

# **THE MIDDLESEX MAGAZINE**



MIDDLESEX  
COUNTY  
AUTOMOBILE  
CLUB LTD

November/December 2009



**Alan Thistlethwaite / Mick Klein**

**Aston Martin Rally GT**

**Bomb-Along Stages – Debden Airfield – 6<sup>th</sup> Sept 2009**

***The Bimonthly news, views and goings on of Middlesex County Automobile Club***



# THE MIDDLESEX MAGAZINE

[www.mcac.co.uk](http://www.mcac.co.uk)

---

Number: 289 (Volume: 14; Issue: 3)

November / December 2009

---

---

**CLUB NIGHT IS EVERY WEDNESDAY**

AT

**GERRARDS CROSS SPORTS CLUB**

7 Dukes Lane, off Dukes Wood Avenue, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire, SL9 7TZ  
(off the A40, between the pillar box and pedestrian subway opposite The Apple Tree)

Map Reference: 176/000875½

Telephone: 01753 886610

---

---

## **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

2 <sup>nd</sup> December	Club Night	20.30	<b>FINAL BRIEFING AND DISCUSSION FOR THE WEEKEND'S EVENT.</b> Have you volunteered yet??
5/6 <sup>th</sup> December	Rally	10.00	<b>ROCKINGHAM STAGES 2009.</b> Back to Rockingham for our annual 2-day event, co-promoted with Thame MC. As usual, there are 4 stages on Saturday afternoon, followed by a Rally Party/Get Together in the evening, and then a further 6 stages on the Sunday. As always, we need YOUR help marshalling over the weekend, especially with the set-up on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. If you can assist on any day, please contact Darren to offer your services – free B&B accommodation is available for both nights (just bring a sleeping bag and pillow).
9 <sup>th</sup> December	Club Night	20.30	<b>NATTER AND NOGGIN.</b>
16 <sup>th</sup> December	Club Night	20.30	<b>VIDEO / DVD EVENING.</b> Some more highlights from the motorsport arena.
23 <sup>rd</sup> December	Partner's Club Night	20.30	<b>PARTNER'S EVENING – CHRISTMAS PARTY AND BUFFET.</b> Our usual Christmas get-together is again being subsidised by the Club, so will only cost you £3.00 for another of John's excellent buffets, while Josie will look after our thirst. No need to book – just turn up. (We have guessed the likely numbers as only 4 or 5 usually book anyway!!)
28 <sup>th</sup> December	Rally	9.00	<b>LONGMOOR LOCO STAGES.</b> SCMC's 2-wheel drive event at Longmoor Camp.

30 <sup>th</sup> December	<b>No meeting</b>		<b>Club shut. HAPPY NEW YEAR AND SAFE MOTORING.</b>
6 <sup>th</sup> January 2010	Club Night	20.30	<b>NATTER AND NOGGIN.</b> Have you returned the trophy/trophies that you won last year yet? If not PLEASE bring it/them along tonight so that they can be engraved for this year's recipients.
13 <sup>th</sup> January	Club Night	20.30	<b>NATTER AND NOGGIN *** MEET AT THE TOBY CARVERY PUB***</b> (At Tatling End, on the A40, near the A413 junction)
20 <sup>th</sup> January	Club Night	20.30	<b>VIDEO / DVD EVENING.</b> Some more highlights from the motorsport arena, hopefully including the Rockingham Stages.
27 <sup>th</sup> January	Club Night	20.30	<b>NATTER AND NOGGIN *** MEET AT THE TOBY CARVERY PUB***</b> (At Tatling End, on the A40, near the A413 junction)
30 <sup>th</sup> January	Dinner	19.00	<b>ANNUAL DINNER-DANCE AND PRESENTATION OF AWARDS.</b> We return to Stockley Park for our main social event of the year. Full details are elsewhere in this issue, but Peter Nathan awaits your money quickly in order to take advantage of the bar tokens!
3 <sup>rd</sup> February	Partner's Club Night	20.30	<b>PARTNER'S EVENING - TBA</b>
6 <sup>th</sup> February	Scatter	19.00	<b>VALENTINE SCATTER.</b> Andy and Garry have promised a clear night for our first competitive event of the year, so dust off Map 175 and head for Pinkneys Green. Regs available at Club, on the website or from Andy G.
20 <sup>th</sup> February	Rally	09.00	<b>MIDDLEWICK STAGES 2010.</b> We return to Woodbridge for our first rally of the year.

## CLUB NIGHTS

Unfortunately, due to the dwindling attendance at Club Nights over the last few months, Gerrards Cross Sports Club has doubled the charge for our weekly meetings with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January. We are, therefore, looking into various alternatives but in the meantime we will continue to meet at GXSC for the 'Partner's Evening' and one other evening each month.

On the intervening weeks we will meet at a local pub and in the short term this will be The Toby

Carvery, which is on the A40, near the A413 junction, between the Denham roundabout and GXSC.

Hopefully we will be able to sort something permanent out before the next Magazine is issued in January.

Please reply to the questionnaire if you received it via the MCAC Net, as this will help us.

## Trophy Returns

Please remember that now is the time of year when you need to start polishing up the trophies that you won last year and return them for this year's recipients to collect at the Annual Dinner.

Please do not leave it until the last minute – it takes time to sort them out and take them to the engravers, who then take time to do the actual

engraving. They then have to be got ready for the evening.

If you can, please bring them to a Club Night before Christmas – if not please contact Mike Hurst on 07774 672110 to arrange an alternative.

