



The Oulton Park Gazette

May 2026: Vol 2 Issue 2

SIDEWAYS START



Oulton Park's racing season gets under way

Fastest Man at Oulton



Meet Team Allen



David Coulthard

Broadbent's Book Corner & Quiz

WELCOME

Hello!

We have a bit of everything in this month's edition.

Mike Jenvey who (we believe) has set the fastest lap at Oulton Park for this season in his highly developed Gunn Sports Prototype is interviewed by Dan Chilvers.

We have a debut article from Shirley Woodall – the “S” in PS Images – who has written a very warm and “human” story about Brian and Helen Allen who thoroughly enjoy their club level motorsport. This includes competing in the CNC Heads Championship with a humble 1,400cc Fiesta against the likes of Simon Allaway and his mighty V8-powered Lotus Esprit.

At the other extreme, we look back to when Damon Hill raced a F3000 Reynard at Oulton Park in 1989. That was before he went on to become World Champion in 1996, bringing a lump to Murray Walker's throat in the process.

Dan also interviewed David Coulthard... but not the former Formula 1 driver and TV pundit. This one is a club racer with a penchant for MGs!

We have the usual quizzes and fascinating book reviews from Michael Broadbent.

...and finally, the format of our race reports has been revamped with more emphasis on the fabulous photography of PS Images and “newsy” coverage of each month's on-track action rather than blocks of meeting reports.

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Bathed in Spring sunshine, the MG Cockshoot Cup competitors leave the grid

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BRSCC 11th April

A FUN START TO 2026



The British Racing & Sports Car Club (BRSCC) had the honour of organising the first car racing of Oulton Park's season and it featured the first ever races for the Classic Mini Racing Championship which caters for post 1976 Minis powered by the legendary 1275cc engine. At the other extreme, Fun Cup started its 25th season in the UK.



Classic Mini Racing Championship – 2 x 20 Minute Races: Chris Morgan (above) won the inaugural Classic Mini race. He pulled away from a battle between Nevan Kirkpatrick and Kelven Fletcher. The latter was hampered due to selecting second gear instead of fourth on a few occasions exiting Cascades.

When the Minis returned to the track, the Top Ten were reversed. David Kirkpatrick battled for the win with his brother, Neven. Chris Morgan caught the battling siblings but couldn't find a way past and had to settle for third.

Fun Cup – 4 Hours: The 25th season of Fun Cup got underway in fine style with a healthy grid of 28 cars which included many newcomers. After a thrilling 4 hours with many changes in both the leading positions and the weather conditions, Team GRD (right) started the defence of their 2025 title with a win ahead of UVio/Hoffmann's and Vape Club with EDF.



MG Cockshoot Cup & Hickford Construction Ltd MG Metro Cup

2 x 15 Minutes: A wet qualifying session for the MG Cockshoot Cup favoured the front-wheel-drive cars of David Coulthard (ZR) and Karl Green (ZS) who topped the timesheets. However, in the pair of dry races, they couldn't keep pace with the rear-wheel-drive sportscars of Christopher Greenbank (MGF – top left) and Keith Egar (Midget). The first 4 in the final classification were the same at the end of both events – Greenbank, Egar, Green (with a braking issue in race 1) and Coulthard.



The Hickford Construction Ltd MG Metro Cup ran concurrently with the Cockshoot runners. Their first outing had a frantic opening lap with Mark Wilson executing a demon late-braking manoeuvre, leaping from fourth to first. But it didn't take long for reigning champion Jack Ashton (bottom left) to pass him. He won from Matthew Simpson and Wilson.

Simpson started from pit lane after he forgot his gloves when he initially went to the Assembly Area. He had changed his gearbox since qualifying.

For race 2, Simpson took his place on the grid and looked to be on course for victory when Ashton spun on oil at Druids. Ashton recovered to win with Simpson just 0.18 secs behind.



Modified Ford Series – 2 x 15 Minutes: James Allen (above) won both of these contests... but he didn't have things all his own way. In race 1, he ran third behind Andy Robinson's Falcon and Piers Grange in a Mk2 Escort. However, Robinson retired with a hub failure and then Grange pulled off the track with a sick sounding engine.

Robinson and Grange non-started later in the day but Allen was briefly pushed down to second by Todd Garner's Focus on lap 2. Allen dived back into the lead at Hislops and pulled away. In the closing stages, with his tyres overheating, Garner was overtaken by Paul Nevill (Mk2 Escort).



Dan Chilvers writes:

When the editor asked me to interview David Coulthard, I packed my bags expecting to be sent off to see the glamorous life-style of the ex-F1 driver at the hotel he owns in Monaco... but, instead, I found myself at Oulton Park having a fascinating interview with a club-level competitor of the same name who has a passion for the MG brand.

