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Malcolm & Steven Grubb on the Revival Rally

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Your Editor Speaking...

Happy New Year to you all!

It seems like a long time since 2004 wore out and was replaced by a shiney new year...

I hope you found the January "mini-Sump" useful - as you may know, traditionally there is no Sump in January but this year there was so much going on that it was felt

useful to remind everyone. Please forgive the "single staple" A4 format - it was done for speed (busy time, Christmas!)... Normal service is resumed this month!

More excellent articles this month - the Revival Rally, a review of the Christmas Skittles evening and a bit on what's involved in putting together this august publication!

Have fun!

Jez Boakes (Editor)

Chairmans Wibblings

Well here we are in 2005, Happy New Year to you all and I hope that it's a good one.

My 2005 started with the New Year's Day Parade in which the **csma** had entered an open top double decker bus, numerous classic cars and some motorcycles.

This was the fourth time I had attended this event and for the first time it did not rain! It was pretty cold but I think everyone enjoyed the day and I was even persuaded to entertain the top deck guests with some magic, until my fingers froze.

The Lambert Arms provided the start venue for the New Year Run, basically a touring assembly around the lanes of Oxfordshire, taking in the views and enjoying the countryside. The navigation is by a road book and no maps are necessary. Toby and Jez had done an excellent job with the road book, and providing information about places of interest was a nice

touch. Once again a good time was had by all and I'd like to thank Toby and Jez on behalf of everyone that took part for a well organised enjoyable day. Lets hope this becomes an annual event.

Friday 14th saw the WMx round of the North London Centre 12 car championship. The event started at White Waltham Airfield and we had a full entry and compliment of marshals. AG had arranged an interesting route around an area in which it is very difficult to get a route together. Consequently the roads have been little used for a number of years. The event was won by Mike Biss/Cath Woodman and Dave Smith/Mike Harrison, in an unusual tie situation. Thanks to Allan and his time for organising this excellent event. The next WMx 12 car will be in April and is being organised by Malcolm Grubb and yours truly.

That's it for now

Beens Rhubarb...

...and some leftover turkey!

Big J (Chairman)

www.csmawmx.com

Mack's Mutterings

Predictably Christmas has passed without too much excitement; lots of pounds gained (lbs rather than ££s unfortunately), another new year resolution to eat less and exercise more and, as usual, nowhere near enough time spent in the garage playing with car bits. So, not much excitement over Christmas then but for me the New Year has certainly started well.

The first big event for me was the New Year Run. As this was the first event of any sort Jez or I had organized, the few days leading up to the event were a bit of a worry! Would we get enough entries? Would the MSA/RLO give us approval in time? Would the route be closed by floods/ice/trees etc? Would the route be a complete disaster? Well, in reality I should not have worried so much. A good number of entries (thanks for you support everyone!), the RLO letter arrived the week before, there were only two potential re-routes due to trees etc that were clear on the day anyway and the general feedback on the route and roadbook was positive. So, from an organizer's point of view a fairly suc-

cessful event, but what about from an entrant's point of view? We noted a few things that could be done better but what did you think? Any comments, anonymous or otherwise gratefully received!

Next up in January was clubnight which I was unable to attend but I did manage to turn out to marshal on the WMx 12 car on the 14th. By the week before it was over-subscribed (AG and John were having to turn away entrants!) and the marshal turnout was excellent. Again, thanks to everyone for their support, from what I saw another excellent event!

So, what next? Well, it is all there in your Sump calendar: Feb clubnight is the slotcar stages and, if that is not enough for you, there is also the North London Centre President's slotcar stages rally on the 15th! For 12 car enthusiasts there is the NWL on the 11th Feb, the NEL on the 11th March and the WMx on the 8th April. Then there are the usual Noggin and Natters every month and, of course, the WMx Annual Dinner on the 5th March!

Have fun!

Toby Mack (Secretary)

New Year Run

1 4 Cars turned out for the **new** New Year Run (formerly known as the Chairman's Run) - placing a scary amount of faith in the organisational abilities of its two event-organising virgins! Route planning and roadbook production etc went smoothly enough, but the day before the event saw very high winds, causing two trees to fall over and block the route! Diversions were planned, and an amendment sheet for the roadbook was produced in the hotel overnight ready for the morning. As it turned out, they weren't needed as both trees had been cleared away - phew!