# WHAT'S ON ?

## DEC

5/6th	Chelmsford MC	The Preston Road Rally	(B)	
<b>5/6TH</b>	<b>MIDDX CAC/Thame MC</b>	<b>ROCKINGHAM STAGES 2009</b>	<b>(B)</b>	<b>AEMC/MIDDX/R2009</b>
5/8th	HERO	LeJog	(-)	
6th		Rally Drift, Pembrey	(B)	
28th	Sutton & Cheam MC	Longmoor Logo Stages (2WD only)	(B)	

## JAN 2010

2nd	Northallerton AC	Specsavers Christmas Stages Rally	(B)	
14/17th		Autosport International Racing Car Show	(E)	
17th	Darlington & DMC	Cartersport Jack Frost Stages Rally	(B)	

## **30TH MIDDLESEX COUNTY AC ANNUAL DINNER-DANCE & AWARDS**

## FEB

<b>6/7TH</b>	<b>MIDDLESEX COUNTY AC</b>	<b>VALENTINE SCATTER</b>	<b>(E)</b>	<b>MIDDX</b>
7th	Southsea/Bognor Regis MCs	Towncross Engineering South Down Stages	(B)	
11/14th		Swedish Rally	(I)	WRC/S2000
<b>20TH</b>	<b>MIDDLESEX COUNTY AC</b>	<b>MIDDLEWICK STAGES, WOODBRIDGE</b>	<b>(B)</b>	<b>MIDDX</b>
<b>26/27th</b>	Southern CC	Rallye Sunseeker	(A)	MSAGravel

## MAR

4/7th		Rally Mexico	(I)	WRC/S2000
14th		Bahrain Grand Prix, Sakhir	(I)	WC
14th		Epynt Stages	(A)	MSATarmac
28th		Bulldog Rally Cwmru	(I)	BRC
28th		Australian Grand Prix, Albert Park	(I)	WC
<b>28TH</b>	<b>MIDDX CAC / Harrow CC</b>	<b>BRAKEFAST AUTOTESTS/AUTOSOLO</b>	<b>(B/C)</b>	<b>MIDDX</b>

## APR

1/4th		Rally Jordan	(I)	WRC/S2000
4th		Malayasian Grand Prix, Sepang	(I)	WC
15/18th		Rally Turkey	(I)	WRC
18th		Chinese Grand Prix, Shanghai	(I)	WC
<b>21ST</b>	<b>MIDDLESEX COUNTY AC</b>	<b>ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING</b>	<b>(-)</b>	
23/24th	Cumberland Sporting MC	Pirelli Tour of Cumbria Rally	(I)	BRC/MSAGravel

## MAY

2nd		Monteberg Rallysprint	(A)	Belg
6/9th		Rally New Zealand	(I)	WRC/S2000
7/8th	Isle of Man Rally Ltd	Manx National	(A)	MSATarmac
9th		Spanish Grand Prix	(I)	WC
23rd	AC de Monaco	Monaco Grand Prix	(I)	WC
27/30th		Rally Portugal	(I)	WRC/S2000
30th		Turkish Grand Prix, Istanbul	(I)	WC
28/29th		Jim Clark Memorial Rally	(I)	BRC/MSATarmac
30/31st	Sevenoaks & DMC	Sprint, Crystal Palace		(MCAC Start)

## JUN

5th	Midland Manor MC	Severn Valley Stages Rally	(A)	MSAGravel
13th		Canadian Grand Prix	(I)	WC
18/19th		Midland Rally	(B)	MSATarmac
27th		European Grand Prix	(I)	WC

## JUL

8/11th		Rally Bulgaria	(I)	WRC
9/10th	Rally Isle of Man Ltd	Rally Isle of Man	(I)	BRC
10th	Mull Car Club	Rally of Argyll	(B)	205Scot
11th	IMS Ltd	British Grand Prix	(I)	WC
17th	Port Talbot MC	Pro Art Signs Swansea Bay Rally	(A)	MSAGravel
18th		ALMC Stages	(B)	MSATarmac
<b>18TH</b>	<b>MIDDLESEX COUNTY AC</b>	<b>UXBRIDGE AUTOSHOW</b>	<b>(-)</b>	
25th		German Grand Prix, Nurnburgring	(I)	WC
29/1st		Rally Finland	(I)	WRC/S2000

# Chairman's Chat

It is nice to report that we have another British world champion – and not Lewis Hamilton this time! Well done to Jenson and Brawn – a very unexpected result after the uncertainties at the start of the year!

The Bomb-Along Stages at Debden, co-promoted with Green Belt MC, went well and was enjoyed by all the competitors. It also provided some much needed income for the Club to offset the losses on the previous 2 events – the MiddleWick Stages and the cancelled Honington Stages.

Darren looked after the display at the Castle Coombe Rally Day and we thank those that helped on the day and displayed their vehicles.

Unfortunately, there was no Hunter's Night Trial this year as Pete was not able to find sufficient enthusiasm to run the event. Hopefully, the event will return next year with some more competitors.

As usual, our European exploits didn't go to plan on the Rally Alpi Orientali as we hit a high kerb on a fast downhill section, spun round and collected 2 punctures. In trying to continue, we got a third puncture as the wheel was rubbing on the broken strut. With no petrol getting through the pumps we had to stop about ½ mile from the stage finish and, although we eventually managed to exit the stage, the car was too damaged to continue.

When we got back to England, Gartrac were unable to repair the back axle in time for us to return to Italy for the Rally Elba, so we had an unexpected break until early November. The

next event was the Rally Costa Brava, the weekend of the Tempest, and despite hitting the Armco rather hard we managed to finish 8<sup>th</sup> overall, 4<sup>th</sup> in Category and 3<sup>rd</sup> in Class. to leave the car with a local crew in Spain, who will repair it ready for us to take to the South of France for the Rally Du Var at the end of November. In the meantime, we had another attempt at the Roger Albert Clark Rally in the Mkl and had a rather uneventful run to finish 26<sup>th</sup> overall and 3<sup>rd</sup> in Class – just behind Steve Perez in the Stratos.

Unfortunate, numbers at our weekly Club Nights are now so few that John feels it is no longer worth opening every week, so we need to consider what action to take. Do we change to meeting monthly, fortnightly, twice a month or what? Brian has sent a questionnaire out on the e-net so please take a few minutes to answer this and return it with your urgent thoughts on the matter.