This particular David Coulthard's childhood was steeped in all things four-wheeled, with Matchbox cars and Scalextric tracks covering his bedroom floor. His uncle, Jimmy Blumer, was a racing driver in the 1950s and 1960s who frequently graced Oulton Park in his Cooper Monaco. Blumer raced both nationally in the BSCC (later BTCC) and internationally, including at Le Mans in 1964 with a works Sunbeam Tiger. His influence on Coulthard would become increasingly evident over time.

Living near Harewood Speed Hillclimb, Coulthard regularly attended events, where MG Midgets caught his eye. Once funds permitted, he bought his own and began hill climbing in 1993. He continued to develop as a driver before deciding that "it was time

to try circuit racing at the grand old age of 40!" At the time, the MG Car Club, in partnership with MG-Rover, offered an Arrive and Drive scheme in the MG ZR. Coulthard quickly developed a love for circuit racing, and strong results soon followed. Coulthard readily admits he is "no technician," so the Arrive and Drive scheme proved ideal. After MG-Rover went bust in 2005, Dan Surridge and the team at CMC Motorsport stepped in to run the cars and Coulthard has been with them ever since.

From there, Coulthard went from strength to strength, culminating in winning the MGCC Northern Speed Championship in 2014. Racing remains central to Coulthard's life since his partner Helen also loves MGs and has her own road-going ZR160. Their household is now home to two unique MG race cars, a 2003 MG ZR190 and a 1998 MGF Cup Car. Only 32 of the latter were built and most have been broken down for parts, crashed or exported to Australia. Coulthard managed to find one that had been off road for a while and restored it. This revival led to other people recognising his efforts and



several other original cars have since reappeared which Coulthard finds “quite satisfying”

The MGF has proved to be a “tricky car to master” due to its mid-engined layout. Coulthard says, “it takes a lot to spin it, but when it’s gone, it’s gone.” As an amateur driver, he admits he cannot always “extract the last 10% of performance to make it go really quick.” The MGF Cup series ran as a one-make championship showcasing the nimble British roadster across the country. The series was often seen supporting professional championships like British GT or Formula 3. Thankfully, his front wheel drive ZR190 is “much more forgiving” to race.

Coulthard reveals his secret to success is reliability, saying “to finish first, first you have to finish.” He believes that “having a car which will finish the race is essential. The results will follow.” However, this has proved increasingly difficult with both MGs now over 20 years old. The MGF has many bespoke parts which are completely unobtainable now. This means he does “tend to stockpile parts when they become available.”

Looking forward, Coulthard is optimistic about his native MG Cockshoot Cup as it rebuilds following

the MG Car Club’s withdrawal from race organising. The Cup moved to BRSCC with strong entries and close racing each weekend. Coulthard’s class, Class C, is one of the strongest with “some very quick cars” involved. He demonstrated his competitiveness by putting his ZR on pole by over a second for the BRSCC NW season opener. When asked about his race day aims, he said, “I’ll be happy just to see the chequered flag a couple of times”. He went on to surpass his aim with two strong fourth place finishes.

Coulthard hopes to continue racing as long as it’s possible at both circuit, sprint and hillclimb events in his MGs. He also harbours ambitions of endurance racing at the Britcar 24 Hours in the future. Blumer’s influence on Coulthard is still evident today as he loves Le Mans and attends the 24 Hour race every year. He also “harbours a desire to do a track day there, one day...” From watching his uncle race at Oulton Park in the 1960s to reviving a lost MGF Cup Car, David Coulthard’s racing career is one of pace, passion and a lifelong connection to MG.

We hope David continues to enjoy his motorsport!

EQUIPE CLASSIC RACING 18th April



Equipe Racing staged one of their excellent meetings with longer races for classic machinery.

Equipe Historic Championship – 1 Hour: This series is new for 2026. Most Historic races are standalone events but this allows drivers of pre 1966 GT, GTS and Touring Cars to compete throughout the season for a championship title.

They'll struggle to have a more exciting race this year than the round at Oulton Park! (Start pictured above)

John Caudwell (AC Cobra) was narrowly leading Nigel Reuben's TVR Griffith when the contest, was halted because a car had rolled at Druids. Reuben jumped into the lead when the event restarted for the remaining 45 minute duration but, for lap after lap, Caudwell dived down the inside of Reuben at Old Hall to move ahead. However, as Caudwell struggled to contain the Cobra within the confines of the circuit on the exit of the corner, Reuben was always able to get on the power earlier and retake the lead down The Avenue.

It was epic stuff to see these classic sportscars being driven so hard.

During the compulsory pit stops, Reuben handed over the TVR to his son, Ollie, while Caudwell stayed put as he was driving the whole race. After the stops, the two cars were still nose to tail but Ollie pushed to the limit, performing some fabulous power-slides through Knickerbrook in the process. Eventually, he had enough of a gap for Caudwell to admit defeat and the duo cruised to the finish.



