



July 2005  
Number 472



***'HANS' Device Recommended  
For Golf Buggy Drivers Following  
Shock Accident - Full Story on Page 4!***

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### Your Editor Speaking...

Firstly an apology for the lateness of this issue. Those of you who attended Noggin will have doubtless noticed that there was no Sump to read over your food... This was due to Nikki and I being away in Ireland on holiday over the deadline and usual production time. Sorry!

Also this month was the WMx Annual Golf Day (AKA The Swishbugrit Day!) which I almost won (gasp, shock horror!) despite (or should that be because of?) not having played since the previous golf day last year...

Slightly less impressive was my performance at the **csma** Karting day at Hoddesdon... I maintain (as did my partner in the endurance race) that our kart was particularly slow. Although my excessive weight and utter lack of skill could have had something to do with it... It also took me the whole of the holiday to recover to the point that I could hold a pint in my left hand without grave danger of spillage. Will someone please remind me of these things when I begin to think that doing it again would be a good idea!?

Have fun!

*Jez Boakes (Editor)*

### Chairman's Scribblings...

Heatwave and flash floods have been the order of the month, which has been interesting! However this didn't stop the WMx group from having another good month.

The June Motorcycle rideout was attended by AG and myself and my pillion and partner Debbie. We had a great rideout to Kimeridge bay on the South coast and as usual Allan managed to find some stunning scenery and great places to eat. If you're a motorcyclist and haven't been on a group rideout yet then I strongly urge you to do so. The routes are always fantastic and the camaraderie is great.

This was the last rideout I was to do on my ZX6r, because I sold her shortly afterwards

and was for a couple of days without a bike. This situation didn't last long and I have now picked up a 2001 model Kawasaki ZX9r in stunning firecracker red. So far I've only done 170 miles on her but I think I am going to be very pleased with it, 147bhp, 0-60 in 2.3 seconds and a top speed of 177mph should be perfectly adequate for my needs! On the downside I arrived home the other night to find that I had a nail stuck in the rear tyre, the wheel was duly removed but the tyre fitters refused to repair the tyre as it has a Z rating. So a new tyre has been ordered, my wallet is now another £130 lighter, but at least it will last another 3000 miles if I don't get another puncture.

Unfortunately I missed the last clubnight, which was the annual walk. I understand

that it was as usual a great event and AG excelled himself yet again, apart from the encounter with a field of bullocks!

Hopefully see you all at the July clubnight, which is going to take the form of a music quiz, should be good!

See you there!

Until then give it beans and Rhubarb...

...but keep an eye out for the cameras!

**Big J (Chairman)**

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## **Mack's Mutterings**

June started for me with a week's holiday down in Cornwall; a mixture of culture (mostly crumbling old buildings and gardens), exploration (the rainforests of the Eden project) and relaxing (some nice quiet beaches and a good book). Just a shame it was only a week and I had to come back to the daily grind! The holiday must have recharged my batteries because I have since managed to fix the hot water system, replace the garage window (the frame was held together by the glass!) and buy some tiles and a shower. All I need to do now is tile two bathrooms, fit two showers, floors, paint etc etc and Gail will have the bathrooms she has been waiting for for the last 12 months. Oh dear, just thinking about it makes me feel tired...

So what about more interesting things like the activities of the WMx group? Well, the start of June saw our clubnight with the walk around Knowl Hill. This time I was not navigating so the walk went without a hitch. The main excitement of the evening was the walk back across a field as it was falling dark, a herd of bullocks got a little excited and curious and did their best to slow us up by getting in the way and charging round the field. Still, no-one got trampled underfoot and we all got back safely, a very pleasant evening!

My only other event of the month was the **csma** Karting day at Hoddesdon. This was my first outdoor Karting event so I didn't really know what to expect. In the event it was a good mix of frustration and fun - the morning started off damp and drizzly and it took me a good few laps before I could get round any corners without terminal understeer or oversteer. So my morning's times

were distinctly average (actually, worse than average!). The afternoon's endurance race was much better though. A dry hot track was much more to my liking and I happened to be paired with one of the best drivers there (Tony) so all I had to do was stay out of trouble - which somehow I managed to do! In fact, due to me not crashing and Tony doing an excellent job of making up any time I lost we managed to win... except we didn't... except we did... Ok, so our main competition had to pit to sort out a puncture and the subsequent corrections to their times got us a little confused. They thought they had won, we thought we had won etc. In the end the fairest solution was equal 1<sup>st</sup> so hopefully everyone went home happy! Apologies to those that had to wait while the "protest" was heard and to AG who could probably have done without over keen drivers getting all excited over the result of what was supposed to be a friendly race! Anyway, an excellent day and, from what I could tell, everyone was thoroughly enjoying themselves and it didn't matter whether you were an seasoned karter or a novice.

