



WINDSCREEN

The Magazine of Swansea Motor Club



Stig Blomqvist lines up for a tilt at Castle Combe's tarmac rally stage in his pristine Saab V4

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Editors Intro

Happy New Year to all our members and welcome to another edition of your club magazine. When I last wrote my concern for us with regard to Llys y Fran was that we would need to comply with the Closed Roads Motor Racing legislation in order to get closure notices on the footpath at LyF. Since then we have been informed that Dwr Cymru Welsh Water, who own the site, are embarking on a major upgrade to the facilities including the erection of three new buildings. Unfortunately for us this means that they are closing the site for one year so there will be no Llys y Fran events in 2018.

Whilst this is a blow to the organising team it has given us a shove to look for an alternative venue. Several possibilities were considered – and thanks to all of you who made suggestions – and the good news is that we are actively talking to a landowner and the MSA about getting a track licence at a new venue. Whether we will be able to set everything up in time to run an event this year remains to be seen but I will keep you informed as we progress.

On the social side we had a pub run around the Neath area in September which was considered lovely but difficult. October saw a return of an old SMC favourite, a Puzzles and Ploughman's evening and in November we held a Tabletop Rally.

For our Christmas meal we went to the Mermaid in Mumbles, a venue which has a long history with SMC, where 27 of us enjoyed a very convivial evening.

We will kick off our 2018 social programme with the annual Darts Challenge on 7th February so sharpen up those arrows.

Good luck with all your plans for the new year and if you feel like sharing what you are doing with your clubmates you could drop me a few lines

Neil

Rallyday – Castle Combe Circuit 23rd September

Blissfully, the sun shone down on Castle Combe Circuit for another epic edition of the UK's premier rally show – Rallyday, and thousands of rally folk rocked-up at the convenient Wiltshire venue to see some of the very best that rallying has to offer and at the end of the day, no one had need to be disappointed. Cars, drivers and personalities from almost every era of the sport were enthusiastic participants with the sole objective of pleasing the fans!

History was a very significant part of the day with many iconic rally cars and indeed drivers being present, but the icing on the Rallyday cake was undoubtedly the M-Sport team's welcome return conveniently fitted in between current WRC commitments and created additional excitement as they brought along a sensational 2017 R5 Ford Fiesta WRC that was the first new-generation world rally car to be driven in anger in front of British fans – and on Wiltshire tarmac too!



1975 RAC Rally winning Allied Polymer Group sponsored works Ford Escort RS 1800 Mk11 of Timo Makinen & Henry Liddon



1975 Tour de Corse winning Lancia Stratos HF of Bernard Darniche & Alain Mahe on Lancia Sport stand

As current FIA World Rally Championship leaders, the Cockermouth team also brought their impressive M-Sport Village together with some iconic cars from a bygone era including Mikko Hirvonen's 2011 Ford Fiesta RS WRC and Colin McRae's 1999 Ford Focus RS WRC. Team principle Malcolm Wilson OBE, a long-time supporter of Rallyday brought with him Ott Tänak, Elfyn Evans and the young RallyX ace Andreas Bakkerud.

Malcolm Wilson commented: **"What a fantastic event. Everywhere you turn there's a blast from the past or someone with a story from way back when. It's been a great day and a great opportunity to bring some of our best drivers and cars to the fans. The support that we've received this year has been phenomenal, and it was nice to give a little something back."**

Joining the famous faces from M-Sport was Toyota WRC team leader Jari-Matti Latvala, 1984 World Rally Champion Stig Blomqvist, Finnish rally & race driver Harri Toivonen, the late Colin McRae's co-driver Nicky Grist and recently crowned British Rally Champion Keith Cronin.



IRDC chairman Shaun Martin shares a joke with the famously funny and engaging 1984 WRC champion and Rallyday regular Stig Blomqvist



Toyota WRC team leader Jari Matti Latvala was a popular Rallyday celebrity, mixing freely with the fans to talk and sign autographs

Once again the Cooper Tyres interview-stage proved the epicentre of paddock action where the enthusiastic fan-base congregated to listen to inquisitors Howard Davies and Mike Board quiz the star names in their knowledgeable, pithy but light-hearted style which has become a characteristic of these two former top-flight international co-drivers! Following each interview, the 'Stars' made themselves available for autographs, a Selfie or just a simple chat with delighted fans. Elsewhere, car clubs, specialist trade stands and rally teams proliferated in all corners of the expansive Castle Combe paddock and the on-track action was continuous with passenger rides and tyre-smoking donuts the order of the day during the many demonstration runs by Star-drivers in Star-cars!



The first public sighting of a 2017 WRC rally car on British soil as Elfyn Evans delights fans by giving M-Sport's Ford Fiesta R5 a 10/10ths run over the rally stage.



