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**The Newsletter of the Midland Region of the
British Motor Racing Marshals Club
(Internet Edition)**

EDITORIAL

***THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE
OF THE BMRMC LTD OR THE EDITOR***

It's been a bumper post bag this month, as you will see later. It is heartening to see the pages of the newsletter being used for debate. This is a far more constructive way of making your views known than grumbling to your fellow marshals between sessions. The newsletter is sent beyond the confines of the Midland Region; the "big three" clubs all receive copies as do most circuit owners, as well as the MSA themselves. I like to think that they also read the newsletter like you do, and it can be seen as a barometer for marshals' feelings on a variety of subjects. Indeed if they would care to respond to any of the issues raised, then I will gladly give them column space.

I'm sure that you will all have heard of the incident at Mallory Park involving the Eurocar, whilst we are all thankful that the injuries sustained were less than they could have been, the fact remains that marshals were injured. We all have our part to play in minimising the risk of personal injury, from simple things like facing the on-coming traffic and having a "safe" area to jump to in the event of something going wrong. I'm sure that actions such as these helped reduce the severity of the injuries sustained.

It's that time of the year again. Yes, the Annual General Meeting notices appear. This is your chance as members to have your say about how the Club is being run at both a regional and a national level. The attendance at these meetings has been falling in recent years. Is this a sign of a well run Club, or an apathetic membership?

Stay on the safe side.

DJS

Chairman's Chat

As you will have read in the last editorial there has been further change within the regional committee with the departure of Phill and Anne Chamberlain. I think that Dave expressed very well the gratitude that the committee feel for their efforts. Phill has already departed from the committee but Anne has stayed on for a couple of meetings to see out the year-end as Regional Treasurer. Anne has also kindly agreed to speak about the regional accounts at the AGM. Thank you both for your efforts over the years; you have made an important contribution to the way that the region has worked.

With Anne's departure and the appointment of a Club Book-keeper the role of Regional Treasurer will change quite drastically. There is still a need for someone to keep an eye on the finances of the region to make sure that we are not overspending and to assist with the monitoring of regalia stocks and sales. Steve Allison has kindly agreed to take on this role although we have not yet decided whether to change the title of the role.

You will, I am sure, be aware of a couple of problems that have occurred at Mallory Park recently. The better publicised of these was the Eurocar incident at Post 11 which involved a number of marshals being injured; thankfully the injuries were not as serious as first impressions would suggest. I have spoken to Malcolm Sims a couple of days before writing this article; Malcolm was due to return to Mallory the following day for the first time. I know that everyone wishes all concerned a speedy return to motorsport. The following weekend the Mallory Armco did an excellent job in stopping an errant Morgan in front of race control. Unfortunately due to the position of the damage an on-the-spot repair was not possible and an excellent meeting had to be abandoned. One lesson to learn, however, is not to stand in the openings in the barrier in that region as the impact ripped the end of the bottom rail of the barrier out of the post and would have delivered a hefty whack into the ankles of anyone standing in the gap.

A couple of weeks ago nostalgia ruled as I spent the whole weekend at the Coys Festival. I have previously only attended on the Friday but this year was able to go for all three days. There was some good racing, alongside some fairly tame racing. The main thing that sticks in my mind is the atmosphere and the fact that you could wander anywhere and see anything. It reminded me of the only GP that I attended, as a spectator, in 1971. There were excellent cars being driven with panache, a large crowd and unfortunately on Sunday morning a few queues to get in (the last couple of miles took as long as the previous 60). Although a bit of time was lost for a variety of reasons I thoroughly enjoyed the weekend and will go again next year if I don't have clashing engagements.

Whilst the racing season is beginning to head into its run-down organising activities are still at full stretch. Coming up in a couple of months we have our regional AGM and at the end of the year we have the national AGM too. Whilst these are, to a certain extent, formalities to legalise the operation of the club they are also your opportunity to have a say in the running of the club, to air any problems that you may have and to offer ideas for the better running of the club. Attendance in recent years has been fairly low, is this a sign that we are running the club satisfactorily? We are also organising the Dinner Dance and will shortly be making an announcement about that event which has also suffered from declining numbers recently.

Safe marshalling.

Jeremy Edwards
Regional Chairman

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2000

As a canny Scot who has assiduously hoarded the Club's cash reserves this past eighteen or nineteen years, perhaps I should not be pleased at the following news! But I will tell you anyway!

Council has decided not to make any increase in subscription rates for next year. So, unless some financial catastrophe hits us between now and the end of 1999, subscription rates for 2000 will remain at £15.00 per adult, £22.50 for family membership and £7.50 for junior and student members. This seems remarkably good value to me. Joining fee remains at £5 once-off for new members.

There was a thought that a light "touch on the tiller" might be called for, say another £1.00 on the basic subscription, to fund some new items of expenditure for next year. We are engaging a part-time, paid bookkeeper in the new financial year, to overcome ongoing accounting problems in some regions and to improve overall control of Club finances. We are also looking to renew the Club display stand, some parts of which go back to the original stand generously donated by Sid Marler, then of Marler-Haley fame, in the mid-seventies. (Sid still races occasionally, as does his son, and our paths cross from time to time at race meetings.)

