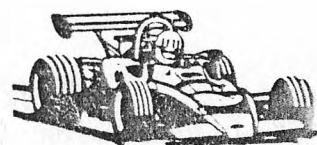


BARC

YORKSHIRE CENTRE TIMES

Issue No. 8

**MARCH 1989**

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Dear Member

It is with some regret that I write this month's 'Chairman's Letter' as it is to be my final one.

I have decided that the time has come not to offer myself for re-election. Apart from the increasing pressure of business, which is a problem faced by most active people in the 1980's, the main reason is that I feel that the office of Chairman of any organisation like the Yorkshire Centre should be rotated. This should ensure the application of new ideas and fresh thinking. I also feel that two years is the ideal period for which the office should be held, as the first year is spent learning the ropes. Speaking from personal experience, it is only in the second year that one feels fully confident in carrying out the duties imposed by the office.

Rotation also means that the honour of being elected Chairman is not denied to other, equally well qualified people who have made their contribution to the running of the Centre. So, having now completed three years as Chairman, I feel it is time to step down.

During those three years I have relied on, and enjoyed, the support of a very knowledgeable and hard working team of officers and committee members. I particularly wish to thank Vice Chairman 'Boris' Hardcastle, Secretary John English, Treasurer Denys Townsend and Competition and Social Secretary Tim Thomson, all of whom have brought their experience and time together to ensure that the Centre reached the extremely healthy position in which we now find it.

The committee comprises a cross section of motor sporting interests and experience. There are represented here, competitors (Chris Seaman), officials and marshals with very different backgrounds of experience (Tony Hodgetts, Ivor Pashley, Martin Frost, John Staveley, David Dalrymple, Graham Wride, Dick Hooper, David Naylor and David Spark) and ex-competitor, former Centre Chairman and current BARC Council member Simon Clark.

Add to that list the two co-opted members Don Staveley, who has done a superb job as Stage Commander on the last two RAC Rallies for us, and Tim Smith and it is not difficult to understand how the Centre continues to run such successful events at Stockton Farm.

The Annual General Meeting on 22 March will see the election of my successor and I wish him well, safe in the knowledge that he will be in good hands.

Finally, don't forget to support the Centre at Harewood this season, whether it is as a competitor, marshal or spectator. It is your Centre and it needs your constant support and enthusiasm!

Yours etc

Jim Johnstone

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the British Automobile Racing Club Yorkshire Centre will be held in the Meeting Room at Stockton Farm, Harewood, at 8.00pm on Wednesday 22nd March, 1989.

By Order of the Committee

J M English
Hon. Secretary

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

MEETING ROOM,

STOCKTON FARM, HAREWOOD

WEDNESDAY 22 MARCH 1989

8.00pm

Please make every effort to attend the Annual General Meeting as this is a time when views about the running of the Club can be aired.

Your hard working committee will appreciate your support and interest in the Centre's affairs.

It would appear that there is a possibility of some changes within the committee so make a firm date in your diary to be at Stockton Farm on Wednesday 22nd March.



George Swinbourne in Pat's shopping car

FOCUS

NEW FOR '89

Few members bothered to take the trouble to inform us of changes of car or specification. This can be understood as people like to keep their cards close to their chest until the last possible moment so as to gain some mythical advantage.

I am sure that members would love to hear of any new exciting plans that people have. Unfortunately, other than the fact that the 2 litre Racing Car Class will be well supported with both the Peters, Riley and Varley, known to be constructing cars of this capacity, the only other changes that I know of (although there will undoubtedly be many more on show at the Test Day or Easter Meeting) are the Royale 84 of Formula Fordster Tony Bridgen, and the new engine which Westune are building for the enthusiastic A H Sprite driver Steve Openshaw.

JIMS NEW CAR TO GRACE THE HILLS

The highly successful partnership of Jim Robinson and David Grace are to have a new Pilbeam sports car which will be motivated by their 2.5 litre Hart.

This should give the established runners within the top ten considerable food for thought.

JOHN FEELS 'FOWL'

The Centre Secretary, John English, has felt 'fowl' of late being struck down by Salmonella? Listeria? - not so - but Chicken Pox! This ruffled John's feathers somewhat but he expects to be fit for the AGM.



