

Maidstone and Mid Kent Motor Club

Spring Newsletter 2020

Chairman's Chatter

Welcome to the first Maidstone & Mid Kent Motor Club Newsletter for 2020. What an unusual year this is proving to be! As I write this we are all in lockdown with no indication as to when we may be able to start competing again. Those of us who are not essential workers are occupying ourselves with gardening, DIY projects, car preparation and sorting through the archives of event paperwork anyone who competes seems to accumulate.

The resumption of motorsport will need non-essential travel to be acceptable again and social distancing requirements are likely to mean that autotests and autosolos may be the first events to be run when activities resume.

My first job is to congratulate Des Crocker on his appointment as a Director of the club with effect from 31 March 2020. Most of you will be aware of the significant contribution Des has made to the club in revamping our website and looking after our social media as well as maintaining the club championship records. Des has not done this alone and I do need to give special thanks to Helen who has assisted Des with all these tasks as well as compiling the results on our events throughout the year. Des and Helen were awarded the Ford Rose Bowl for Club People of the Year at our awards evening on 1 February.

The MMKMC Championship Results for 2020 show that several of us did manage to compete in the first few weeks of the year. There were five MMKMC drivers on the Brands Hatch stages including Tom Grant making his debut on a special stage rally and all finished the event. Roland and Stuart Brown were pleased to finish three seconds ahead of Tim Mewett and I telling us that this was the first time they had beaten us. James Muir and Hugh Holdaway were competing in Tim's yellow Astra. It was great to see this out again. Although the event was held on 18 January the sun shone and there were an incredible number of spectators at what is now the only special stage rally in Kent. There was a constant stream of visitors to our service area with lots of club members coming to say hello during the day.

Three weeks later the Newton brothers and Tim and I were the only MMKMC crews on the Southdowns Stages at Goodwood circuit but what a result for the club! Anthony and

Chris Newton were an incredible second overall in their Nova and we were eight seconds behind in fourth. Both crews were class winners. There is a report from Chris Newton below.

Two autosolos took place on 15 March with MMKMC being represented by Lloyd Covey, Andre Layne and Mens Tamakloe at Brands Hatch and Brian Sharpe and Toby Groves at Brooklands. Lloyd and Brian went into the lockdown in the joint lead of the club tarmac autotest/autosolo championship and it will be interesting to see how this battle develops during the rest of the year.

There were two production car trials, the Roger Holmes on 19 January and Holbecks on 23 February. Jay Grossmith, David Fleck and Dennis Usmar competed on both with Roger Ashby joining them for the second. Dennis Usmar has produced a report for this newsletter.

I am pleased that we were able to have one social gathering before lockdown with our awards evening at the Dog and Bear, Lenham and there is a report from Lyle below about this.

The board of directors and the club committee have started holding virtual meetings with a big thanks to Des Crocker for guiding us through the process and helping everyone concerned to connect to the software. It was good to see all the familiar faces and know that everyone seems to be keeping well.

Do please let us know if you have any ideas for lockdown activities.

We were due to hold our Annual General Meeting on 5 May but the directors have decided to postpone this until we know if we are able to meet up again. If a meeting is not going to be possible we will deal with this as a virtual meeting.

I wish all MMKMC members the best of health in these uncertain times and look forward to meeting up with as many of you as possible at future competitive and social events once we these are permitted again.

