

The **BRITISH MOTORSPORT** **MARSHALS CLUB**



MOTOR SPORTS ASSOCIATION RECOGNISED

FOUNDED 1957

No. 5

MAY . 2023.



Northern Ireland Region.

Newsletter

MAY 2023

Cover Story.

Ford deserve a lot of credit for their (mostly British) P.R. over the last 60 years. From being a low cost high volume car builder to a real contender in the U.K. market took a lot of positive work.

It started , I think , with the Mark1 Lotus Cortina which saw drivers like Jim Clark winning National and International Saloon Car races , The Stuart Turner years that saw Mk.1 and Mk.2 Escorts turned into World class rally cars and Ford going all out to win LeMans.

They still can surprise us , remember the Mark 1 Ford Transit fitted with a F1 Cosworth engine ? Latest surprise is designed to appeal to buyers of the all new electric van range with the 2000 BHP Supervan. Not a design exercise , it does exist and is currently the fastest commercial vehicle in the world.



Classic Car News.

Strange times we live in ! Early series 1 Range Rovers are now selling for over £60 grand , double the price of 2020 , why? Yet a very nice MGB GT V8 sold by H and H sold for £9,000 way below estimate. CCA had a barn find 1971 Mini Clubman 1275 GT , only 11,000 miles on it , stored in a damp garage for almost 40 years and needing a full restoration selling for over £38,000. A full restoration will cost at least another £20 K leaving A NICE CAR worth maybe £30k.

Ford RS Escort Turbo,s have shot up in value as most Mk1 cars were destroyed by boy racers (mainly in Essex where most early cars were registered) . The few remaining are selling for around £27,000 if you can find an unmolested early one. The 2 door Subaru Impreza P1 is in the U.K. limited edition model so u.K. models are rare. So rare that a Low mileage one owner example is being offered at £70K A Silver Shadow Drophead Coupe is a rare beast , but one owned by actor Michael Caine is unique so selling it for £135,000 plus premium is no surprise. The 1955 TR2 ex South Africa sold in January has been resold in March for just over £12,000. No way is this way below true value unless the sellers know something we don't .

In spite of 77,000 miles on the clock this nice 1983 VW Golf GTI sold above estimate at £19,350.

There are still people who will pay silly money for anything connected to the Royal Family. Last year some collector paid over £722,000 for a car first owned by Diana . Lord Mountbatten's Jaguar 420 owned by him more than 30 years ago sold for £ 126,000 and more recently the Prince Phillip Land Rover 110 was sold for over £123,000. Why?

One car I have be keeping an interest in is the rare V8Allard Safari woodie Estate car. Sold in 2019 for £40,000 it is back on the market at less than the original selling price.

My interest is the fact that for years the car has sported an original B.M.R.M.C. badge on the front , was this once some Marshal's pride and joy ?

PEGASO.

Think of classic Supercars and Bentley , Aston Martin , Bugatti , Alfa and not least Ferrari come to mind. Almost forgotten is Pegaso a high performance car built in Spain between 1951 and 1956. Pegaso were Spain's largest Bus and Truck company from before W.W.2 and the decision to build a sports car when Spain post war was one of the poorest countries in Europe was either a brave or foolhardy decision.

In spite of this engineers designed a lightweight 2.8 V8 engine with double overhead camshafts and over 130 BHP. Top speed was 115MPH , high for 1951

and a close ratio gearbox allowed the car to hit 0 to 60 in 9 seconds. Later versions saw further lightweight racing cars developed with tuned engines up to almost 200 BHP.

In spite of the fact that Pegaso scored several race wins against Ferrari the new Spanish Government withdrew support and the car division was closed at the end of 1956.

Less than 100 Pegaso Z sports cars survive and are today valued at almost EURO 1 Million.



The Spitfire Story.

Italian design house Michelotti were approached in 1957 to design a small sports car for Triumph. Nothing came of it until Austin Healy brought out the Frog Eye Sprite closely followed by the Mark 1 M.G. Midget. In response to this in October 1962 Triumph showed off an all new car at Earls Court. The Spitfire 4. It was only a Herald tarted up said several critics and would go on in it's early life to be dubbed like things like a hairdressers car.

Triumph decided to fight back entering LeMans in 1964 with 3 works cars , only one finished but in 1965 they won their class with Simo Lampinen. Spitfires built for LeMans also won a class win in that years Alpine Rally beating the works Porsche.

By Feb.1968 Spitfire sales hit 100,000 thanks to demand from the U.S. and in 1973 Spitfires ware winning races in the U.S. SCCA sports car Championships.

#



But it was at LeMans where the Spitfire proved it was a real sports car. Running strongly in 1964 before getting involved someone else's accident they returned in 1965 to take both first and second in class. Reg no's ADU 48 and ADU38.

Other works Spitfires ADU 48 was second in class at Sebring followed by ADU28 third in class.



One of the most important motoring book to be published recently (and I am not discounting Paul Robinson's fine effort !) is 50 Years of the Formula Ford Festival. By Alan Bowles and Darren Banks.