Our next major Club event is the Rockingham Stages (5/6<sup>th</sup> December) and we hope to see as many of you as possible there competing, servicing or marshalling. That is followed by the usual Christmas Party, when John will provide his usual excellent buffet for us to enjoy. Then early next year we have the Annual Dinner, the Valentine Scatter and then the MiddleWick Stages – so book some dates now.

Happy motoring – see you at Rockingham and the Christmas Buffet.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

Tony

---

## At Last - Motorsport in Croatia

by Tom Ryan from Croatia

It occurred to me recently that I have been neglecting my duties as roving reporter for the Magazine but I consoled myself with the thought that there is only so much guff that committed petrol-heads want to read about sailing and that I have spent practically the whole summer cruising the Adriatic in the company of various groups of friends. It has been a varied experience since in early June and part of July there were some serious winds and the old boat fairly flew along on large

waves. Later in the year we would motor gently from one nice bay to another, stopping to swim here and there and arrive at some impossibly picturesque little harbour as the sun was setting – just in time for sundowners before strolling off to one of the delightful restaurants which spill out onto the quayside. It's a hard life but somebody has to do it.... however....

Last week I was strolling in Omish, our nearest little town, and my eye was drawn to a colourful

poster nailed to a tree in the high street showing what looked like cars racing around a track of sorts. Closer inspection revealed that it was advertising a round of the Croatian National Autocross Championships to take place Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> Sept at a place not a million miles away from Pisak (where I live). Not having a pen and paper to hand I duly typed all the info into my mobile phone and hurried home to try to locate the venue on my maps. It was a two-day event with practice on Saturday, heats on Sunday morning and finals in the afternoon. It turned out to be only 15 km from my house and right next to a huge viaduct taking the new Zagreb-Dubrovnik motorway over a valley. I suspect that the track was bulldozed out of the scenery by a friendly driver during the motor-way construction a couple of years ago. Everything was a bit rough and ready but hey, it worked. The track was 0.65 km per lap. Heats were 4 laps and finals 5 laps which was just as well since some of the cars sounded like they wouldn't manage any more without major re-fettling between races.

In spite of it being a National event, the atmosphere and organization level was about the same as an MCAC Autocross at Oakington. Instead of an old control-tower they had a soft-top artic lorry as the start/stop control with all the judges and time keepers neatly seated in the back and one side curtain open. As it happened (Murphy is alive and well in Croatia) the first rain in many weeks fell during the Sunday afternoon so the truck tarpaulin kept the organizers dry while making the track pretty tricky in places but dust-free. The surface was crushed rocks and clay which formed a sort of concrete on the undersides of the cars – they must have gotten slower and slower with the weight! In true MCAC fashion the entry list, start list, grid positions and results were all stuck to the side of the truck with sellotape – fond memories of Donna...!

There were 18 entries in three classes of which 16 presented themselves at the start. The classes seemed to be just capacity based with Class 1 being up to 1.6 litres and Class 2 over that limit. Class 3 comprised three buggies of the sort seen on UK off-road safaris. The most common vehicle was an aged VW Golf Mk 1 with Yugos the second most numerous though there were a couple of Peugeots and one Subaru Impreza. It appeared that a local rich-kid had acquired a very ex-rally car and had stripped it down to the essentials for Autocross. It had a full works cage, camera mounting point and plenty of other evidence of life on the road. It seemed to me to be quite unfair as this 4WD vehicle would tear off the start-line but,

surprisingly, never got very far away from the pursuing 1.8 L Golf though he did win the event at the end of the day.

The area under the motorway viaduct provided the shelter for the paddock and amplified the noise of the cars to a satisfactory level to make it sound like a real motor-race. Since the nearest human habitation was probably 10 km away, the word decibel was not heard all weekend. The loudest noises (except for the PA – see later) anyway were generated by the bashing of metal echoing around the viaduct as bent fenders and the like were 'adjusted' between heats. The organisation ran pretty smoothly, with cars turning up for their heats in good order and in spite of the small entry there were some close and exciting races. A few cars expired during the heats and a Rav 4 provided the Rescue Service when needed, while the local fire-brigade and an official ambulance were also in attendance though not mobilized during the time I was there.

I chatted to a couple of the competitors while they were waiting for their service crews to sort out the cars. The overall leader of the Championship after 4 out of 6 rounds was a 23 year old from Rijeka called Daniel Beziak driving a 1.8 litre VW Golf 1. Between his limited command of English and me not having reached the chapter on motorsport in my 'Teach Yourself Croatian' book, the interview was a bit brief but I wished him well and continued my ramble in the paddock. Clearly I put a jinx on the poor lad since about an hour later he was leading his final by a small margin when he overcooked a bend, stalled and watch his title hopes fade from the top of a mud-bank, shaking his head in despair.

The finals were great to watch since all the contenders in each class who were still running by the time the finals were run got a start. So, there were seven cars on the track during the over 1.6 race and six for the smaller class. The buggies, of course, only had the original three and they were so mismatched that they seemed to circulate at exactly one third of the track intervals, hardly even in sight of each other. The racing in the other two finals was close and exciting with plenty of contact, lots of slipping and sliding and occasional overtaking.

One thing which they did far better than MCAC was the PA. They had huge speakers positioned on top of the start-finish truck and an excitable local bellowing into the mike without appearing to breathe during a whole heat. Even when the

cars were as far from the speakers as it was possible to get, the noises of the engines were often drowned in highly-amplified Croat, but it certainly created atmosphere.

Immediately after each car had crossed the finishing line in each final, the cars stopped at the stop-start area for the results announcement and trophy presentation. The commentator became quite delirious with excitement and built up to a great crescendo as each first place was announced, to the great amusement of the hundred or so spectators and service crew who had assembled and whom he tried to inspire with his cries of 'now

great applause for ...' Having collected their pots the driver proceeded to the paddock hanging out of their car windows like some world champions waving their silverware at a largely unappreciative audience.

Having sat through the two good finals I sloped off home before the three buggies treated us to another 'economy run' and so ended my first attendance at a motor-sport event in Croatia. It was all a little makeshift; friendly and relaxed but everyone seemed to enjoy it and the drivers all had a ball judging by their huge grins and I guess that is why we all (used to) do it!