The counter to this proposal was the welcome addition to Club funds from organised events. Midland Region's sprint is doing very well, the meetings we "badge" at Croix-en-Ternois in Northern France now contribute and, as always, we continue to enjoy financial support from people like Two Four Sports at Donington, SUNBAC who contribute generously every year to Jeremy's training fund, plus 750 MC and others from time to time. Nor must we forget those individual members within the regions who so often come up trumps on sponsorship for marshals' overalls, newsletters and the like.

On balance, therefore, it was felt we could forego an increase for this year and offer some small incentive to our members who already contribute so much to motorsport at all levels.

George W. Copeland
National Treasurer

WANTED - HELP WITH REGALIA SALES AT DONINGTON

Robert Williams (Regional Sales Officer) is looking for someone to help with sales of Regalia at Donington Park. Robert's Jaguar Car Club commitments mean that he is unable to attend many meetings at Donington. He is looking for someone to sell the Overalls, Waterproofs, Grading patches etc. Robert will still continue to manage the stocks and look after the paperwork.

Anyone interested in helping should contact Robert by e-mail at Williams.Robert@BTInternet.com

NEW CENTRALISED BOOKKEEPING SYSTEM

For the new financial year, which starts officially on 1st July 1999, the handling of all Club financial transactions will move to a new central control system. This is to overcome ongoing accounting problems in some regions and, more importantly, to give us better and more effective control of overall Club finances. It will also relieve the pressures on regions to find volunteers who are not only willing but able to carry out the regional finance function and to report promptly and accurately each month.

Indeed, at this stage, I would like to thank all our Regional Treasurers, past and present, for the very substantial contribution they have made to the financial well-being of our Club. The Regional Treasurer's job is not an easy one. It involves a considerable amount of work, much of it very tedious. Despite this, many of our Treasurers have done sterling work in implementing cost savings and/or fund-raising within their regions, on top of everything else they do. Many, many thanks to all of you.

That said, we do not see the regional financial role disappearing just yet. Certainly we hope to see all receipts and payments handled centrally in the new financial year but there are still many tasks within the region well suited to the talents of those who are Regional Treasurers right now. Perhaps our Regional Treasurers can now spend even more time on cost saving/fund- raising exercises, at which many of them have been so successful in the past. We will be asking regional committees to give some thought to this issue over the next few months.

In the meantime, all bills for payment should be sent to Julian Floyd, who has volunteered to be our Central Bookkeeper, at least during this initial start-up period. Membership receipts, the proceeds from regalia sales, etc. should come to Julian or, preferably, the money may be paid in at your local Midland (HSBC) Bank and the counterfoil and explanation of what the receipt is for sent to Julian without delay.

It will take us a couple of months to get the system fully up and running and it is unlikely that we will be able to produce regional monthly reports until this year's audit is nearly complete and we have confirmed opening balances for the new accounts. I expect we will encounter a few snags along the way, too.

Please bear with us while we struggle through this first stage.

George W. Copeland
National Treasurer

LETTER HEADED PAPER

Over the last few months, Council have become increasingly aware of the ease in which "Computer Generated" letter headed paper can be produced, and possibly issued to either the media or official bodies.

i.e. any document headed British Motor Racing Marshals Club could be interpreted as representing the Club's official view on the documents subject matter. It is also possible that certain legal problems could be caused to the club by mis-representation etc.

Consequently as an official Club directive, no document, either on the Club's official paper, or similar, should be issued without (a) consultation with your Regional Chairman, in the first instance, and (b) subsequent approval of one of the Club's Senior Officers.

Dave Moore
National Secretary

RAC DISCOUNT

I have recently received correspondence from the RAC Motoring Services, confirming that, as in previous years, by virtue of the Club's affiliation with the MSA, all Club members are entitled to receive 15% discount on RAC membership.

To take up this discount there is an application form to complete etc., thus is any member wishes to take up this option, please contact me, enclosing a SAE.

Dave Moore
National Secretary

LETTERS

EUROCARS – MALLORY PARK 27th JUNE 1999

As observer at post 11 – Devils Elbow – at the recent Eurocar meeting, may I wish the team a full and speedy recovery from their injuries. To those who escaped physical injury may their pulse rate be back to normal. For myself, I managed to fracture the neck of the humerus, that's the bit sticking out of the shoulder. I've been told to let nature take its course for a few weeks to knit together. At the moment my left upper arm, shoulder and chest are a kaleidoscope of purples, and yellows.

Thanks for all the assistance I've received, i.e. getting me back from Leicester Royal Infirmary and the collection of my car from Mallory Park. Also thanks for the phone calls and cards, particularly to Mike Schmidt, the Eurocar driver involved, for his concern and the card and framed photo.

