

MARSHALS POST



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Channel Islands Capers

Up at the crack of dawn for a Monday 0530 departure from Club HQ at Loanhead, Bruce Craig and I met up with Frazer M'Quoid, Donald Reid and Andrew M'Quoid at Weedon Lois near Silverstone (the Club's usual Grand Prix Bed & Breakfast haunt).

A very quick cup of coffee later, Andrew was on his way back to Edinburgh in the hired car while the rest of us were heading to Weymouth in 'Rescue 6' to catch the overnight ferry to Jersey.

SMMC had been asked to stand in for the Midland rescue unit, which normally attends the RAC British Hill Climb Championship rounds on the Channel Islands. Fortunately for us, on this occasion a clash of dates had made their attendance impossible.

In addition to our duties at the two Channel Islands hill climbs,

we had also been requested to "sing for our supper"! I shall explain.

In the Channel Islands, there is no motor sport rescue service, as we recognise rescue units on the mainland. The National 'A' hill climbs are the only occasions at which a rescue unit visits the Islands. Even this is a relatively recent situation, which was first made mandatory by the RACMSA in 1992. Due to the (fortunate) fact that since that time, we have never had need to demonstrate our capabilities in anger, some mystique naturally has grown, over what equipment a rescue unit carries and also a distinct lack of local knowledge as to the duties and responsibilities of the crew.

Earlier this year, Frazer was contacted by Fiona Woodrow who, apart from being the wife of the Aide-de-Camp to the Governor

General of Jersey, is also the leading light of the St John Ambulance in Jersey. The request to Frazer was for a demonstration of the rescue unit equipment for which the audience was the St John Ambulance, Fire Brigade, States Ambulance Service, paramedics and some of the hill climb organisers. As many of you know, this is the type of show which is regularly given by our rescue team members to motor clubs etc throughout the country. As requested by Frazer, Fiona had made available an old car in the area to the rear of the Fire Station. This afforded a good sized tarmac working space where the audience of approximately 50 could spectate in safety. One of the local marshals, Roger Holland, was keen to be of help and he became our casualty for the purpose of the demonstration. While Frazer

carried out the commentary, Bruce, Donald and I, assisted by Bob Elwood, a member of Midland Rescue, did the usual "roadshow routine" — look after the casualty, remove the roof, steering wheel, chain-pull the steering column clear of the dashboard, and use the Desoutter saw to cut part of the helmet in order to establish an airway. Blessed with an evening of glorious warm sunshine, the onlookers seemed suitably impressed by the equipment and capabilities of the crew from one of the UK's mainland RACMSA Race Rescue Units.

Early in the evening prior to the hill climb, the Jersey Club hosts a cocktail party at their premises, The Chequered Flag in St. Helier. All mainland competitors are invited along with various officials and, of course, ourselves. It is one of those occasions where you avoid the cheap red or white plonk — stick to the orange juice, it's safer. However, I do recommend the canapes. There are a couple of speeches, one by the Club President, basically to welcome all to the Island, and one by the Chairman of Coopers & Lybrand in Jersey, the event sponsors. Reflecting upon it, one can perhaps relate the occasion to muster — it has a similar ambience.

Bouley Bay Hill Climb is held on a closed public road with start line and paddock adjacent to the Watersedge Hotel. The paddock area is smaller than the likes of Doune and the single seaters are virtually rubbing tyres with absolutely no working space around the vehicles.

This hill, which is organised by the Jersey Motor Cycle and Light Car Club, was one of only five that featured in the first year of the RAC British Hill Climb Championship when its event was run in



Paddock scene at Le Val Des Terres, Guernsey, 22 July '95.

Continued on page 2

Channel Islands Capers

Continued from previous page

July 1947. The winner that year was Raymond Mays in an E.R.A.