Despite being into the summer holiday season there are still a good few events for the next month in the calendar. At the start of July is the National Motorcycle Rally, WMx are manning a checkpoint so there are things to do even if you are not a biker! July clubnight (14<sup>th</sup>) is a music quiz organised by Nikki and the Noggin and Natter (26<sup>th</sup>) is the end point of another motorcycle ride out. Oh, and for me there is always tiling and plumbing to keep me busy.....

Have fun!

**Toby Mack (Secretary)**

## **P.G.A. Advises wearing of HANS device for Golf Buggy Riders**

**W**hen AG says "These things are hard to turn over" its time to... bale out!

Imagine a peaceful WMx Golf Day.

On the fifth hole at Blue Mountain AG comes blasting down the hill in his GOLF BUGGY and turns sharp right.

Now, bearing in mind AG is on the left and the lower side of the hill this was not a GOOD idea. As he had just airily said "These things are hard to turn over" I was very confident in his usual mastery of the situation.

Imagine therefore my surprise at finding myself elevated as we cornered. This surprise turned to consternation as the elevation increased and despite the nifty application of opposite lock it was clear disaster was looming.

I valiantly leant out on the up hill side... to try and balance the driver who, by now was leaning out on the downhill side. I was ineffective, at 12 stone, in counterbalancing our esteemed **csma** Captain who (at considerably more than my svelte <12 stone ) had the advantage of the hill.

As I rose smoothly in the air I thought "I am going to land on AG!, (however I am awfully glad its not the other way around!!)".

In Rallying it's always the navigators side, not so here.

The inevitable happened and AG subsided, with a crunchy / whumpy noise on the ground, taking the Golf Buggy with him.

They are, thankfully, extremely light so that when I exited, also on the down hill side of hill, AG managed to catch the roof with his feet from his prone position in the mud thereby avoiding being cut in half by the roof. I landed gracefully (of course) with my feet on the path and joined in his efforts to right the buggy.

Meanwhile I could hear Bob Head's expressions of concern (?) even from under the buggy (but they sounded awfully like laughing to me...)

We managed to correct the imbalance in the aforesaid golf buggy and (slowly) recovering our dignity we returned to an even keel and sheepishly brushed ourselves down.

Now, given that the reason I was in the BUGGY in the first place was that I was preserving my (dodgy) back and therefore not playing golf in case I screwed up my back for the Karting on Monday the injury to my neck is a bit ironic...

I know I should have taken the PGA's advice and worn my HANS device when riding as a passenger with AG, but you kind of don't really think it will happen to you!!

Put it down to wet grass, the imbalance of passengers weight distribution or the heavy golf clubs on the down hill side but I reckon this comes under the heading "FAMOUS LAST WORDS".

Thanks for ride AG!

(P.S. No passengers were injured in the making of this epic)

***Drew Goodspeed***

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**The deadline for articles for the *August* Sump is July 20<sup>th</sup>!**

**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.**



Dates	Event (Status)	Club	Type of Event	Champ
Jul Sun 24	* Grasshopper (Nat B/C)	NEL	Grass Autotest	Centre
Aug Sun 21	* Holly (C)	NEL	Grass Autotest	Centre
Sep Sun 4	Haymaker (C)	WMx	Grass Autotest	Centre
Fri 16	Greenhorn 12 Car (C)	NWL	Navigational Rally	
Oct Sun 2	Autumn (C)	NWL	Grass Autotest	Centre
Fri 14	12 Car Rally (C)	WMx	Navigational Rally	Centre
Sat 15	Quadruplex ()	SoS	Inter-Group Quiz	Centre

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

### Past Events

**Juniper Autotest** I think the competitors went away very two days of hard competition. The Maidstone event on the Saturday saw four tests run three times, usually around the 65s mark and then they had my event with 16 tests around the 55s mark. There were a couple of suspension breakages, but neither from hitting the kerbs, and they were fixed by welding them up using an electric welder and three batteries. The weather was kind to us again, although maybe next year having it damp underfoot might be a good idea, just to keep the tyre noise down for the locals. Anyway, Paul Swift in a Mini Special, despite having the front suspension break and collapse on the third test (he got a maximum), stormed through the field with some superb driving and won the event making it a double success weekend. My thanks to all the marshals who turned out to help make the event such a success.



**RNLI Challenge** Unfortunately Allan Goddard had to make the decision to cancel the event due to a very poor uptake in the entries. Hopefully he will be able to put something on next year that people will want to come out and take part in.