In my days as an incident marshal I was sometimes recognised by my Hermit hat, now it seems it is "you know, Richard, the observer who rolls his own fags". I'll be back on the bank before too long and if when you sign on you're told "your observer will be the one who rolls his own fags" I won't take offence but would like someone to turn up.

Enjoy your racing and keep safe. (Safer than me, that is.)

Richard Poole

SNATCHING & FLAG SIGNALS

After reading Julian Floyd's comments on flag signals for snatch, as a snatch marshal, his ideas strike me as having some merit. A snatch unit is an intervention vehicle, and as such I see no reason why it should not be treated like any other intervention vehicle, and be covered by a white flag while en route to an incident. The extra risk of a "slow" (those FastTracks sure don't feel slow, especially when you've got a young driver!) tractor is pretty much negated by the fact that it is usually well away from the tarmac.

However, I do feel that your editorial comments also need to be considered here. Stiffer deterrents must be put in place for drivers disrespecting flag signals. I have been to too many meetings where drivers have set their fastest qualifying laps of the session while yellows have been out on two or more corners. I have also been at more than one meeting where the snatch tractor has been hit by an errant car (this was under yellows and whites!).

Being a snatch marshal is potentially the most dangerous job since (s)he may be lying down under the car, trying to attach a strop when it is hit by another car, and hence (s)he has no opportunity to run for cover. More than most, snatch marshals need to feel they can rely on yellow flags for protection.

Lee Hartshorn

LETTERS

Blue Books

Further to the letter from Julian Floyd in the last issue of "The Marshalling Post" I agree that marshals should be issued with a copy of the "Blue Book"

If there is to be a more professional feel to the 'lot' of the marshal then we should be provided with the tools to do the job. We all provide our own personal equipment and protective clothing but we are not issued with a copy of the official rules and regulations that we are supposed to be upholding. The Club keeps us up to date with the changes through the magazine, but changes to what.

Maybe marshals could be issued with a "Blue Book" when they start and then every few years with lists of changes for the intervening years as suggested by Julian.

If the books were issued over a period of four years starting, of course, with the Midland Region, then say Northern Ireland, North East and South Midlands the next years and the other two regions in the last two years, the whole marshalling fraternity would have the current regulations in a cost effective way.

There will always be different interpretations on the meaning of regulations but to be able to read them for oneself helps true understanding.

Tony Bayford

Tony Bird

Tony is now at home after discharge from Basingstoke Hospital where he received treatment following a fit.

His bed has been set up in the sitting room (thanks to Jim Soper - a helpful neighbour). He has had to give undertakings not to use the staircase and not to light any fires (both hard to give up but very much worth it).

He is visited 3 times a day by a carer - just to see that he is OK. Everything appears to be in order except that he can't walk without a zimmer and his brain is stuck in low gear.

To all the kind and helpful people who have contributed to his well-being Tony says a great big **THANKS**.

Apologies for this newsletter type of message, but writing is difficult.

Tony Bird

DONINGTON DOODLINGS - I



It must come to us all - a great gap in our motor racing activities - something that isn't planned, it just happens.

Perhaps I could have rustled up a few mates and gone on a trip to Mallory, or ventured forth to Cadwell. We could have set ourselves up as The Three Marshals Ere.

But that swear word keeps getting in my way - it's called "work". Since my last meeting in April, I have had to do a fair amount of overtime mainly at weekends and during the week to cover for holidays.

I had to cancel the Vintage meeting and the AMOC weekend I wasn't doing anyway - more about that later.

One activity Ian Berry and I undertook in the early part of May was to mark the "Fire Bottle" points around the circuit. We managed to get in no problem and made our way to post 2, and circumnavigate the circuit in a clockwise direction, seeming to follow us were the producer and the chief camera man from a TV company. There were various circuit staff carrying out their chores, advertising hoardings going up and being taken down. Riders on mini mopeds trying to learn as much of the circuit as possible before their first practice.

We strolled around quite quickly and marked where we thought the best place to put each marker, "up one post more, back one post, up a bit, down a bit" get the general idea? We, at last made our way back to post 2 again, finishing our report when a good looking dusky maiden jogged in our direction from Goddards. She glowed as ladies like to say, and she wasn't hanging around.

"Three laps" I shouted, "Two!" she replied and stuck two fingers up. She carried on her way. "I hope she wasn't telling me where to go just then" retorted Ian "It's not me". We had a good chuckle about that I can tell you.

Going back to not being able to attend the AMOC meeting, the reason follows. Cast your mind back to the Marshals' do at Redgate lodge last year, the many tombola prizes there were. Some prizes can't be used by the winner, thus some prize swapping takes place. So it was that Mark Baines' nephew won a drive at the Ian Taylor Driving School at Thruxton. Unfortunately for him he couldn't drive and neither could Mark, and Reg didn't want it. The prize was bartered around various tables with no takers. Eventually I exchanged all my worldly tombola prizes.

