

# The BRITISH MOTORSPORT MARSHALS CLUB



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MOTOR SPORTS ASSOCIATION RECOGNISED

FOUNDED 1957

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**NORTHERN IRELAND REGION MAGAZINE**

# Newsletter

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## Cover Story.

John Fitzpatrick's Porsche, one of the most famous 956 race cars built by Porsche is currently up for sale.



The car led the 1984 LeMans race for many hours before losing a lot of time with a misfire. On Sunday they fought back finishing in third place. A 1985 and 1986 the car finished the race in fourth place. The car won the 1985 Norisring race finished second at both the Nurburgring 1000K and Mosport 1000K with third place in both the 1985 and 1986 Nurburgring Superprix events. In 2001 the car was restored and new owner Martyn Konig raced it in the Historic Sportscar championship. Between 2002 and 2004 the car scored 14 class wins and 4 outright wins. Restored again in 2018/2019 the car is currently for sale. No price but likely to be in the millions given that a Porsche 904 GTS in original condition sold in the U.S. for £2 million.



F1 News.

2 big stories . It appears Vettel has done an Alonso ( threw his toys out of the pram) by walking away from Ferrari although he says it is not about money but with no hint about his future plans. Carlos Sainz has signed for Ferrari and Daniel Ricciardo will join Lando Norris at McLaren. Other news about McLaren is the decision to sell off their collection of Formula 1 cars as part of a bid to raise something like £175,000,000.

Secondly Silverstone wants to run one or possibly two G.P. races mid year with or without spectators but social distancing is easy for the drivers , how often do we see cars close together these days , but for marshals and other staff the situation is much more difficult. Time will tell.

Other Motorsport News. Sorry Nothing !

To keep boredom at bay I have been working on some old models , mainly wooden ship models but also played about with this old Revival kit. Not perfect but still nice to have.



Booked the Vincent in for M.O.T. a while ago with a June date but have heard nothing since ? Am I supposed to get an exemption certificate or something ?

Sons Of Ulster John Watson Eddie Irvine.

Two very different people but from humble backgrounds both became popular and successful professional Formula 1 drivers with both starting their careers at the Kirkistown track. John started in 1964 with a well modified Frogeye Sprite and Eddie in 1983 running a Crossle 32F and a Crossle 50F. John would soon move to a Chevron 2 litre and a Crossle 9S and would go on to win several Formula Libre races , including Phoenix Park while Eddie was quick enough to impress the local Mondiale team who as a result of him beating the works Mondiale at Mondello Park offered him a 1984 car.

John Watson after several years success at home and abroad started racing in the European Formula2 Championship in 1969 with the Surtees Chevron and after a number of top 6 finishes got his chance in 1972 to race at Brands Hatch in the F1 Hexagon March Cosworth .

This lead in 1973 to entries in the British grand Prix Brabham BT37 and the U.S. Grand Prix in a works Brabham BT42. For 1974 Hexagon supplied a Brabham BT42 in which John had a 6<sup>th</sup>. Monaco , a 4<sup>th</sup>. Austria and a 5<sup>th</sup>. U.S. Grand Prix considered something special for such a small team.

In contrast 1975 was a disaster neither the works Surtees nor later in the year the works Lotus ever getting close to the front of the field. 1976 was a gamble , John signing for the new American Penske team , successful in the U.S. but almost unknown in Europe.

John did them proud taking 3<sup>rd</sup>. In France and the British G.P. before winning in Austria and 6<sup>th</sup>. In the U.S. Grand Prix. Brabham signed him for 1976 for the new Brabham Alfa F1 car but although he did finish in the top six several times the car was not a front runner.

In 1978 he became a contender with 7 finishes in the top 6 including a couple of 2<sup>nd</sup>. Places scoring 25 points. 3 years at McLaren followed with no wins but several top three places until in 1983 he set an unique record , In the U.S. Grand Prix West , Long Beach , he started 22<sup>nd</sup>. on a circuit judged difficult to pass but passed everyone to win the race finishing several seconds ahead of ream mate Prost.

