

The BRITISH MOTORSPORT MARSHALS CLUB



MOTOR SPORTS ASSOCIATION RECOGNISED

FOUNDED 1957

No. 7

JULY . 2023.

Northern Ireland Region.



CULTRA HILLCLIMB 2023.

Newsletter

JULY 2023

Cover Story.

For the first time I was not able to take part in this event so I thank all the people who posted pictures of this fabulous event.

While Gerard entertained the crowds Tim Woodside was unbeatable on the hill.

Nice to see Neil Dugan in his restored Vauxhall Viva take a class win and I am more than sorry I missed it (I tried to get in at lunchtime but on both sides of the road there were long lines of traffic trying to get in.)



Neil in the Viva.

Winner of the event was Tim Woodside in the family Pilbeam.



Barn Finds.

This appears to be a new name for scrap cars , and I cannot understand why people are willing to spend money on them while road worthy cars can still be bought. The £8,000 spent on a Mini Clubman 1275 GT off the road for over 20 years seems like madness. What is he going to do , spend £40,000 restoring it and have a nice 1275 GT worth £25,000 ! Worse was a Mark1 Astra GTE off the Road from the late 1990's , sold with new front wings to be fitted , a ruined engine and chronic rust it sold for over £3,000. In contrast a Mk2 Opel Manta GTE carefully stored for 20 odd years and on the button deserved to sell for £12,000. Another strange story is the early 1960 Mini sold for over £9 grand. Bottom half is rotten so the choice is reshell it , it can no longer be sold as a 1960 mini or spend a fortune replacing all four wings , floors , sills etc, rebuilt the early 850 cc engine and gearbox and hope someone is willing to pay a fortune to own an early Mini. Don't think so.

Just to prove me wrong , after the sale of a Sierra Cosworth recently for £590,000 another Cossie in rather poor condition. has gone through Silverstone Auction fetching £110,000.

Readers might remember I reported on a rare Allard P2 Safari estate with a BMRMC badge on the front . It was sold in May for over £54,000.

Other sales include a nice 1977 Alfa Spyder selling for £20,000 and an 1985 Sunbeam Talbot Lotus selling well above estimate at £42,750.

It was inevitable that in the current economic climate some of the most expensive collectors would drop in value. Hardest hit are early Porsche cars , 1970/1980 Ferraris , Aston Martin and top of the range Alfa Romeo. One exception is the 1963 Aston Martin DB4 GT built to special order for Peter Sellers. Bonham's are selling the car at their July auction with a guide price of over £2 million. Pre war Bentleys rarely come up for sale but both 3 litre and 8 litre cars are currently valued at less than their pre pandemic value , in the case of any 8 litre Tourer value has dropped by almost £1 million from 2018.

In contrast a 1979 Talbot Sunbeam Lotus valued at £30,000 has just sold at Silverstone for over £42,000 and early MGB roadsters and Opel Manta GTE cars have seen prices rise by around 10% from this time last year.

Forgotten Hero's JACK GILL.

For those who remember the 1980's they may recall long running American T.V. shows like the Dukes of Hazard , Knight Rider and films like Cannonball Run 1 and 2 and The Fall guy. For these and many other cop based films Jack Gill was the stunt car driver.

In over 60 Episodes of the Dukes of Hazard Gill drove several versions of the General Lee car ,totalling several after jumping from roof top to roof top, a 100 foot jump over police cars and a couple of serious injuries.

One would have thought that after a long and dangerous career Gill now in his late seventies would have retired but is working as the stunt co-Ordinator for the Fast and Furious Film-series and for the Marvel film franchise.

KIRKISTOWN 70 Anniversary.



Carrickfergus Driver Chris Smiley and his TCR Honda Civic were one of several guest drivers at Kirkistown on the 24th.



Joey Greenan next to an ex T.T. Aston Martin which did several demonstraton laps.

THE COLLECTOR.

Stephen Leckie President of the Scottish Chamber of Commerce and Lord Lieutenant of Perth shire and Kinross is somewhat ., Like many Aristocrats a bit unusual, He never watches T.V. he does not play golf and he never goes to his local pub. All of his spare time is spent in his several garages where he likes to strip cars and put them back into runner order. If was in beyond his expertise he is happy to pay for one of the marque's best engineers to do the work for him.

His 1931 3 litre Lagonda is a case in point , he has commissioned a £15,000 rebuild of engine and gearbox in spite of being good enough to rebuild a 1931 Lagonda Rapide himself. He is aware that the 3 litre car needs specialist tooling for a new crankshaft and camshaft , gears in the gearbox will be made from scratch and he could never justify the cost of all the equipment needed to complete the rebuild.

