



September 2004
Number 463



Toby having fun at Gurston Down!

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Your Editor Speaking...

Blimey - an interesting Grand Prix! I was under the impression that you can't overtake anyone - let alone Michael Schumacher - on the entry to the bus-stop at Spa *around the outside*... Fortunately, no-one seems to have told Juan Pablo Montoya! OK, it went a bit pear shaped the second time he tried it, but full marks for effort!

An **excellent** day at Gurston Down hill-climb school (highly recommended!) in the Westfield reinforced the point that what my little Westie really needs more than anything else is **more power**... To this end bits

and pieces are being amassed - a 2 litre 16 valve Vauxhall engine is currently providing day-to day transport in a Cavalier, a set of GSXR 750 throttle bodies were bought off Ebay, and a set of bits for an engine management computer should be on their way to me soon... All that's needed now is a replacement daily driver for the Cavalier and the transplant can begin... Throw ze switch, Igor! Bwahahahah...

Some excellent articles for you this month - many thanks to Dave Rillie, Drew Goodspeed and to Jerry Ludlow and Chalkie White for the competition ideas! Keep 'em coming folks!

Jez Boakes (Editor)

Ladies and Gentlemen, This is your Chairman Speaking...

It's been a funny old month.

Baking hot, high winds and torrential rain. Is it Global Warming, or is it just the normal cycle of life?

I have to say that I really don't know but it all adds up to a most peculiar month.

The Rally car has gone to a new owner and my house move is imminent.

Hopefully by the time you read this I will have moved and will be sorting out my new place.

I hope to be able to get back to competitive motorsport soon but in which discipline I have not yet decided.

Hopefully the Haymaker will go ahead as planned, entries are coming in but the state of the field is as yet unconfirmed. The last event to be held at the Bramley site was in fact cancelled as the ground was waterlogged, so we will have to wait and see what the weather does.

AG tells me that all the accommodation for the Curtis Bennet has been taken but I'm sure there will be a few spare beds around so if you've not booked up yet don't despair. I for one have 4 spare beds in my chalet so if you want to share then give me a call.

Thats all for now, hope to see you all soon. Give it beans.....

...and don't forget the rhubarb

Big J (Chairman)

Mack's Mutterings

Well, the last month has been an interesting month for me. Things started well with a day at Gurston Down hillclimb school, a very well organised day and the Westfield behaved itself so an excellent day all round. Thoroughly recommended to anyone who has even a vague interest in hillclimbing! August promised to start well with a trip to the Great British Beer Festival. Unfortunately it coincided with the worst rain we have had in ages (45mm of rain in less than 2 hours!!) and our house having a bit of dodgy tarpaulin for a roof. No surprise then that I got a panic stricken phonecall from my wife telling me to get home quick and help mop up the mess! Oh well, at least that was followed by two weeks in Brittany. Very relaxing and, despite being the peak of the holiday season, hardly any traffic on the roads....

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So, what next then? Well, the autotest practice day has had to be cancelled but the Haymaker itself is sure to be good (5th Sept). Next is our "Bring your own slotcar" clubnight on the 9th. Don't worry about the title, come along even if you don't have any slotcars (I don't and I will be there!). Next for me is the Retro Run on the 11th/12th. A touring assembly in Lincolnshire / Leicestershire which will be an excellent weekend if the previous ones are anything to go by!

Looking slightly further ahead into October, there is the Curtis Bennet weekend on the 8th to the 10th and our new members clubnight on the 14th. So, a good couple of months coming up by the look of it! As usual, contact me (or one of the other committee members) if you want any more info on these events.

Toby Mack (Secretary)

West Middlesex Group Committee Member Contact Addresses

<p>Chairman John Wright</p> <p>01923 468205 (Home) 07831 687113 (Mobile) BigJ@UKRM.net</p>	<p>Secretary Toby Mack</p> <p>07770 365797 wmx@ghatzo.co.uk</p>	<p>Treasurer Nikki Wild</p> <p>07778 161572 (Mobile) 01256 762865 (Home) nikki@jez-nikki.net</p>
<p>Committee: Rob Gibbs</p> <p>01908 631652</p>	<p>Allan Goddard</p> <p>agoddard@csma-netlink.co.uk 07785 903000</p>	<p>Bob Head</p> <p>020 7834 1367</p>
<p>Paul Chamberlain</p> <p>020 8933 0589 (Home) 07940 544913 (Mobile)</p>		<p>Sump Editor Jez Boakes</p> <p>07748 766409 jez@jez-nikki.net</p>

**The deadline for articles for the
October Sump is September 22nd!**

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.

