

# BRITISH MOTORSPORTS MARSHALS CLUB

NI REGION



FOUNDED 1957 MSUK RECOGNISED

## NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2024



## Cover Story

3 training days were held at Kirkistown Circuit in January and February this year covering all aspects of marshalling. Our very own Duncan McGregor was the person arranging and delivering most of the sessions. All in all, 3 very successful days and those who attended were full of praise and felt that they were able to learn. In particular, day 3 offered practical training where Incident marshals, Rescue Unit, Ambulance, Doctors and others all came together to deal with scenarios, such as extractions and cars on their side.



In 1984, the BMRMC as it was then known held their annual training day in Ormeau Park. Again, they had access to a real car to completely destroy! Robert Coursey found this article from Carsport magazine in his archives recently:



A reminder that BMMC / BRMC will hold it's annual Training day on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April at Transport Training Services at Nutts Corner as per the last couple of years – 15 Dundrod Road, Crumlin, BT29 4SS for your Google Maps. This is also an opportunity for MMP Marshals to learn more about Race and Rally and maintain their grade.

## Editor Note

A slightly different look to the magazine this month. I've played about with the design a little bit for a freshen up. Not quite used yet to putting a publication together so a bit of trial and error going on. And if the font looks a bit larger than before, it's to help my ageing eyesight! Any feedback gratefully received!

## MSUK News

MSUK have published a reminder in relation to upgrading under the Acquired Rights Scheme. They state "There is now a just over a month to submit completed paperwork to Motorsport UK (by 31st March 2024) to request the opportunity to upgrade via the Acquired Rights Scheme. After this date, there will be no future extensions to the Acquired Rights Scheme and the standard Marshals Pathway must be followed for upgrades. The closing date for applications under the Acquired Rights Scheme was extended for the final time, to allow Marshals to obtain any missing modules during this current training season, please remember, that this is only suitable for Rally, Speed and Kart Grading. Details on the application process can be found in the Resource Centre of the Motorsport UK website".

They have also published the following FAQ for upgrading. However, you may find it easier just to ask our Grading and membership secretary, Goff Evans. "Answers to Frequently Asked Questions - Upgrading

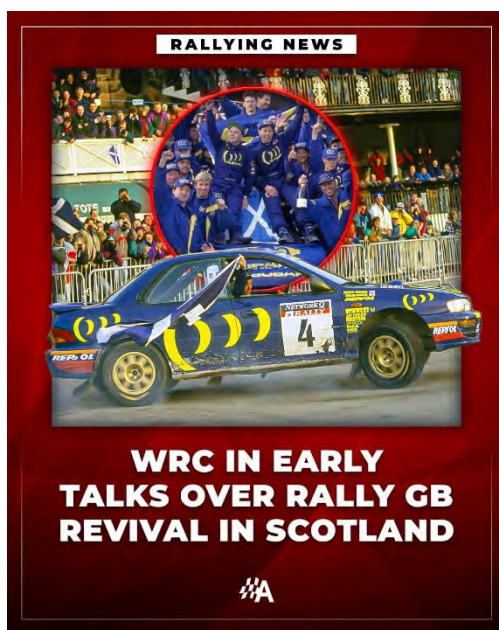
- If you are collecting signatures but have run out of space in your PRC, there are continuation sheets available in the Resource Centre, or you can email [marshals@motorsportuk.org](mailto:marshals@motorsportuk.org) for a new PRC.
- Event attendance can be signed by someone of the same grade or higher than the Marshal who requires the signature.
- Upgrade Assessments can only be signed by Marshal Assessors holding the grade for the discipline which they are assessing.
- Training Modules can only be signed by licensed Motorsport UK Trainers.
- The days to obtain the minimum requirements to upgrade must always be separate to the additional days required for assessment.