Equipe Libre – 40 Minutes: Having been thwarted in the Historic Championship contest, later in the day, Caudwell comfortably won the Libre contest that closed the meeting.



Equipe '70s with Sports Racing Cars – 40 Minutes: Steve Dance took a comfortable victory in his fabulous Ford Capri RS.



Equipe GTS – 40 Minutes: This was a race that no one seemed to want to win. Rob Cull was the early leader in a TVR Grantura which he had already taken to a class win in the Historic Championship but he retired in the pits at the end of the second lap. A similar TVR was then out in front which was shared by Brian and John Caudwell. This was soon also in the pits although it re-joined and finished in third.

Jonathan Abecasses looked like he was going to win until he spun off at Cascades just after half distance. Eventually, Simon Cripps sailed through to take the victory in his MGB Roadster.

Equipe Sports Prototypes – 2 x 25 Minutes: Mike Jenvey won both of these races. In the process he set what will probably be the fastest racing lap at Oulton Park this season. See the feature that begins on the next page.

FAST MIKE!

By Dan Chilvers



Each season at Oulton Park, the battle for the fastest lap is usually fought between modern single-seaters and GT3 cars. But this year, the benchmark lap has already been set, not by a Ferrari or a McLaren but by a home-built sports prototype driven by Mike Jenvey.

Mike says, “Racing was always in the blood!” His dad, Richard, began taking him to circuits when he was four months old. Richard started racing in 1975, winning the Modsports championship before competing in the World Endurance Series into the early 1980s.

In 1987, Richard set up Jenvey Dynamics to manufacture motorsport throttle bodies and, during school holidays, Mike would help his dad with the company. After a ten-year stint in powertrain development for Ford Motor Company, he took over the family business. Mike’s love of motorbikes led to him telling his parents that he was going to race bikes only for them to fund a move to car racing for his birthday instead.

Jenvey’s racing career got off to a shaky start after spinning a rented Formula Vee in the second corner of his first race, and yet, he was hooked. In 2001, he bought a second-hand, midfield Formula Vee. Mike and Richard jointly developed the Vee to win the championship in 2004 and 2005. After a one-year break, he bought a Sports 2000 Duratec. And after developing it he won the Championship in 2009 and 2012. Mike still runs this car having honed it to perfection with his dad by his side.

The Gunn TS6 was chosen as it looked “low and wide (good for aerodynamics) and had pull rod suspension.” At the time, Red Bull Racing were making headlines for their innovative use of pull rods which rely on tension rather than compression, allowing the car to sit lower and reduces its centre of gravity.

The Gunn had its first outing at Cadwell Park where Jenvey noticed “it’s a very big car for such a tight track!” Over the years, the Jenveys have made extensive modifications. They began by stiffening the chassis and revising the suspension geometry. Then, after two seasons, they redesigned the bodywork. This led to one major project per winter rebuild including a new Hewland gearbox with paddle shifters, new suspension components, a dual plane rear wing and significant weight reduction. This winter’s new rear diffuser is yet to be completed. The car currently runs a “320bhp 2.0L Ford Duratec engine, big aero, big slicks and a more refined driver.”

Jenvey is quick to praise the symbiotic relationship between his racing and the family business. “We are motorsport people and love our hot-rods and restomods, so it fits perfectly.” His Gunn chassis is used as a test bed for Jenvey Dynamic projects. It has been fitted with a whole host of parts to help research and develop them before release.

In Oulton Park’s Equipe Prototype races, after taking pole by 0.7 seconds, Jenvey battled an electrical fault as rain allowed Joe Lock’s Spire

Turbo to take the lead in the first encounter. Jenvey waited. Then, with the circuit drying, he struck back - passing Lock and building a commanding 7.8 second gap to win. Race two would prove to be just as eventful before the car had left the grid. After fixing an issue with the front left wheel in the assembly area, the electrical issue returned. A laptop was required which promptly chose that moment to update Windows! Once resolved the clutch failed so Jenvey had to leave the assembly area with his foot on the clutch. Thankfully, “the car was perfect once on track” and Jenvey took race two with ease. He commented after the weekend “I still feel there was more to come from Druids and Island (the fast stuff).”

Amid the chaos, Jenvey delivered the lap that defined the weekend: a 1:33.921. Faster than a GB4

car - just 0.6 seconds shy of the all-time GT3 lap record despite a 250bhp deficit. Jenvey explained “although the money spent is not high, the effort is massive” and the team puts in “a huge amount of work to keep improving and keep the car running.” He loves the engineering challenge of prototypes and the close bond within the team – his mechanics are all ex or current employees of Jenvey Dynamics. Mike also has an eye on the future. “I am starting to plan for the next generation,” he told *The Gazette*, “as my son progresses in karting.”

