



The Oulton Park Gazette

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DOUBLE CHAMP'

Simon Allaway takes second CNC Heads title

True Grit, Team BRIT



Racing a Classic



Racing on a Shoestring - Broadbent's Book Corner

WELCOME

Hello!

October always has a very distinctive feel. The rich colours of nature illuminated by soft Autumnal sunlight, drivers racing into the dusk, chilly air beckoning on the Winter months and – for some – clinching that elusive championship at the end of a long season. The title is often the reward for years, if not decades, of hard work.

This very much applies to our cover star, Simon Allaway, who secured the most prestigious title in North West motorsport for the second time – the CNC Heads Sports/Saloon Car Championship – exactly 40 years after taking up racing. Since that first series win in 2013, his Lotus Esprit has been totally rebuilt, even though initially Simon only intended to replace a single panel on the roof! Read the full story on page 7.

Elsewhere in this edition, I am indebted to Dan Chilvers for providing 5 brilliant features on a diverse range of subjects. From top end GT racing cars with configurable hand controls that accommodate drivers who have disabilities to competing on a budget in a Citroen 2CV or MG Metro.

Plus, he gives the fascinating back-story to a couple of fabulous machines that graced the Classic Sports Car Club's meeting.

Finally, I have written up detailed reports of all the happenings in the final trio of race days at Oulton Park in 2025... and there were lots of “happenings”!

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RACE REPORTS

AUTOS DE FRANCE – 11th October

OOOH LA LA!



Classically French Citroen 2CVs battle it out around Oulton

BARC paid their final visit to Oulton Park on 11th October with a mix of Tin Tops which included Britcar, the Junior Saloon Car Championship and the Track Action Race Club.

But for many local fans, the main focal point was the final couple of rounds for the CNC Heads Sports/Saloon Car Championship. Amazingly, the first of these was the 500th since the series started in 1983.

The spoils in this landmark race went to Chris Roberts' BMW M4 which had opened out an 11 second advantage until his tyres began to lose grip. This allowed Simon Allaway to close in rapidly in his Lotus Esprit. He was only half a second behind at the flag and would have undoubtedly won had his car been handling to his liking.

Next time out, Allaway made a brilliant start to lead Roberts and drove flat out until a few minutes from the end when the Lotus began to jump out of fourth gear. Therefore, he was relieved to see the red flags come out because a couple of cars had stopped in vulnerable positions. The win meant Allaway was the 2025 CNC Heads Champion.

converted pole into the lead and kept just ahead of Josh Selvado until the red flags came out with a few minutes remaining due to a car beached in the gravel at Druids. Just before proceedings were halted, Butler had a scary moment when he locked his brakes approaching a chicane and nearly went off. Oil had made the tarmac very slippery.

Butler and Selvado renewed their battle in race 2 but both had their frustrations. Selvado passed Butler for the lead at Cascades on lap 1 then, on the next circuit, Butler suffered right front suspension failure and retired on the exit of Old Hall. Selvado went on to take the win but a 10 second penalty for a start infringement dropped



Wilf Butler won the first JSCC race but retired from the second

him to third in the final classification behind Oliver Kerr and Ollie Smith. The spoils went to Kerr after he got better drive out of Hislops and passed Smith at Druids with a few laps to go.

At the start of the day, Nick Crispin was one of 5 drivers who had a chance of the 2CVparts.com Classic 2CV Racing Championship. In both of their encounters, he broke the tow to pull away from the pack and take the honours thereby claiming the 2025 title after a couple of lonely races although the battling behind him was very intense. We have an interview with Nick on page **xx**.

There was a very busy start to the 90 minute Britcar Enduro. As the Porsche 991 Cup of Dom Malone pulled away in the lead, at the start of lap 2 Martin Addison (Aston Martin Vantage) dived down the inside of the Ginetta G55 of Chris Bingham at Old Hall to move into second. Next time round, there was contact in the battle for fourth at the same corner when Noah Cosby's McLaren 570S and the BMW E46 M3 of Harry Barton tried to occupy the same piece of tarmac with the latter running wide on to the grass.

The race then settled down as Malone built a large advantage as Addison, Bingham and Cosby ran fairly close together with Barton a further 9 seconds back.

Just after the pit stop window opened, Cosby spun on the entry to Druids triggering a Safety Car period during which almost the entire field made their stops.

Malone's regular co-driver, Adam Smalley, was away racing in Europe and so, when he made his pit stop, his driving coach took over – none other than BTCC competitor, Charles Rainford.

When everyone was back on track behind the Safety Car, Rainford's leading Porsche was in the middle of the crocodile with just 3 back markers between him and Addison's Aston Martin which was yet to make the mandatory pit stop. Therefore, when the contest went back to green Rainford was quickly able to put a lap on the field.

Before long, the Safety Car was out again due to the Aaron Morgan/Paul Fullick McLaren 570S going into the gravel at Lodge.

Addison lined up behind Rainford, albeit a lap down, but needed to stop for fuel which is not allowed when the Safety Car is out to minimise risk.

He thought the caution period was ending so he dived for the pits only to find that the Safety Car was doing another lap. He had to do a "Drive Through" and take on fuel when the contest went back to green next time around. This cost him a podium finish and he was classified eighth.

A well-timed pit stop when the Safety Car was out enabled Callum Bates to take second place in his BMW M3 E46.

It was fitting that the podium was completed by a BMW M2 fielded by Geoff Steel Racing as, prior to the start, a minute's silence was held to mark the recent passing of the team owner. The former Touring Car driver and long-time Britcar entrant was very highly regarded in the UK's Endurance paddocks.

