



WMx csma

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Number 453



Westfields doing it backwards on the Autotest Training Day...

Newsletter of the West Middlesex Group of the csma

Your Editor Speaking...

Well, the verdict is...

...my car stood up extremely well to the rigours of the autotest training day!

Despite me driving like a 'complete loony'! (Thanks John!)

The day was an absolute hoot - made possible for me because my car had been set up for autotesting by its previous owner (Duncan Wild...!) and therefore has a hydraulic handbrake and limited slip differential, making the entry to, and control of, powerslides, flicks, doughnuts (depends upon how long they last!) relatively easy. Or so it seemed compared to the struggles of the others on the day who unfortunately only had standard handbrakes and diffs...

The tarmac of Martenique Square was (as Duncan observed) extremely grippy so it wasn't surprising that road spec. handbrakes were having difficulty locking the rears...

From the Hot Seat

Hello and welcome back from your holidays. Whether you've basked in the record-breaking heat wave at home or have been further a field, I hope you've had a very good time and are back with us looking forward to the remainder of the year with WMx.

The Autotest training day on the 19th July was a fantastic opportunity to practice but sadly not supported by as many members as had been indicated when the idea was first floated. Those who did attend found the very grippy parade square a challenge (even the autotest special felt like it was driving on treacle) but had a lot of fun and learned a lot about autotesting.

The **Weakest Link August Clubnight** was definitely not one of our successes. Either you're all way too scared of Ann Robinson or the thought was just not enough to bring you out on a sunny summer's evening. A grand total of two people made it to Windsor (myself and Jez). Needless to say,

However, despite this everyone appeared to have a good time around the courses laid out. I would have had a better time but for a bit of brain fade which lasted - ooh - the whole day, rendering me unable to remember any of the courses! Rather frustrating since I can right now (sitting in front of my PC putting together this edition of The Sump) recall both tests with perfect clarity! But ask me to drive one of them and I'm pretty sure the result would be the same - me sitting in the middle of the course trying desperately to work out where I am and where to go next...

Maybe autotesting isn't for me...

However, the opportunity to be a complete hooligan (OK - guilty as charged John!) in complete safety and with total immunity from the unwanted attention of Plod isn't a chance to be missed, and I heartily recommend taking part should WMx undertake this again! I certainly will...

Have fun!

Jez Boakes, Editor

Clubnights are something that the Committee will be paying close attention to at the next meeting. If you have any contributions to make with either ideas of what you'd like to do or just with insights as to why you feel Clubnights aren't for you in their current format, please call one of the Committee or drop one of us an email with your thoughts. The more feedback we have before the session on September 7th, the more informed our decisions will be.

Monday the 8th September sees a number of the Group members descend on the Daytona Karting track at Milton Keynes for a day's competition. Good luck to those taking part.

Three days later is the **September Clubnight** which will be a **Navigational Table Top rally** organised by AG. For those of you who are not familiar with Table Tops, it is an evening of navigational exercises to solve similar to those that you would encounter as a rally navigator but without all

the inconvenience of having to find a driver to take you round the route!

information, feel free to contact any member of the Committee or email the Group.

Other activities of note in the coming weeks are on the calendar. As usual, for more

Nikki Wild, Chairman

The Secret Hairy Bits

I always seem to end up typing this at the last minute. I got home on the 23rd to find an email from our esteemed editor reminding me to complete my article by the 20th. Oh dear looks like I missed the deadline again.

A few events have taken place since the last issue.

I went out to NEL's Greenacre Autotest to witness a clean sweep by team Grubb congrats to Malcolm, Steven, Michael and Caroline, who if my memory serves me correctly took the first 4 places.

I also went along to the Holly Autotests with WMx's newest member Gavin Waller where we both competed in my 205. Things were going well until the throttle cable snapped – still such is life.

The August Clubnight was a bit of a let down for organisers Nikki and Jez. Unfortunately as no-one turned up it was a bit of a waste of their time, perhaps it would be better in future to scrap the August clubnight, as most people seem to be unable to attend? Which brings me to Clubnight attendance generally, have we done something wrong? Have we upset you all? Or is there another reason why Clubnight attendance figures seem to have dwindled recently? Perhaps you would like to do some other activity at a Clubnight? Perhaps we meet on the wrong night?

We "The Committee" would like to see more of you attending Clubnight and Noggin and Natter evenings. But we need to know what YOU want to do and why you don't come.

If you would like us to change the way we run YOUR group then please let us know, you will find contact details for all committee members in this issue.

This is YOUR club and we need YOUR help,

Looking forward, we have the **Haymaker Autotest** taking place again this year at Bramley on Sunday 21st September. The regs and entry details are attached; we'd love to see you either as competitors or Marshals. This is an excellent event for both novices and experts so get those entry forms in soon please.

The **Greenhorn 12 car** takes place on Friday eve 26th September. This is an excellent event to get you into the swing of the main 12 car championship which starts in October or an excellent introduction for those that have not competed before. It is being organised by NWL Group. Regs have not been published yet but let me know if you want them and I can forward them on as they become available. Alternatively contact Alan Thurbon from NWL.

