Spotlamp



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December 2018

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Plymouth Motor Club Diary 2018

November 2018		
30th		12 Car Rally Start Kings Arms Tamerton Foliot
December 2018		
4th		Committee Meeting
8th		Le Jog
25th		Christmas Day

Important Date For Diary
19th January
Annual Dinner & Dance Awards Presentation
Yelverton Golf Club

Series Dates 2019 Coming Soon

Editorial

Its that time of year again, a time to reflect on all the highs and lows we have had in our motorsport season in 2018.
For me personally its been a great year filled with both attending, marshalling and competing in new events that I had not done previously. Aside from motorsport I started my first job in the big wide world, which means only one thing. Some money to spend on race cars of course, perhaps 2019 will be even crazier ? Who knows.

Martin Sharp has written his own Autobiography for this edition of spotlamp outlining his return to motorsport this year, continuing on from Part one that was published earlier on in the year. It makes for some very good morning or evening reading and I would greatly appreciate more contributions in a similar format.

Moving away from our own club for a minute I would like to recommend a TV program to you all, its definitely a must watch not only from a motorsport stand point but also the great courage and strength shown within it. The show I am talking about is the documentary on Billy Monger which aired last week on BBC TWO. Certain parts are so inspirational for a lot of reasons and I urge you to give it a watch.

Looking towards the end of the year we still have Le Jog on the 8th December to look forward to and of course it goes without saying. Come along for a great load of classic cars coming through Werrington Park on a Winter morning.



As probably mentioned elsewhere in this magazine, this month saw the awards evening at Wiscombe House take place. Thanks to Adam Ingleheart we have some of our club members and friends posing on the stairs of Wiscombe House with there new silverware.

Until Next Month, Good Bye. ***Rob Selley***

<u>Membership</u>

If you are competing early in 2019 please get your membership renewals in early to avoid dis-appointment and any last minute rush/panic.

Chairman's Chat

Oooh look the end of the year is nigh! Happy Christmas all (is it too early for this? As even John Lewis have released their Christmas TV advert I'm guessing not!)

2018 then – quite a year for the club. From having glorious weather for the full weekend at Werrington to getting a "mention" in a city council meeting, it's been a good year all in all. We have had stand at a couple of local shows (something I am very keen on expanding in 2019), we have assisted/co-promted the first closed road hillclimb at Watergate Bay and we have increased our member numbers in the year. Congratulations to PMC member Ian Ingleheart who has secured the 2018 ASWMC Hillclimb championship, well done Ian from the whole of the motor club. Another PMC member. Ben Bonfield has taken 3rd place in the championship and well done and congrats to Ben as well. My profound thanks to all that helped and supported to make all this happen. My "proper" review of the year will be in next month's installement.

By now some, if not most, of you will be aware that our governing body is had a change of name and logo to Motorsport UK. This is not just a rebranding of the name, but signifies and major shift from the organisation being solely a governance/regulator/adminstrator based institution to a more member supporting,

promoting governing body to sustain the future of our sport. There is more of a shift to supporting grass roots level and clubman motorsport which is excellent news for motor clubs such as ourselves. Here is the official "press release" from Motorsport UK House:-

"*An ambitious new phase for motorsport in the United Kingdom has begun, with the Motor Sports Association (MSA) launching a new identity, Motorsport UK, as it transitions from a traditional governance-led association to a modern membership-focused organisation. The rebrand from the MSA to Motorsport UK signals a shift in the governing body's emphasis, putting the promotion of the sport and customer service at the forefront of its mission. This represents a fundamental repurposing of the organisation as it seeks to grow the sport and better serve its members. The new name, Motorsport UK, and the more striking visual identity with its modern typeface and bold colour palette, will make the governing body more identifiable and relevant to new audiences, providing a better platform from which to market and grow the sport. Motorsport UK's new strategy aims to build a stronger, more vibrant community across motorsport. The new identity reflects this through four concentric circles to represent four-wheeled action, united across four home nations, with a dynamic design celebrating speed. The governing body will*