Cars line up for their turn on the stage under the shadow of Castle Combe's famous Avon Bridge

A significant event being marked at Rallyday was 10 years since the tragic and untimely death of Colin McRae in a helicopter accident in 2007 and as well as his former co-driver and friend Nicky Grist being a prominent guest, several of Colin's rally cars were being demonstrated on the circuit and displayed in the paddock for fans to remember the popular Scottish legend and the Subaru owners club provided a stunning display of cars. There were also prominent displays of the evergreen Opel Manta and Lancia's range of competition cars from bespoke rally icons, the Stratos and 037 to the sophisticated saloon-rally combo of the Integrale, cool and synonymous with distinctive Martini branding.

Since Castle Combe Circuit took Rallyday in-house some 3 years ago the event has grown inexorably in stature and steadily improves year on year. It is now the only show dedicated to the sport of rallying that takes place in Europe and this unique selling point is undoubtedly the key to its enduring success, roll on 2018 - I'm sure Brexit won't bother the world of rallying too much!

Ken Davies

The Story of Jedi Racing Cars

Our correspondent from Nigeria, John Bunting, has been involved with Jedi racing cars since the earliest days and has written the story of their origin, design and development. Part one appeared in our last Windscreen – here is part two.

When the project first started there had never been any thought given to this car being a production race car. It had been intended to build just two cars so that the four of us could share-drive and go racing.

The original plan for two cars to be built and shared between the four of us then went rather pear-shaped, both Roger and John Beaden dropping out for their own personal reasons, so John Corbyn and myself jointly owned and shared the first car which in John's hands was immediately showing itself to be competitive – even more so after fitting the softest available Hoosier tyres to replace my much harder road going Pirellis.

At its first outing the car attracted a lot of interest and Peter Sullivan, a manufacturing jeweller, asked if John could build a car for him to be fitted with a 500 Godden grass track race engine that would be running on methanol. The number three car was built with a Suzuki T500 fitted for Jon Perkins, a 'latter day Steptoe' who previously had been using a JW4 fitted with a 500 Maico motocross engine that vibrated enough to break chassis tubes at every outing!

Jon was the first Wellingborough customer and had a lot of successes with his Jedi before turning his hand to classic sidecar racing, in which he is still competing.

This was the start of the Wellingborough Mafia with a few people from the area buying and driving Jedi's and a host of willing helpers who only required feeding and watering, in exchange for coming along for the weekend to help out in push starting all the cars in the class, which could be a major issue that you could hardly expect the marshals to do, with sometimes up to 12 cars in the growing class that in those days could also still include a few historic 500's, before they had their own dedicated class.

As they didn't have wings, push starting was not a pleasant job, the cars were so low down you were bent over like a demented Quasimodo and when the car fired up you had to let go very quickly and were always very off balanced, many a pusher ended up on their nose in the gravel!

It was not too long before other cars were joining the Jedi's on the start line, within a year there were cars being built by Steve Owen in Leeds, the Lystonia which was a rather pretty creation from a slightly stretched children's formula 6 chassis, the Nemesis, which was so narrow in the cockpit only the very slim had any chance to enter. Tim Cameron's Techno ex-F4 car, that was hinged in the middle, motorcycle swing arm fashion, for its rear suspension movement and fitted with a 500cc Konig 4 cylinder 2 stroke engine, it always looked like a frog hopping when leaving the line, as it would squat down when the clutch was dropped and then jump up as the suspension unloaded when it got going.

Many different engines were tried from single cylinder 500 2 stroke motor cross engines, 500 4 Stroke single cylinder speedway/grasstrack engines, 250cc Rotax twin cylinder 2 stroke, 350Lc Yamaha twin cylinder 2 stroke, but in the early days the Suzuki T500 was the popular choice, some years later John bought a Yamaha Tz750 that had been used in a racing sidecar outfit, which was adapted with some clever machine shop work by fitting Yamaha Lc250 barrels and pistons to reduce its size to a 500cc. This entailed fitting the barrels "the wrong way around" with the carbs to the front and the 4 expansion chamber exhaust pipes straight out of the back, this was very convenient in a car, maybe not so good to fit into a bike.

Several owners installed the Suzuki 500 - 4 cylinder Gamma with varying degrees of success, while a few used the 2-stroke, Nova built, Sparton 3-cylinder 500, based on a Suzuki 380 bottom end. But none of these seemed to have the performance, or the reliability, of John's Yamaha Tz/Lc500 hybrid. I was always surprised that no-one copied it as it was not particularly hard to build and we made no secret of what it was.

I can remember only once having to put the car back on the trailer due to a breakdown and that was on my sole visit to Scammonden Dam, just off the M62 in Yorkshire. I had managed one practice run before the clutch basket broke when John took it out for his first run.

But after it had been converted from Suzuki T500 to the Yamaha Tz/Lc 500 engine, Jedi number one was written off at a Donington Park sprint in 1988.