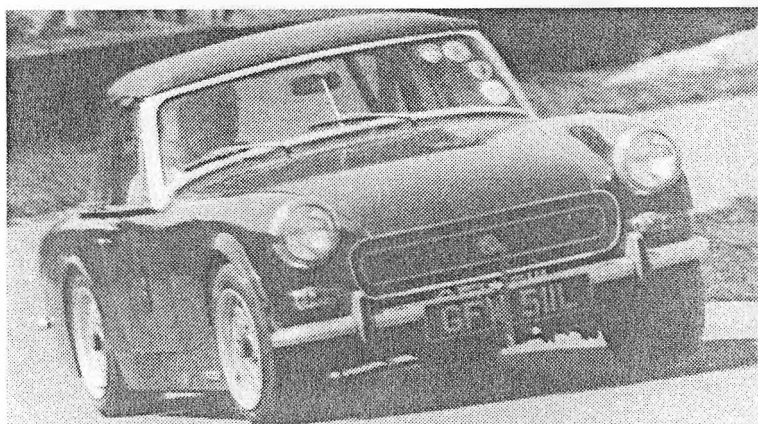
John English feels 'fowl'

Photo by David Scatchard

SPORTS CAR REVIVAL

It appears that many manufacturers are likely, within the next few months, to be unveiling new models of sports cars. Mazda and Lotus are known to be very near to their unveiling although the Lotus has been in a long drawn out gestation period and has undergone many facelifts; engine changes due to first the involvement of Toyota and then the General Motors buy-out. It appears also that the revered name of MG may soon be seen back where it belongs on the front of a genuine sports car and not a tarted up Maestro, Metro, Montego etc.

Rumours are also circulating that the name of Capri may also grace a sports car but as this term is extremely loosey used in this day and age, we can only await developments. Hopefully, some of these models may find themselves on the 'hills' within a 'Marque' category. This, I'm sure all will agree, would add considerable variety.



Midget of Paul Greaves

Photo: Frank Hall

TWIN CAMS

It is well known that British Leyland, Rover, MG, or whatever they happen to be calling themselves this week, have been testing, for production, two exciting twin-cam engines. I do not know which existing model or completely new models these engines will be fitted into but with capacities of 2 litre and 1.4 litre, if fitted to an MG sports car, or to the Metro, they will undoubtedly shake up the establishment.

COMMITTEE NOTES

Work is well in hand in moving the timekeeping equipment down to the start. All electronics are being serviced and updated and should be complete in time for Practice Day.

The March meeting is only a one day meeting this time, on Sunday 26 March. How many requests for Sunday practice will still be received?

The Centre are running the start of the Norwich Union Classic at Harewood House on Sunday 28 May. This will be followed by a passage control at the 'Hill' with an option to parade up the 'Hill'.

There will be a working party on Sunday 5 March to get things ready for the first meeting. All help gratefully received.

Remember the AGM will be held at the Clubhouse and NOT the Parkway Hotel.

PROFILE

JIM JOHNSTONE

CENTRE CHAIRMAN

BY DAVID SCATCHARD

As the last unstable baulk of timber crashed to the ground and the dust began to settle, Jim started to contemplate his first encounter with the hills. Only on this occasion it was downhill when at 18 months old, he released the handbrake on his fathers Alvis, it gathered speed and demolished the garage. Father didn't grant a re-run!

His introduction to motorsport proper came some years later through a neighbour Ken Lee, a well known competitor and Centre member during the fifties and sixties. Ken used to bring home a variety of mouthwatering cars which sufficiently whetted Jim's appetite to have a go himself using a fibreglass bodied Talbot 10 in a Burton's millyard sprint. This resulted in another bent motor!

A Speedwell tuned Sprite was then introduced to the stable, though not a streamline coupe, it had a lightweight body and a lot of the mechanical tweaks such as twin Amal carburettors to stop fuel surge. This was raced, rallied and hillclimbed and resulted in several first class awards in 1962, including Rufforth, Mallory Park, Oulton Park and Cadwell Park.

The following season, the Sprite gave way to a Turner as the competition in those days included Mallock's and Lotus 7's, but after some hairy dices, including one at Cadwell where he came away with paint on both sides of the car from one incident. The paint, he hastens to add, wasn't his - so Jim decided to call it a day!