This is a complete history of 1600 Formula Ford the low cost Formula devised by Brands Hatch boss John Webb and Racing driver school owner Geoff Clarke. Using standard Cortina 1600 blocks cars in 1968 could be built for £1,000 making the class one of the cheapest ways into single seater motor racing. Companies like Lola , Lotus , Crossle and Van Diemen quickly got involved and in 1972 the first Festival was held over 3 days with a large entry list and was judged a great success.

Future G.P. Drivers who won include Derek Daly , Eddie Irvine , Jonny Herbert , Roland Ratzenburger , Jan Magnussen , Mark Webber , and Jenson Button , and let us not forget Michael Rowe , Tommy Byrne and Kevin McGarrity , all Festival winners.

The book also pays tribute to several young drivers , tipped for stardom, who died or suffered life changing injuries which ended their promising careers.

A must read for fans of Formula Ford which today has F.F. Championships in over 50 countries.

Robert's RallyBuzz

May 2023

Callum's Cookstown Sizzler

The 2023 Circuit of Ireland Rally was that in name only. Yes, the Ulster Automobile Club were listed as organisers, but it was the promoters Cookstown Motor Club who ran the event on the ground this year, and they did so very successfully.

Based in Cookstown (the Co.Tyrone town famous for its sausages) the compact one-day rally had four repeated closed road stages which circled the town. The stages totalled 68 miles. This was the third round of the 2023 Irish Tarmac Rally Championship.

For my part, myself and Victor were "double-jobbing" as timekeepers and radio operators at the end of the 8-mile SS1/5 Wolfs Hill. A total of 120 cars started and four went missing on the first stage. The biggest accident happened when Frank and Lauren Kelly lost control of their "Baby Blue" Ford Escort Mk.2 mid stage. They were badly shaken but otherwise ok. The car was not, a full rebuild will be required.

Second time round we had just 93 cars but thankfully no major incidents. There was a serious accident on SS8 when the Polo of Declan Boyle and Patrick Walsh crashed out of sixth place. One spectator was injured by flying debris and taken to hospital. Neither crew members were hurt. Our own BMMC rescue crew attended the incident.

Callum Devine and Noel O'Sullivan led the rally from start to finish in their VW Polo GTI R5. The only challengers were Josh Moffett and Andy Hayes in a Hyundai i20 R5. After the eight stages Moffett finished 10.2 seconds down. Meirion Evans/Jonathan Jackson were third in another Polo a further 37.1 seconds back. NI Champion Jonny Greer's Citroen C3 Rally2 finished fourth with Niall Burns, just 2.8 seconds behind Evans. Sam Moffett/Keith Moriarty were fifth in their new Hyundai i20 Rally2. Best of the 2WD finishers were Jason Black and Karl Egan in their Toyota Starlet. There were 29 R5/Rally2 cars on the start list and only one Word Rally Car, how times have changed!

McGarrity Strikes Back

The 2023 Northern Ireland Rally Championship resumed last month with the Maiden City Stages. Held over six sealed surface tests within the Shackleton Airfield Complex at Ballykelly this was round three of five. We would be covering radio and rescue on the day, which turned out to be totally dry despite the rest of the province suffering persistent rain.

Jonny Greer led the Championship going into this event which was sponsored once again by Eakin Bros. of Claudy. Desi Henry was a late entry and being a Shackleton expert started first on the road with number 83 on the doors of his Citroen C3 Rally2. Jonny Greer and Niall Burns were next in a similar car followed by Gareth Sayers/Gareth Gilchrist's Fiesta Rally2.

As the rally got underway, the fourth car driven by Derek McGarrity was fastest out of the blocks. He and Graham Henderson were in a VW Polo GTI R5. Then Greer took over the rally lead until the fourth stage when a damaged manifold slowed the C3 dropping the Carryduff

driver to second place 12 seconds behind McGarrity. Despite his service crew working on the problem, Greer's car ground to a halt on SS5 and into retirement.

McGarrity had a 12 second lead over Sayers going into the final 8-mile stage but a spin near the finish almost cost the Glengormley man the rally win. In the end Derek prevailed, just, he won by the smallest of margins; 0.7 seconds. It had been another strong finish from Gareth Sayers in second unfortunately his class 11 Fiesta is not registered for overall points. Third went to the fast finishing Desi Henry and Paddy Robinson. They had been as low as fifth at one time but gradually got the C3's set up sorted and we're just 9.5 seconds behind the winners in the end.

Best of the two-wheel-drive brigade were Damien Tourish/Brendan McElhinney who finished 11th in their Ford Escort Mk.2. In total we had 77 starters and 69 finishers.

With regard to the NI Rally Championship, eight-time title winner Derek McGarrity now leads on 85 points. Stuart Biggerstaff, who was seventh at Shackleton, is second with 78 and Aaron McLaughlin third on 77. Jonny Greer is back in eighth place 24 points behind McGarrity. The next round is the first of the two road-closed events, the Go Power Tour of the Sperrins this month (see diary)

Craig Breen

Motorsport Worldwide is still in a state of shock following the tragic passing of Waterford's Craig Breen during a private rally testing accident in Croatia last month. The Irishman died instantly when his car slid off the road at a relatively low speed and made contact with a wooden fence. A post from this fence entered the cabin of the Hyundai i20 N Rally1 through the driver's side window. Co-driver James Fulton was unharmed.

