

# *Maidstone and Mid Kent Motor Club*

## *Autumn Newsletter 2020*

### **Chairman's Chatter**

Thanks to the efforts of our governing body Motorsport UK we have had a framework that has enabled us to organise three events in the period since the spring/early summer lockdown with the Wings Autotest on 23 August, the Brian Lewis Trial on 27 September and the Autumn Autosolo on 25 October. A big thank you is due to all those who helped to digest the new guidelines we have been required to follow. A lot of time was spent by the committee during July and August on Zoom meetings and individually preparing for the first event. Special thanks go to Bruce for the paperwork he produced as secretary and Des who automated the Covid declarations and signing on process to produce a system that is both efficient and user friendly.

All three events were held at Stoneacre Farm, Otham and I also want to give special thanks to Ian Betts who has not only allowed us to use his land but also has been there with his tractor on the morning of each event to assist where necessary.

The Autumn Autosolo was particularly challenging. It was always going to be a gamble to run an event on grass this late in the year, but we wanted to give everyone one more opportunity to compete in what has been a very short season. Unfortunately, we choose the day after a heavy storm crossed the country!

It was good to see the competitors were still smiling and enjoying the challenge of finding grip as conditions worsened. Lyle did a sterling job rescuing those who found themselves going nowhere in the mud on test one and the timing marshals enjoyed using the Sapphire Solutions timing system. Thank you to Toby Groves for masterminding the introduction of this.

As I write a second total lockdown has been announced. I suspect this will lead to another suspension of permits for motorsport events.

Fortunately, there is a gap before our next proposed event which is a 12 Car rally on Friday 22 January 2021. This a round of the Weald Motor Club 12 Car championship. I shall soon be recruiting marshals to stand by the roadside in a deserted spot on a cold January evening!!

*Liz Jordan*

**Chairman**

## WINGS ALL DAY AUTOTEST

As you will all know we have at last run our first post Covid 19 event on Sunday 23rd August, the Wings All Day Autotest. A lot of effort was put in by the organising team led by our Chairman Liz Jordan to meet the Motorsport UK requirements to run an event in the now familiar Covid 19 environment. The requirement that no paper changes hand on the day, meant the Club website came into its own as a method of administering the event. We are indebted to Des Crocker for all the hard work he put in in setting up the system and making sure the entering and signing on procedures were as seamless as possible.

Clerk of Course Andy Jenner aided by Dennis Usmar set out the test on the preceding Saturday experiencing some difficulty in knocking the posts in due to the very dry ground. Unfortunately, Ian Betts the land owner had been unable to prepare all the field in the way he had hope again due to the dry weather, so fifty percent of the venue was freshly cut grass. Liz who had taken on the role of Chief Marshal but was unfortunately unable to attend in person as Boris changed the rules before she was able return from France in time, after visiting her sister.

The day of the event turned out to be dry despite the forecast threat of rain. A full entry of forty competitors entered with a reserve list of three. Due to various human and mechanical



failures all three reserves were able to compete on the day. As no paperwork could change hands the normal procedure for recording the test times had to be amended with marshals recording the times rather than

competitors carrying score cards. At first this change caused a few hiccups, but marshals and competitors soon became used to it. With two runs complete on the first six tests the Clerk of Course called a break for lunch while he amended the tests for the afternoon session. The back field was



also showing signs of cutting up so this needed a bit more work than he had planned.

During the morning, some competitors had experienced problems with rolling tyres off rims probably due to dry ground (and the way they were driving!) At the lunch break Dave Cook had a slim lead over Charlie and Zach Lower in their MX5, with Tommy Woolley leading the Juniors Class. In Class A Chris Smith led the way with Brian Sharpe hot on the heels of Dave Cook in Class B. Peter Gorham was all on his own in Class C but was putting up some respectable times in his Peugeot 206SW. In Class D, Christopher Newton was leading all the BMW's. In the MX5 Class, Class E, the Lowers were showing everybody the way while the Sinclair's were enjoying themselves in their well turned out Reliant SS1. Roger Ashby seemed to be struggling on through the dust in his Orthoptera as he usually goes up to his eyes in mud in the trials which his car is more suited to. Maybe he was just dreaming of the day when he can squeeze more power out of his venerable 1172 Ford engine with a blower.?? All the Juniors were putting up a good showing with Tommy Woolley leading the Class at the halfway stage.

The PM tests were based on some tests left as standbys, should we ever need them in an emergency, by our ex-President Mike Jordan who in his time was an experienced and a successful autotester. The afternoon session got underway around 13.30 and soon the cars were disappearing in clouds of dust, which showed the small amount of rain had done little to dampen the ground. Fortunately, the morning tyre problems were not recurring, so all the modified tests were completed without incident.