From watching his father race across the globe to chasing speed himself, Jenvey’s progression is as relentless as it is impressive. With constant development, the question is not whether more records will fall – but by how much?



Mike leads away a diverse grid of Sports Prototypes



BARC 25th April



The British Automobile Racing Club (BARC) organised a meeting on 25th April at a very sunny Oulton Park. There was late drama in the headlining Britcar race and an amazing 54 car entry for the CNC Heads Sports/Saloon Car Championship. The first CNC contest was won by Andrew Southcott in his MG – pictured above.



OT Coupe Cup – 2 x 15 Minute Races: For the final few corners of the first race, Mark Eales held off Nathan Boyle to take the win. Having had a new engine fitted after his power unit failed during testing on Friday, Boyle was fastest in qualifying but a missed gearchange early in the contest meant he had to fight back from fifth place.

Later in the day, it was Boyle who won the second encounter after an early skirmish with Matthew Watson.



CNC Heads Sports/Saloon Car Championship – 2 x 20 Minutes: During a delayed start to the first CNC Heads Sports/Saloon race, Andrew Southcott (MG Midget Lenham) and Roddie Paterson (Caterham C400) both pulled into the pits. They were due to start from first and third on the grid respectively.

Fortunately, they both had mechanics who were able to quickly get their cars up and running so they could join the race at the back of the pack.

Mark Primett led the way but his MG Midget had brake problems which caused a few spins and ultimately his retirement in the closing stages. The BMW M4 of Chris Roberts (above) took over out front but Chris, too, had his problems. After qualifying, his car had not been refuelled so he was driving with economy in mind rather than flat out.

Roberts made it to the finish but not before Southcott had charged through the entire field to take the win. Paterson meanwhile made it up to third and very nearly snatched the runner-up position from Roberts.

Reigning champion, Simon Allaway (Lotus Esprit V8), had a CV joint fail on his 3rd lap of practice. He would have missed the rest of the meeting if it wasn't for a spectator who volunteered to take Simon to his industrial unit in Winsford where he was able to fit a new CV onto the driveshaft using a press.

By the time Allaway and his team had put the mighty Lotus back together, qualifying and race 1 had already taken place but he got out on track just in time to start the second encounter from the back of the grid.

He charged up the order to finish third behind Roberts and Paterson. Southcott had briefly been in the lead but retired in the pits with his MG stuck in fifth gear.

Simon's day of drama continued after the chequered flag when his car caught fire in parc ferme!



Welsh Sports & Saloon Car Championship (including CNC Classes E & F) – 2 x 20 Minutes:

There was such a large CNC Heads entry that Classes E and F ran alongside the Welsh Sports and Saloon Car Championship.

Running in the Welsh Invitational Class, Kirk Armitage looked set to score his second victory of the day in his newly acquired BMW M2 Competition (above) when he appeared to run out of fuel on the last lap of the entire meeting!

This meant the overall win went to a car from the CNC Heads series in the shape of Matt Hibbert. His Honda Civic Type R had been driven in the earlier race by his father, Richard, who finished third overall and the first CNC Heads runner therefore, Matt had come through from the back of the grid.



Britcar Endurance Championship – 90 Minutes:

It should have been a comfortable Britcar victory for Mark Cunningham and his father Peter as the fastest lap for their yellow and black Porsche 991 Cup (left) was around 4 seconds quicker than their closest rivals. However, when refuelling during one of the pit stops, Mark breached the regulations by not closing the visor on his helmet.

They thus had to make an additional penalty stop with around 15 minutes remaining. They re-joined down in sixth place, well behind the leader who was Simon Clark in his McLaren 570S. But then the fates smiled on the dad and lad duo when the Safety Car was scrambled to enable the recovery of a competitor from the gravel trap at Shell.

When the contest went back to green with 5 minutes on the clock, Mark was able to pass 5 cars in the space of a lap to take a winning lead.



RACING SPIRIT

Brian Allen's Puma leads George the Fiesta with his wife Helen behind the wheel

Lunch With... Team Allen

Words by Shirley Woodall:

Anyone who is a regular to Oulton Park and follows the CNC Heads Championship will know of Team Allen, consisting of Brian & Helen Allen, and Mick Allen (Brian's brother). Following their award for 'Spirit of the Championship' from CNC Heads North West Sports Saloons in February, we caught up with them over lunch at the Red Lion, Little Budworth, which is a stone's throw from Oulton Park, to find out more about the husband and wife team of Brian and Helen Allen.

Let's rewind back to the beginning, how did it all start? Question: What do you buy the man who has everything? In Helen's case, she bought Brian a number of race lessons!

