



**North
West
News**



May 2010

Editorial

The general election has been won (well sort of....) and while I write this negotiations are underway to determine who will lead the country for the next five years. That is assuming a coalition it will be stable enough to last the lifetime of a parliamentary term. Here in the North West the result of the opening Formula Ford rounds were perfectly clear with Jordan Skinner winning both races in the post 89 division. In the spirit of election night statistics I predict that if he continues to win he could be champion, although a minor swing to Mike Gardner (class B party) could be a factor. In the pre 90 class John Farrell also opened the season with a brace of wins.

Following the uncertainties of the closed season it is pleasing to report that the Formula Fords are still attracting high enough grids to run separate races for the post 89 and pre 90 divisions. A situation which we all hope will continue. Still on the subject of on-track activities, our reporters at large inform me that the assembly / Parc Ferme areas at Anglesey have been resurfaced.

Away from the track we have had the annual centre dinner & awards plus our regional AGM. The first was an enjoyable social event; the latter had a slightly lonely atmosphere. More on both in this edition.

Marshals Training Weekend

A high number of our regions Marshals turned out for the annual training days, held at Oulton Park on the 20th & 21st February.

During the training Mike Cadwallader, the regional Marshals Club chairman, presented the annual awards. As noted in the last issue, Nadine Lewis is the MSA Marshal of the year, an award which was supplemented with the regional trophy. In addition Jim Bamber, the well known motorsport cartoonist, had supplied an original piece of artwork. The other award was the Stan Foulds trophy for contribution to motorsport. This went to our own chairman, Tom Dooley.

North Western Centre AGM

A somewhat sparsely attended AGM was held on the 23rd March at which the regions members were joined by Roger Tello from BRSCC HQ. In his opening remarks the Chairman, Tom Dooley, noted that during the 2009 season the region had held 6 meetings at Oulton Park and 5 at Anglesey under its own banner, while 3 had been fronted for other clubs. Perhaps unsurprisingly competition numbers had fallen although the situation could have been worse. Thanks were given to the championship co-ordinators for their efforts. Increases in fuel expenses may also have had an impact on Marshals attendance. The centre party was again a great social success, thanks to the work of Jan Gower & Graham Lindley. Finally the Rescue unit and hire of radios provide a stream of income, thanks to Simon Morrell & Geoff Cooper respectively.

Formal business was soon completed with the existing committee being returned for the next year. There then followed a period of un-minuted discussion which focused mainly on the subject of communications.

Centre Dinner and Awards

The Park Royal Hotel at Stretton was again the venue for the annual BRSCC North West awards & dinner. With Richard Sproston as MC, proceedings opened with the awards to the drivers. Barry Thompson of Creative LED Solutions did the honours for the Formula Fords. In addition to the championship awards, Ian Parkington picked up the Marshals Driver of the Year award, voted for by the regions marshals.

On the other side of the barriers Harry Cabot received the John Ellison award for the Marshal of the year while, as reported earlier, Tom Dooley was honoured with the Stan Foulds trophy. Tom Dooley gave thanks to Jan Gower for arranging the evening.

Not exactly a motorsport matter, but one worthy of celebration, Steve Rolls of the XR Challenge celebrated his 40th birthday with the customary trimmings of cake & balloons. Speaking of balloons there was a little controversy in the 'table art' prize for the best sculpture this year. Allegations of the illegal use of helium to provide support were proven when one entry managed to hover above the table.



Harry Cabot receives his award from Richard Peacock

During the course of the evening the raffle & auction yielded the magnificent sum of £3013, which will be used by the centre's rescue unit. Thanks to all those who generously contributed.

Finally Jan Gower was presented with flowers in appreciation for the work done in arranging the evening.

Transatlantic Experiences

Much has been written over the past few years on the environmental impact of motoring. Here in the UK most of us have an impression that California is home to the clean living electric eco-wagon. On a recent business trip this image took a bit of a bashing....

I arrived at San Francisco airport and met a couple of Dutch colleagues who had arrived on a separate flight. At the Avis check in desk we were given directions to our 'full size'. Usually I travel alone and get allocated a 'compact'. This is typically either a bland front drive Japanese thing (works but lacks

charisma) or an American domestic (works sporadically and after the first few miles very little of the interior trim remains attached). However, as there were three of us with luggage & business equipment we needed a bit more space. Our full size was the American dream of the mid 1970's. Large chrome badges proclaimed that this leviathan was a Mercury Grand Marquis. A quick external survey revealed a V8, rear wheel drive & a separate chassis while internally it sported vinyl seats and acres of plastic wood. Apparently it was the civilian version of the Ford Crown Victoria which is a mainstay of the police & taxi fleets. We also noted that Avis were renting out far more Mustangs & Camaros than Prius hybrids....