I decided to make a weekend of it and booked a couple of nights in the nearest Travel Lodge. My drive took place at 2:30 on Friday afternoon. After signing on and watching a short video on driving standards we (yellow team) were taken on a short tour of Thruxton by an instructor, two short, one fast.

Next up was a drive in a MGF in which marking took place, a little apprehensive we set off. To anyone who hasn't driven round Thruxton I can tell you it isn't as flat as it looks on TV neither are any corners open or easy. I had heard that the road camber slopes to the outside, but I had never realised by how much. Three fast laps, or as quick as I would dare go, realised a mark of 75% and a comment of "Well done, good drive, you need to use more width on the entrance and exit of all corners, clip all apexes". Stewart Clarke, I'll remember him.

Next step, five laps in a F. Ford with which I put into practice all I had been instructed. I set off slowly and speeded-up well by the second lap, by lap five I felt that a M. Schumacher might be looking over his shoulder. Good fun though. Try it sometime if you can.

A few weeks later I picked up Tim, our Guernsey visitor, on the Friday before the touring car meeting. It was a beaut of a day and we set off home to have a few beers in my back garden.

DONINGTON DOODLINGS - II

Tim had brought some Guernsey Cauche with him, and some Guernsey butter to put on it, and the tasted pretty good as well. Also some Brandy went down very well. After a few hours sunning ourselves and knocking back a few we went to my local for a meal and then onto my youngest son's football presentation and then back to our local for a few more.

Saturday morning dawned, without a hangover, don't know how and we set off for Donington.

On arrival at the allocated gate, the Exhibition Centre, it was still lock, and security directed us to Coppice. Slightly annoying.

At sign on I discovered that I was on post with my usual and personal observer, Reg Baines. Can't keep on meeting like this Reg, must be the fourth or fifth time we've been on the same post this year.

Now I did some training for snatch the other week, and due to a technical problem we had to do our practical session on a not so suitable piece of rough ground near the museum, and as a result it was agreed to hold another practical session on the Sunday morning of the Touring Cars.

Becoming snatch however didn't take long, on the Saturday of said meeting I was called upon to perform the duty of IO on post 29 as well as snatch, now conversation on the ear piece livened up the say - someone squeaked her way onto base radio for a very short time - this was Di.

I also let it be known to the marshals on my post that no matter how far a car was in the gravel, it would be pushed out, wouldn't it. Saturday passed at post 29 without a great deal of grief.

On Sunday morning, grinning Steve Robins appeared in an MG Metro on the access road at post 29, and proceeded to drive it as far and as deep as he could in the gravel. Everyone had a go and succeeded in dragging said vehicle out and away.

Young Ken Gibson walked round to our post moaning and complaining at the difficulty marshals were having in getting in on Sunday morning. He said he had 12 marshals of his own who were not coming again and if the marshals entrance wasn't sorted out by the next time he came to Donington he would tender his resignation.

The problem arises when marshals arrive at the infield entrance and have to queue with members of the public who at the best of times are slow; they can't find the correct money; they don't know where to go; they wait for their change. This situation became compounded when marshals trying to get to sign on at the allotted time, drove to the front of the queue only to be turned back. I think that at least we should have an entrance that we can use, or a facility to enable us to get in quicker, a ticket only entrance, or a marshals' second lane. I have my own ideas, one of which has been used in the past with great success. All complaints I have received have been passed onto Di. Whether the circuit are prepared to do anything remains to be seen.

Race day at post 29 was quiet, a few intakes of breath, and one or two ooohs, finally a crunch when a Vectra ran out of brakes. Concorde was probably the highlight of the day. There were more bits off Ford Fiestas than I had seen on a corner before, but they all kept going. These pieces were given to some young children who were asking for them.

What must be the saying of the week came during a track inspection, Reg Baines, waiting trackside with his report commented on the two rather plump marshals enjoying a lie down on the Recticel wall erected at 29.

"Can someone get in touch with Race Control to call out the RNLI and rescue these two beached whales". A lot of laughter and a couple of hand gestures, or flipper waves from Orca and Willy.

May I send out commiseration to some people. Firstly to Mick Avery who has been in hospital for an operation, and is, according to his son, recovering nicely. Secondly to Malcolm Sims who with several other marshals was involved in an accident with a Eurocar leaping the barrier at Mallory Park. I hope that you are all on the mend and soon back on the bank.

DONINGTON DOODLINGS - III

At the recent Gold Cup meeting I was again acting as I.O. and snatch, but this time at Redgate. This doesn't sound too bad, but it can get quite hectic when vehicles want to cross the circuit. Not just the odd one or two, but convoys of them; everything from catering vans to very large wreckers. Organised by a very frustrated gentleman who may have been forgiven for thinking that we were shutting Redgate deliberately at times when he wanted vehicles to cross.

I was unable to make the Friday session due to working commitments, but I did hear that proceedings lasted a long while yet again. Looking at the timetable in our programmes on Saturday morning, as far as times went, things didn't seem too bad, but yet again the timetable went out of the window.