Well that's it for now.....

Just remember the beans and the rhubarb and you won't go far wrong.

BigJ, Secretary

The deadline for articles for the October Sump is September 24th!

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



MOTORSPORT CO-ORDINATORS' BULLETIN

SEPTEMBER 2003

Dates	Event (Status)	Organising Club	Type of Event	Champ
Sep 13/14	* Bullnose Rally (Nat B)	Oxford MC	Road Rally	Southern
Sun 21	* Haymaker Autotest (C)	WM	Grass Autotest	Centre
Mon 22	Track Day at Croft (C)	HQ	Take your car on a race track	
Fri 26	Greenhorn 12 Car Rally(C)	NWL	Navigational Rally	
26-28	* Retro Run (C)	HQ	Car Touring	
Oct Sun 5	Autumn Autotest (C)	NWL	Grass Autotest	Centre
Fri 17	12 Car Rally (C)	WM	Navigational Rally	Centre
Nov Fri 7	12 Car Rally (C)	NWL	Navigational Rally	Centre
Sat 22	Quadruplex ()	WM	Intergroup competition	Centre
Dec 6/7	Civil Service Rally (NatB/Cm)	NW	Road Rally	
Fri 12	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 There were seven entries in the championship round event and nine entries in the **csma** only part. Gavin Lane won the main event whilst the Grubb family, from West Middlesex group, were out in force in the Centre event and scooped the top four places.

Holly Autotest This event will be running as I type this, so a report next month maybe.

Future Events

Haymaker Autotest This will be held at Church Farm, near Bramley, south of Reading. Passengers are not required for this grass event and all runs at the tests will count for the results. Entries are £12 each and available from John Wright on 01923 468205.

Greenhorn 12 Car September sees the start of the 12 car rally season and if anyone wants to know about these events, now is the time to start asking. The routes are about 45 miles on a Friday evening and the emphasis is on plotting and following the correct route on an Ordnance Survey Landranger map (1:50,000 scale). The whole event is timed at an average speed of 30mph, and the main aim is for a bit of fun rather than serious sport. That's what the Saturday night events are for.

WM 12 Car Rally The October 12 Car Rally will now be running a week later on the 17th October.

Quadruplex This inter group event will be hosted by West Middlesex this year and will run on Saturday 22nd November. Please book it in your diaries now. Further details will appear later but it will be suitable for everyone.

Civil Service Rally This will again be based at Eaves Hall and special rates for two (£70 DBB) and three (£100 DBB) night stays are available. The event is also a round of the local regional championships and was well received last year. The event also caters for the novice competitor with a separate class with easier navigation. To request your set of regs for the event contact Terri Jacobs at HQ or ask me.

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

The Highs and Lows of how they do it in Germany...

It all started with an innocent Christmas raffle. Colleagues in the office were winning the usual things like tins of biscuits, Christmas pudding, bottle of wine, etc., then my number was pulled out of the hat. I selected a slip of paper from the "lucky dip" of named prizes and discovered that I'd won two free BA flights to anywhere in France, Belgium or Germany any time in 2003 donated by the company!

Jez and I both had the immediate thought of World Rally Championship (WRC) and Formula 1 (F1) dates. Spa was a definite attraction but examination of the calendar showed that the Grand Prix (GP) circus wasn't going to the circuit in 2003 so that was ruled out. Then we spotted the perfect combination: the WRC round in Germany was followed a week later by the German GP.

In January, I booked the leave and arranged the prize flights, so far so good. Next came the costly bit: Hotels. Having had consistently good results with the Good Hotel Guide in Britain, I obtained a copy of the edition for Europe and started visiting listed web sites for hotels around Trier (for the rally) and Heidelberg (for the GP).

A couple of email exchanges secured hotels for each and I was pleased to see that, while the GP caused the hotel prices to go up by over 50% that weekend, there was no such inflation associated with the rally – Cardiff take note! The plan was to spend a week at Trier to give us chance to do the tourist bit in the Mosel valley after the rally and then move over to Neckargemund, just outside Heidelberg, in time for the GP.

I think that the bargain of the holiday was the next booking. A hire car. I rang round a few of the usual firms and had a few online quotations and then visited the csma website to find out what was on offer there. The partner "Holiday Autos" came back with a price which greatly undercut everything else I'd been offered: A VW Golf 1.3 (or equivalent) with air conditioning (a must!) for 12 days with unlimited mileage was around £240 after the csma discount. As that also included things like insurance, breakdown recovery and replacement cars if it went wrong, I decided to bite their hands off and booked it.

It occurred to me that when booking a hire car in a foreign country, it would be useful if the hire company would provide some information about local rules of the road. This view was confirmed when, after a great deal of searching, a book shop proprietor in Trier told us that Germany doesn't have a Highway Code as we would recognise it. That meant that most of the rules had to be worked out by common sense. Surely, hire companies should be promoting safe driving in the countries we travel to by educating their customers rather than leaving us to work it out for ourselves? Even if they didn't want the expense of providing notes themselves, on the booking confirmation they could include details of where information could be found. I've since discovered that the AA and RAC web sites offer advice on driving abroad – they include things like the current drink-drive limits, rules about headlight use, national speed limits, etc. But even these web sights didn't tell us everything we needed to know. For example – they tell you what the speed limit is in a built-up area but they don't tell you that there are not often speed limit signs, instead you are supposed to use the town name sign as the start of the restriction. Simple advice like this would have been very useful!