**Midsummer Enduro** Several csma crews were out on this new Chelmsford MC event and for a first attempt it was very well received. Several *selectifs* were run on Saturday afternoon and were followed by a 200 mile night event in Preston country, i.e. lots of whites, mostly rough, with a couple of *selectifs* at the end thrown in. It must have been the hottest day of the year and there were several



crews who had gone red by the evening halt. With the start in Bury St Edmunds, the route made its way out to the Wildtracks rallycross circuit near Red Lodge for four runs round the course. Two were all tarmac and two included the off-road parts. Then it was on to Waterbeech for two runs round the perimeter road, darting on and off the road to go round a cone. This was a bit tricky the first time around as it was very easy to miss the first couple of cones and a lot of crews had to go back and correct themselves. The last venue of the afternoon was Oakington barracks, with six tests, with a break after the first three. After this it was back to Red Lodge and the transport café for the evening supper halt. This turned out to be a superb venue with fantastic food (even better I think than that served at the finish hotel) and plenty of space



to fettle the cars prior to the night section. It was strange doing what was in effect the Preston during the summer as all the undergrowth was either very close or very high. In some places we were driving down tracks with the grass as high as the bonnet and lumps of greenery hitting the windscreen! The organisers have promised to make the event even better next year.

**Greenacres Autotest** This will have taken place by the time you read this, so a report next month.

**Future Events**

**Grasshopper Autotest** This will be held at the Studd Farm venue near Leighton Buzzard and will have two parts. The national B event will be a round of the Southern grass autotest championship and the Clubmans PCA event will be the Centre championship round and also open to invited clubs. Entry fee is £12 and regs are available from Bernard Ward.

**Holly Autotest** This is taking place on Sunday 21st August at Studd Farm, Leighton Buzzard and this will be a PCA event, so passengers will be required. All the tests will be straightforward and you should have fun and a bit of a laugh. The entry fee is £12 and further details and regs are available from myself.

**Haymaker Autotest** Details of this West Middlesex event should be available next month.

**Other News**

**Enduro Rallies** Another new Enduro event is being planned for this year, this time in Ulster. Although it is only two weeks before the Revival, as that is already full, the organisers hope to still get plenty of entries. This new format has definitely caught the imagination of a lot of people and brought in a lot of new competitors and also some that had retired. Look out for a championship of these events next year.

**Formula 1** No, I won't bother mentioning that farce, we have better things to do!

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**csma West Middlesex Group***Motorcycling events planned for Summer / Autumn 2005*

**Sun. 17<sup>th</sup> July** **Motorcycle Ride-out & BBQ** - Starting at Henley River and Rowing Museum and finishing at Jez & Nikki's house for a BBQ!

**Tues. 26<sup>th</sup> July** **Mid-Week Ride out** – another chance to slip out of the work environment for the day. Join us on a trip to the seaside... before the kids get there in force!

**Sun. 7<sup>th</sup> Aug** **“Harman Fun Challenge”** A motorcycle scatter – a great day out on your 'bike, you can't miss this! Our own **Dave Rillie** is organising this **csma** HQ event – lets give him our support! Must enter in advance tho'.

**Tues. 30<sup>th</sup> Aug** **Mid-Week Ride out** – this one will be led by **Nick Palumbo** – Starts at Jenner's Café in Maidenhead at 11am and finishes at The Jolly Woodman for our Noggin 'n' Natter – please book with ME as usual for this one.....

**Tues. 27<sup>th</sup> Sept** **Noggin 'n' Natter bike night...** Bring your 'bike to our Noggin...*or* ride with me all day and then finish at the N&N and the Chairman will buy you a pint!

**Sun. 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct** **The Three Shires Run** ~ now a 'Motorcycle Friendly' event!....full details soon.

**And finally...** ***We still have this enormously cunning plan!***  
**Summer 2006**

*Some of us are more keen than ever on planning a 5 or 6 day Group trip to Scandinavia. If you like the idea of touring on some of the quietest and best roads in Europe, and taking in the spectacle of riding the fantastic ocean bridges between Denmark and Sweden ~(twice!) then please register your interest with me ASAP ....*

*As of today, in mid-June, only two others have shown interest, we need six people to make this work. Showing interest is not a final commitment....but it means I can go and negotiate prices to see what it's going to cost. Only when I know all the financial details will I ask you to commit.*

*And if we get enough people interested, we will do it!*

I hope you all have a warm & safe summer of motorcycling, if you'd like more details on any of the above events please contact me - details below.....

**Allan Goddard** : WMx Group Motorcycling Co-ordinator

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## A New form of Motor Sport

I'd like to share with you a new branch of motor sport for us motoring enthusiasts who are still a little childish at heart.

