



Maidstone and Mid Kent Motor Club

Newsletter

November 2021



Editors Ramblings.

As we near the end of the year and the 2021 motorsport season starts to draw to a close, I see that members have still been taking part in a diverse range of events. Maybe we are getting back to near normal so let's hope nothing comes along to disrupt it again. With you all being so busy with events it is good that some have found time to share their experiences with the rest of us, so I must thank all those who have contributed to this newsletter. Can I just hope that others follow their example? Anyway, those that have been competing need to get their results into Des so that he can determine who is going to take home the silverware this year. Our President is already busy polishing.

After a year when we could not provide many events, Subs were reduced this year to reflect this, but we are hopeful that in 2022 we will be back to our normal level. 2022 Subs are £15 for single and £20 for family membership, still below our pre covid rates. Renewal reminders should be going out soon, so now is the time to renew your membership.

The calendar for next year (which you will find at the end of this newsletter) has now been fixed following agreement with Headcorn Aerodrome that we are able to continue to run our events at this excellent venue. Part of our agreement is that we again help marshal the carparking for the Combined Ops Show in August. This is always an interesting couple of days so please put it in your diaries to help on one of the days. You will also again get marshalling points to count towards the annual driver's championship.

While on the subject of end of year events, some of those to be congratulated for recent successes are Lloyd Covey on taking FTD at the Brands Hatch Autosolo and past Chairman Chris Browne finishing 14th and 2nd in class on the Roger Albert Clark Rally (RAC), in what must have been changing conditions. A message from our current Chairman suggested that the weather had caused her to be holed up in a hotel for two days with no ability to contact the outside world while marshalling on the RAC. I bet James Muir is glad he withdrew his entry?

It is good to hear from one of our younger members, Louise Gilks (page 8) and how she is progressing with her career in the motor sport industry. We need to hear more of the younger generations exploits. What happened to Catie Mullings since she became a TV celebrity?

And finally, it is not my intention to turn this newsletter into an obituary's column, but we do seem recently to have lost some notable names from our sport, particularly those I grew up with. See pages 8 & 9.

Bruce

Up and Down the A20

- It would appear that leaving the EU has not made some of their ideas go away as our government is intent on taking them up anyway. A while back there was an EU proposal to make it an offence to drive a vehicle on the public highway that is in noncompliance with EU Type Approval Regulations, i.e. any modification to a vehicle that is not part of the manufacture's specification. This would manifest itself as an MOT failure in the UK. It would appear the UK Government has put out a consultation document with a similar aim. The British Federation of Historic Vehicle Clubs (FBHVC) has raised concerns as to whether this will apply to all vehicles including historic's and those intended for motorsport. The reply they received from the DfT was that it would not be applied retrospectively but only to new vehicles. We in the motorsport community tend to use vehicles that are neither historic or new. What are new vehicles today will be the club vehicles of tomorrow so there will come a time when vehicle will not be able to be modified in any way for road events. Are we looking at a very bland future?
- The rules that required people who passed their driving test after 1st January 1997 to pass a further test before towing a trailer, that were due to change on 15th November, still have not been implemented. This is due to the House of Lords, to date, having insufficient time to pass the changes into Law.

You're Never Too Old To Get Involved In Motorsport.

From an early age I've always loved cars, I have fond memories of being a child, listening to the engine in my dad's car and watching his feet, waiting for him to depress the clutch pedal so that I could change the gear for him! Through the years I've owned and driven various cars of varying size and power. My all-time favourite car that I owned was a white 1989 Honda CRX with a 1.6 VTEC engine that I used to love throwing round the bends on the A225 when I lived in Bexleyheath and worked in Otford.

I got married, had children, and settled into family car ownership, although it always had to be something with a little bit of oomph!! Fast forward twenty years to meeting Si, and as well as a shared love of Speedway, we both also loved driving cars.

When we met, I'd booked to take part in Volvo 600 in March 2019 with my XC60, a Guinness World Record Attempt at a procession of 600 Volvo's travelling one mile, so I asked him if he'd like to come with me, which he did. That summer Si noticed on Facebook an MMKMC member saying come along to one of our autotests and try it out. Si took his son Drew and they both thoroughly enjoyed it, so I went along to the next evening one at Headcorn with him and I laughed so hard at all the fun we had my stomach ached for days. I was hooked!