create a sustainable future for UK motorsport not only by reaching out to new audiences but also by adding value for existing members. The current membership comprises 30,000 competitors, 10,000 marshals, 3200 officials and 720 clubs. As a first step, Motorsport UK is launching a new member benefits package, with High Street partners offering discounts across a range of accommodation, travel, outdoor clothing and breakdown recovery products. Motorsport UK will also get its members closer to the action through discounts on the most popular motorsport and automotive shows, exhibitions and magazine subscriptions. Motorsport has a wide range of disciplines, from karting to drag racing and autotests to trials. Many have lacked promotion to new audiences, yet they present a great low-cost way for enthusiasts to enter the sport. As part of the new approach, there will be a promotional focus in each area, with sub-brands such as Karting UK providing a clear focal point for the industry. Governance will remain a cornerstone of Motorsport UK's activities but the organisation will work to recruit and retain members through a more transparent and customer-focused approach to regulations. The governing body will maintain its track record of outstanding management of safe and fair sport; while lowering barriers to entry and enhancing its customers' ability to enjoy their passion for four-

wheel competition.

David Richards CBE, Chairman of Motorsport UK, said: "When I took over as Chairman in January, I outlined my vision of a sustainable future for motorsport in the UK. It's been a year of hard work behind the scenes as we've begun moving towards this goal, and I'm delighted that the first real changes can now be revealed in the shape of our new identity, Motorsport UK. This is the just the start; there are lots of new initiatives in the pipeline, all designed to grow the sport and better meet the needs of our customers and stakeholders. We're moving forward with a renewed confidence for the future of UK motorsport, and that future starts here."

Hugh Chambers, the new Chief Executive of Motorsport UK, said: "Becoming Motorsport UK means so much more than a new name and logo. It signals a new chapter in the history of the governing body, marking a clear step change in approach, putting a real focus on our members and the promotion of grassroots motorsport to new audiences. We're confident that by strengthening our customer service, adopting a more commercial approach and enhancing our marketing capabilities, we can ensure the UK's world-leading motorsport success story continues well into the future."

All the governing body's main channels, from its website and social media accounts to its publications and membership packs, adopt the new Motorsport UK branding from today. (13/11/18)"

Motorsport Carnival at Boconnoc – we need Plymouth members to help not only with set up and on the day but to help on the organising committee, and possibly take on official roles, such as chief marshal etc. Plymouth MC is very under represented and we need to change this and quickly. The organising meetings are held in Saltash so very close to us and are held as and when required. If you are able to help please please let me know asap. We need you!!!!!

Watergate Bay Speed Hillclimb 2019 is a go!! Plans are already under way for the 2019 event to be held on the weekend of 14th and 15th Sepetember. More news as we have it.

Dont forget the annual awards Dinner and Dance takes place on Saturday 19th January at the Yelverton Golf Club. This is a ticket only event, which can be purchased in advance at a mere £28 per head, details are on our website www.plymouthmotorclub.co.uk/social.html and also see the advert elsewhere in this mag.

We are looking for volunteers to join the committee, we meet once a month. If you fancy it or want any further details then please contact

a committee member or myself and we can have a chat.
As always I have an "open door" policy so if you need to talk, have something raised at committee or at the ASWMC Executive etc etc please don't hesitate to contact me.

Jay Brown
Chairman



Competitions update – November 2018

It's all over – well almost! As a Club we've only got one 12 car rally left and that's 2018 done for us. There are still some rallies left for those competing in regional championships but the speed season is definitely over.