- A Knowledge Check is the Assessor asking questions to ensure that the Marshal has taken in enough information regarding, for instance, flags and flagging for a Race: Grade 2 (Incident) upgrade.
- If you have a question regarding your proposed upgrade, or any other marshalling query, please email [marshals@motorsportuk.org](mailto:marshals@motorsportuk.org) so that we can assist.
- If you need to update your details, you can do so on the Motorsport UK website. If you have forgotten your login details, please email [marshals@motorsportuk.org](mailto:marshals@motorsportuk.org) and we can reset them for you (please remember to include your Motorsport UK number).
- If you require an upgrade assessment, please give the Chief Marshal of the Event as much notice as possible. It is up to you, the Marshal, to arrange your assessment with the Chief Marshal and it is not something that Motorsport UK is able to assist with.
- The form for upgrading is available on the Motorsport UK website within the Resource Centre. It is called "2024 Application for a Motorsport UK Marshal Registration". [Application-for-a-2024- Marshal-Registration.pdf](https://motorsportuk.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/application-for-a-2024-Marshall-Registration.pdf) (motorsportuk.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com)
- If posting paperwork for an upgrade, please always remember to take a copy before posting, and put 'For the Attention of Sue Fletcher' on the envelope"

They have also sought to clarify the changes made to Marshals signing on sheets after it appeared to cause some argument. They state "Further to the recent emails regarding the newly updated Officials and Marshals Signing-on forms, we have incorporated the parental consent for officials under the age of 18 into one form. For confirmation, the requirement is simply that those signing on confirm they are fit and able to carry out their relevant duties on the day without impairment. So, as long as you are confident that you are able to fulfil your duties (as you have always done), then there is no change. PLEASE continue to marshal as you always have."

## WRC

Interesting news for next year's championship with the possibility of the championship coming a bit closer to these shores. Firstly, Motorsport Ireland are in advanced talks with the WRC promoters to bring Rally Ireland back on a 3 year contract, rotating the Rally base over the period with Waterford, Kerry and Limerick. It is believed this will likely get the green light IF the Government come up with the required funding, the same obstacle which scuppered Rally GB return, when Stormont decided to take a wee break.



Speaking of Rally GB, Hugh Chambers and Dave Richards of MSUK met with the WRC promoter Simon Larkin during the Swedish Rally to discuss the possibility of Rally GB's potential return, putting Scotland forward as the likely venue, again for the 2025 championship. This would be the first time that Scotland has featured on an International Rally Calendar since 2011 when the Intercontinental Rally Challenge visited. Talks are at a very early stage.

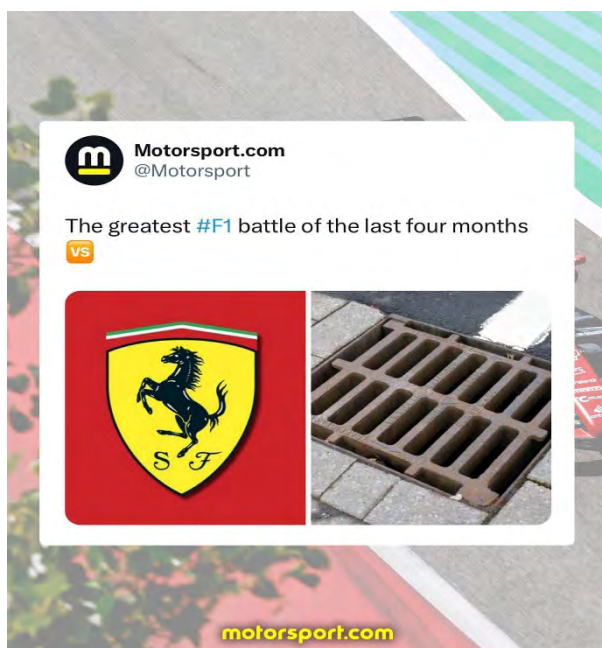
## NASCAR

Whenever we think some of the penalties in local Motorsport are harsh (but deserved), spare a thought for Joey Logano in NASCAR. At the weekend race in Atlanta, a pre-race inspection showed that his gloves had been altered, with the possibility this was done to gain a competitive advantage. Webbing had been added between the thumb and index finger on one glove and during qualifying he was seen to be holding the side window netting (no side window glass on NASCAR). He was fined \$10,000, made to start from the back of the grid, AND had to serve a drive through penalty at the end of the first lap!!