A civilised road car was bought in the shape of an Austin Healey 3000, but a few hillclimbs later and a Lotus 18 in Formula Junior trim followed for a start of what became a serious attack on 'the hills'.

Mid-sixties hillclimbing at Harewood was dominated by Peter Meldrum's supercharged 1500cc Lotus 20-Ford. A chat with local tuning expert Bill Crossland and a similar Shorrock supercharging set-up was built on Jim's 1100cc engine. One of Jim's memories of that season was 3rd FTD at the last ever Bo'ness hillclimb in Scotland - it was an RAC Championship round and he beat the great Tony Marsh who at that stage had already got four of his six titles under his belt.

The Lotus chassis gave way to the first of a series of Brabhams, a BT15 using the engine from the 18. 10th in the Championship, 3rd at the last 'Rest and be Thankful' and a host of class records made for a rewarding season.

The 1969 season was the most successful, with a BT14 Brabham which came complete with a 3 litre Buick V8. 6th in the RAC Championship, and FTD at Harewood, a 2nd at Shelsley as well as the Martini award for the best aggregate time over the two National meetings at Shelsley that season. Shelsley Walsh ranks, with Harewood, as Jim's favourite hill. I took the opportunity to ask about a race I remember at Rufforth with this car, "After a coming together with F3 ace Barry Maskell, I managed to get up to about 4th before a spin ended the race - being a hillclimb car, it wouldn't self-start" recalled Jim. This car remains his favourite despite having his only major accident in it when it rolled at Shelsley - "It must have been quite an altitude because Peter Varley remembered looking up into the cockpit as I flew overhead." He escaped unscathed!

During a lay-off for about seven seasons, Jim kept his hand, not only on the official side of hillclimbing but also in the cockpit when on occasion he was loaned some quite interesting machinery. A 1966 F1 Brabham, still in works colours, with a 4 and a half Traco Oldsmobile engine proved an interesting mount at Scarborough's Olivers Mount - thanks to David Hepworth. The Chevron B19

BMW Alpina was the most alarming - Jim drove it at Harewood when David Garnett owned it - the front suspension had been modified to B26 specification, and for the 100th Harewood he greatly appreciated Roy Lane loaning him a Cooper-Daimler T87.

By 1977 the yearn for another Brabham got the better of him and Jim did local events in a Brabham BT18 in which he took FTD at the novices(!) hillclimb. For the next



Jim Johnstone, the retiring Chairman

Photo by David Scatchard

two seasons he campaigned an ex-Formula 2 Brabham BT30 which he bought as a rolling chassis and an FVA engine, from a saloon racer, was found in bits and rebuilt into the car. Jim is very proud of the fact that he managed to get the first sub-40 second time at Harewood for an up to 1600cc racing car. Fellow Yorkshire Centre Committee member, Chris Seaman, bought the BT30 in 1980 and has competed with it ever since.

In more recent years, Jim has enjoyed hillclimbing a Brabham BT18 Buick, this was after a painstaking restoration following being unearthed in the Midlands from a soggy garage - a car that suits his requirements of lots of mid-range torque and usable power. As this car is now in Peter Speakman's collection, have we seen the last of him on the hills?

For many years Jim has been a member of the Yorkshire Centre's Committee, and the last three as Chairman of the Centre have seen him working harder than ever for the cause. Jim's friendly approachable manner has always been welcome, a factor I appreciated as a teenager who used to hitch lifts to hillclimbs with Bill Crossland. I have little doubt others do too, whether it is to defuse the more frantic problems of hillclimbing or, more preferably, to pass the time of day in the paddock at Harewood.

Away from Harewood, Jim has three 'children'. Becki 23, Nick 21 and Sally 11, all three are occasional visitors to Stockton Farm, but father's passion has not really been taken up, to his slight disappointment. Other interests are squash and music, the latter being original Jazz - 1960's Lotus entrant Chris Barber being a favourite. His music tastes are otherwise catholic but include country music.

Next time you stay in an hotel, you may still benefit from Jim's influence on people, for as Sales Manager for a company called Northmace, he sells hotel bedroom equipment.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

There are two things guaranteed to stir-up the speed events world - discussions about class structures and the workings (sic) of the RAC MSA Speed Events Committee.