However, as I mentioned last month, we are running a test for Le Jog at Werrington on Saturday 8 th December. Signing on is from 09:00 down by the farmyard and I'd love to see you there. Staying with the Werrington theme, Jen & I recently had a meeting with Mr Williams and his son, Tom. They were very happy with the way that we have conducted ourselves as a Club at Werrington & the care that we take of the estate. Mr Williams senior is looking to retire in the next few years and hand over the running of the estate to Tom so is unable to give us a new multi-year licence as our current one has just expired but they are both prepared to let us keep running hillclimbs there until Tom finally takes over. The door is open for us to negotiate a long term deal at that time. Note to self: Better start planning for Werrington 2019 then!

One last Werrington item. We have recently purchased a 20 foot shipping container and sited (hidden!) it in the farmyard. What it needs is some

industrial racking or shelving to put all of our stuff on to keep it tidy. If anyone has some or knows of some that we can (ideally) borrow or (not ideally) buy, please get in touch. Another last thing – thanks to Debbie for helping me to paint the roof of the container to keep the rust at bay.

Staying on a hillclimbing thread, congratulations to Ian Ingleheart for winning the Tillicoultry Quarries Wiscombe Park Hillclimb championship for a record breaking third time. The championship was won and lost on the second event runs of the last event – how close can you get? Ian also won the Tyremarks ASWMC hillclimb championship too with fellow Club member Ben Bonfield third. As usual, ~~Ian gave a long and rambling winners speech~~ Ian gave us an amusing winners speech at the Wiscombe awards bash last Saturday evening, a speech further enlivened by the use of a message screen by his son, Callum.

Talking of Awards evenings, our own Awards Presentation Evening is on Saturday 19 th January 18:30 for 19:00 at the Yelverton Golf Club. If you have a perpetual trophy from last year please can you return it to Malcolm Tuppen as soon as possible.

More news next month. Peter Locke

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The final round of this years Scatter Rally series was set by Isobel and Joan Golightly and started from the Rock Inn at Yelverton.

The forecast for the afternoon and early evening was not good with Strong winds and Heavy rain forecast. In fact, my drive home was not good as the Tamar bridge was shut to motorbikes and High sided vehicles and the Traffic was diverted around via Gunnislake, which is the way I chose to go home. The water on the A390 to Callington was like driving in a river and did not bode well for the evening.

I did consider calling off the event but the rain eased and the wind dropped while I had my tea and I decided to make my way to the start to see how things looked when I got there. When I got there the rain had almost stopped but there was still a lot of water on the roads.

Considering the conditions I decided to go ahead with the event. I found one crew in the Pub already, Jonathan Brodie and Poppy Bull, and it was not long before Joan and then Isobel joined us. We were then joined by two more crews, Simon Heywood and Kevin Moyses and Sam Abbot and Ivor Oatway.

There was no discussion about not running the event and having sorted out the paper work Joan and Isobel gave out the clue sheets – this time we were playing Monopoly and had to visit 15 out of the 20 locations on Map 201 & 202 to find

the property names and then match them into their correct groups for more points.
Having been given the information I plotted the 20 points and then set off into the dark and wet night. The plan for the evening was to get around and back to the finish safely and in one peace – there was not point in heroics as Simon Heywood had already won the Scatter series and there was only a win up for grabs tonight.
I got to the first point on the way down to Milton Coombe after an interesting drive down a 'river'. Once at GZ at last the rain was not bad, but I found my torch would not work so I had to take it a part to fix it before I started to look for it! Still I was able to get it working and I found the plate fairly easily.
From there I went through a very wet Milton Coombe and I was glad that to see the Flood gauge was not surrounded by water!
At the next point I was surprised to find the plate up a bank and behind a tree! Once more it was on up a wet road covered in wet leaves to the next point by the entrance to Bickham House. I was not sure where it was here and spent time checking out the Cattle Grid before I moved on and found the plate in plain view on the sign post at the junction.
From there it was on to the Downs to another Cattle grid where once more it took a bit of hunting for but I found it in the end. Then it was on to the