Listening on a headset to Race Control can give one an insight into what problems can occur and an update on what is being done about them. Unfortunately standing on the bank, not being able to hear or see what hold up there is can be a very frustrating experience, especially if you have booked to go out on Saturday evening, have 20 or more miles to travel, get showered and changed and the drive to the restaurant or other destination by eight and it's just past seven with two sessions to go.

There are some of course who have my total sympathy, they are the members who have to go to work after a meeting and do a night shift. I have done that and know what it's like.

A problem which could have been avoided I think was an oversight in the pit lane; which was to weigh all SWRC cars in the pit lane, not allowing the BOSS formula into the pit lane, also jammed in there with them were two breakdowns trying to unload and we all know that they always try their hardest to get things done ASAP. The pit lane IO and Race Control were trying to get things moving but the log jam continued for sometime. A similar occurrence happened on Sunday, but the hold-up was sorted quite quickly, but a delay none the less, it all adds up.

Race day kicked off at nine with SWRC warm-up followed by nine races with plenty of action in between. Now seeing that the timing went out of the window again the RAF Falcons appeared as if from nowhere, but on time. Meanwhile back at post two you will never guess who my observer was - he was with me on post 14, moved round to post 19, then on to post 9 finally we both ended up together again on 2, yes Reg Baines. "Someone is going to start talking about us" mentioned Reg. You dare.....

In the late afternoon it dawned on me that I was still a virgin snatchman, all these starts, no wheel tapping or shunting had occurred, everyone treated Redgate with a great deal of respect, it was all very quiet. Palmer Audi had progressed part way through its race when the Red Arrows appeared on time, and having seen their new routine the previous week I would have liked to see them again, but while the racing was on I could only catch a quick glimpse. The twist in the tale came a few laps later when two cars had a coming together, one ending up in the gravel minus front wing and no driver; having hot legged it so fast he left his steering wheel on top of the car.

Snatch called for, off I went with Maurice towards said vehicle to perform a masterful snatch. The problem came when the strop I used round the rear of the car snagged itself on a piece of body and pulled itself apart. But using a more flexible strop I managed to weave a more satisfactory hold and we set off towards the Redgate gap with ease. Phew, first real snatch over and done. The Red Arrows looked good lying on my back in the gravel.

It was a real treat to see an old friend in the shape of Mick Avery, only a few weeks after his big op.

We all wish you a speedy recovery.

Ian Dixon

[Ed's note. Due to communication and timing difficulties I have been unable to publish Ian's articles monthly, but I think we are now up to date. Although we could have done without the pun at the end.]

FROM BEHIND THE WHEEL (MID SEASON REPORT)

The first event at North Weald, as reported last time, went quite smoothly. The run up to it hadn't as the engine had an oil leak, so did the gearbox. Initial diagnosis suggested the crankshaft oil seal and the driveshaft oil seals were leaking. North Weald was done in this state and it was back to Shenpar for corrective treatment. This work was carried out in time for the first Curborough event which was run by Mid Cheshire. Brake bedding in was completed at the Mid Cheshire event and the engine was run up to 7,500 rpm for the first time. The car was pulling well but I couldn't put in the sort of times that I expected. After the event the car had to go back to the workshop because the engine was still leaking oil. The problem was further diagnosed as a leaking sump gasket which was re-sealed. This was sorted in time for the first BARC event at Curborough. I managed to make some improvement in time but still nowhere near what I should be achieving. The car was understeering heavily at several points and was getting 'exciting' to drive. There then followed quite a long lay-off until mid June when the national championship came to Curborough. By this time I had learned that trying to brake heavily now made the brakes lock up spectacularly so I was now trying to develop an improved braking technique.

The national event at Curborough continued the trend and I was suspecting that the front tyres, which were quite old, had gone off although there appeared to be quite a lot of rubber left on them. The next event was the Shenstone two lap event on Grand Prix weekend. I knew the tyres were suspect and still had problems making a good time. I could put together either a good first lap or a good second lap but never both in the same run. On returning home I inspected the tyres to find that the tread was peeling off the inside of the fronts and onto the sidewall. There was no other solution but to get two new tyres at £160 each.

New slick tyres take a short while to bed in; the release material must be worn off and the rubber scrubbed to get best effect. The next event was at Wroughton airfield near Swindon. If you have seen Tiff driving a car round an airfield for Top Gear it is usually Wroughton. The course is fast with a series of interesting chicanes, fast and slow corners and a blind brow with a right hand bend near the finish. The surface is quite coarse so tyre scrubbing was achieved quite quickly but 120 ish on rough tarmac is an interesting experience. No success at Wroughton but a steady build up of pace and a couple of places gained during the day.

Back to Curborough next for the John Clarke sprint and the inter-club challenge. I made up part of the Shenstone and District Car Club team with James Cheshire (Porsche 944) and Simon Thornley (Westfield). Weather conditions were changeable (damp, wet and never fully dry). For most of the time I elected to run on slicks as my wet tyres are aged Avon road tyres, two of which have about 2 – 3 mm of tread. The car ran well in the conditions and I won the small class by about 6 seconds. I couldn't really tell whether the tyres had made a difference as it was too wet. Further to the class win, the Shenstone team won the inter-club challenge shield quite convincingly.