Because he was struggling to find gears in his Skoda Octavia, Paul Roddison made a slow start to the opening encounter in the Track Action Race Club's Double Header. He dropped down to seventh but recovered such that he was overtaking leader, Adam Croft in his VW Scirocco, as they flashed past the chequered flag. Unfortunately for Roddison, he was 0.025 secs behind as they crossed the line.

Roddison made a better start next time out and exited Old Hall in third position behind Callum Trump (Nissan 240Z) and Croft. At the end of the opening lap, it was 3 abreast across the line as Croft and Roddison went past either side of Trump. Roddison then spun at Cascades.

Croft was probably thinking he was on his way to his second victory of the day but Dan Robinson was charging along in his Honda Civic having started from nineteenth on the grid after failing to finish earlier in the day due to an incident. He passed Croft at Shell. In the very next braking area, for Brittens, Croft put 2 wheels on the grass which rotated his car 90 degrees and launched him across the kerbs at the entrance to the chicane.

This dropped Croft to third behind Trump... but not for long as Trump spun exiting Cascades before retiring.

Roddison recovered from his earlier spin and demoted Croft in the closing stages to finish runner-up to the flying Robinson who had to dodge a couple of spinning cars on the last lap.



The Malone/Rainford Porsche powers towards Britcar victory



Dan Robinson had an amazing drive from 19th on the grid to win the second Track Action Race Club contest

TRANSFORMER



Simon Allaway won the CNC Heads Sports/Saloon Car Championship in a Lotus he has transformed since he last won the title 2013

Not only were the 2 races in the CNC Heads Sports/Saloon Car Championship on 11th October the 500th and 501st since the inception of the series but it was almost exactly 40 years since Simon Allaway took part in his first motor race at Donington Park in a Hillman Imp Special Saloon. Therefore, it was a poignant moment when Simon clinched his second CNC Heads title this year.

His first came in 2013 after he won the final round of the season following a thrilling battle for the lead with series-sponsor Ric Wood. Unfortunately, the driver of the ex-DTM Opel Astra crashed heavily and brought out the red flags, leaving Allaway to claim the title.

Although he became the 2025 champion behind the wheel of the same Lotus Esprit as in 2013, over the past 12 years, Simon has transformed it into a very different beast. At that time, it was powered by a Wildcat-tuned Rover V8 with suspension from a variety of sources – a March F2 car, a Westfield and some of Simon's own wishbones.

Everything changed when Allaway was preparing to defend his title prior to the 2014 season. He removed the roof from the Lotus with the intention of replacing it with a lighter panel but the cracks he discovered in the spaceframe meant he ended up having to completely rebuild the car rather than just replace the roof. This took several years!

Every cloud has a silver lining and the reconstruction meant that Allaway could develop

the ultimate version of the car which had been coming together in his mind for some time.

For a new power unit, Simon found an absolute bargain in America on eBay – an ex-IMSA Chevrolet LS6. To comply with the regulations, it had been reduced from 5.7 litres to a still mighty 5.5 to meet the requirements of IMSA regulations. This meant that there was little demand from local buyers and so Allaway's bid only had to match the starting price.

Having secured the aluminium power unit, Simon realised it needed new cylinder heads and received a nasty surprise when he received a quote for brand new ones from an engine-builder in the USA. Fortunately, the guy on the other side of the pond picked up on the fact that Allaway was a clubman funding motor racing from his own pocket and offered some second-hand components which he refurbished at a much lower cost.

The engine then crossed the Atlantic to be rebuilt in Simon's garage!

It wasn't just the power unit that was imported from the States. The suspension started life attached to a Lola Indycar. This was such a key area – the whole car was built up around these imported 4 corners.

No area has been left untouched in the unrelenting quest for speed. Even the bodywork has carefully designed aerodynamic appendices attached to it.

No wonder the mighty Lotus is so quick!

ALL YOU NEED IS... 45 BHP!

Writes Dan Chilvers



The motorsport ladder follows a consistent formula. Every rung you climb brings both an increase in speed and cost. Young drivers spend years scaling this slippery challenge with the dream of reaching Formula One. Yet for some racers, 45bhp is all they need. Some even take part in a 24-hour race at Snetterton behind the wheel of the iconic French people's car, the Citroen 2CV.

After chatting to some marshals while watching BTCC in 2011, Nick Crispin had an idea. He then devised a plan with Marc Nordon, David Watson and Colin Sanderson to compete in the 2012 2CV 24-hour race. P2W Motorsport was created and has evolved over the last 13 years and still features Crispin now partnering James Dartiath and Sean Sidley. The trio work as a team to build, prepare, run and race the car. Before his first race, Crispin had never "been on a racetrack, let alone held a race license" but his years as a mechanic and avid follower of motorsport meant he got up to speed fast. Surprisingly, 2CV parts are still mainly "available off the shelf" and any specialist parts that require "modifying or adjusting" can be easily done by a machine shop or race team. Equally, classic racing's famous community spirit shines through, with many series veterans "willing to help you out."

After World War II, France needed a people's car to mobilise its masses - and Citroën answered the

call. 40 years later in 1990, British club racers decided to go and race them flat out for 24 hours around Snetterton. These precision racing instruments require the same preparation as any classic race car. The teams who run them just have more fun! They may only service their car once a season but race winners like Crispin must be "prepared to spend more time going through the car before a race".

However, this post-race service gets quicker over time as you "learn which parts require attention more than others." It's great having the fastest car on the grid, but without mastering the strategy over a 20-minute sprint race let alone the full 24-hour race then it's all for nothing. Crispin reveals there is an art form to "judging safety car appearances after an accident (that) can gain you a lap for nothing, obviously a good pit crew helps with the refuelling



and driver change times, people having specific jobs and also keeping a watchful eye from the pit wall can bring advantages.”