West Middlesex SWEEP the BOARD!!

CSMA Karting Track Day.

(If you knew how good it was, you would have been there!)

The venue for this year's **csma** Karting Track Day event was Rye House Circuit at Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire and, unusually for my Karting outings, Monday 7th June 2004 was fine, dry and sunny (although so far, both **csma** Track days have enjoyed excellent weather) and, although it only attracted a total of 34 entrants, the event transpired to be... quite the best day's Karting I have ever enjoyed.

The format allowed for both individual and team events and, in terms of track time per pound, was typically for the **csma** outstanding value for money. The £65 entry fee brought 145 minutes of driving. This is better than half the usual commercial rate for Karting hire!

The mixed ability field comprised a fair proportion of "first timers" as well as "intermediates" and "experts" and the format of the event gave all the chance to win some silverware, with a "novice" eventually taking first and second in the main event.

The best lap of the day fell to West Middlesex and was a "42.34" which was "in sight" of the lap record so the driving standard was good and the Karts thoroughly prepared, well matched and fast.

The track, which has been resurfaced since my last visit, was in excellent condition and now includes a nice little left and right at the end of the pit straight, which not only extends the track but also changed the character of the lap significantly... for the better.

The usual main straight leads into the excellent flat out CAR PARK curve, which allows some brave cornering, (it feels like 3 G on that bend!) before the pits complex where team members urged each other on to every greater feats.

The event started with the entrants being "split in two" ("Karting term") for a 20 minutes practice/warm up session, which establish grid positions for the first competitive sections of the day.

The racing commenced with each half of the field having a 45 minutes (mixed ability) individual race, providing the opportunity for the fast drivers to shine and warm up for the main Team event.

These individual races saw some close racing at the front between the "experts" and a host of hotly contested skirmishes further down the field. Both races were great to watch and despite the variance of experience and lap times went safely and in good spirit. Most of the novice drivers rapidly improved their lap times in the heat of battle, as they learnt from the more experienced karters.

First blood to West Middlesex teams who swept all before them with a new "signing", Matt Clucas, winning the first 45 min individual race in fine style after some close racing.

There was, of course, some exciting overtaking as the back markers were lapped and (apart from one small complaint about the "unreasonable attitude" of the marshal who penalised me for using the grass to overtake at one stage!) the marshals were excellent.

The lunch break allowed a little regrouping before the first of two (mixed ability) Team races.

Each team of two combined drivers from both ends of the lap time spectrum as the organisers sought to give every one an equal chance of winning, as well as mixing with other members from around the country.

The race resulted with some fascinating racing and, positional changes throughout, as teams changed drivers and faster and slower drivers constantly fought it out over the 90 minutes.

This first Team race was again a West Middlesex triumph, with Nick Bray and Richard Goodspeed coming out on top with a fine drive by both to take the honours by a half a lap.

After this race we were all suitably "hyper" but all drivers were offered the chance to "retire gracefully", if they wished, or to take part in a FURTHER one and half hours racing. All but a couple took up the challenge (much to the amusement of the Deavinson's marshals who thought we would be "on our knees" after so much driving) and indeed some suffered blistered hands, but the **csma** is made of sterner stuff and the final one and half hour race took place in the same fiercely competitive but friendly spirit.

Again Nick and Richard were heading for victory before an enthusiastic bit of cornering saw the leaders "in the tyres" and the enforced driver change cost them the win, they still finished second to round off an impressive performance.

The event finished with the Awards Ceremony, which saw several novice drivers on the podium and overall the day was a great success, much to the credit of the organisers.

The Kart Track Day provided hours of friendly competition, very cheap and fiercely competitive motor sport for all abilities and a great chance to mix with other **csma** members.