A prospective customer who had also previously driven 1100cc single-seaters and to spare him any embarrassment had best be left nameless, was having a share drive with John and did not give quite enough respect to the little 500 Jedi when having his first practice run on a slightly damp track. The result was a 'head-on' into the tyrewall at Coppice corner. Unfortunately, he was not using the crutch straps and slid forward, causing breaks to both his lower legs. Sadly, but perhaps understandably, the prospective customer became a non-customer...

The top of the bulkheads over his legs had to be cut to get him out, so John had to work many late nights to produce a new chassis (number 20 but always called 1A) in time for my return to the UK for my share-drive holiday. John didn't tell me what had happened until after he had built up the new car and by the time I was back in England, the only thing noticeably different was that 1A was now the first Jedi to be fitted with wings.

We had initially thought at our relatively low speed they would not make a noticeable difference. In fact, though we may have lost a small amount of straight line speed due to drag, the additional down-force meant that we gained a lot of time due to later braking and increased corner speed. Now, the thought of running without wings is quite buttock-clenching!

John and I continued to share 1A until our last outing at the August 1990 MGCC Curborough, where we both broke the single lap course class record. I'd led John until his last timed run when, in typical Corbyn fashion, he pulled something out of the bag to beat me by three hundredths of a second with a 33.31s run. In fact this gave me a lot of satisfaction as it was the closest I ever got to

beating Corbs. It was memorable, too, as it was to be our last shared drive. Only Allan Staniforth in his unique, self designed and built rubber tension sprung 1100cc Terrapin Mk7 was slightly quicker on the day.

From the car's first outing in August 1984 to our last outing in 1990 at that same MGCC event, the car was now more than 6.5s quicker – how I wish I too, could be a second quicker with each advancing year!



The original car with Suzuki T500 power and number 1A with hybrid Yamaha Tz/Lc500 engine

By this time John wanted to have another go at circuit racing and came to an agreement with the Monoposto Racing Club to allow 500cc cars to run with their single-seater race car class. On the circuits we could clearly no longer share-drive, so we agreed that John would continue to use 1A and would build a new car for me. I bought a Spondon framed Yamaha 350Tz 2-stroke twin motorcycle so that its engine could be fitted into the new car, but then had second thoughts. Instead of racing Saturday and Sunday every weekend on my leave in the UK, I would be lucky to race more than twice in a year. After much pondering I decided to put things on hold and sold the Spondon-Yamaha bike. The quickest of the circuit race 500 cars often embarrassed the bigger single seat cars in the Monoposto club events, but due to small 500 entries and a poor finishing record things did not really take off.

In 1995 I decided that if I was going to have another go it would be now or never and asked John to build me a new car. It was eventually completed in 1997 but there were lots of delays regarding the Nova/Sparton 3-cylinder 500 engine I had first considered installing, I never found out if the delay's were from John's part or from Nova's as they both blamed each other, leaving me not knowing why things had ground to a halt. I was too far away either to see for myself what the problem was or to get answers. With almost no means of communication from Nigeria to the UK other than by writing a letter, which could take up to two months to arrive, or not at all if it got lost, things got rather heated from my side.

At that time there were no mobile phones that could make a call out of the country.

Land line phones could if you paid a special tariff, but that was really only practical for a commercial business. Internet was not easily available in Nigeria – and it still isn't!

To make a call to another country meant going to the Nitel phone company office and queuing up, sometimes for hours, then trying to make yourself heard in a little cubicle without a door, on a bad line and with people in the adjoining cubicles shouting down their phones to make themselves heard. Ah, the good old days!

So having decided not to use the Nova/Sparton 500, I eventually went for a 1000cc Kawasaki ZX10 that happened to be available. Even then it was not exactly state-of-the-art, but it was known to be a strong and reliable engine with an electric starter, so there would be no need for a pusher to get me started.

This, then, was the start of my affair with Jedi No.47 which is still going strong to this day

John Bunting (To be continued)

Ross Takes Third Overall in Junior TKM

SMC's Ross Deal took third place overall in the MSA British Karting Championship Junior TKM series following the series finale at PFI on 10th September.

Going into the final weekend Ross was concerned that dropped scores would be the decider in the Championship battle and so it proved. Having scored consistently through the series Ross had a score of 167 to drop, whilst his main rivals Abbi Pulling and James Pashley had 127 and 160 respectively.

An astonishing final race saw the lead change multiple times and for a short period during the race Ross was winning the Championship. However, it was not to be as the pack shuffled again and again. At the end, with all the dropped scores taken out, it was Abbi Pulling who became the first girl to win a major junior kart championship with Pashley 2 points behind and Ross one point further back. Nonetheless an outstanding year for the talented Swansea youngster.

Ross is pictured below on the right of the podium at the recent SuperOne series awards with Pulling in the centre and Pashley to the left.