Tim Smith has gained national exposure for his views arising from the attempt by the Speed Events Committee to introduce revisions to classes with little consultation. Knowing that Brian Kenyon will be putting 'pen to paper' I thought that I should put a word in support of 'silhouette' cars, as well as to confirm my philosophy towards the sport of Speed Eventing.

If we start with the RAC MSA definition of a Speed Event :- '...The term 'Speed Event' will include hillclimbs, sprints, slaloms, autocross and other similar events', then the important words are hillclimbs and sprints. The Speed Events Committee must consider both types of events, even if certain clubs do not! (more on this later). The technical regulations, QF, are for 'hillclimb and sprint vehicles', so it is important to consider what is happening in both sorts of events.

The first problem that arises is that the RAC MSA classification of vehicles can be varied by the SR's of a 'club' event and so there are class differences between National Championship events and the regional/club events. Then the sport is further fragmented by the regions and clubs adopting different classes depending upon geographical locations or decisions taken sometime ago (for reasons that may or may not stand up to scrutiny today).

The most obvious polarisation of hillclimbing and sprints is that within the BARC - a club divided by the regulations of two of its centres but one assumes with the 'blessing' of its Council at Thruxton. Perhaps the members of the BARC and its Council should get the clubs classes sorted out - before trying to do the same for the RAC MSA, who at least have a common class structure for hillclimbs and sprints. If other clubs and regional championships can operate a single class structure, why can't the BARC?

If we could have a common classification then what sort of vehicles should be accommodated? For those who have back copies of the Yorkshire Centre Circular - particularly 1981/5 (September) - then my letter 'comprehensive changes in classes' was my guidance to the BARC (and RAC MSA) for a range of classes for all types of competitor and spectators. With a few changes, after 8 years, my proposals differ little from Tim's proposals but I would wish to see early implementation. I would also suggest that Tim Smith has used phrases that might make writing regulations more complicated than it needs to be. 'Along the lines of existing regulations' is a term that must have many wondering, like me, which rules he intends to use. What is wrong with the regulations already published in the 'Blue Book'?

For 'Silhouette Cars' there would be no point in using Special Saloons regulations as even Group B Rally Cars with relocated engines and roof top wings would not be eligible. The Donington GT regulations would suffice although some people might not wish to see a single seater or sports racing chassis covered by 'Esprit' or BMW M1 bodies, competing against RS200's or Lancia S4's costing many tens of thousands of £'s.

The Special Saloon cars competing today would only slowly be outclassed as the more liberal rules are incorporated into new vehicles. A well known Tiga-Skoda might meet some competition in a silhouette class, unfortunately a steel bodied car like Nic Mann's Morris would soon become outclassed. Kit Cars, which can be a cost effective way to build a competition car, would also swell the numbers in the silhouette classes.

Tim Smith hopes that re-structuring of the classes will become a topic for discussion, I hope that the talking will not last another 8 years and that somebody will take a lead. Revolution might be too disruptive but 'evolution' will never get the green light from some within the sport.

I must join with Tim in his comments about the inconsistency of the Speed Events Committee but I would add that they do not always appear to understand the whole of the sport, and they only communicate with those at or near the top of the pyramid. The governing body should be prepared to guide the whole of the sport, from the bottom to the top. (How can a sport attract a public following if a single event becomes a qualifying round for six championships using the same class structure but different scoring systems?)

Sprints and hillclimbs have a future if everyone moves in the same direction and vehicle classes become 'common' at all levels and hopefully throughout the UK. What would be ideal is to be able to compete in the same class with the same car from Sussex to Ayrshire. If the RAC MSA continue to move slowly then the BARC and other clubs should take the lead, or even the HSA should take a stronger position to bring about constructive change in the sports that form its title.

Even after 8 years I still hope that we shall see a range of classes to cater for all competitors and that will appeal to the spectators.

Yours sincerely

Malcolm Pittwood

PS As 'minority' lobbying seems to move the Speed Events Committee perhaps my plea for a steam rocket powered class will be adopted!

Dear Editor

I am writing with reference to the report by Brian Kenyon in the December/January issue of the 'Times' on the subject of the Classes Forum.

The paragraph concerning 'hot' hatchbacks and the implication that they are anything but 'hot' is, to say the least, a somewhat blinkered opinion. The present Harewood class structure enables 'Touring' cars and 'Marque' sports cars to enjoy virtually unlimited modification to engine and suspension and we have therefore what can best be described as race-tuned cars that look (almost) like standard production vehicles.