See you at the next **csma** Karting Track Day: who can challenge West Middlesex?

Drew Goodspeed

MOTORSPORT CO-ORDINATORS' BULLETIN	SEPTEMBER 2004
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Dates	Event (Status)	Club	Type of Event	Champ
Sep Sun 5	* Haymaker Autotest (C)	WMx	Grass Autotest	Centre
Fri 17	* Greenhorn 12 Car (C)	NWL	Beginners Navigational Rally	
Sun 26*	Topographia Rally ()	Farnborough	Photo Treasure Hunt	
Oct Sun 3	Autumn Autotest (C)	NWL	Grass Autotest	Centre
Tue 5	Quadruplex ()	NWL	Inter Group competition	Centre
Sat 9	* Metropole Run (C)	HQ	Regularity	
Sat 9	* Curtis Bennett Rally (C)	HQ	Navigational Rally	
Sun 10*	Dunlop Autotest (C)	HQ	Grass Autotest	
Sun 17	Holly Autotest (C)	NEL	Grass Autotest	Centre
Nov Fri 12	12 Car Rally (C)	NWL	Navigational Rally	Centre
25-27	Revival Rally (C)	ERA	Endurance Rally	
Dec 4/5	Civil Service Rally (Nat B/C)	North West	Navigational Rally	
Dec Fri 10	12 Car Rally (C)	NEL	Navigational Rally	Centre

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

Past Events

Grasshopper Autotest The event managed to avoid the worst of the weather and only had rain during the lunch break. There was good support from the invited clubs but a lot of **csma** people who couldn't make the event, so hopefully more entries will be received next year. There were 15 entries in the Grasshopper and Roger Dudley, driving his Mini

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Scamp, was the winner. In the Groundhog event there were 9 entries and I was the winner, in the Astra estate.

Future Events

Holly Autotest The Steam & Country Show organisers have confirmed that they can't help us this year (finding their feet with the new site), but might be able to accommodate us next time. As a stop gap, I am planning to run the event at the Studd Farm venue, the one near Leighton Buzzard, on Sunday 17th October.

Autotest Practice Day The practice day has been cancelled due to a lack of interest.

Haymaker Autotest This will be held at Church Farm, near Bramley off the A33, which is easily accessible from either the M3 (Jn 6) or M4 (Jn 11). Passengers are not required for this grass event and all runs at the tests will count for the results. Entries are £15 each and regs are available from either Nikki Wild or myself.

Greenhorn Novice 12 Car Rally This year the event will be held on the 17th September, a week later than previously published, and will use map 166. The start is from the John Bunyan Public House, Coleman Green, Wheathampstead, MR/189½126¼. The event is primarily aimed at beginners and novices, although experts can enter as well, so the navigation is usually easier than the main events. Entry forms should be available in this edition of the newsletter or from Mike Harrison on 0208 841 1657.

Topographia Rally This is a treasure hunt where all the clue locations are given as photographs. You have to work out from the picture where it is on the map, go to the location and then find the answer to a question. There will be 28 questions in all, but you only need to answer 16 of them. The event uses map 185 and starts near Basingstoke at 10am, with the finish around 6pm. Entries cost £6 and regs are available from either myself or Dave Pegg 01438 834062.

Autumn Autotest Returning to the Studd Farm venue near Leighton Buzzard, this Production Car permit event will be similar in format to the Greenacres. Details are not to hand at present, but the usual rules will apply and information will be available nearer the time. Contact me for details.

Quadruplex Inter Group Competition Don't forget to put this in your diary as it will be held on Tuesday 5th October. The hosts this year will be NWL and the event will be held at the Noke Thistle Hotel, St Albans, just off the M25 at junction 21a.

October 12 Car The event is definitely off for this year.

Other Items

Centre Championship Current positions in the Centre championship are shown in the accompanying table (*see reverse of calendar flier - ed*). At present there are 14 events planned, which using the $\frac{2}{3}$ rule, will mean a maximum of 9 events counting.

