

After some (more) nattering from Potts about using too much paper for the Mag, the format has now been changed. I've had to buy thicker lens spectacles and there may be a free magnifying glass with the next issue.

Talking of which, no one's queried the titles of my past reports. There has always been a link between the title and the text. This can only lead me to one of two conclusions; a) No one can figure out the link, or b) er, I think we all know the second one.

So what have we got for you in this issue? Plenty of action from our favourite Chairman. He's been very busy on the road rally scene with Andy Beaumont recently and finally got their first win together – due, no doubt to their rather natty outfits (see photo elsewhere in this issue). Petchy's also done an 'Epilogue' as some time has passed since he sent me his Chunterings, not to mention a little globetrotting! Sadly Graham Gardner has ended his excellent navigational quiz series, owing to a general lack of response. Thanks to Angela Cammish for the Qantas Fun Page. With no mini adventures from the Briggs' until next year, this issue's a little sparse. Ironic really when Potts has just got me to cut down on paper. Oh, watch out for the page headed 'HumberSide Safety Camera Partnership.' It could just save you some money.

In the Larkspeed League Beverley are currently languishing in 7th place, the unexpected timing of the last PCT event catching me out. On Thursday the 24 July, the evening before the present Mrs Everingham and I departed for foreign shores, Matthew sheepishly handed me a set of PCT regs for Sunday the 27th! I'm not sure how long he'd had them in his briefcase, but the closing date for entries was 21st July. Precious little time even to organise for someone else to do it. Two recent Autotests have served to keep us 7th, but we're currently only 4 points away

from 6th. If we could get a few more bodies to the last event – yes, it's another autotest – on 2nd November, it might just put Trackrod MC behind us. Any takers? (Jon Meacock excepted).

Talking of holidays, the annual summer vacation was spent exploring the roads on the island of Crete, along with the handling characteristic of a Daewoo Matiz, which had a tendency to chuck it's coolant out and spit back through the airbox. Terminal understeer and a complete ban on using the handbrake whilst on the move by Her-In-The-Right-Hand-Seat, made for some interesting driving.

This first time on the island also introduced me to Radar - on – Holiday! What the hell's that all about anyway? I soon learned that the best way to avoid spending time and money with the local constabulary was to stick a Merc taxi in front (not difficult anywhere in Greece, there's usually one giving you a good close-up of a 3 pointed star in your mirror any time!). When he slows down, bingo! just around the next bend is a bunch of cops pointing their equipment at us. Second best choice is a coach, although they can be a bit slow on corners – but not much! Imagine the scene. "H-hallo matey peeps!" "Pullin' ova please sir – innit." "Ere, why you driving sh*t car Matiz – eh?" "Not enough dosh – eh?" "I got loadsamannay!" Error! Error! Character slip! Oops! Apologies to our Greek readers/members/Royal Family /friends/Romans/countrymen..... Last one – old joke. What's a Greek urn? Whatever you've got in your wallet when he stops you!

Moving swiftly on.

Apologies to our Internet readers for the late appearance of the July issue on our website. Unfortunately we're at the mercy of resident computer buff Matthew Atkinson to load it on. He blames his recent holiday – two weeks in a very long estate car harassing French motorists who hurl abuse at three fast disappearing blond heads on the back seat!

Anyway, just in case this one's late getting to you, A Happy New Year!

Well, hope you manage to read the rest of the Mag. Maybe I could save even more space by leaving out the vowels – you should still be able to follow the plot okay.

Rd n.
Hlp! Hlp! spllcck's jst thrwn wbbly.

Hw.

Chairman's Chunterings

In the last issue I was still moaning about the Witch Way Road Rally, but to be fair, a lot of crews enjoyed it despite not doing very well. So maybe it was just me! I was looking forward to the Armstrong Massey Road Rally, which had actually happened by the time you read last months *Chunterings* (last months! - Ed.) and also the Westmoreland. As you probably know by now, Andy and I came home 2nd overall on the Armstrong Massey, behind the diesel Cavalier of Graham Hepworth and Iain Tullie. In fact, despite being pleased at coming 2nd, I was actually berating myself for making two mistakes on the night. It cost us what really should have been a win, as we had been going very quickly in comparison to their vehicle. Some people are just never happy are they?

The weekend after saw us bordering the Lake District for the next round of the ANCC Road Rally Championship, The Westmoreland. This was an enjoyable event, starting at Tebey Services on the M6, returning there for petrol and the finish. Danny and Ian had apparently returned at least twice, even before NTC2, the roundabout next to the services having too many exits for Ian to work out! We had a very good night, coming home 4th overall,

'unexpected' as it said in one magazine article (not mine! – *Ed.*). Somewhat unfairly I thought. They obviously don't know how quick Andy is, providing I don't mess up.

The next round was the St. Wilfred's at the beginning of August. Starting from Ripon with over 50 entries, it included some really nice old stuff like a TR3 and a Volvo PV544. It made us feel as though we should be in something like a MK1 RS2000 - if anybody's got one that's not in bits. Get your finger out Andy and get it finished!

We really enjoyed this event as well. Fantastic route and would've had another good top 10 finish but for losing 5 minutes on the first section. Things not coming together quickly enough. I'd blame Andy, but to be fair it was just one of those things. We were waiting to go at NTC2, a tractor was coming up behind us as we were being counted down. Andy was audibly fretting, a term I have used before. He was desperate to get away. And he did, very quickly. All the maps slid off my lap as we pulled about 3G's. I climbed back into the front and just as I got around to looking at the route sheet, we arrived at a grass triangle with a manned control. Maps down, time card out and off again. We were now at the first junction. I'd plotted nothing at all but guessed at a slot right through some woods, which I'd been down before. It would give me some time to plot. You guessed, we were wrong. From there, having back tracked to the correct route, everything else went fine apart from the third puncture of the year. The poor Proton is really taking a pasting. Oh, and we were 14th overall, putting me fourth in the Navigator's Championship and Andy fifth driver.

Other stuff now. Matt Blood has taken over from Carl Briggs as Club Secretary. Thanks go to Carl for his time in the post (1st or 2nd class? – *Ed.*).

