



YORKSHIRE CENTRE TIMES



BARC

Issue No 74

November 1998/January 1999

Happy Christmas and Best



Wishes for 1999 to all



Yorkshire Centre Members



CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Dear Member

Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year to you All

1998 has surpassed even my expectations in terms of competition, enjoyment and the improving performance and spirit within the Yorkshire Centre and Harewood.

We had a great Yorkshire Auto Trader Championship and Champion. A very well subscribed Harewood entry list, an excellent and dedicated team of marshals and organisers, the successful launch of the Harewood Driving School and a superb Dinner Dance and Prize Giving.

I would offer a great vote of thanks to you all and I am delighted to report that today, the Hillclimb and Sprint Association (HSA) awarded Harewood the Norrie Galbraith Memorial Trophy for the Best Organised British Hillclimb Championship round of 1998, which just caps my year off to perfection. It gives me great pleasure for the Yorkshire Centre to receive this award as Harewood was one of Norrie's favourite hills and one he visited regularly.

Thank you
Simon

DATE CHANGE FOR PRACTICE DAY

**Our Harewood Practice
Day will be on the**

**14th March
1999**

**Please remember to
enter it into your diary
NOW**

EDITORIAL

The Yorkshire Centre is taking strides into the electronic age. Many of you will already be aware that we have a tie-up with MotorWeb who will be running a complete Harewood information site on www.motorweb.ltd.uk (don't be surprised if you see cars for sale as this is the prime business of this particular site). BARC Headquarters have also introduced details of the BARC Headquarters and all the Centres' events on www.barc.net

On a more personal level I was proud and pleased to be involved in 1998 in what was probably one of the most successful seasons that the Centre has enjoyed for many a long year. Entry levels were high, so was the paddock spirit and the competition was as keen as ever. With Yorkshire Auto Trader behind us for yet another year, I am sure that 1999 will be even more successful. Likewise, the Harewood Speed Hillclimb Driving School was extremely successful in its formative year. It introduced many new people to the sport and undoubtedly increased the potential of many competitors.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed this year to the 'Times'. A successful and interesting Club magazine is the very life blood of our Centre and helps to envelop the widely spread membership under one umbrella.

Brian and I enjoyed the highly successful Annual Dinner. Georgina Clark had topped the magic 200 attendance figure and an extremely enjoyable evening was had by all.

Looking forward to 1999 I will require your co-operation in sending in your entries early as I, and no one else for that matter, will enjoy turning away any of our regular competitors, if as we expect, we are oversubscribed at many, if not all of our 1999 events.

I wish you all a Happy Christmas and a successful 1999.

Pat

**Articles for the next edition of the 'Times' to the Editor by January 31st 1999 please.
Mrs Pat Kenyon, 'Hillside', West Lane,
Holdworth, Loxley, Sheffield, S6 6SN
Tel: (0114) 234 0478**

1999 ENTRIES SECRETARY

In 1999 I will be the Entries Secretary for all meetings, consequently my work load will increase quite considerably. To help with this and other BARC matters, there will be a BARC Yorkshire Centre dedicated phone, fax and e-mail line, details will be in the next magazine. Please try to ensure that all calls to this number are made before 9.00pm.
Pat

NEW FOR 1999

The Harewood Driving School is, at the moment, in the throes of developing a format for a new Advanced Driving School course. This will run alongside our existing courses. Details will be released early in the New Year.

PADDOCK OFFICE & RESULTS DISPLAY

It is the intention in 1999, to segregate the Paddock Office from the timing display. Signing on etc will, of course, will remain as in 1998, but the results will be displayed on a board in the Refreshment Tent, adjacent to the brow of the hill.

The use of the Refreshment Tent for the run times will mean that competitors and their team members will be able to view the times in a dry environment, on wet days, and also free the top end of the paddock for a safer flow of cars emerging from the track.

1999 CAR MOVES

1998 Harewood Champion, Colin Stewart, is well advanced in the preparation of his new mount for 1999. The Elan will be put aside to be substituted by a Locaterfield, so Colin will be out to test his mettle against those in Class B.

Andy Stokes and his 1998 Ladies Champion partner Jenny Woodfield are considering shoe-horning a 1.6 litre 16v Vauxhall into their very successful Caterham.

SPEED EVENTS FORUM

Following a successful 1998 season, which saw the implementation of new classes and a new marking system, the Centre Committee were keen to build on the success. They will be pleased with the support they received for this view at the Speed Events Forum. Consequently, we will start off the 1999 season as we finished 1998, using those records and bogeys which were set at BARC events during 1998.