From Toby and my point of view the event itself went off *unbelievably* well - no-one got hopelessly lost (or no-one admitted to it anyway!) and there were no unforeseen hiccups. Phew again! Flushed with success, there is a very high chance that it will run again next



The Lambert Arms

year... Make a note in your diaries, and watch this space!

If any of the participants has any comments on what could be done better, or even what we did right, we'd be only too pleased to hear from you! And if any of you fancies bashing out a short article for the Sump, that would be grand too!

A big thank you to all the entrants, as well as those who helped out!

Jez Boakes

Our December Clubnight has been a festive evening of Skittles for several years now. The event proved even more popular than ever, with the 30 places available being filled well in advance of the night itself.



Strike!

Rhys Edwards had once again grouped the members into teams, in such a way as to mix people well and ensure that those of us who have been around for a few years, had chance to chat with less familiar faces.

The competition was intense from the start and the new balls at the skittle alley, at the Greyhound Pub, Eton Wick, were an interesting change. Instead of the rubber balls which had a tendency to bounce dangerously at the hands of the more flamboyant bowler, the new, harder balls were more stable and no less effective at knocking down the pins.

I captained Team 1 to an early tie for second place with Denise's Team 3 after the first round of bowling, beaten by four points by Jez's Team 2 on 41 points.

Before most teams had their second round, play was suspended for food. Once again, the Greyhound had done us proud with an excellent hot and cold buffet followed by chocolate Yule log and mince pies. The crackers had excellent prizes too – the spinning top is still on our kitchen table to be twirled at regular intervals.

Whether it was the fuelling of the pies or the festive paper hats that did it I'm not sure, but Team 3 upped their game in the second round and it was all change at the top. Team 3 had taken a 1 point lead over Team 2 on 82, leaving my team in third place on 78.

The third and final round saw things change again. Team 2 reclaimed their first place spot, with a grand total of 129, and my wonderful team mates helped us retake second



Strange goings on in team 4!



Rhys relieving some aggression!

place with 122 from Team 3 who took the third podium place on 114.

The star bowler of the night emerged as Jez, with the highest personal score in a single round of an impressive 24 points and a total at the end of the evening of 49, fourteen points clear of the nearest rival!

Our youngest team captain for some years, 10 year old Robert, took the wooden spoon for the "player with the most potential". I must also thank Rhys who, anticipating a repeat of the previous two years, had prepared a second "player with the most potential" spoon with my name already on it before the competition began. Nice to know he had confidence that I'd improve!

Team 2	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Total
Jez B	17	8	24	49
Derrick H	8	9	7	24
Judith T	8	7	7	22
Simon M	8	17	9	34
	41	41	47	129

Team 1	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Total
Nikki W	6	7	12	25
Tom C	7	12	16	35
Andy T	15	7	7	29
Celia M	9	15	9	33
	37	41	44	122

Team 3	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Total
Denise W	6	16	8	30
Ann H	6	15	9	30
Dave W	16	7	8	31
Bob H	9	8	6	23
	37	46	31	114

Team 4	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Total
Steve W	4	12	8	24
Maurice H	4	9	11	24
Gail M	9	7	7	23
Marie H	6	12	5	23
	23	40	31	94

Team 6	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Total
Angie C	9	8	9	26
Allan G	10	4	7	21
Terri T	8	7	6	21
Rhys E	8	7	8	23
	35	26	30	91

Team 7	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Total
Toby M	8	8	7	23
Barbara W	2	7	8	17
Ian R	9	7	2	18
Mike S	8	9	12	29
	27	31	29	87

Team 5	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Total
Robert N	2	4	6	12
Sheila H	6	5	5	16
Kenneth W	18	7	8	33
John W	7	7	7	21
	33	23	26	82

Well done to all those who took part, for creating another fantastic evening. I'm looking forward to December and another match.

Nikki Wild

December Sump

Wednesday 16th November. Send a reminder to Toby and John that their submissions are due in one week.