Finally, we ordered tickets for the rally and the GP. With everything in place there was nothing left to do except sell a couple of houses, move into the new one and wait for our holiday to arrive...

Rallye Deutschland

We flew out to Frankfurt and picked up the hire car – a brand new VW Beetle. 1.4 litre petrol engine, manual transmission, in black with 31km on the clock. I should note at this

www.csma-grouplink.co.uk/webs/wmiddlesex

point that from day one, Jez banned me from putting flowers in the Beetle's vase so we ended up using it as somewhere to put the used car park tickets.

As Jez has more experience of driving on the continent (I've never driven on the wrong side of the road!), we (**that should be "I" - ed**) put him down as the named driver for the holiday. A shrewd move, I thought, considering we were going to a region known for it's wine! That of course meant that the responsibility of navigating us to our destinations fell to me. I bought a Michelin map of the region where we were staying before we travelled and had a fair idea of where we wanted to go. In addition, the phrase book had very useful sections about how roadside parking worked, translations of fuel types at petrol stations, examples of road signs and so on so I was feeling quite confident. We also had a map which came with the rally passes which had a large scale overview of the area covered by the event as well as a street plan for Trier.

The signs out of the airport were clear and we were on the correct autobahn heading in the right direction at the first attempt. All went well for our 2 hour, 265 Km journey to Trier although Jez will confirm that being able to do any speed you want isn't much fun in a gutless car. Down hill with a tail wind, the most the Beetle ever managed was 170kph (about 105 mph). We arrived at our exit and after only one detour (one exit too late off the roundabout) we ended up heading into Trier. I was slightly thrown by dual-carriage-way roads that weren't shown as such on the street plan but we emerged relatively unscathed the other side and arrived at the hotel. Our room, at the top of the hotel, had a balcony with a stunning view across the whole town and lovely sunsets over the hill the far side of the Mosel river.

While we were travelling from the airport, the mobile had rung: AG's voice on the other end asked "when are you coming to see us then?" He was calling from the service area where he was based with the Prodrive team merchandise crew. We decided to meet up that evening for a drink at their hotel.

Unpacked and refreshed, we drove down to the town. We'd established that AG's hotel was on the riverside next to the roman bridge but we wanted to find somewhere to eat in the town first so we picked a car park on the map and headed for it. What I didn't know was that neither one-way streets nor the large pedestrianised area in the middle of the town were marked on the street plan. It seemed that every road I wanted to use was marked "No entry" and I was becoming more and more frustrated when eventually we found a multi-storey car park. A very helpful local showed us on our plan where we were and by chance it was the car park we'd been heading for. I was completely baffled as to how we'd found it but decided not to knock it. Needless to say, the next day we purchased a good local map with a street plan which marked everything to enable us to negotiate the town centre without the unwanted excitement of random routes.

The town centre was a buzz of excitement. There were cordons through the main square and the competitors for the rally were about to drive through following the official rally start. We watched the first few before hunger got the better of us and we spotted a Chinese restaurant nearby. The food was excellent and very good value. Converting from Euros to sterling became second nature very quickly.

We walked from the centre out to the riverside (accidentally finding ourselves down the road that appeared to be Trier's red light district!) and found the hotel where AG was staying. We found them in the restaurant and retired to the roof-top terrace for drinks. There is something surreal about meeting fellow WMx members in another country on the roof of a hotel but we can talk shop anywhere and the time flew. It was getting on for midnight before we found our way back to the car. The journey back to the hotel was less fraught as the one-way streets appeared to be working in our favour.

With all the activities prior to the holiday (selling a house, running the Autotest training day, work commitments, etc) we hadn't really thought about how to approach the rally. With hindsight this was a mistake and meant that we didn't get to as many stages as we would have liked. AG had been extolling the virtues of service so we decided to go there first (while there was still likely to be a full field to see). It was surprisingly quiet and we had very good views of all the crews at work. The top cars in their paddocks were arranged in a horseshoe around a central public area but there was no access to any of the other crews' servicing so it was all over very quickly. Plus not very exciting because the crews vanished straight into their caravans leaving us to watch the mechanics work their magic.

Spectator movements were very well managed. The stages were all a short distance from the autobahns and each exit had signs clearly showing which stage number they served. Once off the motorways, each stage was colour coded so you just followed the spectator sign for your colour and when closer, each viewing point was numbered so you could just follow the number of your choice. The traffic flows in and out of the stages were also very well managed and we never had to sit and queue. (Not like clogged lanes and roads in Wales!)

We went from service to stage 5 (a second running of an earlier stage). It would have been a good spot if it had rained – hairpin into downhill straight into another hairpin. But it was so hot and dry that there was no tail-out entertainment and it actually felt like a bit of an anticlimax. There were a lot of spectators who were only there for the top drivers – after the first dozen cars had passed a huge number left. We stayed for most of the crews on the first day – it was nice to see Stig Blomqvist running (car 65) so he became our benchmark to wait for on other stages.