At the end of the day the Class winners were :

Class A - Chris Smith

Class B - Brian Sharpe

Class C - Peter Gorham

Class D - Christopher Newton

Class E - Zach Lower

Class F - Roger Ashby

PCA— Class J - Jamie Gorham

All the Marshals who stuck at their posts all day despite the dust must be thanked. The organisers would also like to thank all the Competitors and Marshals for the patients and taking the time to understand and comply with the new rules under which all events will have to run for the foreseeable future.

Seemingly everybody enjoyed the day and all the work put in by the Organising Team had paid off to produce the Club's first successful Post Covid 19 event.

*Bruce Jenkins*

## Up and Down the A20

- Operation Brock to be reintroduced on M20 Jnc 8 to Jnc 9 with a moveable barrier.
- 174,887 cars were registered in July 2020, an increase of over 30,000 in June.
- MMKMC to introduce Sapphire Timing for 2021 autotests.
- UK Government to allow the introduction of E10 fuel in 2021.
- Mitsubishi to withdraw from Europe by end of 2021.
- Treasury lost £2.4billion in fuel duty in two months of first Lockdown.
- It can cost up to £300 for a car to be recovered from a UK Motorway or A Road by Highways England.
- Rumour has it that somebody is glad to see the back of a certain green and yellow Westfield.
- Our spies tell us that a long time Mini exponent has been seen driving a Citroen on trials somewhere north of the Thames. Will we now see him in Citroen?
- Headcorn Aerodrome has introduced a £2 per car parking charge. Just think of the money we could have made when we were doing the parking at Headcorn?
- According to a recent RAC report, 1 in 3 of all drivers take handheld calls while at the wheel. 1 in 5 young drivers make video calls behind the wheel and 1 in 10 young drivers play games on phones when driving.!!
- The latest word for car manufacture's design language is "Retro-futuristic". No wonder they are so ugly?
- Not being allowed have passengers on trial's, one of our members took his dog instead. Trouble was the dog bent the brake pipe to the rear wheels and he ended up competing with locked rear wheels.
- Each year at least £11 million of damage is done to vehicles from collisions with deer. Very dear indeed!

## Vnuk

The Vnuk issue apparently has not gone away. The Motor Insurance Bureau (MIB) is a non-profit organisation set up in 1946 to compensate victims of uninsured / untraced drivers under the provisions of the Road Traffic, i.e. not on private land. The MIB compensation pot is funded by motor insurance.

### **Article 10 of EU Law states:**

*Each Member State shall set up or authorise a body with the task of providing compensation, at least up to the limits of the insurance obligation for damage to property or personal injury caused by an unidentified vehicle or a vehicle for which the insurance obligation provided by Article 3 (compulsory insurance) has not been satisfied.*

MIB recently lost a case in the Court of Appeal because it was considered to be an emanation of the State and the UK Government had failed to fulfil its obligations under EU Article 10 to set up or authorise a body, therefore MID had to carry out its obligations under the directive. This extends to all wheeled vehicles on private land in accordance with the Vnuk decision.

This ruling which will include such things as e.scooters could add £50 per year to the cost of car insurance as MIB estimate that it could be forced to pay out between £200million and £2 billion per year. The EU has however accepted that vehicles used solely for motorsport are exempt from the requirement for third party insurance.

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## **Falcon MC Car Trial 11<sup>th</sup> October**

The Falcon MC. David Maiterland Car Trial was held on downs near Ivinghoe Aston, not far from Whipsnade Zoo. I normally double drive with Dave Feck who unfortunately was unable to compete this time. Instead of giving it a miss I teamed up with Ray Lane which was a new experience for him driving a Saxo instead of a Mini. After an early start we arrived at the venue at around 8.30 parking in a paddock area with fellow competitors that we had not seen for a while. There was a full entry of 47 competitors competing for five different championships. During these strange times we are living in it has become a paperless event with no driver score cards. The signing on form which incorporated a pre-event scrutineering declaration form was all done online. There were 8 hills marked out presenting different challenges with two rounds in the



morning followed by two after lunch break.

It was an ideal day for a car trial with the weather being fine and not too much wind. The different classes of cars evenly split starting at different hills promptly at 9.30.

After completing each hill, the car re-joined the queue for the same hill but before the second driver could sit

in the car it had to be sanitised each time. I don't think many germs stood a chance of being on the car at the end of the day, with the number of times it was cleaned with antiseptic wipes.