Mike Biss - Motorsports Co-Ordinator Home: 01525 720299 Work: 01977 593482
mike.biss@bt.com

Confessions of a Track Day Virgin

As with many things I've done in motorsport over the years, it seemed like a good idea at the time; the difference this time is that, for once, Allan Goddard wasn't involved! An E-mail came round in March 2001 saying that our works bike club were organising a track day, with entries subsidised by the club. Would I be interested? My initial reaction was 'Not a chance,' because I'd only bought my VFR at the end of August 2000. As you may remember, large swathes of England spent much of that winter under water so in my first six months of ownership I had managed less than a thousand miles on it. I was certainly not interested in crashing it just yet, thank you very much. But thanks to a very persuasive colleague, and the fact that the subsidy brought the entry fee under £50 I had my mind changed and duly signed on the dotted line for a visit to Cadwell Park on Friday 1st June 2001.

So it was that on the last day of May I slipped away from work early to head northeast. Cadwell is further away than you think, just outside Louth in deepest Lincolnshire. Lincolnshire is a big county and Louth is at the northeast end, about 20 miles south of Hull. It's well over 200 miles from Bristol and going cross-country it took me a full five hours with stops. Lincolnshire is also very flat, and the wind was the strongest I've ever encountered, so much so that my magnetic map-holder was blown off the tank and straight across the A16 into the opposite verge; this led to my spending five minutes of grubbing around in the grass locating it. Fortunately there had been nothing coming the other way at the time otherwise it would have made for an interesting insurance claim form!

We were booked for two nights B&B at the Black Horse in Donnington-on-Bain, about four miles from the circuit – a venue which comes recommended if anybody's every going to Cadwell. The event organiser turned up at the pub to meet us and went through instructions and hints for the following day. Food was plentiful and reasonably priced and beer was consumed in moderation (yes, honestly) before retiring to the motel-style rooms.

Friday dawned at an unacceptably early hour, grey and overcast but at least it wasn't raining. Arriving at the circuit, large quantities of tank tape were being used to tape up lights, mirrors, number plates and in my particular case, anal sphincter. Thursday's gales had subsided slightly; the wind was still strong but the circuit's woodland location effectively protected us from the worst of this. It was my first visit to Cadwell and I couldn't get over how narrow the track was, especially the area immediately adjacent to the paddock, which looked no wider than your average B Road.

Signing on was straightforward apart from the long queue to get to it and we were issued with wristbands to show to the start marshals. The day was divided into three groups, fast, intermediate and the politely titled 'touring,' each group getting a twenty-minute session on the track per hour. All those who had not done a track day before were automatically put into the touring group, with the promise that suitable candidates would be promoted as the day progressed. We then attended a briefing in the canteen, which was essentially a repeat of what we had been told in the pub the previous night.

It was at this point that I finally got around to reading the track notes that had been provided. "A classic woodlands circuit", "exit speed should be around 80", "a blind, off camber right hander, one of the most dangerous bends on any UK circuit", "up to 170+ on the back straight" were not phrases designed to inspire confidence in a first timer. Instructions such as "Do NOT try for a straight line through The Gooseneck, you WILL go off" also added to the general feeling of panic that was rapidly developing.

The fast group went out first and the rest of us adjourned to the canteen area to watch. It was at this point that I seriously started to question my sanity as the machinery, speeds and skills on display would not have looked out of place at a WSB round. Knees were going down on corners and front wheels were several feet in the air coming over The Mountain. Next to go out were the intermediate group. After about ten minutes of this session, one bold hero managed to overdo it coming over The Mountain and went straight onto the grass at Hall Bends with inevitable results. His actual crash was thoughtfully positioned right outside the canteen, thus giving us a grandstand view of the paramedics loading him onto a spinal board and taking him away. And it was my turn next.....oh great.

We lined up in the paddock, and I made very sure that I was at the back of the group as the green flags came out and I went onto a race circuit for the first time. The first two laps were sighting laps, ridden behind an instructor to give us some idea of what we were supposed to be doing. The organisers had put cones at the apexes of all the bends to provide an aiming point - just like joining the dots, they had said. Well it came as no surprise to me to find that it wasn't quite that simple. I was riding much the same as I do on the road, very conscious of the fact that I had to be able to ride the bike home afterwards, and I couldn't get used to not being able to see anything in the mirrors. I think everybody must have lapped me, a couple of them twice over.