Off to Harewood for my final away-day event on the following day. The weather forecast wasn't too good, it was raining quite hard when I set off at 5 am and I wasn't too confident. On arriving in Yorkshire, however, I discovered dry weather. An excellent day followed as I re-learned the course and despite coming last in class knocked quite a satisfying chunk of time off my previous best. Conclusion drawn = tyres OK. The weather stayed fine all day, the sun even came out. The return journey was a little different; rain started to fall gently as I passed Leeds. Just south of Sheffield the rain became very heavy and stayed that way for the rest of the journey (and the night). On arriving home I decided not to get soaked and left the car uncovered on the trailer overnight. When I came to unload next morning it was full of water and the engine wouldn't start. Much drying and plug changing ensued to restore order.

What is left for the rest of the season? There are three more events at Curborough. The handling of the car is improved with new front tyres but needs to be further developed by changing the front springs for something a little softer. Verdict so far: poor start but getting better.

Jeremy Edwards

MARSHALLING THE GERMAN GP - I

In October 1998 Vanessa Hughes and myself decided that it would be a good idea to volunteer for a European Grand Prix during the 1999 season. Looking at what we believed was feasible and the countries that we would like to visit, taking into consideration that we both speak German, albeit not that well, we decided to see about the 1999 German and Hungarian Grand Prix, unfortunately due to unforeseen circumstances I had to cancel the Hungarian Grand Prix and Vanessa was unable to attend the German Grand Prix due to being in hospital.

The question was where do we start? Well first of all I phoned the RAC MSA, there I spoke to Allan Dean Lewis, He advised me to contact our John Felix, who provided me with the names and addresses of the relevant National Motor Sport Associations. I then set about writing them a letter requesting an invite and Faxed this to them on the 12th October. On the 14th October I had a phone call from the person who sent the Faxes for me informing me that he had a fax for me. This fax was from the Automobilclub von Deutschland, thanking both Vanessa and myself for our interest in marshalling at the GERMAN F1 GP, which incidentally is the 49th organised by the AvD, and that they had forwarded our details to the Chief Marshals, they also sent us the Phone and Fax numbers so that we could contact these officials directly, as they are authorised to make up their own crews.

Following this up, I then faxed the Chief Marshals for On Circuit duties and the Chief Marshal for the Pit lane. I very swiftly received a reply from Jens Klingenberg, the Chief Pit lane that we had been included in his Pitcrew for the Hockenheim GP. He in turn requested that he be invited to the British GP for 1999 and I passed this request on to Peter Roberts for him to arrange. I then wrote to the RAC MSA requesting the necessary authority to marshal at the German GP.

The Hungarian ASN sent me a fax at the same time notifying me that our request was with the Clerk of the Course, who had told them that an invite was theoretically possible, but due to some problems with the Hungarian GP that they would contact me again in February 1999.

This part of the proceedings had taken just over four weeks and had proved to date to be very productive. The next stage had now to be implemented, requesting the permission of the MSA to attend and to plan the expedition.

With the invites in place and the authorisation from the MSA we then set about arranging how to get there. Basically there were four choices. Blag a lift from a F1 Team, Drive, Fly or Train. I tackled the first option initially, unfortunately all of the British F1 Teams said that they could not accommodate me, due to insurance reasons. After looking at the cost with driving I ruled this out as it was somewhat prohibitive, considering the extra insurance for a Green Card and the RAC European Cover. That left the option of flying or rail. I decided on rail as it would afford the opportunity of seeing some of the country. It is absolutely fantastic travelling through the Rhine Valley by train, huge mountains on either side, vineyards cascading down the mountain sides a huge expanse of water dotted with massive barges carrying all sorts of commodities, these barges look about 500 meters long, numerous pleasure ships full of tourists and sitting on top of the mountains numerous castles.

MARSHALLING THE GERMAN GP - II

I booked the ticket from London to Hockenheim through Deutsche Bahn UK, using Eurostar to Brussels. Wow what a train, top speed of 300kph (187.5mph). Just imagine standing in the bar having a beer at that speed. My journey started at Leicester, on the Wednesday morning, at 5am with a taxi to Leicester station for the 5.30am train to London and I arrived in Hockenheim at 7pm, finally at the campsite, (well the backyard and car park of the local pub), at Gasthof Talhaus for 7.30pm. The pit marshals campsite, yes we had our own exclusive site, is about 8km from the circuit and we used to commute by means of 50cc Aprilia scooters, loaned for the event to the AvD by one of the pit marshals who is a motorcycle dealer. On site there were 11 of us, rather than go into details of everyone, but there were a couple of notable characters. There was Opa, (Granddad), with his big blue bus, this bus had been converted for using to transport Superkarts and accommodating six people, they basically travelled together as a crew either for marshalling or kart racing, at the opposite side of the road was Jurgen and his sidekick in their motor home, they are also kart racers. In front of the bus was my palace, well dome tent really and in front of me was Bernhard Kollenberg's Mercedes van and trailer for the scooters, then we had a couple of other tents. Quite a nice happy little crew.