The two rounds in the morning were quite slippery in parts but both of us were achieving fairly good results. We stopped for a lunch break while the hills were altered to make them more difficult to climb as the wind was helping to dry out the marked sections on the hills,



The wind had dried the slopes, but the alterations made to the course were still a challenge for the afternoon rounds.

The results were to be published online so that there was no waiting around, we loaded the car on the trailer and made the journey home.

A thanks to Falcon MC for a well organised good days trialling

Seven MMKMC took part in the Falcon MC Trial

Class A Jim Puller in a Toyota Yaris

Class B Dennis Usmar. & Ray Lane. In a Saxo

Class D Roger Ashby. In a Coates Orthotera. Les Rayfield. & Chris Young. In a Freestyle Fun Buggy

Class 1 Jay Grossmith. In a VW Lupo

*Dennis Usmar*

## Brian Lewis Car Trial 2020

Having successfully run our first event of 2020, the Wings Autotest, we pressed on with the organisation of the Brian Lewis Car Trial. Clubs were concerned that upon the restart of events there would be a problem with over subscription. All clubs restarting at the same time has been more of a problem though in trying to make sure events did not clash. Competitors have had plenty of choice of events which for us meant we did not get the full entries we had hoped for.

Since the Wings, MSUK requirements had moved on. This meant a complete review of what we had to do to safely run an event. With a lot of trial entries coming from double driven cars, to allow this or not was one of the biggest issues. Some clubs were allowing double drivers, and some were not. With the benefit of our Chairman's connections with clubs in other regions we were able bring some uniformity to our revised regulations and operational systems, to enable us to meet the latest Government and MSUK requirements.



At the close of entries, we had 21, disappointing but the level we have come to expect for trials in recent times. It has taken time for both competitors and marshals to get used to the new signing on procedures. Des Crocker has done an excellent job in simplifying the complete entry and signing on process, but this still

seemed to confuse some folk. We thought we had cracked it with the Wings but with the "trialer's" generally being a different set of competitors, there were a number of queries, although we did not have to chase people up to sign on this time.

Unfortunately, in the days before the event we had had a couple of withdrawals. Jay Grossmith with car problems and Andy Laing receiving a broken shoulder when somebody knocked him off his push bike. Also added to the list was our Covid 19 Officer Paul Thornton, who had fallen off his push bike damaging his ribs. No wonder the Health Service is over worked. Is this the low carbon future the Government is always banging on about ....and we have still got e scooters to come?!!



On the Saturday before the event the usual Team of Dennis Usmar, Tom Thompson, Gavin and Ray Lane were joined by Roger Ashby and Clerk of Course Andy Jenner to set out the hills. After the long dry summer, we had had some rain in the days leading up to the trial but the ground was still very dry. This always makes it a challenge to try to produce a mix of hills that strikes a balance between all hills being cleaned and competitors hardly getting beyond the start.

On the morning of event competitors and marshals were all checked in by our Team of volunteers recruited by Chief Marshal Liz Jordan. Lyle Cathcart was promoted to Covid Officer in Paul Thornton's absence and got to wear the red tabard supplied by Motorsport UK specially for the occasion. The benefit of this to us was everybody could see him coming from a mile off.

With no scrutineering allowed, Andy gave a marshal's and driver's briefing and then Liz directed the marshals to their allotted hills. Si Kellow, Andrea Sterry, Alan Blunden and Andy Matthews, were among the new faces that we were glad to have marshalling. It was also good to see Harry Mewett and Jamie Graham representing the young generation.

With the now much reduced prestart procedures completed competition started at 10.00 as scheduled. The first run soon proved no obstacle to Classes 3 and 4 with nearly all cleaning all the hills. Classes 1 and 2 didn't have it quite so easy with most ending up in the mid score range. At this stage it looked like we were going to have a difficult time getting a result, but just on queue before the second run, or may be Clerk of Course Andy Jenner had organised it, we had a shower of rain. This provided the challenge that we needed to sort the men from the boys. At the halfway point Class 1 was very close with Michael Trim just ahead of Jim Pullar. Class 2 was led by David Brock from Dennis Usmar. In Class 3 Cliff Morrell was ahead of Andy Laing. Class 4 was dominated by the Redmayne's, with Graham just behind Barry who had the best overall score of 17.

After the completion of the first two runs C of C Andy Jenner made a number of changes to the hills while competitors enjoyed a leisurely lunch break. With the rain now having passed over the afternoon hills produced a mixed result with some finding it a bit more difficult and others cleaning everything.

