

# BRITISHMOTORSPORT MARSHALS' CLUB



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## MARSHALS' POST

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTH WEST REGION OF THE  
BRITISH MOTORSPORT MARSHALS' CLUB

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# The Chairman's Chat

Wendi Batterson, South West Chairman .....

## SW Regional Committee Chairman's Chat – August 2017

Dear SW Member

I certainly hope you are enjoying some very pleasant summer weather that we have right now. I know we have had more rain than usual as my courgettes seem to have become marrows overnight and I can't keep up with them!

We are coming to that time of year when we need to think about worthy candidates for our awards so if you know of a marshal that you think would deserve being recognised please let me or indeed anyone on the committee know.

If there is anything you wish the committee to take forward on your behalf then do please let any one of us know. Similarly, we are always looking for articles to go into our newsletter so any little stories you have please send direct to Karen Connolly our Newsletter Editor for inclusion in the newsletter. Email [sw.news@marshals.co.uk](mailto:sw.news@marshals.co.uk)

All the best and stay safe.

*Wendi Batterson*  
South West Chairman  
British Motorsport Marshals' Club

# Upgrades

For those personnel requiring upgrades can you please make sure you complete the following before sending of your PRC.

- a. PRC is complete with all the relevant signatures including training signatures.
- b. A Registration Form is also required and can be downloaded from the MSA website and needs to be completed and signed by the applicant.

Once all of these are complete please send to your Regional Grading Officer. For the South West that will be myself.

Once received they will be checked through to make sure nothing is missing before being forwarded to the MSA for their action.

Once they are happy that everything is in order you should receive your upgrade shortly after.

Stay safe and enjoy your marshalling.

Regards

*Chris Drew*  
SW Regional Grading Officer  
British Motorsports Marshals' Club

## **"It could have been so much worse..."**

For those of who that frequent Castle Combe you will be aware that certain corners have a sense of inevitability when it comes to incidents. Not a race meeting goes by where a car doesn't visit certain points such as Quarry, Camp or Tower.

As with any other race track, the barriers in these areas are fairly sturdy albeit battle scarred. Several different paint colours adorn the black conveyor belts holding the tyre barriers firmly in place. The grass leading up to them shows signs of sideways wheels leading up to the inevitable crunch zone where yet another competitor meets their demise.

In order to reduce the damage caused to the circuit and the time taken to rebuild these barriers after impacts Castle Combe, along with other circuits, have recently invested in a new type of barrier called "Safeguard" designed by a company called Recticel.

They have been a permanent fixture at bike meetings, including the Isle of Man TT for a few years but this season at Castle Combe is the first time they have been used there, forming a permanent barrier structure at tactical points around the circuit.

On the Saturday, the cells did their job beautifully in safely arresting an errant Formula Ford who swapped ends and visited the marshals at Quarry. Despite a minor issue of a very small fire within one of the cell which was quickly identified and dealt with by the team at Quarry they worked brilliantly in saving significant time and also absorbing huge amounts of energy where a conventional tyre barrier would have not done so well.

On the Sunday however, it was my turn to witness the excellent features of the "Safeguard" barriers first hand. The CSCC session was in its dying seconds as a blue saloon car headed straight on into the barriers at Tower corner. The bang was exceptional and the angle of the car suggested it was at no slow speed. The medical crews were called and the marshals rushed to the car immediately. Fortunately, the driver was alert and more importantly, uninjured.

With the session over we went to inspect the damage. The "Safeguard" barriers worked wonders i absorbing an enormous amount of energy and causing only minor damage to the car but also the circuit. If the driver had been unfortunate enough to visit the corner in the same manner without the "Safeguard" cells or the tyre barriers, I feel that this day would have ended rather differently.

The driver's car which was recovered to the onlookers in the paddock who couldn't believe how little damage was present on the car despite the speed and velocity it hit the wall with. The driver remarked he last glanced at the speedometer moments before he braced himself for the impact and it still said he was travelling at nearly eighty miles an hour.

All in all, the incident from start to finish only took thirty minutes to deal with and the only casualty was one "Safeguard" cell which had had its outer bad and foam insert torn into about four pieces, a testament to these barriers that undoubtedly ensured that the driver could walk away with a damaged car and nothing more.

*Alex Hodgkinson*  
SW Regional Training Coordinator  
British Motorsports Marshals' Club

# Motorsports Trip to Canada and the USA

Although health issues during 2016 mean we can no longer get health cover for spending half the year in the USA, (as we have done for the past 24 years!!) I can still make short, one-off visits - as we did recently.