Day two was a bit of an oops on the planning front. They were running through a couple of stages near where we were staying but at 8:30 in the morning! No thanks. We felt as though we'd already done service to death so we did a spot of sight-seeing in a couple of towns before visiting a stage in the afternoon. With hind-sight that would have been the day to do service and we should have fitted in 2 stages on the Friday instead.

Day 3 was better. The timing of the stages meant that they started the first stage at 7am – I don't think so – this is a holiday after all! But we picked a good-looking spot on the second run through just after lunch and it turned out to be a cracker. In the vineyard area, we could hear them coming down the valley then they appeared below us round a right hander, into a left hander disappeared from view along a straight to a hairpin then emerged from the right in front of us, heading left, uphill into a 90 right, another short straight and then left over a crest. After about a minute, they then appeared on the hilltop across the valley for a short distance. An excellent place to watch from and when the 1-minute interval boys started, there were cars everywhere! We saw more action there than the previous two days combined.

After that, we headed back into Trier to watch the parade at the finish. We decided not to battle with the crowds at the finish ramp but to wait in the main square again where they were going to drive through as they had at the start. Unfortunately this time it was very badly done. They waited until three cars were there then drove them through with a police escort which was fine but we then had another long wait for the next three. Another wait, then there was a pair of cars. Another wait and three more, the third of which was Burns' Peugeot but driven by goodness-knows-who. After a very long wait a couple of MPV's appeared. They had blacked-out windows but we think that the top three crews were in them because after another wait, Gronholm and Loeb's cars were driven past us by unknowns. That and the slight glimpse of something shiny through the

blackened windows which Jez thought was possibly the winner's trophy. It was over an hour after the official finish and a real anticlimax. Very disappointing for everybody who'd waited patiently in the rain for ages to support the drivers. To have them not drive their own cars was bad enough but to then use blacked-out cars was ridiculous. A real shame that they close with that because as the last part of the event, that's one of the lasting memories.

Having said that, I'm really glad that we went. It was odd watching rally cars in hot sunshine on tarmac, rather than in rain and snow on the loose forest surfaces. It felt much more authentic on days 2 and 3 when there were a few showers but even they were warm! It was difficult to feel the buzz and excitement that we get on events in the UK purely because of the lack of information in a language that we could understand which made it feel a bit distant. The rally radio was entirely in German and the "Rallye Information" points were only selling the spectator maps which we already had. If they had had interim results such as those available on British events at information points, we could at least have deduced overall positions. As it was, we had to listen intently to commentaries and translate them.

The one thing that they really should sort out for the future is marshal training – there were very few who seemed to do a proper job. Most seemed to be just there to stand in dangerous places to get the best views! It appeared that they had little regard for "crowd control". But then I suppose that's what happens on all international events – the hangers-on come out in force for the prestige. Maybe Germany should take a leaf out of the MSA's book and have a register of trained marshals.

Apart from the unnerving one-way system, the worst experience of Trier involved the underground car park. The sign at the entrance said "24" and we checked the signs carefully which said there was an overnight charge. We also found a sign on the attendant's office which said "hours of business 06:00 to 21:00". We logically assumed that meant the attendant. We adjusted this interpretation at 21:40 when we arrived at the stairs down to the car park and found them gated and locked. A pair of young men (I think they were Belgian) appeared to be in the same predicament – they had been shouting into the intercom at the voice on the other end and had managed to force open the lift doors. They were beckoning to us to join them and we figured we had nothing to lose so descended to the first level where our car was, leaving them to descend a further floor to theirs. I paid for our parking at the ticket machine while Jez investigated the exit. Beyond the barrier was a big metal wall where the exit ramp used to be.

At this point we were worried. Sure, we could have taken a taxi back to the hotel and returned for the car the next day but I'd now paid for our parking which meant our ticket would have expired by the morning and we were now trapped inside the car park because of the gated stairs (I didn't fancy trying to force the lift doors open). I was preparing myself for a night in the car and a fine in the morning! I found a "help" button on the pay-machine and a crackly voice answered. I asked whether he spoke English (apparently not) then tried to explain, in very bad German, that we were trapped with our car. A garbled reply came back to me but I didn't need to work it out because at that point, the two who had got the lift working drove up to our level, waved frantically at us to follow them and vanished towards the exit. We ran back to the car and followed. By the time we reached the barrier, there was no sign of them so crossing our fingers, we put the ticket into the machine and watched as the barrier and the metal shutters lifted. Phew! We were touched that our partners in distress had waited in the road to make sure that we too had escaped the clutches of the car park safely. Not an episode I'd like to repeat. We didn't use that car park again.

As if we hadn't had enough of a motor sport fix, the day after the Rally (returning from a day out at a castle) we took a detour to visit the Nürburgring – the original Nordschleife, of course. We found a parking area with a good view of a downhill s-bend into a long sweeping right-hander before the track disappeared up a hill and away from view and spent a very entertaining hour watching everything from bikes, through worryingly basic road cars, to a pair of Porches out to play all experiencing varying degrees of excitement. No, we didn't take the Beetle for a lap.