At the end of the day all the competitors seemed to have had a good days sport and although we were not allowed to present any prizes, which seems a bit of an anti climax, the Brian Lewis Trophy went to Barry Redmayne with an overall score of 17, all of which he racked up in the morning. The class winners were; Class 1 Alan Scott, Class 2 David Brock, Class 3 Cliff Morrell and Class 4 Graham Redmayne.

Thanks as always must go to Liz Jordan and her band of marshals who spent the day running up and down the hills and of course to Andy Jenner for keeping the event on course and doing his best to make the afternoon hills different and interesting.

Let's hope we can do it all again next year.

*Bruce Jenkins*



**Brian Lewis  
Car Trial**



## **Mud Glorious Mud or Otham Autumn Slalom**

With the curtailment of motorsport activities due to lockdown and having lost the whole of the summer autotest series we were looking to see what events we could run for members. With it being past the end of the grass autotest season Andy Jenner suggested holding a slalom on grass i.e. an all forward autotest. Well it seemed like a good idea at the time.

Motorsport UK still had all the covid procedures in place but issued permits for the event to go ahead. Landowner Ian Betts gave the go ahead to use the top field at Otham, as in his words he had sent all his sheep off on "holiday".

After the long dry summer, it had to catch up some time and unfortunately it chose the day before the event to do so. Setting up the event proved to be a bit of challenge as accessing the top field was looking difficult and Andy proved the point when he got his van with all the equipment in, stuck.

We then had to resort to Plan B and access the field via a long and wet access track which with a bit of skilful driving by Andy enabled he and Toby to deliver the equipment to set out the tests.

I was awoken in the night by the rain battering on the roof and dreaded to think what things would be like in the morning. Sure enough, upon arriving at Otham it was as wet as I had feared it might be. At this point maybe we should have taken the decision to cancel the event but with everybody having put a lot of effort into organising the event and no more events planned for the rest of the year we decide to give it a go. But would the competitors turn up? At least it had stopped raining by now. The first to arrive were Liz and her band of marshals to check people in. Looking around it was obvious that we were not going to get competitors into the field by the normal route and Andy's experience from the previous meant that most cars particularly the MX's would not be able to use the Plan B route due to the depth of the ruts. With a marshal's briefing planned for 9.30 and a driver's briefing at 9.45 we had to find another way or it was call it a day. A quick discussion with landowner Ian Betts revealed a Plan C. Plan C was to run up the trial's valley and through a gate at the top that lead to the top end of the field. We were not sure if everybody would be able to make it up the last steep bit, but it would be the first test of everybody's driving skills. An added bonus of a car trial all in one event.

Marshals and drivers briefing completed it was time to put Plan C into action. The cars were sent

up the valley one at a time. All but a couple of the lighter front drive cars made it without problems, so we were ready to commence the tests. Drivers that didn't make it were towed by Lyle Cathcart and received a liberal coating of mud from his Freelander's

wheels. The plan was to split the competitors into two groups and have them do all three runs on each test before going to the second test to avoid too much trekking about. The weather forecast was for showers late morning and sure enough we had one. Trouble was it was torrential, so the bit of drying out from first thing was all undone. Finding traction was now very difficult and all test were completed in slow motion with keeping to the course, being the essential skill.



One of the aims of the day was to trial the internet based Sapphire timing system to see if the Club should adopt its use for all events in 2021. Toby Groves had set the system up and had instructed the marshals in its use. Marshals were therefore taking turns in timing competitors to gain some

experience of using the system. At least this part of the day appeared to be going well.

At the completion of the first two tests Alan Scott was leading Class A, Dave Cook Class B, Chris Penfold Class D and Geoff Fox Class E. In a Class of his own literally,





Roger Ashby was putting up some respectable times probably due the condition being more akin to a trial than an autotest. The Juniors were being led by Ryan Howatson but all were struggling with the conditions.

By the time everybody had completed their first three runs the ground was really cutting up very badly and for some just keeping moving was impossible. This involved more towing by President Cathcart. At this point a pole of the

drivers was taken as to whether to carry on or call it a day. Much to the organiser's surprise the decision was to carry on as most were enjoying the slippery conditions

The afternoon session would therefore consist of two runs of one test in the flatter field.

As the day wore on the mud got deeper and the tests more difficult but to be fair to all the competitors, they all stuck it out. As is the way, as the event drew to close the rain stopped and the sun came out.



The final class positions had not changed from the morning session with the same competitors winning their classes that had been ahead at the end of the first two tests. However, Dave Cook recorded Fastest Time of the Day which gave Brian Sharpe the Class B class win.

*Bruce Jenkins*

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## ***From the Club Archives***

20 years ago this this year, the club ran the Hopper National Rally.