As we pulled into the paddock and parked up I was wishing that I'd kept my money and stayed at home. It must have shown in my face, because Jan, our group organiser, asked me how I was getting on. I told him, we had a chat about it and he suggested that on the next session I followed him as he had done several track days at Cadwell before. He had also mounted a camcorder on a piece of wood that he had bungeed to his pillion seat facing backwards. This meant that I would be able to look at the tape afterwards to see where I was going wrong. I also adjusted the tape on my mirrors to leave a gap of about half an inch – just enough to warn me if somebody behind me was about to do something really stupid.

The second session arrived and I duly followed Jan out onto the track. I found that following somebody else helped a lot as it gave me something to lock my concentration on to – something you would never do on the road - and the right lines weren't necessarily the ones you would get by following the cones. Finishing this session I was in a happier frame of mind and inspection of my tyres showed a nice orange peel effect beginning to appear. We also had a look at Jan's video, which resulted in some more advice being offered and taken.

Back on my own for the third and fourth sessions I decided that I was going to pick a couple of the less threatening bends and work on my speed and positioning through them for a few laps each. This idea worked well and I found my lines and entry speeds improving noticeably. I was pleased to find that I was staying with other riders, even starting to catch up through the corners and not getting lapped so much. Better still, the VFR remained completely confidence inspiring; none of my ham-fisted efforts had upset it in the slightest and I was increasingly confident that barring any third party interference I wasn't going to stack it.

We then had an hour's lunch halt to give both riders and marshals a break. I had my best run on the session immediately afterwards; suddenly everything clicked, I knew exactly what I was trying to do and was finally managing to get the bike to do it. Entering Mansfield on the last but one lap I finally touched the peg down, something that I'd not done before on this bike. Even at this sort of lean angle, the VFR felt perfectly poised and

secure with no inclination to slide or misbehave. I was also overtaking others regularly by now, mostly under braking and through the corners.

The second afternoon session was as good as the first, but by the third one I found myself easing off – my concentration had started to fade and I was starting to wonder whether my tyres were going to be in a suitable state for the journey home. Track time was running out and we were offered a shortened fourth session but I declined – I had achieved what I set out to do and was happy that I would be taking the bike home in one piece.

So back to the pub, and I was very grateful that I had taken Jan's previous advice that I would be too tired to ride home and booked in for the second night. Food and beer were dispatched, both in much larger quantities than the previous night and at an informal group awards ceremony I was delighted to be named as 'Most Improved Rider' for the day, despite it costing me a round of drinks. Absolutely knackered and full of ale, I had no difficulty sleeping. The following morning Brendan, my roommate, described my snoring as "like sharing a room with a medium-sized Ducati with a faulty race can."

The trip home provided another new experience for me. I kept reminding myself that after a day on the track I would need to re-adjust to being on the road, and was determined not to become an accident statistic on the journey home from the circuit, a common occurrence by all accounts. But by the time I got down through the Cotswolds I was convinced that I'd lost any ability to ride a bike. The VFR just wouldn't do what I wanted it to and I had several scary moments, one whilst overtaking on an open right-hander. Cursing my stupidity and lack of skill, I turned onto the M4 to take me round Bristol and thence onto the M5 and home. Coming off the M5 it finally dawned on me that there was something seriously wrong with the bike. The exit sliproad at junction 22 has a long, tightening right-hander with a good view that I normally take at around 50-60. Being tired, I entered it at 40 and immediately the bars started flapping about. I backed off and rode the remaining two miles home very carefully. On arrival, the rear tyre had only 10psi left in it. I had picked up a nail somewhere along the way and the tyre had been gradually losing pressure all the while. I've not had a puncture before so didn't recognise the symptoms and blamed myself for the peculiar handling - I shall know better next time.