Rather surprisingly, Crispin finds a 20-minute sprint race “more draining than a 3hr stint at the 24hr” due to the higher concentration levels required and the pressure due to having “little time to make amends for any mistakes or issues.” This ability to recover from issues proved very useful to P2W Motorsport team when, around 75% into the 24-hour race, the car had a wheel failure. They lost three laps dropping them down from the lead into third where they would valiantly finish after some quick repairs.

When asked to summarise the 24-hour race Crispin said the “24hr race is the season highlight” because “you get to race against people and cars you wouldn't normally compete with.” This ensures “there are very few times when there isn't another car with you, so you are always racing against someone.” The sense of “camaraderie amongst all the teams is special” as everyone wants to see every car cross the finish line. This means that often other mechanics will chip in to help get a car back on the track. The fact that at the end of the weekend most drivers say, “never again” and yet 12 months later they find themselves on the grid for another

crack speaks volumes about the event and its appeal.

Over nine races this season, Crispin and his P2W Motorsport team were a true title contender and after some fierce fighting at the Oulton Park season finale Crispin walked away with the coveted drivers' championship. He took 4 wins and three 3rd places en route. He is quick to mention and thank the immense help he received from “James, Sean and also all of the pit crew, not only for the sprint races but also the 24hr.” Crispin's personal key to success was his meticulous preparation and “final 5% of consistency” across the full calendar. P2W Motorsport and Crispin's ambitions don't stop there as he will be driving a Toyota MR2 next year alongside a BMW powered 2CV in the 2CV 24-hour race at Spa and even some European 2CV racing rounds. For Crispin and P2W Motorsport, it's not just about speed and trophies, it is about camaraderie, the challenge and the joy of racing a 45bhp icon twice around the clock.

The Gazette would like to thank P2W Motorsport and Nick Crispin for talking to us and they will be back out from the 8-9th November for the Race of Remembrance.



SPORT FOR ALL



Words by Dan Chilvers

Photos courtesy of Team BRIT

Team BRIT are a true inspiration. Although from the outside they may look like a normal GT racing team, beneath their purple livery lies a technological innovation that is changing the world of accessible motorsport. Based in Sussex, the team has battled all the usual motorsport challenges while championing equality in motorsport by supporting disabled drivers and veterans. The outfit was founded by Dave Player in 2015 as an extension to his charity for injured veterans, Kartforce. The team gets its name from its role in supporting injured veterans as BRIT originally stood for “British Racing Injured Troops” but after 2019 it opened its doors to any driver with a disability. With the team now celebrating its 10th anniversary, The Oulton Park Gazette reached out to them to learn about their story.

Team BRIT found its home in The British Endurance Championship, where they have fielded multiple cars over the years. This “melting pot of teams, budgets, and experience levels” created a perfect dynamic racing environment for the team to grow in. “It’s a brilliantly run series that strikes a perfect balance between eligibility and competition, allowing drivers at different experience levels to

find their place and grow”. Naturally, “each weekend brings its own hurdles” says Team BRIT, “from unpredictable weather to strategy calls under pressure.” However, if you are anything like me then its Team BRIT’s 2 groundbreaking seasons in British GT that come to mind first. The “incredible learning curve” that came with British GTs “level of professionalism and intensity” meant they had to dig deep to compete against factory driver and manufacturer backed teams. This didn’t deter the engineers, mechanics and drivers who rose to the occasion culminating in an overall GT4 podium at Spa in 2023.

The team’s two McLaren 570S GT4 cars and BMW 240i both undergo full strip downs after each race. Every component is “inspected, cleaned, and checked for wear or damage. Anything that doesn’t meet the standard is repaired or replaced” before being “meticulously” rebuilt. At the circuit, engineers dial the car to extract the final tenth of performance. They work on suspension geometry, tyre pressure and aero balance to ensure the car perfectly meets the drivers’ needs for each circuit. In endurance racing “preparation is everything. When the lights go out, you want to know that the car beneath you has been built and cared for with absolute dedication, and you need to have



confidence that it will reach the chequered flag.” But it’s their work off track that truly sets them apart.

This world leading system sets “a new global standard in adaptive technology” and ensures that a disabled driver can compete on equal terms with able-bodied drivers, which no other sport can truly offer. Developed by Team BRIT in partnership with Slovenian motorsport experts MME Motorsport, the system combines “pneumatic, electronic and hydraulic technology to enable the steering, brakes, clutch, throttle and gears to be controlled seamlessly using hands alone”. Previous methods involved drivers using a “push/pull” technique which required them to drive with only one hand on the wheel, costing valuable time. The fully adaptable technology was inspected by Motorsport UK’s technical experts and is surprisingly easy to adapt to. Drivers start out on a simulator to learn the controls before getting out on track with an instructor to build speed and performance at a comfortable pace. One of the system’s key features is its ability to be “instantly removed, unplugged and replaced with an ordinary steering wheel so the car reverts to standard specification” meaning that multiple drivers can use the car despite differences in disability.

On top of these challenges and innovations, the team must contend with all the standard race team problems such as finding sponsors, funding and delivering results. As they are not a charity, Team BRIT depends on “corporate and private sponsorship to enable us to race”. However, it is all worth it to “show our supporters the difference

they’re making and bring them into the Team BRIT family so that they feel a part of what we’re doing and see first-hand the impact we have”.