The middle days of the holiday flew by and it was soon time to leave the vineyards and old roman towns of the Mosel valley behind us to head to the Rhine area. We checked out from our lovely hotel and thanked our host (one of the two brothers who run the friendly guest-house-style hotel) for a thoroughly enjoyable stay. He presented us with a very nice bottle of local wine as a souvenir.

Formel 1 - Hockenheimring

We were to stay at Neckargemund, a small town the far side of Heidelberg from Hockenheim, and the race circuit. Information when I booked the hotel suggested that we should have about a half hour drive to the circuit but we didn't bank on Heidelberg getting in the way. It took us a couple of hours (excluding the visit to the aircraft museum and a late lunch in Ramstein) to reach Heidelberg then another hour and a half to get through it. The main road along the banks of the Neckar was solid so we crossed the river to a smaller road, hoping that would be quieter. Unfortunately they were digging it up and it was this queue that we sat in for over an hour watching the, previously jammed, traffic flowing freely on the opposite bank! The road works looked well established for a long visit so we decided to avoid that road for the duration of our stay. We had planned to return to Heidelberg for the evening but as most of the evening had gone by the time we reached our hotel and unpacked, we stayed put for dinner.

The hotel was on the riverside, across a bridge from the town centre. We had views across to the pretty churches which were considerably less endearing at 6:30 every morning when they began a loud and lengthy peal of bells. Definitely not somewhere to stay if you like a lie in!

We had taken a pretty laid-back approach to the rally – late breakfasts before heading to whichever stage looked promising. The GP was to be slightly different. With thousands of people descending on the same place at more-or-less the same time we prepared ourselves for traffic – and lots of it.

While I was booking hotels, Jez had bought us tickets in the Mercedes-Benz grandstand which looks over the cars emerging from the Parabolica, down to the hairpin, back up the straight and through the right/left kink in front of the stand before they turn right to the next complex. It was an excellent choice for a number of reasons. Firstly, there was lots of action to be seen from our vantage point – especially in the support races (which were F3000, Porsche GT Cup and Renault Clios). Secondly, and well worth the extortionate money for the tickets, the stand is covered (which meant we were in shade after noon) and has its own ticket-only enclosure with much posher food stands, loos, etc, than the open sections of the circuit. Being the obvious place for all the Mercedes-Benz hospitality, there were Merc-related display stands, a stage with musical “entertainment” (the band was more like a bad karaoke session most of the time) and the odd celebrity wandering about.

On Friday we were queuing for food (which happened to be next to one of the loo exits) when we spotted Bernie “I hate Silverstone” Ecclestone emerging from the Gents. We resisted the temptation to go and ask him why he hates the British GP so much! I was,

however, quite impressed that he stopped his entourage so that a couple of kids could take his photo and have autographs signed. Then on Sunday, we were sat under some of the steps into the stand getting some shade when Niki Lauda appeared just in front of us on the steps for an interview. It was quite funny watching trios of camera/sound men scurrying about trying to keep up with the celebs! Raikkonen put in a whole 4 mins for an interview on the stage in the enclosure on race day but we didn't see any sign of David Coulthard.

The atmosphere was great. Having been there all through Friday and Saturday, there was a real sense of build-up and as the stand filled to capacity on Sunday there was a buzz which really doesn't come across on the TV coverage.

There were big screens up around the circuit which showed the scenes for the television feed so we saw on those exactly what everybody back home was seeing at the same time. That meant we could see what was going on elsewhere on the circuit. I kept catching myself watching the screen instead of the cars coming past me! There was a commentary which was in German for the support race practice and qualifying sessions but which alternated between German, French and English for the GP qualifying and most of the races. However F1 cars were so loud that it couldn't be heard.

We assumed that, like the rally, the majority or people there would be interested only in the top drivers. On both Friday and Saturday the stands were very quiet during the support race activity and on both days the circuit was comparatively empty by the time we walked back to the car. We decided to stay for everything – we were determined to get our money's worth and we were really enjoying the fun of the support races.

I have to confess that I found practice sessions rather dull. Not a lot of interesting action and with commentary that we couldn't understand it made it less interesting (particularly for the support races). I have a habit at home of watching the start of GPs, dozing through the middle and then waking up for the finish. I'm afraid to say that Hockenheim was no different. At least, not for the practice sessions. Despite the roar of their engines, I fell asleep during the Friday F3000 practice session! I blame too much sun and a long day in the fresh air!

The GP itself was very good. The grandstand was full and there was an air of anticipation as we all waited for the start. We had ear plugs in for the race but even with those, you could still hear the collective gasp as we all watched the crash at the first corner on screen. There was speculation about whether there would be a restart or just a safety car and the usual cynical "Michael's OK so they won't re-start" comments. Sure enough, they let the race run and it all settled down. I found the middle third of the race a bit of a procession – I have to confess to nearly nodding off a couple of times! The fact that so many cars had been taken out in the initial incident meant that a lot of the promised racing action was missing. I also felt that by not having an audible commentary alongside the visual action made it feel strangely distant. But all that changed after the second batch of pit stops when the action picked up in the final dozen laps. Coulthard was closing on Schumacher (Michael – Ralf was out) who was closing on Trulli and it all got very exciting.