It will only be possible for bogey times to be altered if they are set at BARC meetings. The marking for the Yorkshire Auto Trader championship will be based solely on times and performances set at BARC Yorkshire Centre Championship meetings.

Classes will remain exactly the same as those used in 1998, support seems to be strong throughout the class structure presently used and the only variations will be those for one make etc.

It was thought that random selection of cars for re-scrutineering should be made throughout the 1999 season. This will allay any fears concerning possible class infringements. These checks may be made at any time during the course of the meeting

It was suggested that competitors might consider paying slightly larger entry fees for an improved results service ie one incorporating the first 64ft times, split times etc. Although competitors present at the Forum felt that these services were informative, they were not prepared to pay extra to cover the cost of importing other timekeepers and their services to Harewood. The committee is committed to an improvement of the timing system and results service and hopefully, even if this is not achieved in 1999, it will be up and running in the year 2000, and ways of achieving this without incurring vast extra expenditure, are also under review.

Further suggestions involved a timing display after the Finish on the Road Block sleepers. An improvement to signs directing spectators to viewing areas throughout the hill. A map on the Paddock Office was though useful.

Possibility of a Fun Motor Sport Weekend in the year 2000 maybe involving a Team Hillclimb Competition.

A greater discount was suggested for the September weekend when entering both events.

NORRIE GALBRAITH TROPHY

The HSA, this year, have awarded the Norrie Galbraith Memorial Trophy to the BARC Yorkshire Centre for the Best Organised British Hillclimb Championship Round of 1998.

This is a great honour for the Centre and will give great satisfaction to all those involved in the July event. Team work is the key to any successful event and Harewood is extremely fortunate to have, at this time, a progressive and forward thinking committee, as well as a highly competent official and marshalling team.

Some of our 'older' members will remember Norrie with great affection as an enthusiastic Scottish Ginetta and later, single seater driver who loved to come south to compete at the Yorkshire hills.

He was sadly killed in a freak accident, driving his single seater, while involved in some pre-publicity for a Scottish hillclimb event.



The photograph above shows Norrie (centre) with Chris Seaman (left) and Brian Kenyon (right) - both with hair!! taken at Scammonden in 1975.

DRIVE OF YOUR LIFE

Marie Curie Cancer Care

I received a letter and phone call thanking all those at the BARC who took their cars along to Croft in October to support the Cance Care Drive of Your Life.

Pat Darling, the co-ordinator was delighted with the response and hopes that many of you will go along to their next event at Oulton Park on March 27th 1999.

They raised a magnificent £13,000.

Pat

UPHILL RACER

Colin Stewart

It really is amazing how time flies when you are enjoying yourself, here I am sat down planning for next season. What car? What events? (what more expense?) It seems such a short time since I was planning for a serious assault on some 1998 championships. The car I had available last year for once seemed to fit into a class where it might stand a chance of success. Having recently been up against 2 litre kit cars in the Elan, and before it with the Lotus Cortina, for 1998 it might just be a fairer fight. My dilemma over last winter was due in part to some very encouraging outings at the nearby Croft circuit, where the Elan showed good agility and superb grip, this being rewarded with a class win on its first outing in 1997. I looked at the saloon and sports car championship due to be run in 1998 and decided that I might just be able to fit both Harewood and Croft into the schedule, with the appropriate differential and suspension changes between events. Over the winter the car was stripped to the chassis for the addition of more protection bars, ducts, silencers, etc. together with jiggling the chassis and rebuilding diff, gearbox and engine. The engine came in for a lot of attention whilst remaining at 1598cc some detail changes with a different head were made. Of course the change to "cool blue" (honestly that is the ford colour!) was made, necessitated primarily because of work on new wheel arches, and a splitter (and having no more guards red left!) The first 1998 outing was a crisp dry test morning at Croft, on an almost frosty track, the car lapped quicker than ever, nearly 2secs quicker, the winter work looked as though it might pay dividends.

The first Harewood round loomed and my entry had been accepted in fact all the entry forms were sent in early, if I was going to be serious about the championship I could not leave entries to chance. I was delighted to get a class win and bank the 18 points on that cold April meeting. The first race meeting at Croft was a week later, the first round of the PDS series it attracted a very diverse collection of club racers, from Tony Sugden in his awesome Skoda silhouette to historic Healeys and Lister Jaguars. All was well with the Elan until after 6 laps of practice, that sickening rattle was heard as a cam follower seized and allowed a valve to hit a piston (at about 8000 rpm). Damage was limited to block, piston,

