



February 2010
Number 527



The Thames at Benson on the New Year Run!

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Your Editor Speaking...

Well that was another exciting month... Yet more snow! I got rather fed up of shoveling snow with a trenching shovel so I spent 5 minutes in the garage and made a snow shovel with a 2 foot square of plywood and a length of 2 x 1. Worked a treat! Although we were nicely dug out I was still told to stay away from work for a couple of days... Shame!

Garage progress - well, the switchgear cabinet is mounted, the control pendant is wired and mounted, and the two just need

to be wired together. That's all... Then with any luck there won't be any flames when it gets to the testing phase.

One of the Westfield engine mounts has been re-welded and X-rayed again. It looks better now, but there is still one joint needs re-doing. Then onto the other one. And then I need to learn how to weld upside down when I do the gearbox mount.

Should be interesting...

Have fun!

Jez Boakes (Editor)

A Note from your Chairman

2010!! We've finished with the noughties (noughties?) and we are a decade into the millennium – good grief.

The new year was kicked off by the New Year Run – thank you all that joined in and helped me to also celebrate a 'significant' birthday at the same time (with apologies to Gwyn) it was very special for me.

The 'Dakar' (how can it be so called when it is held in South America?) is done and dusted and as I write this, the Monte is just about underway, can Kris Meake bring it home? – I hope so. We have two World Champions at McLaren, one at Ferrari and a seven-time champion at Mercedes (nee Brawn) so it should be a very interesting year. There is also a Yorkshire based

team, Manor GP re-named Virgin GP – let's hope they run faster than Boycott used to accrue his runs!

That's the international stage addressed, so where was everyone on Clubnight??? If everyone makes a new year resolution to attend, say, two clubnights this year, we'll either have reasonable attendance through the year, if it's spread out, or two very well attended evenings if it's not!

AND – apart from that, there's a whole host of WMx (and other csma) organised events to keep you from getting complacent.

I hope the new year brings all that you hope for.

As ever keep your foot in it.....

Derrick Holden (Chairman)

csma West Middlesex Group
Secretary's Scribblings

Happy New Year !

I hope you had a great one and you can restart your New Year's Resolutions next year !

For me the year started as I expect it'll continue – up early on 1st January to collect the new rally car which I “accidentally” bought on ebay. A full 1600 Challenge spec 205 GTi, MSA log booked and ready to go, with another car in spares and enough wheels and tyres to last two seasons. I put on a low bid thinking bidding would go way higher, and I won at £300 under my maximum bid ! It flies. The LSD tugs more than I remember, but grip is amazing. It feels quicker than my old works 205.

On Sunday 3rd it was time for the NWL Autotest at Bovington. Apologies to Derrick for not attending the New Year's Run, apparently it went well, and maybe we should have gone ! This was to be Owen's (son number two) competitive driving debut at the age of 15. For an Autotest, it was mighty like an Autosolo! No complaints. After the first test I was sixth overall (two half spins), leading the Novice class and Owen was leading the Beginner's class. However we'd been experiencing some groaning from the gearbox area. Owen completed his three runs at the second test with more groaning from the gearbox , 4 cones and (almost) a marshal. Owen was enjoying himself, he thought he was on

The Sump February 2010

Grand Theft Auto! My first run at the second test produced more noise, another half spin and no drive after the test. A few calls and we guessed either clutch (but there was no clutch smell) or the crown wheel spinning on the diff (a 106 weakness). The car should be back tomorrow with a new clutch and rebuilt gearbox with lower final drive, welded crown wheel to diff, and a bill. At least it should be bullet proof now for Oli's (eldest son) assault on the BTRDA and CMSG Autosolo championships.

What else happened this month :

- An enjoyable evening with the karting group, congratulations to Drew, Oli will beat you next time !
- An abridged version of “AG Warts and All”. Where was everyone? He'll run it again, I never knew AG had done so much. Side entertainment provided by a salsa class which had been double booked in to the same room.

To look forward to :

- 11th February Club Night at the Liberal Club with Slot Cars,
- Driving on a frozen lake in Sweden for a week (well for me anyway),
- 20th Presidents Night, final of the CSMA Slot Car Championships,
- 23rd Noggin at the Jolly Woodman, Littleworth Common.

Alan Wakeman (Secretary)

**The deadline for articles for the
March
Sump is February 17th!**

Ann Flynn (nee Redhead)

I am personally so sad, and very sorry indeed, that I have to advise West Middlesex Group members that on the morning of Monday 18th January 2010 Ann Flynn passed away at her home. She lost a tough year- long battle with cancer, and was just 47 years old.