Wednesday 23rd November. Send a reminder to Toby and John that their submissions are due today.

What *have* we got? The Motorsport Bulletin from Mike Biss, some ads and stuff from AG and an article from Nikki about the WMx survey. Right.

Make a new copy of the template, remembering to change the date and advance the issue number by one. Start with Mike's article. Mike writes his articles in Micro\$oft Word, and formats them for A4 printing. The Sump is of course A5... Reduce all the text to 9 point, then start on the table of up-coming events. This always causes problems – there is a lot of information to get across the (much smaller) page width, which requires careful juggling of tab stops (PagePlus doesn't import Word stuff very well). Having done this, all the rest of the text is easy. Hold up – a couple of tables. Oh no... PagePlus does an even worse job of importing tables – the quickest way is to start again and re-enter all the information by hand. Off we go... A couple of pictures to import as well. Done – about 40 minutes.

On to Nikki's article. Import the text – no problem. Import the graphs – no problem. Try printing it out – problem. The colours used don't show up at all well in black and white. OK – get the original Excel file and change the colours to cross-hatching. Trial print – nope – this doesn't look very good either. Try some shades of grey. Yes! It's all in PagePlus now, but there's a hug gap at the bottom of the first page, into which the first graph *just* won't fit... Hmm... Shift the start of the article to follow the Motorsport Bulletin. A better fit, but now the first page doesn't face onto the graphs. I don't like it, but it'll have to do for now – I might be able to do something with it later. Done – about 30 minutes.

Now to the ads etc from AG. An ad for the WMx walk next year – blimey, he's really thinking ahead! – a list of motorcycling events and a plea for the January 12-car. Nothing difficult here – import the text, change the fonts (it keeps the size of the eSump down if fonts already "built in" to the Adobe Acrobat reader are used) and change the size of the text so that it fits on A5. Add a bit of a fill to emphasise one of the ads. Done all three in about 20 minutes.

Now to write my little bit of stuff and nonsense. Quite difficult, this! Think a bit, type a bit, delete a lot, and repeat... About half an hour later, there's something which I think doesn't sound *too* bad (of course, you may think otherwise!)

At close of play on Wednesday I've spent about 2 hours on it. Still nothing from either John or Toby. Time for beddy-byes... Ypres tomorrow! Woohoo!

Sunday 28th November. Back from Ypres - tired but happy! A Good Weekend! Quick check of email - ah good - an article from Toby, and a change of address from John. Hm.

Monday 29th November. The plan was to get back from New Year Run road book preparing / route finding in time to put the Sump together in the evening. Erm... No. Didn't get back until 11pm. Ho hum.

Tuesday 30th November. Noggin night... Home from work early. 5:00 start. Put Toby's article in. Add a note of congratulations for the WMx crews on the Revival Rally. Oh dear - still three pages to fill. Modify the ad for the New Year Run and stick that on the back page. Takes a while to get the 'fill' for the page to match the picture of the rally plate. Got the entry form for the NEL 12-car. Stick that in. Bum - there's a lot of text to get on

an A5 page! Went in fairly easily though. A page for future events - nothing too tricky - time's running out! We printed a couple of silly competitions in the September Sump. Have a trawl through my email for entries. A depressingly small number as it turns out - come on you people!! Knock up a page announcing the 'winners'.

Ah! Something for the front cover. No suitable photos have been submitted... OK, I think it's time for the WMx committee to wish everyone a happy Christmas! Sorted!

Whilst all this is going on the MSA Wheels supplement has been printing - 10 copies should do for tonight (Noggin).

The Sump is now finished, and it's 6:30. Print off seven copies for Noggin tonight. Now, the group printer - a Cheap-As-Chips Brother laser - only prints single sided, which for double sided means taking the printed sheets and putting them back in the paper tray *making sure they're the right way around...*

While they're printing attention turns to the calendar flier. Remove November's events and add some new months on the bottom until the page is full. On the other side - the entry form for the New Year Run. I don't like putting entry forms and things on the back of things which people are likely to want to keep, but there isn't much choice. (This was some good feedback given to me early in my Sump production career.) Finished this about 7:15pm.