Liz Jordan

Chairman

Newton twins impress at Goodwood

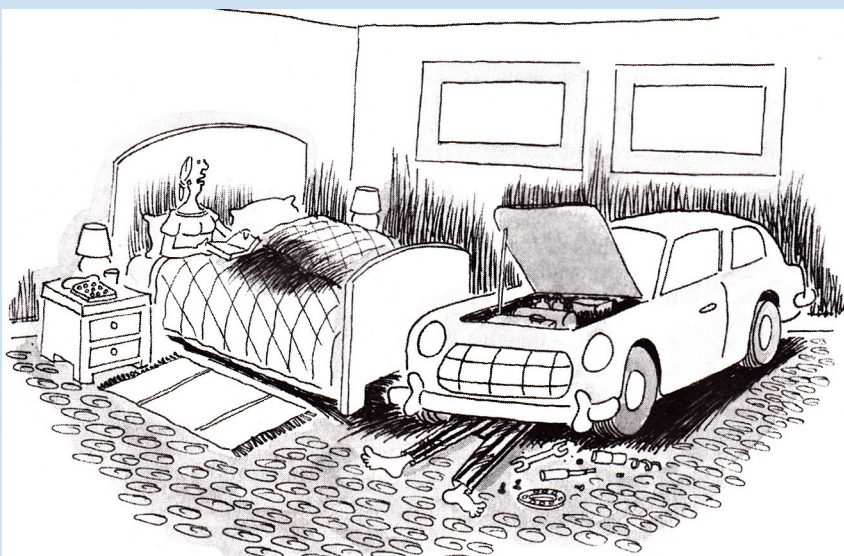
Anthony and Christopher Newton took their JenCo Electrical Ltd sponsored Vauxhall Nova to 2nd place overall at the Southdowns Stages 2020 on Saturday 8th February. The rally held at the historic Goodwood Motor-racing Circuit, played host to an array of rally cars for this early season favourite with competitors and spectators alike. Though we didn't know it, this was going to be the last event for many before the Covid-19 virus hit.

The Newton's opened their account early on, starting on Michelin wet tyres to overcome the lack of grip in the damp, which saw them set a trio of stunning times through stages 1, 2 & 3 and placing them 3rd overall. With a dry and warm track developing, the weather did not play to the strengths of their 1400cc nova, which was significantly outgunned by the more powerful cars they were competing against. Although the conditions did not provide the perfect hunting ground for the little hatchback, they remained in the fight, despite losing a couple of places on stages 5 & 6, which dropped them to 6th overall behind Tim Mewett & Liz Jordan. They hardened their resolve to claw back time on stage 7 and made a change to the suspension, fitting harder springs at the service halt. As darkness fell, they prepared for a push in the last two stages. With auxiliary lights ablaze and now back to 3rd, the duo blitzed the last two tests. Indeed, on the final stage of the rally they went quickest, finishing 23 seconds off event winner Paul King and more impressively taking 10 seconds from the car in front to consolidate the runners-up spot. It was a close run thing, as the Newton men finished the rally equal overall, with identical accumulated time as that of 3rd place driver Rob Dennis, but owing to going 2 seconds faster on the opening stage than Dennis, they were classified 2nd overall.

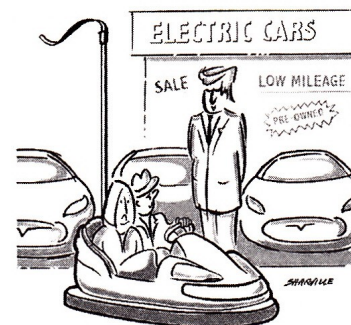


Up and Down the A20

- ◆ The Tendering and Clacton Rally has been postponed until 2021.
- ◆ The organisers of the 2020 Kent Forestry Targa Rally have made the decision to postpone the event until 2021. The proposed date for the event will now be Saturday 18th September 2021.
- ◆ The Pirelli has suspended their Calendar that has been a feature of the car world since 1964.
- ◆ Yokohama is offering classic car owners modern performance with tyres from their hobby-tyre range. The GT Special Y350 which dates back to 1967 is available in 14-15 inch wheel sizes. The Advan HF Type-D 008 is available for 10 - 15 inch rims. An updated A539 is available in six sizes from 12 - 15 inches.
- ◆ The SMMT has predicted that new car sales in 2020 will be down to 1.73 million, a reduction of 23%.
- ◆ Surrey Police caught a driver on the M25 doing 130mph, who told officers “ I thought the faster I went, the less chance I have of catching coronavirus”. Meanwhile Met Police caught a driver doing 134mph in a 40 limit.
- ◆ Since the UK lockdown the volume of petrol sold has drop 75% and diesel by 71 %.
- ◆ The number of vehicles on UK roads exceeded 40 million for the first time in 2019.



“I will be glad when this working from home is over.”



“Well, sir, it is fully electric and low-mileage”



“You must be joking”

THE ANNUAL AWARDS PRESENTATION 2020.

The Club this year decided to delay the 2019 Annual Christmas Dinner/Party until early in 2020 and bring forward the date for the Annual Awards Presentation with the Dinner being held at the Dog & Bear Inn at Lenham on Saturday 1st February 2020. This move and new venue appeared to be acceptable to those thirty six members and friends who attended the evening. Our club Chair, Liz Jordan presided over the evening and presented the awards, between the meal courses, which allowed those present time for social chat and to watch the Clubs activities on the continuous visual display provided by Helen and Des Crocker on the large screen.

