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WELCOLME BACK B.T.C.C. !

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Newsletter

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Cover Story.



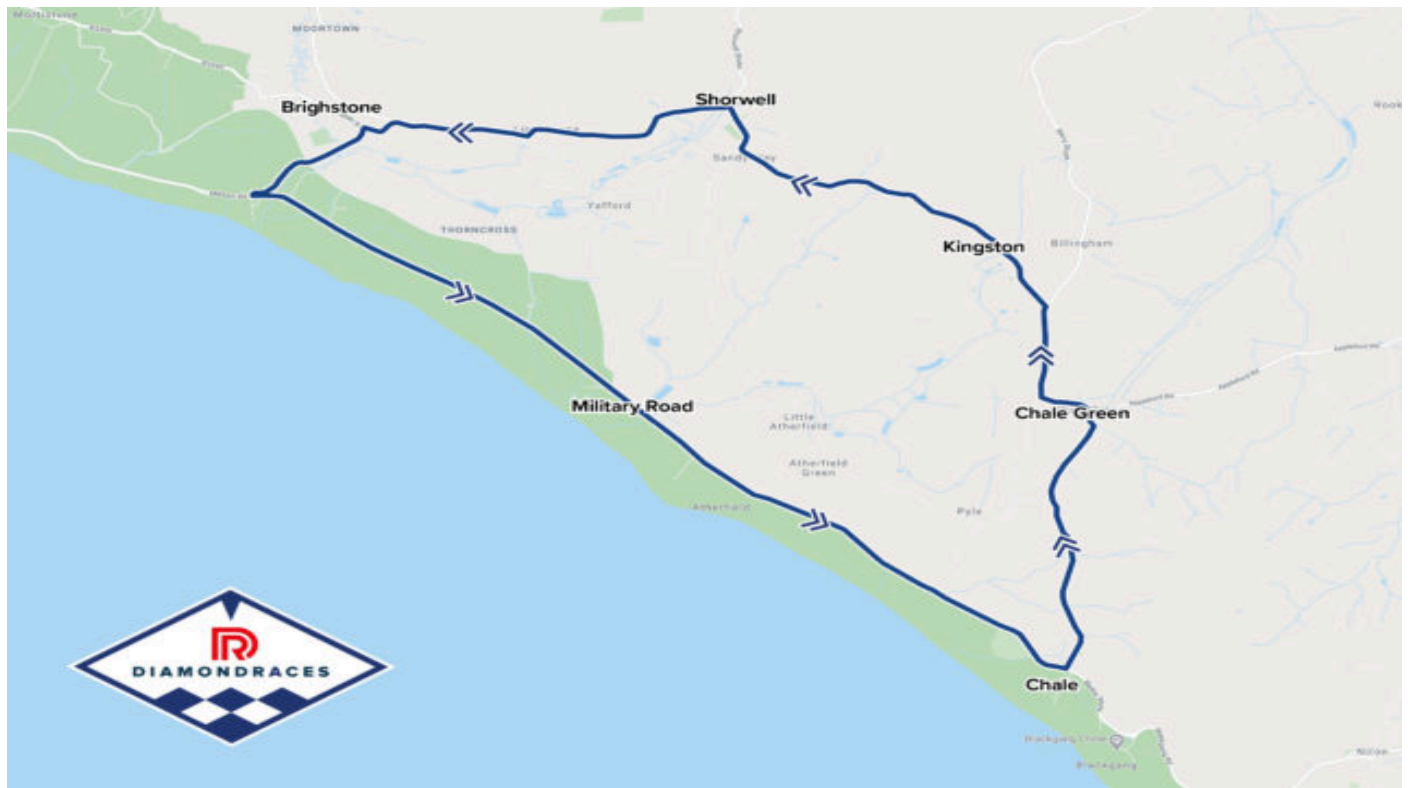
Welcome back ! BTCC returns with no less than 12 races in August alone. Another bit of good news as 3 more Grand Prix are added to the calendar , two in Italy and a new Portuguese race at the Portameo circuit in the Algarve.

Although the U.S. and Mexico have been ruled out as 2020 venues there is still a chance of other races in the far east this year.

Watching races on TV is one thing but getting the old overalls on is a different matter and its thanks to the 500 Club that we attended our first race meeting in July. A lot of work behind the scenes was needed to make it happen so well done to all concerned !