Craig Breen was a one off; a perfect gentleman, a superbly talented rally driver and a real character. Craig had brightened up the normally dull and robotic WRC stage-end interviews with his off-the-cuff and emotional comments which have since become legendary. The Hyundai WRC team paid its own tribute to their driver by decking out their i20 Rally1 cars in the colours of the Irish flag for Rally Croatia. When Elfyn Evans won the rally for Toyota, he and co-driver Scott Martin (who had been Craig's co-driver for five years) dedicated the victory to the memory of Craig Breen. The rally continued with full support from the Breen family, "It's what Craig would have wanted" they said. There were no celebrations, everyone one was very subdued and they really didn't want to be there.

My own memories of Craig Breen are several. Accompanied by my son David I witnessed the end of the 2011 Wales Rally GB when Craig and Gareth Roberts were crowned WRC Academy Champions in a freezing-cold sheep shed in Builth Wells. It felt like all of Ireland was there to celebrate the €500k prize-winning drive. David was lucky enough to spend a few hours interviewing Breen for the original RallyBuzz website when the up-and-coming star was involved in promoting a new WRC computer game. A high-speed run with Craig in the driver's seat being the highlight of the day. A mark of the man's honesty was revealed when he told David that he thought the game wasn't very good! That was Craig Breen to a tee!

When Craig took the first of his two back-to-back European Rally Championship Circuit of Ireland victories in 2015 he described the classic Hamilton's Folly stage as quote: "The best tarmac stage in the World". He always enjoyed rallying in Ireland and won the Irish Tarmac

Championship in 2019. I have seen him compete on numerous events over the years including Rally GB, Donegal, the Circuit and the Ulster Rally. Actually only last month Craig's father Ray was competing on the 2023 Circuit of Ireland in his Subaru Legacy.

On behalf of BMMC Northern Ireland Region may I send my sincere condolences to the Breen family circle at this extremely sad time. We are so sorry for your loss.

Still Hope For 2024 WRC Rally NI

The deadline for a proposed Rally Northern Ireland to be included in the 2024 World Rally Championship has been pushed back one month until the end of May. Originally the end of April was the deadline for a UK round to be submitted for inclusion in next year's calendar but now Simon Larkin, Event Director at WRC Promotor GmbH, has given Bobby Willis and his team extra time to find funding for such an event. Larkin said; "The potential for a World Rally Championship event in Northern Ireland is an opportunity that is just too good to give up".

Motorsport UK say they are "fully behind" the Northern Ireland WRC project, which they estimate will cost one million pounds of public funding to secure. Somewhat surprisingly though, MUK CEO Hugh Chambers also revealed that other parts of the UK are now being considered as possible candidates, with a return to north Wales currently in the mix.

Ian Paisley MP is supporting the NI bid and he has said that if WRC Rally NI came to the province next year it would be a "fitting tribute" to the memory of the late Craig Breen. Craig was a staunch advocate of such a venture and never missed an opportunity to vocally support the Rally Northern Ireland proposal. He knew the value it would bring to Northern Ireland's economy and to the enthusiastic rally fans.

Rally Diary

Sat. 20th May.....Tour of the Sperrins

Round 4 of the 2023 NI Rally Championship. The "Go Power" Tour of the Sperrins is based in Magherafelt and organised by Magherafelt and District Motor Club. There are 6 closed-road stages (3 repeated) in Counties Tyrone & Derry. The stages total 41 miles and include the well-known Barnes Gap. A full entry list of 120 cars are expected to start. As a club we are providing timekeepers, radio cover, rescue, recovery and stage marshals. Big question is will current champion Jonny Greer bounce back after his Shackleton disaster or can points leader Derek McGarrity stay on course for his ninth NI title? All will be revealed on this challenging event. Sign-on via rallyscore.net as usual.

Fri.16th—Sun.18th June.....Donegal International Rally

Round 5 of the 2023 Irish Tarmac Rally Championship. Based in Letterkenny and organised by Donegal Motor Club. We are timekeeping for the three days. Expect a full entry of 150 cars in the main event. Friday's stages are close to Donegal Town while Saturday and Sunday feature the usual classic tests including Knockalla and Atlantic Drive. Callum Devine is the driver on form. The Claudy man has won the last two rounds of the championship in his Volkswagen

Polo GTI R5 and leads the standings. Josh Moffett (Hyundai i20) and Meirion Evans (VW Polo) are the closest challengers. Donegal will test them all!



Cathal Curley Donegal Rally 1974 The Glory Days.

CRAP CORNER.

Husband takes the wife to a disco. There's a guy on the dance floor break dancing, moonwalking, back flips, the works. The wife turns to her husband and says, "See that guy? 25 years ago he proposed to me and I turned him down."

Husband says, "Looks like he's still celebrating!"





Two rare pictures of the Black and Tans invading the pitch at Lansdowne Road in September 1920 and below the Black and Tans burning Cork City Centre in 1920.