From the start, it's up the hill to Café Corner, a sharp 90 degree left hand bend leading into a sharp right. A quick blast up a short straight with an almost flat-out right hand kink known as Sleamans, then into Les Platons, a tight left hand hairpin. This is followed by a series of left and right kinks, then it's hard on the brakes for Radio, an incredibly tight right hand hairpin with a forbidding rockface on the exit to catch those who make an error! Some of the larger single seaters did not have sufficient lock to negotiate this hairpin in one turn on the way back down to the paddock. From Radio, it is up to the final left hand hairpin and a quick dash to the finish line. All done in less than 40 seconds by the big boys! One major difference to other hill climbs which I have attended is that not only do cars compete, but also motor cycles, sidecars and karts. The motor cycles were impressive as they pulled wheelies out of Radio where the Rescue Unit is stationed. I am still not sure how the sidecar passengers managed to cling on through those bends. The fastest time of the day and new hill record went to Channel Islander Andy Priaulx, with a time of 38.65 seconds. To put his time into context, earlier this year at the June Doune, Andy took the hill record during the Top 12 Run Off with a time of 38.60 seconds. Doune is 1680 yards in length, whereas Bouley Bay is 1011 yards yet the time difference is only 0.05 seconds. The Doune average speed is in excess of 90mph!

One slight drawback of the event being held on a public road was that tourists and delivery vehicles require to leave the hotel and this means interruptions to the proceedings! It was amusing to watch the confused tourists being cheered on by spectators as they slowly made their way to the top of the hill in their hired Fiestas. With delays such as these, it was remarkable that the event finished on time — but of course it has to, as the road needs to be re-opened to the public. The best part of the day? — when the overalls and boots were removed following a day of brilliant sunshine with temperatures peaking at 88 degrees with no breeze. Back at the hotel, that first pint tasted good!

The following morning was another early start with a dash to catch the ferry to Guernsey but

including an unscheduled tour of St. Helier. So much for the Club's map-reading tuition. A leisurely lunch and afternoon followed, seeing the 'sights' in the pedestrian precincts of St. Peter Port. The following morning was bright and sunny. Frazer took the opportunity to photograph the rescue unit in the paddock, which very casually happens to be the tree-lined main street.

Le Val des Terres hill climb is also on a closed public road but fortunately without the requirement to let the occasional tourist through! The track width is around 25 feet including the footpaths which are used by virtually every competitor. It is just as well that the kerbs are low and do not present a problem to the low-slung single seaters.

Once again we had a quiet day with no major incidents. The unit was positioned at the top of the hill with an excellent view of the last bend and the finish. It proved to be an ideal spectating point with many of the competitors throwing their cars across the finish line sideways, although this was to be rather expensive for David Grace when he slid off and hit the bank heavily. The commentary, provided by a team of three positioned at the start, half-way up and at the top, (quite literally, as he sat on a wing-backed armchair on a steel frame bolted to the roof of a Nissan Patrol) had to be heard to be believed. Even the instructions to the marshals (and other comments) are announced over the PA system. The commentator at the mid-point was Australian and must have been watching a different hill climb to me. The turn of phrase and the descriptions of the cars' performance were different! The fastest time of the day was again produced by Andy Priaulx at 30.46 seconds. Surprisingly, a 250cc kart qualified for the Top 12 Run Off with a time of 31.28 seconds and produced the second fastest time of the day.

Later that evening, following a fish supper, we boarded Condor 11, the jetfoil bound for Weymouth. Some 13 hours later, we were back at HQ in Loanhead, having enjoyed five days of glorious weather and two days of excellent hill climbing.

If you ever get the opportunity to visit the Channel Islands, make sure that you do so when the hill climbs are being held. You will not be disappointed.

Paul A. Woods

BRITISH GRAND PRIX

This year in terms of the national rota for rescue units, SMMC was invited to attend the British Grand Prix at Silverstone on the 14-16 July 1995. Four crew members travelled south, Frazer Madder, Andrew Main, Richard Allen and myself along with our own doctor Jamie McHugh.

We travelled down on the Thursday in order to sign on that evening. Most of the crew stay in B&B accommodation which is about ten minutes' drive from the circuit and has been used regularly over the years, but other Club marshals choose to stay on the official camp site next to the circuit.

On Friday morning after a briefing about new flag regulations, we headed for our post at the inside of the new Abbey corner. Action started with a two hour free practice session which was held in dry and sunny conditions but with a strong wind. Lunch break was between 1130 and 1300 and included air displays while you filled yourself at the numerous fast-food stalls offering everything from bacon rolls to stir-fry chicken.