As I mentioned in the Brands Hatch article (in the June Sump), Jez has a new satellite navigation system. Based in a PDA (that's a little palm-held computer thingy), it is portable and so has been in my car a few times. That is when I was introduced to Sat Nav baiting.

"Jane", a very well spoken lady, speaks from the box to tell us where to go on our journey but it seems that she doesn't always know best. This is where the fun comes in.

*Here's the game:* The challenge is to maximise the number of times in your journey that you deviate from the sat nav's chosen route - thereby causing Jane to go into a quiet sulk, tell us to turn around or re-plot to select a new route - without getting lost or adding time to your journey.

We always start the game leaving our village. It appears that she has been programmed to avoid Reading Road in Hook (it's signed as "access only" but takes us to one end of our road so we frequently use it) so within a couple of minutes of setting off we have already caused: "Turn right" ... silence ... sulk ... think ... identify where we are and re-plot taking us off the little road into the estate to get us off Reading Road a.s.a.p. "in 200 yards Turn r..." (by which time we're usually past the turning) ... silence ... sulk ... think ... identify where we are and re-plot from the end of the road.

It's childish, I know, but surprisingly funny when she is interrupted mid-instruction because we've already ignored it and goes off into a sulk.

On a recent trip back from Waddesdon Manor, near Aylesbury, we were trying to get the machine to plot a cross-country route. Having rejected a few suggested options, we selected one route fairly close to where we wanted to go and set off. What we hadn't noticed was that in rejecting certain route options, the machine appeared to have "black spotted" those roads for the entire journey resulting in some very convoluted re-plots.

For example, Jane was adamant that we were to use the M40 down to the M25 but we didn't want to so ignored several instructions and we were near Henley before she finally stopped telling us to turn around or take side roads that would take us back up to the M40. Every time she said "turn around where possible" we'd shout "no" back at her – yes, its surprising how quickly you start talking back to the machine!

Once through Henley and heading down to Hook through Wargrave and Twyford (virtually due south), Jane wanted to take us east along the M4, south around the M25 and then west down the M3 to Hook! That was the most ridiculous route the system had come up with until a week later when it excelled itself.

We were staying on the south coast for Alison & Rob's wedding in a tiny hamlet, reached down a lane which ended up at the beach. On the morning of the wedding we'd driven to Portland to enjoy the views and see a bit of the local area and on the return journey, Jane told us to turn off the B-road a few miles earlier than we expected. The left turn was sign posted for Chesil Beach. According to my OS map, the road didn't connect at the other end with the lane we needed but we thought we'd give Jane the benefit of the doubt and see.

Sure enough, we reached the beach. The lane narrowed and a sign announced that it had become "single track with passing places". So far so good. We came to a terrace of cottages and a "no through road" sign at a point where the road deteriorated to more beach pebbles than tarmac. But Jane was still adamant that we should continue so we pressed on.

After 2 miles of gradually narrowing lane, along the top of the beach, we came to another lone house and a sign announcing that we'd reached National Trust land and that to proceed was "unsuitable for motorised vehicles". (From the beach at the other end, the next morning, we could see that indeed it wasn't a goer.) At this point we decided to ignore Jane's cracking instructions and turn round - much the amusement of the various walkers who had seen us pass them and waved as we returned.

We had got to within half a mile of the destination but had to admit defeat. I suspect that if we'd been in the Mini we may have given it a shot but not in the Lexus!

In future, I shall bear this episode in mind and when my OS map says one thing and Jane says another, I'll believe good old Ordnance Survey – with the added benefit that it will cause Jane to have another sulk and re-plot.

Doubtless, before too long, the government will find a way to either tax or outlaw this harmless and enjoyable pass time for motorists so I intend to make the most of the opportunities to play over the coming months.

*Nikki Wild*

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## ATB DIFFS – A “GOVERNMENT HEALTH WARNING”

Since far too many people have wasted good money buying Quaife ATB diffs for unsuitable applications, the reference to ATB diffs in the last “Sump” is worth some clarification.

The Quaife ATB diff is not an LSD. Quaife are most careful not to advertise or market it as such, although some retailers do. I am aware of large numbers of competitors happily using such a diff: 4wd, fwd, rwd cars with irs and rwd kit cars. Unfortunately, without exception, the very extensive list of experienced competitors I know to have tried it (particularly the Ford “English axle” type) in “live axle” rwd saloons have found that it cannot match the performance / effectiveness of a true “plate-type” lsd and on many corners can be ineffective (i.e. operate like an “open” diff).

