

BLOG October 2013 : by Jon Clapp

This month was supposed to see a re-run of the (August) abandoned Belvoir Castle Blast, with a scenic tour, in the dark, of some of the lively country roads that the vale of Belvoir has to offer...not to mention the real ale selection of the Dirty Duck !

Unfortunately there was only 3 hardcore members who turned up....myself, Matt and Chris, so we decided to park in Wilton Road car park and walk across the road to the Kettleby Cross for beer....

Excuses this month ranged from :

“I’ve got marking to do and the dog has eaten my homework” – Gary

“I’m on holiday in Belgium (sampling chocolates...)” – Jerry

“The Rat has had a headlight malfunction (again) and I’ve only got sidelights !” – Carl

Matt nearly cried off, saying that it was Halloween, he was washing his hair and he gets scared by the people in costume....although a beer in the Kettleby Cross managed to calm him down somewhat.

STONELEIGH MINI FAIR 2

Jerry, Matt and I (courtesy of Matt’s Honda Accord....) made the journey across the M69 and A46 to Stoneleigh on Sunday 20th to see what the latest British Mini Club event had to offer and also try and find some winter project essentials....body panels and sundry items !

The show was being held at the Agricultural College, in a mix of a main exhibition hall and some of the “sheds”. Mini only parking was on offer, but unfortunately only accessible if you actually parked in there, which was a slight

disappointment, as who doesn’t walk around the car park (looking for hidden gems) at regular outdoor mini shows.....

There was a reasonable selection of traders, with Minisport and Mini spares both in attendance, as well as Specialist components and DSN classics for those billet alloy luxuries ! Specialist components had their new line of Alloy wheels on display which we all agreed looked better in the flesh than in the magazines !

Minimagazine were present with a small



selection of cover cars on their stand as well as the usual back issues, stickers and t-shirts.

The centrepiece of the show was the Premier Concours which rounded off the show season with a selection of very well prepared cars. These ranged from a unique Paddy Hopkirk themed Cooper, through stock Sport 500’s, Mini Clubman Estate, pick-up and even a Cox GTm.



Autojumble was evident in “the sheds” with some interesting period items amongst the stalls. Also in the sheds were the club stand stands, with

some very inventive wizard and witch themes, just ahead of Halloween !

The Mini Cooper register Central Midlands region



(which Jerry attends) had a club stand with an interesting selection of cars....1071 S, CCC Cox GTm,

Arden 8 port racer, 71 Cooper S, Mini Countryman.....all well presented with period features a plenty !



60's racing maestro Barry "Wizzo" Williams put in an appearance on the MCR stand and we were fortunate enough for a quick chat. Barrie also had his original 1071 S Rally car on display in the main arena next to the BMC stand. Very nice it is to !



In summary, not a bad end to the show season, especially being largely indoors ! Not as big (or well attended) as Min Fair 1 @ Bingley Hall at the end of January, but I am sure this show and venue will grow.....

SOCIAL BIT

Thursday 28th November : Quorn Slot car club – 7.30pm for racing to start at 8.00pm. The cost is £5.00 per entrant for a fast and furious racing evening with no damage to your pride and joy guaranteed ! The venue is behind the Station Public House, Derby road, Loughborough, LE11 5AG (for those of you with sat nav). Jon has approached some contacts at Derby Classic Mini Owners Club so this could be the start of an inter-club rivalry so get practising !

December : Options ? our usual club night is Boxing day evening.....so we may want to pull this forward a week or 2 !

JERRY'S MOTORSPORT MAYHEM

If you go to see the British Grand Prix or any motor racing even, such as Donington Historic, hill climbing or rallying you will see marshalls in high viz garments making sure things run smoothly. The job of a marshall is an important one and can involve flag waving and also incident / accident support and control.....without marshalls we wouldn't have motorsport !

At local car club level, as well as providing access to motorsport, they also need marshalls to help in the operation of their 12 car rallies, for example, or are requested to supply marshalls to national events in the midlands region.

Since joining the Loughborough Car Club I have had the opportunity to scrutineer and marshall at a number of events. I have attended 2 Greenforce Electric Car Endurance events, one

at Mallory Park (now in administration) and one at Rockingham Oval, both very different circuits but none the less entertaining ! The Greenforce events are for Schools and colleges to enter, with everyone very enthusiastically involved with their weird and wonderful electric vehicles. It was very quiet racing, but entertaining none the less (even if you had to make your own bruuummm sounds).

I have also had the fortune to help out with a timed autotest as part of the Tour Britannia. This event is run around the country for people with very nice cars, visiting various racing circuits and venues, where they have to participate in an event (time trial or autotest for example) and then continue to the next venue....all against the clock ! My participation in Tour Britannia was as a marshall for an autotest leg run on the car park outside the Motor Heritage Centre at Gaydon. Porsches were the preferred car of choice on the day, but there was also a good mix of rally and circuit cars as well, including : a 1929 Bentley, Morgans of various guise, Escorts (Mk I and II), Alfa Romeo's and even a Citroen SM Maserate....this one being very spectacular around the cones !

Back now to the 12 car rally.....run by LCC. As the name suggests, this is a navigational car rally run to the same rules as the RAC rally of old, but for no more than 12 cars. I have been involved with marshalling on two of these events. The first one I was with an experienced marshall at a check point near Owston, where we checked the cars coming through were "on time". The participants have to be at the checkpoint at a certain time, too soon and they are held back, too late and they lose overall time against their competitors....Navigational rallying with average speeds at its best !

The second event I was a passenger in the organisers rally prepared Peugeot 205 GTi as he

charged around the country lanes doing random safety checks on the competitors. Ironically, for some of the time, we were parked up just a stone's throw from my house on a track marked as a "white road" from the OS map of the area. In reality, the "white road" was a car breaking, rut covered, dog walking track ! Harnessed into the bucket seat and surrounded by a roll cage, safety and timing equipment in the dark, charging down single track roads at scary speeds was both brown trouser territory and at the same time very exhilarating !

Who knows where the next instalment will take me....I am very much enjoying the variety !