head, camshaft! To say that I was disappointed is an understatement. Having built many Lotus engines and not suffered a single failure I was even more annoyed when I discovered the root cause was a machining error by a very well respected outfit, whom I have used for many years. I had some spare parts, but not the essential ones, and at one stage the Elan I was restoring for a customer looked like a possible donor vehicle! After a lot of running around sourcing parts I got an engine running on the eve of the next Harewood. With guessed carb and ignition settings and running in during practice I had an excellent battle with Mathew Pinder to take the class on Saturday followed by a steady run to set a new class record on Sunday, all in all a satisfactory conclusion to a hectic few days. As the dust settled I started to look in detail at the championship, having missed last year's classes for I was not really sure of what factors might affect the end result. I reckoned that the key was to control the class, that is score well at every round but aim to peak later in the season and hope that the weather would not prevent this. Obviously quite a few people were in with a chance and there would be several different rates of improvement, the question was when would people peak? An early "peak" would make it difficult to score well on a damp day. The plan for the rest of the season was to push hard toward the year-end with a limited weight reduction programme for driver and car in the wings, as it were, and a trip to a rolling road some time maybe. A new set of tyres helped to achieve a good damp track time in June, when my brother Ian made a demon tyre change as we were about to be called to the line much to Denis Crompton's surprise. July proved an excellent event with a big improvement on the record, however I was by this time having to keep an eye on a BMW and the occasional Citroen Saxo. August wasn't so good for me with a puncture spoiling a final push for a record however. So to September, a smaller radiator, auxiliary silencer removed, together with rear spoiler and a plumbed extinguisher. With the championship quite close I was going to have to push hard, but a new concern was my back, damaged a couple of weeks earlier it was making me feel like a prime candidate for the geriatrics cup, it was so bad I cancelled the short course entry. The final proved to be a bit of an ordeal for me but still very enjoyable. Practice went very well, with times

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Blackpool

close to my record but the first timed run was accompanied by a lot of steam! The small drive belt on the water pump had disintegrated and I had no spare! A call over the tannoy in the paddock came up with an amazing collection of items all broadly speaking belts. An F2 injection belt doing the job nicely. The second run was a banker, I was relying on a terrific final push however a scorching start came to nothing when the engine died at Chippy's. Refusing to fire at all until finally the over rev unit wires were removed, I stood watching all the other competitors go charging by my stricken vehicle. I had a good laugh with the marshals and resigned myself to having blown it! In the paddock Tim Wilson was the first to come over and congratulate me, he seemed so sure I had won. I just did not want to look at the results, I was sure Tim had made a mistake! Well the new marking system certainly produced a close finish, I certainly enjoyed the challenge and am delighted to have won, having had 6 years at Harewood it's really satisfying to get something back for a fair bit of commitment not to mention expenditure. My sincere thanks go to my wife Aileen and brother Ian who have enthusiastically supported me over the years. Thanks also to the organizers for their professionalism in striving to ever improve the events for us, the competitors. A big thank you to the marshals for their commitment and endurance (only 2 little tows out of the gravel traps this year). Also thanks to the other competitors for a great battle, not to mention the challenges of straightening bent wishbones on L7's.

Finally to Steven Booth of the Yorkshire Auto Trader, thank you for the continuing support of Hillclimbing at Harewood, and generosity in respect of matching the club award for the championship.



Colin's Championship winning Elan has been placed on the substitute's bench.

Photo: Peter Cunningham

Dear Editor

May I, through your columns, thank everyone who came to the assistance of Jamie Hylton at the last meeting at Harewood.

Thankfully the 'off' caused only minor damage to the Malan, but to see so many drivers and mechanics give up their lunch break to help repair vital damaged parts, was just magic. Where else would you see this camaraderie where points in your championship were so vital, but other competitors put this to the back of their mind, just to help someone else.

the 'Hylton Clan' have really enjoyed our first full season at Harewood (not the weather though). I promise, if asked to commentate with less 'Murray Walker' clangers and the 'lad' will try to get round farmhouse without frightening the marshals

Talking of 'This Hairy Crew', well done for a job done in lousy conditions, but I hope you all enjoyed your 'BARC Marshals' printed Blackpool rock.

Looking forward to next season
Jerry and Jamie Hylton

Dartington, Devon

Dear Pat

It's been two years now since I moved to Devon from Manchester and had to stop competing at Harewood. I have followed the comings and goings at Harewood through the 'Times'.

It has been good to see Colin continue to sort out his Elan after his Lotus Cortina days. His determination in continuing after his brother's accident in the Elan's first outing at Harewood is commendable.