Now all seven copies are printed and need to be collated : the printer does all seven pages 1, 2, 15 and 16 (think about it!), then all seven pages 3, 4, 13 and 14 etc etc. (It took me ages to get my head around A5 double sided booklet production!) Then they're folded and stapled. While the Sump is being collated and stapled the calendar flier is being printed (noting that this is A4 and needs to be put into the paper tray a different way!)

7:30pm - done. Seven copies are ready for Noggin. Turns out to be just enough for the monster turn out!

Wednesday 1st December. Now to print the rest! Various other things happening mean that the task doesn't start until 9pm. Because the paper tray is quite small they can't all be printed at once. The seven given out at Noggin mean that 123 copies need to be printed. One batch of 24 and three batches of 33 should do it (35 is about the limit for the printer output tray). And of course 120 more MSA Wheels supplements. Whilst one batch is being printed, the previous one can be collated and stapled. Got them all printed and about half collated by 11:25pm.

Thursday 2nd December. Finish off the collating and do all the stapling. Modify the address labels to remove those people who were at Noggin and therefore don't need their Sump posting. Print the labels. Stick 123 labels onto 123 envelopes, along with (of course) 123 stamps. Not the most interesting of jobs, this - but at least I don't have to lick them... While sticking stamps and labels, the calendar fliers have been printing. Fold these in half, then put one Sump and one calendar flier in an envelope. Repeat 123 times. Done! Another three hours gone.

Friday 3rd December. Later than is ideal (the Sump should be in your hands by the first of the month) because of various happenings, plus the fact that Noggin fell on the very last day of the month, the Sump is posted on the way to work at 07:25am.

Home from work in the evening. Now for the eSump. Swap the graphs in Nikki's article back to colour ones and change a few contact details to reflect the easier distribution possible with email and export the Sump and calendar flier as PDF files. Compose a suitable email and send it off. Done in half an hour. Finally finished! Same again next month!

Jeze Boakes (Sump Editor)



Dates	Event (Status)	Club	Type of Event	Champ
Feb Sun 6	* Red Tape (C)	HQ	Motor Cycle Trial	
Fri 11	12 Car Rally (C)	NWL	Navigational Rally	Centre
Tue 15	* Slot Car Stages ()	NEL	Intergroup Scalextric	Centre
19/20	* Kent (Nat B)	Sevenoaks & DMC	Road Rally	Southern
Mar Fri 11	12 Car Rally (C)	NEL	Navigational Rally	Centre
Sun 20	* Auto Solo (C)	Farnborough & DMC	Semi Speed event	
Apr Fri 8	12 Car Rally (C)	WMx	Navigational Rally	Centre
Sun 17	Concorde PCT (Nat B/C)	NEL	Production Car Trial	Centre
Sun 24	Services (C)	HQ	Motor Cycle Trial	
May Sat 21	Metropole (C)	HQ	Regularity Run	
21/22	Curtis Bennett (C)	HQ	Navigational Rally	
Sun 22	Dunlop (C)	HQ	Grass Autotest	

Licence required: (I/Nat A/Nat B/Cm) = MSA Licence, (C) = Club Card, () = Nothing, * = Regs available

Past Events

January 12 Car Yet again West Middlesex attracted a full entry to their event, and even had to turn a couple of crews away. A new aerodrome location near Maidenhead was the start and finish venue and very nice it was too. A novelty on this event was that the navigation was given out in one go as you left the start, with all the different bits of navigation numbered. You didn't know which bits to use until the marshal gave you the list of numbers as your due time came up. It seemed to work quite well and the organisers didn't have to do the laborious job of stuffing routecards in envelopes, as all the control locations were given on the roadbook. As the event was running in a congested area, at times the roads were a bit built up but I think most people enjoyed the route and at least the roads were new to a lot of crews.