Carpark at Shaugh Bridge via another plate and Cattle Grid but this time hidden up a bank behind a tree. I only spotted that one after I had checked out a lot of Fence posts!
Once I Shaugh Bridge it was case of where had Isobel hidden the Plate? Well I checked out all the obvious places, the fence posts on both sides of the road and up the path, I even checked out the notice board at the end of the Carpark without success and it was only while walking back to my car that I nearly fell over the plate as it was screwed to a Tree stump and hidden by leaves! It was here that I made mistake that was to cost me dear at the end. I got into my car set off towards Shaugh Prior and as I was driving up the road, I thought that it was very misty and I wondered why my windscreen was not clearing despite the Heater and Air con on full bore and the heated screen as well for good measure. (I was very glad I was not in my old Mini!) It was only when I happened to look over the top of my glasses that I found the road and screen were clear and that it was my glasses that had misted up!
Still the next two plates did not take me long to find and I arrived at the Road Bridge / Ford at Meavy, unfortunately was the only one I could not find.
From there it was quick drive over to Walkampton and towards Huckworthy. It was here that I meet Sam and Ivor looking for the plate as I got out and

stated walking towards them, I immediately spotted the plate on the back of a Pole. Having shared the information I set off up towards Eggworthy Farm and Ward Bridge – Classic Rally Roads but more like a river tonight! In several places I stopped as the water was over the road and standing and I could not decide how deep it was so it was a case of taking it easy through the floods.

Once more the next two plates where quick finds but the Clock was beating me and I had to get back to the Pub to sort out the answers. Once more it was a case of taking it easy as the Road down to Horrabridge was awash with water with jets of water shooting out the drains!

Fortunately I made it back to the Pub safely with time to spare so I could work the groups. I managed to get most of them sorted but it has been a long time since I looked at a Monopoly Board.

Having got in to the pub I found I still had 5 minutes to spare so I decided to have a quick Google to see if I was correct with my groups, unfortunately the signal was a bit poor and when I did get some answers they tuned out to be American! Still I was able to correct two groups.

By now it was time to hand the answers in.

Comparing notes with Simon and Kevin it appears that they hit a Flood and got a jet of cold water in to the car via the Gear Lever and decided to stick to the main roads and had visited 11 loca-

tions the same number I had.
Shortly after the other two crews appeared and it did not take long for Isobel and Joan to work out the final Scores.
In 4 th Place was Jonathan and Poppy with 17 points, in 3 rd was Sam & Ivor with 18 points then in second place it was me with 34 points and in First place it was Simon and Kevin with 35 points so it was a close finish at the top.
It was made worse for Me when Isobel revelled that the answers I got at Shaugh Bridge did not count as I had put the wrong number on the map beside the plot and as a result I had put the answers in the wrong Boxes! :-(
Well done to Simon on his win as it as meant that he had a clean sweep of 4 wins in the series this year.
Well done to Isobel had won the Navigators Championship before the start of the Event.
Thank you to Joan and Isobel for setting the event and to the other 3 crews for Braving the weather on what was not a nice Evening.
Overall this year we had 9 Navigators and 9 Drivers take part in the series which is up on last year and it seems to have been a very Friendly series so hopefully this will continue in to next year.