I notice not everyone has yet bought Motor Club leisurewear from Matt. Now he's the

Secretary I believe some really nice bright blue split skirts and jackets are in the pipeline! Looking forward to seeing him in those, not!

Finally, back onto rallying and we've just finished the Three Swans Rally. You'll find a comprehensive report within this issue. I couldn't be bothered to write a lot about the others this long after. That's no reflection on my enjoyment of the events, I should've written them sooner, whilst still able to remember the details. I'm actually starting to chunter now (and ramble – *Ed.*), so I'll stop and write something else.
Bye

Mike Petch

Where's My Classic

Hi.
Over the past few months we have been working on an idea for a website which we hope will be of interest to you and your members.

The site is called 'wheresmyclassic.com' and as you will see, the main concept behind the site is that it provides a resource through which you can find a vehicle you used to own, or some history from other owners regarding a vehicle that you currently own. It works by the visitor registering as a member (which is free) and then registering vehicles that they currently or have previously owned. There's no restriction on type or age of vehicle, modern vehicles are also very welcome.

Visitors can browse and search for vehicles without registering as a member, but there are many benefits in registering. For example, if you find a vehicle you are interested in, you can contact the person who registered the vehicle through a form on the site. Security of a member's details is guaranteed and email addresses are not available to other members. You can also add vehicles to a favourites list and there is a forum, which provides

rooms in which to post messages. If your club does not currently have an online forum we would be happy to create a room for your members to use. Our link is <http://www.wheresmyclassic.com> Have a good look around, register yourself and your vehicles and let us know what you think to the site and the concept. You will see there are a number of vehicles registered on the site and increasing this is crucial in making the site a success. We believe the site has a lot of potential and we are really fired up about the benefits to the classic vehicle community. We hope that you feel the same.

Kind regards from
"wheresmyclassic.com"

**Sunday 17 August 2003
National Autotest
BTRDA/ANCC
Championships
Hartlepool & District
Motor Club**

Things Can Only Get Better

After years of dragging Heepy over the twisting roads around Malton, Helmsley and Stokesley on our annual visit to Hartlepool, I finally discovered the A19! It knocked 20 minutes off my usual 2-hour travelling time and I arrived fresh as a daisy at 08.45. Doh!

Most of the big guns were there with the notable absence of Dave and Adele Mosey, Adele being taken ill just before the event. This left Richard Wood as the sole driver of Dave's car for the day and a chance for local driver Paul Swift to win.

Hartlepool's C o C Chris Langan and his team were already setting out the two test sites, complete with a ticket machine on each, as I arrived. The P A system was also being wired up for the considerable audience that always attends this popular city centre venue.

Following scrutineering most of us were keen to walk the tests as a quick look at the diagrams the night before confirmed they would be as complex and challenging as in previous years. The three entries in Class 'A,' up to 1100cc Minis, meant our class wouldn't be going first, that dubious pleasure falling to John Griffiths all the way from the Midlands. He set the scene for the day chucking the Mini over the first reverse stop-astride without using reverse gear. The impressive manoeuvre was academic as he negotiated the finish incorrectly and earned himself the first washout of the day – it would get worse.

I was running second car in Class 'B' behind Richard Wood and set fastest time for the big-engined Minis. This was by dint of BTRDA contender Mike Sones suffering a stall on the test followed by a stuck bendix on his starter motor. He did manage to bump-start it on the inclined car park. His time though was 21.4 seconds slower than mine. Not a good start to his day – it would get worse.

Test two was awesome! It contained no less than 4 'gates' requiring an approach flat in 1st and then, at the very last moment, grabbing the handbrake and dropping the rear wheels over the line. If it was done properly reverse gear wasn't needed. A reverse flick over the finish line had me grinning from ear to ear as Chief Timekeeper, Bob Clouston, marked my card.

On the way back to the paddock a Marshal takes the competitor's time card so they can be entered onto a giant scoreboard. Whilst sat in the car waiting for the Marshal to bring my card back, I was chatting to Eric Norton, Chief Scrutineer. Suddenly there was a loud bang from Heepy. Eric asked me what it was. I thought it was the handbrake slipping on the ratchet, as there wasn't any smoke coming from the still running engine. Back in the paddock I whipped the front off, but saw nothing wrong.

Test 3 was a repeat of 1 and as soon as I set off there was a

dreadful banging from the front of Heepy. Surprisingly I still set fastest time in our class, but collected a 5 second penalty for hitting a cone – in keeping with everyone else in the class! Thinking there were all sorts hanging off the car I dived into the covered paddock to investigate. With the front end jacked up and first gear selected I twisted the front wheel and spotted the engine swaying about. The engine steady bar had snapped and the two broken ends had been banging together as the transmission was loaded and unloaded. The really weird thing was that it had snapped while I was sat in the car talking to Eric with the engine running – that's what the bang was.

Panic now – I don't carry a spare and neither did any of the other Mini owners. Who the hell breaks engine steady bars anyway? Duncan Wild kindly lent me a ratchet strap to restrain the engine movement, but there was a distinct lack of anything to attach it to on the bulkhead. Meanwhile the rest of the competitors were getting through the tests. Someone then came over and told me John Griffiths had just blown his diff and retired. There was a whole Mini going spare! With a handful of tools I wandered over as he was explaining to a bunch of people how it happened (they just go bang!). "You'll not be needing your engine steady bar now will you John," I ventured. A quick nod from him and five minutes later it was off. There was a bit of a struggle trying to fit my bushes to it, one end is brass, the other plastic, but it all went on eventually. I can't remember a year when so many things have gone wrong – it would get worse!

As is customary, when I've had to effect a repair, the panic sets in. This generally manifests itself on the following test. Yep, slowest time in the class plus a line penalty for good measure! By this time Mike Sones was clawing back time hand over fist from me although I was still leading the class by 4.5 seconds. In the other classes Steve Johnson had been setting some cracking times in his 1100cc Mini

to lead Class 'A.' He kindly offered to share his car with either John Griffiths or his partner Katie Carter after the demise of their diff. As Katie needed the BTRDA points more than John, she got the drive.