So would I go on a track day again? Maybe, but certainly not as a regular thing. I'm not cut out to be a racer, which I knew before I left home. The reason I eventually decided to go to Cadwell was to find out how my new bike handled when pushed to the limit in a safe environment and without taking too many risks. In a way I failed, because I now know my riding simply isn't good enough to test the limits of the bike. What the magazine reports say is true - the VFR is a superb and accomplished piece of machinery, capable of doing far more than I ever will be. However, I did learn a great deal which will help with my road riding, in particular exactly how far within the limits of the bikes power, handling and braking I normally ride, which is a Very Long Way. This in turn has increased my confidence that if the unexpected does happen, the bike can get me out of trouble by simply leaning further or braking harder. For this reason I would recommend that everybody should consider doing at least one track day, be it on 2, 3 or 4 wheels. I think that the sort of knowledge you gain can only improve your riding or driving – the same as most other motorsport carried out in 'normal' cars.

DSR's Note:- I wrote this article three years ago, just after the events in question, with the intention of sending it in to our works group newsletter but the editor resigned and the newsletter went with him. Despite the misgivings I had at and after the event I have taken the VFR on two Track Days since then, both at Rockingham, and enjoyed them far more than the one described above. Cadwell is a very difficult and narrow circuit and wasn't

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really suitable for a first track experience.

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The biggest difference, however, was between the organisations running the track days. At Cadwell, after the initial two sighting laps you were on your own for the rest of the day. At Rockingham the days were hosted by Rapid Training, a bunch of serving Thames Valley Police motorcyclists who run Rapid as a paying hobby; thoroughly nice, down-to-earth guys who come highly recommended for both their track and road advanced training (bike and car) – visit them at www.rapidtraining.co.uk The attitude at their track days is that they are there to help you improve your riding, and to a numpty like me this made an enormous difference. As a result I learnt far more on both these days than at Cadwell and went away even more impressed with what my bike is capable of doing.

I have now reached the stage where I won't be doing another Track Day until I change my bike. Towards the end of my second day at Rockingham I felt that I had learnt as much as I reasonably could about the VFR that will ever be of use to me on the road. The bike was quite happy doing what it did and whilst I could have probably have pushed it harder, I had reached the point where to do so would have significantly increased the risk of stacking it – not something I want to experience. Besides the VFR isn't really designed for racing – anybody got a cheap Ducati they want rid of??

Dave Rillie

Congratulations Jerry and Emma!

On the birth of your baby girl!

Few details at present - apart from:

*“Mother and daughter are both well.
Father on the other hand is nursing
the Mother of all hangovers!”*

Kerb-Went (Caerwent), The Welsh Enduro Experience.

It started with Allan Goddard saying "There's this great new Rally format, Endurance Rallying, every one gets a chance to win, recreates the old RAC spirit, you would really like it....." etc etc

So as a result of his encouragement I have entered the Revival Rally (probably in a spirit of male menopause) and so I bought this AX GT, "ready prepared" and thus entered my first Rally for many a long day.

Then I figured I had better find a good co driver and then try a "smaller" event first.

My Welsh Enduro experience was about to start.

In the event I had chosen my Co Driver very wisely and Tony Brooks, who (metaphorically) held my hand through the event was more than a match for the event. His considerable experience in Stage and Historic Rallying proving invaluable.

I decided to have some work done on the car.

A bit of knock form the suspension on lock, check the brakes etc etc, move the brake lines/fuel lines inside etc etc.

With just over 3 weeks to go it seemed plenty of time.

Oh yes?

For various very sound reasons it wasn't. And so it was that 10.30 on the night before it came home.

A frantic hour or so trying to pack in all the tools and spares then a few hours sleep before a 6.00am start.

That's why they call it Endurance Rallying?

It was easy to find, especially with a Navigator who had (fortunately) been there last week end, first ordeal was of course Scrutineering.

This was less stressful than I had expected, so many little jobs remained undone, including a pre-event noise check.

Thus we were armed with a bundle of wire wool and I sat in trepidation (and hope) at the noise check.

Now I started to learn "Give me 4500 please" the marshal called, I looked at Tony... that's expensive I said!

So, after a little explanation, in fact we passed easily and pausing only to toss the wire wool in the skip set off to scrutineering "proper".

It seemed a very cursory examination but I am assured by my mentor (AG) "that these guys only make it look simple because they know exactly what they are doing" and if car looks right it probably is .. etc.

Then back to "mission control" for breakfast and a table full of signing on.

(Very smoothly organised but I understand that's a Hywel Thomas trademark.)