James Ellison

Scatter Series 2018

Driver	9-Feb		9-Mar		8-Jun		12-Oct		9-Nov		Total	Drop Score	Final Score	Champion-ship Position
	Pos.	Score	Pos.	Score	Pos	Score	Pos	Score	Pos	Score				
Simon Heywood	1st	20	Org	19	1st	20	1st	20	1st	20	99	19	80	1st
James Ellison	Org	19	2nd	18	2nd	18	3rd	16	2nd	18	89	16	73	2nd
Joan Golightly	2nd	18	4th	14	3rd	16	2nd	18	Org	19	85	14	71	3rd
Lucy Wilson	4th	14	5th	12	4th	14	Org	19			59		59	4th
Rick Loy			1st	20	Org	19	5th	12			51		51	5th
Jonathan Bodie							4th	14	4th	14	28		28	6th
Stephanie Russell	3rd	16									16		16	7th=
Kevin Moyses			3rd	16							16		16	7th=
Sam Abbott									3rd	16	16		16	7th=
Navigator														
Isobel Golightly	2nd	18	3rd	16	2nd	18	2nd	18	Org	19	89	16	73	1st
Andy Hamlyn	4th	14	4th	14	3rd	16	Org	19			63		63	2nd
Kevin Moyses					1st	20	1st	20	1st	20	60		60	3rd
Simon Russell	3rd	16	1st	20	Org	19					55		55	4th
Poppy Bodie							3rd	16	3rd	16	32		32	5th
Sophie Buckland	1st	20									20		20	6th
Christi Terry			2nd	18							18		18	7th=
Ivor Oatway									2nd	18	18		18	7th=
Ricki Thacker							4th	14			14		14	9th

Plymouth Motor Club Menu

Starters

Coquille St Jacques
(black pearl scallops in a white wine sauce topped with mashed potato,
gruyere cheese and toasted breadcrumbs)
or
Home-made leek & potato soup
or
Hog roast pork, apple & sage pâté
or
Wild mushrooms in a Champagne sauce on garlic ciabatta bread (v)

Main Course

Locally sourced roast top-side of beef & Yorkshire pudding
or
Chicken breast wrapped in Parma ham with a sage & onion stuffin
or
Fillet of salmon with a hollandaise sauce
or
Beetroot tarte tatin (v)

All served with roast potatoes and 3 seasonal vegetables

Dessert

Caramel apple pie with custard
or
Raspberry & white chocolate meringue roulade
or
Brie & Roquefort cheeseboard
or
Luxury Ice-cream selection

Followed by Tea or Coffee & chocolate mints

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110th Anniversary Annual Dinner & Dance Awards Presentation

Yelverton Golf Club,
Golf Links Road,
Yelverton,
Devon,
PL20 6BN



19th January
6:30pm for 7:00pm
AJ Disco To Midnight



Drinks at pub prices
Plenty of parking

Dress code- Smart casuals to black tie, no jeans or trainers please.

Come and have a fun night out and collect all those awards you have





Return of Award Trophies



I'm afraid its time to think about taking your trophy off the mantlepiece, giving it a good polish with Silvo and getting it back to me.

As the Dinner and Dance and Presentation is planned for January next year the engravers need to start in December.
I therefore would like them back by the beginning of December.

You can make arrangements with me or via any committee member. I will also be at the start of the October & November 12 cars.
My contact number is **01752 837449** (answerphone)
Thanks in anticipation
Malcolm Tuppen

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Award Winners 2018

These people all have an award to collect at the annual presentation. So without more ado and as they say ' in no particular order they are ' :-

Kevin Moyses	**David Webb**
Christi Terry	**Simon Heywood**
Joan Golightly	**Lucy Wilson**
Marc Treleaven	**Tracy Treleaven**
Fran Drew	**Rick Loy**
Simon Russell	**Andy Hamlyn**
Darren Stevens	**Adam Hughes**
Andy Flanaghan	**Ben Parker**
Nigel Swan	**Julian Seipp**
James Ellison	**John Sluman**
Isobel Golightly	**Alan Frame**
Keith Selley	**Shaun Layland**
Ben Bonfield	**Sophie Buckland**
Sam Treleaven	**Adam Ingleheart**
Ian Ingleheart	**Ian Harrison**
Daniel Benson	**Stuart Freeman**

Tess Salvage

Plus two mystery members chosen by the Chairman ?

So, if you haven't bought your tickets yet, get a move on and see you on the night.

Happy New year to you all. Malcolm Tuppen. Awards Sec.