If the Kirkistown race meeting was good then the following weeks Sprint was even more special ! An entry of over 100 cars many of them top class rally cars (McKinstry Motorsport were running 5 WRC cars) so rally fans missed a treat. Many of the Rally cars were penalised for all four wheels off but as one explained “ we are only out for the craic” A great days sport and thanks once again to all involved.

Big news for bike fans is the new road racing circuit along the south coast of the Isle of Wight . Seen a video of the proposed 12.4 mile course and it does look spectacular ! it will host British Superbikes in 2021.



The new road racing circuit on the Isle of Wight.

CLASSIC CAR NEWS.

Boredom or just madness , but recent on line auctions have seen top dollar prices paid for not very special cars. In fact Quentin Willson has tipped the humble Triumph Herald as a top buy with values rising by 20% since lockdown started.

Ferrari's , Aston Martin's and Porsche prices are falling , they were well overpriced at the start of the year but more modest cars are finding eager buyers. BMW 2002 cars are up to £20grand Anglia Car auctions sold a Opel Manta GTE for £15,600 a new record. Elsewhere a standard 1966 Austin Healey Sprite sold for £12,960 , a 1993 Porsche 928 GTS sold for £30,000 (below estimate) and a 2007 MG SVR sold for £33,700 (well above its £25,000/£28,000 estimate). A rare low mileage Renault Clio V6 also sold above estimate making over £50,000 as did a Citroen DS 23 selling for £26,000.

This months adverts make interesting reading , 1961 and 1963 Land Rover

series 2 on sale at £26,000 a 1971 Daimler V12 convertible £59,000 and a 1978 Fiat 130 coupe £42,000. MGC GT cars always attract a premium over MGB GT models but £45,000 for an unrestored one ? I think not.

A restored Jensen Interceptor FF is offered at £146,000 and a 1965 Jaguar Mark 10 ,winner of several concur events is offered at an eye watering £99,950 !

New Car News.

Unless you are passionate about new electric BMW or Hyundai , Nissen Hybrids nothing of interest on most new car news sites. However for us petrol heads the recent news that Honda have smashed the front wheel drive lap record at Suzuka with a limited edition Civic Type R is interesting. The Civic is not by any means a heavy car but Honda have reduced the weight by 47 kilos and have improved the air intake to enhance high speed performance. The car TYPE R Limited addition goes on sale soon but with only 100 coming to the U.K. Engine is still 320BHP but air con is taken out , no touch screen info system , and a lot of sound deadening removed. Wheels are forged 20 inch alloys (30% lighter than current wheels) and shod with road legal Michelin Cup 2 racing tyres. Uprated brakes (a new floating calliper system to save weight) and sports suspension complete the package. No price yet but expect it to be under £40 grand for tax reasons. Lighter body (remember Colin Chapman's motto at Lotus " add lightness") and better airflow means even better in gear performance. As the standard Type R can hit 90 MPH very quickly in third gear at 7000 RPM , I wonder just what this thing will be like.

The Lamborghini Essenza SCV12 is the most extreme Lambo yet. Would you really pay 1.6 million euro for a car which is not only not road legal but in spite of owning it you cannot take it home.

In fact the car stays at the factory looked after by a specialist team of engineers until you join Lamborghini at one of their track days at F.I.A. approved tracks (like Spa and Paul Ricard) where LeMans winner Pierro will be your tutor.

Built to F.I.A. GT3 sports car regulations and with over 800 BHP from its N/A V12 engine , rear wheel drive , six speed sequential gearbox this has to be the ultimate toy. Only 40 will be built with several already ordered!



Wild and Wonderful the new Lamborghini Essenza SCV 12.

Robert's RallyBuzz

International Return

The FIA European Rally Championship 2020 finally got underway last month. First off was Rally di Roma Capitale. The Italian tarmac event was won by 2018 champion, Alexey Lukyanuk in a Citroen C3 R5. Eighty-seven crews entered including Irish men Craig Breen and Calum Devine, both in Hyundai i20 R5's. Breen finished fourth after struggling with the performance of his sponsors MRF tyres on day one of the two-day rally. No such luck for Devine, his i20 ground to a halt with engine failure early on.

Italian star, twice ERC champ and winner last year, Giandomenico Basso was second and Oliver Solberg third in their respective VW Polo GTI R5's. Interestingly Solberg (co-driven as usual by Tyrone's Aaron Johnston) lost his glasses before the start but carried on and said he thought he drove better without them!