The first "prime" (stage) came up at 2.19 pm and, true to form, the Welsh heavens opened, after the first cars had swept through and, as we waited for our start time, ..oh well I wasn't going to rush anyway.

The start consisted of a chicane thingy around a cone (something like 5 mins penalty if you hit it!) then off through the narrow roads and high kerbs that typify Kerb-Went, all went well except the code boards deliberately intended to slow us down, were full of M,N,

& C,V, and D & B and all sorts of other tongue twisters, (I am sure I called a 1 which was an i) my navigator has a fine pair of lungs when you forget a letter.

Second stage and, after 1 mile or so, "ROAAAR" what the hell, oh there goes our exhaust , (another job that missed out due to the late return last night), it would be a muddy track with all sorts of rocks and gradients, we limped through the "prime"/stage and then pulled over, off with my... clothes... no point in getting them wet as well, into the "river" that passed as a road and out with the cable ties and coat hangers. A temporary repair was effected and off we... potted.

And the rain came down, into prime/stage 3, then the bleeding engine died, damn, out we get up with the bonnet thingy, wiggle the leads around, all looks ok "try it"perrumpff roar... it started, of-f-f-f we go!

Never did work out exactly what happened but apart from a bit of a stuttererering on the next stage it kind of cured itself.

Some of the "primes"/stages were through the buildings, tunnels and passages which were broken and uneven surface with 90 degree turns that needed to hand braked just to get round. A bit like Bodie and Doyle racing around empty warehouses etc for the older ones amongst you.

Lots of 90 left, 200 yards, 90 right, 200 yards 90 left, etc etc, oh for some power steering, mind the kerbs , all the kerbs .

However, I was now really getting the hang of this handbrake business, very enjoyable, and with the severe under-steer we were suffering from it was a nice solution, the trouble was I was enjoying too much and using it ALL THE TIME, thereby loosing too much momentum, so I eventually worked out that was not a good idea, and then started being more discerning about the bends to use it, and that seemed to be the answer with an improvement of 25-30 seconds a prime.

At the end of the first set of stages we were to repeat them for the second half so with a quick visit to "service" where Peter lashed up the exhaust a lot more firmly, we went back round for another go, having "dropped" 3 minutes ..or something.

We eventually reached the end of Daylight stages for day 1, but not before the attractions of the Welsh scenery proved too much for the self control of the little Citroen which just had to make a closer acquaintance!

So we modified the navigator's headlamp in some Welsh bushes mainly due a little muddy bit, too much enthusiasm, and a severe case of under/over /under steerey stuff.

Still we live and learn.

At the rest halt, after a cup tea, .. my second priority, we made a temporary repair, which is still working fine two weeks later, this utilised the navigators plastic file covers (well it was his headlamp) and the every trusty tank tape, to restyle the front end and hold the bumper together.

Now the night stages, these were... interesting?

Kerb-Went is a maze of little roads, turnings going nowhere, dead ends, taped roads and lots and lots of strange buildings, in burial mounds of earth with very few distinguishing features, (just the occasional "K704" etc (or is that classified?) and one called Centre Point!

Then "we" had 30 minutes to plot, on the photocopied maps supplied, (My God Tony's eyesight must be good) and then we were off... into the dark with 1.5 headlamps and, a murky night and only our steely determination to... "drive for a finish", yes I know, everyone says that!

More B*** Code boards , B & V again etc, and now “give way” signs (my navigator can shout) “STOP”... “I did” “no you didn’t” etc) these were in the strangest places which made it a very challenging night, however “Hawkeyes” Tony was well up to it, reading the maps, spotting the roads and calling the location of the code boards so well that after the night section we moved up around 15- 20 places to 11 th O/L!

(Didn't I choose well.)

The night was not without its humour, at one point we arrived at a junction of 5 roads and there were... five competitors... all facing each other, headlights blazing and, no one moving.

When we then found the “right route”, (we thought), we were the middle of a train of 3 only to find, it wasn't, and we were (literally) in a “blind” alley (around 6 ft wide), couldn't



open the doors even, and it was pitch dark with a 90 right to reverse out of in an impatient “train”.