I never knew for all those years of loving cars and watching motorsports that it was even possible to take part in anything like autotesting or a rally, and so aged 50 a whole new world opened up for me. Si asked if I fancied trying my hand at a 12 car rally, without any hesitation I said yes. I was so nervous beforehand, but we got round and we laughed lots and even better we were still talking at the end of the night. Since then, I've had a go at autosolo's, marshalled a Targa rally and a couple of trials and on Friday I took part in my first track day at Brands Hatch, aged 52. I absolutely loved it, despite a little pirouette coming out of Paddock Hill Bend on one of the laps. If the last 18 months or so have taught me anything, it is to grab every opportunity to do things that I enjoy when I can. I have had a couple of spinal operations and am currently waiting for a new hip which can be painful, but life is too short to sit back and spectate, I intend to keep on getting out there and having a go for as long as I am still able. If you've ever thought about trying something different, just do it!

Andrea Sterry

Farnborough & District Targa Rally Report.

A great day at FDMC Rushmore Area Targa on 7th November. Well organised, great venue with a range of surfaces and perfect weather. Thanks to FDMC and all the marshals who stayed on into the dark. There were six long tests with the last one going into the dark just to make it more challenging.

Out of the 46 entries 6 were from MMKMC and who produced some great results. Notably, Steve and Rebecca Groves were 3rd Overall and 2nd in the Master's over 1400cc Class. Also, with Rebecca driving their Clio, they were 7th in Class and 15th Overall.

In the largest over 1400cc Class for novices, Katie Smith navigated Grahame Standen to 1st In Class and 5th overall and was 13th herself. Richard Olsen navigated by Emma was 3rd in Class and 8th overall in their



MGZR that survived a bent front cross member and two punctures, forcing Richard to be uncharacteristically gentle in the rougher patches! Also, out of a class of 21 Emma Olsen was 10th and Toby Groves navigated by Millie Groves was 12th.

FTD went to Matt Endean, navigated by Suze who finished 9th overall in their MG ZR recently re-built

Emma Olsen





The Sevenoaks Winter Autosolo Series, Rounds 1 & 2

The thought of a new series of solos "in the dark times" was something that got our family a bit excited.

Round 1

The first round was contested at the Ashford Cattle Market on the 6th of November, and after the drowning we got at the first event at Ashford in the summer, it was a relief that the dawn revealed a dry outlook. As Ryan had gotten himself a Saturday job, it was just Andrea, Drew and me trundling down to Ashford in the red and grey Micra's. Sevenoaks and District were running the day, and the familiar yellow tent was setup as race control. After collecting our numbers (a way to meet Motorsport UK's eco sustainability targets - rather than us competitors keep printing off at home, SDMC have created the numbers and laminated them - woe betide anyone who forgets to hand them back!) there was just time for a walk round the first layout and a visit to the onsite facilities before a prompt start.

The format for the day was nice and simple - 4 tests, 3 attempts at each test and best 2 runs to count. A strong MMKMC contingent with at least 15 of the 45 declared entries.

My usual plan of watch the first few attempts before I had a try was thwarted by the planners - someone must be car one, and today it was me. I did feel slightly under pressure to do well, as I had the minis of Lloyd Covey and Chris Smith running behind me. Now I have to say that I am a fan of the Sevenoaks traffic light. The start marshal got me into position, "watch for the green light", and off I went.... Well, it could have been a spirited start, but as the paddock at Ashford really is a "paddock" (borne out by the sheep occupying the way to the facilities!) then then the first two gates felt a bit "fuzzy" as the mud came off. Slingsing the Micra into the right to go into the pressure washer bay I felt the tyres grip and knew that I wasn't going to end up finding out how well they had cleared the concrete area out :) 🤖 🤖

The layout for Ashford is on the concrete apron at the back of the livestock sale area and is "L" shaped. As the test took the 90 right to head up towards the road, you couldn't help focussing on the very deep drain that is about 6 inches wide, between the sale pens and the apron. For me this is just a "don't go too far to the right", but as Alan Scott found out in the RX-8, he was microns away from dropping his rear tyre into the drain (when we walked the course later in the day, the tyre mark clearly showed how close he had come to the edge, and proved he was very sideways at the time!). This did prompt the Clerk of the Course to adjust the layout slightly before test 2!