This has been rewarded with the Championship this year. I don't know Colin's address so can you please pass on my congratulations through the 'Times' I hope he remembers me (White 205 GTi). My car is now on its 2nd re-shell and is now Ralley Yellow. Hopefully, it will be completed over the winter then I can get competing again, 2 years is a long time out.

Can I please book 2 places on the Hillclimb School to knock off the rust? It's a long way from Devon but I'm sure it will be worth it.

With thanks
Ken Barker

'DRIVE OF YOUR LIFE' CHARITY DAY AT CROFT

Tim Bendelow

The last Centre 'Times' ran an advert for the 'Drive of Your Life' Marie Curie Cancer Charity Day to be held at Croft on Saturday 17th October. Harewood regulars responded to it and a successful day was held with £13,000 being raised - 130 people paying £100 for a 'Gold Card' that enabled them to drive and be driven around the three 'circuits' that were set up at the north Yorkshire race track.

Passenger rides in rally cars ran on the Clervaux circuit (the new pits straight through Clervaux, Hawthorns and onto the old track into the chicane, the old startline, Tower, then a short cut back to the pits along the old paddock entry road) with a variety of cars out. The Lanfranchi's were out - Malcolm in a road going Subaru Impreza whilst Peter brought out the AC Bristol, more often seen in Historic races. They mixed it with Escort Cosworths, an Astra, an Austin Healey, Lancia Stratos plus a Toyota Corolla WRC (rallycross version) testing for the next day's Rallycross National Finals. The highlight was an expensive Ferrari road car being hammered round by ex Touring Car driver Tim Sugden.

The Jim Clark circuit (Jim Clark, Esses, Barcroft, the 'new' Sunny, the Complex then back through the old paddock 'out') had race and road cars out. The new Harewood Champion, Colin Stewart, brought out his 'other' car, a cream Austin Healey for a play; 'new boy' Andrew Stokes drove the Caterham up from Lincolnshire, Nigel Stubbs brought his Ferrari and even 'Spotty Smith' was tempted out in his AC Ace Bristol. Paul Pocklington trailered 'Green & Mean' (his Westfield crossflow) along with other Westfield CC members and had a good day until it rained, and of course we all got wet! Paul put up with the damp until he was 'monstered' by a Dodge Viper whilst trying to negotiate a sodden Sunny Corner so he pitted and called it a day. Paul told me a week later that he spent the next three days drying out the car with the seats, carpets, tonneau and hood hanging out on the line.

The third element allowed Army trucks, HGV's, PSV's, a fire engine, AA and Police vehicles to be driven under instruction on the old Railway Straight.

Despite the rain, everyone seemed to enjoy

themselves, the only 'down point' being that the rally circuit marshals didn't get a ride in one of the cars, but next time!!

Maybe Paul can give us a 'from behind the wheel' account of the day?

1999 HAREWOOD ANNUAL AWARDS

Tim Bendelow

As co-ordinator for the Annual Awards I am looking again at the marking system for the scheme. I haven't come up with the 'definitive' version yet but I have some ideas and intend to experiment before publishing the finished article. I would like to encourage more marshals/officials to contest the awards.

Your ideas are welcome.

1999 DATES

Tim Bendelow

Don't forget:

The Harewood season starts with the Training Day on Sunday 14th February. We'll have a leisurely start about 10.00am and an early finish about 3pm as we have no practice day with the training.

Practice Day is 4 weeks later on Sunday 14th March 1999. If you can help out with marshalling on any of the 1999 events, then please complete the enclosed form or get in touch with me directly, as we need as many marshals as possible to adequately staff the course.

The Training Day organisers and marshals cordially invite any competitors to our 1999 Training Day at Harewood. Come and see what we get up to and take part in the day - you might even learn something and I'm sure you'll find it a useful experience. Interested? Then please talk to Don Burt, Mike Shorley or Tim Bendelow for further details.

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.

FOR SALE

VAUXHALLI 16v 2 litre

Standard pistons, rods and new QED bolts £120
Flywheel and clutch assembly £40
Set of standard valves, clean £60
Pair of standard cams (& springs & pulleys) £60

LOTUS T/C

Q 450 cam - good £80
Standard 'B' cam £65
Twin plate clutch release carrier £20

ELAN

1 Rear shocker insert £20
1 rear upright / platform / strut (o/s) £150
1 Elan clutch slave cylinder £25

MISC

Smiths 0 - 10K chronometric Tacho £100
(With tell tale)
Pair of pre-litigation Westfield front wings £60
Pair of 150w KC Daylitter lamps £60
Tow bracket 94 BMW 5 Series £35

Colin Stewart

01287 634203

FOR SALE

Due to car and class changes, the following are no longer suitable for my own needs:-

Trailer

Twin axle, 11ft x 5ft marine ply decked, galvanised, braked, manual winch.