## F1 News

Due to a bit of time off work I had the “pleasure” of watching all 3 days of winter testing from Bahrain. Quite boring stuff really, and impossible to tell much due to “sandbagging” other than the Alpines of Ocon and Gasly are looking very poor. I’ve now just finished watching the 2 Free Practice sessions and a better picture is emerging. Mercedes seem to have made a vast improvement with both drivers fastest in FP2. Aston Martin and McLaren appear to be in the mix, and Red Bull slightly behind. Of course by the time you read this the race will be over and I’ll have egg on my face 😂.

I mentioned last month that the first 2 races are strangely on a Saturday. The reasons for this is that Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March, the weekend of Race 2 in Saudi, is the start of Ramadan. It was deemed not appropriate or safe to hold a race on this day, the majority of those attending the race would likely be fasting in the heat for a prolonged period, so F1 agreed to hold the race on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup>. However, F1 regs state that there MUST be a gap of 7 days between races, therefore Round 1 in Bahrain was brought forward by a day to maintain the 7 day gap. And Vegas will again be held on a Saturday due to it’s night time schedule. Were it to be held on a Sunday night, it would be the middle of the night / early Monday morning across Europe and Eastern USA which would obviously affect viewing figures.



In an incident during pre season testing in Bahrain last week, Charles LeClerc suffered substantial damage to his brand new Ferrari, when he drove over a drain cover on the edge of the kerb. The session was suspended to allow a lengthy repair. Given the short timescale to race weekend (6 days), organisers decided that the best solution was to fill the drains with concrete as a temporary repair. On average it rains for 2 days in March, so fingers crossed!

Thankfully the damage to the Ferrari was minor in comparison to that caused to Sainz’s car in Vegas.



Some new liveries about this season. During Car Launches, it was observed that a few teams' cars featured a lot of unpainted carbon fibre, to save a bit of weight. However, a few teams made big livery changes, Mercedes brought back some silver in the nosecone, Sauber (formerly Alfa Romeo operated by Sauber) have gone for a hi-vis green approach and RB Racing / Alpha Tauri / Toro Rosso / Red Bull B Team had a whole new look due to new sponsors and a name change.



On the subject of name changes, if like me you sometimes struggle with which team evolved into whichever other team, Autosport magazine handily posted the pic alongside as a guide to the origins and paths of the 10 teams currently on the grid. 4 Teams currently carry their original names, Haas is the only team still run by the founder. I would expect that in the next few years the Williams and Haas names will also disappear and be replaced – Williams has already been



taken over, and I think Gene Haas will finally lose patience and sell up.

This season the grid boasts 11 previous Grand Prix winners, certainly amongst the highest I can remember. As a bit of a challenge, can you name them all? Answers at the back of the magazine if I remember to add them in when I get that far!



bucket list.

Good to see that the British Grand Prix at Silverstone will remain on the calendar for another 10 years. Fans have been worrying that the “Home of Motorsport” would be replaced by a London street circuit. I believe that Silverstone is one of the great circuits left on the calendar along with Spa, Suzuka and Monza, despite the major changes made a few years ago. I highly recommend that you all consider marshalling it at least once in your lifetime – it is Marmite, love it or hate it, but is definitely an experience for the

## **Robert's RallyBuzz**

March 2024

### **NI Season Starts With Two Events**

Last month Stormont went back to work (not before time and probably too late to help bring WRC to the province), but the big news here in Northern Ireland was the start of the 2024 rally season. The Echlinville Stage Rally at Kirkistown Race Circuit was first off the mark on the 17th February. We were out in force marshalling the newly branded 90% sealed-surface single venue event which as usual was organised by North Armagh Motor Club.

Round 1 of the McGrady Insurance Motorsport UK Northern Ireland Rally Championship, the Echlinville Stage Rally had 75 starters, headed by 2023 champions Jonny Greer and Niall Burns in their Citroen C3 Rally2. In changeable conditions Greer led from start to finish, the Carryduff driver was fastest on four of the six stages. Total stage mileage was just 26.2.