In the combined Class 'C/D' Duncan Stephens was leading in his Nova by not having any penalties, whilst in Class 'E' Dave Cook was putting his VW Buggy to good use ahead of Steve Morten's Sylva Striker. Paul Swift's Mini Special was beating everyone, as expected, but a couple of penalties had Stephen Wild breathing down his neck.

By the time we'd run the two tests 3 times, Mike had turned his deficit into a 3.2 second lead in our class. Time to learn some new tests.

As usual with most organisers, the plastic cones stay in the same places, we just have to drive round them on a different route. There was another slight panic when I realised I'd missed a bit of the first test whilst walking it and Steve Morton was on the line waiting to go, the organisers deciding Class 'E' should kick off the next lot of new tests. I watched him and all the other competitors making sure the corrected part was firmly embedded in my mind.

Sat on the line I kept repeating it to myself as the Marshal zeroed his stopwatch. Away I went, round the first cone then stopped. The whole bloody test had disappeared out of my head! I sat stationary for what seemed like minutes. Looking at the test diagram on the dash didn't help, it was just a jumble of lines (probably how they appear to Andy Beaumont). Then I heard a voice telling me which way to go – I know it was Sunday, but it wasn't 'Him upstairs.' I think it was Duncan Stephens actually, shouting from the start line. I'd gone too far round the first cone, so as soon as I reversed up the whole thing came flooding back. It was like a time warp, go between the cones, memory goes, reverse back out, memory returns. I decided not to test this theory again and set off in the

right direction, but the 13 seconds I lost dumped me to 4th in class. I was mortified and staring at yet another embarrassing result.

After driving through the covered paddock to the next test I parked a few metres away from the start line to run it through my head before attempting to drive it. Richard Wood suddenly appeared from the paddock and parked up. He'd been running ahead of me all morning so I expected him to pull up to the start line. He then waved for me to go next on the test. Having been rushed onto a test before and then suffer a mistake, I indicated for him to go first. Halfway round the test, his car came to a halt. Yup! Memory lapse. It was my turn to shout directions now. He got round okay, but took a maximum in the process. Bob Clouston had seen what happened before Richard went on and was quick to comment it could've been me. The test didn't go particularly well as I lost hold of the steering wheel knob near the finish and took a very wide line round a couple of cones. An arm that spends all week pushing a pen generally runs out of power about halfway through an event with grippy tarmac. This, coupled with the still injured left shoulder, was losing me buckets of time. It would get worse!

By test 10 I'd pulled ahead of Richard Wood and Rob Rolston, back into 2nd, but was still some 41 seconds behind Mike Sones. Then fate stepped in. Unknown to me Mike's Mini lunched its reverse gear on test 11, leaving him to take washouts for the last three tests.

World War Three almost broke out after test 12. The final instructions clearly stated that the last test in progress at 15.45 would be the final one – test 13. Not clear enough for some people who thought we should run an *equal* number of tests, i.e. 14. Good fun though they were, most of us had a long way to drive home and there were the presentations to get through too. Sod's law, I got a penalty on test 13! Didn't affect the results

though. With the year I've been having, a class win was gratefully accepted. My commiserations to Mike Sones who still didn't come last overall despite the equivalent of 4 washouts. Rob Rolston took 2nd in our class from Richard whose day didn't really go to plan.

Steve Johnson easily took Class A and an excellent 9th overall, whilst Duncan Stephens continued his earlier form to put his Nova 1st in Class C/D. Dave Cook's VW Buggy steamrolled its way to take the up-to-1500cc sports car class from Steve Morten with Malcolm Livingston taking the honours in Class F. Stephen Wild and Paul Swift ended their day-long battle of the Specials in favour of Paul, who's been trying to win this event for some years now.

The usual bottles of wine were presented along with the trophies to end yet another cracking event from Chris Langan and his team. I was on a high from it for a whole week!

Howie.

YOUR RAC MEMORIES WANTED!

Your RAC Rally anecdotes would be welcomed as part of a project researching the history of the rally between the years 1961 and 1997 inclusive. They may be stories of great drivers you have pushed out of ditches, freezing nights in the middle of nowhere or how you repaired an ailing car with just a branch and a cable tie?

Any stories that sum up the nostalgia that surrounds the RAC would be welcomed from competitors, service crew, spectators and marshals - if you were there and have a story to tell, I am interested in including it in the only website in the world dedicated to our rally. The project that will launch shortly, records the history of the event from it's golden years and will build to give generations to come

the story of a great event from the people who were actually there.

From working on this for the last twelve months we already have interviews with many of the great characters, giving a very personal view of what it was like to compete on and win the country's premier motoring event in that era, but we need your views to complete the picture.

So, if you were there between 1961 and 97, let me have your best stories - brief and to the point would be good, funny or sad, with the year if possible, and your name. Then in fifty years time when most of us will be OTL at the final control, the legend that was the RAC will still be there for people to read about, and all those who contribute will be listed there too. Contributions can be emailed to theracrally@aol.com or posted to I.Marlow, 82 Paxton Road, Fareham, Hampshire, PO14 1AD.

3 Swans Road Rally Selby & District Motor Club 23/08/2003

Round 9 of the ANCC Championship and we're back closer to home. Starting at Selby using maps 105 and 100, some familiar territory was more than likely. We were seeded at 4 with a number of strong crews around us including Stan Featherstone and Oggy, who I had tipped for victory. Having said that, I also believed we had as good a chance as any, if all went well. Our main championship opposition at this stage was John Lawson/Chris Pringle, the Holdsworth's and Dave Chapman in the driver's table. Dave Taylor, with his navigator being on holiday, left a good chance for me to catch him up with a top 5 finish. I think Andy and I have both learnt a lot about the way we operate in the car and felt much more calm and focused than we have previously. We also felt very professional in our matching BDMC shirts and shorts, especially as we posed for

the photo shoot prior to noise check.