In spite of this McLaren let him go and John moved to World Sports Cars racing for Porsche , Jaguar and Toyota before in 1987 winning three races for Jaguar and finishing 2<sup>nd</sup>. in the Championship and then deciding to retire.

He has since travelled the world as a commentator working for ESPN , Eurosport and Sky Sport and Sky F1 as well as official commentator for the Britplan GT series.

Eddie Irvine was a top runner in Formula Ford for 3 years winning the 1987 RAC Formula Ford and 1987 Esso F.F. Championship as well as the Formula Ford Festival in a works Van Dieman.

This was enough for Eddie to get a Formula 3 drive with Dick Bennett's Racing. 1988 resulted in no wins but 6 second places and on his first visit to Macau pole position , winning the first race and fastest lap of the weekend.

An offer from the Pacific team for the European F3000 championship followed and in 1989 Eddie had a difficult year finishing 9<sup>th</sup>. In the Championship. 1990 proved better driving for Eddie Jordan with 3<sup>rd</sup>. In the Championship , a win in Germany and a couple of 2<sup>nd</sup>. places.

In 1991 Eddie moved To Japan , a move which was to shape his future career. The Japanese Formula 3000 Championship was not only one of the biggest in the world but the top drivers were earning the same sort of money as several lower ranked Grand Prix drivers. Eddie fitted in well scoring several wins and in 1993 finishing 2<sup>nd</sup>. in the Championship as well as a Formula 1 debut for Jordan.

Signed by Jordan for 1994 he had a hard couple of seasons scoring only 6 points in 94 and 10 points in 95. Still his pace was enough to interest Ferrari who in a surprise move signed Eddie as Schumacher's team mate for the 1996 season.

The year started well with 3<sup>rd</sup>. Australia 5<sup>th</sup>. Argentina and 4<sup>th</sup>. Imola but poor reliability for both cars saw him end the season with 11 points. 1997 was an improvement with a second in Argentina third in San Marino , Monaco , France and Japan ending the year with 24 points.

1998 saw another improvement a fourth in Australia , second in France , Italy and Japan and a run of 6 third places earned him 47 points and restored his confidence. 1989 was almost Irvine's year with a win at the Australian G.P. second in Monaco and at the British G.P. followed by wins in Austria , Germany and Malaysia. 74 points meant he was only beaten by Mika Hakkenin who won the Championship with 76 points. Eddie knows that San Marino when the car stopped when he was running clear in third may have cost him the Championship.

2000 saw him join the new Jaguar team for three seasons but the car in spite of his best efforts was never a front runner and during 2002 he decided to retire. Since then he has built up his property portfolio in many parts of the world and is today a multi millionaire. A complex character but a true case of local boy did good.!

Classic Car News.

It would appear that lockdown has had a strange effect on the market. On Line auctions continue and people stuck at home seem determined to spend money with surprising results. CCA in March sold a 1967 VW split windscreen Type2 van for £42 ,000 way over estimate followed by Bonhams selling a 1974 BMW 3.0CSI for £46,000 and a 1971 Trident Clipper £32,200. Even more surprising was H & H offering a 89,000 mile 1982 Ford Fiesta XR2 nicely restored and selling it for over £18,500. This is a 40% increase in value from pre lockdown.

Other surprises are demand for the few MG Metro Turbo's still on the road double the value from this time last year and Citroen DS 21/ 23 saloons currently selling for over £30,000 as are MGB GT V8's. Strange times ? Anybody want to buy a nice Vincent only 30,000 miles for £20,000 ono ? Contact ROY.



The strange story of two Rover Cars.

Rover , the most British of British motor manufacturers had from the 1930's a very well defined customer base , Bank Managers , Solicitors , Senior Doctors and minor members of the Royal Family were all repeat Rover customers. Even in 1940's /1950's austerity Britain Rover continued to prosper selling large , comfortable cars to the middle class market.