The ERC calendar features just six events in total. The next round is Rally Liepeja, Latvia running from 14-16 August. Check out the ERC website for full details.

The 2020 World Rally Championship is scheduled to restart next month. At the moment 6 further rounds are on the provisional calendar detailed below. The first three rounds were completed before the series was halted due to the coronavirus pandemic back in March.

- Round 4: Estonia.....September 4-6
- Round 5: Turkey.....September 18-20
- Round 6: Ypres (Belgium)...October 2-4
- Round 7: Germany.....October 15-18
- Round 8: Italy.....October 29-November 1
- Round 9: Japan.....November 19-22

Whether the above events actually run is of course dependent on the situation in those particular countries regarding the Coronavirus pandemic. It hasn't gone away you know!

Donegal Stages Best in British Isles!

In a survey recently carried out through social media by Motorsport News magazine to find the best rally stages in the UK and Ireland, three of those used on the Donegal International Rally were in the top eight. Hamilton's Folly in County Down which has been used on both the Circuit of Ireland and the Ulster Rally is also on the list.

In all 32 stages made it to a shortlist which was then whittled down to the final eight. Of these only one was a Welsh gravel test, the rest Irish closed road tarmac stages. This should add fuel to the debate for the future destination of a British Isles WRC round. Can Ireland be ignored? These are the elite eight chosen by the public vote;

THE EIGHT BEST RALLY STAGES IN THE UK AND IRELAND

Sweet Lamb Hafren.....Mid Wales (Gravel)
Atlantic Drive.....Donegal
High Glen.....Donegal
Molls Gap.....Killarney
Healy Pass.....Killarney
Knockalla.....Donegal
Hamilton's Folly.....Co.Down
Ring.....West Cork

LOOKING BACK

40 Years Ago.....1980

No Ulster Rally this year of course, but back in 1980 Dessie McCartney was the winner in his newly acquired Vauxhall Chevette HSR. Neil Boulton and myself were covering various time controls on the Belfast Telegraph sponsored event. In between times I remember trying to navigate Neil as he flew round Northern Ireland piloting his little Suzuki SC 100 GX in an effort to see as many stages as we could.

On stage three near Dungannon, McCartney got a puncture and stopped right where we were spectating. He couldn't get the jack to work on the Chevette, so we and others lifted the car while the crew changed the wheel. Neil then lent a grateful Dessie the jack from his rare Suzuki coupe. Thankfully it wasn't needed and we got it back when the rally finished at the Kings Arms Hotel in Larne.

McCartney dropped outside the top ten following that time consuming puncture. He then proceeded to set fastest stage times and went on to win because Jimmy McRae, who was leading at the time in a similar HSR, fell off the road and got stuck in a bog on SS17 Orra Bridge. Derek Boyd was 31 seconds back in second while Robin Lyons finished third, both were in Sunbeams. The 1980 Ulster Rally had total of 25 stages covering 5 counties, starting and finishing in Larne within a 24 hour period.

30 Years Ago.....1990

David Llewellyn was the victor by two minutes in the British Midland Ulster Rally driving his Toyota Celica GT4. Conditions were very wet from the start which suited the four-wheel-drive car. Bertie Fisher and Graham Middleton were second and third respectively in their BMW M3's. There were 21 stages

covering all six Northern Ireland counties. Of the 67 starters only 42 made it to the Belfast finish. We were timekeeping as usual over the two days.

Derek McGarrity won the Mourne Rally in a rear-wheel-drive Nissan engined Peugeot 205. Co-driven by Ian Beasant, the pair were 37 seconds ahead of second placed Mervyn Hill and Kevin Shaw in their Escort Mk.2 while David Greer/Mark Crowe brought their Toyota Corolla home in third. This event was yet another outing for us BRMC timekeepers.

20 Years Ago.....2000

The 21st running of the North Armagh MC's Lurgan Park Rally proved to be one of the best in its history. I first attended the event in 1981 as a marshal and then our club was asked to provide marshals the following year. We were involved every year since until the final event in 2016.