A one-mile run out to the South of Selby and a quick loop via the short 'white,' where Matt Blood and Graeme Potter were spectating complete with video camera. We dropped a minute in this section after a hundred yard wrong slot, but it turned out that we were joint leaders as many crews had gone further and dropped loads more time including Mr Ogram. Sorry, but this was a confidence boost for us with one of the main rivals trailing already.

The whole route was issued in envelopes at the start to open at the relevant controls throughout the night. With each having up to two or even 3 sections of navigation inside, I was able to get well ahead with the plotting and be 'on it' reading the road and going very, very fast! Which is what Andy is good at! The route now wound past Wressle and up to Foggathorpe crossroads, heading North via Sutton-upon-Derwent before the petrol halt on the A1079 West of Barmby Moor. Here we were confirmed joint leaders with 3 other crews.

After petrol, a simple section with tulips took us down the 'white' near the Steer Pub, through the usual lay-by and NW past Yapham Common, Full-Sutton and a loop via Bugthorpe and Buttercrambe. All timed to the second. We only dropped 29 seconds here, plus the minute from the first time card. I was fairly confident that things were looking good.

On to map 100 now through Bosall, the route instruction being issued in text, describing where you were going. This was very different and to keep your place in the story meant great care. We turned round at one point as I thought we had missed a triangle, causing Stan and Oggy to go back as well, while I checked the order of the text. We'd jumped a paragraph and hadn't actually got to it yet, so it was now all on to push to the end of the section, managing to make it on our minute - just!

The same thing happened on the next section, up to and around Castle Howard. We followed John Haden there, passed him plotting, but we were wrong and couldn't turn round with him coming up fast behind. So we carried on and turned at the monument and went like hell back to take the loop to the West, dicing in and out of triangles and ornamental drives with Stan and Oggy as we went, oops! Again we just scraped in on our minute and things were now flowing. Andy was driving well and listening too, able to go steady while I plotted and push on as I pressed him to go harder and not back-off over brows and blind corners. Rallying is great fun sometimes!

On through Hovingham, winding round to Yearsley Moor and over the gated road before the final trek South via all the little routes over Easingwold and Stillington. Here we were caught by Stan and Oggy, this being Stan's back garden, no surprise there. Andy was not happy until he had the Proton completely sideways round the last two bends before finishing on the B1363 North of York with breakfast at McDonalds. This turned out to be very poor! I think we've been spoilt in the past with some slap up breakfasts.

Having dropped only 2 minutes 29 seconds all night I was quietly hopeful as long as all the boards were recorded correctly. "Maybe top 3," said Andy. I smiled, "Maybe top 2," he said, still smiling. "Maybe top 1," let's just wait and see.

YES! Results provisional and we've won our first rally as a team. After a tense half hour waiting for the results to be final, we'd done it. Everything came together the team worked well, Andy drove like a demon, I felt great. I made errors, but Lady Luck was with me and I got away with them. Sometimes you need luck as well. MARVELOUS!!

Stan and Oggy came in 4th overall, and are now moving up the Championship order. I've moved into 3rd and Andy has

closed the gap in 4th place. Hall Trophy next in September.

Mike Petch

HALL TROPHY ROAD
RALLY
CLITHEROE & DISTRICT
MOTOR CLUB
6th SEPTEMBER 2003

What can I say? A fantastic start venue in the grounds of Clitheroe Castle, a novel way of issuing route instructions. In theory, not a bad idea if everything had worked. Competitors received 4 sheets of numbered map references with the final instructions to plot at home, if you had time. Fortunately I did as I was on holiday. Many did not have that luxury and were still plotting at the start venue.

On the night, the route instructions for each section would tell which references were relevant to it, which points were controls, code boards, black spots, via, give ways etc. You could then work out the correct route. If only!!

Unfortunately, when all the course cars broke down, none of the route hand out sheets got to the marshals so nothing made sense any more. We just had maps covered in spots and ended up chasing all over, not knowing what was happening

When the top 10 to 15 crews are parked high on a wet moor - lost - and you're starting to feel ill, you can't see much improving. We battled on a bit, wading through many sheets of instructions plus a War and Peace sized book of not-as-map diagrams. It was getting very over complicated. For the first time ever I was ready to quit and go home before we got any further north and the event got any worse. Many crews did just that, but Andy persuaded me to carry on for a little while longer as the organisers were apparently sorting things out. They did and things improved. I was glad we stopped for a wee break (hell, how far north were you? - Ed.) on one competitive section. We obviously dropped some time, but the fresh air brought me round. Besides, at least 3 crews pulled in as well, thinking we had stopped in the

lay-by for a code board! We carried on and somehow managed to finish 8th overall. Sorry, but it wasn't much fun. I was very glad we decided to continue though and grab a few more championship points.

Mike Petch

Sunday 14 September
Autumn Autotest
Larkspeed League
Championship
York Motor Club

Shock Over Coil!

Another hot sunny day to take Heepy out to play, typical of this summer. It would, however, prove to be the cause of much discomfort.

Acaster Malbis was the unfortunate venue. An old airfield with a mixed surface of broken tarmac and concrete strewn with layers of soil and fist size stones - not the kind of surface for a super low Mini with a lot of holes in the floor! Still, I'd competed on it before and even won a couple of years ago.

Four long tests were set up when I arrived for 08.30 scrutineering. It was good to see York MC's Stuart Cariss back out in his Mk2 Escort. The last time I saw him was at this venue and the car was on fire!

The initial entry list of 28 had no less than 5 NHMC entries - they must be desperate for Larkspeed Championship points! This was soon reduced to 3 with the none appearance of James Reynolds and Ian Sadofsky. No sign of the pea-picker or the windscreen fitter though (JT & Shorty). Steve Young brought along his Mini Special and Richard Wood came out of retirement just to confuse the organisers with his namesake from Ilkley & DMC. Ken Sturdy had teamed up with Richard in his Mini saloon and I was curious to know if I'd become quicker than him or if he'd slowed down since he last

competed a few years ago. I was soon to find out.