Silverstone Race School was followed by a weekend at Cadwell for his birthday. In the summer of 1990 whilst attending the Birmingham Superprix, where F3000 cars raced around the streets of the city, a discussion ensued as to what would be the ideal race series for Brian, he replied Multisport – a championship for identical closed wheel two seater sports cars run by Brands Hatch. At which point a voice piped up two rows in front, 'I know where there's one of those for sale' And so it started... The

voice belonged to Mike who has since become a good friend of Team Allen.

The first meeting was at Oulton in 1991. Brian raced from 1991 to 1994, latterly with 750 Motor Club, Helen attended all the meetings supporting Brian.

In 1995 the Multisports was sold and Fred the Red Fiesta was purchased. Now with a tin roof over his head, Brian embarked on competing in the Castle Combe Sports Saloon Championship. After six years of standing on a wet pit wall, Helen decided anything Brian could do, she could do better!! So, Team Allen was born. Helen initially held a competition licence to test the car and run the engines in, until Mike (as in Birmingham Superprix Mike) pointed out 'The clue's in the title, it's a Competition Licence, get out there!' So she did.

From late 1996, Fred the Fiesta would find himself with both Helen and Brian in the driver's seat. Along with the Castle Combe Championship, Team Allen branched out into the Hot Hatch Championship, Northern Saloon Championship and Toyo Tyres Saloon Car Championship Series. Weekends were rather busy, as they competed in over 20 events a season.



Fred the Fiesta attempts to take Old Hall on his roof

Fred the Red Fiesta was shared for 15 years, until in 2011 Helen came across her present Fiesta race car hiding in a barn in Hull. We have it on good authority that this is the ex-Colin Turkington Fiesta from 2001.

Both cars now entered the now famous CNC Heads North West Sports Saloons Championship, the fact that the Fiesta had a 1400cc engine made it the least powerful car on the grid, as illustrated at Mallory Park when Simon Allaway's Esprit lapped Helen seven times in one race!

Some might wonder where the name of Helen's Fiesta 'George' came from? George was Helen's

Father-in-law who, as Helen pointed out would have laughed his socks off if he could see that she was now racing, as he always took the mickey out of her driving.

Helen has since achieved three CNC Heads Championship class wins against her rivals, including the biggest of all... Brian !

Latterly Fred was retired after a long career, including one attempt to take Old Hall corner on his roof, fortunately without injury to Brian. The Fiesta was replaced by an ex Ford Puma Championship car and Team Allen continued to compete fiercely in the CNC Heads.

In addition to her racing career, Helen has also taken on a number of senior roles within the BARC NW, and the British Women's Racing Drivers Club (BWRDC). Presently Helen is Secretary of the BARC NW and Chair of the BWRDC. Helen is passionate about encouraging women to become involved in all aspects of motorsport, whether as a marshal, official, or competitor.

As you see Team Allen are worthy recipients of the CNC Heads 'Spirit of the Championship' award (below).



