



CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Dear Member

I take time in this letter to thank all those who have worked so hard over the past season to make Harewood happen.

So much valuable spare time is given up, not only by those who work alongside myself and the Committee, but by marshals, and indeed the competitors, in order to make a great week-end at Harewood.

Without all the correct ingredients we would not have such a superb venue and a great week-end sport. We hope to be able to give you more news regarding developments at Harewood after the planners decision which unfortunately is not until the beginning of next month.

I trust you are all wintering well and look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the Dinner Dance in December.

Tim Thomson

ANNUAL COMPETITIONS

The Pearce Trophy	Brian Kenyon
The Pearce Trophy Consolation Award	Boris Hardcastle
The Ken Lee Trophy	Chris Seaman
The Firth Bowl	Mrs Pat Kenyon
The Chippy Iola Vase	John & Ann English

THE PEARCE TROPHY TOP TEN

1	Brian Kenyon	47	points
2	Chris Seaman	45	"
3	Boris Hardcastle	37	"
	John English	37	"
5	Pat Kenyon	36	"
	Leon Bachelier	36	"
7	David Dalrymple	31	"
	Peter Herbert	31	"
	Denys Townsend	31	"
10	Peter Read	30	"

plus 12 other members with 29 points or less. Full details of markings etc can be obtained from Boris Hardcastle.

ANNUAL DINNER DANCE AND AWARD PRESENTATION

SATURDAY 8th DECEMBER 1990

PARKWAY HOTEL, OTLEY ROAD, LEEDS
Reception 7.30pm for 8.00pm
Usual band and disco
Evening dress

CLASSES FORUM

OLD GOLF HOUSE HOTEL

OUTLANE

NR HUDDERSFIELD

(JUNCTION 23 M62)

SUNDAY 11th NOVEMBER 1990

COFFEE 10.00am

MEETING STARTS PROMPT AT 10.30am

Among the many topics to be discussed will be classes to be dropped?, new bogey times to be formulated and perhaps even an update on happenings on the proposed new course?

It is in your interest to be there and if you cannot attend, please write to or ring Chris Seaman, 193 London Road, Sheffield S2 4LJ Tel: 0742 - 585695 with your views, suggestions etc.

RAC RALLY

STOCKTON FARM, HAREWOOD
STAGE 2

SUNDAY 25th NOVEMBER 1990

First car due at 0830 hrs but due to the expected large number of spectators, the stage will be operational from 0600hrs.

If you feel you can help, please ring Tim Bendelow (tel.0423 340594) as soon as possible in order to help him to delegate people for the various posts.

EDITORIAL

Many thanks, once again, to all the contributors this month and please keep your articles and ideas coming in over the winter period.

Yet again we move into the closed season not having set up a regular club night. This is an item which would prove invaluable in cementing relations between organisers, marshals and competitors, something that is happening through the columns of the Times already. If anyone has any suggestions, please contact Tim Thomson, any committee member or write to the Times.

One way of helping the Club would be to marshal at Harewood on November 25th on the RAC Rally. I'm sure the regular marshals would appreciate seeing some of the competitors alongside them. Anyone wishing to help, please contact Tim Bendelow (see notice of RAC Rally).

Pat Kenyon

Articles for the next edition of the Times by Friday 16th November 1990 please to the editor:-

Mrs Pat Kenyon
4 Leslie Road
Hillsborough
Sheffield S6 4RB
Tel: 0742 340478

Once again we come to the end of yet another season. I'm a year older, soon to be in my 30's (again), a year wiser, a year poorer, but there's another year to look forward to. The problem is - what to do?

I don't want to upset Brian and buy a Sprite. It would be such a shame to end his dominance, and he would be a broken man seeing me do 43's in a legal car (bit below the belt that!).

Cossies are too expensive and anyway it would be too tempting to turn the wick up to 800 bhp at the twist of a knob. I'll let Richard and John foot the blown engine bills.

Likewise too for SS1 Relaints. Rumour has it that Graham and Barry are going to fit a new engine for each Harewood next year.

I could of course go for a big banger, but it seems that an ex-F1 qualifying turbo engine - good for 1200 bhp - will be de rigueur next year and again I've heard rumours that tyre stops will be required at Orchard on each run. What with that and engine rebuilds at each lunch halt it all seems too much hassle.

Minis aren't my scene, mainly because I've got more than 4 brain cells. To hear one driver state openly that he's going to take Farmhouse 'on two wheels' puts me off forever. In any case, any Mini not rounding Farmhouse on one wheel won't be in with a shout next year.



Class 14 record holder, John Bennett getting all crossed-up in his Van Diemen RF85

Since all the FF1600 has-beens have defected to the 2 litre class, I daren't go there. It'd be jumping from the gravel bank into the armco.