At the end of my first run, I was called back by the marshals, "Timing failure, go again". At least this time I knew where I was going, and the added advantage that my tyres were clean and dry. All was good with the second attempt, and I set a time. I'll take my 60 seconds of being first in class and first overall, if you could just pass the trophy over now chaps, that would be great. Mr's Covey and Smith blitzed my time. I wasn't upset they were in minis, and I know the Mighty 1.2 Micra isn't quite the FTD bringer that I want :)

Drew was up next for our trio. He gets rather worked up at the start of events, and we had a few stalls getting to the start line. Once he was there, we have a quick father and son pep talk "you want me to help or just sit here?". Apparently, my dad sense of humour doesn't translate well at times of stress.

The one thing I must congratulate the course planner for at this event was the way the layout flowed. Apart from reminding Drew where he had to loop, my job as junior supervisor was quite easy. He even changes gear now to save my teeth from jangling as the red line gets assaulted. He put in a decent run, and then it was a hustle to get out of the test area and back into the paddock.

Andrea was looking forward to this round, because of the way the courses flow she doesn't need one of us being navigator. She caused some mirth at the start line as she channelled her inner Stig by having Classic FM on the radio. Now I will admit that Drew and I get competitive, although we are in different time brackets, it's the "did I do better" competition with yourself. Andrea on the other hand is there to do what she loves - driving. She does get cross at times with Drew and I for looking at the times and where we are at overall.

As the third test got going after lunch (small favour – if someone could explain that the phrase “all day breakfast” means “at any time you are open” to the Café we would be grateful) the threat of it getting wet loomed hard over us – the rainbow over the event was an interesting picture diversion. Luckily, the heavens didn't produce the threatened moisture over the layout, just over the paddock – bizarre. As we approached Drew's final run, the amount of mud coming onto the apron on tyres was increasing. This made for interesting starts. Drew's final run of the day, he launched himself off the start line, grabbed 2nd as we went through the first gate, and as we started the right hand turn I was opening my mouth to say “don't forget the tyres are still muddy” and got as far as “don't forget” as he used the reduced traction to slide the Micra where he wanted. “Never mind” was all I could finish off that sentence with. Hmm, perhaps my parental worries of playing Dirt Rally and Project Cars should be dialled down a few notches.

The end of the day came, and we decamped to the Café for a hot tea and some prizes. Technically the FTD was claimed by recent Caterham Academy winner Charlie Lower, but as his car didn't meet the regs, he had to settle for a class win. The FTD was duly awarded to Ian Mephan. I was quite happy with my 5th in class, and 29th overall. Drew was 9th in class and 39th overall – an interesting twist in that juniors were competing, but no juniors class. Andrea was 8th in class and 37th overall.

Round 2

It was a mere 3 weeks that found the four of us heading to Brands Hatch for the second round of the series with both Micra's as I hadn't had time to finish my mini. After Storm Arwen had passed through (luckily only delivering wind and some rain to us in the South East) the morning of the 28th dawned bright and cold, and as we found on the walk round the rally special stage – icy!

There were nearly 70 entries for this ever-popular Sevenoaks event, now incorporated into the winter series. A slightly smaller Maidstone contingent at 14 this time. As there were two tests, the entries were split, we were in group 1 starting on the rally special stage. The format was to be the same as round 1, 4 tests with 3 attempts and the best 2 counting. The planning team had come through for all the double driving crews, and we were suitably spaced out. In our group as well as Lloyd's classic mini, we also had a Blackpalfrey chap in a Berkley – a 400cc motorbike engined machine, that sounds like a collection of pop cans being brutalised by CV joint ball