On Thursday morning we had to sign on at the Deutsche Rotes Kreuz Haus, this was situated about 2km from the site, just outside the town, opposite McDonalds, (you can't get away from your Big Mac). There we were given our tabards, no tickets, no passes etc., the tabard was your entry permit to the circuit, if you had a guest they had to purchase a ticket. Mine is GER 2456 PIT LANE, I still have it as a memento, you don't have to hand it in, we had to be on circuit for the very sensible time of 12.30 for Tyre Scrutineers or 1400 for Pit Marshals. The Pit Crew consisted of somewhere in the region of 60 marshals. The allocation was more or less as follows 1 Tyre Scrutineer, 1 Garage Marshal, 1 Pit Lane Marshal per team, my team was Stewart Ford, on the pit wall there was one Fire Marshal per team, these guys were dressed in full Fire Brigade gear, the blue jackets, trousers helmets, whereas other marshals in the pit lane wore black jeans and polo shirts, supplied by AvD, F1 tabard and baseball hats. The remainder of the crew were made up of Yellow Flag Marshals on the Pit Wall and the various other personnel that are required, i.e. chief, deputy chief, exit lights.

On the journey to and from the circuit John had to ride pillion on a scooter, without a helmet, this caused one or two problems at times, as I had to dismount and walk for a few meters, to avoid being fined by the local Polizei and a fine for my chauffeur, but on the Sunday morning we just rode straight in past all police checks. The view of the police that day was if they are wearing a tabard they have priority, stop the traffic and let the marshals through.

Well we have finally got to the racing, for qualifying for the F3000, Porsche Supercup and F1 I was standing on the line. This was pretty hairy at times, especially with F3000, as there are so many cars. On the Saturday morning we had a briefing from Charlie Whiting on the Start Procedure and I was given my nominated slot as a start line marshal, with a lollipop and yellow flag for the F3000 and Porsche Supercup, for the F1 race I was part of the Pusher Crew. The F3000 had an aborted start, but the other races started OK, but as you might be aware there was an incident in the Porsche race which required the Safety Car, the race was cut short by 2 laps but was a home win for Roland Asch.

MARSHALLING THE GERMAN GP - III

Well what did I achieve:- I set out to carry out my duties to the best of my ability, as I was representing British Marshalling. Additionally my objectives were to get the autographs of Jackie Stewart, Alain Prost and Jean Alesi in my book of Formula 1 Greats and Damon Hill and Eddie Jordan on a poster from Autosport, these I achieved and exceeded by having a photograph taken with everyone's favourite Essex Boy, Johnny Herbert, as well as getting him and Rubens Barrichello to autograph my hat from the AvD. On the Saturday evening one of the medics called in the pit lane, with his F1 Mercedes 4x4, similar to a Land Rover Discovery, I asked him to leave it in the pit lane with the keys after the GP and said that I would take it back to England and let him have half of the price that I got for it. He replied that would not be a good idea, but that we could do a quick lap, that was great, except that I did not have a film in my camera, as my spare film was at the campsite, but it was mega being driven around Hockenheim.

When the podium presentation was over for the F3000 race and the Brazilian National Anthem was being played, I was the first marshal to remove my hat and a few of the local marshals looked rather embarrassed. The F1 result for me was rather emotional. It was fantastic to see Eddie win, a group of us watched most of the race on the TV in the weighing-in bay. Three laps from the end of the GP we left our garage to assemble the barriers for Parc-ferme and stood on the line to marshal the cars in. Once the cars were all in and the presentation took place the pit lane was flooded with spectators and our job was not that easy to keep them away from the cars, but we managed together with the help of the Austrian Security personnel. As one marshal put it too me it's bad enough them being Security, but what is worse they are Austrian, the Germans do not like the Austrians.

Going to the subject of trackside marshals. Marshals from the AvD are the Incident and Flag marshals and wear Green overalls with a Red band. The marshals in Red overalls are from the Deutsche Motorsport Bund, (DMSB), and crew the emergency vehicles, ie Rescue Vehicles Fire Tenders and Doctors Cars. The marshals wearing Green overalls with a Yellow band are from the Deutsche Rotes Kreuz and are the Medics and Doctors.

The thing that amazed me most of all about marshalling at Hockenheim is not so much that I was paid DM400.00 for the four days, but the fact that we received a lunch each day, (cooked meat and veg), and soft drinks all day, coke, sprite and mineral water. Makes you wonder doesn't it, if they can do it why can't the British clubs, (here I mean for prestige meetings), especially for the GP. Lunch and payment is standard with all German meetings and before people start with, but if you pay marshals you won't get the right people, just think about paid employment, if you are not up to the job you are out! Also consider your expenses, this DM400 probably did not cover the expenses of some local marshals, whereas with others it covered them adequately, as many German marshals stop in hotels as opposed to us who camp.