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Mid-life crisis PART 2 – Season Review

Once again I've been asked (coerced?) to make a contribution to the club magazine to document the rest of my 'return to motorsport' season. Duly, I obliged, so here it is! I've added some photos so it's not like reading War and Peace!

Part 1 covered the first 'baby steps' in the OMS at Wiscombe & Werrington. Arguably the two fastest hills in the ASWMC Championship calendar – well you've got to start somewhere I suppose! My two favourite hills and ones I knew well from a good few years ago so it wasn't too daunting – honestly! From Werrington we went on to Manor Farm for my first ever visit to this venue.

Manor Farm (9/10 June 2018)

As first impressions go, I wasn't overly excited about the prospect if I'm honest. I'd been warned about the bumps etc and I was slightly concerned as the OMS was still sporting circuit suspension and I'd already put new shocks on the wish list for later in the year! But, as with both previous hills, I took it relatively steadily and got to know the hill gradually. The warnings were right, it was bumpy! Very bumpy! The car was jumping around all over the place on the lower part of the hill. Hard work after the smooth tarmac of Wiscombe and Werrington but we pressed on and with a relatively small entry list, more runs were planned to be taken. I was

happy enough with the times gradually coming down – still a fair bit off the class pace but I was focussing on my times rather than anyone elses – and I was getting used to the track, maybe a bit too used to it. We'd completed 4 runs already with 6 planned before the end of the day. Run 5 started as normal with a reasonable launch off the line. I took the tight right and positioned the car for the long left hander and hit the power. Half way around the left, the car jumped (as it had been doing all day) on the bumpy surface, but this time the back end kicked out slightly and when the car hit the ground, I was pointing towards a 'big' bale. The front left clipped it and within a spilt second, the OMS was running on 3 wheels only! The car skittered along the ground coming to a rest on the grass on the outside of the corner.

Damn! Game over in the blink of an eye. Those bales are not forgiving especially in a single seater! I did the 'tow of shame' back into the paddock and promptly loaded the car onto the trailer (with lots of help from other competitors!). My only thought being I only had 2 weeks to get it fixed before the next event! I did check out the GoPro footage from the previous runs when I got home and I'll be honest, I was getting pretty close to the bales on all of the runs – just not that close! Lesson firmly learnt! On to Tregrehan.



Tregrehan Park (23/24 June 2018)

After a bit of straightening and fabrication, we were ready for Tregrehan and it came around very quickly! The car was sorted and ready for another attack but this time on a familiar Cornish hill. Albeit a few years ago, I had been to this venue many times before (in the Mini and Escort) and it was a welcome sight after the 'minor off' on the bumps at Manor Farm. First practice was exactly that. Practice! I posted a time and got a feel for the hill. Second practice came and I lined up after a brief tyre warm. The green light came on and the visor went down. I picked up the revs, held them for a split second and then dumped the clutch…….and nothing happened! I sat there, in gear, engine revving but the car wasn't moving. Something had broken. The marshalls pushed

me up the hill to the paddock entrance and I free wheeled back down to my paddock space. A quick inspection diagnosed the diff to be the issue. I hadn't stripped and rebuilt one of those for a while but it didn't take long to re-learn it. The problem was I was in a field and the bolts were tight – very tight! A friend's parents live locally in Luxulyan (and as luck would have it, have a pretty good workshop!) so a trip up the road was followed by a diff rebuild (courtesy of a loan from Ben & Tony Bonfield – who had a spare Mini diff on board).

Diff built, a quick return to Tregrehan, and I was ready to refit it and crack on with the days racing. Wrong!! My original diff casing was different and had been machined to fit a non-standard outer sleeve/shield. Oh, how I've missed the delights of rebuilding cars at events! Back in the car and back to Luxulyan for a re-rebuild! I eventually got a working diff back into the car and managed to get out for the final run of the day, just. Sunday went without an issue and I kept creeping down with the times finishing with a best time of 20.43. I just couldn't get the car below 20s. It is quick enough to do it but I felt like it was on the hairy edge of breaking away which made me start to think about putting some time and effort into the handling during the winter break. I tried minor adjustments during the weekend with some degree of improvement which gave me more

confidence and got me into the low 20's. Food for thought!