Since Team BRIT’s formation it has had one clear goal. To become the first all-disabled team to compete in the prestigious 24 Hours of Le Mans. That dream moved closer when Team BRIT announced plans to field a BMW M4 GT3 in the 2026 GT Cup season. The step up from GT4 has forced the drivers to focus on readiness “both mentally and physically” especially as GT3 cars are “faster, more technical, and more physically demanding than anything we’ve raced before. They produce enormous downforce and require precise, consistent driving over long stints”. This means a mix of simulators, on track testing and physical conditioning has been used to extract maximum performance from their drivers.

Additionally, the jump up to GT3 means a new engineering approach has been used. The team’s engineering director “has taken a hands-on approach to understanding the new GT3 platform. This season, he has spent time embedded with other GT3 teams” reveals Team BRIT “working as an engineer within their operations to gain first-hand insight into the car’s complex systems, data management, and setup philosophy” which has proved invaluable, in addition to getting into the cockpit and testing a car himself. This experience has given the engineer a direct feel for the car’s performance and behaviour. Behind the scenes, the commercial staff have been working hard to build the partnerships and sponsors needed to deliver both “technical and driving excellence” in their

quest of “breaking boundaries and showcasing true inclusion in racing”.

This move into GT3 is a huge milestone for Team BRIT and “recognition of the relentless efforts of everyone in the team who has worked to push us forward”. They are focused on that dream Le Mans drive as it continues to remember its karting roots by supporting rookies and young drivers. In November, Team BRIT is making the leap across the pond to compete in the US Veterans Race of Remembrance with Resilience Racing. They will be running an Aston Martin Vantage GT4 which was

provided by Skip Barbour Racing School – one of the biggest racing schools in the US. The Vantage is fitted with Team BRITs world-famous hand controls, and they will be leaving the technology “behind as a legacy, so that through Resilience Racing, even more disabled drivers can access these opportunities”.

Now into its second decade, Team BRIT continues to break both barriers and records. The Gazette wants to thank Team BRIT for taking the time to tell us their inspirational story and wishes them every success on their road to Le Mans.





RACE REPORTS

Classic Sports Car Club – 18th October

PERFORMING WITH ELAN



Will Linley took his Lotus Elan to victory in the Midland Classic Restorations Classic K race

The Classic Sports Car Club staged its final day of motorsport for this season at Oulton Park on 18th October with a delectable selection of machinery taking to the tarmac. They christened it the “Cheshire Challenge” meeting evoking memory of the “Cheshire Cats” race days that the Jaguar Drivers’ Club used to organise.

The Magnificent 7 competitors had a 20 minute Double Header while all the other categories had single 40 minute races which included pit stops.

Although it is open to any car designed in the style of Colin Chapman’s Lotus7, the Gold Arts Magnificent Seven entry was dominated by various iterations of the Caterham marque. In race 1, it looked like Tim Davis was going to keep the leader, Stephen James, on his toes but on the second lap Davis lost some 4 seconds which cost him a couple of places. James was therefore the first to see the chequered flag ahead of Colin Watson and a recovering Davis.

For the second encounter, James had 10 place grid “penalty” for his victory earlier in the day. By the

end of lap 5, he was up into the runner-up position behind Watson. A few laps later, James was ahead but Watson immediately repassed him. It was shaping up to be a thrilling climax but there was an incident on the start finish straight that brought out red flags with 5 minutes left on the clock. With Davis retiring after his A-frame failed from a little too much kerb-hopping, Stephen Nuttall completed the podium.



Stephen James won the first Gold Arts Magnificent Seven encounter but a “Success Penalty” denied him the Double

The Fox Transport Turbo Tin Tops and WOSPerformance New Millennium runners ran together. From the former category, the VW Scirocco R of John Hammersley and Nick Tongue was the early leader but when a gearbox issue put them out of the race, the BMW M3 E36 of New Millennium entrant, Mark Smith, took the honours by a massive 41 secs over Matthew Sanders who was driving the E46 version of the M3.



Mark Smith in his race winning BMW

The Midland Classic Restorations Classic K encounter saw Will Linley steer his little Lotus Elan to a comfortable victory. The Mike Hawthorn Jaguar Challenge ran concurrently and this featured a fabulous battle between a pair of power-sliding Mk1s in the hands of James Dorlin/Tom Smith and Toby Smith. The former duo came out on top and finished third overall. With his BTCC season completed, Dorlin had to come to Oulton race an older saloon car.

The magnificent sounding Morgan Plus 8 of father and son duo, Russell and Elliot Paterson, was the early leader in the SuperPro Modern Classics and Advantage Motorsport Future Classics combined contest however they were due to serve a 20 second “Success Penalty”, when they made their compulsory pit stop. This proved to be less of a disadvantage than it could have been as they made their stop just as the Safety Car appeared. So, although they dropped to third behind Nick Hamilton (Ginetta G20) and Tom Butler (BMW 323i E30), once the race went back to green the Morgan was soon back ahead and on its way to victory.

Speed is a key requirement for success in motor racing however, Chris Watkinson had too much of it in the pits when he performed his mandatory stop



Russell and Elliot Paterson overcame their "Success Penalty" to take victory over the Modern & Future Classics

in the Adams & Page Swinging Sixties event. Although his little Mini scampered away from the Datsun 240Z driven by Dean Halsey and his driving coach, Scott Gillam. The 1 minute penalty Watkinson received for going too fast in the pits pushed him all the way down the order to sixth handing the spoils the Datsun crew. Connor Kay had been running second in the early stages but he retired when the rocker cover gasket on his MG Midget came unglued and dropped oil all over the exhaust.