Professionally built for Westfield, ideal for single seater

Stored in garage

£695

Set of 13" alloys, Ford pcd, yellow centres, alloy rims with set of Yoko A008R 185/60 tyres
Used only on one track day and the hillclimb school - still look new.

Sensible offers

Interested in the above?

**Call Martin on (01423) 340 582 or
0385 384212**

FOR SALE

Pilbeam MP62

The much developed and hugely successful Fletcher Homes car is now for sale.
QED methanol 2.0 litre engine
approx 300 bhp.

Professionally maintained since new.
The car achieved 4th in the RAC and 2nd in the Leaders Hillclimb Championships and holds numerous class records.

To include a host of spares, ancillary equipment and a purpose-built trailer.

Contact Nick Fletcher

Day 01743 236622

Evening 01939 260340

FOR SALE

1380cc MG Metro

You have all seen this car run and its times prove everything. Well, now is your chance to own it.

This car has everything, carbon fibre bodywork, Stack data logging, 6 pot brakes, racing clutch, 2 full sets of dry wheels and tyres and a full set of wets.

Also fitted new on the car in '97, tyres, suspension, springs, clutch, seatbelts, anti-roll bars and limited slip differential.

The car is very easy to drive and has been cheap to maintain suiting the inexperienced or the expert.

**All this could be yours for the tiny sum of
£8000**

Please ring for any more information

Matthew Pinder

01924 402785 (evenings)

WANTED

**Pair of Alloy Front Hubs for
Westfield - Ford**

**Tel: Peter Herbert on
0191 386 6111 (office)
0135 377125 (home)**

**PETER HERBERT'S
CHRISTMAS SALE
EVERYTHING MUST GO.
MAKE ME AN OFFER**

Distributor, electronic ignition pack and coil for Ford pushrod, BDA etc. £50

Pair of used 9 x 20 x 13" Avon A39 slicks still with life in them £45

Pair of 7 x 13" Revolution alloy wheels, Ford fitting £90

The following Ford crossflow parts:

711 M block bored 83.5mm to 1380cc £70

Big valve chambered head (1 3/8 inch exhaust, 1 5/8 inch inlet)

complete with springs and valves £160

Steel crankshaft with 63mm stroke, 12 bolt fitting 10 thou mains,

20 thou big end undersize, wide journal £350

Set of steel rods (4.3 inch centres) £300

Set of forged Cosworth pistons for 1300 £250

BMW E36 tow bracket £20

**Tel: Peter Herbert on 0191 386 6111 (office)
0135 377125 (home)**



'TIMES' ARTICLES

Articles are always needed for the 'Times'. Please can some of you put pen to paper and write about your motoring experiences throughout the year?

Then send them to the editor

**1998 ANNUAL DINNER DANCE
& AWARD PRESENTATION**

Georgina Clark's efforts on your behalf resulted in the most enjoyable and best attended dinner the BARC has seen for some time. The opulence of the Oulton Hall Hotel was matched by the sartorial elegance of all those who attended, but not only did it look good, it was good. It is sad to say that having taken it to such heights, Georgina has decided that after three years to pass the mantle on to someone else.

At the Dinner, Steven Booth of the Yorkshire Auto Trader, announced that they were continuing their sponsorship of the Centre's championship for another year. Their sponsorship has raised the profile of our Centre and events and as a little added bonus at the Dinner, the championship award winners were displayed on video as they went to receive their awards from our Centre Chairman, Simon Clark - a new innovation at our Dinners.

Very few know of the work load involved in creating a successful Dinner & Dance so a large vote of thanks needs to go to Georgina for her efforts on the centre's behalf. She will be a hard act to follow.

**CHANGES TO TICKETING
AND REGULATIONS
CONCERNING WITHDRAWAL
OF ENTRIES BY
COMPETITORS**

We wish to make competitors aware that in the 1999 Regulations Booklet, there are changes to the rules and regulations concerning dates and times of withdrawal and the return of admission tickets. These rules must be strictly adhered to for competitors to receive any refund or part refund of entry fees.

Please read the 1999 Regulations Booklet carefully so as not to fall foul of these new rules.

The 1999 Regulations Booklet will be included with the next copy of the 'Times'.

KEEPING UP WITH THE LEADERS

.....or how I didn't win the RAC MSA Hillclimb Championship but came bloody close.