After the break, the main business started with the first qualifying session for the Sunday grid. Each team had a possible 12 laps in which to claim the best grid position and after the exciting first session, Damon Hill was quickest and took provisional pole position. The rest of the day is given over to qualifying sessions for the support races, including Porsche Supercup, F3, Formula Renault, Rovers and Touring Cars. Practice officially finished at 1800 but marshals were required to stay on for a safety car test run. The eleven hour day finished about 1900 when we set off back to our lodgings and the necessary beers.

We had to be on post at 0830 on Saturday for a 0930 start. Unfortunately the weather had broken and it was wet and windy. The Formula 1 cars were due out first for free practice but they were slow to emerge and didn't complete many laps, perhaps only enough to get wet weather settings worked out.

Over the lunch break the weather improved and the rain stopped for a while. However when the cars came out for the official qualifying session, the rain returned and for the first half hour we had virtually no cars on the circuit. The poor conditions meant that there was no change to the grid positions, so leaving Damon Hill on pole for the big Sunday

race. Of course, almost as soon as the F1 cars finished, the rain stopped and left the track dry for the four qualifying rounds and two races. During the lunch break there were various track displays, including an impressive one by the F1 Renault Espace — an ideal new rescue unit!!

Sunday again was 0830 on post for a Formula 1 practice session followed by the Porsche Super Cup race until 1115. Between then and 1400, the time is taken up with driver parades and displays, both in the air as well as on the track. At 1400, the reason for the entire weekend started — the 30th British Grand Prix. In my opinion, this was one of the best races we have seen all season.

The only major incident during the race (apart from the Hill-Schumacher collision) was when Mark Blundell and Rubens Barrichello touched wheels coming down from Club, causing Barrichello to lose control and head like a bullet into the gravel next to us at Abbey. For a moment, it looked as though he was going to overturn and cause us some work.

After the race and as though on cue, the heavens opened and down came the rain in buckets. In between the race finishing and the Touring Cars starting, the task of recovering all stranded cars has to be organised. This is farmed out to all available vehicles, including ourselves. We ended up towing Montermini's Pacific back to the pits. After that, John Cleland won the Touring Car race although it more resembled a speedboat race.

So that was it over once again. When all is said and done, this was a great experience and a trip which is well worth making.

Donald Reid

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

The Club extends a warm welcome to the following members who have joined since the start of the season. To all of you, may you enjoy your sport with SMMC. Do make yourself known at events — we would be pleased to meet you.

BOB BERRY, Blairgowrie, Perthshire
RODGER BERRY, Blairgowrie, Perthshire
STEWART C AITKEN, Linlithgow, West Lothian
VIOLET-ANN AITKEN, Linlithgow, West Lothian
PADDY McKAY, Kirkliston
DAVID G LIPPIATT, Glasgow

LESLIE BISSET

An appreciation

With the death on 9 July of Leslie Bisset, SMMC has lost one of its longest-serving members. Leslie joined the Club in August 1974, fifteen months after SMMC was founded and shortly after a tanker drivers' strike caused the cancellation of that year's Scottish Rally. His membership number (110) reflects his long association with the Club and it was typical of him that, having heard of its foundation, he wished to support us in a practical way despite admitting that he was slightly too old to wave a flag or wield a broom.

Leslie's involvement with Scottish motor sport lasted over sixty years. In the thirties he competed in trials, later taking to the hills at Rest and be Thankful, Doune and other venues. He remained an occasional competitor long after most drivers have opted for retirement.

Always keen to put something back into the sport which had been his life, Leslie was Chairman of the Royal Scottish Automobile Club from 1984 to 1986 and President of Scottish Sporting Car Club for fourteen years. As Deputy Clerk of the Course for the Scottish Rally, he offered wise counsel. His long experience was recognised by the many motor clubs which invited him to act as a Steward at races, speed events and rallies.

Officiating with Leslie around the country on many occasions, I was struck by the fact that he always found time to visit the SMMC Rescue Units, and as many marshals' posts as possible, to have a chat with the volunteer officials and give the odd word of advice and encouragement. His interest in marshals and their welfare reflected his attitude to life.

Leslie attended the dinner held to mark the fiftieth Scottish Rally in June this year where he was delighted to meet many old friends among present and former competitors and officials. He was a man held in respect and affection by several generations within Scottish motor sport.