If I joined the up to 1600 racing car ranks, I wouldn't be able to watch Chris or Darell very well from the bottom of the hill, would I? (Think about it!).

It seems to me that I have no alternative but to stick to my own class 14, endure the stress of competing against Tim and Roger, and finish above Brian in the Championship.

These infamous rumours that abound have it that John Wilkinson is to join the ever growing Van Diemen RF85/86 ranks. Oh dear. Tony and I certainly set the ball rolling last year with our RF84. Now I'll definitely have to buy a Van Diemen RF86. Bit I'm hanging onto my big valve, overbored, hot cam but otherwise perfectly legal engine!

Seriously, the above named drivers have nothing but my healthiest respect and I congratulate you all, especially Roger on your well deserved successes.

Thanks to everyone for an enjoyable and successful 1990, and roll on March '91.

John Bennett

Dear Pat

Can I be one of many competitors to thank once more all officials, marshals and fellow competitors for another super year at Harewood. The weather hasn't been that kind to us but the friendliness that prevails has made up for that.

My appreciation also goes to my family, especially my wife Lesley, who puts up with my many hours of overtime in the garage; standing around in the cold; and listening to me talk endlessly about gear ratios, anti-roll bars and tyre pressures "I'LL DO THE KITCHEN NOW DEAR!!!"

My support must also go to David Park's proposal for a 'PROPER' FF2000 class. I speak for a number of Class 14 drivers and many other people as well. The FF2000 class would have all the advantages of Class 14 plus slicks, wings, performance. The class, dare I say, could be as popular as Class 14, especially with a surplus of FF2000 machinery from the circuits now available.

See you all next season. I hope Colin (Wright) gets himself fixed up with a new machine soon, after his unfortunate mishap, so that we can renew our rivalry next year.

Mick Moore
Class 14

Branston
Lincoln

Dear Pat

Now that the season is over I would like to say the following and I am sure that I speak for my fellow competitors when I say to all at Harewood, marshals and officials, thank you for the year's enjoyment. Whatever the weather, faces continually smile, and everything runs as it should.

In the last edition, John Staveley thanked the competitors and I agree totally with his sentiments of the last paragraph.

On a different note, one plea, how about a windbreak at signing on? Harewood must be the only place where frostbite and hypothermia are a real risk!

Regards

Mitch Elliott

Manchester

Dear Pat

Whilst clearing out some old copies of 'Autosport' and 'Motoring News' (following instructions from 'she who must be obeyed') I came across an article written about Stefano Modena shortly after he joined the Brabham Formula One Team. The interesting point was the number of pre-race superstitions he had before he went out in his car. These included; fastening his own seat belts, refusing to let anyone touch him once he was in the car and wearing one of his driving gloves inside out! Quite a list, I'm sure you'll agree.

I was wondering if there was anybody who has any similar pre-race rituals (printable of course!) who would care to share them with us through the pages of the Times? One superstition that Dad and I share, is always getting into our car from the left hand side (fortunately, we have a single seater which makes our task a little easier!). How about you, Pat and Brian?

Regards
David Bailey

Dear Pat

I must protest (not too loudly, of course!) at the inference by John Staveley and one or two others that us competitors don't 'put anything back' into the sport.

I accept that many don't, but speaking personally I will be out at least 3 days on the Lombard, marshalling the Harrogate Start/Finish and clock bashing on Wykeham. Tony Bridgen will be with me too, so there's at least two of us who 'do our bit'.

I have also acted as Secretary of the Meeting at two hillclimbs, a Championship Autotest and a forthcoming multi-use Stage Rally at Manby in December as well as clock bashing on Roppa for the Not-the-Mintex, Not-the-National Breakdown, Not-the-Cartel whateveritis rally in February!!

Don't tar us all with the same brush!!

On a serious note, many thanks to the Harewood Marshals - the best hillclimb marshals by far - see you next year!

Regards

John Bennett

FOR SALE**MALLOCK MK20 CLUBMANS**

Straight, tidy

Competitive - Harewood class winner last time out

Reliable - Ford diff and Quaife-type shafts

Wets on rims. Spares. Less engine.

With Dunlop control slicks on Revolutions

£4250

With little-used Avon A16 slicks on Minilites

£4600

Contact Mike McDermott on 0706 - 78851

FOR SALE**HAWKE DL19B FF1600**

1978 Minster engine Total rebuild in 1988

Used only for sprints and hillclimbs

Very tidy competitive car

£3250 ono

Contact: Nigel Roscoe on 051 342 7713 (H)

FOR SALE**VAN DIEMEN RF85 (FF 1600)**

Winner of 1990 Harewood Hillclimb Championship and four wins and two second places in Class 14 during the year.

Several other class wins at Curborough and Aintree.