In August 2000 some twenty five of us covered 10 fire points as well as mid point rescue and some radio points. Around 13,000 spectators attended the popular SEAT sponsored event. Kenny McKinstry eventually won his ninth Lurgan Park Rally in a Subaru 555. Pre-event favourite Gwyndaf Evans was the early leader but had to retire his SEAT Córdoba WRC with prop-shaft failure. Then Derek McGarrity took over in front for one stage but spectacularly rolled his new Subaru WRC out of the event.

Denis Biggerstaff was second in the fabulous MG Metro 6R4 while Frank Meagher finished third in his Ford Escort WRC. The "drive of the rally" went to Belgian Patrick Snijers. Following a first stage spin he was down in ninth place in his underpowered McKinstry hired Subaru 555. He then set about climbing up the leaderboard and finished fourth after setting fastest time on the eighth and final stage. Snijers was flying and on the limit much to the delight of the huge crowd. Evans got the Córdoba repaired in time for a Challenge Time Trial after the main event which he dominated and lifted a cheque for £6,000 which SEAT then donated to a local charity. McKinstry got £4,000 for the rally win.

10 Years Ago.....2010

Derek McGarrity and James McKee won the toddsleap.com Ulster Rally in a Subaru Impreza S12C WRC. Although Derek had won the Circuit of Ireland four times and was Irish Tarmac Champion on three occasions, this was his first Ulster win. The Glengormley driver revelled in his local event, the stages were all in Co.Antrim. It wasn't easy for McGarrity, Gareth McHale's Focus finished second only 1.1 seconds down after the 14 stages. This was the closest finish in the rally's thirty five year history. There were only FOUR competitors in the WRC Ulster Rally.

In the International Rally Northern Ireland section, there were 42 cars. This category was dominated by Craig Breen and Gareth Roberts in their Ford Fiesta S2000. Second was Keith Cronin in a Group N Subaru while Alastair Fisher was third in his Evo.9. Citroen debut its brand new DS3 R3 in the hands of Brian Bouffier, he was fifth.

George Robinson won the 37 car National Rally in his Subaru Impreza P2000 WRC, but only after Declan McNaughton crashed his Escort Mk.2 on the final stage. Second was Fintan McGrady's Mk.2 and Sean Haveron took third in his Escort Cosworth.

In the Historic Rally there were 45 starters and the winner here was Manxman Connor Corkill in his Escort Mk.2. Ray Cunningham won category one in his Mini Cooper S and David Stokes was the fastest in category two.

We were timekeeping, covering rescue and radio points on the 2010 Ulster Rally. The weather was surprisingly dry for the two days which made our jobs a lot easier. Alastair Cochran and Gary McElhinney in a Mk.2 had a huge crash at the final corner of the Langford Lodge stage. We saw it all from our flying finish location. Thankfully no one was injured. Other competitors had big scary moments at the extremely slippery bend.

Rally Diary

Sat. 15th August. Cam Trophy Rally Time Trial

The first rally event in Northern Ireland since lockdown will be this event organised by Omagh Motor Club. Held behind closed doors. No spectators are allowed. A limited number of marshals are required but they must sign on online two weeks before the event. Chief Marshal, Barry Arundell will contact you if he needs your help. Based at Cam Quarry, 39 Cam Road, Macosquin, Coleraine. Expect either a very dusty dry day or it could even be a wet one!



**Past Donegal Winners together in Glen village . How many can you name ?
Answers on the back of a £10 note to Robert Coursey !**

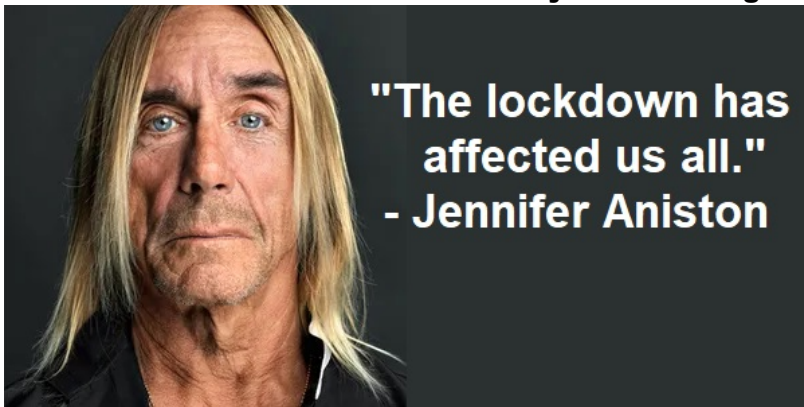
CRAP CORNER.