Castle (7/8 July & 4/5 August 2018)

You'll be pleased to know that I've amalgamated both Castle events into one section! July's event was another brand new venue for me. Thankfully much smoother than Manor Farm, and fast. Really fast! Only one real breaking point to watch out for on the hill, although it is a fairly big one – for the cattle grid chicane. T

he car performed well on the July event but I was still struggling for handling and confidence in really pushing hard. That said I posted a 28.41s run and was happy with that. I still felt the gearing wasn't quite right after watching the other cars in the class so it was back to the drawing board again for a new rear sprocket going from a 50 to a 52. This was all a bit hit and miss but it would give me slightly less top end and more acceleration and seeing as though I was only getting into 4th, I could afford to bring the overall speed down in search of getting there a bit quicker.

The sprocket arrived on the Thursday before the August event so needless to say I was still machining it on the Friday…..and fitting it on the Saturday morning! Nothing like doing it at the last minute! The first couple of practice runs went well and I could tell the car was different in the gearing department managing to snatch 5th up around the long left hander at the top of the hill. All was good

(or at least I thought it was). That was until I heard a knocking noise from the rear on the run back down the hill. I had to strip the diff again. In a field again! This was starting to get tedious now. On inspection, it was the other output shaft (the opposite one to the one that had shattered at Tregrehan) that was complaining!. Cap in hand I went and spoke to the Bonfields who duly lent me their spare diff, again, and I promptly went about rebuilding it……again! Fast forward and hour or so and I was back up and running ready for another climb. Saturday ended with a best run of 27.61s, a second quicker than the previous month in pretty much the same conditions (baking hot!). Sunday came along and we were ready to go at it again. First and second practice went well and I lowered my time again. First timed run. Sitting on the line, and exactly the same thing happened as at Tregrehan. Revs up, dumped the clutch, nothing! It was at this point I swore (evidence is on the Go-Pro footage!). The ****** diff had gone again. This time it was one of the bevel gears that had broken. My first thought was to put the car on the trailer and go home……I didn't. Back to the paddock for the 2nd diff rebuild of the weekend. One thing was for sure. When I got home that evening, the diff would be going in the bin! I just about managed to get back out and in the right slot for the final run but I was treading carefully off the start line (understandably) and the run was a

right off. It was at this point that I made the decision to invest in a proper diff – which I did first thing on the Monday morning.



Wiscombe (1/2 September 2018)

The lead up to Wiscombe was a busy one. The new diff had arrived and I unpacked it. A shiny brand spanking Quaife ATB LSD. I'd be telling a lie if I said I wasn't a little bit excited! I'd forgotten 'that feeling' when you order new kit for your car. Just a matter of fitting it now. What I didn't expect (but should've know by now) was having to renew the entire back end of the drive system. And by that, I mean everything! New inner CV joints, new drive shafts (courtesy of Colin Satchell), new sprocket (time to go bigger again with this extra

opportunity) and new outer CV joints. The latter was an interesting process. I tried buying new, I tried buying second hand from scrap dealers, everywhere I went I was met with the same smile and response as if I was trying to buy moon rock! I contacted some people who are in the know (including Brian Benson – as the OMS has pretty much all Mini running gear), I even spoke to Eli who suggested I went to see Paul Inch. Success! And thank you Paul! The outer joints were on order (some 1960's 850cc Mini – or something – just don't ask!) and they would arrive on Thursday (2 days before Wiscombe). I fitted the new joints on that evening and offered up the drive shafts. They were too short. I called Colin who said "no probs, I'll make up some spacers". Problem solved. He made the spacers and left them at Cullompton Services (he was on his way up to Prescott Hillclimb). I collected them en route to Wiscombe on Friday evening and fitted them as soon as I got there. Saturday morning came around and all I can say is that it was worth all the effort. The back end of the car felt great and I finally had confidence in the diff! The weekend was fantastic and I was over 5 seconds quicker than when I was there in April. The car was beginning to come together now.