Immaculate condition

Everything that matters was renewed in February 1990 and has run for less than 100 miles.

Available after October 14th Curborough.

Offers to Roger Kilty on 0274 - 869747

THE GUYSON HISTORY OF SPEED HILLCLIMBING

By CHRIS MASON

The Centre has considerable interest in the Uphill Racers book as Jim Thomson, of Guyson International, sponsored the writing of the book at its inception. We await its publication (any time now) with interest and publish here a short synopsis of the book. (More in the next edition).

Synopsis:

The book sets out to provide a balanced history of British Speed Hillclimbing while at the same time seeking to convey the atmosphere of the sport, its inherent fascination, and to provide details of the personalities, the technical interest and variety of the competing cars, and the scenic appeal of many of the hills. The intention is for it to be well illustrated.

Much of the book is written within a chronological framework and all the significant events and performances are referred to. However, with the broad scope of the subject - over 80 years of events - it would not be feasible to give a 'blow by blow' description of every major hillclimb. The space required would be enormous and the result would be very tedious. The only partial exception to this approach is that the outstanding performances in all RAC Championship events have been covered since this is the sport's highest echelon. For the rest, the text tries to isolate the most significant occurrences, technical developments and competitive performances and to analyse them.

It is hoped to choose illustrations which complement the text, with a good proportion of 'atmosphere' pictures showing the hillclimb environment as well as the star personalities and their cars and maps of the major hills.

Introduction:

The essence of hillclimbing. Quotations and a summary of what it is all about. The motor racing content of speed hillclimbing through the years.



It's good to see the efforts of our marshals are appreciated (see letter page) for they put in a lot of hard work, both seen and unseen.

Photo: Anne Paterson

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.

HAREWOOD HILLCLIMB CHAMPIONSHIP

After two years of domination of the Championship by the Imp of Andy Tymkewycz, the wheel turned full circle and the competitive car to have this year was, undoubtedly, a Formula Ford. The latest cars in this class are far more sophisticated than those available for use last year. Another bonus the Formula Ford drivers were to receive was the latest Dunlop control rubber. All this added up to a pretty potent package and one that was to prove virtually unbeatable. Add to this the highly competitive nature of the class and you can see why the Championship was heavily weighted in their favour, but even if you have everything going for you, you still have to do the job in hand.

Roger Kilty led the Championship from the first meeting in March and although he was not to win the class at every event, he was a consistent 18 point scorer throughout the year. Roger's neat and tidy driving (perhaps not as spectacular from a spectator point of view) is effective indeed particularly with the low powered performance of a Formula Ford. Roger has put his Van Diemen up for sale and at the moment, is holding his cards very close to his chest and has not indicated whether or not he is going to defend his Championship in 1991.

In second place was a dodderly old gent called Brian Kenyon who has been this way before. Brian seems to achieve second place with monotonous regularity but the Champion's title seems to elude him. Brian's peaks co-incide with those of the Formula Fords and as yet he has never been able to find that little extra to topple them from the top of the pile. Although Brian managed to score higher points than Roger, he didn't do it on a regular enough basis. The June event was to prove a turning point in his season when the clutch slipped and he was a second down on his previous times. The second lost would have seen him in the Champion's spot and to finish the season off, he had a slight chance of taking the lead from Roger if the conditions were good at the final but as we all know, it rained and Brian not only failed to score highly, he was also beaten by Pat.

John Bennett, in third place, was enjoying probably his most competitive season in his Van Diemen RF85. John started the season steadily with a row of mid to high 17 point scores and then peaked with a super new record in August. 42.83 is a fabulous time for a Formula Ford, no doubt one or two of the Class 16/17A boys would like to be able to achieve similar times. If only John could have found his form earlier in the season, he could have easily been challenging Roger for the lead.

Graham Walker, with the turbocharged Reliant Scimitar SS1, stormed on to the Harewood scene and would probably have romped the Championship but for a season punctuated by rocker arm failure and a certain inconsistency in driving having been able to score a fantastic 19.09 in June, he slipped back to scoring 17.86 in August. That, with his mechanical problems, robbed Graham of what looked like in June, an easy championship win. So easy in fact that I would have been, at that point, prepared to put my shirt on him!

Richard Hargreaves, having been second last year in the Sierra Cosworth, started the season in like vein in March and looked a good bet for high honours. Unfortunately he seemed to get stuck in a rut until July, when he achieved a new record and then the hard pressed engine on the Sierra decided it had had enough and with it, Richard's championship fortunes also faded.

John Garnett started the season in the shadow of Richard Hargreaves but as the season progressed, gathered confidence in himself and the car and proceeded to push his class rival Richard extremely hard and he was able to capitalise on Richard's poor late season form. Next year could see a titanic struggle between the two and John could well improve on his 6th place if he continues in similar manner.