bearings – if anyone declares they cannot hear Jeff coming they should be registered deaf. We entered this last year and so had an idea of what the rally stage could throw at us, but with an extra year of autotesting under his belt, Drew was a little more aggressive. In the afternoon, running in the opposite direction he caused me several moments that formed a pyramid in my seat squab. The first was about ½ way around, entering the left before the right to go up the hill. The backend decided that it could go faster than the front, and duly rearranged positions. Now I'm not usually a nervous dad, but this time I was thinking "this is going to go ouch". Imagine my utter surprise as Drew deftly steered into the slide, checked it, and completed the left. Then he burst out laughing, and lost time going up the hill as he was laughing so much. Time on test 72.9. His next attempt he set himself a target of getting under 70. The first sector went ok, he had a worry that he'd collected a cone, down the hill and had a slide on the right hander before his previous slide. Again, he deftly checked it and finished off his attempt without the laughter. We'd cleared the stage when his time pinged up so it was a mad scramble for the app to check – 67.7. Cue much happiness from Kellow Jr. By way of comparison, I'd done a 61.6 and a 59.1. As we lined up for his final attempt, I wedged myself into the passenger seat. We'd just watched the marshals putting the red and white barrier back in place and Drew was targeting under 67. "Ready when you are" came the invitation to proceed at pace. Should I close my eyes? Hang on for dear life? Try and be helpful and supportive? I think I'll opt for just hoping we don't end up in the woods. Off we went, jink left into right going up hill, left at the top onto the flat, stay right through the gates.... Crikey was my thought (ok Crikey is the publishable version), the left to go down the hill is approaching fast. As we took the left, I was mentally checking how many wheels were on the deck. Less than I was hoping. Drew had his determined face on, and then it happened.... We were going down the hill more sideways than I would've liked, and faster than I would've liked. So this is how my day is going to end I thought. How wrong was I? Very. As he had proved on his previous two attempts, Drew knows how to catch a slide, and caught it he did, into the left and kept the pace on. The rest of the attempt seemed rather tame, as we barrelled across the line and he stood on the brakes. "Drew Kellow – 66.6 OK" I had become the proud owner of a happy teenager.

The Paddock stage seemed to be causing folks great problems. There were still a few group 1 drivers to go when we trundled over, and there was a two word phrase that summed up 5 on the trot – "Wrong Test". Seasoned and novice drivers opined the same thing "there must be something very wrong with this test". I lined up for my first attempt at the last test of the day. Two more WT's had gone through whilst I was waiting – don't worry about them I was thinking to myself. I've got a big bulldog clip in the centre of the dashboard, and I glanced at the map. "Watch for the green" – time to do this then. I have no idea what happened out there, I was 120% certain that it was an awful test, the WT of WT's. The closing of the test went something like "hairpin turn left in corner at Hailwood, pass right cone, through orange pair, hairpin right, around cone hard left, down to pair, hairpin right back to marked 90 corner, rotate left around corner, anticlockwise loop around 4 cones, through gate left into final gate right into box and BRAAAKE". "Si Kellow – 94.5 OK" OK, OK???? That was better than OK, that was a total shock. Time was ticking down towards the Brands Hatch curfew. Was it going to be possible to get three runs in? Well some of us did, but just as Drew was lining up for his 3rd attempt, the chequered flag came down on the day. Cue much dabbling of keyboards by the team – Paddock Afternoon was now to be 2 runs, best 1 to count. As everyone congregated in the Hailwood, I found it amusing to listen to the chatter – "something seriously wrong with that last test, I kept getting a WT" well of the 10 runs that this set of novices had on it, only 2 resulted in a WT, and that was first attempt. The day was immensely challenging, but it was Lloyd Covey who lifted the FTD. I was chuffed with 29th, Ryan 35th Drew 36th and Andrea 52nd.

We're looking forward to the next rounds in this new series, it makes the dark times much brighter.

So, this year has been another fast paced and exciting year, with plenty of challenges and full of motorsport that's for sure... *Si Kellow*



So, I am now in my final year of an apprenticeship at Mercedes, working in engine testing for the Formula 1 cars, this has been an interesting year in terms of competition on the track being closer than it has for a while, which certainly is keeping us busy. College work and doing shifts certainly means I'm kept busy, but I wouldn't change it for anything as the knowledge and experience is invaluable at such a well accomplished company and I am excited to see where and what I will end up doing once I graduate into a full time role. Unfortunately, this year with Covid, like so many others it hasn't been the same, but we have been very lucky to be able to continue working and providing F1 world class entertainment even when it isn't going our way sometimes!

On the rallying front, luckily again this year with the help of a Gary Wood, Philip Atkinson and my Granddad, Trevor Gilks, I have managed to get out rallying for some BHRC rounds in the MK1 Escort. We managed to do some forest, some tarmac and even ventured out to the Isle of Man, which was a terrific experience for me, fingers crossed next year brings more of the same.

Between working and co-driving I try and lend a hand and service for Lotusbits with their duo of Lotus Sunbeams competing in the MSN Circuit Rally Championship, which keeps me in touch with a lot of people that have helped me on my journey so far.



BEFORE

I am very much looking forward to the New Year and seeing what it brings!