---

---

## Chief Marshal's Comments

May this year saw a very big birthday for a very small car – the MINI 50 at Silverstone on Friday 22nd --Sunday 24th May. As well as the racing, there were great acts with Calvin Harris there on the Friday evening and Paul Weller on Saturday. It was a great weekend with plenty to do.

The biggest rally show in the UK took place at Castle Combe on Saturday 19th September and MCAC had a stand there for the first time. Many thanks to Kevin Fowler, Peter Cox and Christine for their help on the day. We had Kevin's 205 and Peter's Auto Test special on display, which created a lot of interest with the visitors. I manage to walk round to see some other clubs & talk to them about MCAC and our forthcoming event at Rockingham. It was well worth booking a stand there and we could have a larger area next year if more members wish to display their cars on the stand. Richard Edwards was also there taking his car around the track.

Brian volunteered for MCAC to supply management radios for the Kop Hill Climb at Princes Risborough and I helped on the 2-day event over the weekend of 26/27<sup>th</sup> September. We were blessed with good weather and good crowds turned up to witness this non-competitive event over the hill climb course that was used for the first time almost 100 years ago – from 1910 in fact!

As most of you are aware, Jenson Button is World Champion this year and on Tuesday 20th October he made a visit to the Bluewater Shopping Centre in Kent. Over 1000 people flocked to the venue as he rode in style, taking some competition winners around with Josh Stone & Jody Kid. He also took time out to answer questions from the public and to talk to the Marshals.

As you are aware, we need help with the set-up and marshalling at Rockingham and I await all your offers of assistance.

Darren

---

---

## Kev's Komp Korner!

What can I say? **The Debden, Bomb-Along** was good fun.

Now all we need are some more entries/marshals for the **Rockingham Stages on Dec 5/6 2009**, and we can complete a good year.

*Carfax Stages Rally* (Oxford MC) is due to run in the 22nd November and the entries are filling fast and most clubman motorsport seems to be getting back on track regards entries.

Watch this space for next year!

### Finally, at last, sorted!

In the meantime, due to myself and Gordon's lack of competing, I have been assisting Garry and Andy with the Saxo on some events in Belgium.

After the disappointment of the 1st half of this year, with the gearbox destroying itself for the nth time, it was decided that a more beefy unit was

required, to, if nothing else, save on the wasted entry fees. After much engineering by Garry, Andy and MUCH correction by Peter Cook, the car was finally ready for its shakedown, in Belgium! The Hemicuda rally is held about 1¼ hours from Calais, not a million miles from Roeselare. After a small issue with the driveshaft nuts coming loose

and 'knocking back' the brake pads, the car ran well enough to finish. Unlike the other three British entrants that had issues, from Gary Lomas' Integrale's failing Throttle switch to the Black 306 (present at Rockingham '08) splitting its final drive casing and depositing its gear oil everywhere.

Finishing the Hemicuda Rally meant only one thing, the return to SOMBREFFE. After the two previous attempts, both of which ended in transmission failure (both different reasons) this was the cars bogey event.

The Friday before the event came and, whilst I was working, listening to the radio, the News suddenly announced that "Seafrance Employees are currently involved in industrial action and are blockading Seafrance ferries at Calais". Oh bugger, thinks I, I wonder if Garry/Andy are aware of this. After a few texts, Garry responded saying that we were on P&O. Next News announcement "The Seafrance blockade has now spread to halting P&O services too and P&O ferries are now being held at Dover". More texts and a new plan of action came through. "We'll leave at 11pm tonight (Friday) instead of 5:30am!"... Ok says I, off we go.. A shrewd bit of thinking between us, sees us driving to Dover on the M2/A2 instead of the M20 which has 'Operation Stack' blocking it. Would you believe, straight into Dover and onto an earlier ferry, which was of course delayed, but not by much. Drive through the night after the 3:30am

breakfast and straight to Sombreffe - way too early of course.

Parked up the trailer and after some faffing about we were on our way to get some recce notes done. That sorted, scrutineering was despatched and the car/trailer/Berlingo were taken to the hotel for the night. What can I say but, strange place! Meal, shopping and in bed by 10:30'ish, ready for the 'early' rise of 7am. Brekkie done and off to the trailer parking, in the main service area. The one thing about Sombreffe is that it has mobile service for two stages and the main service for the other two.

After an eventful rally, including a tyre change on the front, one puncture and lots of mud on the car, Garry/Andy finally came into the last service of the day, after 12 stages in three loops. The car was dirty but had finally broken its bogey event. Job DONE! All we had to do now was to wait for the car to be released from the Parc Ferme so we could trailer up and head on home.

All in all I think I got about 15 hours sleep, from getting up for work on Friday morning at 4:30am to arriving home at 8am Monday morning, mostly in 2hr bursts. Results had been declared by Tuesday 20th October and Garry/Andy were 3rd in class... with 6 starters.

Kevin Fowler

---

---

## WRGB in Edgware!

So yet another Wales Rally GB has been and gone. This time it produced the expected result with Loeb winning both the Rally and the Championship, but it was far from predictable, with drama unfolding almost from the start of SS1.

No, I wasn't there, at least in body, but in spirit. Via the WRC website, you can listen to commentary from the service area and interviews from the Stage finishes. The well-informed lady commentator who sits in the Service Area has all manner of computer read-outs and GPS systems to watch, and is brilliant at interpreting the events as they unfold. Split times can be watched on your own computer, and with the commentary, can build a full picture of what is going on down in the stages.

As per usual, Peter Nathan joined forces with associates from Green Belt MC, and was marshalling stages on 2 days in Mid-Wales. As expected, phone communications were a bit dodgy

in Myherin, but one phone was found to have service, so I was able to text relevant info straight down as it happened. The next day at Crychan, comms were much better, so no difficulty was encountered in speaking, or texting, information to Peter.