The podium places were completed by two former NI Champions. The 2010 champion Stuart Biggerstaff and Anthony Nestor were second, 15.3 seconds back, in their older Ford Fiesta R5 which went well in the wetter tests. Eight-times champion and Kirkistown expert, Derek McGarrity and his co-driver Paddy Robinson finished third (19.3 seconds behind Stuart) in a Skoda Fabia R5 Evo. Best of the two-wheel-drive finishers were Colin Price and Billy Regan who were 11th overall in their Toyota Starlet.

For my part, Victor and I were marshalling at Fisherman's bend. Thankfully we were able to shelter from the rain in a new permanent marshal's hut. The rally started at 9am in damp and misty conditions but, after very heavy rain during stages three and four, the final tests took place in much drier conditions. All six stages ran to schedule and without any major incidents, despite the bad weather. We and all the other marshals were well fed and looked after by the organisers. A total of 61 cars finished the event.

By the way, you can watch highlights of each round of the NI Championship, hosted by the BBC's Stephen Watson, on YouTube following the events. Just search for the 2024 McGrady Insurance Motorsport UK Northern Ireland Rally Championship.

A week after Kirkistown, I was deep in the woods of County Tyrone for round one of the 2024 McGrady Insurance Motorsport UK NI Forest Rally Challenge. The Samsonas Rally Fivemiletown was organised by Omagh Motor Club on 24th February. There were 8 special stages totalling 31 miles spread over three forests south of Fivemiletown, SS1/4/7 Jenkin SS2/5/8 Crocknagrally and SS3/6 Doon.

A smaller than usual entry of 54 cars started and 43 finished. Winners were Niall McGonigle and Caolan McKenna in a Fiesta R5. The Clady driver, who has helped to organise this event in the past, finished just 2.8 seconds ahead of the VW Polo R5 of Vivian Hamill and Lorcan Moore after a rally-long battle. McGonigle led from the start but then Hamill went ahead by two tenths of a second on the penultimate stage. On the final 3.05 mile Crocknagrally test, Niall pulled out all the stops and claimed a popular win.

Derek Mackarel and Darren Curran were third in their Fiesta R5 but they claimed top NI Forest Challenge points as they were the first registered competitors to finish. Best of the 2-wheel-drive cars was the Escort Mk.2 of Hugh McQuaid/Martin Byrne who finished 9th overall.

I was on radio at the finish of Crocknagrally. The weather was cold to start but warmed up as the event progressed. We had a heavy localised shower before the final stage. There were no major problems for us, all three stages ran to schedule with just a few retirements. Other BMMC marshals were timekeeping and also covering rescue on the Doon stages.

## **Looking Back**

### **40 Years Ago**

Ronnie White won the second round of the 1984 Belfast Car Ferries Rallycross Championship at Boyd's Quarry, organised by Larne Motor Club. The Ford Fiesta driver was fastest all day and finished the A final ahead of Denis Biggerstaff's Mini. Jimmy Peak was third also in a Mini. We were marshalling as usual and the weather was kind to us for a change!

A healthy entry of 72 competitors took part in the first round of the 1984 NI Loose Sprint Championship. Held at Craigmore Quarry and organised by Mid Antrim MC the winner was David Francis in his Escort Mk.2 who was just two tenths of a second ahead of Bertie Law's Vauxhall Chevette. Dominic McNeill

was third in his Escort while Stanley Orr gave the Corry Cultra it's NI debut and finished a respectable fourth. BMRMC (as we were back then) provided marshals at the Randalstown venue.

### **34 Years Ago**

It's now been 34 years since the first time North Armagh Motor Club organised a rally at Kirkistown. The Kittle Brothers Stages on Saturday 3rd March was round one of the 1990 Adair-Singleton Northern Ireland Rally Championship. Winners were Fred Cameron and Dale McNeill in their Ford Escort G4. Second were the father and daughter combination of Derek and Roisin Boyd in their Mazda RX7 4-wheel-drive while Stephen Mawhinney and Ian Beasant were third in a Talbot Sunbeam Lotus. There were 6 stages. Not sure how many started, but 48 finished.