The flight from Manchester to San Francisco is not much fun. Apart from taking a long time you have to negotiate changing flights at Heathrow and being regarded as hazardous cargo by the US Homeland Security people. Following the short drive to our hotel in Cupertino none of us were in much of a mood to go far that evening. Despite this we all felt that it would be worth inspecting the microbrewery located two blocks along the street. Usually this would be a brief two or three minute walk but, due to the lack of pavements in American cities necessitated driving. Unable to decide who would take on driving duties for the evening we asked the hotel receptionist to call us a taxi. As we are going only two blocks he says we can ride in the hotels courtesy car. This turns out to be a stretched Lincoln Continental with a mirrored roof lining and, needless to say, a large V8.

Next morning we head into our office & meet with a colleague who would be joining us for the week's business. He is much more in the traditional mould of a Californian and conscientiously drives a Prius hybrid. We engage in the customary Monday morning banter of what we did over the weekend. It turns out that he goes camping in a vintage 1950's aero caravan, which he tows with a Chevy Suburban. We load up the Mercury and head off to see our customers in the fine, clean Pacific coast air of California.

The final tally for this bastion of the green movement? 340 miles on just under two tanks of fuel. Can you believe that in 2010 a road car is being sold with sub 200 mile range? Arnold Schwarzenegger would be proud.

Formula Ford, Oulton Park 24th April

The opening rounds of the 2010 championship were held at Oulton Park, where the racing shared the bill with Time Attack. I suppose that it could be considered a historic event, as Time Attack were holding their first meeting as an MSA recognized sport. The meeting was a double header with a combined qualifying session being followed by two races apiece for the pre 90 and post 89 divisions. An already crowded timetable took a knock (literally) when two race trucks giving a lunchtime demonstration engaged in an impromptu bout of Sumo wrestling at the Knickerbrook chicane. However, all races were completed although the second encounter of the day had to be shortened by five minutes.

During the racing it was encouraging to see a healthy mix of regular competitors doing battle with new faces to the championship. Notably Jordan Skinner scored a brace of victories on his debut meeting in the championship.

In the first post 89 race the defending champion, Simon Kinsey, was sadly a non starter due to mechanical issues. Stuart Gough made the best start but was unable to hold off Skinner who went on to take the flag. The second race followed in similar order with Gough again beating Skinner away from the lights but being unable to maintain his advantage.

John Farrell was in strong form for both pre 90 events, holding sway to determined work by Nigel Dolan who took both second place slots. During the second race Lee Hannam put in a spirited drive to claim third from the back of the grid.

Avon Tyres Formula Ford Northern Championship Positions (following the first rounds at Oulton Park)

Class Positions

Class A	Class B	Class C	Class D	Class E
Jordan Skinner 68	Mike Gardner 68	John Farrell 66	Nigel Dolan 66	Stuart Dix 61
Stuart Gough 54	Pete Booker 51	Davis Franklin 51	Matthew Ridge 54	Ian Parkington 36
Chris Chisnall 48	Craig Currie 51	David Beechey 40	John Wilkinson 42	John Swift 4

Overall Positions

Post 89	Pre 90
Jordan Skinner 46	John Farrell 42
Stuart Gough 30	Nigel Dolan 32
Mike Gardner 24	David Franklin 18

XR Challenge Championship Positions

The XR Challenge has not yet had a race at Oulton Park or Anglesey this year, so I cannot bring you a race report. However, the championship standings following the first round at Silverstone are as follows;

Class A	Class B
Paul Bishop 23	Mark Robinson 24
Simon Robinson 21	John Ifan Jones 20
Steve Poole 19	Marcus Riley 19

Dates

15 May – Oulton Park	14 August – Oulton Park
22/23 May – Anglesey (CSCC)	4 September – Oulton Park
12 June – Oulton Park (CSCC)	11 September - Anglesey
26/27 June - Anglesey	25/26 September – Anglesey
3/4 July – Anglesey (Leinster MC)	16 October – Oulton Park
31 July – Oulton Park	28 November - Anglesey

Contact

Letters to the editor should be addressed to; Andy Powers, 27 Hovis Mill, Union Road, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK11 7BF. Email andrew.powers1@ntlworld.com

Note; the opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the editor and do not necessarily reflect those of the BRSCC