The exhaust was slowly, but surely, getting noisier and noisier again and soon we sounded a lot like a ...Spitfire? (wishful thinking) so it was off to Peter and Betty again.

“Enough” they cried, it is 11.30 pm we can do this in the morning and MAYBE it won't be raining then.

Sunday was grey but dry...ish so it started early, on my back again, removing the sump guard and helping the experts to “fix it”.

A neat solution to “my rear end problem” was nice a length of chain, so neat that I am keeping it as this approach allows it to, swing, flex, and rattle all at the same time. (I am even thinking of getting one for my exhaust.)

A little strategic planning now arose, my co driver had worked out we were 2.5 minutes behind last years winner (forget it Drew) “you will NEVER catch him” (I do like a little confidence!) and we were “around 2 mins ahead of the next car”, a very smart NOVA in rather fine Vauxhall livery. SO “PLAY IT CLEVER”, drive to preserve the position, NO Red Mist.(... “Yes sir”.)



So, several (I lost count) 3 and 4 mile “primes” in reverse to Saturday, with cone chicanes to avoid, and the usual crop of gates cattle grids and cattle troughs and by now the unmade sections were getting really “chewed up” (technical term) and we were ground-ing “everywhere”, with that exhaust being worryingly low and, no tank guard (another job that didn’t get done), however, all the “lines” are inside ... thank goodness.

Nearly finished.

Then the final prime, the “piece of resistance” and we were “Hawkeye reckoned“ all of 4 mins ahead of the next car, someone else had dropped out so, a Top Ten finish was a possibility, so long as YOU don’t put it in the bushes (again).

Steady does it, 14 miles this one all the short ones strung together with a few changes in between to keep us on our toes.

GREAT, a lot of fast drift sections then, mile after mile of, 90 right, 200 yards then 90 left, 200 yards then 90 right, etc etc.

A tactical stage, back off ...just make sure we finish then... the temperature starts to climb!!!

"Sh**", heater on, back off, a bit more, only around 4 miles to go... temperature still climbing, "SH**" its now off the gauge! The red light is on, we can feel the heat... literally really back off, and ...here comes my nemesis "The NOVA"... let him through (anyway... "he can't make up 4 minutes").

We eventually coasted out of the stage, being really calm, went gently around the final cones and drifted to a stop... we had finished.

Yes we finished we were 11th... by 12 seconds!!!! SOD IT.

The bottom hose had split, no water in the radiator at all. Bless that little car. Another job (change all the hoses) I had reckoned on doing in the "10 days prior to the event", when the car came back from the "prep" shop.

So wiser, yes, and it was a steeep learning curve, we had after all entered to help our preparation for the Revival Rally and to give me some experience of "stage" events and to see if we could work together as an effective team.

It was a very well organised event ("in my great experience") with some really experienced crews and well prepared cars and we did better than I had dreamed possible, BUT SO MUCH remains to do to get us ready for November.

What a great format this Endurance rallying is, it proves that even a really green "beginner" can be (quite) competitive (with a very good co driver) and our little old car was not that far off the pace.

With no service crews etc you fix it yourself and, surprisingly, I am quite enjoying that part!!

Next... the CB, AG's 40thsee you there.

Drew Goodspeed

Photos in this article are courtesy of:

Martyn Jenkins

RallyQuest Video Productions.

www.rallyquest.co.uk.

Tel 01792 812135.

The Ludlow Haynes Manual Challenge...

Whilst perusing the Haynes Manual for the Ford Sierra 2.3, 2.8 and 2.9 (incl 4x4) - as one does - I came across a component which had a very long name (as used by Haynes, not necessarily by the rest of the world...), viz:

The Rear Final Drive Unit Pinion Retaining Nut

(Shame it didn't have a locking pin!)

The Challenge:

Find the longest name for a car component in a Haynes Manual.

The longest validated name wins a beer from me at the Annual Dinner!

Entries to the Sump editor please!

Good luck!

Jerry Ludlow

Caption Contest

Can anyone come up with a suitable caption for this picture (and let's face it, it's begging for one!) of a well known comedian standing next to Oliver Hardy? Suggestions to the editor!



Thanks to Chalkie for the pic...