I own a 'hot' hatchback and like the majority of owners of like vehicles, find it necessary to use the thing everyday of the week. How many of the 'Touring Cars' clock up 20,000+ miles a year and double as the family transport?

Brian's next paragraph was a statement on the 1.4 factor inflicted on turbocharged cars. Is the Kidsley Brabham or the Griffiths Pilbeam 40% quicker than the opposition? I accept that a well developed turbo engine can deliver the BHP but this is only part of the full story concerning turning those horses into quick times.

Returning to my own turbo hatch, the 1.4 factor gives 1820 cc and a factor of 1.8 - 2340 cc. The maximum BHP I can extract economically and reliably is 135 - compare this with a well tuned Chevette HSR or Lotus Sunbeam able to compete as a 'Touring' car. Go above 140 BHP and the fuel injection can't cope, above 160 and the gearbox can't take the strain. No doubt the affluent will be muttering to themselves about modifying the lot - not so easy when the car has to remain tractable in everyday use.

My wandering thoughts now go to the 'road legal' Davrian sleeping in the barn, now minus its intractable full race engine (below 4000 revs and you might as well walk!!).

The genuine dual purpose vehicle is a very rare breed indeed and in final defence of the 'hot' hatches, how many Mallock or single seater owners have the daily pleasure of driving a tin top that goes 0 to 60 in the high sixes, tops 130 and still returns 35 to 40 mpg. There is a vast difference between the everyday hot hatch and the one purpose 'Touring Car'. If anyone can suggest how to bridge that gap economically and effectively, then I'm all ears.

Yours sincerely

Peter C Wilkins

Dear Editor

I am pleased to see that Peter Wilkins has risen to the bait. The remark concerning 'hot hatchbacks' and turbocharging in my report of the Classes Forum does not mean that I hold the present breed of hatchbacks in contempt, but surely somewhere amongst our present 'Touring Car' structure, one of this breed could challenge the Mini which is, as you will be aware, 30 years old. Perhaps one reason for the lack of entries of this type of car is, after spending many thousands of pounds for a standard car, they balk at the prospect of spending a comparatively small amount on top of the purchase price to convert it into a competitive car.

The Touring and Marque cars do not enjoy virtually unlimited modification of either engine or suspension; on the engines you cannot change the cylinder head, the block, nor can you change the crank stroke and the maximum bore size is +60 thou. With such engines as the Mini, a fair number of standard parts can be used within the engine. If you changed the cam of my Sprite and put on road tyres, the car would be suitable for driving on the road. Perhaps it would be a little fussy but providing you didn't take it into the middle of London, it would be perfectly driveable.

The suspension of my car retains the lever arm shock absorbers at the front and rear and standard but stiff front springs and indeed also much of the rubber bushing supplied in the standard car. This is hardly unlimited modification.



John Casey (Mini Cooper 'S')

Photo: Frank Hall.

The cars in Marque and Touring do look standard and are standard except for the removal of over-riders and the fitting of three inch wide wheel arch extensions and, in some cases, a carburettor blister.

As regards turbocharging, all I can say is that these must be lumped with supercharged cars and, as anyone who knows anything at all about engines, will know that both these systems greatly increase the power and torque, the latter being most important in hillclimbs. I would never suggest that the Griffiths Pilbeam could be 40% quicker than the opposition, although I consider that at this point in time no one has yet extracted anywhere near the power or performance potential of a car fitted with either of these systems.

Concerning cars and their competitiveness within classes, the modern car, whilst increasingly sophisticated with fuel injection, engine management systems and turbocharging etc. has also added considerable weight through the fitting of many items such as electric windows, stereo systems and all the other trappings which go to make an up-market 'hot hatch'.

I note that you quote the HSR as being able to compete as a Touring Car; this car has been deleted from the list as all cars within the Touring Car category have to have been produced in figures not less than 2000, thereby ensuring that they are a genuine volume produced car.

I, like you, regret the passing of the dual purpose car in which one could compete with a fair amount of success in races, rallies, hillclimbs, autotests etc., but I am afraid that this has been swept aside by 'progress' and specialisation is now, unfortunately, the name of the game.