On arrival at Crychan, Peter phoned me and gave me the Map ref of their location. I replied that they must be adjacent to the small clearing that contains a lonely residence. Peter confirmed this, and I informed him that a couple called Mr and Mrs. Cox live there, and they race Siberian Huskies! (YES---the dogs win, I've heard it!) This was their raison d'être for moving into such a lonely position. I met Sheila Cox a few years ago while route marking a horse event around the forest, and she immediately offered to help us during that event. It transpired that they had bought the property and had installed a proper generator system, and other aids to modern living in the middle of a forest. Sheila invited us in when we

Brian Catt.

first met, and was only too proud to demonstrate their mastery of things technological, even having Channel 5 on the TV, a feat almost unheard of in those parts!

Peter talked to Mr. Cox, and handed him his phone, but the combined efforts of a helicopter landing, and his deafness made conversation just about impossible! No wonder he is a bit deaf, he has spent most of his life in generator rooms on oil rigs in the North Sea!

Well, what of the future? The event will be back in Wales for a few years, albeit without WRC status in 2011. This will upset quite a few enthusiasts, who wanted the event to migrate up country to a new base, in order to use different stages. No doubt the finances concerned were the deciding factor, after the Welsh Assembly reversed their earlier decision to stop the financial support of the event; they seem to be well behind the event

now. One thing that does irritate me is the vast amount of time lost in driving between the stages and the Service Area. On Friday, the "Remote Service" was at Builth Wells, but on Sunday, cars had to travel down to Cardiff for their midday service. This seems pointless mileage and time lost. Yes, the Organisers need time between last cars on the first loop and first on the second loop, but it seems a pity that the modern WRC car needs to be totally re-built at such short intervals. Maybe once the current WRC regulations are phased out, sanity will prevail, and the vast expense of the myriad of mechanics and the rebuilding of cars will be made somewhat less.

No doubt I will be watching most of next year's WRC rounds from the computer, but if possible, I'd like to be there, on stage and online in Wales.

---

---

## **CHAMPIONSHIP UPDATE - Nov 09**

---

At the time of writing a number of championships seem well sewn up, whilst others are up for grabs in the final weekends of the season.

Starting with the Overall Championships, I (Rob Brook) am leading the Overall Driver Championship on 98 Points, followed by Chris Keys on 38.5. Others would be 2nd, but have only scored on one category of event this year. Paul Brown is leading the Overall Navigator Championship with 108.5 points, I am 2nd on 69. This doesn't tell all the story again though, with Peter Cox having scored 97 points but only on 1 category of event. He is comfortably leading the Road Rally Navigators Championship...

In the Off Road Drivers Championship - Paul Hopkinson has had a successful year in Historic Circuit racing and has totalled 51 points. In the Road Rally category, no eligible contenders at present as I am leading the overall championship and am the only member to have scored any points in this category this year. Night Trialling, Andy Greenlands win on the Fun Run has him 1 point clear of the rest of the field. The Navigators championship is being headed by Tony Phillips and Paul Brown, the former will win that if Paul wins the overall championship or vice-versa.

In Stage Rallying, Graham Samuel and Tony Phillips are holding a slender lead over Richard

Edwards and Paul Brown, however Richard is entered at Longcross this weekend and Paul is already leading the overall Navigators championship.

In the Marshals Championship Darren Pike is streaking away from the field with 54 points, more than double his nearest challengers. However, servicing is likely to go down to the wire. Nick Donaldson is currently 2nd to Hazel Hopkinson, but with another event this weekend for Nick, this is likely to be a tie. Tony P and Darren P share the lead of the Organisers championship, whilst the Jeeves' (Robert and Steven) are sharing the Juniors Championship.

Finally, John Brook is leading the trophy for the Most Active (Not leading any other awards), whilst I surprisingly lead the Most Competing having done a quiet 14 events this year!

Please remember, these may all change in the last few weeks. A number of people haven't marshalled yet, so please get those claims in quickly.

All the best,

Rob

**The 2009**

**Annual Dinner**

**&**

**Awards Night**

Will be held at

**Stockley Park Golf Club, Heathrow,**

On

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2010**

7.00pm for 7.30pm

Carriages at 12.30am

**Tickets may be ordered from Peter Nathan**  
**(25 Marsh Lane Mill Hill, London, NW7 4QN)**  
**(020 8906 0803)**

**At the bargain price of only**

**£25.00 per ticket**

**Tickets ordered and paid for before Christmas**  
**will received a £2.50 bar voucher**

# Life Members Survey

Brian Catt

With a previous magazine, we sent out a letter to those members who have been given Life Membership. This includes the members of Hampton and District MC, who joined us on the demise of their own club. Many have replied, but a few have not. We will be publishing a few stories

about those who are still involved in the sport, and are sending them new Membership Cards valid for the next 10 years. Those that have not yet replied will receive a card valid for only one year in the hope that they will reply to our original letter, and be granted a further membership period.

---

---

## Actual Exchanges Between Pilots

While taxiing at London's Gatwick Airport, the crew of a US Air flight departing for Ft. Lauderdale made a wrong turn and came nose to nose with a United 727. An irate female ground controller lashed out at the US Air crew, screaming: "US Air 2771, where the hell are you going? I told you to turn right onto Charlie taxiway! You turned right on Delta! Stop right there. I know it's difficult for you to tell the difference between C and D, but get it right!"

Continuing her rage to the embarrassed crew, she was now shouting hysterically: "God! Now you've screwed everything up! It'll take forever to sort this out! You stay right there and don't move till I tell you to! You can expect progressive taxi instructions in about half an hour, and I want you to go exactly where I tell you, when I tell you, and how I tell you! You got that US Air 2771?" "Yes, ma'am," the humbled crew responded.

Naturally, the ground control communications frequency fell terribly silent after the verbal bashing of US Air 2771. Nobody wanted to chance engaging the irate ground controller in her current state of mind. Tension in every cockpit out around Gatwick was definitely running high. Just then an unknown pilot broke the silence and keyed his microphone, asking: "Wasn't I married to you once?"