Watching classes 1, 2 and 3 complete the tests confirmed the amount of dust we were going to have to contend with all day. The long hot summer creating the worst conditions I'd seen here for some time. Test one included an almost flat in 2nd section and the sound of stones rattling the bodywork made me wonder if Heepy would survive the day. Strange, part of the test included a large area of clean concrete that some clubs would've held a complete test on. I was running with the very old Goodyear G800's on the front to try to raise the ride height a bit.

Stuart Cariss took an early overall lead closely followed by Chris Leeming, proving the conditions were more suited to stage rally type cars than out and out autotest vehicles. Ken Sturdy pulled almost a second on me just on the first test. The trend was set.

Most of the usual Sunday gang were away on a BTRDA event or something so we were all in with a shout on this one.

By test 4 Ken had pushed himself to the front and was leading me by 4.42 seconds with Jon Graves' Fiesta third, only 18 hundredths ahead of Chris Leeming. And we were all chewing dust. Not only did it follow you into the finish, but the inside of the car had a cloud of it too!

Both Richard Wood's suffered a fail during this first run, NHMC's on test 2 and Ilkley's on 4. Another run of the same tests was completed before a much welcomed lunch. During this time the event turned into a 3 horse race with Ken now over 9 seconds ahead of me and I was struggling to hold off a very persistent Jon Graves, now only $\frac{3}{4}$ of a second behind. Chris Leeming was still leading his class, but was now over 30 seconds adrift of Jon - a 10 second penalty on test 7 not helping his cause.

Out of sheer curiosity during lunch I removed Heepy's front just to check everything was okay

after the mornings battering. I was stunned to find the coil resting between the starter motor and subframe cross-member. Thankfully all the wires were still connected, but they could've pulled off anytime during a test. On closer inspection I discovered the bracket had snapped, it must've been weakening over a long period of time. Visions of that bloody albatross keep flitting through my mind. I don't think I've had one event this year where I haven't had to make some repair or other. A bodge job was effected to see me through the rest of the day.

New tests were learned and if I'd been Gerald Holdroyd, running first, I would've gone round with a shovel to clear some of the piles of soil before attempting them!

Ken beat me on two of the next four tests and I beat him on two, but it wasn't enough to stop him extending his lead by another 3 seconds. This round was not good for Jon Graves as I managed to finally pull away from him by over 23 seconds to finally give me some breathing space. Breathing was something I was now having trouble with! Clouds of dust and asthmatics don't mix and to compound my problem I hadn't brought my 'puffer' along (I usually only suffer during the winter months). About this time I just wanted to go home. One of the organisers told me this was the roughest of the three venues they use and this one was chosen because their members were stage rally people and liked rough stages. Thanks!

During the last run NHMC's Steve Young had quietly snuck himself into 4th overall ahead of Chris Leeming by just over 2 seconds. Both Richard Wood's were also popping in some occasional good times, but still being hurt by their earlier washouts.

The next run of tests saw me commit my only indiscretion of the day. Tagging a cone landed me with a 10 second penalty and extended Ken's lead even further. On test 16 he was sat on the line waiting for me to finish. I came hammering round a bend

and had a big lock-up almost going the wrong way round a cone. He then did exactly the same thing, but took 2 ½ seconds longer than me to gather it all up again.

Some people started loading up at this point as it was getting late, but the organisers had different plans. They decided to set up another 4 tests and run them once. The only problem was, by the time class 4 had finished the previous 4 tests, Gerald Holdroyd was starting the final ones. There was much muttering from competitors about not being allowed to walk them, but all we could do was watch the early runner's attempts and try to learn from them. The whole event could now be lost with a wrong test. Cautious times!

Ken just beat me on the first one, but I took almost 4 seconds from him on the next. A very technical test 19 then gave me another second on him, but the final one had a high speed chuck from forward to reverse through a gate and I went for it! Shades of Hartlepool! It got me almost another 8 seconds back, but all too late. The final gap was only 9 seconds, but Ken had the day. Congratulations to him and to Jon Graves for 3rd overall and 1st in class 2. Steve Young took a convincing 4th overall, just in front of the old campaigner Gerald Holdroyd (who'll be having a word with me if he gets to read this report!). Chris Leeming took a comfortable win in class 3 ahead of Stuart Cariss.

I can't say I enjoyed the event for a number of reasons. The condition of the venue left a lot to be desired and I can't say I wasn't disappointed to come 2nd to someone who's been out of the sport for some considerable time. And I wasn't looking forward to suffering the same ignominy again next Sunday at YSCC's Larkspeed event.

Howie.

"Quotes"

"Coke is God's way of telling you you've got too much money."

Paul Ross – Broadcaster, on Ch4's recent programme 'Snorting coke with the BBC.'

"Ooh, that's a long one."

Checkout lady in Safeway's supermarket complimenting Howie on his excellent choice of the yellow fruit – or was I just pleased to finally get to the checkout? Too many potential coronaries queuing behind me for any smartass replies!

"It's almost reptilian."

ITV's F1 commentator, James Allen, on Kimi Raikkonen's ability to concentrate unblinkingly.

Sunday 21 September
September Autotest
Larkspeed League
Championship
Yorkshire Sports Car Club

Plod Spoils The Party

It's 06.15, cold, still a bit dark and I'm donning shorts! Heading out to Brighouse on the M62 and the temperature is still only 9°C. It was certainly a bit nippy round the Trossacks!

A brand new venue greeted us at some kind of factory, right next door to the police station. Smooth clean tarmac was a world of difference to last week's rough and dusty venue.

Scrutineering was tougher than last week too, evidenced by Richard Davis and Andrew Wood's difficulty getting their shared Metro through with its side exiting exhaust – exiting through the passenger door skin that is! Heepy had been vacuumed out, engine jet-washed and a new coil bracket fitted. And he was feeling good!

An entry of 33 included some of the more usual ANCC competitors including Dave and Adele Mosey and Steve and Ben Morten. NHMC fielded the same team as last week, but this time James Reynolds made the start along with Steve Young, Richard Wood and Ken Sturdy. Still no sign of the pea-picker and the windscreen fitter.