We would love to be able to run a rally in Kent these days never mind award 100 Guineas first prize, find 200 marshals and attract top line competitors!!

## THE HOPPER RALLY 1960

This event, although receiving severe criticism from a number of competitors and the press, was one of the best "Nationals" held in Southern England for as long as I can remember.

The rally started from Brands Hatch Circuit and the first section was run at sensible average speed to Rainham.

After Rainham, the rally started in earnest. Eight very short sections on glorious rally roads south of Sittingbourne and across to Charing. This took toll of quite a number of competitors and at Charing where there was a period of 'dead time' to the competitor's own choice my navigator, Vic Elford, had his first incident.

The next section was a three minute one and whilst Vic was getting the new card, I sat with the engine running and Vic's door open ready for him to jump into the car whilst it was already travelling at 20 m.p.h. Unfortunately he missed the door opening and threw himself on to the sharp part of the body on which the door shuts—he couldn't sit down for a week.

The next few sections headed generally south via Ashford, Cranbrook and Heathfield to even better rally country, namely Pevensey Marshes where the maze of difficult 'white roads' whittled the number of clean sheets at the supper stop, which was at Beachy Head, down to twelve.

From here, the next three sections were on easy main roads to a point north-west of Brighton and then came the six sections which caused most of the criticism. These sections traversed the top of the South Downs over roads which were difficult to define on the map and navigation in some cases had to be done on the trial and error method.

Everyone lost time here and several courting couples had their sessions disturbed by very effective roof lights! However, the results show that the more experienced competitors got through without losing too much time.

After this the route went north with seven excellent sections via Fittleworth and Haslemere to the A.30 cafe at Hook where there was a most welcome break of half an hour.

Two long main road sections followed still going north to four really tight sections, two of four minutes and two of two minutes around Burnham Beeches and then the final run in to London Airport and breakfast.

Congratulations to the Club and the Clerk of the Course for organising a fine rally which sorted out the sheep from the lambs as a National Rally should.

Even more congratulations to the 200 marshals who braved the elements and got us through controls as quick as was humanly possible.

And finally congratulations to Pat Moss and Stuart Turner for winning the event with a loss of only three minutes.

For myself may I say—same again next year please?

DAVID SEIGLE-MORRIS.

(The Clerk-of-the-Course informs me that every section on the 'Hopper' was done clean by at least one competitor.)—THE EDITOR.

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## RESULTS FOR THE NATIONAL "HOPPER" RALLY Saturday, 2-3rd April, 1960

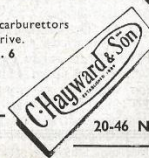
1. The Harold Fletcher Trophy and 100 Guineas .....	Miss Pat Moss
The Rootes Rally Trophy .....	S. Turner
2. The Wilfred Pocock Trophy and 75 Guineas .....	G. D. Grimshaw
A Trophy .....	B. Melia
3. A Trophy and 50 Guineas .....	R. N. Richards
A Trophy .....	G. C. Davies
4. A Trophy and 25 Guineas .....	S. Clipston
5. A Trophy and 15 Guineas .....	R. J. G. Smith
6. A Trophy and 10 Guineas .....	D. Seigle-Morris
7. A Trophy and 10 Guineas .....	E. Malkin
8. A Trophy and 10 Guineas .....	H. J. Harper
9. A Trophy and 10 Guineas .....	R. A. Clift
10. A Trophy and 5 Guineas .....	I. D. L. Lewis
11. A Trophy and 5 Guineas .....	G. Mabbs
12. A Trophy and 5 Guineas .....	D. H. Ray
13. A Trophy and 5 Guineas .....	J. Stedman
14. A Trophy and 5 Guineas .....	J. Poulton
15. A Trophy and 5 Guineas .....	J. R. Clarke
The Jane Waugh Trophy .....	D. Seigle-Morris
Team Award .....	R. J. Smith; S. Clipston

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# KENT DRIVER

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AND MID-KENT MOTOR CLUB



THE NEXT ISSUE OF KENT DRIVER WILL CONTAIN AN ARTICLE ON THE 1960 MONTE CARLO RALLY  
BY JOHN LATROBE (SEEN ABOVE AT DOVER).

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WHAT PRICE PETROL? · SAFETY GLASS · MORE ABOUT SIGNALS · "HE'S A GOOD DRIVER"  
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR · PERSONALITY PAGE · BEHIND THE SCENES · AUTOCROSS  
NATTER & NOGGIN · UP AND DOWN THE A.20.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY, 1960

ONE SHILLING