

The BRITISH MOTORSPORT MARSHALS CLUB



MOTORSPORTS ASSOCIATION RECOGNISED

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ALFA ROMEO . Bimotori 1935.

Northern Ireland Region.

Newsletter

November 2023

Cover Story.

From the early days of motor racing teams have looked at ways to take an advantage over other teams. In 1929 the Bentley boys fitted large superchargers to the 4 litre Bentley's (against W.O.Bentley's wishes) and won the LeMans race.

In the early 1930's the Nazi Germany backed teams seems unbeatable so at the end of 1934 Alfa decided to take a P3 chassis , make it slightly longer , position the driver in the middle and place 1 eight cylinder supercharged engine in front of the driver and a second eight cylinder supercharged engine behind the drivers seat. Employing Nuvolari considered one of the best drivers of the era Alfa had high hopes for the car during the 1935 season. The car had a top speed of over 190 MPH and was designed for the high speed circuits like Monza , Avus and Tripoli. In it's first race Nuvolari was faster than both the Mercedes and the Auto Union cars but it was wearing out it's rear tyres every four laps.

It soon became clear that no tyre could handle the power and torque of the Bimotori and the project was cancelled. Car 1 was scrapped and car 2 sold to English driver Arthur Dobson for use at Brooklands.

Today Nardi are known for bespoke steering wheels supplied to the worlds top supercars but in the early 1950's they designed and build their own racing cars.

One of the strangest was the 1955 Nardi 750 built to take a class win at the 1955 LeMans race. The torpedo shaped body with a large frontal radiator had the driver on the right the tiny 4 cylinder 750cc BMW engine on the left and the fuel tank between them. The aerodynamics were spot on and in testing the car was setting new lap records.

In qualifying the car finish first in it's class although concerns were raised that the car needed clear air to operate efficiently. Sure enough during the race larger and faster cars passing disturbed the air flow and eventually a faster car coupled with a cross win literally blew the little Nardi off the track and into retirement.



Most of us remember the Brabham fan car , banned after one race and the more successful Tyrrell 6 wheeler but how many remember the STP Paxton Turbo built to race in the 1967 Indy 500.

Strange that many of the design features on the Little Nardi were similar to this car , the engine ,Turbine rather than turbocharged was fitted centre left with the right hand side of the car holding the driver , the oil tank and the fuel cells to balance the weight . The turbine designed by Air Canada was to become one of the most successful turbine engines for small commercial aircraft over the next ten years . The turbine was linked to a Ferguson four wheel drive system (these N.I. inventors get every where!)but just 8 miles from the finish the car stopped. Entered for the 1968 event the car crashed and never raced again.

1970 saw the strange Chapperal J2 . This car designed to run against the McLaren and Porsche cars in Can-Am had two huge fans built into the rear of the car to suck air from below the car pushing it into the ground, It was the most extreme use of downforce ever devised.

Quicker than the other Can-Am cars by around 2 seconds a lap it was plagued by unreliable engines and often retired mid range after building up a commanding lead. After pressure from the other teams the Can-Am promoters banned it in January 1971.



The Chapperal J2 fan car.

Even more weird was the 1982 Eagle Flyer Special. Built for the Indy 500 by the Eagle Aircraft Company it used light aircraft design in the build including plywood and balsa wood wings. Initially the design seemed to work but as experienced Indy car driver noted it had so much downforce over the front that at speed the amount of downforce pressing over the front axle would cause the rear of the car to lift . **work**



Not only was the drivers feet exposed in front of the front Subframe holding a horizontal rad but as the driver would later explain “ the level of downforce was enough that on the straights was enough to make me hold my helmet in place. Slowing for a bend meant due to the downforce on the front of the car the rear wheels would lift off the track. Three spins in two laps of practise proved this thing was never going to work.

The long wheelbase proved to be the problem. Even fitted with a rear Wing it

only generated downforce over the front axle. The front half of the car was exactly what Wright designed , the exact opposite of aircraft lift. But due to the long wheelbase it could not generate downforce over all of the top bodywork. IT was withdrawn and never raced again.

GROSS INSULT.