The day ended with a thrilling Co-ordSport Tin Tops thrash which wasn't settled until the closing stages. Adam Brown (Fiesta ST150) had a 12 secs lead wiped out by a late race Safety Car period to recover a car from the gravel trap at Druids. The green flags waved with a few laps to go. Danny Cassar was able to take the lead as he and Brown sped across the grid to start the last lap so that he scooped the spoils in a Honda Integra Type R that had been started by Nigel Ainge.



The Honda Integra of Nigel Ainge and Danny Cassar leads the Co-ordSport Tin Tops into the gloom

RACING ICONS

By Dan Chilvers



Motorsport is rarely cheap, and prices are only rising. As technology continues its unstoppable march of progress toward a digital future, racing is becoming a world dominated by laptops, simulations and software. Classic touring car racing offers one of the last bastions of old-fashioned mechanical technology, a space for people to share their lifelong passion for mechanical engineering and craftsmanship. Nostalgia for classic racing is a powerful drug, and no club concentrates it better than the Classic Sports Car Club (CSCC). Their plethora of series allows anything from '50s Morris Minors to '90s Civics and beyond. One such series celebrates Coventry's finest motor company - Jaguar. The Mike Hawthorn Jaguar Challenge is a series for pre-1961 cars running to true period specification.

One team taming these wild cats is West Riding Racing Legends. Located in Halifax, this professional restoration workshop spends its weekdays poring over every detail of classic cars. They take "great pride in improving the performance of these classic cars, blending original craftsmanship," under the careful watch of expert and owner Dave Bye. They began as a group of enthusiasts rebuilding Jaguars and evolved slowly into a fully-fledged classic touring car team. As is often the case, "choosing to race and restore them was never a business decision, it was an emotional

one. Every time we bring one of these cars back to life, we feel a connection to that golden age of motorsport and to the people who built, raced and admired them."

The team runs multiple cars, including a gorgeous white Mk1 Jag' which is a front-runner in the Mike Hawthorn Challenge. These classic racers have competed both in recent times and when they were new. Period drivers included '60s stars Graham Hill and Roy Salvadori. This means their work is not just "restoring metal" but also "preserving pieces of living history". Although parts are no longer easy to find, West Riding Racing Legends endeavours to restore and evolve "every rivet, weld and modification," enabling them to push "the limits of what was thought possible."

I've asked multiple classic car racing teams and drivers what the best part of the sport is. Their answers are all the same: the camaraderie. West Riding Racing Legends are no different. They once again emphasised the common goal of keeping the cars in period specification while honouring the history. Classic paddocks carry a certain sound, yet besides the noise of history roaring to life, West Riding reveals it is "the atmosphere that makes it special, the smell of oil and tyres, the friendships formed in the paddock, and the satisfaction of seeing these machines cross the line once more" that draw teams and fans back without fail. No



classic paddock epitomises this sentiment more than Goodwood's world-famous Revival, and West Riding had the privilege to be invited to race in their Mk1 against Le Mans winners, F1 legends, and modern touring car stars. The pairing of James Dorlin and Alex Brundle took the top spot in the St. Mary's Trophy Part 2 and the team's sights are set on returning to the pre-1965 touring car race in 2026 and beyond.

The team's recent addition of BTCC and British GT driver James Dorlin brings an "extraordinary level of professionalism, focus, and enthusiasm" to the team. His ability to "describe exactly how the car behaves on track allows our engineers and mechanics to make precise adjustments that genuinely improve performance". Yet despite his CV including wins at Goodwood, Spa 6 Hours, and British GT, he remains "humble and approachable," sharing his "insights with our drivers" and working closely with the mechanics and technical team. Dorlin and his teammate Tom Smith fought fiercely

in the 40-minute Hawthorn Challenge at Oulton Park. They qualified third overall and first of the Jaguars (as the race was shared with the Classic K series). Both drivers showed incredible composure and poise to slide the car beautifully onto the overall podium and class win when the chequered flag fell.

Thank you to Paul and Ben from West Riding Racing Legends for taking the time to speak with us



CLASSIC SPICE

By Dan Chilvers



If variety is the spice of life, then the Classic Sports Car Club's Swinging 60s Championship is a spice rack of classic cars. When the series visited Oulton Park on 18th October, the grid contained 39 cars from 14 manufacturers. There were so many fabulous machines but the beautifully presented car no. 240 belonging to Dean Halsey stood out.

Dean was watching his friend race in 2017 and was bitten hard by the racing bug. He decided to build a classic race car from the ground up and sourced a 1969 Datsun 240Z body shell from the US. It was stripped back to bare metal before Halsey and Carl Gannon of Xtreme Classics transformed it into a full race car, christened the 240 Sporty. He's always been a fan of the '60s coupe, owning one "since 2010 (after a long hiatus since the eighties!)". He joined classic racing for the same reason as so many others: the paddock and its atmosphere. Halsey explains that racing is a "controlled environment" where the "rubbing is racing" mentality is tempered by the rules, making it better suited to newcomers and veterans alike.

The Datsun 240Z (or Nissan Fairlady Z in Japan) was a US-market version of the Fairlady Z that gave birth to Nissan's Z series of sports cars when it arrived on the scene in the early 1970s. It had four-wheel independent suspension and a powerful 2.4-litre inline-six which helped cement its reputation as a fun and affordable way to go motor racing. A factory-prepared rally version even won the 1973 East African Safari Rally!