### **20 Years Ago**

The first two rounds of the 2004 British Rallycross Championship took place in Northern Ireland. Round 1 was held on Saturday 27th March at Kirkistown for the first time. In fact the venue hadn't been used for rallycross for 10 years. Round 2 was at Nutts Corner the next day. Will Gollop won at Kirkistown and Dermot Carnegie was top dog at Nutts Corner, both of them were in Ford Focus's. Local man Lawrence Gibson was second on both days in his Metro 6R4. There were 50 races on Saturday and 40 on Sunday. We supplied marshals on both days. After a total of 10 rounds, Dermot Carnegie went on to become 2004 British Rallycross Champion for the second consecutive year. Unfortunately, the British Rallycross Championship has never returned to Northern Ireland since that doubleheader in 2004.

### **10 Years Ago**

Belfast City Centre came to a standstill on Saturday 22 February 2014 when a cavalcade of 200 classic rally cars (mostly Minis) made their way from Parliament Buildings at Stormont via the City Hall to the new Titanic Belfast museum. It was all to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Paddy Hopkirk's 1964 Monte Carlo Rally win.

Hopkirk himself, now 81, led the cavalcade in a replica of 33 EJB, the Mini Cooper S which he drove to the surprise victory. Others including Ari Vatanen driving a Ford Fiesta he used on the Monte and Jimmy McRae in the 1980

Circuit of Ireland winning Vauxhall Chevette joined in. Northern Ireland's current WRC star, Kris Meeke drove a DGM Citroen DS3 R3. An autograph session proved very popular. I was able to have a word with old friend John Lyons who attended the event in a Mini.

A celebration knockout autotest was staged on the Titanic slipway and large crowds saw Paul Blair take victory in his powerful Westfield, but only after pre-event favourite Steven Ferguson's Mini Special hit a pylon in the final run. The event concluded with a gala dinner in the Titanic Suite.

## **Rally Diary**

**Sat 9th March**.....Race & Rally Stages @ Bishopscourt

Round 2 of the 2024 NI Rally Championship, this Ballynahinch and District MC event takes place as usual within the confines of Bishopscourt Race Circuit in South Co.Down. We are providing timekeepers and stage marshals. The rally starts at 9am and runs until approximately 5pm. Sign-on up until 8am at the venue if you haven't already done so on [rallyscore.net](http://rallyscore.net) Hot food will be provided. Leading entrants include championship contenders Jonny Greer, Derek McGarrity and Stuart Biggerstaff.

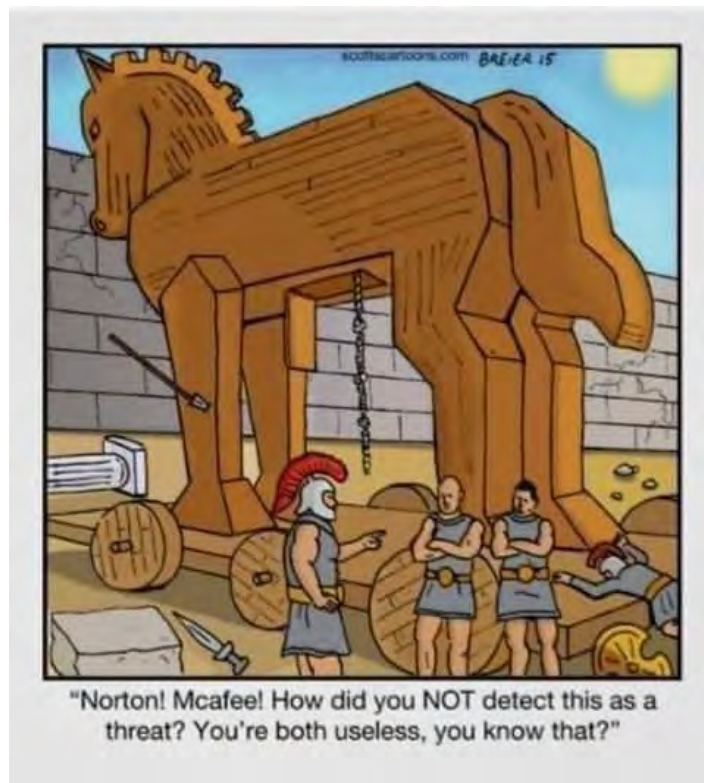
**Sat 30th March**.....Wastewater Solutions Circuit of Ireland Rally

Round 3 of the 2024 Irish Tarmac Rally Championship. Organised by the Ulster Automobile Club and based this year in Dungannon Co.Tyrone. There are four stages run twice. We will be covering rescue, stage marshals, timekeepers and radio points. Sign-on via [rallyscore.net](http://rallyscore.net) or on the one-day event.