I have, on at least two separate occasions, debated this aspect at considerable length with Michael Quaife. His view is that, by softening the rear suspension, it should be possible to make the ATB diff work on a “live axle” rwd car as well as an lsd would work. I made the point to him that experience is to the contrary and there are practical limits to achieving his claim (which is the need to keep weight on both rear wheels, including at hairpins), particularly with the constraint of standard configuration rear suspension demanded of all saloon cars in speed events and the basic geography of many venues. I have to say that my experience (and that of many others in rwd cars) is that an ATB can also allow the inside wheel to spin (where an lsd will not) on fast corners, including smooth race circuits. In a straight line, I am aware of no criticism of the grip / traction provided by an ATB diff on any car.

So be warned. The above is a balanced view based on wide experience. An ATB is not an lsd and cannot function as one in all circumstances. The article in the last Sump fully mirrors the experience of some of the fastest competitors in the country in “Locaterfield” 7s in speed events. They use the ATB diff because they find a “plate” lsd is harsher in operation and can promote understeer / poor turn in regardless of driving technique. That does NOT, however, read across to all applications and I hate to see any club level competitor waste money. I could, of course, deny any problems and mention I have one for sale...

*Keith Lay*

## The Catalyst Returns

It all started with a seemingly innocuous phone call one morning a few months ago from Nigel Nelson...

"Morning Jerry, are you competing in the C-B this year?". I said I was, of course, and Nigel then went on to explain, with no pressure on me, that the whole event was being based around *my* ability to complete the rally as the new format was aimed at encouraging novices to not only have a go, but to complete the event and my C-B record was one failed to start (excess noise) and one retirement at half way due to "Mal de Nav".

Suitably encouraged, I sent the forms off after confirming that my volunteer for the left hand seat from last years cancelled event was still willing to have a go, even after some loony driving round Barton Stacey in the meantime – Brave chap! I also took the liberty of inviting my parents along to spend some time with their grand-daughter and also to keep Emma company while us boys went off into the night on the basis that they would return next year and perhaps do the Metropole run or even the Autotest!

Having got everything in place, I was feeling good about the weekend; which nearly went pear-shaped as some "unmentionable" broke into the Sierra while it was parked outside my local pub and tried to steal it. Quite what someone would want with it is beyond me and I'd have not been best pleased to find it burned out somewhere after all the work that's gone into it so far. I have a feeling that the central locking had failed to lock the tailgate, judging by the muddy footprints on the seats and where the toe-rag had tried to break the steering lock by kicking the steering wheel. Thankfully, there was very little damage (the steering lock held) and at least I still had the car. Word had got to Nigel, who phoned me in a minor state of panic that his "test" crew had no car, but all was explained.

The Sierra, with its lowered springs, was fine for smooth events, but as the previous C-B attempt proved, it was a little low for the rougher roads. I really wanted to have a crack at this years event, so I had some springs tailor made for the job, uprated and about 2" taller than the ones already on the car, so I spent a day changing them and the car felt like new. I think it was a week before the event when I realised that the MoT had run out, so I nervously stood around the local garage while they went over it, but thankfully it passed with only two advisories, one of which, the steering column bushes, I fixed for £4.07 and the other will be done in slower time with a new steering rack later this year. I also finally got round to painting the galvanised steel roof panel (covering the sunroof hole) to match the rest of the car. Emma's Astra needed new front brakes for the journey down but that was only an hours job.

We left home on the Friday, just after lunch and had a reasonable drive down, although the weather didn't look too promising for a while. Mum and Dad were already there, so we unpacked and had a wander round the site before settling in to the bar for a drink and some take-away fish and chips. Emma and I took full, shameless advantage of having two free baby-sitters and left Jessica with them whilst we went out for a drink that evening.

A solid breakfast and a mid-morning family swim took us through to Saturday lunch, (beef-in-beer cooked by my Mother and brought with her) when Anthony, my navigator, turned up, and we had a restful afternoon in preparation for being up all night. All too quickly scrutineering time was upon us and we went to noise first and then safety scrutineering, where the Sierra was pronounced fit for battle with some confusion over allowable air filters. Once I proclaimed that I didn't actually *have* an airbox I was told to shut the bonnet quick [NB – Post event reference to the Blue Book states that for Standard Production class air filters can be changed but no mention is made of keeping

the original casing, so we were OK anyway]. We went to sign in and get all the bits and bobs, then had a light tea and I went through the requirements of the Metropole run with Anthony and then explained the complicated philosophy behind my approach to the C-B; "Finish the event".

So, on to the Metropole, which we assumed would start in number order. Assumption is a bad thing, but it's a good job I checked as we were something like 8<sup>th</sup> on the road not 16<sup>th</sup> as our number suggested. With Anthony not having navigated anything like this before we tried to keep the timings as best we could, but things got on top of us a bit, so I tried to keep the average speeds about right and Anthony concentrated on the route. The approach got us round and we didn't do too badly, although we were never going to win without much tighter control of the timing. I didn't think that there was any sense in putting ourselves under pressure in what we saw as a warm up to the main event, so just took it as it came.