Other cars in the garages include a 1926 Rolls Royce 20 . a 1927 Daimler Limo , a 1931 Alvis 12/50 sports special , three 1950,s Sunbeam Alpine convertables , a 1956 Armstrong Siddeley , A couple of Daimler saloon and Dart cars , a 1962 Alvis TD 21 , early E Type , a 1967 Ford Mustang , a damaged car which he and his son restored learning welding along the way (the car arrived with massive rear end damage which meant they had to cut away all body work behind the back screen and fabricate a complete rear end including rear wings . boot , boot lid , back bumper and boot floor. The car today is show quality and is considered better than when it left the Ford factory.

His modern cars are several Aston Martin DB cars , a 1976 Stag a 1976 R.R. Shadow and a 1986 Porsche Carrera . Stephen with the one exception of the Lagonda maintains all these cars himself , he spends almost his spare time in the garages (just wonder what his wife thinks?) and almost every car is on the button , starting first time and where required M.O.T. certified.

Robert's RallyBuzz

July 2023

All Quiet On Rally NI Front

Despite being given an extended deadline until the end of May to find funding, there has been no announcement to date regarding the possibility of a WRC round in Northern Ireland next year. Bobby Willis and his team had been hoping to secure the required financing for a Rally NI project, but with Tourism NI cutbacks and a lack of local government it would appear that there is not much hope of that happening. The only sporting event that Tourism NI say they can support in the foreseeable future will be the 2025 Open Golf Championship at Portrush. It's not looking good for Rally Northern Ireland then.

McLaughlin Wins Again In Loughgall

Apparently it's been 25 years since the first Loughgall Country Park Rally took place. We as a club first became involved providing timekeepers in 2000. To celebrate their anniversary, organisers North Armagh Motor Club tried something different this year. Up until now the event consisted of six sealed surface stages held entirely within the confines of the Country Park. Originally for 2-wheel-drive cars only, the clubman event opened up to include 4-wheel-drive machines a few years ago.

For the 2023 PMR & RPM Motorsport Loughgall Stages Rally, North Armagh MC had obtained a road-closing order and ran three stages over a 5.93 mile Kinnegoe test, close to Loughgall village. As well as this there were four stages in the Country Park giving a total of approximately 30 stage miles. We provided radio cover on Kinnegoe and all three stages ran faultlessly. Other stage marshals helped out during the day which was dry throughout. The rally was a huge success.

Last year's winner Aaron McLaughlin, this time with Darren Curran alongside, won again in his usual Ford Fiesta R5, but it was very close. After stage one in the park McLaughlin headed Aidan Wray and Martin Brady's VW Polo R5 by just 2.5 seconds with Garry Jennings/Brian Hoy third in their Fiesta Rally2. Wray was in front after the first run over Kinnegoe (SS2) but by only 7 tenths of a second over McLaughlin.

These two continued to battle all rally long for the lead. After stage five Wray was 1 tenth ahead but then McLaughlin hit back and was 1 second in front going into the seventh and final stage. The Donegal man finished 2.4 seconds ahead of Wray with Damian Toner/Martin McGowan third (13.3 seconds down on the winner) in the local drivers first outing in a Fiesta Rally2. Toner had previously won the event 5 years in-a-row driving a Ford Escort Mk.2.

Leading retirements included Garry Jennings whose Fiesta didn't appear after stage three. Top 2-wheel-drive finishers were Jason Black/Karl Egan whose Toyota Starlet was seventh overall. As far as I was concerned, from my radio point on a very fast section of the Kinnegoe stage, the entertainer of the day was Marty Toner who finished 11 in his rear-wheel-drive BMW M1. There were 80 starters and 57 finishers.

I may be wrong, but I think a Ford product (Escort or Fiesta) has won the Loughgall Rally every year since it started, with one exception. In 2021 the event became a one-off round of the covid-curtailed NI Rally Championship and Jonny Greer won in a Citroen C3.

Looking Back

Marshalling Memories

20 Years Ago.....2003

During the month of May, Victor and I marshalled a very wet Drumquin Rallysprint. We were up to our knees in a muddy quarry but no major incidents were recorded. Then accompanied by Richard Donaldson and the Hughes family we helped with timekeeping on a very wet and curtailed Tour of the Sperrins Rally. Trevor Moore won for the third time on the extremely rough gravel event. Also in May four of us covered timing on the Glendun stage of Mid Antrim MC's Ballypatrick Stages Rally.