STOCKPORT VIADUCT QUIZ

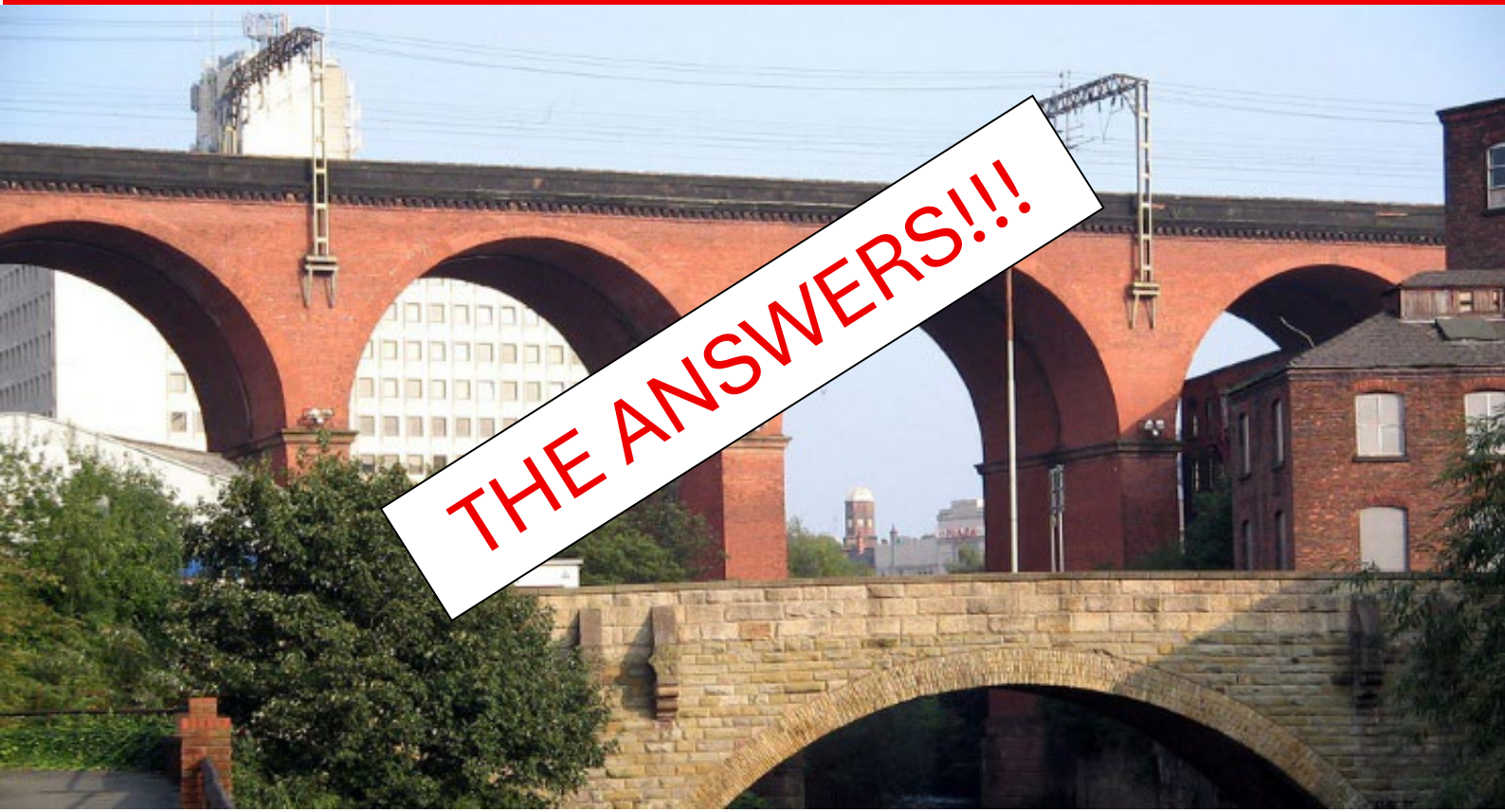


Photo: David Dicken blog

Here are the answers to the Stockport Viaduct Quiz that Michael Broadbent set last month:

How many arches are there in total? **22 main arches each with a span of 63 ft + 2 of 20ft. This increased to 27 when the viaduct was widened**

What year did construction start? **1839**

How many bricks were used? **11 million**

How much stone was used in construction? **11,300 cubic metres (400,000 cu ft)**

What was the cost in total? **£72,000**

When was the viaduct opened? **16th July 1841. (It was put into regular use from 11th August 1842)**

What river does the viaduct cross? **River Mersey**



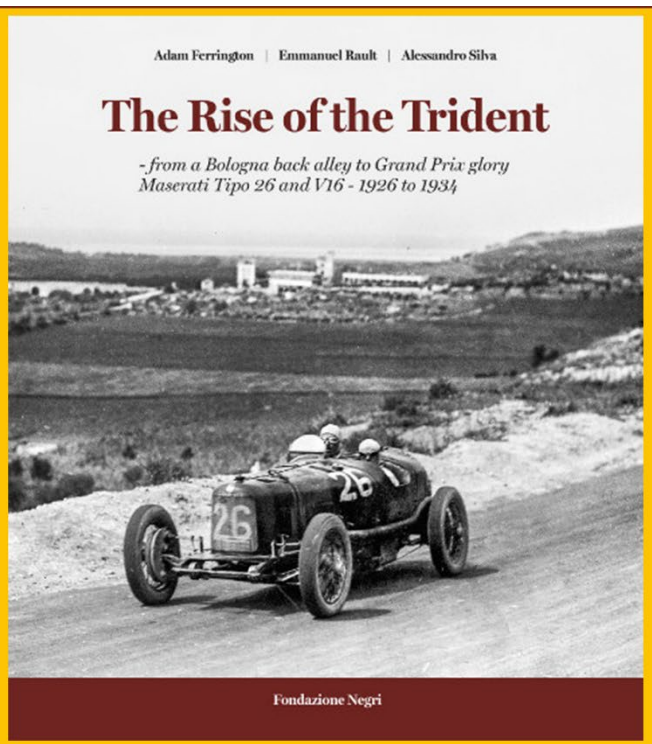
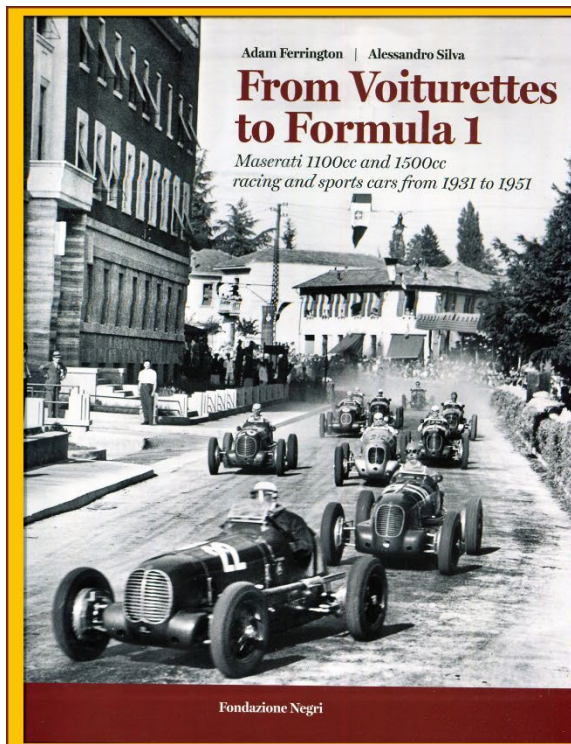
Graphic generated by Perplexity AI