Yours sincerely

Brian Kenyon



Rod Stanniland, in his road-going Escort RS Turbo, shows you can enjoy some exciting hillclimb-ing in a standard road car.

Photo: David Scatchard.

Dear Editor

I, like Brian Kenyon, have sat on the sidelines trying to live up to the Yorkshire maxim of "hear all, see all and say 'nowt'", until reading Brian's letter which absolutely typifies one of Charles' main points, don't behave like big spoilt kids and bury your heads in the sand.

I know I am bound to be considered biased as one of Charles' mentors and earlier partners in this stupid but wonderful sport we all keep throwing more and more money at year after year. Surely you know by now that whenever somebody is told an odd time in any part of the country the reply amongst regular and experienced hillclimbers is 'that's a Harewood time'. Harewood has always been notorious for throwing up unusual times for the 21 years it has been my fortune to compete. I remember in my clubmans days doing a gentle first practice run and was given a time approximately 2 seconds inside the record!! For the rest of the weekend I never came within 3 seconds of that time. I remember commenting at the time to an eminent hillclimb champion (not Charles) who was standing alongside at that moment. He had just suffered the reverse situation. His comment was don't query it, they'll say it's right, this Club never admits mistakes, one of the reasons we don't come here unless we have to. I did query the time and said it was impossible for an idiot like me to achieve that time, 'Oh no' I was told 'it's correct'.

I have heard it so many times at Harewood but fortunately I have never seen it affect the climax of a meeting and a championship as it did in September 1988.

Surely, Brian, it is better to complain to the Club that it affects than to go moaning to the RAC MSA and then involve high level inquiries and all the ensuing explanations and work that this is going to put on the Club.

Charles was trying to be polite initially in pointing out to the Club they have a problem which had now really been highlighted. Instead of BARC saying thank you Charles we'll try and put it right, certain bodies amongst the Yorkshire Centre hierarchy have taken it as a personal slight on their ability, and started a real stupid 'slanging' match, instead of accepting there must be a problem and let's try and sort it. To deny it is crazy, you will only alienate people from going to Harewood. You keep wanting to attract top class entries, you won't do this if you don't accept criticism let alone disband the top ten/twelve but that's another subject.

Yours sincerely

Jim Robinson

Dear Editor

Although not wishing to prolong the timing debate longer than necessary, I do feel that certain points of Jim Robinson's letter require an answer.

First of all the remark concerning 'big spoilt kids and the burying of heads in the sand' is unfortunate and unfair to all parties concerned. I, and any other reasonable thinking person, would never deny anyone's right to make valid criticism but I would challenge that there is a time and a place for this to be done. For Charles to have made the remark concerning timing undoubtedly must have meant that feelings on the subject were, at that time, running high, but his speech at the end of the day was not either the time or the place for such a remark.

A far better way of approaching the problem would have been to have requested a meeting with the Committee or to have written a letter, along with others who felt similarly aggrieved. I also, like Jim, have been on the Harewood scene for 22 years, but have not only been a competitor, I have marshalled both in the paddock and on the track and been a Steward, so I feel that I am in a position to see both sides in a fair and dispassionate way. During my 22 years at Harewood I find it difficult to understand why I have not become aware of the idea that the Harewood timing has been faulty, for until Charles' speech I, like many others, was blissfully unaware that a problem existed.

Harewood, most definitely, is not the only venue where rogue times have appeared, in fact Charles' speech named a southern venue at which a similar problem had occurred and I have been the subject of absolutely unbelievable decisions regarding timing at a famous midland hill along with other venues.

As to the Harewood officials being unable to admit mistakes is yet another point on which I cannot agree, in fact I have, along with Pat, attended a special meeting which was organised by the Committee for members to bring such points and grievances to their notice. This surely was the platform which such items as the timing could be included. The attendance at this meeting was abysmal with only another couple (who came to lobby for the inclusion of a kit car into a specific class) being present.

At this meeting I put forward several proposals concerning improvements which could be made for all competitors and classes. These received a fair hearing and indeed, some of the points were acted upon.

A couple of years later, I asked if it would be possible to attend a Committee Meeting for further points to be raised and again, the Committee were only too happy to oblige. I think that I can state with absolute certainty that no person within the Centre has been more critical of the Committee than I have but I have never found them to be unreasonable if my views were well founded and constructive.