Manor Farm (22/23 September 2018)

Finally, an event that I wasn't in a mad rush to get stuff done beforehand. Having said that, the event itself was challenging. The weather was atrocious. I can't complain. I'd been all season without putting the wet tyres on the car so we were due a damp one – and it was certainly that! We camped on Friday night but by Saturday morning, the weather had turned foul. High winds and driving rain made it a particularly challenging day. I'm not sure I should be saying this but it's the first time I've ever raced with a coat on top of my race overalls. I so wished I'd had a tin top that weekend. First two practices were taken very steadily. Then during the first timed runs, one of the saloon cars went off on the bottom part of the hill taking out a bale…….and a 2 inch gas main! Venting to atmosphere for over 2 hours! Suffice to say the racing was stopped and the gas board called out to rectify the issue. Unfortunately the meeting was abandoned and we had to go to a nearby pub to dry/thaw out – I'd never been so relieved to have a race cancelled! Soaked wasn't the word so we sacked the camping and checked into the holiday park across the road from Manor for a dry, comfy night. Sunday morning arrived with the promise of better weather from around lunchtime onwards. Gas main fixed we were on for Sunday's competition. Being in the single seater class has some advantages in that

the weather had somewhat subsided by the time we went out for first practice. Again, incredibly slippery and getting to the top in one piece was the primary focus. By lunchtime it had dried out enough to put the slicks on but the top half of the hill was still very damp and mud had been drawn out on to the track. Fair play (and huge thanks!) to the organisers and marshals for putting on an event in less than ideal conditions. No point even talking about times for this one!





<u>Tregrehan (29/30 September 2018</u>)

And so on to the final event of the season. Back to Tregrehan and a dry (well Saturday was – more about the Sunday in a sec) event. Practice started with a 21.81s run. My quickest run there in June was 20.43 so I had some improvements to make. The event ran so smoothly that we had 7 runs in total on the Saturday with my best time at 20.42. Just beating the June time but I was struggling again with the car feeling as though it was on the edge of breaking away. Sunday morning came

and I completed first practice with a low 21s run. I was chatting to Ben Bonfield about the handling and he offered to lend me a different set of tyres (which I accepted!). The next practice run came and the car felt better. I posted a 20.14. Definitely more stable on the left hander after the start straight. I had my sights set on a sub 20s run. First timed run and I managed a 20.05. It was coming and I was getting quicker and quicker through the left and long right hander. Second timed run and I gave it as much as I could, got to the top and tried to listen out for the time. 19.90s, I'd done it finally!

We had more climbs to come as the event was running smoothly but the weather was looking like turning. The next run was a good one too. I got to the top of the hill but no time was posted. I had a re-run. It started to spot with rain as I approached the start line but it wasn't very much (or at least that's what I thought).

We were under the trees and it was barely spitting, however the hill at the top was more damp than I realised. I left the line and hit the left more or less flat in fourth. The back stepped out and I momentarily thought I'd caught it. I hadn't! The car went off the road on the left and then dived back across the track clipping the bank on the right hand side. For the second time this season I had only three wheels left on the car (but this time it was the opposite side). Game over! I'd tried but

the damp track had caught me out. A bit of a disappointing end to the season but that's racing for you.
It's been a steep learning curve this year but I know a lot more about the car both through driving it, and from others knowledge and experience but above all, I've had fun re-learning the sport. The car is now in the garage undergoing a complete rebuild for next season with all the improvements I've been collecting along the way this year. Hopefully see some of you out on the hills again next year. Until then, have a great Xmas and New Year.

Martin Sharp

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