back in 1993. Six of us covered the timing on all six stages on a cold but dry March day. There were 94 starters and 75 finishers. George Robinson was second and Stuart Biggerstaff third after a great battle. Both were in Subaru Impreza's.

McGarrity and the Subaru WRC were back in winning form a month later. He won the Circuit of Ireland Rally for the fourth time. The Easter classic was now a two-day event, sponsored by UTV Drive and

based in Dundalk. Starting on Saturday 3rd April we had just 41 cars in the main International event and a further 42 National competitors. Alastair Fisher was one of the stars of the rally, leading the main event after day one in his Group N production Mitsubishi and eventually finishing third. Lisburn's John Waring won the National Rally in his Mk.2 Escort, round 3 of the NI Championship.

As Chief Timekeeper, once again, I had 50 people manning all the various time controls on the 17 stage event. A huge percentage of the timekeepers were BMMC/BRMC club members.

Gordon Noble was Clerk of the Course and Bobby Willis, Event Director. The 2010 Circuit was billed as a Supporter Event of the Intercontinental Rally Challenge. Willis's ambition was to bring a round of the IRC here in the near future.

## Stay Safe!

Despite no current action to report from the NI rally stages, RallyBuzz will try to entertain you each month during the current coronavirus crisis.

JUST REMEMBER:

Stay At Home

Keep Your Distance

Stay Safe

WE WILL BEAT THIS!

The nightmare WILL END eventually; but only if EVERYONE is sensible and obeys the rules!

Robert Coursey, April 2020



**Found this on a German website. Opel Kadett GTE running a 5 litre V8 engine with 560 BHP. Running well in European Hillclimb Championships.**



## **CRAP CORNER.**



### **COVID 19 will not stop quare stretch in the evenings vows Johnson.**

**Prime Minister Boris Johnson has stepped in to reassure the nation that the annual quare stretch in the evenings will go ahead , regardless of the corona virus outbreak.**

**There had been growing concerns in scientific circles that the quare stretch may be delayed by the strict government lockdown . “ We had been worried that this important phenomenon may in some strange way be put back, perhaps by weeks” says the U.K.s top scientist Professor Brian Cocks. “We’ve seen the football season suspended and the Olympics prosponed , so everything’s on the table. Who’s to say Donald Trump wouldn’t try to persuade the World Health Organisation to transfer the entire quare stretch to the U.S. for example.”**

**However the Prime Minister made it clear that resources were being allocated to what he described as “an important and meteorological event , particularly among the culchie tribes west of the Bann.”**

**“I can assure you that all the top people are on the job” he told the Ulster Fry “ As we speak a team of experts is slowly elongating the evenings at a special facility in Hertfordshire, gradually adding the vital minutes needed to build up a full quare stretch.”**

**As a result of this intervention , the annual quare stretch in the evenings will go ahead and will be officially unveiled by German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier in a field outside Pomeroy on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup>. March.**

**No one else will be allowed to attend.**