1. Who is the only driver to have won LeMans, Indianapolis 500 and the F1 World Championship?
2. When was the first race meeting held at Oulton Park?
3. Who was the organising club for the first meeting?
4. What is the length of the Island circuit, favoured by BTCC?
5. Why does Lewis Hamilton use the #44 on his F1 cars?
6. Where and when was the first F1 race held post WW2?
7. Who was the winner?
8. Who is credited with the most BTCC wins at Oulton Park?
9. Jan and Kevin Magnussen both raced in F1 - and for the same team. Which one?
10. Which F1 driver had the nickname of Britney?
11. Who was the designer of the Brabham F1 car – the BT46B fan Car?
12. Who is considered to have the most wins at Oulton Park?

No Prizes! Answers published next month

BBC – Broadbent's Book Corner

Michael Broadbent reviews his favourite books



From Voiturettes to Formula 1 & The Rise of the Trident – The Tipo 26 and V16

By Adam Ferrington, Alessandro Silva,
Emmanuel Rault & Fondazione Negri

It's two for one month. Yes, these two weighty tomes now grace my shelves as I was encouraged to buy them by Adam Ferrington – who is well known to some of us as being one of the foremost authorities on Maserati. They have been produced, printed and distributed in Italy and both are limited editions. However, either Chaters or Hortons Books may be able to help with purchasing them.

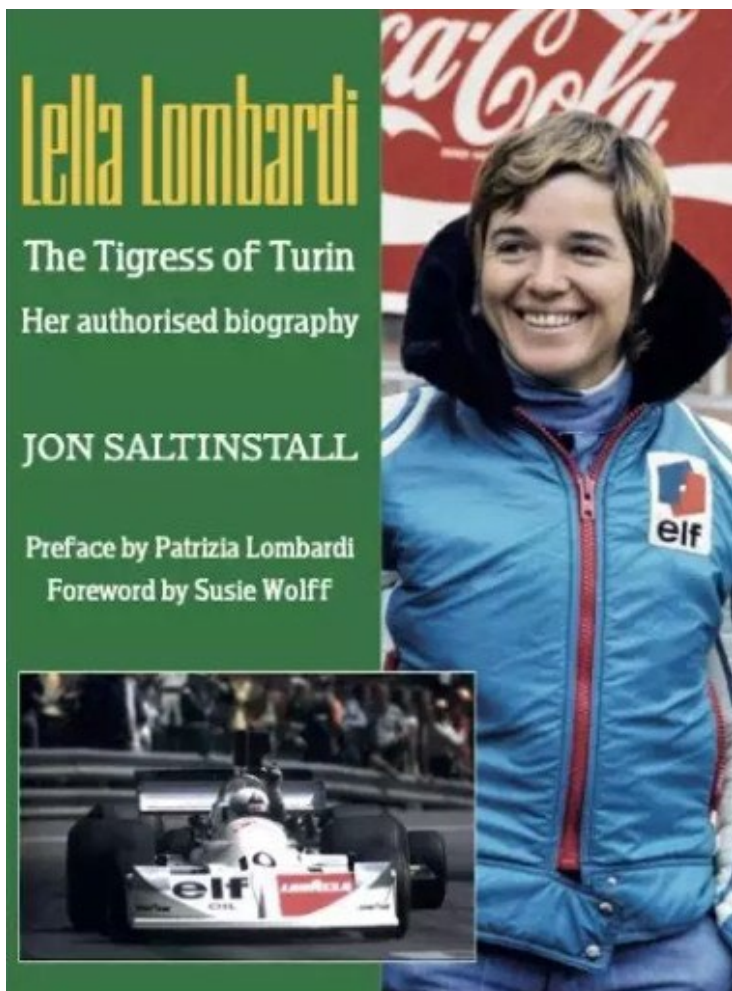
The books document in detail the history of Maserati race cars from 1926 to 1951 and takes the reader on a voyage of discovery of chassis numbers, drivers, entries, owners and results from races. However, far from being a dry book of statistics, the authors have gone into detail about what happened at races, how cars changed hands,

their involvement at Indianapolis and the people involved in running and racing the cars.