So it was more shock than surprise when in 1950 Rover unveiled its Jet car. Based on a Rover 80 chassis this rear engine rear wheel drive gas turbine car went on show in England and then at the New York Motor Show. Dismissed by many as a gimmick the car in 1952 set a world record for a turbine car running at 152.69 miles per hour in Belgium.



The 1950 car at Silverstone.



The 1952 car now registered JET 1

Gimmick or not the car won an Engineering award and enhanced Rover's reputation as a company which could produce quality motor cars.

The second car is even more strange , ex Rover engineer Peter Wilks and designer Spen King ( both nephews of Rover boss Maurice Wilks ) left Rover in 1950 and set up the Marauder Car Company in 1951 designing and building a luxury sports car. The car was never officially approved by the Rover board but when it went on show at the end of 1951 it became known as the "Rover Marauder". Based on the new Rover 75 chassis and powered by the 6 cylinder 2.2 Rover engine 15 were built the final 2 fitted with the 2.4 litre Rover 100 engine tuned to give 100 BHP. The car ran foul of Governments new Luxury car Tax rules and production ended in 1953. Ian Glass owner of one of the two 100 engined cars was a great supporter of the Retro and competed throughout the 1990's. He liked a pint and we had many nights together in Killarney , Kenmare , Waterford and Galway !

P.S. There were obviously no hard feeling as both Wilks and King were re employed by Rover soon after !



Press photo of the first Marauder 1951.



Ian on the Retro Circuit of Ireland 1993.

NASCAR.

For those with access to Fox or other U.S. TV channels NASCAR racing resumed last Sunday at Darlington raceway. Parts of the race can be found online at the NASCAR web site.

Not my scene but better than nothing !

Several states have cancelled the lockdown in spite of a rising death toll , I just wonder what history will make of Trump's handling of the whole thing ? ( see crap corner !)

# Robert's RallyBuzz

## No Rallying Until Next Year

It would seem that there will be no more stage rallies in Northern Ireland until 2021. All major 2020 championships in the island of Ireland have now been cancelled. These include the Irish Tarmac Rally Championship, the Triton Showers Irish National Rally Championship and the Valvoline Irish Forest Rally Championship.

The remaining rounds of McGrady Insurance Motorsport UK Northern Ireland Rally Championship have been canned. It remains unclear whether current points leader Derek McGarrity can be called 2020 NI Champion. Just two of the planned five rounds were able to go ahead.

Latest events to be called off here in Northern Ireland include the popular single venue Loughgall Country Park Rally due on 4th July and the Today's Ulster Rally which was due in August. Also cancelled are both the Lakeland Stages and the Bushwacker Rally which should have taken place in September, they were due to be part of the new McGrady Insurance NI Gravel Rally Challenge.

Although the governing body (MUK) have issued guidelines as to how rallying could return after lockdown restrictions have been eased, these would appear to be totally unworkable. For example co-drivers would not be permitted (unless they live in the same household as the driver) and service parks would have to comply with social distancing rules. In this situation only driver-only Rally Time Trials would work.

Internationally, the World Rally Championship MAY resume with Rally Finland on 6th August. Wales Rally GB organisers are still planning for their event, the penultimate round of the WRC, to go ahead in late October. This would of course depend on the coronavirus situation in the country at that time. It has also been stated by clerk of the course Iain Campbell that Rally GB couldn't take place without paying spectators. Ticket sales generate more than half a million pounds of the rally's income, money that is not available from other sources. By the way, there appears to be a very slight chance that WRC Rally Northern Ireland may still be able to go ahead as early as next year, but I wouldn't depend on it!

Talking of next year, here's some exclusive news.....Both the Circuit of Ireland at Easter and the Ulster Rally in August are set to be included In the 2021 Northern Ireland Rally Championship. According to a draft calendar (yet to be confirmed) there will be seven all tarmac rounds, three single venue rallies and four closed-road events. Sounds very exciting. Hopefully an extended championship should attract decent entry lists and give us all something to look forward to.