At signing on we were given a cracking map of how to get to the venue! The driver's briefing was interesting. Steve Morten voicing his concern over the two speed humps on the access road we had to use to get to the test sites and the fact that a number of competitor's cars couldn't get over them without seriously catching the underside. Larkspeed Championship coordinator Carl Davis was addressing the briefing and replied that if our cars were too low to clear the speed humps, he didn't consider it his problem. That went down like a lead balloon! Retribution would soon follow!

Two test sites were set up, one with two tests on and the other with one very large test. They were short by last week's standards, but looked typical Larkspeed. Young Ben Morten was cursing them. He hates short, simple, unchallenging tests.

Being in class 4, we had a considerable time to wait for our run so watched the others competing. The tarmac was quite sticky and noisy, similar to Hartlepool. During this wait I spotted a couple of Police Constables talking to Carl Davis. They didn't appear to be just passing the time of day with him either. It transpired there'd been some complaints from people living nearby about the noise (probably following Chris Leeming's run!).

Dave Mosey stamped his authority on the event from the off. He was a second clear of the next fastest, Ken Sturdy, followed by Richard Wood (Ilkley's – we had two of them there again just to keep the results crew on their toes!), Steve Morten and then me. By the end of a very tight test 2 I'd leapfrogged into 2nd almost half a second clear of Ken, but he then equalled the dual on the bigger (but not longer) test three. Our totals were identical on 100.2 seconds. Dave was light years ahead of us all, almost 9 seconds in front after only three tests!

Enter Plod, who threatened to arrest Carl Davis if he didn't do something about the noise. What we all couldn't understand was that the cops had helped the organisers to tape off the access road before the event – what the hell did they *think* we were going to do with 36 cars all day? So test 3 site was closed, as it was open to the houses nearby. The remaining site being enclosed by buildings to shield the noise. It was one less speed hump to negotiate anyway.

Excitement over, we got on with having some more fun. I had a slight 'CRAFT' moment on test 4, but Ken picked up his first penalty on #5 putting me over a second clear of him. The rest

were now dropping behind and into the clutches of a slow starting Adele Mosey who was now beginning to wind the Mini Special up. Good to see Adele back after her recent illness. Talking of which, we lost NHMC's Richard Wood after test 5. A ricked back rendering him hors de combat (no, he *didn't* have a sore throat!).

Two more runs at the remaining tests saw Dave pull even further away from me, but another penalty for Ken dropped him behind Steve Morten's Sylva Striker and only 3 seconds ahead of Adele. In the other classes Gerald Holdroyd was having an easy run in his 1100 Mini saloon. He was well ahead of the Burrows, who'd discovered that if they pushed their empty Mini over the speed humps, the underside didn't catch. In the heavily subscribed Class 2 Jon Graves was just managing to keep his Fiesta in front of Henry Kitching who was pedalling his lurching Metro as though his life depended on it! Chris and Lorraine Leeming (or Lemming as the entry list proclaimed!) seemed to have the edge over the rest of the class in their RWD Escort, although Chris was producing the most tyre smoke as usual! Another regular 'smoker' Rob White promised wife Linda he wouldn't be 'going mad' and scrubbing tyres off. Some tight and frustrating tests later saw him enveloped in a rather familiar blue cloud!

Lunch couldn't arrive too soon as breakfast seemed a long way away. It also gave the organisers time to re-jig the event after the loss of half the venue.

Various officials continued to visit the event in their efforts to find out what the racket was and further harass Carl Davis! We had one from the local Council, then another from Environmental Health. Do all these people come out on a Saturday night when the joyriders are around? Soapbox away.

Two more tests were set up on the remaining area and they were very short. No sooner had you

left the start line than the finish loomed. Always felt like you'd missed some of it out (not like me eh?). I actually recorded the fastest time on the first one. Not sure what happened to Dave, but him and Richard were seen peering at the carby and the engine sounded rough.

We ran the two tests three times, during which Adele nipped past Ken Sturdy, demoting him to 5th with Steve Morten now 4th. Thankfully I still had a 15 second buffer over her as she was pushing me hard.

Having to close the larger car park and losing the more open tests, which were to be run on it, the organisers decided to give the bigger cars a chance to shine. They set up one big test for our final three runs. It didn't do me any favours as my buffer to Adele was reduced to 9.4 seconds at the end of play. No matter, my 2nd place was maintained behind Dave who was a massive 46 seconds in front. His FTD left me with 1st in class, Adele 2nd and Steve Morten 3rd. Gerald held on to 1st in Class 1, as did Jon Graves in Class 2 with Henry a creditable 2nd and John Haygarth in 3rd. Chris and Lorraine Leeming maintained their 1st and 2nd in Class 3. Carl Davis played his 'get out of jail' card and everyone went home happy, some of us with a bit more crystal glass to stand on the sideboard.

I don't think we'll be going back to that part of Brighouse for some time!

Howie.

ROGER ALBERT CLARK RALLY 2004 LAUNCHES IN SHEFFIELD

The Roger Albert Clark Rally 2004 was officially launched in the Peace Gardens, Sheffield City Centre, today Thursday (9 Oct).

The Peace Gardens were transformed by a giant stage and video screen, marking the place where details of the event were revealed between

1pm and 2pm. On show were 11 ex-works rally cars from the 1970s and 1980s. Up to 200 guests from the world of motorsports attended, along with several hundred members of the public.

The team behind the 2004 rally was introduced. John Taylor, ex Ford works driver heads the team, which includes Geoff Round, Colin Heppenstall, Brian Avery and Graham James of De Lacy Motor Club, and Andrew Thompson and Jim Holmes of Stuttgart and Oval Ltd.

The city of Sheffield is the host venue for the four-day British special stage rally, which takes place from 20th - 24th November 2004. The event will start from the excellent facilities of the Don Valley Stadium.

The rally has been organised from an embryo idea of Paul Adams and attempts to capture the historic challenge which the Lombard RAC Rally offered and to which teams from the UK and Europe, particularly Scandinavia, flocked in the 70s and 80s: no pacenotes or practice, rain, snow, hail, fog and ice - the classic rally challenge.