I feel sorry for the 500 Club who in recent years have put a lot of effort into Promoting the prestigious Martin Donnelly F.F. race. Unlike Formula Vee who love the event many F.Ford drivers ignored the event , only 9 managed to enter. Sad that the F.Ford brigade would insult the 500 Club in such a way. Maybe we are seeing the end of F.Ford here and instead promote F.Vee who provide much better racing and classes like the Legends and saloons which this year provided much more entertainment than the tiny grids of Formula Fords , only two or three of which were competitive.

Luton Airport Fire.

The Luton Airport fire has resulted in an unbelievable number of comments on the Internet . Initially reported as a fire in a diesel car in now seems clear the fire started in a hybrid Range Rover sport. As one retired Firefighter commented " In 30 years I have only dealt with 2 diesel fires , diesel unlike petrol needs very high Temperature to combust and the way this car burnt is not indicative of any diesel fire."

Lets look at the facts , In early October in Chambéry France the Tesla Service Centre suffered a massive fire destroying 16 used Tesla cars.



In Perth Scotland the V.W. Dealership reported a fire in it's service bay and a few days later came reports of an E.V. on fire at Glasgow Airport.

Many recently built Apartment blocks in Central London have underground parking with charging for Electric Cars. All E.V.cars imported from France and Germany come via Cross Channel ferry ships or some via the Channel Tunnel.

A fire on any of these would constitute a disaster , are we still convinced that all E.V. cars are safe ? Love to know what you think.?

MST Cars Ltd.

MST in North Wales started as a rally preparation business but today are building brand new Mk1 and Mk2 Ford Escorts. They offer everything from a road going Mk1 RS2000 to a full Group 4 Rally car. Engines range from a 2 litre Duratec to a full race Millington 2.7 litre engine. In spite of cost between £75,000 and over £100,000 MST have almost a full year's worth of orders. No other company in the U.K. can claim this level of success.



NEW CAR NEWS.

It is interesting to note that while most car makers are concentrating on more and more hybrid and electric cars there is still a demand for efficient petrol engine cars.

Next years BMW M3CS is lighter , faster and more fuel efficient than any previous M3 model. The six cylinder engine now produces 540 horsepower and a 0 to 60 time of just over 3 seconds.

New for late 2024 sees Ferrari join the luxury SUV market. A 6.5 litre high revving engine will produce over 700 BHP making it the fastest SUV ever produced.

The new 4 door Maserati GranTorismo due July next year has for the first time an engine producing 540 BHP from an all new V8.

Porsche are also producing 2 all new models in 2024 , a return of the 918 Spyder with over 500 BHP and the Cayenne SUV GTS twin turbo V8 with close to 650 BHP, this car like the Ferrari will set a new benchmark for luxury SUV cars.

In contrast the late 2024 Ford Mustang with it's 5 litre V8 tuned to 500+ BHP is not going to excite buyers with under 20 MPG.

Worse is the new Nissan GT-R concept car.



This thing with it's batteries producing over 1000 BHP will never reach production hopefully it will go on fire sooner rather than later.

CLASSIC NEWS.

Crazy is how one well known dealer described September and early October Auction results. While there were a few real bargains prices were all over the place.

A nice 1952 MG TD was sold by H & H for £13,500 that is seven grand below estimate yet a week later they sold a 1948 Morris Minor MM the second oldest known for £25,200 which is almost ten grand over estimate. Historics also had a restored 1982 Porsche 911 Targa upgraded with a later 3.0 SC engine and other mods. Modified cars are normally harder to sell but this one sold for £134,000. Strange when genuine 3.0SC 911 cars are selling for £50,000.

Bonhams meanwhile sold a very rare 1961 Mk1 MG Midget one of only a handful of Brabham tuned cars fitted from new with a Coventry Climax engine. This was considered a steal at £18,000 well below its £25 grand estimate. WB and Sons sold a well restored TR6 , 60,000 miles with over 30 years of MOT certificates for £12,800. This car would have sold for close to thirty grand twelve months ago.

With Sierra Cosworth cars fetching telephone numbers there appeared to be considerable interest in a one owner 29,000 mile from new Sierra XR4i. On the day its faded paintwork put people off and it sold for a disappointed £8,100. I am aware from a friend who lives in Essex that a complete respray in London could cost up to £12 grand but he had his classic Merc 500SEC taken to Humberside where costs were around half that. The new owner of the Sierra could have a valuable asset by spending 5 grand on a decent respray. !

