

BLOG August 2012 : by Jerry Filor

A tricky trip into the vale of Belvoir preceded by 2 meeting venues, the Gate Hangs Well and Windsor Road Car Park Melton. The route out of Melton was towards the North and out through Scalford, from here the twisty roads meandered around the vale ending up at Woolsthorpe b Belvoir and the Dirty Duck Public House and a welcoming beverage waiting !

We had the return of Glynn, still using his sons cars for his own enjoyment, having Ryan moved from his "cobra" cooper-a like though the VW phase (of a Lupo Gti) and now the current car of a BMW Mini Cooper S. And very nice it was too ! It was gunmetal grey and had been well specc'ed up with the Chilli pack and optional Sat nav (handy for the country roads !). Glynn is now on the lookout for a classic mini for youngest son Ash and is hoping to get into discussions with Gary very soon about the final destination of Pukka !

Karl gave a colourful description of his route home after last month's cruise around Rutland Water.....he "followed my sat nav" and took a very different, if not very direct, route home. En-route he managed to find quite possibly the bumpiest road in Leicestershire (just what you need with 13 x 7" alloys and very stiff suspension !), which indeed tested his springs to the limit ! Discussions followed where this could have been.

Glynn said he has found out a near neighbour has both a mini and a cooper and he will be in touch with him to hopefully introduce him to the Wanderers crew. Maybe we'll see him in the near future !

As you may well know, my Green Cooper is being prepared for club motorsport (more on

that later), and I in need of few things to regain it's MOT.....the first of these is a new rear subframe, closely followed by some front end bodywork. Mat had mentioned a new bodyshop that had opened up on the outskirts of Melton down near the nurseries towards Leicester. Apparently he used to work at Astons at their former bodyshop before venturing on his own. However, after showing initial interest, when I spoke to him, he didn't bother to get back in touch ! Jon also popped in to see him about potentially re-clubmanising his car (sometime in the next millennium – Jon) and all that was suggested was a re-shell into a new BMH shell ! it seems he would rather spray "freshly prepare" bodysells rather than re-panel / prep and spray !

Because I needed some bits for the Green cooper and at short notice, I decided to go to MiTP, at Santa Pod, for the first time. I've been to the venue, Santa Pod, before but that was when I was in my teens (a very long time ago.....). Spookily while writing this about Santa Pod, on the telly was an advert with two older persons racing up the strip on their mobility scooters ! MiTP is certainly a different event offering, for those that haven't been before or for a very long time, the weather was fine which meant for some 1.4 action for those that were brave enough ! There were an assortment of traders of which Somerford Mini stood out. Entertainment was provided by Monster trucks crushing cars in one arena and a jet powder dragster doing demonstration runs on the strip...in between the RWYB mini's doing battle ! This ranged from standard looking classic and BMW minis to out and out dragster minis, like Stuart Meads Zetec engine creation (Mini Calendar – November 2012). There was also a very competent single place

aerobatic display over the park. The only moan I had was that the mini only parking was not very big, a thought echoed by others that had been !

CLUB AOB

A the next meeting club subs is due.....as a reminder.

Single membership £10

Joint / Family Membership £15

Jon will attempt to remember the membership forms and has agreed to collect the monies....please give generously !

And now to my new column.....

JERRY'S MOTORSPORT MAYHEM

(poetic license – Jon).

Now that I am retired my aim is to enter F1 by the age of 70, hoping to take Michael Schumachers place at Mercedes as his is also getting on a bit, although it seems that Lewis Hamilton might now beat me to it !

However, I am hoping to realise a dream (or is it a nightmare) eventually having a race license to part in Hillclimb and sprinting disciplines. Part of this process means you have to join a bona fide car club which I have in order to make smooth transition from spectator to participant !

I am now a member of Loughborough Car Club, whose aim is to get people involved in grass routes motorsport as a competitor in racing, rallying or as a supporter in terms of

marshalling on rallies, regularities or autotests or club organisation of such events.

My first evening was as a spectator for a club karting event at Stretton, where 2 person teams battled it out on the outdoor karting track.

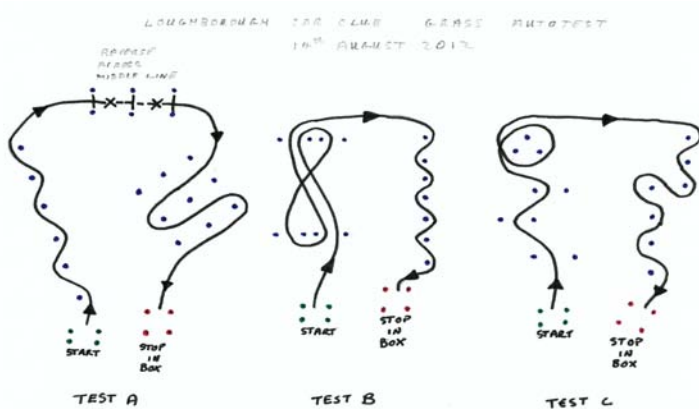
The second outing was an evening of Auto-solo, which is basically Autotesting in one direction....so no chance of reverse parking issues ! For the LCC Auto-solo club night, you get a field, you get some cones and plot out a course then you get a mix of cars and people and they have to navigate the course (with the aid or hindrance of a passenger) as fast as they can !

The object is to not hit any cones and park it in the “finishing” box. Any cones that are touched or stray wheels out of the finishing box means penalty time is added.....it's not as hard on the car as autotesting, but great fun none the less, even if you rarely get out of 2nd gear !

There was a strange mix of competitors, split into various groups ranging from Mitsubishi Evo's and Scoobies to a Berlingo Van and everything in between. Who knew that a Berlingo van was so effective at handbrake turns ! The best cars seem to be the small and nimble cars, such as Micra's, Lupo's Pug 205's, Ford KA's and of course....my mini ! Good power to weight ratio was essential and outright power + 4 wheel drive didn't necessarily mean all conquering (although a guy in an Audi RS6 seemed to be having fun !).

I have a lot to learn in terms of confident car control and handbrake turns. Jon took the role of navigator and handbrake puller at the appropriate moments, the car clicking out to negotiate the sharp turns of the courses.

The courses that we tackled (each 3 times) were :



Thursday 25th October : Quorn Slot car club – The annual championship 7.30pm for racing to start at 8.00pm. The cost is £5.00 per entrant. The venue is behind the Station Public House, Derby road, Loughborough, LE11 5AG (for those of you with sat nav). There is a potential inter-club rivalry that could be started...with an invitation to Derbyshire Classic Mini Owners club ! we'll see if they are up to the challenge, so get practising !

Xmas Meal : Get your thinking caps on for the annual Xmas meal....maybe something a little different this year, following the previous 2 years successful curry nights !

My second outing on Auto-solo I was a passenger with a more experienced driver in a Ford Fiesta. He had the handbrake turns off to a fine art, as he also did Autotesting on tarmac regularly. The object is to keep the speed up and carry the momentum through the corners maintaining a smooth style braking as little as possible !

The Auto-solo season has finished now as it is getting too dark too early so the next club session is a basic navigation training evening in preparation for the winter season of 12 car rallies or regularities. This I am looking forward to and should be interesting !

That's all for now.....see you next month !

SOCIAL BIT

Thursday 27th September : Club Night – The Badgers Sett, Cropston. Meeting at the Gate Hangs Well from 7.30pm for 8.00pm cruise....