In June we marshalled four events. First up was the Maiden City Summer Stages Rally where John, Victor, Andy Gibson and I were finish timekeepers on a closed-road stage near Aghadowey stadium (which was also used). Again all went smoothly. Next was the NI Championship Mourne Rally. I was Chief Timekeeper and had lots of club members helping me out. With a total of 12 stages the sealed-surface event organised by Newry and District Motor Club ran faultlessly. There were no less than 101 cars starting. Eugene Donnelly won with championship leader Denis Biggerstaff finishing fourth.

The 2003 Donegal International Rally took place in mid-June. We were covering finish time controls for the three days and were blessed with good weather. All 22 stages ran in spite of a few delays on Saturday as officials struggled to manage a record crowd of spectators on Knockalla as usual. Only a few minor incidents were recorded on the event which was dominated by Andrew Nesbitt in a Subaru Impreza S8. Eugene Donnelly was second in his older

Subaru while Derek McGarrity finished third in his S8. Our club ran two stages of the Mid Antrim Festival Stages at Nutts Corner in late June. Victor was Stage Commander as all the usual suspects turned out on a hot summer's evening (which was my birthday) to assist. The event ran smoothly.

Mark Lovell and co driver Roger Freeman were both killed when their Subaru crashed on a round of the 2003 North American Rally Championship. The car hit a six foot wide tree just a few miles into stage one of the event.

July 2003 was also a busy month for us. On Saturday 5th we covered radio and rescue on the Loughgall Country Park Rally. North Armagh MC looked after us well and the event ran without incident. Then on Bank Holiday Monday 14th Ballynahinch and District MC ran their usual Clubman Rally. This year instead of the normal gravel stages the rally moved to the tarmac and concrete runways of Bishopscourt. Winner here was Martin Elliot in his unique Sydney Meeke built four-wheel-drive Vauxhall Corsa, unbeatable on the twisty stages.

The following Saturday Victor, Ross, John and Anna Hughes plus yours truly found ourselves in Co. Donegal for the Maiden City MC's Lark in the Park. This year the event started in St. Columb's Park in Londonderry but then headed for an 8-mile closed road stage near Muff where we were the finish timekeepers. Eugene Donnelly scored his tenth rally victory of the year on this one. Adam Hughes and Neil Anderson provided excellent radio cover at the start and finish of the Donegal stage which meant that between us all car accountability was second to none. The weather for all three July events was excellent.

Rally Diary

Sat. 22nd July.....Carryduff Forklift Down Rally

Fifth and final round of the 2023 Motorsport UK McGrady Insurance Northern Ireland Rally Championship. Based in Lisburn at Lagan Valley Island, the event uses 8 closed-road stages (4 repeated) including the classic Hamilton's Folly running at almost 9 miles. The Down Rally is also round six of the Protyre Motorsport UK Asphalt Rally Championship. The seeded entry list is published at 18.00 on Tuesday 4th July @ rallyscore.net. Jonny Greer won last year and must be favourite again for the win and possibly a third NI Championship in a row.

After four rounds Derek McGarrity leads the championship with 110 points, Aaron McLaughlin has 98, Derek's son Michael is third on 95 and Greer has 91. When dropped scores are applied, Jonny Greer still can win as he and everyone else can drop their worst scores, only 4 out of the 5 events count. We are providing timekeepers, radio cover, rescue and stage marshals on this event which is organised jointly by Rathfriland & Ballynahinch MC's. Sign-on @ rallyscore.net

Sat. 5th August.....Premier Car Parts Rally Time Trial

Maiden City MC are the organisers of this new clubman event. Based in Ballykelly at the Shackleton Complex. The event (for rally cars only) will consist of 6 timed runs over a three mile stage, the best 2 runs to count. We are providing rescue, radio cover and stage marshals. Sign-on @ rallyscore.net

Fri. 18th—Sat. 19th August.....Modern Tyres Ulster Rally

**Round 4 of the 2023 British Rally Championship
Round 7 of the 2023 Irish Tarmac Rally Championship**

Based in Newry the event has four closed-road stages (2 repeated) on Friday and six (3 repeated) on Saturday in Counties Armagh and Down.

Organised by the Northern Ireland Motor Club. We are providing timekeepers, marshals, officials, radio cover, rescue and recovery.

Leading Ulster entries include Callum Devine in his Polo R5 and Adrien Fourmaux in the latest Fiesta Rally2. Devine leads the ITRC (after his Donegal victory) Fourmaux has won all three rounds so far in the British Championship.

Both of these drivers have had failed European and WRC adventures in the past but having returned to domestic” events are on top form at the moment. More on the Ulster Rally next month.



The Good Old Days'

Hannu Mikkola Audi Quattro

Austin McHale Opel Monza 3.0.

CRAP CORNER.

You come from dust and you will return to dust. That's why I don't dust. It could be someone I know.