Ann joined West Middlesex Group, along with her brother John, in 1982. She represented the Group on several Curtis Bennett Rallies and numerous other motoring events, as both a Driver and a Marshal. She also spent several years as a pro-active Group Committee member until work requirements forced a move from Heathrow to Stanstead airport and subsequently a house move.

I visited Ann at her home in Henham just a week before she left us, and her spirit was really strong – indeed, inspirational.

Our thoughts at this dreadful time must be with all of Ann's family, particularly her young daughter Laura. On behalf of all West Middlesex Group members, I send our sincerest condolences and our deepest sympathy.

Please say a prayer if you can

Allan Goddard

CSMA West Middlesex Group :

Our FEBRUARY CLUBNIGHT :

the usual Windsor Liberal Club venue will host the Annual

West Middlesex Group **SLOT CAR STAGES RALLY.**

Signing-On opens at 07.45pm with first car away at 8.15pm.

Everything provided – and you know it's a good night out!!!

Contact AG if you need more details

CSMA North London Centre presents:

The President's **Slot-Car Stages Rally..** *and the*

North London Centre Championship 2009 Finals!

Saturday 20th February 2010

All members of the North London Centre Groups, their family and friends are invited to attend another President's 'Slot Car Stages' event on Saturday 20th February 2010 at the Noke Thistle Hotel, Watford Road, Chiswell Green AL2 3DS, just half a mile north of junc. 21a of the M25.

A slight change this year – it's all happening on a Saturday afternoon!

Signing –On is from 1.30pm and we'll have a briefing at 2 o'clock. Proceedings will get underway shortly after.

The usual format will have something of a twist this year in that the event will incorporate the Finals of the year long 2009 NLC Groups Championship (we couldn't fit the Final in last year!) but there will still be the 'normal' Group Team event as well when teams of two from each Centre Group compete to win the President's Trophy for 2010.

For the last few years we have enjoyed some really splendid turn-outs and some real competitive fun evenings. Once again our Centre Committee will be the hosts and, in addition to our Group Champions, everyone from our Centre will be most welcome.

A note of your planned attendance will be much appreciated please.

Directions :The Noke Thistle Hotel can be found by leaving the M25 at junc. 21A & going north towards St Albans on the A405. The Hotel is on the left at the next roundabout, about half a mile from the M25. For Sat Nav users, the postcode is : **AL2 3DS** I look forward to seeing **YOU** there supporting **YOUR** Group! **AG**

Allan Goddard : allan.goddard@csmaclub.org; or m) 07785903000; h) 0118 934 5726

Oh, no! Not another note from AG...!

Blimey! It's happened again! There I was, just tidying up the garden a bit after Bonfire Night, casually thinking through the Christmas present list requirements and, BANG! No, not a delayed penny-banger erupting, it's the New Year ! And, as per usual, I'm not really ready yet

So how many of the New Year resolutions you made, just four short weeks ago, are still intact? Yeh, I thought so, none of us get any better as we get older do we? But I hope that one resolution you might have made, and plan on keeping, is the one that goes :

"I will try to support the CSMA West Middlesex Group in every way I can and, this year, will earnestly attempt to attend Club nights, Noggin 'n Natter's, and the Group organised events, whenever possible!"

If that's one of YOUR resolutions, and I sincerely hope it is, I thought I'd plug a couple of things the Group are involved with in the next few months that might interest you, and you might enjoy