We got our start time checked several times for the C-B and made sure we were available early! Then it started raining; and boy did it rain. This would be a good opportunity to praise the (always) happy band of marshals that make this event (and many others) possible. The conditions before the event were *appalling* and I guess many got wet at the start and stayed wet until they arrived back at Whitemead, six hours later. Thank you one and all.

Of all the little jobs the Sierra needs doing, I now think replacing the heater matrix would be a good move as the windscreen was literally running with condensation and we needed to run the engine and have the blowers on full for 15 minutes to clear it. When underway, however, it kept completely clear, which was nice.

The easy run to the start was taken nice and gently with a wrong slot out of Whitemead, quickly corrected, which meant we followed Charlene Gibson and Ian Perry to the start proper. We turned off the dual carriageway to an orderly queue of rally cars waiting for the off. It felt like a "proper" rally at that point and seeing the cars shoot off down the narrow lane one after the other really got me in the mood to drive this event. Anthony's navigation skills were assisted by the use of a poti and map light and he soon settled into calling the route and approximate timing and the miles started racking up. The roads on the first half were not too tricky but soaking wet in places. In my mind that only added to the great feel of the event as the car pounded down the lanes with water flying everywhere. If you want smooth dry tarmac, go to Silverstone and drive round in circles all night! The route was enjoyable and with the new springs I had no worries about any of the rougher sections or giving the car some welly when it opened up. Whilst he didn't really admit to it, I think Anthony was feeling a little rough in places, so I tried to encourage him to just read out the next significant junction with an approximate distance and then look out of the window, while I would then have to drive the road as I saw it, moderating the throttle in response to the many varied colours that Anthony's face went through. Not perhaps the most effective policy, but we made it through the first half and arrived at petrol for a well earned rest, which I think did us both the world of good.

The second half was a bit tighter and twistier, but the speeds were generally lower and Anthony seemed to have a new lease of life and was calling the route like a seasoned rally campaigner, which consequently made our progress smoother and enabled us to keep more or less to the schedule (which we weren't concerned about unduly, but it was nice to be on pace). The 4WD in the Sierra came into its own on a couple of sections, and my nerves were tested a few times with an unexpected slide on a downhill section (as opposed to the deliberate slides elsewhere), a real crunch over a pothole (not the one marked with a caution!) and a couple of surprise jumps, and as we got closer to the finish,

## The Sump July 2005

**csma** West Middlesex Group

the usual horrible thoughts crossed my mind, like “this is where we bin it – 2 miles from the finish” and “was that noise there at the start?”. Fortunately, the hedges and strange noises kept away and we passed the final control just as dawn was breaking. It was quite a feeling to have finished the C-B after the previous failed attempts!

After a slow drive back to Whitemead we were both exhausted but wide awake (if that makes sense), so we took the time to have a chat with some fellow competitors, have several cups of coffee and a huge nicotine hit. The overall feeling was that everyone enjoyed the rally and the new format certainly didn't stop people dropping time in the second section, which was pretty much as desired by the organisers. We'd also heard that a Rover had crashed out but the crew were OK, and it transpired that it was two friends of ours, Clive Chapman and Chris Glenn-Smith. (*Stop Press – The Rover is now fixed and road worthy again!*)

I had been mildly flattered, but ultimately concerned that we'd been put in class A with the experts, so I put a query form in explaining the crews (lack of) experience and went back to the apartment for a lay down. We didn't get much sleep for whatever reason (excitement at finishing, eyes still out on stalks and baby daughter waking for her 0800 feed – Bless her!). We decided to hit the restaurant for breakfast at about 10, where we met Chris and Clive who were indeed OK. I then decided that I really couldn't cope with



***The Proud Class C Winners and their Trusty Steed!***

a morning of arm twirling on the Autotest (apologies to the organisers, it's nothing personal, I just couldn't move properly) and so withdrew my entry and retired to bed again, after being told by Nigel, on the way back to the apartment that not only had we finished, that we were second in class C after we were reclassified! What a result, and a truly unexpected bonus as we were very pleased just to have finished.

Sunday went by in a kind of blur; I looked like I'd done ten rounds with Mike Tyson and felt like I'd had ten rounds with George Best, despite Emma doing her best to give me some quiet time by walking round the park with Jessica at 0600, so apologies to anyone

who was a bit shocked to see that! I wandered up to the Autotest to see how the WMx'ers were doing, went to laugh at the crash damaged car of Clive and Chris and tried to get some rest before the awards, starting at 4 p.m. in The Venue. A quick wash brush up and a clean shirt to accept our award, and off we set.