**Tower:** "Delta 351, you have traffic at 10 o'clock, 6 miles!"

**Delta 351:** "Give us another hint! We have digital watches!"

**Tower:** "TWA 2341, for noise abatement turn right 45 Degrees."

**TWA 2341:** "Center, we are at 35,000 feet. How much noise can we make up here?"

**Tower:** "Sir, have you ever heard the noise a 747 makes when it hits a 727?"

**From an unknown aircraft waiting in a very long takeoff queue:** "I'm f...ing bored!"

**Ground Traffic Control:** "Last aircraft transmitting, identify yourself immediately!"

**Unknown aircraft:** "I said I was f...ing bored, not f...ing stupid!"

**O'Hare Approach Control to a 747:** "United 329 heavy, your traffic is a Fokker, one o'clock, three miles, Eastbound."

**United 329:** "Approach, I've always wanted to say this - I've got the little Fokker in sight."

A student became lost during a solo cross-country flight. While attempting to locate the aircraft on radar, ATC asked, "What was your last known position?"

Student: "When I was number one for takeoff."

A DC-10 had come in a little hot and thus had an exceedingly long roll out after touching down.

**San Jose Tower Noted:** "American 751, make a hard right turn at the end of the runway, if you are able. If you are not able, take the Guadeloupe exit off Highway 101, make a right at the lights and return to the airport."

A Pan Am 727 flight, waiting for start clearance in Munich, overheard the following:

**Lufthansa (in German):** "Ground, what is our start clearance time?"

**Ground (in English):** "If you want an answer you must speak in English."

**Lufthansa (in English):** "I am a German, flying a German airplane, in Germany. Why must I speak English?"

**Unknown voice from another plane (in a beautiful British accent):** "Because you lost the bloody war!"

**Tower:** "Eastern 702, cleared for takeoff, contact Departure on frequency 124.7"

**Eastern 702:** "Tower, Eastern 702 switching to Departure. By the way, after we lifted off we saw some kind of dead animal on the far end of the runway."

**Tower:** "Continental 635, cleared for takeoff behind Eastern 702, contact Departure on frequency 124.7. Did you copy that report from Eastern 702?"

**BR Continental 635:** "Continental 635, cleared for takeoff, roger; and yes, we copied Eastern... We've already notified our caterers."

The German air controllers at Frankfurt Airport are renowned as a short-tempered lot. They not only expect one to know one's gate parking location, but how to get there without any assistance from them. So it was with some amusement that we (a Pan Am 747) listened to the following exchange between Frankfurt ground control and a British Airways 747, call sign Speedbird 206.

**Speedbird 206:** "Frankfurt, Speedbird 206 clear of active runway."

**Ground:** "Speedbird 206. Taxi to gate Alpha One-Seven."

The BA 747 pulled onto the main taxiway and slowed to a stop.

**Ground:** "Speedbird, do you not know where you are going?"

**Speedbird 206:** "Stand by, Ground, I'm looking up our gate location now."

**Ground (with quite arrogant impatience):** "Speedbird 206, have you not been to Frankfurt before?"

**Speedbird 206 (coolly):** "Yes, twice in 1944, but it was dark, and I didn't land."

One day the pilot of a Cherokee 180 was told by the tower to hold short of the active runway while a DC-8 landed. The DC-8 landed, rolled out, turned around, and taxied back past the Cherokee. Some quick-witted comedian in the DC-8 crew got on the radio and said, "What a cute little plane. Did you make it all by yourself?"

The Cherokee pilot, not about to let the insult go by, came back with a real zinger: "I made it out of DC-8 parts. Another landing like yours and I'll have enough parts for another one."



On 15th September 2009 the Association was pleased to welcome two senior officials from the Motor Sports Association to answer a range of questions on various aspects of the sport. Our visitors were Alan Gow, Chairman of the MSA Board of Directors, Colin Hilton, Chief Executive of the MSA and P.A. to the Chairman of Council.

**Question 1** Alan Jones asks if the £250 fixture list support by the MSA could be increased to £300 by the MSA as the earlier figure had been in place for quite some time.

The meeting was advised that, rather than increasing the fee, it was more likely to be discontinued. Apparently the majority of Regional Committee members ((Presumably acting with the best interest of their clubs at heart)) had pointed out that each Association was now running a website with much more than just a fixture list. As a consequence the fee was not really important. Vernon Quaintance pointed out that running a website was not without associated costs and that the fee could well be a nice honorarium to whoever puts in the hours keeping things up to date. We suggest that the Regional Committee think again!

**Question 2** Bernard Baker wondered if the MSA might look at setting up an accumulated fund for club / Association investment to try to get better rates of interest? (Alan Hawkins at the British Hardware Federation has the appropriate licence, we think)

Alan Gow indicated that the MSA team had spent quite some time making sure that the substantial investments that they hold were in the best place to withstand the effects of Crash 09, and so far they had been successful in doing that. Chris Deal pointed out that, with the predicted demise of cheques, more and more entry fees will need to be paid by BACS or PayPal. Alan Gow said that he could see the line of thinking and would discuss this with the team to see if something could be done in the future.

Question 3 What does the MSA do to keep the retail trade updated on changes to helmet, gloves overall etc specs? Are the trade involved at Technical Committee level?

It was pointed out that the direct link was between the FIA, which set technical specifications, and the manufacturers who produced products 'up to spec'. The MSA was just one ASN which policed the application of the spec to a particular discipline. Colin Hilton advised that there is a registration system in place for retailers to receive from the MSA updated information on changes, so there really is no excuse for a retailer to distribute 'outdated' or very short 'life' stock. Loyd Gerken felt that additional publicity in Autosport and Motorsport News would help. Alan pointed out that it was not 'news' and so the magazines are not interested in printing such information. Publishers were advised on major changes, but their response is usually negative. Peter Cook asked if a paid advert would help, but Alan was of the view that these were just skipped over, anyway.