If anyone thinks that my comments above can be construed that I have sold out to the Committee and become one of the establishment, they couldn't be further from the truth. I have never been on the Centre Committee and have always maintained my own views and opinions.

I agree wholeheartedly with Jim that it is far better to complain to the Club than the RAC MSA but my original letter on the subject was meant to highlight the fact that some officials - timekeepers and scrutineers - are RAC appointed and therefore their actions are not directly under the control of the Club.

I fail to see what more the Centre can do regarding the timing, having already stated many times publicly that the timing was being overhauled and that the points had been noted and would be acted upon, so surely for all concerned, it is better to put an end to the matter and start afresh in 1989. Let's all meet in the paddock, have a chat about things, shake hands, have a laugh and get on with enjoying ourselves, which after all is what the sport is supposed to be all about.

Yours sincerely

Brian Kenyon

The inclusion of any article in this publication does not imply that the Club, its Officers, its Editorial Staff or any other member, shares any opinion expressed therein.

Dear Editor

That the RAC MSA Speed Events Committee have at last conceded that something needs to be done concerning the rules affecting saloons and modsports, is something which is way overdue, but I would say their handling of this matter has been insensitive to say the least. These changes have never been printed in the MSA's 'Competitor' magazine and indeed, in that magazine they said they were considering changing the rules but did not quantify them, also they said that they were only informing their championship entrants. This means that the rest of the Speed Event licence holders count (in their eyes) for nothing. Although I am a member of one of the largest hillclimb organising clubs in the country, I have yet to see the new proposals.

Like Malcolm Pittwood, I have read Tim Smith's suggestions and would like to point out that Tim is rather late in throwing his cap into the arena as Malcolm and I, both at the BARC Yorkshire Hillclimb Forum in 1981 and in the Yorkshire Centre Circular, made the proposals of a silhouette formula, and confirmed our support for such a formula at this years BARC Forum. It would appear to me that Tim has latched on to the mood of the moment but that he gained national coverage is only to the good of our cause.

We start with a few facts as I see them:-

1) The saloon and sports car classes in hillclimbing and sprinting have blindly gone along with the racing regulations and allowed cars which bear no resemblance to what they purport to be. If you applied the Trades Descriptions to, particularly, the saloon cars, how can something that purports to be a Skoda or an Imp, and has not one part of that car on it, either the engine or the chassis, be called a Skoda or an Imp, they are sports racing cars in disguise.

2) The last change the Speed Events Committee made to the modsports rules moved these further away from the vehicles they were supposed to be i.e. they allowed changes of both engine and gearbox and also the removal of windscreens. This takes them closer to the realms of the Clubman or Sports Racing car.

3) While competing at a Harewood event I had the opportunity to discuss with a high ranking MSA Official (who happened to be the Steward on the day) the lack of 'proper' cars within their speed events class structure. He informed me that this removed the likelihood of any protests or eligibility problems. He also stated that they considered 12 classes to be the correct number to cover their requirements.

4) Perhaps a move towards more recognisable cars may be brought about by the success of the Midlands Road Going Class, again this is similar to the 'Marque' category. I have always felt that the largest proportion of spectators like to see cars with which they can associate i.e. those that they drive on the roads during the week and not thinly disguised sports racers, so I therefore recommend that the Marque and Touring cars would be an ideal basis for classes A, B, C & D.

5) I am sure that people will say that I am trying to hoist my own particular category or class upon the national scene. I have always tried to support things which I feel are fair and indeed the Clubman's Category was one such category that the BARC introduced on the hillclimb scene, this without the support of the MSA for many years, it has now become part of the national scene. It seems odd that the Formula Ford 1600 category, of which there must be more cars than any other in the country, has been studiously ignored by the RAC, but yet they can introduce an up to 2000 cc Racing Car Class at the virtual drop of a hat. A case of lobbying?

6) Malcolm Pittwood and Tim Smith both mention the lack of consultation by the Speed Events Committee with either clubs or competitors within sprinting and hillclimbing. Their speed events forum should be moved to a venue within the Midlands area which would result in a larger attendance and perhaps a wider spread of views and opinions might be expressed. Undoubtedly the Speed Events Committee are moved by minority lobbying but dismiss, almost out of hand, a well supported petition for the removal of the 2500 yard rule for sprints.