1st	Car 3	Mike Biss / Cath Woodman	NEL/NWL	Exp	0	Fails	0	Mins
1st	Car 5	Dave Smith / Mike Harrison	NWL	Exp	0	Fails	0	Mins
3rd	Car 0	Chris Pratt / Glynn Hayward	Reading	Exp	0	Fails	0	Mins
4th	Car 6	Philip Brent / Graham Robinson	NEL	Nov	1	Fail	2	Mins
5th	Car 7	Steven Grubb / Caroline Grubb	WMx	Nov	2	Fails	0	Mins
6th	Car 2	Malcolm Grubb / Michael Grubb	WMx	Exp	2	Fails	9	Mins
7th	Car 1	John Evans / Ted Manktelow	NWL	Exp	4	Fails	0	Mins
8th	Car 4	Derek Newbould / James Newbould	NEL	Exp	8	Fails	44	Mins
1st	Car 10	Chris Foxley / John Bennett	WMx	Beg	0	Fails	0	Mins
1st	Car 11	Colin Hiscock / Chris Hiscock	WMx	Beg	0	Fails	0	Mins
1st	Car 12	Dave Edmunds / Dom Jeans	WMx	Beg	0	Fails	0	Mins
4th	Car 9	Doug Powell / Trevor Holland	WMx	Beg	11	Fails	6	Mins
5th	Car 8	Drew Goodspeed / Simon Mummery	WMx	Beg	12	Fails	2	Mins

Future Events

Red Tape M/C Trial This will take place at Bagshot Heath in Surrey. Anyone interested in marshalling this event should contact the Chief Observer John Ward on 01344 648380. There are usually several people from the Centre who support this event.

February 12 Car This event has had to be postponed due to a lack of organisers. NWL will be trying to come up with another date so that the event is not lost, so details will be sent out as soon as any arrangements have been made.

Intergroup Scalextric Stages Since the advert last month, this event has changed venues and will now be hosted by NEL at the Red Lion Hotel, 88 Great North Road, Hatfield, Herts AL9 5EU, map reference 166/233092. This is the same venue as last year and was also the venue for the Club Governance presentation by Stephen White (and also the next presentation). It is a lot of fun and no previous experience is required (sometimes that is even an advantage). With a minimum of rules and a maximum of 'play time', a good fun evening is certain! The organisers will provide all the slot cars, facilities and equipment to be used for the evening. All members of NEL, NWL, Milton Keynes, Surrey, Southend, Wraysbury and West Middlesex Groups are invited to attend.



Historic Motorsport Show This is the second running of the show, held at Stoneleigh Showground near Coventry and will take place between the 25th-27th February. The event has displays of classic cars and bikes (and classic drivers come to that) from all forms of the motorsport arena, together with trade stands and autojumble stands. Ticket prices are £12.50 in advance and £15 on the day. The live action events are free, with a BTRDA autotest show on the Saturday and the start of the Winter Challenge to Monte Carlo on Sunday morning. For more details visit the event website at www.historic-motorsport.co.uk



March 12 Car Rally This will be run by NEL and the start will be somewhere on the A10 (that's the best I can get from the organisers at present). The event will be on map 166 and will cover the usual 45 miles or so. More details will be available next month, along with an entry form.

Farnborough Auto Solo This is a new style of event that is a cross between an autotest and a sprint. The **csma** have an invite from Farnborough & DMC to their event on the 20th March, which will be held down at Bordon in Hampshire. Any road car is suitable (see picture from last years event) and sharing the driving is allowed. Handbrake turns and a good memory are not required as the tests are designed with no sharp turns and all the gates are numbered. Most of the tests are done in second gear so certainly faster than a tarmac autotest but no where near as fast as a sprint. The entry is split into two or three groups and when you are not competing, you help out marshalling. Also, as there are usually a lot of competitors, this means there will be someone to talk to about the other competitors progress whilst you're marshalling. The entry fee will be about £25, but you will get two runs at each of the four tests run during the day. Regs and further details are available from myself.



Other News

MSA Future Ideas The MSA have decided that motor sport needs a policy against child abuse. Instead of coming up with a brief statement, they have produced a 14 page document which goes into immense detail, even making it a requirement for clubs to have a club child protection officer, complete with training and police background checks. This is only at a draft stage at present but it will be fought against by the LCAMC regional association (whose secretary happens to have a wealth of experience in this area) as totally over the top and may even give the misleading impression that there is a serious problem within the sport.

Mike Biss: NLC Motor Sports Coordinator

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The deadline for articles for the *March* Sump is January 19th!