A huge amount of research has gone into sourcing and cataloguing photos from around the world and although some have been cleaned up for publishing purposes, they provide a wonderful insight into life in the 1930s to 50's in Europe and the USA. Certainly, the picture on page 134 of a parc ferme in 1935 perfectly illustrates the fact that all men wore hats, there was a sense of informality about racing and there were stark differences between the Italian and German race car designs. The picture on page 236 of the start of the AVUSRennen in 1932 shows how different car manufacturers approached race car design. You can almost smell the special fuels used for these cars as well!

Although these books are expensive, if you are a fan of pre and post war racing, then these would be a worthwhile addition to your collection. They are well written, with incredible photographs, and yes, Maserati did build a Grand Prix V16 engine long before BRM did!

I can't really do these books the justice they deserved as being true labours of love. They are simply stunning and my hat is raised to the authors for being brave and publishing them.



Lella Lombardi The Tigress of Turin

By Jon Saltinstall

[Available Here](#)

OK so I am late to the party regarding Women in Motorsport during March 2026. However, this book is excellent and well worth the wait.

My introduction to Lella was during late 1973/early '74. She was racing in the Shellsport F5000 championship in Jackie Epsteins' (no relation!) team that ran Lolas – amazingly spectacular cars that were fast, noisy and challenging to drive.

Lella's teammates included Clive Santo, Ian Ashley and Tom Belso (incidentally Denmark's first F1 driver). With stiff competition including Peter Gethin, Teddy Pilette, Bob Evans and Keith Holland, Lella held her own. Dicing with the best and scoring points at most meetings. Watching them race at Oulton Park was incredible. You could not hear anything above the noise of those mighty V8 engines and the racing was close as well. (OK, rose tinted glasses removed now!)

Unlike shorter retrospectives, this book chronicles her entire career (nearly 400 appearances), from her early days delivering meat in her family's van to enjoying success in Formula 3, Formula 5000, and the European Touring Car Championship.

Lella was the first (and only) female driver to score a point at an F1 race – well half a point in 1975. The race was the 1975 Spanish Grand Prix which was shortened due to Rolf Stommelen having a huge accident and killing spectators & a marshal. In his report for Autosport, noted journalist – Pete Lyons – heaped praise on Lella's driving and it is well deserved.

She was the first female works F1 driver ever. Her predecessors were all private entries. However, Max Moseley and Robin Herd had sufficient confidence in her ability – along with sponsorship from Lavazza to put her into a March 751. The rest of her career in touring cars and sportscars (including Osella) is well documented and the glossary at the back is well researched and includes all her races.

In this book, two things stand out for me. One is Susie Wolff's eloquent foreword. As a high-profile driver and blazing the trail for women in motorsport, she writes: 'I'm lucky in my sport. We wear helmets and the athlete isn't visible. As far as racing is concerned, performance is everything; if you are fast, everything else falls away.'

The second is a comment from Gillian Fortescue-Thomas. She wrote 'I hated all female races. I did as few as I could because I loathed them. I'm often asked about how to get more women into motorsport. If they want to do it, there are no barriers. The doors are open, just let the girls do it.' That was in 1973!

Fortunately, in the 21st Century, there is likes of Jamie Chadwick followed by Danielle Sutton and Lydia Walmsley (to name but two) blazing the trail, the future looks a lot healthier for more women in motorsport.

This book has been thoroughly enjoyable, well-illustrated and researched (over 20 years!) and would make a welcome addition to your library. And all for £40 – great value.

REARWARD GLANCE



Future World Champion, Damon Hill, tackles Old Hall Corner on 15th April 1989. He is driving a Reynard prepared by CoBRa – Colin Bennett Racing – who were based close to Oulton Park in Warrington.

This was Round 3 of the 1989 British F3000 Championship – the first year that this domestic series for the category one step below Formula 1 was staged. Imagine contemporary Formula 2 cars competing at the Cheshire circuit today!

The race was won by Andrew Gilbert-Scott with eventual championship winner, Gary Brabham, in the runner-up position. Brabham set the lap record at 1 minute 22.37 seconds.

Hill finished third. He would only make one further appearance in the CoBRa car – two rounds later at Brands Hatch where he finished sixth.

However, the chassis was taken to victory with Paolo Carcaschi at the wheel when the series returned to Oulton Park that August.

Of course, 15th April 1989 will always be remembered as the day on which the Hillsborough Disaster occurred.