## Looking Back

### Donegal: A Rally of Triumphs and Tragedies

This month should have seen some of us BRMC members officiating on one of my favourite events, the Donegal International Rally. Held in mid June, the weather is usually kind and the craic in the host town of Letterkenny always mighty. An estimated 70,000 spectators were in attendance last year. The cancellation of this year's rally due to the continuing effects of the coronavirus pandemic means a huge loss in revenue to the whole county of Donegal and particularly to the town of Letterkenny itself.



Last year the rally (not for the first time) ended in tragic circumstances on the final day with the death of three-time winner Manus Kelly as a result of an accident on the Fanad Head stage. The 2020 Jule Donegal International Rally should have given the organising Donegal Motor Club a chance to regroup and to add a new and positive chapter to the 50-year history of the most popular rally in Ireland. Now all the club can do is to look forward and plan for a return to their classic stages in June 2021.

### 35 Years Ago.....1985

This was my first year timekeeping in Donegal. Partnered with my neighbour and former club member Neil Boulton, we covered the start of four special stages. I was the first person to start a MG Metro 6R4 in an International Rally! Tony Pond debuted the brand new works Computervision sponsored blue and white beast on the Donegal Rally 1985. The supercar (which I thought at that time was exceptionally wide) was fastest on the first six stages, and one minute ahead of everyone, before the engine blew! The Metro later ran as a course car with 007 on the doors. Of course the local wags and wise guys then referred to the "main man" as Tony BOND!

The rally was won by Billy Coleman in the Rothmans Porsche 911 after a titanic battle with Austin McHale's black Shell Oils Opel Manta 400. Coleman led after day one, but lost a huge amount of time to McHale on day two only to claw back to 37 seconds behind going into the final day. Then by the start of the penultimate stage the gap was down to just 8 seconds. Billy blitzed the short stage to take victory by ONE second.... the final stage was cancelled because too many spectators had jammed the roads!

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

This was the year of the battle of the amazing BMW M3's in Donegal. Austin McHale in the black Xtravision car won the rally by 9 seconds from Bertie Fisher's white Tough Mac example. Vincent Bonner led after day two in his Opel Manta 400 but dropped to eighth on the final day with mechanical problems. Then Fisher edged in front, but he ultimately lost the rally win after picking up a ten second penalty for an "off-schedule" tyre change. Had the penalty been quashed, Bertie would have won by ONE second. James Cullen was third in a Ford Sierra Cosworth. Andrew Nesbitt made his Donegal debut in Manta 400 and impressed many on his way to seventh place.

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

Andrew Nesbitt in his Subaru Impreza S7 WRC was fastest on all 22 stages of the Donegal Rally, a record that still stands today. I was only able to help on the Saturday stages that year. The weather on Fanad Head was fine with great views of Lough Swilly to be had. Four of us were timing the finish of this classic test. We had a trouble free day apart from some competitors who had bother getting stopped for their times. James Cullen was a distant second, 3 minutes down to the flying Nesbitt.

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

We all know Motorsport can be dangerous and accidents do happen. The Donegal Rally takes the safety of officials, competitors and spectators very seriously indeed. Despite this the rally has had its share of tragic circumstances over the years, including of course 2019. In 2002 we had the sad loss of two young marshals, then in 2008 a spectator died. In both incidents the unfortunate victims were struck by competing cars.

In 2010 a young co-driver, Thomas Maguire from Longcross in Co.Meath, was fatally injured when the Citroen C2R2 Max he was sharing with driver Shane Buckley, left the road on a fast section on the fa-

mous Knockalla stage and plunged over a cliff. Shane was badly hurt but survived. The accident happened on day two and the final Sunday section was cancelled as a result.