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors, and not necessarily those of the csma, csma West Middlesex Group Committee or the editor.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

I read with no little interest your fascinating article, "Diary of a Westfield Owner, aged 38 *Precisely*" on its publication late last year. Whilst perusing the aforementioned work, it became increasingly apparent that you are without that most essential item in a mechanical artisan's library, "Haynes Terms Explained." I have thus taken the liberty of attaching a copy of the same publication for your edification.

Yours etc,

I. Bashem-Harder (Haynes Technical Division)

- Routine Maintenance If it isn't broken it's about to be
- Undo Clamp with an adjustable spanner and beat repeatedly with a hammer in an anti-clockwise direction.
- Remove retaining clips Clean away fifteen years' worth of solidified crud - the rotten remains of the retaining clip will be there somewhere.
- The ... should come away easily It will be corroded into place. Clamp with an adjustable spanner and beat repeatedly with a hammer in an anti-clockwise direction.
- The ... will be a tight fit As a minimum, you will skin your knuckles. Clamp with an adjustable spanner and beat repeatedly with a hammer in an anti-clockwise direction.
- The ... will be a very tight fit Not a hope in hell of shifting it without a trip to casualty. Clamp with an adjustable spanner and beat repeatedly with a hammer in an anti-clockwise direction.
- Apply moderate heat Heat until glowing red, clamp with an adjustable spanner and beat repeatedly with a hammer in an anti-clockwise direction.
- Ease the ... Apply super-human strength...
- Using the correct size of punch... Hacksaw the tip off an old nail, apply and beat repeatedly with a hammer...
- Prise off Insert an old screwdriver and beat repeatedly with a hammer.
- Making sure that you retain the small sprung inner circlip retaining widget for re-use Bloody hell, that thing nearly had my eye out!!! Now, where did it land?
- Retaining nut Large, perfectly circular blob of rust that will shear off or crumble when an attempt is made to remove it with mole grips.
- Gently... Start off gently and increase effort exponentially until the veins on your forehead stand out.
- Carefully... You are about to hurt yourself...
- It is advisable to get assistance when... You are about to humiliate yourself in front of somebody you know...
- Refitting is the reverse of removal Except that the swear words come in different places.

Revival Rally 2004 – The view from car 9

Anticipation and Buildup

I had always wanted to compete on the RAC rally, having followed it religiously over the years in various guises as spectator, marshal, and support crew. Unfortunately it was always out of reach due to family considerations and financial constraints. Just as the family constraints were easing the cost to compete began to rise out of sight, and so I resigned myself to always wondering 'what if?' The character of the event had also changed with the clubman progressively being squeezed out and the endurance element being sacrificed to satisfy the requirements of TV, marketing, team logistics and crews.

Fortunately for me, other clubmen had had the same experiences and relished the chance to compete, on equal terms, with each other in a clone of the old RAC format. When I became aware of the Revival Rally and its attempt to provide clubmen with an 'affordable' RAC replica it didn't take us long to decide to enter, especially as CSMA were supporting the venture. The challenge would be a 3 day, 1,400 mile endurance rally for



Nova SRi Prior to the Event!

up to 1400cc cars. The route would visit England, Scotland and Wales and would use many of the stages previously used on the RAC.

Being a close knit motor sporting family, my son Steven leapt at the chance to co-drive (and loan / sell me his Corsa SRi to use on the event) and my daughter Caroline agreed to co-drive for John Wright in his 205 XS. My wife

Madeleine had offered to marshal on all three days and thus remain in touch with the event and hopefully check that her 'family' were all OK, as Mum's are wont to do!

In addition to John and ourselves from West Middlesex Group, entries were also received from Dave Smith / Pete Johnson (car 2), Pete Gregory / Graeme Presswell (car 3), Mike Biss / Cath Woodman (car 47) and Alan Wakeman / Ian Perry (car 82) so the centre was well represented.

At this stage all looked to be under control and we began to investigate when, where, what and how we would need to prepare the Corsa for the event. The organisers technical regulations were pretty straightforward and intended to keep the cars as standard as possible, with safety equipment (roll cage, full harness belts, extinguisher etc...) and reliability (sump guard, waterproofing etc...) being the main tasks. Engine, gearbox, steering and brakes had to remain as standard and all cars had to run on the same type of Colway remould tyres.

