



# WINDSCREEN

The Magazine of Swansea Motor Club



## November 2007

**Celebrating our Welsh Sprint and Hillclimb Champion Neil Watkins**

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# CHAIRMAN'S CHAT.

Welcome to another edition of the club magazine. A bit later than planned, it appears that the editor and his computer have had a bit of a falling out and have not been speaking to each other. And now that they are talking, his computer has decided to keep his entire list of files secret and wouldn't let him get at his databases and such like.

The postponed car show had a better evening as far as the weather was concerned the second time around, mind you it should have been, it was August after all. A good number of members brought their cars out for all to see, and were joined by some unexpected BMW enthusiasts with some modified engines on display in their well cared for engine bays. It was a good chance for members to see cars that aren't normally on show at club nights. Thanks to all who made the effort and didn't mind us poking around their pride and joy's.

September saw members enjoying a navigation scatter around Gower, organised by James Phillips. I still think co-drivers/navigators are devious souls, how else could they find all these obscure roads and turnings? It was a lot of fun though, trying to find the various codes hidden in the shrubbery and by the roadside. Having said that, it also helped if you had a working torch, not the type that fell to pieces when the button was pressed. Sally and I were going well despite the torch but had to retire when the navigator threw a sickie. I must eat more carrots; they are supposed to help with night vision. I might not need the torch next time!

October saw the awaited fitment of some new fuel lines to Rob Allender, which should see his performance figures improve shortly after some rolling road work. He is now back in residence and seemed in good spirits when we spoke and looking forward to some visitors.

October also saw an evening reminiscing over old photos and memorabilia brought up by various members. The evening was to have been led by Gwyn Evans, however, he was unable to attend but he did send some interesting bits up with Jeff Clement. Lots of members contributed info, pictures, stories and personal memories of the club's past events and it was interesting to remember just what a long and competitive history the club has had throughout its history, and still enjoys today.

The next planned event is the inter-club quiz between the Swansea Historic Vehicle Register members and us in November. Your support will be needed on the night if we are to retain the award after the final round next January. Let's see if we can win it two years running.

What would you get if you merged Xerox with Wurlitzer?

A company that makes reproductive organs!!!

*Mike Jones.*

## Welsh Sprint and Hillclimb Champion 2007

Neil Watkins is the 2007 Welsh Sprint and Hillclimb Champion, the series going down to the wire at the final event of the year but Neil taking the title in his trusty droopsnoot RS2000 (see front cover).

Congratulations to Neil for getting out there all year long and flying the Swansea MC flag to the top of the Welsh series. Well done, Neil and well deserved.

Just to prove that sometimes you need a bit of luck to help you along Neil also found time to pen the following report of one time when his Ford was not quite so trusty this year:

### View from the Hot Seat or 'It could have been worse'

Thought I would type up a quick ditty about my trip to Aintree, which was, lets say, eventful ! I will entitle it "It could have been worse".

Anthony (Bailey) and I decided to do the "Aintree Summer Sprint" this year, Saturday June 30th, as we had not done this event before and it would make a nice change. For those of you wondering if that name sounds familiar, yes, it is the same Aintree as the one used for the Grand National horse race. The motor racing track, which has a rich history, is literally around the back of the horse racing course. Five Grands Prix were held there in the 1950's to early 1960's. Some of the great names in motor sport have competed there including Moss, Tony Brooks and Fangio. Now us.

Liverpool Motor Club run the events there with over 100 years of motor sport behind them. Great we thought.

As Aintree is a fair hike, we decided that an early start would be a good idea. Anthony had a half day on the Friday and I planned to finish work 2.30pm. As I had brought my Sprint car to work, I planned to drive straight onto the motorway, meet up with Anthony at Pont Abraham and head up through Mid Wales, getting there early evening. We would then visit the circuit, take in the sights(!), book into the digs, meal, few liquid refreshments, you know how it is. This plan went wrong from a very early stage!

At 2.30 on the Friday, I rang Anthony, told him I was finishing work and would see him at the allotted meeting point and the stated time. Got into the car in the works car park, started the engine, dipped the clutch and.....CRUNCH....clutch cable snapped. For the uninitiated, a clutch cable on a Mk2 RS2000 is an awkward sod to do in the comfort of your own garage, let alone in a works car park. Rang Anthony, asked him to turn around and get over to Swansea Enterprise Park to give me a hand as soon as possible if he could. At this point I rang a friend of mine, Andrew Davies, who runs a garage in Pontlliw (A&R Davies) who offered to do the job for me if I could get the car over to him by using the starter motor to get it going in gear. Bit awkward I thought, but worth a go. Got 5 yards and burnt the starter motor out! Anthony and I, after much swearing and cursing, got the clutch cable done on site, with Anthony quoting the technical term, when I asked him how he managed to get the plastic clip on top of the clutch pedal back in, "with brute force and ignorance"; but as the starter motor was now dead, we bump started it and got it to Andrew's workshop. Unfortunately, the spare starter he had was not the right type, so at this point I very nearly called it a day. Luckily for me Andrew let me borrow the starter off his Mk2 road rally car, so at 5.45pm we were on the road.