- **Tues. Feb 9th** ~ I'm planning another exclusive CSMA trip to **Prodrive** – always a fascinating visit – contact me for more details...**Charitable donation of £20 per person.**
- **Thurs. Feb 11th** ~ Our '**Slot Car Stages**' **Club night** proved popular enough to attract 21 people to participate last year, producing our Group Champion, Vince Norris - this years event will form our February Club night, it'll be at the Liberal Club in Windsor, will start at 8pm...and it's **FREE!**
- **Fri. Feb. 12th** ~ NWL are running their **12-Car Rally** on Fri. 12th Feb. to which WMx Group is invited. Details elsewhere in this Sump or give me a call**Entry Fee : £10.**
- **Saturday Feb. 20th** ~ The NLC **President's Day** ~ normally a weekday evening event that we've switched to a Saturday afternoon in the hope that more Members & families can support and enjoy it. Incorporating the 'Finals' of the year-long Centre Slot-Car Championship, it's a good-fun event that EVERYBODY can get involved in and compete on behalf of West Middlesex in light hearted competition (!) against the other North London Centre groups. And it's **FREE !** Venue is the Noke Hotel at Chiswell Green (500 metres north of M25 junc.21a – postcode AL2 3DS). I really would appreciate YOUR support if possibleStarts at 1.30pm and we'll be done by 6 o'clock.
- **Tues. Feb. 23rd** ~ The **February Noggin 'n Natter** at the Jolly Woodman. Never been? Well perhaps 2010 is the year that you should try it ! No stress, no fuss, no effort, just good chat in good company. The Jolly Woodman is at Littleworth Common, a couple of miles due north of Burnham, and we're there from 8 until late This event is also **FREE** to all Members & their Guests, but you do have to buy your own drinks, unless you catch the Chairman in a particularly good mood
- **Sat. March 6th** ~ The famous **West Middlesex Group Annual Dinner**. Details elsewhere in this newsletter, but always a great evening and usually the best turn out of the year ! A black-tie-&-posh-frock occasion and amazing value at just **£25 per person.** Contact me if you haven't booked YOUR place yet.....

Thurs. Mar. 11th ~ Our **March Club night** will be in the hands of Chairman Derrick, literally! Come along to see what I meanIt'll be interesting and fun! Another **FREE** evening with West Middlesex.

Tues. Mar. 30th ~ The first **Mid-Week Ride Out** of our new year, and we're going North! Starts at Jenner's Café opposite Boulter's Lock in Maidenhead – gather from 09.30, and we aim to leave at 10.30 sharp, finishing at our Noggin 'n Natter venue about 6.30 'ish ! A call if you're planning on coming would be appreciated. There is no charge for our Mid-Week Ride- Outs – it's **FREE!**

Please note : Our Noggin' an' Natter's are on the last Tuesday of EVERY month, except December. We meet at the Jolly Woodman PH, Littleworth Common, SL1 8PF and all West Middlesex Group Members, friends & family are welcome - we're there from 8 until late.

And I know I've said it many times before, but YOUR support is vital to keep our Group alive and moving forward – it really can be quite enjoyable, and often, FREE!

So, if I don't see you on at least one of those events listed above I'll be bitterly disappointed, 'cos it'll mean I've been bashing away at this keyboard for about an hour and a half, and I could've been watching the 30cm's of snow melting from my back garden or something ! If you want to know more, give one of the Committee a call, or, if you're really desperate, ring me, either way, we'll try and help!

Please come along whenever you can and have a very Happy New Year!

Allan Goddard

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.

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What's on...?

with CSMA Club Rally Marshalling
plan your future enjoyment now!

Sun 7 Feb

Association of Eastern Motor Clubs Rally Marshals' Training Day, Cambridge College, Cambs. Learn new skills and refresh your training for future events. Free for marshals, food excepted. Any queries contact Vernon, Training Officer on 020 8768 5507.

Application for places at the training day should (if possible) be made via the online booking form on the Volunteers in Motorsport web site (<http://volunteersinmotorsport.co.uk>) to be found by using the Training Days button on the front page.

Sat 20 Feb

Middlewick Stages, MOD Woodbridge, near Ipswich, Suffolk.
Come and help fellow club members run a stage rally.



Sun 14 Mar **Sprint**, North Weald Airfield, Essex.

A great sprint event from our friends at Borough 19 MC who always appreciate our support.

Sun 11 Apr **CSMA North East London Concorde Autosolo**, Bovingdon Airfield, Herts.

Sun 9 May **Debden Sprint**, Debden Airfield, Essex.
Great sprint run by Herts County Auto & Aero Club.

Sun 6 June

CSMA North East London BTRDA Junior Autotests, Hatfield, Herts. Exciting action from this popular national championship round which we host.



Sun 4 July (please note amended date)

Essex Charity Stages, Bradwell on Sea, Essex.

A favourite and popular event run by our friends at Wickford Auto Club supporting the Essex Air Ambulance.

Come and join us !!