John Wilkinson was consistently amongst the leaders in the Formula Ford battle but as his other rivals were equipped with the RF85 Van Diemen, he must be left wondering whether or not the Royale is its equal. John never managed to get into the 18 point scores that were required for a high placing this season but will no doubt be hoping to capitalise on this year's success and move up the order in 1991.

Barry Mardsen, sharing the Reliant of Graham Walker, started off his season with a rather low key 16.29 and it took him to mid season before he started to challenge his co-driver's times, perhaps Barry could be another one who could benefit from this year's experience and become a formidable challenger in 1991.

Martin Brobyn, in the Class 2 Mini, had a somewhat yo-yo season, although picking up three class wins, he was never able, through one reason or another, to get down to the class record. (I might add that Martin was not alone in the Mini class as none of his rivals could reach record breaking times). Martin's season could have been an awful lot better if not for stupid little instances like missing gears through having to stretch for the gear lever. For next year Martin is in a quandary, whether to continue in the Mini or to bring out his Midget to play with BK and Co.

Paul Harris has, in the past, competed in a Class 16 Eldon but this year decided to have a shot at the Formula Ford class and for a first season's attempt he made a good job of it too. His distinctly coloured Hawke DL19 earned itself the nickname of 'Kermit'. Paul could perhaps benefit from another year in the category but he is to revert back to the Eldon for 1991.

FTD AWARDS SERIES

With a big bag of gold up for grabs, one would have thought that this series would have been earnestly contested by many of the top drivers but unfortunately, few bothered to compete on a regular basis. Chris Seaman (39 points) led the championship throughout the season but was overhauled by our club chairman, Tim Thomson (40 points), at the final. Chris's class rival Dave Whitehead competed at five rounds and scored 27 points to edge out of third place Alan Newton, who had done all six rounds and scored 26 points.

LADIES CHAMPIONSHIP

Yet again, Pat Kenyon (84.35) was the winner of the Ladies Championship. Her nearest rivals were Lynne Whitehead (63.67) and Sue Sturges (55.48).

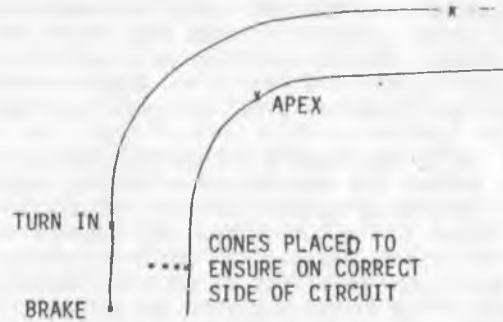
HAREWOOD HILLCLIMB CHAMPIONSHIP

POS	NAME	CAR	POINTS
1	Roger Kilty	Van Diemen	90.94
2	Brian Kenyon	AH Sprite	89.95
3	John Bennett	Van Diemen	89.39
4	Graham Walker	Reliant	88.58
5	Richard Hargreaves	Sierra Cos	88.56
6	John Garnett	Sierra Cos	88.42
7	John Wilkinson	Royale	86.90
8	Barry Marsden	Reliant	85.96
9	Martin Brobyn	Cooper S	85.85
10	Paul Harris	Hawke	85.81
FTD	Tim Thomson	Pilbeam	40
2nd	Chris Seaman	Brabham	39
3rd	Dave Whitehead	Chevron	27

LADIES AWARD

Pat Kenyon AH Sprite 84.35

The next step was to be driven around the circuit by one of the instructors, in groups of 4, indicating the correct braking points and lines to be taken through the corners. You'll see from the diagram that the corners themselves were marked out with a system of cones to ensure that the correct line was taken.



Having completed your tuition lap you were let loose on all the cars Rover had provided - everything from a Metro 1.4 to a Rover 827. You were allowed 2 laps per car and only permitted to overtake on the left, once the car in front of you had indicated to pull over to the right. Soon the pit lane was filled with the acrid smell of hot clutch plates and brake linings!

The high spot of the day, as far as I was concerned, was taking to the track in a Rover 216 GTi 3d Twincam, with one of the instructors in the passenger seat. After passing a few favourable remarks regarding my lines through the corners, we came to a halt in the pit lane having completed my two laps. The instructor complemented me on my smooth driving style and asked if I had any competition experience. When I told him that I owned a Formula Ford he was most interested because he began his own competitive career in the exact same car! The instructor's name? Adrian Cottrell who currently competes in a semi-works Reynard in the Formula Renault Championship.