We extend our sympathy to Leslie's daughter Lindsay and her family.

JCL

MARK COLTON

On the odd occasion when I do not attend a round of the RAC British Hill Climb Championship, I always receive a telephone call later that evening from Tony Fletcher, the Championship Co-ordinator, to update me with the results.

On Sunday 5 August 1995, Tony phoned me at mid-day with information that honestly I found difficult to accept as the truth and yet obviously it had to be. The news came from Craigtantlet Hill Climb near Belfast.

During his first practice run, Mark Colton had had an accident from which he sustained immediate fatal injuries.

Death occasioned through competition in British hillclimbing is exceedingly rare and therefore when it strikes somebody who one knows and sees regularly, it creates a strange initial disbelief. This then changes to the feeling that a void suddenly has been created at various places which are visited sixteen times per year.

Five years ago when Mark was competing in 1600cc Racing Cars, he was posing a threat to many of the large engined entries at several rounds of the Championship. When he moved up to a 2.8 Hart in the back of Ray Rowan's Roman, he had arrived in the top three at virtually every event which he entered.

Last year it was Lane, Grace and Colton normally finishing 1st, 2nd or 3rd in any combination at most Championship rounds. Eventually only the latter two went to the final championship round at Doune to fight for the ultimate crown — that of the RAC British Hill Climb Champion. David Grace won the event and the Championship only after pulling everything out of the bag, including a hill record to qualify for the Run Off. This year, Mark changed cars and purchased one of Mike Pilbeam's new MP72 'state of the art' hill climb specials, into which he installed a 3.5 litre Judd powerplant. For those who do not travel the hill climb circus but did attend the June Doune, you will easily

remember the vivid green and bright red Pilbeam which was Mark's 'championship hope' for this year.

The car and driver combination soon became sorted with a win in early May at Lerghy Frissel on the Isle of Man. Later that month while at Gurston Down, I witnessed Mark at his very best. When competing in the Top 12 Run Off, he crossed the finish line to take a hill record which had stood for many years. However, the competition had not ended there as his time was to be bettered by the latest arrival at the

head of the Championship runners, young Andy Priaulx from Guernsey.

The last time that I saw Mark compete was at Le Val des Terres in Guernsey, just two weeks before his tragic visit to Craigtantlet.

Mark epitomised the top level of British Hill Climbing — a quiet spoken gentleman who took his sport very seriously. It is certainly no cliché to say that his death has come as a great loss to all of us who are involved with hill climbing.

Frazer Madder

THE JIM CLARK ROOM

During August, a visit by a dozen members of the rescue unit

was arranged to the Jim Clark Room at Duns. The premises are not normally open in the evening but special arrangements had been made to be able to look round as a private party. It was a fascinating display which chronicles his life and achievements by way of wall boards, photographs and a stunning array of silverware and other awards gained in his all too brief racing career. We were told that in fact this is only a sample of

the total range of awards which he achieved.

We finished the evening in the time-honoured manner, with a bar meal in the Whip and Saddle in Market Square. There, we were joined by Louise Aitken-Walker and her husband Graham who runs a garage on the outskirts of the town. No coincidence this — it was pre-arranged by Yvonne Lamb who knows Louise well.

Our thanks to Yvonne for taking the time to arrange the details of the visit and the social side, both of which were most enjoyable.



NETWORK Q RAC RALLY 1995

The RAC has helpfully produced a newsletter which provides advance information on the format and organisation of this year's Network Q RAC Rally. It might be of interest to members if some of the main points were set out here.

The event takes place between Sunday 19 and Wednesday 22 November 1995. Last year, the Rally was based in Chester as the first of a three year agreement with the City and therefore the format is largely similar. However, the main change to the route is the use of Leeds rather than Harrogate for the Sunday overnight halt. It is planned to use the Art Gallery as Rally HQ with the overnight parc fermé literally outside the front door on The Headrow. In addition, the City will become a co-sponsor of the Millers Oils RAC

International Historic Rally which will be based in Leeds.