The crowd were a sea of red baseball caps but of course being in the Mercedes stand, there were lots of McLaren supporters. Everywhere went nuts when Schumacher got past Trulli and then, when Coulthard got past too, right in front of us, it all went nuts again – he couldn't have picked a better spot to overtake. Then when they next came into view, we saw Coulthard close on Schumacher though the parabolics to the hairpin. They went out of sight behind the advertising banners that span the track and emerged up the straight with Coulthard ahead. It all got very exciting. That was the point at which the

screen showed the flat tyre on the Ferrari and people actually got up and started leaving! Of course, cheers were even louder for Coulthard as he went past again and again on his parade lap. Definitely a highlight moment.

We were annoyed about what followed the race though. The big screen showed the podium and the awards presentation and you could tell that national anthems were playing but they'd cut the feed to the speakers and resumed the band's music. All the support races had had the podium ceremony shown and the anthems played (German of course) so we don't know why they chose not to have the sound for the GP result. I wonder whether they'd have done that if Schumacher had been up there? Real sour grapes stuff!

Probably the most frustrating thing about the whole weekend though was the lack of information for car drivers. The Hockenheimring web site says get off the Autobahn and follow the signs. That's it. We weren't sent any information with our tickets about car parking. When we bought the tickets online there was an option to buy a pass to park at the stand but that was very expensive. We thought, again from the web site, that there would be plenty of parking near the circuit and that we'd take our chances.

On the first day we left the autobahn and were directed by the police towards the town to parking area "P6". We'd come off the motorway on the "wrong side" from the circuit and I was expecting us to cross back over to park. Not the case. We were directed to a large field on the edge of Hockenheim town which was also one of the main camp site areas. That left us with over an hour's walk through woods, across the motorway, through more woods (very welcome shade in the heat) to the circuit entrance when we then had to walk to our stand. We asked everybody we could think of where a nearer parking place was but the security had been brought in from outside the area for the event and knew nothing. There were buses parked near our stand marked P11 and I thought that maybe that meant there was a car park P11 and these were park'n'ride buses from there.

At the end of Friday, we decided that P6 could be bettered. After our unsuccessful attempt at finding parking information (including at 6:30pm being directed to the circuit information office only to find it had closed two hours earlier – excellent: main race meeting of the year and they close information an hour and a half before the racing stops!) we decided to recce the whole area around the circuit and try to find a better car park. One security person had told us that P2 was the nearest public access car park but that it had to be approached through the town. We didn't think that was a particularly good idea and as we'd headed to the town and been channelled into P6, that wasn't a promising idea.

We were driving about round the east side of the circuit and found an entrance where two security guards announced that it was P17 but that they had no idea where any other parking was. Then one flagged down a BMW which was leaving the track. The gentleman inside spoke English and I went over to his car (leaving Jez in the Beetle) doing my useless girly act. He explained this was P17 (this we knew) and that all we had to do was head into Hockenheim itself and then follow the signs to the car park we wanted (this we also knew). I explained that that was where the plan fell apart – we didn't actually know where we wanted to park because nobody could tell us anything. I told him we'd been in the Merc stand but had a very long walk so were trying to find somewhere better for days 2 & 3. He said that P17 would be ideal (parking on the old circuit and then just walk to the hairpin and around to our stand) but that we needed to buy a car pass from the information office. I explained that the office closed too early. Then I think he got sympathetic (or just wanted to get rid of me) because he rummaged in the back of his car and fished out his passes for Saturday and Sunday. He said he wasn't coming

back and we were welcome to them! What an incredibly nice chap. That really did make the whole experience a lot nicer.

He also handed us a small booklet which showed the circuit and marked the car park areas (apparently you get one with your car passes!). It showed that this was the only parking on the east side of the circuit which had the result of being well away from the majority of the traffic. Sure enough, on Saturday morning, we had a trouble-free journey to the car park and were at the stand within half an hour. It was at this point that we deduced that P11 was in fact the parking at the stand and the P11 signs were the bus's passes for the on-site shuttles to allow them access to the enclosure. I've no idea where they shuttled from.

The traffic was surprisingly painless for the whole weekend. The first and second days were fine anyway because most people left after the F1 activity and the rest staggered their departure so that by the time we left when all the day's practices/qualifying/racing had ended, there were very few cars in any of the car parks. But on Sunday, the GP is the last thing of the day so everybody tries to leave at once. Fortunately P17 came into its own and we just drove straight out onto the B-road. As we crossed the motorway that we would have joined to go back to Heidelberg, it was absolutely solid so I fished out the map and took us cross-country to the hotel where we were sat, watching GP highlights less than an hour after leaving the circuit! I suspect that you couldn't do that from Silverstone! Having said that, the notorious P6 car park sounded diabolical and we kept hearing traffic reports referring to P6. I suspect they may have been there for a considerable time after we'd left.