HAREWOOD ANNUAL AWARDS

Yorkshire Post Trophy	Martyn Griffiths
Jack Farrar Trophy	Tim Thomson
Arnold Burton Trophy	Roger Kilty
Richard Sutherland Trophy	Brian Kenyon
Guyson Sandblast Trophy	Haydn Spedding
Hatfield of Sheffield	
Jaguar Trophy	Haydn Spedding
Ford Woodhead Trophy	John Bennett
Appleyard Group Trophy	Graham Walker
Wallace Arnold Trophy	Richard Hargreaves
Total Trophy	Richard Hargreaves
Scrutineer's Trophy	Brain & Pat Kenyon

Congratulations to all the Annual Award Winners. We hope that you will be able to attend the Dinner and Award Presentation on Saturday 8th December 1990 to receive them, otherwise please make alternative arrangements with Ann & John English for their collection.

HAREWOOD TOP TEN

Photo of all the top ten who were at the prizegiving, including the FTD and Ladies Champions.

From L to R back row: Barry Marsden; Graham Walker; John Wilkinson; Tim Thomson (FTD); Martin Brobyn; Paul Harris.

Middle row: John Garnett

Front row: Roger Kilty (Champion); Pat Kenyon (Ladies Champion); Brian Kenyon; John Bennett.

DONINGTON TRACK TEST

DAVID BAILEY

Sunday October 7th dawned cold, bright and dry. I was fortunate enough to be involved with a Rover Track Test at Donington Park. The company I work for (Ashmall Parkinson Ltd of Eccles, Manchester) being a Rover Main Dealer and quite heavily involved with a handful of major new car fleets, organised a Track Test of the majority of models in our range, via Rover, at Donington.

The whole event was organised in conjunction with the Ian Taylor Racing School, who provided the instructors for the day. The day began with a driver's briefing conducted by Ian Taylor himself. This consisted of introducing us to the system of flag signals being used for that day. These included; Yellow (for any potential incident), Blue (a faster car trying to overtake), Red (return to the pits immediately) and a series of 'Slow Down' boards (if you were guilty of trying too hard!). There was a white Rover 827 Fastback (decked out in police colours) continually circulating to react to any potential incidents/hazards.

Autumn, the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, and the final hillclimb of the year at Harewood. The mists and mellow fruitfulness did not arrive until Sunday, and Saturday practice was held in pleasantly dry conditions.

There was a pleasant end of term feeling in the paddock, and the talk was of next season, the new class structure, and who would be driving what. But first there was unfinished business. The rich and famous had the Harewood Championship to settle, I had to break into the 47's.

A six strong Class 9 was without the non-starting Metro Rod Dutton, thus giving more credence to the programme's assertion that I should figure in the top three. The Lancashire chapter of Ecurie Ecosse, in the form of the Archie Inglis-Gordon Wright Midget, had support from head office in the shape of the Citroen GS based Lomax of 'Uncle' Bill Wood's daughter Lesley, which had made the trip from Edinburgh. Lesley described the unusual machine as a 'wee pig to drive', much preferring Dad's Mallock. However, she had been given the use of the Lomax for a year, a fate that may well excite the attentions of Amnesty International.

Archie Inglis' tyre marks still graced the tarmac at Willow as a reminder of his August excursion with a throttle jammed wide open. I was assured that the accompanying marks on his trousers had been more successfully removed. Proudly Archie and Gordon showed me their new hand-built accelerator pedal that now works on both directions, however a very ugly incident was only narrowly avoided when the two Scots discovered a penny lodged on the Midget's footwell.

Mike Donner's immaculate Elan and Roger Thomas' Westfield completed my competition, and in practice the latter was a revelation. Despite never having seen the hill before, Roger's times were 48.23, 46.96 and 44.16. I felt only slightly better on learning that a Graham Hickman built twin cam was delivering 155 bhp to the Avon A15 shod rear wheels.

My opening practice run produced a gentle 53.41 while my second, although feeling nothing special, returned a personal best of 48.02. My third climb felt quicker but was only good for 49.21. Funny old game this hillclimbing. Meanwhile back in the paddock anxious faces peered beneath Gordon Wright's bonnet. The Midget's head gasket had blown and a piece of metal had chipped off the cylinder head's surface. However, Superglue is a wonderful thing, and the MG was fettled in time to take to the track on Sunday.

The rain arrived on Sunday and it was with some trepidation that I descended the hill to the startline, umbrella held aloft for protection. Unfortunately the beastly Mr Tarbet spotted me secreting said brolly in the Westfield's passenger footwell prior to my ascent, and it was promptly confiscated. According to commentator Sproston my time of 55.32 was good enough to lead the class, and I could hardly eat my egg sandwich for excitement. But close examination of the bus tickets revealed Mike Donner's Elan quickest on 53.32. But where were the others? Well the Ecurie Ecosse Superglue only lasted as far as Farmhouse, which was sad for Gordon and Archie, but only goes to prove my theory that Superglue

is only good for sticking fingers together. As for the flying Roger Thomas, the switch back to road tyres was a bit of a culture shock and he was struggling to hold off the Lomax.