Louise Gilks



AFTER

From the Archives

Letter taken from MMKMC Monthly Bulletin April 1937.

FROM A VICE - PRESIDENT

These are really just a few words to wish the Club the best of good luck in its new venture, but it is a good opportunity to say that nowadays there is a real, genuine, and satisfactory reason for the existence of a good, clean motor club.

Some years ago people had a habit of asking why they should join a club, what earthly use that club was, and it was not over easy to explain satisfactorily. Today, with every possible sort of new legislation affecting motor cars, with the general outcry about driving on the road, a motor club can do a great deal of good. It can consolidate influence, for one thing, it can certainly influence events either by itself or in collaboration with other people, and quite certainly motorists want coherent combinations to make sure that they are not victimised.

Again, the whole point of a motor club is to convert people into real motorists, not just the sort of folk who go about from one place to another and care nothing at all, either for their cars, or for the way those cars are driven. If you can get a bit of enthusiasm into driving, if you can make a man really interested in driving, which is after all a highly technical and rather difficult matter, then I think you are on the way to improving that man's driving on the road, and a trial or competition is an extremely useful way of teaching anybody to handle their car in difficult circumstances, to reduce their time of reaction in an emergency, and generally to learn what driving really is, all of which is a definite benefit. It goes without saying, also, that the club can assist materially in educating other people, and doing it in a way that is not offensive, and so there is every reason in the world why a club is necessary,

Further than that, almost any sort of competition is a little adventure, and the more adventure you can have in the world, which becomes a little harder and a little more difficult every year, is in itself of great value.

S. C. DAVIS

Obituaries

Tony Dron (1946 – 2021)

He qualifies at the Collage of Aeronautical and Automobile Engineering in Chelsea but his writings saw him the Guild of Motoring Writers' Sir William Lyons Award in 1968. Professional racing contracts saw him drive for Triumph and Porsche in the British Touring Car Championship and Le Mans, winning his class in 1982. He was known most recently for racing at the Goodwood Revival and winning the Sussex Trophy for three consecutive years. He also played an instrumental role in nurturing motorsport talent. He last raced in 2011.



Frank Williams (1942 – 2021)

Sir Frank Williams, who died at the aged 79, was one of the greatest Formula 1 team owners in history and a man who became an icon through his determination to compete at the highest level despite a severe disability.

Sir Frank, who first ran a team in F1 in 1969 and set up Williams Grand Prix Engineering in 1977 before launching into two decades of success, was a quadriplegic after breaking his neck in a car crash in March 1986. Once he had come through months of recovery and rehabilitation, with considerable help and support from his wife, he launched himself back into F1, a sport he loved with a passion matched by very few and went on to his greatest achievements.

His team won seven drivers' and nine constructors titles, but in recent years had fallen to the back of the grid, after racking up £13m losses. Williams was sold to an investment group in August 2020 and the with family stepping aside.



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2022 CLUB DRAFT FIXTURE LIST

Event	Clerk of Course	Secretary of Meeting or Contact	Date
12 Car Rally	Liz Jordan	Toby Groves	21 st January
Annual Awards Evening	Liz Jordan	Lyle Cathcart	15 th March
Tyrwhitt Drake Trial	Andy Jenner	Bruce Jenkins	27 th March
<i>Autosolo (Provisional)</i>	<i>Ben Dawson</i>	<i>Andy Jenner</i>	<i>March</i>
Annual General Meeting via Zoom	Lyle Cathcart	Liz Jordan	4 th May
Autotest Taster Day - Otham			8 th May
Evening Autotest - Headcorn			18 th May
Evening Autotest - Otham			1 st June
Evening Autotest - Headcorn			15 th June
Evening Autotest - Otham			29 th June
Mike Jordan Celebration Tour	Liz Jordan		2 nd July
Evening Autotest - Headcorn			13 th July
Lydden Co-pro Sprint	Barry Morris / Josh Bennett	Simone Cornish	16/17 th July
Summer Slalom	Andy Jenner	Hilary Jenner	31 st July
Combine Ops Show – Headcorn Parking	Tim Mewett		6 th /7 th August
Evening Autotest - Otham			10 th August
Wings All Day Autotest -Headcorn			21 st August
Kent Forestry Targa Rally	Dave Clark	Toby Groves	10 th September
Brian Lewis Trial	Tom Thompson		30 th October

November 2021