Peter Herbert

Becoming 1997 Yorkshire Auto Trader Harewood Hillclimb Champion changed my life. There were the incessant interviews, the worldwide promotional tours and of course, the OBE. A time came when I could no longer leave my Yorkshire country seat for a simple bucket of caviar or magnum of champagne without being mobbed by adoring autograph seekers. So I flew down to my Monaco apartment in the Learjet. There, forced into tax exile, I whiled away the hours, eating in expensive restaurants, taking in the winter sun on the deck of my yacht 'Brian' and signing lucrative book and film deals.

Yet, curiously, I remained unfulfilled. There was something out there that remained still to be done. Then suddenly, while skiing at Klosters with Demi Moore and Kate Moss, it came to me. The RAC MSA Leaders series, comprising thirteen rounds held over the finest uphill asphalt in the land, represented the ultimate challenge for a plucky Class A Westfield pilote. I had to be there.

And so it was that Equipe Herbert's Technical Director Russell Cockburn landed the team's Bell Jet Ranger Helicopter on Sir Michael Leighton's lawn on a damp Easter Sunday for the Loton Park opening round.

Seven long months had passed since my bum had graced the Westfield's Mellor Coachcraft custom made seat and I rustily languished third in class after Sunday practice. But on Easter Monday I unleashed the full magnitude of my Cosworth BDH power plant onto the roller coaster parkland course. A 57.74 second opening climb, a personal best by over 2 seconds, leapfrogged Mike Cockayne's Peugeot 106 and Andy Russell's Ginetta G15 to put me in the lead, minutes before the snow arrived. As a result, my time stood as second FTD until the Run-Offs, which were held on a drying track. At the end of the meeting I was leading the Leader's Championship, with six or so other class winners. Joy was unconfined.

My lead lasted for just two weeks. Down in Devon a week's rain had left Wiscombe Park sodden, and the RAC British Hillclimb Championship contenders voted unanimously not to run their 600 bhp single seater's in such conditions. Championship co-ordinator Tony Fletcher called the Leader's runners together, but

not to run would call for unanimity. Duncan Stewart bravely was the first to vote to run, so we all ran, and I was pleased we did, for Wiscombe is a 600 mile round trip from Moulton. Ironically, Duncan was to crash his Westfield-Vauxhall very heavily that afternoon in the Esses.

Although the sun dried the lower reaches of the course, Castle Straight high beneath the trees remained treacherous. So the scene was set for local hero Andy Russell to pitch his traction and skill against my raw power and ignorance and skill came out on top, which is how it should be. On our final balls-out runs, we both glanced off the same bank as we slid out of Saw Bench Hairpin, and were separated by just three tenths of a second across the finish line. I dropped to fifth in the championship.

The heavy precipitation had not been confined to England's southern extremities, the midlands had suffered extensive flooding. Rumours were rife that the following weekend's Prescott meeting might be cancelled, thus it was not unreasonable to telephone the Bugatti Owners Club to enquire. Big mistake. I was told in no uncertain terms that Prescott would be run, hell or high water. Here was a hill with attitude, but perhaps I was the 200th caller to ask the same question.

A damp practice preceded dry Sunday runs and I returned the Westfield to the head of its class a couple of seconds clear of the Russell Ginetta, and within spitting distance of Dylan Talbot's record. I remained fifth in the Leaders series but Barbon was the following Saturday, home ground.

The short Westmoreland climb is graced either by beautiful blue skies or raging storms, and on this occasion after threatening the latter, was blessed by the former for the competition runs. In practice I had set a personal best time, but I was still more than a second shy of Carl Talbot's four year old 25.86s record. But it was still worth a shot, and to my utter amazement and glee my opening competition run stopped the clock at 25.74s. And boy Oh boy, believe me, there are few experiences more pleasurable than returning down a hillclimb to an awaiting devoted team after breaking a record. Not even skiing with Demi Moore.

Now up to fourth in the championship, I journeyed three weeks later to Gurston Down. With its super fast downhill start, and even faster uphill sweeping finish, this is a track that I find scary. A field of tall rape plants, which obscured the line through the flat-out downhill Hollow Bend, the Eau Rouge of hillclimbing, did not help, yet everyone was telling me that Dylan Talbot's 35.12s record was easy meat.

In practice I was not within a second of the mark, but a change of approach to Karousel, following a chat with a local driver, made all the difference. That night, on the eve of the competition, I sat in my bedroom and went over the course again and again, Senna-like. Next morning I was more nervous than I had been for years. Was I a star, or just a no hoper with a quick car?

A final Sunday practice run steadied my nerves, and I dipped into the 35s for the first time. Robin Boucher promised great things for me when we all did it for real.