After we'd returned home, somebody asked me how the WRC and F1 compared. I think that's an interesting question. Both events are at the pinnacle of their branch of motor sport but they were very different experiences. The GP was easy because everything was contained at the one location all day. The atmosphere was great and the buzz was contagious. There was much less of an atmosphere at the rally.

The WRC was excellently organised around the autobahn routes and the traffic management was amazing. All the stages were well signposted and easily accessible. The Spectator Map which we were sent with the passes in advance was very good – it showed the whole rally route and stage areas and then the programme gave more detailed info for each stage on an OS map scale. The GP was less good – it was as if they assumed everybody had been before and already knew what to do.

One down-side of the rally was the lack of on-event information about results and other competitor news. The "Rally Info" points at motorway service stations could have been used but weren't. It would have been easy for them to fax interim results and maybe copies of press releases about mishaps to these places but it didn't seem to have occurred to them. I found out most information by talking to dad on the phone!

Which one would I do again? Both of them. Although I'd plan which stages to visit in advance and I'd buy tickets for car parking at the GP!

All in all, an excellent holiday. A great deal of fun and one we shall both remember for a long time to come.

Nikki Wild

Get well soon Uncle Allan!

Rumour has it that...

Pan Europeans don't go very far with flat tyres.

Motorcycle clothing isn't actually that waterproof.

Nikki Wild looks a bit good in a mini, especially a cut down one!

Jez Boakes likes doing it sideways.

John Roberts has a full race Piaggio moped.

Paul Chamberlain is now known as the Pinner Slayer.

You might get a secretaries report before the deadline for submissions.

Dave Wiles is alive and well and living in Argentina.

Paul Bolden is running the next clubnight.

The Grubb household have compulsory autotest practice every morning before breakfast.

Rhys Edwards motorbike is not working at the moment.

Valentino Rossi went to the Aylesbury control and no one noticed.

The bad weather we are experiencing really is Perry Roe's fault.

That Toby Mack really has got a brother called Apple.

anon

Last Minute Holiday Preparation Hints – What not to do!

1 week to go:

Final preparation for motor sport event for which one is Clerk of the Course;
Exchange on house sale

5 days to go:

Submit articles for Sump deadline; Run a motor sport event

4 days to go:

Go and start final clearance of house ready for completion

3 days to go:

Final evening clearing house for completion

2 days to go:

Keep out of Sump Editor's way during the production process;

Wash all the clothes that should have been dried and ready for packing

1 day to go:

Cheer with relief that the house sale completes;

Help stuff Sumps, fliers and stickers into envelopes;

Help label and stamp Sump envelopes;

Attempt to locate suitcases (not seen since house move) and start packing;

Realise that some sort of forethought for the holiday itinerary would have been advantageous but it's too late now...

0 days to go:

Finish last minute packing;

Take 145 Sumps to the post box;

Get picked up by the lift to the airport.

I strongly recommend that in the immediate days leading up to a holiday you do not try to do any of the following:

- a) try to clear/sell a house
- b) run a motor sport event
- c) produce a motor club news letter

After all that, you really do need a holiday!

Nikki Wild

THE HAYMAKER AUTOTEST

Sunday 21st September 2003

SUPPLEMENTARY REGULATIONS

**csma
WEST MIDDLESEX GROUP**

WELCOME TO THE 2003 HAYMAKER AUTOTEST

Suitable venues are proving more and more difficult to find so we are very grateful to Mr Hall for the use of his land. The venue is a field owned by Church Farm in the village of Bramley, off the A33, which is easily accessible from either the M3 (Jn 6) or M4 (Jn 11). The field is off Frog Lane at MR 175/632600 and a map will be enclosed with the Final Instructions. We draw your attention to the fact that the venue is several minutes from the village amenities, so we recommend that you bring provisions with you as required. The organisers will, as last year, have limited supplies available for you to purchase at cost price.

Numbers are limited to minimise local disruption, so put your entry in as soon as possible. Cheques post-dated to the date of the event will be accepted.

Clerk of the Course

Acknowledgements go to:

Mr Hall and Church Farm; **csma**; Motor Sports Association Ltd; the local police and emergency services (whose assistance we hope not to need); the marshals.

THE HAYMAKER AUTOTEST SUPPLEMENTARY REGULATIONS

1. **csma** will organise a Clubsport permit autotest on Sunday 21st September 2003 at Church Farm, Bramley, Basingstoke, (MR 175/632600), by the kind permission of the owner.
2. The meeting will be governed by the General Regulations of the Motor Sports Association Ltd, (incorporating the provisions of the International Sporting Code of the FISA), these Supplementary Regulations and any written instructions that the organising Club may issue for the event.
3. An MSA Permit has been applied for.
4. The event is open to all fully elected members of **csma**.
5. All competitors must produce a valid **csma** Membership Card at signing-on.
6. The event may be a round of various **csma** Championships.
7. The programme of the meeting will be as follows:
 - a. Scrutineering and signing-on will start at 09:00 hours.
 - b. Any competitor not signed-on by 10:15 hours may be excluded. A briefing will take place at 10:15 hours.
 - c. First competitor starts at 10:30 hours.
8. The event will consist of four classes.