NWL group seemed to take 90% of the awards but WMx got in a few mentions, and then we got to the C-B awards and class C. Third place in class was announced and I was just getting ready to stand up to accept 2<sup>nd</sup> in class when I heard two names in second place that weren't ours! What had gone wrong? Had we been disqualified on a driving standards issue? Had we forgotten to fill in a time sheet properly? Was I still asleep? Where was George Best? Feeling rather embarrassed and ready for a "robust" enquiry, I got ready to politely applaud Andy Shepherd, a QinetiQ colleague who had, I thought, won the class, but heard AG call out our names instead; we'd somehow managed to get first in class! It transpires that Andy had broken his first navigator on the Metropole Run and hired another at the drivers briefing. His new navigator was an expert and thus Andy was reclassified to Class A (where he did a good job) meaning that Anthony and I got promoted to first in class C.

We gladly accepted the Paul Brown Memorial trophy and our pewter cups and promised each other much beer at some stage in the not too distant future. Anthony had to return home that night due to work commitments on the Monday – I had taken the day off to enjoy my Sunday night, a good move it would appear! A few photo's later and I was out celebrating with first the parents and then Emma.

And that, as they say, was that. First time navigator, first C-B finish, first in class!

Just another 37 years to go and I'll be accepting my cut glass trophy at age 74. Fill mine up please. Sanatogen by then, I should think...

See you all next year!

*Jerry Ludlow*

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## **A virgins guide to the Curtis Bennett weekend (Continued)**

### ***Marshalling on the Curtis Bennett....***

**A**s there were three of us (Jez, Nikki and I) together it would appear we were given one of the more interesting controls. We were somewhere south of Abergavenny (estimated an hour away) and the first car was due past us at about 2.30 on Sunday morning. So, after leaving the bar, we all agreed to get an hours kip but to be ready to leave by 1am. However, after Nikki had gone to bed I noticed that the first course car was 15 minutes early so we should be setup by 2.15. So Jez and I agreed that we would in fact leave at 12.45. Hmm.. that was 45 minutes time - oh well. So up at 12.45 only to have it pointed out by Nikki that the original timings had taken into account the course cars and we were a little early. Damn! There goes 15 minutes of desperately needed sleep. No wonder Nikki wasn't her usual cheerful self at this point!

On arriving at our control we setup - which is a grand way of saying we hammered in a marker post, put on our warm coats and got our clipboards out! Our control was timed to the second so we had agreed that I would time the cars as they came past the marker and pass those times on to Jez and Nikki who would mark the cars timesheets and tell me what the car numbers were. I would then note the times and car numbers on our checksheet. No problem unless 5 cars turned up at once which would mean we would be completely overloaded. Which was a distinct possibility given that the section before us was likely to take time out of them, so there could be a few crews keen to catch up time. Anyway, time to sit back (or rather stand around) and wait to see what happens.

First excitement of the evening was when a car pulled up slowly by us. We ignored it to start with until there was a brief squawk from a siren and some blue lights flashed under the grill. Jez politely reassured them we were not broken down or up to no good and they went on their way again, thankfully not along the route. Only to be replaced 5 minutes later by a marked police car, obviously sent to double check on us! From there on in things went fairly well as planned. Two course cars came and went, plus the Clerk of the Course. Then, 10 minutes later, we heard the sound of a car being driven hard. A few minutes later it came into sight, pretty much on the time of car 1. I duly logged its time as it hammered straight past us without stopping and disappeared again. I thought they were supposed to stop!!? As it turns out this car was not a competitor and, as far as we know, nothing to do with the event. Presumably just a local out having fun? Oh well, it gave me more practice timing cars past the marker anyway!

From then on real cars started arriving. From very early on it became obvious that all the crews were having problems - no one was on time with most 1½ minutes plus down. After about 10 cars had gone past things started to quieten down. Ted Saunders (Event Steward, who had joined us to observe) went off and we were left waiting for the stragglers. As it turned out about 16 cars made it as far as us, just over half the field but we did not have to wait around too long. As soon as the remaining cars would be OTL we shut up shop and went back to Whitemead for a rest. The amazing thing was that, despite monsoon conditions when we left Whitemead, we had spent a few hours on some hillside in Wales without getting wet! Occasionally the cloud would come down and it would start spitting but Jez had developed his own biological weapon system - regular deployment burnt away the clouds and held back the rain (*it must have been the Guinness! - Ed*). At least, we think that was what was happening, it certainly kept us away (and upwind) from him!