It was absolutely great, fantastic, marvellous, words fail me, to be invited to this event and more than compensated for not having been selected for the British Grand Prix yet again. Still maybe next time someone will realise that I ought to be invited in 2000. Speaking to a Chief Marshal the other evening the subject of the British Grand Prix cropped up and I find it amazing that to use more or less his words the BRDC consider it a privilege to be invited to the British Grand Prix.

*John Kirby
Grey/Black 314*

BRMC and the Internet

What has the Internet got to do with Rallying? Well not a lot on the face of it. However there are more and more people everyday who have access to either the Web or email. Quite a few of these people are you the members. After between committee and members we have done two things.

- an email discussion list that is for you the members to talk to each other, pass on news and most importantly for the Club to get late breaking news to you as quickly as possible.
- the BRMC website has had a major revamp to try and bring it more up to date and give it some interactive features. These include a volunteering form that you can fill in and send back electronically, a selection of events that have asked us for marshals and an "Electronic Green Slip".

It is important that this latter "Electronic Green Slip" is used for insurance only as it may not get checked until it is too late to volunteer for an event. The insurance record will be generated automatically.

If you have access to the Internet to join the mailing list send an email to majordomo@cranfield.ac.uk which has one line of text that says `subscribe brmc-l`

To find the website go to the url <http://brands.sims.cran.ac.uk/brmc/>

None of these things are going to replace the Newsletters you currently receive in the post, they are simply about trying to make the Club more reactive to what you are asking us for.

We hope you like them.

Peter Harrison
BRMC Chairman

Kerridge Rally

On behalf of Midland Manor and Ludlow Castle Motor Clubs I would like to thank all the members who turned out for the Kerridge Rally on 5th June. Yet again we managed to pick just about the worst weather in June for the event but everyone put on a superb performance despite this.

On a personal level the Club probably turned out more personnel than anyone else on the entire event. Paul Sansom with his team set up and broke down all of the stages for the second and third legs of the event and even found time to go out on Friday and setup one of the first leg stages !

It was a fantastic effort and has given us a real boost, I hope you all enjoyed the opportunity to get together and run complete stages. We can hopefully do this sort of thing on other events.

Next year: Put Saturday 3rd June in your diaries and if you can possibly make the Thursday or Friday to help setup you will be very welcome.

Peter Harrison

A SIDEWAYS VIEW



This month's Sideways View includes details of those stages of the Rally of Great Britain which are seeking marshals.

You will see that a number of the high profile Sunday stages haven't been listed by the MSA as requiring marshals - among them Cornbury (First Car 09.47), Silverstone 1&2 (SS 3&4, first car 11.18), Silverstone Service (First car 11.44) and the Silverstone SuperSpecial (SS6, first car 14.38), not to mention Blenheim Palace (First car 13.13). I don't know about Cornbury or Blenheim Palace, but I would suggest anyone wanting to marshal at Silverstone contacts the Silverstone ES team through the

circuit, and remember that Donington ES team have a sector on the Blenheim Palace stage; contact Diane Hardy for further details.

The British Rally Marshals Club is running three stages - Sweet Lamb 1&2 (Special Stages 12&14) on Monday and Rhonda 1&2 (Special Stage 18) on Tuesday. Please support the club's own stages if you can.

Monday and Tuesday have some marathon stages - in marshalling terms, anyway. Almost 12 hours at our stage on Sweet Lamb on Monday and 16 and a half hours at the Builth Wells Services on Monday, followed by nine hours at Neath on the Tuesday, together with late finishes at Bridgend and Cheltenham.

Anyone who wants to marshal on the stages listed below can me grading@marshal.force9.net.

Bob Rae, Midland Region Rally Rep

NETWORK Q RAC RALLY	
Date & Time	Location
Sat 20 Nov 06.30-15.99	Cheltenham (Scruitineering),
Sun 21 Nov 06.00-11.30 14.00-20.00	Cheltenham Start & Stage 1 SS 7 & Service B
Mon 22 Nov 04.00-10.00 04.00-10.30 05.30-22.00 06.00-13.00 07.00-14.00 08.00-15.00 10.30-22.00 11.00-22.30	Hereford Service Radnor SS 8 Builth Wells Service Crychan SS 9 Esgair Dafyss SS10 Tywi SS11 Sweet Lamb SS12&14 Myherin SS13&15
Tue 23 Nov 04.00-11.00 04.30-11.30 05.00-10.00 05.30-12.00 08.00-18.30 08.30-17.30 09.00-16.00 12.30-19.30 15.30-21.00 15.00-22.00	St Gwynno SS16 Tyke SS17 Cardiff Service Rhondda SS18 Rheola SS19&21 Neath Service Resolven SS20 Margam SS22 Brigend Service Cheltenham Finish