Fake News.

The Farmers Union of Mexico have objected to Trump's Wall. A spokesman said "Our members are upset but I am sure they will soon get over it".

A mysterious explosion at Dulwich Police station has badly damaged the recreation room and the toilet block. Police admit they have nothing to go on.



Forgotten Hero's. DON NICHOLS 1926 -2017.

Who ? I hear you ask. Of all the people involved in Formula 1 Don Nichols , founder of the Shadows Racing Team is one of the least known.

Orphaned as a child when a tornado swept through his mid west town Nichols as a 19 year old landed at Omaha Beach on D Day. By the start of the Korean War he had joined Army Intelligence and survived a number of secret missions. After the war he decided to live in Japan and became a very successful businessman. In 1963 Nichols with assistance from Mitsubishi founded the Mount Fuji Motor Speedway which would go on to host a number of F1 races. It was about this time that questions were raised about Nichols business activities , many convinced it was a front for an C.I.A. spy ring operating across the far East. Nichols never commented but on his return to the U.S.A. in 1968 he founded the SHADOW racing team with the badge of a masked and caped spy !



His first cars were built for Can Am and featured very small front wheels giving a high level of downforce. George Follmar and Vic Elford were the drivers and in 1974 Jackie Oliver won the Championship for Shadow. By this time Nichols had moved to the U.K. and was running his Formula 1 team. The F1 car first appeared at the 1973 South African G.P. (a track that proved to be very unlucky for the Shadow team) with drivers Oliver and Follmar and a customer car for Graham Hill. The car showed promise with both Oliver and Follmar scoring a couple of third places.

1974 and Shadow had two young up and coming drivers signed up , Jean Pierre Jariar and Peter Revson. Jariar's best result was a 3rd. Monaco and a 5th. Sweden but Revson was killed at the South African G.P. and was replaced by young Tom Price.

1975 started well with Price winning the Race of Champions at Brands and scoring a 3rd. a 4th. And three 6th. Places throughout the season. 1976 saw Price score another 3rd. place along with a couple of 4th. and a 6th. Place. 1977 started badly with both Price and Jariar taking pole positions but suffering car problems in both races. In the South African G.P. Price was killed when a marshal ran out onto the track carrying a large fire extinguisher and was hit by Price. Both died at the scene. Another new driver Alan Jones was brought into the team and proved his worth winning the Austrian G. P. And finishing 3rd. and a couple of 4th. Places during the season. Jones was a real talent but not for the first time in F1 was poached by Williams at the end of the season.

New drivers Clay Regazzoni and Hans Stuck were not up to the job in 1978 and mid season Hong Kong millionaire Teddy Yip bought out the team which reappeared as Theodore. Often asked about the Shadow badge and his contacts with the C.I.A. Don remained tight lipped and died with a lot of unanswered questions hanging in the air.

HANS MEZGER 1929 to 2020.

Another name that deserved to be remembered Mezger studied engineering at Stuttgart Collage in the early 1950's before joining Porsche in 1957. At first he was working on experiential diesel engines but in 1960 he bought a tired 356 coupe and with pencil and paper designed a quad cam flat four engine. (it should be noted that at BMW it took dozens of engineers months to design and build the fist MSport V8 engine). Soon after Mezger became involved in the Porsche F1 programme the 1.5 litre 8 cylinder 804 G.P. car. His design was copied o produce a 2.2 litre flat six which was the basis for the 911 range lasting for some 50 years.

Mezger was promoted to head engineer of the racing department and designed the six cylinder 910 sports car which was to give Porsche its first World Sports Car championship win in 1967.

Porsche then decided it was time to challenge Ferrari and the dominant Ford GT40 and Mezger designed a twelve cylinder engine and a lightweight chassis which became the Porsche 917 winning LeMans in both 1970 and 1971 and then winning many Can Am races in the U.S. He was also responsible for the Group 5 Porsche 935 and Group 6 Porsche 936 both of which raced successfully in the WSC Championship and led to the first 911 turbo road car.

His main achievement was the creation of a 1000 BHP turbocharged engine for McLaren who won the world championship in 1985 , 1986 and 1987. Mezger retired in 1989 but spend his whole adult life as a Porsche engineer and it is a pity he never got the recognition he richly deserved.