However, Steven's car was unfortunately written off in a road accident when another driver exited a side road and hit the Corsa. Fortunately no one was hurt however we now had to find another car and time was running out fast. Again we were fortunate in that Dave Smith, who had also entered the Revival Rally, had already acquired and prepared

a Corsa for the event. It turned out that he had also acquired an old Nova SRI that had already been part prepared to the endurance rally format. The Nova was in fact 'spare' and so we bought it.

As a try out Steven and I entered the Nova in the CB weekend events (Curtis Bennett Rally, Metropole Run and Dunlop Cup Autotest) to see if everything worked and if anything fell off. This proved to be a valuable exercise as a number of niggles emerged which we would need to address in the remaining spare evenings and weekends.

I was very lucky to find a couple of Bilstein struts on e-bay, which we 'won' by putting in the winning bid with just 5 seconds to go! We also had to replace a total of 13 assorted bulbs, fit a trip-meter, a map light, fix the rear wiper, washer and heated rear window, fabricate spotlight brackets and fit the necessary switches, relays and wiring. I never got around to sorting out the gear linkage, which battled with the driver when trying to change up to 5th (not too much of a problem on the event) or when trying to change down to 2nd (definitely a problem!). If the basics had not already been done (roll cage, seats, belts, sump and tank guards) then I don't think we would have made it.

Finally the day of the event approached, as we were running at car 9 we had been allocated a very early scrutineering time on the Wednesday morning. This either meant leaving home at 04.00 or else travel up the previous night and find somewhere to stay in York. As I work in Hamble, overlooking the Isle of Wight, it meant leaving work at 17.30, driving the 70 miles to home, a quick bite to eat and then the 210 miles to York. This worked out well as we were able to calibrate the tripmeter, and learn how to use (some of) its features on the journey. Excitement mounted as we parked at the hotel and saw how many other crews had had the same idea.

Scrutineering passed ok with no problems and we then signed on and collected our road books and detailed route for the next three days. Steven and I spent most of the Wednesday plotting this on our OS maps in our hotel room. As a result we missed lunch but were able to join up with Allan Goddard, Alan Smith and the two crews from Windsor Car Club who were in a club team with ourselves. After a nice meal and chat we had another pleasant surprise as Madeleine and Caroline arrived. They had decided to drive up Wednesday evening and called at our hotel before moving on to a B&B they had booked.

The Event – day 1 (York to Carlisle)

The day of the event dawned at last, we lined up at the start ramp with three minutes to go when a member of the Hotel staff suddenly appeared at Stevens door. It seems that although I had settled the bill for the extra hotel night we still had some more to pay. Whilst struggling to get out of the full harnesses, get out of the car, find wallet and then go to reception (leaving Steven to drive the car onto the start ramp alone) I spot Madeleine and Caroline in the crowd, wave them over and ask them to pay so that we can get on with the event. Fortunately they agree to do so, I get back in and we make the start with seconds



Deer Park

Cont'd

to spare although it was a while before I got all of the full harness belts back in place. Not an auspicious beginning.

The event started with a long run out (in the surprisingly heavy York morning rush hour traffic) to the North Eastern group of stages.

The first two forest stages are at Wass, and these pass off with a strange problem in that under heavy braking the engine cuts out, although it starts first time immediately afterwards. This didn't cost too much time but meant that I had to be prepared for nothing to happen when accelerating away from cones, corners and obstacles after heavy braking.

Then on to Pickering for a wet and rutted stage around the showground tracks. After one particular watersplash we get water in the alternator and the drive belt begins to screech, and slip. The engine keeps running and after a few minutes dries out enough for everything to work properly again.