Perhaps just once in a season, or even in a career, everything goes just right. A great start, crisp lines, precise braking, clean gear changes, early on the power, no wasteful sliding, complete concentration, total self belief. It happened for me at Gurston, my new record still stands at 34.50s.

Two weeks later the national hillclimb circus arrived at Shelsley Walsh, the Brooklands of speed hillclimbing. On a nice weekend there is no more magical place to race motor cars against the clock. This was not a nice weekend. Much of it was wet, and I don't do wet. Actually, it was a mixture of wet and dry, warm sunshine alternating with torrential downpours. The tyre changing was endless.

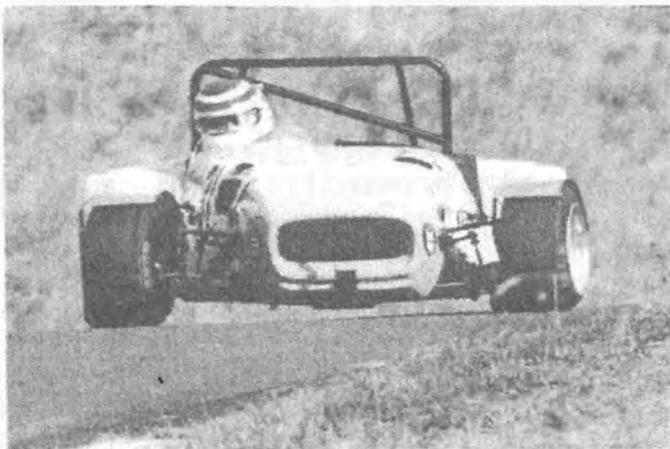
After the first Sunday runs held on a damp track, Andy's orange Ginetta was 0.75s ahead of me, while Mike's Peugeot was a close third. But over lunch the track improved a little, and on my second run I gave it everything. All went well until I powered out of the top Esses. Under the trees it was still slippery and the car went sideways I lifted and corrected, then got back on the gas for the finish straight. But all was lost Surely? As the times came up on the screen in the tent at the top I saw, to my amazement, that I had won by 0.48s. I was up to third in the championship.

At this point in the season I should have

proceeded to Loton Park then Doune, but pressing commitments with my sponsor saw me languishing in the South of France instead. Bad choice some would say. Good choice in my view. For without family support and tolerance my helmet goes up on the hook.

My return coincided with Harewood and round nine. It was good to be back at my home hill, but a cruel merging of classes saw me lumped in with the 2 litres. My aim was to be the first Class A driver to climb the course in under sixty seconds, but struggled all weekend. A 60.83s ascent saw me finish fifth and best of the 1400s but it fell well short of my expectations. The only thing I could put it down to was my experimentation with first gear for Orchard. Previously, for eight years in fact, I had hung onto second. My exit speed felt better but perhaps two extra gear changes off-set that. What do the school masters think? Answers should be sent to me on five pound notes. Whatever, I moved up from the sixth place my vacation had dropped me to, and was now fifth in the Leaders.

Fine August weather accompanied my second visit of the season to Shelsley, but in practice I was struggling again, way off the pace. But Mr Cockburn is not on a seven figure retainer for nothing and quickly traced the fault to a stretched throttle cable. Once full throttle was restored, I bounded up the hill to a personal best time, and my first dip into the thirty two's. The team celebrated extravagantly with 99's all round. Come Sunday confidence was high, and although unable to match my practice feat, a 33.13s winning ascent did the business. The Leaders



Peter Herbert fearlessly negotiates East Brae, Doune

Photo: Steve Wilkinson

series had a new fourth place man.

A return trip to Gurston brought more fine weather, but any chance of improving upon my May record disappeared with Pete Griffiths' oil pressure when he dumped the contents of his Chevron's sump coming out of Karousel when the motor let go. Ashes corner was never quite the same after that but another win came my way, so the long journey to Wiltshire was not wasted.

Prescott was the venue of the penultimate round, and the Cotswolds were enjoying fine Autumn sun. Murray Walker was making a guest appearance and we were all very excited at the prospect of him getting our names wrong as he gave us our awards. That was if we were fortunate enough to win any of course. As it happened, I did manage to sneak a 2.68s victory over my perennial Ginetta mounted rival, missing Dylan Talbot's record by just 0.18s, but by that time old Murray had buggered off. Still, I did get a fine Bugatti travel rug from a nice man from Auto Windscreens.

After five long months I had regained the lead in the Leaders Championship. But it was the joint lead with Martin Groves, Graeme Wight Junior and Tom New. When count backs were taken into account my nine class wins and a second would not beat eleven wins and a third of Groves and Wight. Even if I won at the Doune final round, I would still be disadvantaged. But Tom had nine wins and three seconds. So, if I had another win in Scotland and he did not, I would finish third in the series. Still awake?