7) To take up Malcolm's point of the difference between the BARC Centres i.e. the Midlands & Home Counties which run the sprint series, and our Harewood and Gurston classes, I rang Ian Bax a year or two ago to ask him to clarify some of the differences between our categories, and it would appear that they had indeed come a little closer. To look further afield, Scotland has introduced a category similar to our Marque and Touring so it would appear that the only ones out on a limb are the Midland hills who run to RAC categories and classes.

8) Regarding the method of points scoring to be used for Championships, as mentioned in Malcolm's letter, the whole point of hillclimbing is to go quicker than the rest of the class and also to break records. The BARC Yorks. method of scoring would be a more suitable scoring system for all hillclimb and sprint championships for it rewards drivers for their endeavours and not just because they happen to be the only quick car within the class against a lot of make-weights. It would also remove the frustrations a driver must feel if there aren't enough cars entered in his class to gain points in the present system. A driver who breaks a record surely is more worthy of points than one who does not.

Yours sincerely

Brian Kenyon

Dear Editor

Apropos the general moaning and groaning about Harewood timekeeping, we do not live in a perfect world, and whatever the dedication of operators or quality of equipment, it seems painfully obvious errors do occur.

However, the whole sport of hillclimbing/sprinting is based on the timeclock. If you feel you cannot accept what the clock says, you are in the wrong sport. Go home and take up something else.

Yours sincerely,

Allan Staniforth

PS Congratulations to 'Old Moore' for the 1989 Almanac - scurrilous, insulting, irreverent, and suitably critical of the less-than-competent in high places. Superb!

Eds.Note: I have passed on your congratulations to 'Old Moore' and he says 'not so much of the Old'

TIMING

Eds. Note: Whilst not wishing to deny anyone the opportunity of voicing their views on such an important matter, I do feel that the time has arrived to end the correspondence on this subject.

EDITORIAL

When taking over the position of Editor of the 'Times', I was aware that I would have to contribute a considerable amount to the magazine as well as editing it, but the lack of input has shaken me somewhat. Although many letters have been received and published on a variety of topics, and I would like to thank all contributors, with 460 Yorkshire Centre Members I would have thought that someone, somewhere had a good story to tell whether it be a couple of lines or a full blown article concerning the acquisition of a new car or a funny happening, either past or present, anything to add a little variety to the magazine would be greatly appreciated.

The AGM is approaching and all members are urged to attend if possible. This is a time when matters regarding the running of the Centre can be discussed with the Committee. Although some matters involving the running of Harewood are strictly not AGM business, I have never known anyone be denied the opportunity to put forward their views.

Our Chairman, Jim Johnstone, as you will have read, is retiring at the AGM. My personal thanks go to Jim for the encouragement he has given me during my time as editor of the 'Times'. Jim has always been very supportive and approachable and a great help to me during the past few months.

If any Yorkshire Centre members find they have little to do with their weekends, I know they would be most welcome as marshals both at the hillclimbs and the rallies. The Harewood Marshals are a very professional band of people who are always on the lookout for new helpers to swell their ranks and they would love to hear from you if you have the time to spare.

Don't forget, if you change your address, please let me know as well as informing Headquarters. The list of members is updated regularly but you may just miss an edition.

Pat Kenyon

PRACTICE DAY and MARSHALS TRAINING DAY



Our regular Rescue Unit. (Note: 'Ambulance' and 'Rescue Unit' are mirror images on the van).

HAREWOOD HILLCLIMB

SUNDAY 12th MARCH 1989

HAREWOOD HILLCLIMB and RALLY DATES 1989

PRACTICE DAY
12 March

SPRING NATIONAL HILLCLIMB
26 March

NOVICES HILLCLIMB
20 May
MEMBERS HILLCLIMB
21 May

NORWICH UNION CLASSIC
28 May

SUMMER CHAMPIONSHIP HILLCLIMB
10/11 June

RAC NATIONAL HILLCLIMB
8/9 July

MEMBERS HILLCLIMB
20 August

CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS HILLCLIMB
16/17 September

TOUR OF BRITAIN
23/24 September

Articles for the next edition of the 'Times'
by 25th March please to :-

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