It was pleasing to note that in the Club Annual Championship Awards results all the winners [who had qualified by organising/marshalling an event] were clearly ahead of their rivals whose results were discounted by their failure to comply with the regulations. This has not been the case in past years. We must thank all those who played their part and forgave an event by helping to run the event which is in the spirit of the regulations and also gives all the competing members an insight into the amount of detailed commitment that is required to organise and promote Club events.

The Club Championship Annual Awards for 2019 were presented to :

Young Club Driver of the Year:

1st Under 21 Trophy – **Jamie Gorham**

2nd Sports Car Challenge Cup – **Drew Kellow**

Senior Club Driver of the Year:

David Haynes Rally Trophy – **Robert Sharpe**

Lady Club Driver of the Year :

1st Eric Northover Memorial Trophy – **Emma Olsen**

2nd Uniflo Trophy – **Rebecca Groves**

Marshal of the Year:

1st = Don Baker Trophy – **Tom Thompson & Nigel Watson**

2nd Kleeber Trophy – **Dennis Usmar**

Navigational Scatter Driver & Navigator of the Year;

1st Peter Singleton Memorial Trophy – **Lloyd Covey**

2nd Graham Castle/Alan Turner Memorial Trophy – not awarded

Car Trials Driver Championship Driver of the Year:

1st Waugh Two in Crew Trophy – **Dennis Usmar**

2nd M R Cannon Trophy – **David Fleck**

Grass Autotest Driver of the Year;

1st Castrol Shield – **Brian Sharpe**

2nd Roy Carey Trophy – **Lloyd Covey**

Tarmac Autotest Driver of the Year:

1st Ken Jordan Bent Con Rod Trophy – **Richard Olsen**

2nd Ken Jordan Memorial Trophy – **Brian Sharpe**

Race/Sprint Club Driver of the Year:

Jubilee Trophy – not awarded

Special Stage Rally Driver and Navigator of the Year:

1st Driver Charing Rose Bowl – **Tim Mewett**

1st Navigator Wilfred Pocock Rally Trophy – **Liz Jordan**

Road Rally Club Driver of the Year:

1st Kathleen Jupp Trophy – **Steve Groves**

2nd Doug Harris Mid Kent Trophy – **Tom Grant**

Road Rally Club Navigator of the Year:

1st Lee Davey Navigators Trophy – **Rebecca Groves**

2nd John Liddell & Co Trophy – **Emma Olsen**

Overall Club Driver of the Year:

1st Hayward Trophy – **Brian Sharpe**

2nd Coronation Trophy – **Richard Olsen**

3rd P A Barden Trophy – **Lloyd Covey**

Club Event Official of the Year:

Sir Gwaine Baillie Trophy – **Bruce Jenkins & Andy Jenner**

Club Person of the Year:

Ford Rose Bowl – **Helen & Des Crocker**

Club Organiser of the Year:

John La Trobe Trophy – **Andy Jenner**

It was especially pleasing to see almost all of the Award Winners present especially both of the Young Club Drivers of the Year the notable absentees were Emma and Richard who were on a foreign holiday but kept in touch with the evening through Facebook!

The Club thanks Liz and Bruce and Des & Helen for making the evening a success.

Lyle Cathcart

Members comments on the news of the passing of Stirling Moss at the age of 90.

- ♦ With regard to Pat Moss I remember watching a film at a M&MKMC event of the peculiar sport of caravan rallying that had Pat Moss competing. - Brian Grant
- ♦ I don't recall that Stirling ever competed in any MMKMC races, but I was in short trousers in those days and Silverstone was too far to cycle on my trusty Dawes although I used to cycle to most of the Brands Hatch events. Oddly, considering he began racing in formula 3 I am pretty sure he never actually competed at Brands in formula 3 and his first event there was in a formula 2 Cooper Climax in which he knocked about two seconds off the lap record. The final lap record for Formula 3 was actually held by George Wicken although he didn't win the race in which he set it, I think Don Parker won it.— Ken Kimber

Car Trial Events 2020

The beginning of a new year means the start of the ASEMC 2020 car trial championship. This year another four trials had been added to the calendar making it a total of twelve, thanks to Roger Ashby making more of a challenge this year.