Lovely drive up through Mid Wales, Wrexham, Chester then through the Mersey Tunnel. Got to the dig's after a few wrong turns in Liverpool, about 9.45pm. Luckily for us there was a pub directly across the road, so we 'de-stressed' ourselves there for an hour or so.

Next morning, rain, rain and more rain. Arrived at the course, changed tyres, signed on, got scrutineered, went to the drivers briefing then straight on to the first run. At this point, it is worth mentioning that the fan on my car had packed up, so picture the scenario, it's raining, never even seen this track before, no idea of the lines, apexes (not that I generally take any notice of these anyway) and this is the fastest course on the calendar; car gently misting up, wipers pretty ineffective at the best of times and all those mechanical dramas in my mind from the day before with the added thought of having to drive the car home again. Not the best start line preparations it could be argued. I bet Lewis Hamilton doesn't have to put up with all of this, although I suppose he has got the slight issue of 20+ other drivers

trying to drive on the same bit of road as him off the line. All the same, he's got talent to help him out with those sorts of minor irritations.

First lap, although it was wet, reasonable time and 109mph over the finish line. Mr Bailey and the other local lads with us all did OK as well. Led the class for a while until the locals got fed up of that, protested about my tyres (1B's, which were probably a disadvantage in the conditions as they are almost bald) and got me put into a different class along with some of the other Trident lads.

Did 4 runs, all got the championship points we needed and as the rain was by now teeming down, with rivers running down the paddock, we decided to call it a day and head home.

No further dramas, other than we got a bit lost around Wrexham, but a good weekend all in all. The moral of this story is "it could have been worse" for the following reasons;

- The clutch cable could have snapped somewhere else other than the works car park, perhaps en route (in the Mersey Tunnel even !!) which could have presented us with all sorts of aggravation.

- It could have been raining when it snapped (it wasn't....it was quite sunny actually).

- We may not have been able to source a spare starter motor (thanks Andrew!)

- Some other drama could have occurred anywhere on the way there or back to really hack us off.

An old manager of mine in the Bank used to say that such incidents were "character building ". I just hope that my character isn't built any further for the rest of this season. Thanks again to Mr. Bailey for his mechanical wizardry; it's quite a sight seeing a tradesman, a professional even, with a lump hammer and the biggest screwdriver he can lay his hands on go to work on a clutch cable. British craftsmanship at it's best.

Happy motoring and don't let anyone fool you that old cars are necessarily a good thing.

*Neil Watkins*

Many thanks, Neil. But let us not forget all the other SMC members who have been campaigning through the year in various branches of motorsport.

In sprints and hillclimbs:

Paul Perkin 2<sup>nd</sup> overall and 1<sup>st</sup> in class 3B in the Midland Speed Championship and 3<sup>rd</sup> overall in the Welsh Championship

Andrew Meek 10<sup>th</sup> overall and 1<sup>st</sup> in class 1C in the Midland Speed Championship and 10<sup>th</sup> overall in the Welsh Championship

Andy Dunbar 32<sup>nd</sup> overall, 1<sup>st</sup> Novice and 3<sup>rd</sup> in class 2B in the Midland Speed Championship and 6<sup>th</sup> overall in the Welsh Championship

Kevin Cole 72<sup>nd</sup> overall and 3<sup>rd</sup> in class 4A in the Midland Speed Championship

Anthony Bailey 13<sup>th</sup> overall in the Welsh Championship

And the following one off outings:

Nick James 1<sup>st</sup> in class, Richard Thomas, Neil Samuel at the Epynt hillclimb, Ken Bowman at Llys y Fran

In rallying:

Nick James 1<sup>st</sup> Group N and 6<sup>th</sup> overall in the MSA Asphalt Rally Championship

Mandy and Ken Bowman on selected events

Paul James and Derek Davies on selected events

Huw Richards and James Phillips 2<sup>nd</sup> in class on the Classic Tracks road rally

Tony Jones on classic events

In racing:

Ken Davies

Anybody else who I have missed please get in touch and let me know what you have been up to.



**2007 Wales Rally GB**  
**walesrallygb.com**



## **Shakedown Stage, Penllergaer**

Once again Swansea Motor Club will be running the shakedown / Press stage for the Wales Rally GB and Huw Richards needs help to set up and man the stage. An initial setup will take place on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> November, which should be a fairly relaxed day. Speak to Huw for details.

On Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> Nov the main setup will take place from 8.30am, with cars coming through to recce the stage from around 1.00pm.

The big day will be Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> when you will need to sign on at 4.30am – yes, 4.30 in the morning! First car is due at 8.00am and cars should be using the stage until about 1.30pm.

Finally the club will also be assisting at the fuel halt at the Botanic Gardens on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> December from about 7.30am. Limited numbers of marshals are required so it is hoped to arrange this in shifts of about two hours.

Please let Huw know if you can assist with any of the above. Phone **01792 527978** or **07979 565328**

### **2007 WRGB Marshals Newsletter 2**

Welcome to the second marshals newsletter for the 2007 Wales Rally GB running in our traditional end-of season slot for the World Rally Championship on November 30<sup>th</sup> - December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2007. The event is once again the final round of the Tesco 99 Octane MSA British Rally Championship and is also the final round of the Ford Fiesta Sporting Trophy International.

Regulations for this year's event were published at the beginning of September and entries are already coming in. We are hoping that with many titles yet to be decided in the WRC, BRC and FSTI we will be in for a bumper entry from manufacturer teams, privateers and amateur entrants leading to more excitement and a more worthwhile and enjoyable time for us all.

This email is intended to give you some information about the event and to allow you to download the latest marshals newsletter from the Wales Rally GB website by clicking on the following link:  
[www.walesrallygb.com/documents/Newsletter\\_2.pdf](http://www.walesrallygb.com/documents/Newsletter_2.pdf)

We have now started the process of moving over to sending these newsletters electronically to those that are willing to accept this rather than having a paper copy. This is already reaping benefits and putting more money back into the marshals fund to be used for rewards rather than postage and printing.

If you are willing to help us save money spent on printing and postage and receive this newsletter in electronic format only please send us an email on [staffing@walesrallygb.com](mailto:staffing@walesrallygb.com) with your name, marshal number and the email address you want to use and we can ensure we send it to you that way.

Please feel free to forward this email onto other marshals who may like to receive the emails and/or newsletter. If you have received this by email from the event you do not need to do anything and will continue to receive these emails. However if you received this email via a 3<sup>rd</sup> party you will need to register with the event on [staffing@walesrallygb.com](mailto:staffing@walesrallygb.com) with your contact information and email to receive these emails and/or newsletters.

The web forum for the 2007 event is now up and running so you can communicate directly with us, ask questions and chat with other marshals. The forum can be accessed at [staffing.walesrallygb.com/forum](http://staffing.walesrallygb.com/forum)

[www.walesrallygb.com](http://www.walesrallygb.com)

## **Diary Dates**

### **2007**

Nov 21<sup>st</sup> Inter Club Quiz against Swansea Historic Vehicle Register

Dec 12<sup>th</sup> Christmas Party

### **2008**

January - Return leg of the Inter Club Quiz against Swansea Historic Vehicle Register

February - Darts

March - AGM and Quiz

April - Tabletop Rally

May - Navigational Scatter

June - Pub Run

July - Barbecue

## **Odds and .....**

Brian Jenkins will be addressing the Swansea Historic Vehicle Register on the subject of Cyril Kieft and his cars on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> November from around 8.00pm. SMC members who wish to hear the illustrated talk are welcome to attend at Murton Rovers.

Andrew Meek is naturally slightly wary of Castle Combe circuit following a fairly major accident at the infamous Quarry Corner earlier in the year (<http://www.stevekilvington.fotopic.net/p42826147.html> or <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kL-Yfyd64Ck>) but was brave enough to let Paul Perkin double drive the Impreza at the last sprint there this year. Paul repaid Andrew by thoroughly trouncing him in the event, circulating a mere four seconds quicker in one lap.

A proposal has been made to hold a club dinner at a local pub or other venue with a provisional date of February 29<sup>th</sup> 2008. Please let any member of the committee have your view on whether this would be a worthwhile event.

My apologies for the long gap between the last issue of Windscreen and this one – all brought about by me fiddling with my computer and succeeding in formatting the hard disk, thereby losing the entire contents. Luckily I was able to call on the assistance of some techy guys in work who knew what they were doing and were able to rescue an awful lot of what I had lost. It really is scary what can be recovered from a computer hard drive even when it has been formatted – Big Brother really does know what you have been up to, or he can find out!!!

Christmas is coming and we are preparing for our annual festive party on December 12th. Price will be £5 a head and it would be appreciated if you could let Chris Gibbon know if you are coming so she can plan the food. Mike Jones would also welcome any donations for Santa's Sack. Contact numbers inside front cover.

**..... Ends**