We need maximum support for all these events so if you are available for these fun days out call Graham, North London Marshalling Team, on 020 8553 4700 (evenings & weekends) or email: graham.mclean@bt.com

February 2010**Motor Sport Coordinators' Bulletin**

Date	Day	Event (Status)	Type of Event	Club	Champ
Feb	Fri 12	* 12 Car Rally (C)	Navigational rally	CSMA NWL	Centre
	Sat 20	* President's Slot Car Stages	Intergroup Scalextric	CSMA NLC	
Mar	Fri 12	12 Car Rally (C)	Navigational rally	CSMA NEL	Centre
	Sun 21	AutoSolo (C)	Cross between autotest/sprint	Harrow CC	
Apr	Sun 11	Concorde AutoSolo (C)	Cross between autotest/sprint	CSMA NEL	Centre

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

Previous Events

New Year Hangover Autotest The event was very well supported, with 19 entries, on a very cold but dry day. The event moved to the hard surface of Bovingdon airfield after the grass field used last year was deemed to be too wet. The change also saw one larger test laid out, lack of marshals was also a consideration, that was done three times before being changed. With a bit of alteration next year, it most likely will take place here next year so that we don't have to worry about the weather in advance.

NEL 12 Car Rally The 12 Car rally got postponed yet again due to the bad weather conditions. Third time lucky in March hopefully?

Carpetbagger Rally With a full 60 car entry, some mud and water, it wasn't surprising the Carpetbagger lived up to its tough reputation, with only 28 finishers. Congratulations go to Jamie Turner and Dan Harrison on their first Bagger win.

Future Events

NWL 12 Car Rally The event will start at The Harvester, London Road, Flamstead, Herts AL3 8HT, MR 166/088½148 and it will be organised by Mike & Cath again but hopefully with better weather this time. Usual £10 entry fee and a good route on map 166, edition C3. Food will be available at the start.

President's Slot Car Stages This annual Scalextric event is organised by Allan Goddard but this year it will also include the Centre final for all those winners and runners up from the Group heats held in 2009. Not sure what the format will be, but it will be along the lines of previous events. To help everyone get to the event, which this year will be held at the NWL club venue at the Noke Hotel, Chiswell Green, it will take place on the afternoon of Saturday 20th February, so people can get back at a sensible time. Please see separate advert for more details.

NEL 12 Car Rally The 12 Car rally season continues with the first NEL event and will be organised by James Newbould. This event was postponed from its planned December date. The start venue will be at the Green Man PH, Brackley Hatch, on the A43 SW of Silverstone, MR 152/648418 and map 152 will be required (current edition is D2). Food will be available at the start. Please contact James on 07752 033122 for entries and offers to marshal.

Concorde AutoSolo NEL are again running the Concorde AutoSolo event, this year on the 11th April. For this year we will be moving it to Bovingdon Airfield (larger area than the autotest on the 3rd Jan). An AutoSolo consists of all forwards tests on a hard surface. They are not a memory test as numbers and markers help you find your way around. One score is dropped per test layout to allow for those 'little mistakes'. You can also enter if you are only 16, so long as you enter in a saloon car. Entry fee is £22 per driver. The change of venue will make it safer, with no kerbs at all to hit, and should run a bit smoother without the limited route at Hatfield. Contact me for further details. Regs should be out end of Feb, beginning of March.

Mike Biss: NLC Motor Sports Coordinator

Tel: 01525 720299

E-mail: mike.biss@btinternet.com

How was the Preston?

There I was, minding my own business when a text message from Clive forewarned me that the Preston online entry list had opened and there were at least 30 crews already signed up. Half an hour's frantic internet action saw a new entry (paid up and confirmed immediately) for one I Perry, navigated by that well-known supporting act "A N Other" and driving the by-now-familiar TBC 1-point-something litre hatch-sal-estate.

By the end of October, however, this had transformed into my navigating in the Metro now owned and campaigned by Clive and Chris (scheduled to be languishing in the far East at Preston time). We spend a flurry of Saturday mornings underneath the car getting the heavily-modified steel guard fitted, plus lights, various mud-repellent devices and a big tin of Adrian Gladwin's Bravery Pills. Yes, you could tell it was the Preston.

Then the heavens opened.

The rally wasn't quite as wet as everyone feared, actually. They did a fair bit of last-minute jiggery-pokery with the route to cut out impossibly wet stretches, and had a few more recovery crews than normal. Despite promises (partially realised) of Biblical torrents, the actual evening was relatively dry. As usual the start was the opportunity to meet up with various of the Usual Suspects and carry out the ritual mickey-taking. Several competitors quizzed me about the presence (or otherwise) of plywood under the Metro, but departed disappointed to learn that the underneath (of both car and author) was by now totally lacking in 0/90-oriented-fibre cellulose laminate. And so we settled down and waited for the clock to take us to the start of the rally. And ate burgers.