### **Results for the Metropole are posted....**

On arrival back at Whitemead, at maybe 4.30am, Jez elected to go to bed (very sensible). Nikki and I decided to see if there were any provisional Metropole results. Again very sensible as it turned out as our results were there, just missing a time at the last PC and no final score or result. Oh dear... Given that I was pretty convinced I had messed up the timing I was not too concerned until Nikki pointed out that, on the times shown, we had dropped 30 seconds which would put us in third place! To say I was amazed is an understatement! So off we went to query it with the timekeepers. A quick check of the timecard showed it was probably a transcribing error so we left them with a promise it would be sorted. Needless to say this meant that, despite having 30 minutes sleep in the last 22 hours, I could not sleep for wondering what our final position would be and whether I had messed it all up at the last PC!

As it turned out I needn't have worried. Somehow I had not messed it up, we were on time at the last check so we had that 3<sup>rd</sup> place! Needless to say I was dead chuffed! Not only had I completed an event as navigator without being ill, it was a type of event I had no experience of and we had come 3<sup>rd</sup> overall. I think luck had a lot to do with this result but I think it was much more to do with having an experienced and tolerant driver. Thanks Nikki!

### **The Dunlop....**

Sunday morning started bright and early! Well, 10 am which was pretty early given it was gone 4.30 when I got to bed! After a fried breakfast we (Jez and I) took the Westfield off to scrutineering for the Dunlop. Now one problem with a production car autotest is that soft tops have to be fitted. This makes it a right pain to get in and out of the car - not great when you are sharing the car and have to change drivers between every 3 tests. It also

presented a challenge to the scrutineer who wanted to check the brakes and was not used to the contortionist approach needed to slide into the cockpit. Sorry for the bruised shins Mick!

Scrutineering done and timecards collected and we were off to walk the tests. These were all forward direction only but some looked pretty tight. That might favour the rear wheel drive Westfield. There had been a few lighthearted comments during scrutineering that using a Westfield was cheating because you could see out so easily but that was obviously from someone who had never sat in one with the hood up or driven a lightweight car with decent power to weight on mud! Jez and I were number 33 and 34 (ie last). That meant we had to watch everyone else turn the tests into a mudbath before we went out for a spin. No surprise then that traction and steering was a bit of a problem! I went first and found that getting any power down was impossible. Trying to powerslide it round cones wasn't as easy as I thought either, despite having an LSD. Half the time the car just pushed straight on, half the time it span. After a while I started getting the hang of it, learning to be a bit more gentle and trying to stay off the really slippery bits. The handbrake was useful starting a slide but mostly it could be controlled on the throttle. Lots of fun! Also lots of frustration as slides turned in to spins and too much throttle saw me stationary trying to get away. Hmm... lots more to learn here I think!

Jez went next. Maybe he had learnt from my mistakes or maybe he was just lucky but he was a lot tidier than me and put in much better times. Oh well, there was always the second run to show him up. Second runs came and I did a bit better. Maybe as good as Jez's first run but not brilliant. Again Jez beat me. Hmm.. What excuse can I come up with now? Final results showed me fairly low down the rankings (ok, 15 out of 16 if you must know!) and Jez doing better in 8<sup>th</sup> place. I was thinking of challenging one of my times (possibly misread from the timecard) but lets face it 5 seconds was not going to drag me far from last place! So what did I think? Well, despite giving a pretty poor performance and the embarrassment of having my excuses quashed by Jez (doing much better than me in a car he had never driven before...) I thoroughly enjoyed myself. I learnt a lot about driving my car in poor conditions and had a great laugh doing it. I think it is also true to say I can't do much worse next year so I look forward to doing much better!

### ***The end....***

So that was it then. With the Dunlop over it was time to pack the Westfield back on its trailer and get ready to go home. Here I learnt a valuable lesson. Having put a car on a trailer it is always a good idea to strap it down before moving the trailer. Even if the handbrake is on and the car is in gear and especially if the car tyres are covered in mud! I was lucky, the car stopped an inch from the end of the trailer and we pushed it back into place without even having to take the handbrake off.

After that last little bit of excitement we set off home. We had wanted to stay for the awards etc but the weather looked bad and it would be a slow journey towing the trailer. Plus the fact I had got a strong hint from Gail that she would welcome me back earlier rather than later to help with the kids.... It was a shame we could not stay as rumour has it the WMx group did quite well and that AG got a well deserved special award !

So, an excellent weekend! Thanks again to everyone involved in organizing it, Nikki for coping with my navigation on the Metropole and Jez for showing me up in the Dunlop! Hang on, that last bit isn't right... Next year Jez you can take your own bl\*\*£y car!!

***Toby Mack***



July 14<sup>th</sup>



# ***Clubnight! Music Quiz!!***

Start 8:30 - get your thinking caps on!



At the Liberal Club,  
Victoria Street,  
Windsor



(175 / 967 766)