Question 4 Has any progress been made with our suggestion that individual sections of the Blue Book are sent electronically to some or all Championship Co-ordinators to do a last minute check prior to printing ?

Yes, this is being actively pursued, so keep your eyes peeled.

Question 5 (a) Is LARA functioning? (b) Can you prove it? (c) Can't we have something that meets our needs?

Colin Hilton was forthright in his support for LARA. The high quality expertise that they could bring to the table had been a major factor in a dispute over 4x4 using National Parks. The recent High Court success was almost entirely due to the efforts of Alan Kind, who takes a personal, keen interest in what is going on. Because of this we get very good value for our funding of LARA. John White suggested that, once again, it was a case of the information not being communicated to the sport at our level. Eddie Wass later raised the lack of support in a confrontation with DEFRA, which has given a lot of people the impression that LARA is not tuned in at club level for either cars or bikes.

Question 6 Can we, please, have a proactive system that brings all guns into the firing line when a venue is likely to be lost for motor sport use?

Question 6a Is there any merit in exploring a facility, that can be requested by a club on an event by event basis, whereby the MSA adds a second 'thank you' letter to the one sent by the club to the landowner after the event?

Colin Hilton said that the key element was for the message to be relayed to the MSA at the very earliest opportunity. The Communications Dept. can then assess the situation and immediately alert the relevant people. As another step the club(s) should look at the 'save motorsport' website where there is much useful information on the 'rights' for clubs. Colin said he would study the current content of the site to see if it needs improvement and he would welcome comments from anyone with a venue issue. Appreciating that our primary concern was the loss of Millbrook, Colin was at pains to point out that the MSA were no less keen on retaining the venue than the clubs. A part of the problem is a liability to repair roads and armco that cannot be covered by an insurer. By virtue of issuing the permit the MSA stands alongside the club when it comes to legal action, and the MSA cannot risk its considerable reserves in a case like this.

Question 7 How much influence does the Chairman of a specialist Committee exert over the choice of members of that Committee? Are those not selected advised accordingly?

The committee chairmen are regularly asked by the MSA to say how their committee is functioning, including any issues with members. As far as nominations go, the Appointments

Panel looks at all the submissions, where practical tries to achieve some degree of 'rotation' of members, and then makes the final decision. At no time does the chairman have any say in the matter. For those whose application is not successful the MSA advise the nominator, not the applicant, of the result.

Question 8 Given the obvious synergy between bike and car events at our level, is it not a good time to change the current 'division' of cars at Colnbrook and bikes at Rugby to one of club level sport at Colnbrook or Rugby and Rally GB / Moseley, Renault & Co in Outer Mongolia on the other?

Colin Hilton said that they were regularly in contact with the Rugby team. There were areas of mutual interest and these were kept under review. For instance, it might give a saving based on 'economies of scale' if a common competition licensing process was in place. Insurance was of concern to both groups, but the bikes have a much higher number of 'small claims' than cars so an amalgamation of policies may not be to the benefit of cars. The issue of event permits was different, with the bike Centres issuing local permits, and collecting the revenue. It appears that the ACU Centres are particularly protective of this right and would not be keen on centralisation. Alan Gow said that his feeling on the subject was that the ACU were comfortable with their current set-up, as they are fully entitled to be, and so not looking to move to closing working. Colin pointed out that the Training Trust was active for both cars and bikes and was looking at using the apprenticeship scheme to be inclusive of both activities.

Question 9 Why does the MSA Rallies Committee too often bring in regulations that preclude 'interesting' rally cars, so that we finish up with dozens of 'one make' cars at many of the events?

Colin reminded the meeting that the MSA implements rules arrived at by democratic process via the specialist committees. It is up to competitors to put the case at regional meetings ((by attending them?!)) so that Regional Committee can have an input. John said that List 1 b tyres were just such a case. The rumblings had come from competitor level and the revised ideas were now open to consultation. Colin emphasised - if you have a view, SAY SO. If you want 'interesting' cars in rallies tell A.E.M.C. how the regs should be framed.

Question 10 Media coverage of British Touring Car Championship events tends to convey driving standards more akin to Small Oval Banger racing, and these standards then get accepted as the norm at club level racing. Can the MSA invite their Stewards to take a more positive stance to protect the investment that small privateer teams make in getting to the start line, because without these teams the grids will continue to decline in numbers?

Alan Gow indicated his long term involvement, and passion, for the Touring Car Championship. As far back as 1980 he had championed the sport, and so fully understood the sentiment expressed in the question. However, there was more to it than at first sight. In 1980 TV coverage averaged 20 minutes a week, now it was 6.5 HOURS. In those days there were a few cameras scattered around the circuit, now there are around 16 cameras out on the circuit and 18 in the cars. The incidents and 'contacts' have not gone up, the capturing and regular replay of them has! It was little known, but the MSA looks very carefully at the contact incidents, if for no other reason than to review safety and potential insurance claims. This was no different to Formula 1. Steward and marshals reports are also fully appraised and not put in a file to be ignored. Alan Jones took Alan Gow to task over a recent event at Knockhill. A heated discussion followed on what had taken place. Colin Hilton said that, at FIA meetings, the MSA was given a list of penalties imposed at the event. Richard Warne said that these might be made more public to restore confidence. Graham said that these were advised to competitors via regular bulletins, so again the aggressive drivers were 'put on notice' to behave. John Sharp commented on a recent Brands meeting where cars were going off all around the circuit. John White smiled and told the meeting that the Stewards were very busy all day!

Question 11 In the 'good old days' Colin Wilson used to regularly send out event promo information for clubs to use in their magazines. Given that gomotorsport seems to be giving very

little in the way of results for the huge expenditure, can we please go back to the 'good old days'?

It was first necessary to remind some on just what Colin Wilson did. Besides event information made available to club magazine editors he kept a very regular watch on listing events on Teletext. In this way Joe Public could find out reliable information on what was on in his / her region. Colin Hilton said that efforts were being made to upgrade the customer service system so that date lists were more informative. He asked that this subject be brought forward to Regional Committee as a matter requiring further consideration.