The first leg was the usual bits south of Thetford, apart from Knettishall - apparently the land-owner has decided we were responsible for too much damage to the surface so we won't get back onto it unless/until it changes ownership. The familiar first section across Berners Heath nowadays includes a loop through forestry at the very top of the heath, and here the first drama of the night opened. The Metro is a bit tail-happy and if you start to get a tank-slapper going, and then lift off, it gets worse (I think that's at least partly down to the hydragas system and the way it loads up the back when the front comes under load)... so we got a bit of a wobble on, jumped off the track on the LHS and over the bank into the field. Clive tried to drive out of it but then was forced to stop to let a following competitor past, and so we beached on the bank. We dug, we pulled, we pushed; we swore, we shouted curses to the clouds scudding across the night sky, casting vituperative imprecations at the heedless Gods of Rallying. They enjoyed that so much that none of our physical efforts worked. Eventually, we jacked up the front RHS corner and dug out enough room under the wheel to put one of the spares under it. Careful forward motion swathe the car drag clear of the bank and back onto the track. We piled everything back into the boot and set off, just as the recovery truck arrived. Guilty looks at the clock showed we'd spent about 30 minutes on the bank, so we cut our losses and missed the second loop, heading straight for the end control. The following section

(Ingham) contained no great dramas other than yet more sideways action across the muddy fields, but by now I was looking at the OTL time with some concern. Fox Pin was next but we elected to cut, saving ourselves some 15 minutes of lateness and allowing up something of a breathing space as we went into Sparrow Hall (scene of the Metro's retirement two years previously). The floods of slurry that did for the alternator on that previous visit were still present, drenching the little car in a complete brown-out, but we pressed on with washers and wipers on overtime, and came out at the bottom of the hill intact. Or so we thought. 10 yards down the road on the way to the next section, the alternator light came on. A quick look inside the engine bay revealed that we'd need to remove the wheel to get at it, and with the route moving further and further in the wrong direction (so that it would be both essential and yet impossible to cut if we pressed on) we elected to cut to Petrol 1 to be sure of getting there inside time and still be able to fix the car and carry on.

One small fact about K-series Metros – I've never been able to find an alternator belt for one, in Halfords or any mainstream motor factors. Clive obviously also has that problem; the spare belt was too narrow and too long, but it (finally) was on and tensioned (ish) and we were away again.

Leg 2 was to the north and west of Thetford, and took in a couple of absolutely brilliant new sections (fast, twisty, with perfectly cambered junctions and a couple of slippery crossing-points where the Metro started to weave again)... but then we hit a big bump, there was a heck of a bang and loads of vibration and Clive couldn't change gear any more. After a bit of a fight he managed to get 1st and 2nd but nothing else, so we chugged on. A quick look on the road section confirmed that the gearbox was now resting (slightly undignifiedly, like a spinster Aunt sitting on a sheep) on the sumpguard – the new angle meant that the control rods could not get to the right angles to engage the 3rd/4th and 5th/reverse gears. 'Don't overshoot' I said. Guess what. Yes... A closer look on the next road section (taking us to the final two competitive sections in leg 2) showed what had happened. We'd thought the GB mount had gone (it's a known weak point) but it was intact, and there was loads of GB oil everywhere... the reason the GB mount was OK was that the casing had fractured and ripped the whole of the mount out of the gearbox itself. So we limped to 2nd petrol (35 miles in 2nd gear is REALLY dull) and ratchet-strapped the gearbox back into position.

The final leg beckoned, and with 5 forward gears and reverse we gritted our teeth and set off into the forest again. Then towards the end of the first section (NE of Thetford again) the spare alternator belt broke and we were down to the battery once more. We held a council of war – did we have anything we could use to replace the belt? Could we chance on the battery holding out a bit longer and getting us through a couple more sections if I used my head torch to point the way? But no, if the battery gave out in the middle of the woods... So we cut straight to the finish and surrendered the time-cards to the marshals, with me contemplating a 100% failure rate as a navigator.

But no. The regs actually say that to qualify as a finisher you need to visit the MTCs at the start and finish of each leg, that's all. In the end we had done exactly half the sections, but managed the all-important MTCs. The missed controls meant a national record number of fails, but we weren't last – 28th and 5th in class, from 58 starters (of whom only 30 finished). So we'll call that one an honourable draw, I think.

One of these years, I'll get something with a high and hard front end, that will NOT dive into every hole we find along the route... I've still got a contact who is selling a Skoda 130... any takers? ;-)

Ian Perry

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