Although Halsey is unlikely to be tearing across Kenya, his Datsun still had quite the rollercoaster ride at Oulton Park this year. Halsey's racing coach Scot Gillam, a 30-year veteran of the sport, flew back from Spain to coach Halsey on Friday's test day. Unfortunately, disaster struck the duo when the gear selector shaft between second and third broke. Halsey thought "that Scot would have to fly home, and I was incredibly disappointed." Thankfully Dansport Rally uses the same gearbox and despite them being in Spain! Halsey managed to arrange a spare gearbox to be sent over, and it arrived at 8pm on Friday night. After an all-out effort, Halsey and his team stripped, rebuilt and installed the gearbox in the 240Z. The gearbox was fitted just in time for the car to take part in qualifying at 10:40 am.

As a reward for the team's hard work, Gillam put the car second on the grid, just 0.072 seconds behind Connor Kay and his MG Midget. In the 40-minute race, Gillam managed to take the lead and build an impressive gap before handing the car over to Halsey. After losing a place to a Mini Cooper, Halsey thought he would have to settle for a podium, but a pit-lane speeding penalty dropped the Mini to sixth and the Datsun took the win in their final race of the year. A 24-hour turnaround – from a broken gearbox to the top step of the podium.

The Gazette would like to thank Dean Halsey for speaking with us about his fantastic piece of Japanese metal.

FUN FINALE



Once again, the Fun Cup provided the finale to the Oulton Park motor racing season

As has become the tradition, Fun Cup ended the motor racing season at Oulton Park on 25th October. The category had a Double Header comprising of a 1 hour "Sprint" in the morning followed by a 3 hour "Enduro" in the afternoon. They were separated by a trio of support races.

A showery morning had left the circuit very wet when the Fun Cup Sprint got underway in bright sunshine. An impressive 30 teams had taken part in qualifying but this number was reduced on the exit of the first corner when the Renom Racing entry, which had started from pole, spun and triggered a chain-reaction.

There were 7 cars which failed to take the restart while Axiametrics, who had an outside chance of the 2025 title, joined the contest from the pit lane

With 8 minutes on the clock, VapeClub – EDF with Ted Brabury behind the wheel, was already in the lead and charging away. A Safety Car just after Brabury had handed over to Vlad Vassilev negated their advantage and, when the race went back to green, Vassilev was shuffled down fifth.

With this just being a 60 minute encounter, it was soon time for the second round of pit stops which enabled Brabury to get back behind the wheel. Once everyone was back on track, Brabury was in third and gaining on the leaders, Olympian-GRD and UVio/Hofmanns, however travelling even faster was the Team FFS car which was soon right with Brabury.

At this stage, Lewis Thompson was driving for Team FFS, his dad Barry Thompson and Nicholas Highton were his teammates. After he and Brabury passed UVio/Hofmanns, Thompson passed Brabury. The pair worked in tandem catch Riley Phillips in the Olympian-GRD car. Thompson took the lead from Phillips at the start of the last lap to claim the first Fun Cup victory for Team FFS.

Phillips tried everything he knew to keep Brabury behind him but had to yield as they approached Lodge for the final time.

In the first few corners of the 3 hour finale, it was good to see the Demon Tweaks car leading the way with Jason Minshaw at the wheel but he was soon overtaken by a trio of championship contenders – Axiametrics, VapeClub – EDF and UVio/Hofmanns.

The fourth team who had a chance of taking the title, Olympian-GRD, were right at back following a spin at Island Bend.

It looked like a tall order for Olympian-GRD with their drivers – Chris Dowell, Riley Phillips and Simon Rudd – to get back to the front but, thanks to slick pit work by their team, they were leading when overcast skies and the darkness of the Autumnal early evening resulted in bad light stopping play with 11 minutes remaining.

Their victory meant Olympian-GRD sealed the Fun Cup Championship for the third year in succession.

The Hickford Construction MG Metro Cup and Ricci Concept Classic VW Cup ran together. The Metros set off 20 seconds after the German cars.

Due to rain prior to their opening race, some parts of the grid were drier than others and this saw Donald Dewar get enough traction on the second row to launch his little Mk1 Golf GTi into the lead.

The same thing happened in the Metros with Matthew Simpson getting the jump on serial winner Jack Ashton.

1Pole sitter, Tim Evans, had got his Audi TT in the lead by the time he reached Shell. It took Ashton a little longer to move ahead, out-dragging Simpson up Clay Hill. Both went on to take comfortable victories – despite Evans using wet tyres on a largely dry track and Ashton having a nasty cold.

Their second encounter was halted on the opening lap due to Luke Shaw's Scirocco rolling and coming to rest against the barriers on its side after an incident that also involved Dewar.

Evans won the restart while Ashton started from the pit lane to see if he could win from there. He nearly did it, finishing second to Simpson.

There was an eclectic mix of 31 cars taking the rolling start in the SW Motorsport Clubsport Trophy 45 minute enduro. Reflective of this was the front row which comprised the Audi TT of Chris Coomer and the Morgan Plus 4 driven by Shane Kelly. When the red lights went out, the Morgan briefly cut out causing Kelly to lose a number of places. He recovered to finish third despite a spin at Druids.

So Coomer set off in the lead but Yan Whittaker was rapidly gaining on him. Whittaker's Porsche Cayman had been sixth fastest in a wet qualifying session but he found the drier conditions that the race started in more to his liking. However, his charge soon ended when his engine let go and he coasted to a halt at Clay Hill.

Coomer then took the win when the race was halted a few minutes early as a car had hit the fence on the exit of Cascades which protects marshals at motorcycle meetings. Phiroze Bilimoria was second in his VW Scirocco. Misted up windows meant Bilimoria was only tenth in qualifying.