Robert's RallyBuzz

November 2023

Winding Down

The rally season here in Northern Ireland has virtually finished. Just a few low-key targa events left to run in 2023. My last outing was on the Bushwhacker in September but I know some of our marshals have been covering both the Antrim & Magherafelt targa rallies held last month. For many years I managed to attend over 40 events including Rally GB which was usually held in November. Nowadays I have cut right back. I only do the events I enjoy, which amounted to just 12 in 2023. Highlights included working on the five-round NI Championship and the three Forest Challenge events.

Looking forward to 2024, I see there will be no British Rally Championship round here, the Ulster Rally has been dropped from the calendar. As well as this, the Protyre Asphalt Championship will not be visiting Northern Ireland next year. There were only six registered BRC competitors on the 85-strong Ulster start list this year, so the loss of that series should not effect the event too much!

The 2024 Northern Ireland Rally Championship will again feature five sealed-surface events (two single venue rallies followed by three on closed-roads) and the NI Forest Rally Challenge should consist of four gravel rallies (although one has yet to be confirmed). I presume there will also be the usual visits to NI of both the Irish Tarmac Championship (COI & Ulster) and the Motorsport Ireland Forest Championship (Lakeland & Bushwhacker)

Unsurprisingly, there will be no World Rally Championship event in the British Isles next year. It will then have been five years since the last Wales Rally GB took place in 2019. Some good news for Wales though, the closed-road Rali Ceredigion, based in Aberystwyth, will be a round of the 2024 European Rally Championship. With regards to the WRC, it is still hoped that there might be a Motorsport Ireland promoted "Rally Ireland" in 2025, although everything has gone quite on this front at the moment. As they say no news is good news!

2023 Rally Champions

World Champion: Kalle Rovanpera (Finland)
WRC2 Champion: Andreas Mikkelsen (Norway)
WRC3 Champion: Roope Korhonen (Finland)
Junior WRC Champion: William Creighton (Northern Ireland)
European Champion: Hayden Paddon (New Zealand)
ERC3 Champion: Jon Armstrong (Northern Ireland)
Junior ERC Champion: Norbert Maier (Romania)
British Champion: Adrien Fourmaux (France)
Junior British Champion: Kyle White (Northern Ireland)
Irish Tarmac Champion: Callum Devine (Northern Ireland)
Irish National Champion: Josh Moffett (Ireland)
Irish Forest Champion: Patrick O'Brien (Northern Ireland)
Northern Ireland Champion: Jonny Greer (Northern Ireland)

Looking Back

Marshalling Memories

20 Years Ago...November 2003

11 of us BMMC/BRMC (NI) members marshalled on Wales Rally GB, the final round of the 2003 WRC. We covered 6 stages over the three days. Four drivers went into the rally with a chance to win the championship. In the end Petter Solberg in his Subaru Impreza won the rally and the title by one point from Sebastien Loeb, who's Citroen Xsara was second in Wales. 75 cars started and 39 finished. Unfortunately we were one member short this year. Bobby Barr passed away suddenly in September and was sadly missed by us all.

Rally Diary

Sat. 18th November.....Omagh MC Targa Rally

The only rally-type event listed for the month of November in Northern Ireland. No further information is available as I write. If the event is indeed running and you wish to marshal please contact Omagh Motor Club for details.



Another one from my archive , who where and when ?

Bet Robert will know this one !

CRAP CORNER.

So the new CEO decides it's time to rid the company of slackers.

On a tour of the facilities, he notices a guy leaning against a wall. The room was full of workers. Seeing a chance to show he meant business, he says to the guy, 'How much money do you make a week?'

A little surprised, the young man says, 'I make \$400. Why?'

The CEO says, 'Wait right here.' He walks back to his office and comes back in two minutes. He hands the guy \$1,600 in cash and says, 'Here's four weeks' pay. Now get out and don't come back!'

Feeling like a boss now, the CEO looks around and says, 'Does anyone want to tell me what that goofball's job was around here?'

From across the room, a voice says, 'Pizza delivery guy from Domino's.'



REMINDER REMINDER REMINDER.

FORMAL NOTICE of ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

B.M.M.C. N.I.Region

The 43rd. A.G.M. of the N.I. Region will take place on Thursday 9th. Nov. via zoom starting at 7.30 PM.

Agenda.

Apologies.

Minutes of 2022 AGM.

Chairman's Report. Sec. Report. Treasurers Report.

Election of Officers.

Fantasy G.P. Report.

A.O.B.