The Deputy Mayor of Sheffield, Councillor Mike Pye, added: It is an honour for Sheffield to be chosen as the host city for the 2004 Rally and adds to our growing reputation as a national centre of sporting excellence. Next years event will be one of the highlights of my term in office as Lord Mayor.

The rally will predominately feature cars from the Historic, Post Historic and Classic categories. In addition, modern non-turbo two-wheel-drive cars will be allowed to enter to complete the total of 180 competitors.

News of the rally has already spread overseas and it is anticipated that up to one third of the entries will come

from northern Europe and Scandinavia.

Andrew Thompson, a member of the organising committee added: Getting this far in the organisation of the Rally has been a huge challenge for everyone involved. We are recreating the feel of how it used to be, the spirit of how it ought to be, but safety for competitors and spectators is paramount in all our plans. The overwhelming response from grass roots rally supporters demonstrates that this event has the potential to be a fabulous climax to the British rally season. The addition of overseas competitors will add to the unique atmosphere.

Saturday 20th November 2004 will be a great day for spectators, with the cars going through covered scrutineering with tiered seating for spectators at the Don Valley stadium, where there will also be a Rally Show. Later that day, competitors will tackle a prologue stage to will set the start positions for the Rally itself.

On the Sunday, the rally heads out to some of the traditional 'spectator stages' before heading north to revisit the challenging Lake District and Cumbria stages; the rally will then paused for an overnight halt in Carlisle.

Monday morning will see the rally go even further north, to the classic old Lombard RAC Rally south Scottish stages, before returning to Carlisle for a second night.

Tuesday, the last day of the rally, will be one of the most difficult. After an early start, the cars revisit the historical challenge that the Kielder Forest complex always offered, and then south to the North Yorkshire stages before an eventual finish back in Sheffield in time for a gala dinner and prizegiving.

There has been much excitement about this event among the rallying community, Stig Blomqvist, who won the rally in 1971 and 1983, considers that it is the conditions which make the rally unique.

Stig said: Because the rally went all over the country, you never knew what was going to be ahead. I also preferred the events that had no practice and no pacenotes. Two-wheel-drive cars are also the best to do the rally, as 4wd cars are just too good for the conditions to be fun.

About Roger Clark, Stig added: I always had a good time with Roger. The only problem was when he was winning, I kept coming second!

Per Eklund, who came 4th in the Lombard RAC Rally in 1984, said: My first RAC Rally was in 1968 and I have done it many times over the years. I love the RAC and I would like to do the event again, it would be a dream."

David Sutton, who ran the only private team ever to win the World Rally Championship, added: Roger was a great personal friend of mine. I still consider him to be the best British driver, and any event that keeps his memory alive gets my full support.

Summing up the launch, ex-works driver John Taylor said: This really is the event that the sport has been waiting for. The RAC rallies of old were always THE event, because of the distance, weather and night driving.

"It attracted entries from the UK, but also a significant number from overseas. It has also been seven or eight years since a rally of this size moved around the UK, particularly to the north of England and Scotland. This event is about re-vitalising the future of British rallying.

Anyone wanting further information about the rally can visit the website at www.rogeralbertclarkrally.co.uk or e-mail rogeralbertclarkrally@hotmail.com

Prologue

Lewis was very content, enclosed in a safe, familiar environment. Life was so sweet for him. He probably didn't think that. You would consider that to have been too much, way too deep for a 4 year old to be philosophising about. Nevertheless, it was - as you could tell clearly from the smile in his eyes.

Having recently had his birthday, his toys were still new. They had not yet become the old un-played with cast offs he had been bored with before his birthday.

Were those old toys really so old and un-wanted already? It didn't seem so long since they were too. His favourite toys lay about him, and all over the rest of the house too. Sometimes it seemed for days. Having received the most pennies his young mind could imagine from all sorts of Uncles, Nanas and Grand People, could he still remember his exciting shopping trip around Toy's R Us? Could he really have all these as well, and more, Mummy?

An array of his newly acquired Action Men now surrounded him in camp. There was more here than he could possibly have imagined, certainly more than he could have carried home. Each one of them had an individual look. An Indiana Jones style jungle adventurer leant coolly against a pillar, unaware that at any moment the deadly spikes could plunge into him from out of the harmless looking wall. Across from him, a Space Ranger with a deadly looking, multiple rocket launcher resting loosely across his chest, resembling a nearly forgotten Rambo of the future. Between them both a

male version of Lara Croft was examining an ancient Mummy, which, appeared to be falling from an open tomb.

The three buddies appeared to be squabbling, head butting each other and wrestling, totally distracted from the real dangers at large. As Lewis looked on, encouraging more and more fighting, none of them heard the warning sounds of the approaching danger. Suddenly, the door burst open. Lewis was first to notice the intruder, huge in the door, bald and towering over them. As the figure came closer, he dived for cover, managing to shout a warning as he went, "Oh no, a Baddie!!!" he cried. The Action Men lay still, motionless, hoping they'd not been seen, as if time had stopped. "Lewis", called a familiar, friendly voice, a voice breaking into mirth. "It's only Andy coming to pick me up, Daddy's going racing tonight." Daddy could control himself no longer, collapsing at the thought of Andy Beaumont being Action Man's archenemy. A real life scary bald baddie!!!!

LINDHOLME MOTOR
SPORTS CLUB
DANUM RALLY
4th OCTOBER 2003

I chuckled all the way to the start at Howden. In fact, I chuckled all night!! I'm certain I had an Action Man baddie who looked just like that when I was a kid. Enough!! Rallying now.

We needed a good result on this event. Hopefully, being a navigational style event, we'd do okay, especially as I know map 112 fairly well. A 140-mile route must use most of what is available on that map. We managed not to drop any time on most sections, until we overshot the gap onto Sandtoft Airfield/Industrial Estate, dropping 1m 41s. We were still fairly quick anyway.