Next stage was the much anticipated motorcycle racing circuit at Oliver's Mount in Scarborough. This proved to be a mixture of both fun and frustration. The tarmac was super smooth, but damp and very greasy in places. We were running as 9th car on the road and the number of tyre tracks, both on the grass verges and infield, created by the



Sweet Lamb

cars ahead was quite revealing. The frustration came as I misunderstood Stevens's instructions regarding a specific route around the first set of three cones. I had done the first two correctly and was accelerating away from the third, but on the wrong side of it. Stevens's shout of 'STOP!!!!' must have been heard back in Scarborough, but it was certainly effective. I then had the troublesome task of reversing past the cone, which was alongside Steven, but out of my view which is severely restricted due to the fact that I am firmly strapped in a rally seat, can only face forwards, with a high seat back and triangulated roll cage behind me as well. This makes reversing anywhere a tentative process. Having successfully reversed it then took me three attempts to coax the gearbox out of reverse and into first. Eventually we were away again and on the right route, but had lost a lot of time due to my error.

The rally route then headed west and we were due to revisit Pickering next, however the stage had been cancelled due to the deteriorating state of the stage. So it was back to Wass for a rerun of the second stage and then on to Boltby Forest, which proved to be very rough and resulted in bodywork damage to some of the cars ahead (we had to drive around assorted bits of Nissan Micra we found centre stage) and a number of cars behind got stuck on the final steep climb to the finish control.

Final stage of the morning was at Lightwater valley, which turned out to be very narrow and very difficult, at least for me, to find the correct route through the amusement park features and tracks. Steven did a great job of spotting the direction arrows even though some appeared to point in some unlikely directions or even into space! Stevens best

efforts did not stop us having an overshoot, an undershoot where I managed to hand-brake the nova at the last moment into a 90 left slot, only to discover we were 10ft early as the correct left slot was the far side of the hedge on a parallel track! I would have loved another go at this stage as it was quite tricky, but well suited to a road rallyist / autotester if you knew the route.

After a bite to eat we were on our way to Croft Circuit. This was the complete antithesis of the previous stages as it was wide, fast, open and allowed us all to throw the cars around without fear of hitting trees! We had the luxury of doing this stage at dusk, later runners would have found it more difficult in the dark. From talking to a number of drivers this was considered the most fun stage of day 1.



Pickering

We refuelled at Scotch Corner and then did a series of 3 stages at Catterick, Streatlam and then the eagerly awaited Hamsterley Forest and Slayley. These all passed without problem and we made out way to Hexham Auction Mart for the evening meal.

From here we were off again to Shepherdshield for the final stage of day 1. This passed without problem and so we made our way to Carlisle for the overnight halt.

The results for day 1 were already on display when we arrived at around 22.30 and showed us to be lying 24th overall, however there were a number of protests in play due to the blockage at Boltby and queries over penalties applied to some high profile crews for failure to complete the correct number of laps at Oliver's Mount and Croft. The good news was that ours was the leading club team, by just 1 second, from a team of Mini Coopers. We knew that positions would change once the protests were reviewed, but at least we had completed day 1 and went off to bed looking forward to day 2.

To be continued.....

Malcolm Grubb

Appeal for information

Friday 14th January, WMx 12-car start.

Having driven this car around the whole of the Revival Rally without a scratch, Malcolm returned to it in the White Waltham Airfield car park to start the WMx 12-car to find the passenger door had been damaged.

If anyone has any information about what happened or who did it (possibly without realising) please call Malcolm on 01784 435447 (evenings).

Thank you.

csma : North London Centre

Presidents Night

Slot-Car Stages Rally..

At :

The Red Lion, Hatfield *

Tuesday 15th Febuary 2005

All members of the North London Centre Groups, their family and friends are invited to attend another President's Night 'Slot Car Stages' at the Red Lion, Hatfield.

We'll start with a briefing at 8.15pm and things will get underway around 8.30pm. The usual format will have a bit of a twist this year but it'll still be Group Teams of two, best three teams from one nominated group wins the Presidents Trophy for 2005.

For the last few years we have enjoyed some really splendid turn-outs and real fun evenings of competition. Once again our hosts will be North East London Group and everyone from our Centre will be most welcome at the Red Lion, Hatfield.

*I look forward to seeing **YOU** there supporting **YOUR** Group!*

*Note it in your diary, **Thursday 15th Feb. – 8.00pm for an 8.15 start..***

AG

Allan Goddard - 'phone: m) 07785 903000 h) 0118 934 5726

*** Please Note Change of Venue!**