Tim Evans won even though he was on the wrong tyres

METRO DYNASTY

By Dan Chilvers



Motorsport has an incredible ability to bond families. Whether it's sitting in front of the TV on a Sunday afternoon or visiting the local circuit for a day of racing action, something about our beloved sport unites people across generations. This effect can also be seen on the track with countless racing dynasties popping up across the ages. The Hills, the Earnhardts, the Andrettis - to name but a few - show this generational bond and it is not limited to international motorsport. The BRSCC MG Metro Cup provides one such example of motorsport's family appeal.

Jack Ashton is part of a trio of Ashtons who race Metros, and he ran a (nearly) perfect season this year to take his 3rd title. Jack followed his dad and older brother into the Metro Cup in 2013. This one-make series focuses on British Leyland's Mini successor, slightly modified for racing. These pocket rockets run around 120bhp through the front tyres and often run side by side all season providing fantastic entertainment. Jack's dad's Minis and Metros were his "go-to car" long before Jack was even born, so the choice was simple when Jack picked up his helmet.

Like many racers, Jack started to investigate sim racing which involves racing in highly realistic simulations. This training method is increasingly

being used across the industry to help drivers learn new circuits, driving styles and dial in setups. Jack revealed it allows him to "put full focus on how to improve with unlimited practice time at no extra cost (with an ideal reset button when it goes wrong)" and "sim racing has made me the driver that I am today". The world of sim racing helped Jack refine his technique before even turning a wheel in real life. This hard work paid off as Jack took his first Metro Championship in 2018 and followed it up with a perfect season in 2019. After winning every race and collecting every pole position on the way in 2019 it was only a matter of time before Jack inevitably lifted the biggest trophy at the end of the season.

From 2021-2023, Jack raced in the 750 Motor Club's Hot Hatch Championship in its top-class A (200bhp/tonne). He swapped a 1.8 Rover K series and a limited slip differential into a Metro running on wider, stickier tyres, he gave his all. Fighting against multiple series champions and YouTuber Danny DC2 meant that it was tough going, but Jack persevered to earn several podiums and a race win in 2023 at a typically soggy Anglesey. Due to rising costs, Jack decided to move back to the MG Metro Cup to a more level playing field.

Jack was quick to mention that part of his success was down to his engine which is prepared to a “high standard” and paired with “dialled in suspension” that suits his “particular style”. The Metro’s original Hydragas suspension is mandatory in the regulations and dialling in the “ride height, pressures in the spheres with the correct alignment to get the right results is quite an artwork” - something his dad has mastered over the years. It’s Jack’s meticulous preparation and trust in his mighty steed that has allowed him to pedal his Metro to its limit. When asked if he wanted to try racing a different car Jack commented that “it would mean learning from scratch and building another shed of spares and repair bits which isn’t a realistic option for us, so we are just enjoying ourselves racing and having the weekends with our Metro cup family!”

The season hasn’t been a complete walkover for Jack though. He has had constant pressure from

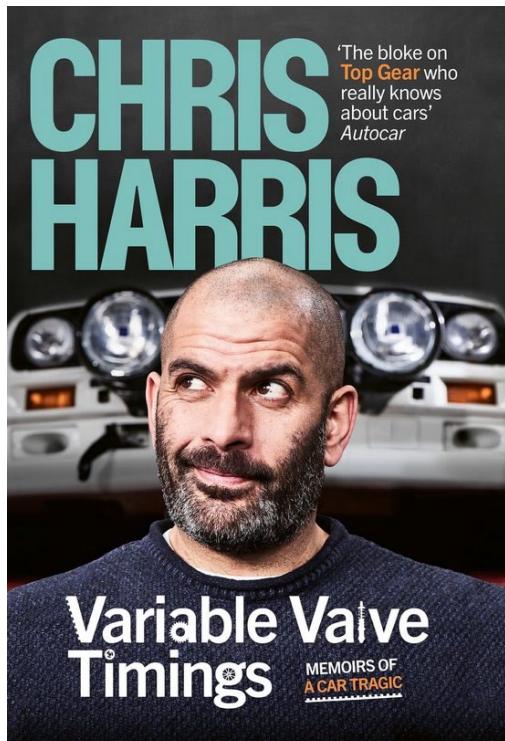
the cars around him particularly during a tough, wet race at Brands Hatch, made trickier by sharing the grid with the VW Cup. “Zero visibility and a very oversteery setup made it a challenge” for Jack but overall, it was a “super, super fun race!” Coming into the final round at Oulton Park on 25th October, Jack had won every single race. He explained that his previous titles meant there “was never really a pressure aspect to my driving, just hunting for fun and enjoyment” and after a dominant win in race 1 he looked set to repeat his 2019 season. Starting intentionally from the pit lane meant Jack had his work cut out to win race 2, a feat he would miss out on by just 0.32 seconds. The classic racing idea of “just one more lap and maybe...” springs to mind. He may not have won every race, but Jack’s virtually perfect season proves that dedication, family and passion remain at the root of club motorsport.

The Gazette thanks Jack Ashton for taking the time to speak to us.



BBC – Broadbent's Book Corner

Michael Broadbent reviews his favourite books



Variable Valve Timings Memories of a Car Tragic By Chris Harris Available Here

The name Chris Harris was pushed into our lives when he took over one of the presenting roles on the BBC series Top Gear as it went through many reboots post the Clarkson/Hammond/May era. However, prior to that Chris had a flourishing career (!) in motoring journalism, writing for several different car magazines.

This book, published in 2023 charts his early life and the challenges faced to get his dream job, writing and talking cars. From an early age, he spent ages reading the weekly and monthly car magazines, digesting statistics, and then reciting them to anyone who would listen.

Chris was adopted from an early age and spent his childhood being brought up in Bristol (sometimes the accent does come out) and then on to university where his car obsession became more & more incurable. The story charts his early struggles to get into automotive journalism, and his exploits teaching English in schools in Zimbabwe.