All was going well until Hemswell Airfield. It wasn't very clearly marked with loads of code boards all over the place and we ended up driving over a spent bonfire,

picking up chunks of metal and nails in the tyres. For what seemed like ages, Andy ran around the Proton, screaming obscenities as he tried to remove the debris from the tyres before limping off the Airfield and, fortunately, straight into the petrol halt. With two or possibly three punctures, things did not look good for a finish, bearing in mind we only had one spare wheel. Many thanks to the driver of the Manta who loaned Andy a can of tyre mousse. With that in one tyre, one wheel changed and fingers crossed for the third, we set off for the second half. Unfortunately I messed up on the last section and dropped us from 3rd to 6th overall. I'm not sure who was most annoyed, Andy or me. Beating myself up inside did not seem enough!!

We were lucky to have finished at all, especially as a SGW fail from earlier on didn't materialise at the finish. The car definitely didn't stop, someone was there and we got away with it - this time! Sorry Andy for dropping a few valuable points, I should be pleased with 6th overall, but I'm not!!

Mike Petch

EPILOGUE

As it's now about a month since I wrote my 'Chunterings,' I guess it's all going to be out of date. I can't even remember what I was rambling about (read the full expose in this issue! - *Ed.*). Therefore I thought I should bring things up to date and have another go.

The thing is, September was so great, and I can't bring myself to chunter about anything else.

Lorraine and I had the first week off work, took the kids camping in Rosedale, which Lorraine loves dearly. Freezing in the tent and having to get up and walk to the toilet block in the middle of the night. The explosive emotion is reminiscent of somebody else I

can think of when the Rallying doesn't go as well as hoped. I think she sort of enjoyed it in the end as we had two or three really nice days.

At the end of that week came the Hall Trophy Rally, of which I've said enough already, followed by a couple of days back at work and then my early 40th birthday weekend in London.

Some of you will know that Lorraine had a little surprise in store for me. As we lorted it up on the first class train to London, it was announced that I was not going to be in London all weekend. After an overnight stay and a great night out in Covent Garden, we caught a plane to Milan to see the Italian Grand Prix at Monza.

This was absolutely awesome!! We spent a day on lake Como, in the evenings eating and drinking in fantastic surroundings. On Saturday and Sunday we were at the circuit amongst the most excitable local Ferrari fans. I can't describe how good this treat was. Who's a lucky boy then!! We got back in time to go back to work a few more days before a Saturday night out in Doncaster with my Brother and Sister-in-law. Had a bit much!! Then it was my birthday on the 23rd. Got a PlayStation 2 with Ferrari steering wheel and pedals (no-one else will win on *that* when he brings it to the club then! - *Ed.*). What fun!! Less stressful than real Rallying!!

September 24th was Lewis's 4th birthday and on the 25th I flew to Vilamoura on the Algarve for a very much appreciated 'jolly' from work. Many thanks to Ian Carr for not going himself!! This was total 5 star luxury. All you could eat and drink, good company, blazing sun, cool pool and everything absolutely fabulous. The three days incorporated some light sporting activities, culminating in an afternoon endurance Kart race at a proper outdoor circuit, designed very similarly to Interlagos. This was immense enjoyment at it's best.

Two weeks on I still have bruised ribs, but we won, so who cares!!

It was now the end of the month, the best month I can remember ever, mind you, when you hit this age, you're lucky if you can remember anything!! (Hullo? - *Ed.*)

So no chuntering for me, except it's back to reality now. Never mind!!

Mike Petch

Where's My Classic

Hi.

Over the past few months we have been working on an idea for a website which we hope will be of interest to you and your members.

The site is called 'wheresmyclassic.com' and as you will see, the main concept behind the site is that it provides a resource through which you can find a vehicle you used to own, or some history from other owners regarding a vehicle that you currently own. It works by the visitor registering as a member (which is free) and then registering vehicles that they currently or have previously owned. There's no restriction on type or age of vehicle, modern vehicles are also very welcome.

Visitors can browse and search for vehicles without registering as a member, but there are many benefits in registering. For example, if you find a vehicle you are interested in, you can contact the person who registered the vehicle through a form on the site. Security of a member's details is guaranteed and email addresses are not available to other members. You can also add vehicles to a favourites list and there is a forum, which provides rooms in which to post messages. If your club does not currently have an online forum we would be happy to create a room for your members to use. Our link is

<http://www.wheresmyclassic.com>

Have a good look around, register yourself and your vehicles and let us know what you think to the site and the concept. You will see there are a number of vehicles registered on the site and increasing this is crucial in making the site a success. We believe the site has a lot of potential and we are really fired up about the benefits to the classic vehicle community. We hope that you feel the same.

Kind regards from
"wheresmyclassic.com"

Qantas Airlines

After every flight, pilots fill out a form called a gripe sheet, which conveys to the mechanics problems encountered with the aircraft during the flight that need repair or correction

The mechanics read and correct the problem, and then respond in writing on the lower half of the form what remedial action was taken, and the pilot reviews the gripe sheets before the next flight

Never let it be said that ground crews and engineers lack a sense of humour

Here are some actual logged maintenance complaints and problems as submitted by Quanta's pilots and the solution recorded by maintenance engineers

By the way, Quanta's is the only major airline that has never had an accident

P = the problem logged by the pilot

S = the solution and action taken by the mechanics

P: Left inside main tire almost needs replacement

S: Almost replaced left inside main tire

P: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough

S: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft

P: Something loose in cockpit

S: Something tightened in cockpit

P: Dead bugs on windshield

S: Live bugs on back-order

P: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a 200 feet per minute descent

S: Cannot reproduce problem on ground

P: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear

S: Evidence removed

P: DME volume unbelievably loud

S: DME volume set to more believable level

P: Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick

S: That's what they're there for

P: IFF inoperative

S: IFF always inoperative in OFF mode

P: Suspected crack in windshield

S: Suspect you're right

P: Number 3 engine missing

S: Engine found on right wing after brief search

P: Aircraft handles funny

S: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right, and be serious

P: Target radar hums

S: Reprogrammed target radar with lyrics

P: Mouse in cockpit

S: Cat installed

P: Noise coming from under instrument panel. Sounds like a midget pounding on something with a hammer

S: Took hammer away from midget