**Sun 7th April**.....BMMC (NI) Marshals Training Day

To be held once again this year at Transport Training Services, Nutts Corner. The day starts at 9.30am and should finish around 4pm. Lunch will be provided but please confirm your attendance with Rory O'Neill. Jim Whittaker is lead trainer. The event is supported and promoted once more by the MMP and ANICC. All motorsport disciplines will be covered.

# 💩 Crap Corner 💩





**A big fire? At the doctor's surgery?**



**I'm sorry, we're only doing telephone appointments right now.**

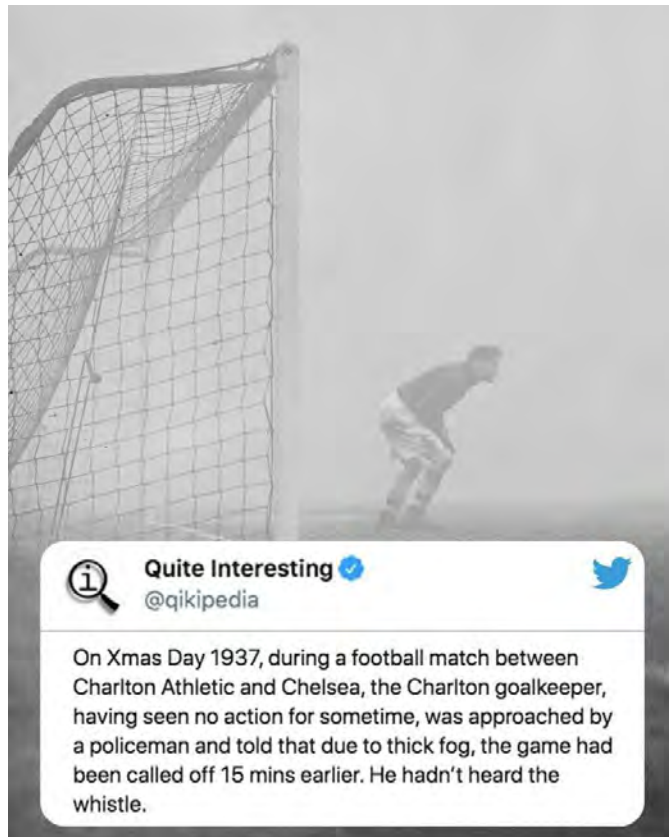


**“Don't believe everything you read on the Internet just because there's a picture with a quote next to it.”**

**—Abraham Lincoln**

“When people say "it's always  
the last place you look".  
Of course it is.  
Why would you keep looking  
after you've found it?”

- *Billy Connolly*



**Quite Interesting**   
@qikipedia



On Xmas Day 1937, during a football match between Charlton Athletic and Chelsea, the Charlton goalkeeper, having seen no action for sometime, was approached by a policeman and told that due to thick fog, the game had been called off 15 mins earlier. He hadn't heard the whistle.



**□ WHEN** adjusting our clocks for British Summer Time and Greenwich Mean Time, we are always reminded by the saying “Spring forward, fall back.” However, my mate Alberto is an acrobat in a circus and during his performance he sometimes springs back, sometimes forward and sometimes falls forward, sometimes back. Over the years the clocks in his caravan have got so out of sync that he has a roaring fire in July and wears shorts and flip flops in February.

***Horlicks the clown,  
Somewhere-on-the-road***

**BEFORE phoning the police to tell them you have a Kangaroo in your garden, check it's not the next door neighbours' greyhound taking a dump.**

***Andy Pandy, e-mail***

Answers to current GP winners on the grid:

Lewis Hamilton, George Russell, Max Verstappen, Sergio Perez, Fernando Alonso, Valtteri Bottas, Daniel Ricciardo, Charles LeClerc, Carlos Sainz, Pierre Gasly, Esteban Ocon

That's all for this month!!