- a. Class structure is as follows:
 - A Saloon or sports cars under 11ft overall length, front wheel drive.
 - B Saloon or sports cars over 11ft overall length, front wheel drive
 - C Rear wheel drive saloon or sports cars.
 - D Four wheel drive cars and any vehicle not eligible for classes A to C (at the organisers' discretion).
 - b. Note: competitors in class D will not be eligible for overall results.
 - c. All competitors must comply with the MSA Technical Regulations.
9. Awards will be presented as follows:
- a. Overall and Class Awards:
 - FTD - the Haymaker Trophy and an award.
 - 1st in each class - an award.
 - 1st novice (subject to at least 3 starters) - an award.
 - 1st beginner (subject to at least 3 starters) - an award.
 - b. No competitor may receive more than one award.
 - c. A novice is defined as a competitor who has not won an award, other than a team award, on any previous MSA-authorized autotest.
 - d. A beginner is defined as a competitor who has not won an award, other than a team award, and has not competed on more than three MSA-authorized autotests prior to 21st September 2003.
 - e. All awards are perpetual with the exception of the Haymaker Trophy which must be returned to the West Middlesex Group of **csma** one month prior to the running of the next Haymaker Autotest or by 31st August 2004, whichever is the sooner.
10. The entry list opens on publication of these SRs and closes on 15/9/2003.
- a. The entry fee is £12.00. (Cheques made payable to "csma West Middlesex Group".)
 - b. All entries must be made of the official entry form and accompanied by the appropriate fee.
 - c. The Secretary of the Meeting, to whom all entries must be sent, is:-
John Wright. 284 Park Avenue Bushey Herts WD23 2 BH.
Tel. Home 01923 468205 Wk. 07831 687113 Mob. 07971 798107
 - d. Late entries may be accepted at a fee of £15.00, up to 10:00am on the 21st September 2003, at the organisers' discretion, provided that prior notice has been given by telephone to the Secretary of the meeting or Clerk of the Course.
11. Other Officials of the event are:
- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| a. Steward: | TBA. | |
| b. Clerk of the Course: | Mr Ian Perry | Tel. 01628 622744 |
| c. Chief Marshal & Timekeeper: | TBA | |
| d. Chief Scrutineer: | TBA | |
12. Entries are limited as follows:
- a. The maximum entry for the meeting, including reserves is 50, the minimum is 12.
 - b. The maximum for each class is 20 and the minimum for each is 3.
 - c. Should any of the minimum figures not be reached, the organisers reserve the right to either cancel the meeting or amalgamate classes as necessary.
 - d. Entries will be accepted on a first come first served basis subject to all requirements being met.
 - e. Entry fees may be refunded in the event of withdrawal after deducting an administration fee.
13. Provisional Results will be published as soon as possible following the end of the event.
14. Any protest must be lodged in accordance with GR O 5.1.
15. Details of tests will be sent with Final Instructions.
- a. The definition of test performance and a wrong test (F5.1.5 and F5.1.6 deleted) is as follows: "In any diagram illustrating a test, dimensions will be approximate and for guidance only. Indications of the direction of travel of the competing car when crossing a line, or passing between markers will be mandatory unless specified

otherwise (ignoring "shunts" to avoid marker. A maximum penalty will be applied if a competitor crosses with both leading wheels a marked test line in the wrong direction, out of the prescribed sequence or too many/few times, otherwise competitors may correct their mistakes by retracing their route to the point where they deviated from the test diagram."

- b. In amendment to the above, the following shall apply: A test will not be incorrect if the driver realises his/her mistake, goes back to the point at which the mistake occurred and then completes the test correctly as required by the diagram.
 - c. Each driver will have up to three runs at each test, all to count for results.
 - d. Timing will be by hand held watches.
 - e. The starting signal will be "in your own time".
 - f. The order of attempting tests will be at the organisers' discretion.
16. Practising will not be allowed. Any competitor found practising by a Judge of Fact may be excluded. As may anyone driving in a reckless manner in the paddock, between tests or elsewhere at the event venue.
17. All signed-on officials and marshals shall be deemed Judges of Fact.
18. Competitors will be identified by numbers which will be provided by the organisers.
19. Marking and penalties will be as printed in Section F Table 1 of the MSA General Regulations, as modified below:
(d) Striking any barrier, wall or pylon or crossing the boundary of a test (per mistake) 5 marks.
20. All other General Regulations of the MSA apply as written except for the following which are modified:
- a. F 4.4.3 Pylons may be less than 1m in height.
 - b. F 11.4 Four wheel drive cars will be permitted to enter in Class D.
 - c. F 11.8.1 Vehicles need not be licensed for road use as the event takes place entirely on private land.
 - d. B 10.1.3 A vehicle may be entered twice to be driven by different competitors.
 - e. E 12.9.1 Competitors must use Standard Road Tyres. In order to comply with the land-owners wishes that we minimise damage to his field, tyres must be Standard Road Tyres. "Knobbly" tyres will not be permitted.