My expectations for Doune were not high. I had only been to this most daunting of courses once, and it had been very wet. Accordingly I expected rain, and a drubbing from the suicidally driven local machinery.

But I was wrong on every account. The weather was glorious, I held off all my 1400cc Modified Production challengers and finished on the bottom step of the Leaders podium when poor Tom New put a rod through his Caterham's Vauxhall block on the opening run.

Now if I had competed at Loton Park and Doune in June, and the weather had been fine, which it was. And if my car had been reliable, which it usually is, and I had beaten Andy Russell's winning times, which I could have done, then I would have had twelve wins and a second and thus won the 1998 RAC MSA Leaders Hillclimb Championship.

And if my aunt had a dick she would be my

uncle. Which just goes to prove that a couple of ifs and a but can win you anything.

Season highlights? Well, the Barbon and Gurston Records of course, and the Prescott near miss. But mainly the good companionship of all the people that make hillclimbing the most friendly form of motor sport there is. It has to be this way of course because there is so much standing around. But in the company of great characters and in wonderful surroundings.

Of my fellow Yorkshire Centre members, it was good to have Alastair Crawford and his mighty V8 powered MGB with me on the Leaders trail, usually with the undernourished David Jackson in tow. David proved to be a talented ice cream eating and beer drinking companion, not to mention a spirited Manta peddler. The Spedding and Green families brought their E Types down to the Midland courses on occasion with good effect, while Tim Wilson was on a Hillclimb Driving School spying mission at Gurston with the Caterham.

'Utterly Nutterly' paid a visit to the team hospitality unit (two deck chairs and a pile of 'wets') at Doune and offered constructive criticism of my driving. To quote from his scrawl on my data logger (a note pad) "too slow", "should retire" and "get an Escort". Fortunately, the kindly Alex Graham redressed the balance by offering sound advice as how to get closer than two seconds to Harry Simpson's class record. Apparently it should take about four seasons. Ben Butterfield was also in Scotland with his newly acquired and immaculate Van Diemen, and despite over gearing, was setting some competitive 2 litre times.

At the posh end of the paddock the OMS mob were also chasing the Leaders and Mark Lawrence completed the season in fifth place, despite knocking every corner off his car at the Scottish finale. Steve and Lynn Owen developed their smart Honda engined version.

For anyone thinking of spreading their hillclimbing wings outside Yorkshire, the Leaders Championship is a good way to go.

As for me, next year I shall be taking on the Brummies in the Midland Championship and having a go at Johnny Foreigner at a Continental hillclimb. In the meantime it's back to Monaco, the yacht and rich living. Merry Christmas.

Marie Curie Cancer Care



OULTON PARK

Saturday 27th March 1999

On Saturday 27th March, Marie Curie Cancer Care are organising another 'Drive of Your Life' but this time at Oulton Park.

Anyone wishing to offer their car to support this event, please contact Mrs Pat Darling at:-

Marie Curie Cancer Care
8 Ormerod Street
Burnley
Lancs
BB11 1PE
for an information pack.

DESPERATELY WANTED FOR THIS EVENT EXOTIC & HISTORIC CARS



1999 BARC HAREWOOD DATES

14 March	Practice Day
4 April	Spring National
8 May	Harewood Open
9 May	May Championship
13 June	Jim Thomson Trophy
3/4 July	RACMSA Championship
8 August	Montague Burton Trophy
11 Sept	September Open
12 Sept	Championship Finals

DRIVING SCHOOL

You may, at times, think we have gone over the top when describing the Driving School's success, but all involved are intensely proud of the progress made by many of our pupils. Not everyone can win but if we, in some small part, have speeded up the progress and increased the potential of people attending courses, we will have proved our worth. If you think that some of the articles in the 'Times' have been rather gushing, I would recommend that you read an article, written by Ian Hyne in Kit Cars International which describes the Harewood Driving School in glowing terms. (Sorry, I don't know which month as we only got a photocopy of the article). Our thanks to Don Burt and all at YKC for inviting Ian to drive their car at the school.

We are now AHASS approved and licence upgrade signatures are available.

Prize for the Best Pupil of 1999 will be a free entry to one of the September Harewood's driving the 4.6 litre, V8, 310bhp YKC Raider.

Dates for 1999

Thursdays

25 March, 22 April,

20 May

24 June, 22 July

**Gift Vouchers available
Details from Pat Kenyon
(0114) 234 0478**



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1998/99

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HG5 8HB

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