Question 12 Is it not time we re-visited the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme for motor sport to bring in younger people to the sport, particularly on the administration and organisation side?

The MSA team were unaware of the history of the Award Scheme for motorsport. Bernard Baker explained that Eastern Counties M.C. had built a working format in conjunction with Will Burchnall and Ipswich School. A pilot programme, centred a round Trials and Autotests, had been endorsed by Suffolk County Council as meeting all their criteria. The information was sent to the Scheme headquarters at Windsor. The next communication that the club received was a verbal one to say that MSA head office had rejected the idea and it was now no longer going to happen. Asked by Colin Hilton why this had occurred, Bernard said no real reason was given. It was almost as though MSA did not think of the idea, so why should anyone else tread on Aunty's toes. Bernard was asked to see if the original details could be found and made public, as Colin felt the matter had much to commend it. Currently work was in hand to develop motor sport apprenticeships. The MSA has been given the status of an accredited assessor and can run programmes up to a standard equivalent to 'A' level. At the same time attention was being paid to ensure juniors who absent themselves from school to go away to do motorsport are not allowed to neglect their education.

Question 13 What is the MSA position on the recent concerns over C.R.B. checks for adults helping in youth motor sport.

Colin Hilton said that anyone with concerns in this area should not hesitate to talk to Allan Dean-Lewis for reliable advice. The Colnbrook view was that we had already made good progress on the matter and had in place, for the most part, robust procedures. The current publicity should alert us to keep vigilant but a balanced approach was necessary. Each club should have a contact person who can deal with local issues and, if felt wise, attend some events to see just what does happen, and suggest improvements.

Question 14 Loyd Gerken asked why it was that Junior Rally cars were limited to 1000 cc and Junior Autocross cars went up to 1400 cc. Is there a case for some harmonisation of the regs?

Colin Hilton noticed that two different specialist committees were involved and someone had missed out on some 'joined up thinking'. He was pleased to be able to take the issue back to Colnbrook and see what the best regs were for each discipline.

John White, on behalf of everyone present, thanked Alan Gow and Colin Hilton for their contributions to the evening. It was agreed that it had been a very fruitful exchange of ideas and the delegates all felt much more assured of MSA support for sport at our level. Both were welcome to come to future meetings at any time. John thanked the delegates for putting forward a wide range of questions and hoped they would take the details back to the clubs.

Just a note: the above is not a verbatim record of the meeting. If we have distorted or misrepresented anything that was said we say 'sorry' and ask you to tell us what we should have written.



# Middlesex Challenge 2009

The current positions in the Challenge, following the Tempest Rally, are:

ROUND		1	2	3	4	5	6	
Name		Valentine	MiddleWick	Brakefast	Foto Genic	Bomb-Along	Tempest	Total
Andy	Greenland	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	99.73	<b>199.73</b>
Richard	Upton	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	98.92	0.00	<b>198.92</b>
Chris	Keys	0.00	0.00	96.23	0.00	99.27	0.00	<b>195.50</b>
Simon	Rees	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	93.90	97.01	<b>190.91</b>
Rob	Brook	81.61	0.00	95.94	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>177.55</b>
Tony	Phillips	64.71	0.00	0.00	81.25	0.00	0.00	<b>145.96</b>
Christine	Wooster	0.00	0.00	76.24	50.00	0.00	0.00	<b>126.24</b>
Sarah	Wooster	0.00	0.00	67.07	50.00	0.00	0.00	<b>117.07</b>
Ross	Daniels	0.00	10.00	0.00	0.00	93.76	0.00	<b>103.76</b>
James	Betchley	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>100.00</b>
Simon	Fowler	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>100.00</b>
Paul	Bareham	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>100.00</b>
Richard	Edwards	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>100.00</b>
Paul	Brown	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>100.00</b>
Rob	Rolston	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>100.00</b>
Mark	Webster	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>100.00</b>
Robert	Lowe	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	<b>100.00</b>
Stephen	Shepard	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	<b>100.00</b>
Robert	Swann	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	<b>100.00</b>
Garrod	Darren	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	<b>100.00</b>
Ernie	Graham	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	99.73	<b>99.73</b>
Jon	Senior	0.00	0.00	99.66	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>99.66</b>
Graham	Tuer	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	99.27	0.00	<b>99.27</b>
Sam	Fordham	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	97.77	0.00	<b>97.77</b>
Martin	Lush	0.00	0.00	93.73	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>93.73</b>
Stuart	Cogger	0.00	93.32	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>93.32</b>
Andy	Murray	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	89.82	0.00	<b>89.82</b>
Alan	Thistlethwaite	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	89.28	0.00	<b>89.28</b>
Mick	Klein	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	89.28	0.00	<b>89.28</b>
Chris	Hedges	0.00	0.00	89.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>89.13</b>
Martin	Mansell	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	87.88	<b>87.88</b>
Brian	Benjamin	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	87.88	<b>87.88</b>
Mike	Trim	0.00	0.00	85.42	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>85.42</b>
Mark	Davies	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	82.17	0.00	<b>82.17</b>
Nicky	Donaldson	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	82.17	0.00	<b>82.17</b>
Tonya	Heap****	81.61	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>81.61</b>
Val	Phillips	0.00	0.00	0.00	81.25	0.00	0.00	<b>81.25</b>
Malc	Farmer	0.00	0.00	0.00	73.53	0.00	0.00	<b>73.53</b>
Peter	Farmer	64.71	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>64.71</b>
Mike	Cawthra	0.00	0.00	0.00	60.66	0.00	0.00	<b>60.66</b>
John	Wilson	0.00	0.00	0.00	37.13	0.00	0.00	<b>37.13</b>
James	Grint	0.00	10.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.00	<b>20.00</b>
Graham	Samuel	0.00	10.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>10.00</b>
James	Smith	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.00	0.00	<b>10.00</b>
David	Jones	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.00	0.00	<b>10.00</b>
Steve	Greenhill	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.00	<b>10.00</b>