Over lunch everyone nervously scanned the sky. The rain had stopped but more threatened, what was it going to be, wets or slicks? No such decisions for me, with but one set of tyres to my name. I prayed for more rain to give my road rubber a chance, but although the track remained greasy and unpredictable, it was dry enough for slicks.

My second run was red flagged as I exited Farmhouse. The Thomas Westfield had gone off at Quarry, I was in with a chance. I had a long wait at the bottom of the hill for my re-run as single seaters kept leaving the track in the tricky conditions. The nice man in the green hut showed me the Class 9 times, and to my delight I was now assured of second place. Could I beat Donner's time of 49.21 and win? On a dry day yes, but conditions were far from perfect. I switched into Senna qualifying mode and went for it. My confidence lasted about as far as Willow when I realised that getting the power down was not going to be easy, and a time of 51.37 was the best I could manage. So it was Donner first, Herbert second, with Lesley Wood a fine third for Scotland.

Another year's hillclimbing at Stockton Farm was over, and it was time to bid farewell to my season-long rivals. Archie was about to leave for Ecuador on further adventures with British Aerospace. Gordon was contemplating an engine rebuild. I felt like the kid at the seaside having to say goodbye to his new pals before going home. But first I had an appointment in the tent with the aces, where drinks and tales were exchanged in equal measure. So as the sun slipped out of sight behind the farmhouse, and a mellow John Garnett slipped out of sight beneath the table, I left the magical world of hillclimbing and left for home.

FIA HISTORIC RACING CHAMPIONSHIP ZOLDER, BELGIUM 20/21 AUGUST 1990 David T Price

One of the attractions of motor sport is the variety of venues and challenges it presents. During the last ten years I have raced, hillclimbed, sprinted both my road-going and full race MGB's with some success at all the major circuits in the UK and Ireland. My affection for Harewood continues undimmed and memories stretch back to marshalling at the first ever meeting, although my visits have been 'regularly infrequent' as a relaxation from circuit racing.

In the last two years I have become increasingly interested in the 'historic' racing scene and have competed in FIA championship meetings at Zandvoort, Spa-Francorchamps and Nurburgring with my 1964 race 'B'. I recall racing at one of the MG Car Club's first forays abroad, at Zolder in 1984. However, my return visit two weeks ago was to race on virtually a completely different circuit.

Racing on the continent is different. The level of organisation is highly variable, the scrutineering is usually a complete joke and the marshalling varies only in the degree of incompetence. Apart from that, it is also a far more relaxed atmosphere, the spectators are much more numerous than the average UK meeting - because they have fewer meetings to attend - and are very enthusiastic. The Zolder meeting

programme included 12 races for 'marque' sports cars, saloons, sports-racing and single seaters. The MG Car Club 'BCV8' traditionally have a race too, therefore I was able to enter two races.

DAF Trucks were introduced to sponsorship of this event via the MGCC several years ago and they have progressed to sponsorship of the entire meeting. For MGCC members this meant a free entry, free use of the circuit on a Thursday practice day, and two lots of practice on Friday and Saturday with free use of the DAF hospitality rooms for two days. The entry for the FIA race was £42, therefore in exchange for this princely sum, one got five hours timed and untimed practice and 21 race laps!

For those readers who have never been to Zolder, a 'flying lap' of this 2.6 mile circuit in my car would consist of a 120 mph+ belt down the long pits straight, braking on a down slope before a long third gear left hander that tightens up as one accelerates round, braking 100 yards later for a long double apex right hander. Up into 4th for a short straight, a right hander taken flat in 3rd, then a half-mile uphill 120 mph straight along the back of the paddock. Hard braking under a footbridge, then a left/right chicane that can be exited very fast in 3rd. A short uphill sprint into 4th into what used to be the fastest part of the track i.e. a long steeply downhill left hand curve taken flat in 4th. In the old days an incredibly fast long right hander at the edge of the circuit followed which, if you failed to make it, didn't provide a choice of which tree to hit.

To reduce speeds they put a 2nd gear right / left / right chicane at this point. Imagine going DOWNHILL on the Harewood straight at 120+ mph and then having a nasty chicane at Farmhouse Bend!

This chicane is followed by a short straight with the road in woodland at this point, then a right hander taken flat in 3rd, changing up to 4th for a short straight and flat out left-hander which is blind due to overhanging trees. To reduce speeds even further they replaced a 3rd gear quick right-hander with a 2nd gear right / left / right chicane. This leads into a quarter mile straight at the end of which is a 3rd fastish left / right into the pits straight. Failure to negotiate this puts one in the pit lane, which with the exit lane is almost as long as Harewood! 2mins 4 secs is 'par' for the quickest modified MGB on road tyres.