It began with an overnight with motorsports friends in southern New Jersey. Ed is something of a motorsport historian and he and Jeanette had invited a few of their friends - also motorsport historians (of the Sketchley/Titchmarsh variety!) - for a very interesting evening. It was 05.00 hrs UK time before we got to bed.

Next morning we had a 500-mile drive to just over the Canadian border near Niagara, to visit June's brother and his family. Then a quick flip to Toronto for the Indy GP. We had been lucky enough to rent an apartment within a five-minute walk of the circuit. On Sunday morning, we were able to watch the British GP on a very large TV, and the end of the Men's Singles at Wimbledon, before strolling in to the circuit. Not much like getting into Silverstone, is it?

In many ways Indy racing is more interesting than F1; almost anyone can win, it seems. No more so than this time, when all the fancied front runners pitted at the same time, which proved to be the wrong strategy, leaving victory to be fought over by mostly second-stringers.

Marshalling is organised by BARC Ontario, who I am told give a warm welcome to any marshals from the UK who wish to attend. I feel sure BARC Thruxton would be happy to help with arrangements.

Our daughter and son-in-law were with us at this stage, but moved on to more adventurous pursuits while we headed on to Quebec, the only major Canadian city we had yet to visit.

On the way we made an overnight stop in Trois Rivieres, a famous name from the past, and the home town of Gilles and Jacques Villeneuve. We had an interesting chat with the owner of the Gilles Villeneuve museum there.

Quebec is a lovely city - but grid-locked with both cars and people while we were there. A taxi back to our apartment could be seven minutes - or forty minutes! Main attraction was the visit of dozens of tall ships from all around the World, for Canada's 150th anniversary. Sadly, we had to leave before they all set sail at 08.00 hrs the day after we left. The arrangement was for them all to leave together, under full sail.

Next on the agenda was a visit to Mount Tremblant, arranged by John Kirkpatrick, of JRRDS fame, who was a good friend to the marshals when Jim Russell was in its prime at Donington. When we arrived there, we discovered their Summer Classic event was on, so we spent Sunday spectating at an interesting race day - in brilliant weather.

Next morning it was tipping it down, as we followed up John's introduction to the Circuit Manager there. Mont Tremblant is a mini-Nurburgring type of circuit, much favoured over the years by many F1 teams for a bit of private practice. It was a favourite of Michael Schumacher, who likened it to Nurburgring. I did not get a chance to drive round myself, as Ferrari USA had the track for two days, but we did get a drive with the Jim Russell Chief Instructor, who was otherwise busy showing a bunch of rich (some very rich!) Americans how to get the best out of their Ferraris. Great circuit!!

The circuit has been owned for the last 17/18 years by a certain Lawrence Strolle - is it any wonder therefore that Strolle Jr has made such an impression with Williams F1? Dad Strolle also owns part of Williams, I am told. Clearly, it helps being born with a race circuit to play with, just as it was for the Schumacher brothers.

Our "digs" here were in the most magnificent B&B we have ever encountered! Run by an Irish Canadian couple - one from Northern Ireland, the other from the South - it was truly an amazing place. Jenny is a cordon bleue cook (and then some!!) who served up only what she could buy locally that day at the Farmers' Market. Husband, Craig (aka "Maurice"), 40+ years in Canada, 20+ years as officer in Canadian Reserve, is a brilliant raconteur and kept us amused. We decided to drive longer runs on the next leg of our journey, so that we could stay an extra night here.

On Jenny's advice, we set off on all minor roads back to the US, where a three-car ferry across a lake was an interesting experience. Canadian small towns are much, much tidier than the US equivalent and we had a great trip. Crossed into the US at Thousand Lakes, amidst staggering scenery.

Julie and Glen re-joined us for our weekend in Pocono. My first visit here was 34 years ago, and we have been back pretty well every year since we built a second home in Florida - with some interesting drives through the States to get there and back, round trip mileage usually 3,500 miles or more. We are flattered to still be invited each year and we usually have dinner one night over the weekend with family and Dr Rose, original owner with recently deceased husband Dr Joe. The grandchildren are now in charge – although the oldest grandson, who was CEO at the track, has just been poached to be part of the NASCAR hierarchy. I have a feeling he might go far!

Great weekend but eventual winner Kyle Busch not exactly popular with the Pocono crowd!

For us, back to JFK, as my 21 days were up. Julie and Glen stayed on a few days in the Niagara region, before flying home from Toronto. A great trip but I do miss our second home in Florida and the ability to go there when we wanted. Nevertheless, we have many happy memories of our home in Sarasota, and the many friends and marshalling chums who were able to share it with us over 24 years.

*George Copeland*  
Vice President

## South West Region

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