The first trial was the Roger Holmes Trial held on the 19th January run by the Cambridge MC. The venue being at Harlton, not far from Cambridge. At the time of submitting the regs I was not sure whether it would take place due so many areas being under water, but the receipt of the final instructions confirmed the Cambridge MC had decided they would go ahead. We started off early Sunday morning arriving at the venue about eight thirty to find the ground frozen. A number of regular competitors had already arrived prepare their cars for the event. Scrutineering and signing on complete we started at ten sharp, on the first hill. Three Maidstone members had entered for this trial, Jay Grossmith in Class 1, Dave Fleck and me in Class 2.



Dennis Usmar and Dave Fleck on the Cambridge Trial

Five hills had been laid out on a frozen sloping meadow but not muddy as in previous years making it relatively easy to drive along the field to the hills. We had three rounds in the morning with small alterations made after each round to make it easier or harder reflecting how far the cars were going up the hills. After lunch there were a further two rounds with



View of the WSMC Holbeck car trial venue

cars going in the reverse order but by this time the meadow had thawed out and started to get rather muddy but even so, some good results were being achieved.

After the finish of the event we loaded the car onto the trailer while we waited for the results to be announced. Jay had a good result with second in Class1, Dave and my self came third and fourth in Class 2. All that was left was a two and a half hour journey drive back home.

On the 9th February the West Suffolk MC had organised the Holbeck Trial on a hilly area just outside Hadley in Suffolk. The event was cancelled at the last minute due to a storm that was going to hit us over the weekend. It was atrocious weather that weekend and there was no way the trial could have taken place. The event was rescheduled for 23rd February with still vast areas of land still flooded. Final instructions were received the day before for the trial to go ahead. Another early morning start to make sure we arrived in time for the signing on and scrutineering. On arriving at the venue, the field that they use as a paddock was quite a challenge in itself to park the car and trailer. While preparing for the scrutineering we had a chat with other Maidstone members Jay Grossmith, Dave Fleck, Ray Lane and Roger Ashby. Scrutineering, signing on and drivers briefing complete the first problem was trying to go up a very muddy track way to the find the pegged out hills. On entering the next meadow we were surprised to find light sandy soil that drains well. The



Ray Lane on one of the sections

host club had intended to have four rounds in the morning and two runs in the afternoon with competitors going in reverse order. It was quite windy to start with which helped to dry the ground out even more, with drivers recording some good results but it all changed after the second round with a heavy downpour. The organiser decided to have an early lunch after that round, change the hills round and see if it was worth continuing. Surprisingly after lunch it was dry enough to continue with the next round.

It was a good venue and well organised event. We finished at a reasonable time and loaded the car on to the trailer while we were waiting for the results. Thirty entrants started the day with Jay Grossmith second in Class 1, Dave Fleck forth, Dennis Usmar fifth. Ray Lane unfortunately retired with an engine problem in Class 2. Roger Ashby came eighth in Class 4

Having submitted entries for the West Suffolk MC, Wattisfeild Trial, MMKMC Tyrwhitt Drake Trial and Falcon MC, Ivinghoe Trials these have all now been cancelled due to the Pandemic. We will have to all wait and see when motor sport can restart again.

Dennis Usmar

Tail Pipe

During these difficult times while this Corona virus plays itself out and we have to suspend all our normal activities your committee has not been sitting on its hands but keeping in touch via video conferencing. Like the Government, we have been looking at the way we may have to operate when the Lockdown is no longer being imposed. As Liz has said in her opening address it would appear unlikely that any events that involve more than one individual will be allowed in the current year (i.e. only autotests and autosolos may be allowed). However keeping competitors safe is one thing but doing the same for marshals will be even more difficult. Below are some of the ways that are being considered to protect Marshals from coming into contact with any competitor that may be carrying the Corvid 19 virus. If you have any bright ideas of how we can restart events safely, please get in touch.



Drivers and navigators

Marshals : it will be in Hi vis of course.

If you have any content that we can use for our next newsletter please email it to mmkmcevents@btinternet.com as we may be in this for a while.

As I write this on VE Day I am celebrating the 75th anniversary of being let out of my air raid shelter for the first time. An event that others particularly those that I am confined with now, probably regret.

Look forward to seeing you all soon and keep working on those cars!!

Bruce