For me, untimed practice on the Thursday and Friday meant trying to sort out the over heating caused by water pressurisation. We replaced the head gasket and, as we torqued the head down one of the short head studs broke flush with the block! You can imagine the problems getting this out without a reverse drill to hand, however we did get the whole thing up and running well before timed practice on the Saturday, where following some ill-advised changes to the carburation and a desire just to qualify, I only managed to catch the tailend of the quicker modified 'B's' to be on row 11 with a completely uninspiring lap time of 2.14. At these overseas events it is customary for everyone to muck-in and help each other and someone's spare engine was fitted to another chaps 'B' in 2 hours.

There were 47 cars on the grid for the MG CC 'BCV8' race lined up 2 x 2, split into 4 classes: 11 standard, 23 road-modified four-cylinder cars like mine, 7 four-cylinder cars on slicks and 6 V8' on slicks. The start was not by traffic lights, but by the old method of national flag.

The trick here (remembered from watching many similar starts at Oulton and aintree in the old days) is to let the clutch out and give it the welly at the moment the flag leaves the top of its arc, so that one is 'away' when it actually drops. I rather think that many competitors weren't used to this, consequently by the time the 'drapeau Belge' hit the deck and everyone began moving off, I had picked up three lanes and six cars going into the first left hander! I had a lot of fun in the first four laps and, once the dust had settled I realised that, not having raced since Spa-Francorchamps in May 1989, I wasn't as 'race-sharp' as I used to be. With no-one to race with and drag me along quicker than I was going, I had to settle down into keeping the car on the tarmac and maintaining my 5th place in class i.e. 3 places higher than I started. This I duly did with a lap time down in the 2.10 area. After all, I had another race to do later on.

The FIA race for cars built prior to 1965 had 30 starters. The over 2 litre class included Ferrari 250 GET's, AC Cobra's, Corvette's and a very quick TVR Griffith. My class was full of Lotus Elans, a lovely Alfa-Romeo Tzi, Marcos, TVR and other MGBs with Abarth, Ginetta and Alfas in the up to 1000cc class.

I had another excellent start and out-dragged quite a few people to be 4th out of 17 cars in my class at the end of lap 1 and about 10th overall. I fell back to 6th but was still the leading MGB and making many drivers of Elans look sick. Down the fast left-hander at the far side of the circuit, I got up the exhaust pipe of an Italian gentleman driving another Alfa whilst braking from 120 mph for the chicane. I recall he had a pained look on his face as I took him on the inside.

Then, on the next lap, I slipstreamed a Climax engined Lotus Elite going down the pits straight. Following him into the left-hander, I kept my foot flat on the floorboards and 'nailed' him on the inside under braking for the double apex right-hander (Don't argue with me sunshine, just move over!) to be back to 4th in class. This and the fact that I then had the quickest Alfa firmly in my sights gave my friends in the MG CC something to cheer about.

I should like to report that I finished 3rd in class, however a broken electrical lead put paid to things on lap 5. However, someone once said that there are 4000 things that can go wrong on any car at any time and that they do at the most inconvenient moments is just motor-racing.

It was an extremely enjoyable weekend, one which I can recommend to anyone, although the circuit is a shadow of its former self in terms of sheer consistent speed. I hope to have done the 'Finals' meeting at Harewood by the time you read this account. This and two further races at Donington and Snetterton will complete my 'season.'

1991 should begin with the second annual 'Monte Carlo Challenge Rally' in February in which I have entered a friends Austin Healey 3000 MkII. Question: (a) who has a genuine 1963 Millets Duffle coat preferably with a certified 'history' of service on the 'Yorkshire' or 'RAC' of yore to match my bobble hat and (b) who has a genuine Halda Speedpilot in need of a good home and a new lease of life?. Answers to 0734 401010 please!

HOLIDAY DELIBERATIONS

Mitch Elliott

Preparation for this year's holiday was somewhat 'busy', not in the least due to the Lincoln club having a stand at the local show on Saturday 1st September. Sunday was spent preparing for the European travel ahead, courtesy of Eurocamp, the destinations being the Loire Valley and the Bay of Biscay.

An early arrival at Newhaven saw us on the earlier sailing than scheduled, a 'millpond' crossing saw us into Dieppe and away. The first overnight stay entailed getting through Rouen, with all the road works, 'getting lost' was quite easy, a tour of northern France finally saw us at our scheduled destination. Passing through Rouen reminded me of all the old F2 race reports of the 60's which used to read like a mini GP.