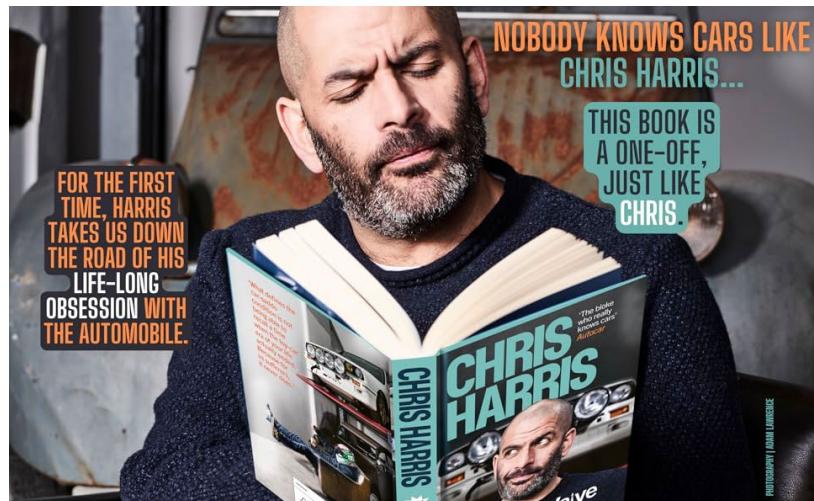
He became a racing driver and continued to write for the car magazines and created his own YouTube channel reviewing cars. So, he developed the skills and presence to drive fast, present to camera and keep it interesting.

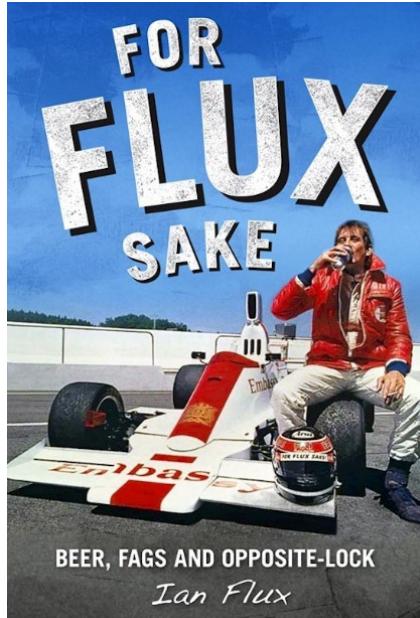
He has close ties with Tamiya (name on his helmet) and Chris explains how this link came into being. He had also spent a lot of time buying & selling cars which provided him with some income as well. The Porsche incident will make you smile though!

The book does not follow the traditional linear pattern of an autobiography, as the index shows. It is a series of anecdotes and stories which bookmarks Chris's career along with several 'Road to Damascus' moments. It is a little frustrating as not all the chapters follow a logical or time sequence. However, you can forgive the author as the book does engage you, without having to go all 'kiss & tell' behind the scenes of the Top Gear production.

As the title suggests, it is a series of memories all about cars which Chris has immersed himself into and a couple of gems do come up – such as Walter Rohrl's description of oversteer and understeer, as well as his relationship with James May – which is enlightening!

If you are a fan of Top Gear, do not expect to have the low down on the programme, or its presenters. The book does not need to do that, being able to stand by itself as a light and engaging read.





For Flux Sake

Beer, Fags and Opposite Lock

By Ian Flux

[Available Here](#)

The name Ian Flux may not be familiar to some of our readers. However, for some the name will resonate as being a 'character' in motorsport starting in the 1970's right up to the present day.

The book follows a traditional linear story of Ian's career in motorsport, and he raced/tested more than 600 cars during his time. He writes candidly about his childhood, early struggles to race and his questionable means of raising funds – not for the faint of heart though!

He talks about the genesis of Radical and his involvement of the development of the cars, Thundersports (think Can-Am sportscars), Sports 2000, and possibly the fans favourite the TVR Tuscan Challenge. It is clear how emotionally involved Ian was with TVR as he talks about the rivalry, the racing and the lengths drivers went to so that they would win. He looks at some of the breaks he had in motorsport including his involvement with Jake Ulrich (ex-head of Centrica) and the glorious McLaren F1 which he raced in British GT's. He certainly had his fair share of driving a broad range of cars, as well as being an instructor at Silverstone, driver coach for individuals and being a test driver for teams both at UK circuits and abroad.

He was also lucky enough to race abroad, including New Zealand in Formula Atlantic and you can tell how fond he was of being part of a well-funded team that won regularly.

He is not bitter about missed opportunities as he is honest enough to be candid about the errors made along the way, including his ability to drink heavily and at the wrong time – think Tony Lanfranchi, Gerry Marshall, and Barrie Williams!

Typically, though, the book talks about the people he met on the way up, how he treated them and how that translated into work that kept him going, racing, and raising a family. It's the old saying though, how to treat people on the way up, as you will never know who you meet on the way down! It is fair to say though, that he did enjoy himself thoroughly, even during dark times, which many drivers have gone through in pursuit of their career.

The cover picture is intriguing though as Ian worked for Graham Hill Racing in the 70's. The car is the Hill GH2 which never raced in period. The team disbanded after Graham and four other members of the team died in a plane crash in November 1975. Ian attended funerals of the team in rapid succession and then assisted in the closing of the team. Now that is quite an emotional way to start your racing career. Oh, and the driver – Tony Brise was a bit of a hero to me when I was but a callow youth!

Overall, it is a good read without being too technical and it does lift the lid on a few people as well.



Photo: James Blake on Facebook