We had been covering the finish time controls of Malin Head on Friday, John and Anna Hughes were with Victor and myself. A total of 144 competitors passed through our finish the first time and then 133 on run two with no incidents to report. A street stage in Bunrana which attracted a crowd of 10,000 spectators followed the second Malin test.

On Saturday morning we were on the end of Fanad Head for the two runs of this popular stage. Craig Breen had a massive sixth gear accident on the first run in his Fiesta S2000, but he and his co-driver were uninjured. They had been in second place after the Friday tests. By the end of the second Fanad stage we had 121 cars left as the crews then headed to the faithful Knockalla test. We headed back to Rally HQ where news of the tragic accident began to filter through around 5pm that evening.

Around 1,500 competitors, officials (including ourselves) and fans attended a hastily arranged memorial service in rally HQ, the Mount Errigal Hotel, Letterkenny on the Sunday morning for the late Thomas Maguire. Damien Crawford, Chairman of Donegal MC, addressed the large crowd and spoke of a close-knit rallying community who competed together, played together and mourned together. Shane Buckley's immediate family attended as everyone prayed for his speedy recovery.

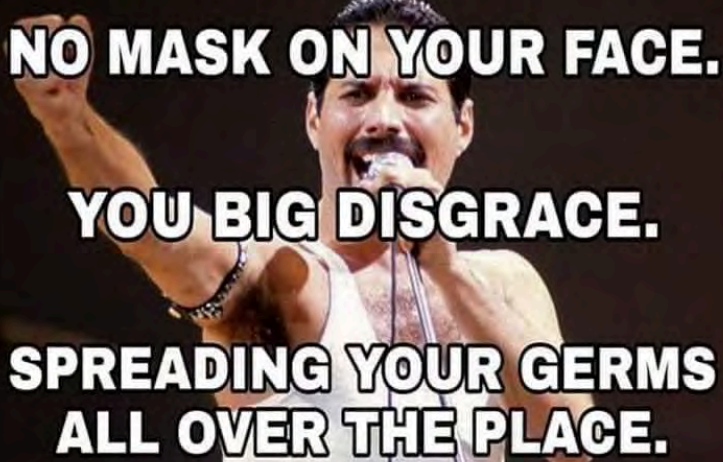
Gareth MacHale and Brian Murphy led the rally from start to finish in their Ford Focus WRC, the same car Gareth drove to victory in 2009. Tim McNulty and Paul Kiely were a distant second in a Subaru S12B while Daragh O'Riordan was third in his S11 example, with co-driver Tony McDaid emulating his dad Robert who had finished third last year with Sean Devine. David Bogie beat all the quick Escort Mk.2 drivers to win the National Rally in his fantastic MG Metro 6R4.



Tony Pond Metro 6R4 in action.

CRAP CORNER.

ONE SMALL STEP FOR MAN. ONE GIANT STEP FOR MANKIND. 😊



Tweedledum and Tweedledee meet for Talks in Wonderland.



Hold...hold...hold , wait till you see the whites of their caravans.

Fake News.

Following the Government's instruction to Stay Alert West Midlands police arrested a 68 year old Dudley man caught yawning in public.

Gardai in Dublin have started a city wide search for a missing 9 year old girl. It is believed she used Olay face cream which is guaranteed to make you look 10 years younger.

The World Health Organisation have advised Americans to wear protective face masks at home at all times. Nothing to do with the virus , it's to stop them overeating.

Latest Government news says that loss of all taste is a sign of Covid 19. " I think back to my ex wife's cooking , I must have been infected in the 1980's." Anon.

My old but nice pair of matching suitcases have found out we will not be going on holiday this year. Not only am I in lockdown I have to deal now with emotional baggage as well.

Durham Policeman " Have you been drinking Sir ?

Motorist " Yes constable , but I am only driving to check if I am too pissed to drive".

Policeman " O.K. On you go , stay safe."

Closest Formula 1 season in history , all 20 drivers on the same number of points !