Tuesday saw us en route to Tours for the first 'long stay', this was my first European driving holiday and I was immediately impressed by the standard of the roads. A mid-day halt was taken at Le Mans, journeying down the Mulsanne Straight it is evident how deceiving the speed of the cars and foreshortening by cameras are, the new 'chicanes' are quite a distance apart.

The lessons of Rouen remembered, the 'French' approach was taken at Tours with 'gaps' created to enable the correct route to be followed, any comments or gesture being returned. That evening saw us dining at the local facility to the campsite. I do not know if it was the Jambon, Eouf or Fromage that was off but I spent all of Tuesday night being passionate with a bucket. Wednesday an improvement and, like Thursday, was spent enjoying the local scenery, chateaux etc.

An evening visit to Tours certainly proved why French drivers are demented, they practice on mopeds, certainly driving at night with no lights displays a definite suicidal instinct.

All too soon it was Saturday and time to pack up and move on South, hopefully to sunnier climates, destination being Vieux-Boucau, a small village approximately 25 miles north of Biarritz in the Bay of Biscay. The N10 was joined just south of Tours and led us all the way to our destination, it was fascinating to watch the scenery unfold from the predominantly agricultural land of the Loire Valley through the somewhat arid appearance around Bordeaux to the re-emergent greenness of the heavily pine forested areas around our holiday location.

These dry climates ensure an interesting array of 'old' cars on the roads as well as some very 'ratty' looking ones. Passing by what appeared to be a derelict farm, my attention was attracted by a French racing blue bonnet. What appeared to be a 'race-ready' car of the late 20's, early 30's stood in the yard. Time prevented further investigation of this and the barn full of dust covered cars behind it, one of which appeared to be a 60's Ferrari.

The arrival at Vieux-Boucau greeted us with blue skies and bright sunshine, a particularly well organised Eurocamp courier welcomed us with not only details of the site but also recommended restaurants etc.. not listed on the paperwork.

By this time the bug had worked its way through the whole family, with everybody at full health (at last). It's quite amazing how one can be healthy for the preceding 50 weeks of the year only for something to intrude into the holiday.

Saturday's brilliant sunshine and heat turned into a warm and cloudy Sunday, breakfast was interrupted by a strange scurrying noise, looking upwards revealed a pair of red squirrels playing and running up and down the trunk of a pine tree some 15 feet from where we sat. The cabaret lasted some 10 minutes before they made off across the canopy of trees which covered the whole site, in fact they made several appearances to entertain.

A search of the site failed to reveal a television on which to view the Italian GP so consolation was taken in a bottle or three. Fortunately the weather improved and the remainder of the week was spent under blue skies. A mid-week visit to the nearby town of Dax to view the old Roman Spa revealed signs to Pau, which like Rouen gave rise to thought about the old 'continental circus' race reports.

The previous evening had seen us at the local bull-fight ring, not to see the real thing but to spend a very enjoyable couple of hours watching a troupe of acrobats vault and somersault over charging bulls, at one stage one 'brave' member doing it on stilts. Two 'intervals' being taken by means of a bull being let into the ring and spectators being invited to burst balloons and hang hoops on the horns. We had the misfortune to sit amongst a group of the 'locals', the aromas emanating reduced the two girls to breathing through their sleeves to fight the garlic.

For the homeward journey it was decided to venture through Bordeaux, a splendid city which we saw quite a large proportion of, anyway it made a change from the dual carriageway. Our homeward journey continued northwards retracing our steps as far as Poitiers, the road to Saumur included the straightest stretch of road encountered on the whole journey, mile after mile of it, one could easily understand why France was such a popular venue for speed attempts earlier in the century, the eventual deviation from straight ahead was much welcome.

Saumur is a very pleasant medieval town with a chateau overlooking the Loire, at night when floodlit it makes an even more imposing sight. The campsite is situated on an island in the middle of the River Loire thus the search for the evening meal necessitated a very enjoyable stroll across the Loire bridge into the 'old' part of the town. We ventured into what appeared to be a 'pedestrian' area, only to have to take evasive action from the hordes of demented moped riders, eventually a street cafe was selected and we settle to eat and watch the 'racing'. The highlight of the evening was a hard accelerating GPZ 900 Kawasaki which had the passenger flailing wildly with his arms to stay on board. The resulting banging on the drivers helmet and loud vocal expressions gave the impression that he doubted if the driver's parents knew each other.

The return to the campsite was equally entertaining with frantically driven Renault 4's, 5's etc being driven across the roundabout, brushing tubs of flowers.

One final twist was that on loading at Dieppe, having staved off errant French motorists and inadvertently 'running' several sets of traffic lights, a 'low ride height' thanks to a fair load of Vin Rouge etc and several other samples of the various local brewing arts encountered, saw the exhaust system lose the battle with the ferry loading ramp despite a very cautious approach!