Back at Chester, the major change will be to the scrutineering function. This will now take place at a secret location and will involve the technical checks of the cars. To compensate the public for losing the chance to see the competitors and their vehicles at scrutineering, a new feature along the lines of a 'pits road walkabout' will be held at Chester Racecourse before the rally on the afternoon of Saturday 18 November. All of the top drivers and their cars will be present. The Racecourse will be the venue for the Start, overnight halts and Finish of the event and Rally HQ will continue to be at the Moat House International Hotel.

Special stages are likely to follow the pattern of last year, although Rother Valley Country Park will be brought back into use as a spectator stage for the first time since 1991.

Fred Gallagher takes over as Clerk of the Course this year with his predecessor Malcolm Neill carrying out the duties of Rally Manager where he will have increased responsibility for all commercial aspects of the event.

SMMC members will have the opportunity to marshal on a stage in the southern Borders during daylight on Monday 20 November, when the event takes a loop north out of Leeds, taking in Hamsterley, Pundershaw, Broomylinn, Wauchope and Kershope before heading for the Grizedale stages in the Lakes and the Chester overnight halt.

IN THE POST



St John Ambulance Headquarters, St Helier, Jersey.

Dear Mr Madder,

Thank-you for coming along and demonstrating your Rescue Equipment. We all found it very interesting.

I hope the Hill Climb went off well. As you said, "95% of your time you do nothing".

Yours sincerely,

Fiona Woodrow

Items for publication to MARSHALS POST do not have to be formal articles or letters. The Editor would like to keep a type of regular 'notice board' column for all sorts of mixed topics.

Suggestions might be: ideas for discounted goods, clothing or services that the club could arrange, marshalling tips or experiences, articles for sale, personal snippets about relevant job, home or family changes and so on.

MARSHALS POST is here to cover and reflect everything that affects the Club, its Members and the sport — please broaden its scope by contributing even in a small way.

The deadline for the next issue is the last week of November 1995 so there is ample time to send material to the Editor at Club HQ, address on the back page.

RESCUE UNITS

In an interesting article in MARSHALS POST No 77, Frazer Madder explained a number of aspects concerning the Club's rescue units. It was explained that such ambulances are funded from the attendance fees charged to organising clubs and that prudent accounting allows for the creation of a capital reserve which is used for the replacement of the vehicles.

As part of the Committee's programme of planned replacement of the oldest unit of the three, we are pleased to announce that a new rescue ambulance has been bought, 'Rescue 7' as it will be known. This is a new Renault Trafic with long wheelbase and high roof, the updated model of the others in the fleet. Regrettably, the suggestion made elsewhere in this MARSHALS POST of bidding for a Renault FI Espace did not attract the Treasurer's interest for long.

It is diesel powered and therefore should have enough grunt to carry out its duties where the small petrol driven Trafic sometimes is lacking. The challenge is to find available space within the engine bay to fit the additional electrics and components which are necessary but unseen — and normally simple to hide away!

The interior of the vehicle is being built up just now with the panelling, racking and stretcher mountings which have proved to be an ideal design in Rescue 6. New cutting and medical equipment will not need to be bought as for the most part this will be transferred from Rescue 4 which will be sold in due course. As before, we hope that this small Trafic will find a new home in

motor sport, just as the Mitsubishi did.

It is intended that Rescue 7 should be on the road before the season finishes and certainly for the Network Q RAC Rally. We are keeping to our wish that there should be a long-term planned replacement programme for the vehicles in order that the Club might continue to be able to offer the highest standards of service, equipment and presentation for motorsport. We know that this Trafic will deliver these with ease. Look out for it in a few weeks time.

THANKS DEPARTMENT

Thanks are due to the Royal Scottish Automobile Club (Motor Sport) Limited, organiser of the Perth Scottish Rally, for arranging a donation to the Club's Rescue Fund.

During this year's event the Media Office ran a caption competition on a photograph of Jonathan Lord driving a fun during the 1994 event. Jonathan Clerk of the Course of the Scottish Rally and a long-standing SMMC member. Entry money received from the competition amounted to £22 which was handed to Jonathan at the 1995 Rally's prizegiving for donation to the Rescue Fund. The winner of the caption competition received a framed copy of the photograph. Jonathan and the Media Office still have to explain what process was used to decide the winner — who turned out to be Jonathan's wife, Angela!

MARSHALS POST is the Club Magazine of

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