

Backfire

Bristol Pegasus Motor Club Magazine



Chris Davies Volvo Abingdon Paddock



February 2021

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Updated - Motorsport UK RS Clubman licence



Intending to compete in Club Motorsport in 2021 and don't have a Motorsport UK License ?

Renew or Apply for your free 2021 License now !

From 2020 Motorsport UK introduced a requirement for all competitors to hold a new RS Clubman licence as a minimum, which is free of charge. If you compete, but don't currently hold a licence you will need to apply for this. These changes will affect Autotests, Trials, Cross Country, Road Rallying, 12 Cars and Scatters. **Passengers will also now be required to hold an RS Clubman licence.**

The RS Clubman licence can be applied for online and aims to encourage more grass roots participation, as well ensuring all Motorsport UK event competitors are covered by comprehensive insurance. Additionally, licence holders will have access to Motorsport UK's Member Benefits Programme that includes the new upgraded personal accident cover.

Online Application for the FREE RS Clubman licence begins here:-
<https://rsclubman.motorsportuk.org/>

Nick's Natter



Hello again, another boring dreary month has passed with me keeping my fingers crossed for an end to this and for motorsport to begin again. We are still optimistically planning a calendar full of events this year.

I have unfortunately heard of another sad death of a motorsport enthusiast. Some of you may have known him but you would have heard his voice at Shelsley Walsh the oldest motorsport venue in the world. Eddie Walder was a larger than life character who I bumped into often at Wiscombe when marshalling. Weirdly in 2019 when we went to Shelsley he called out my name from his commentary post. And we reminisced about old times.....



Nick Wood

Editorial

Welcome to this month's edition of Backfire, on Monday the 8th the club held its first virtual meeting which seems to have gone well and we hope there will be more in the future.

As the one delivering the content it was a strange experience. Well practiced as I am at public speaking, virtual speaking is a bit more of an act of faith as I had no way of seeing the audiences reactions, I managed to ask a couple of questions but still shot through my delivery in about half the time I hoped. I guess practice will help perfect the technique.

At the time of writing we still have no definitive idea when we might get back holding real events, the Auto Solo at Aust March is looking unlikely, but if anything changes and we can get a licence and access to the venue, it will kick our season off.

At the time of writing Madge is still waiting for a OSR wing, I have managed to locate one in Northern Ireland but getting it over here is proving quite problematic, hopefully by this time next month it might have reached the mainland with a bit help from some contacts at work.

Meantime I will get around to applying for my Motorsport UK licence, I had a go at Christmas but something was not quite right with their website, hopefully by now it will have been sorted out.

Thanks for the continued flow of contributions from Dave Cooper, Chris Davies, Phil Jones, Andy Moss and our Chairman Nick Wood.

Wishing you all a continued safe lockdown.

Ralph Colmar

We are looking for members' contributions on competitions, club matters and journeys. Editor: Ralph Colmar Email: backfireATbristolpegasus.com

The views and opinions printed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of BPMC

Events Calendar



Our 2021 dates are shown on the rear cover of this month's Backfire.

At present due to Covid we are not planning to run any winter club nights.

Automated Membership System

The system allows you to update your own information to ensure you get timely information from the club including your renewal reminders. As well as these benefits it reduces administration for the club volunteers and keeps your information secure.

ALL members can check and update their details by accessing our membership system at :- <https://bristolpegasus.com/manage-your-membership/>

All members now get membership for a year from renewal or joining date.

Video / Still Contributions for BPMC 75th Anniversary Video

Ben Bishop has offered to make a short video to celebrate the club's 75 year history and is looking for contributions of any film, video or photo materials members may like to make available, you can contact Ben on bbbishop132<AT>hotmail.com

Club Facebook Group - This Month

Interesting posts on the club Facebook group recently have included :-

- Sam Thomson with progress on his Legend
- Brian James Automobile Art
- Frank Kelly flogging his Baby Blue Escort
- 2019 Bristol Classic Car Show
- Rallysprint 1983
- Mark Higgins on the Isle Of Man TT



There are still a lot of club members who are not in the group. While you have to join Facebook, you can do this with just your name and e-mail and there is no need to post anything if you just want to view the group. There are a lot of other interesting car and motorsport groups on facebook and again if you just want to view these there is no reason to post any personal information.

<https://bristolpegasus.com/facebook-grou>

It's an uphill struggle

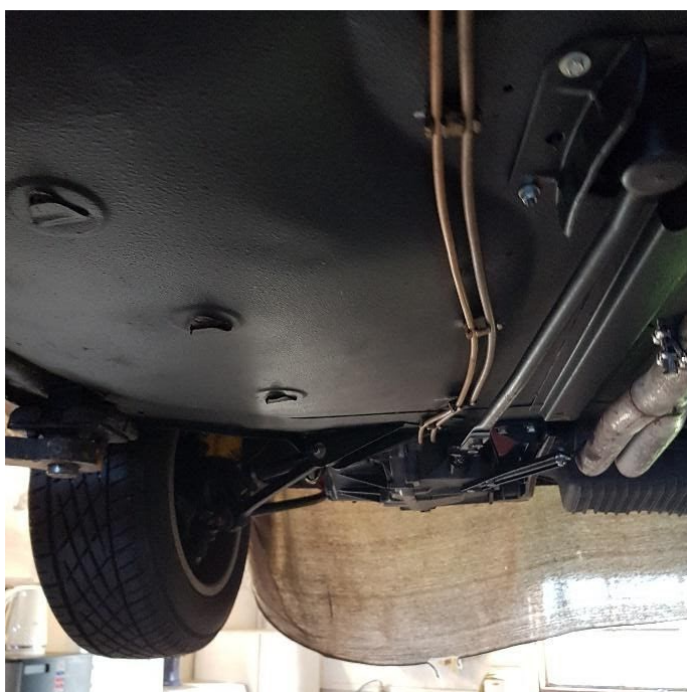
And the full-time scores are...128...One; 124.... Nil

The 124 Sport Coupe had bitten the bullet and I was down at heel. But, in December, TCM's message that the 128 was on its feet with an MOT was just the kind of pick-me-up that the Doctor ordered. Like a COVID-19 jab but without the queue...or an EU stampey tantrum.

Of course, having been in a couple of thousand pieces over the last 2+ years, we wondered how it would drive before the de bugging got it under control. One Saturday, just before Christmas and 12 hours before First Minister Drakeford banished us all to barracks, Owen, Lloyd and I set off for MBG in deepest Oxfordshire with the Jeep....and trailer. Well taking the trailer does not really add much in terms of effort or time and, if the little 128 had a few teething problems, then scooping it up on the trailer seemed much more palatable than a 4 hour, cross legged, wait in the cold for a friendly AA patrol.

A 'celebration' (new collective noun introduced by Jonesy) of Greggs bacon rolls at Leigh Delamere got things off to a civilised start. It was a long stop as the two lads serving – who seemed like intellectual college types and were extremely polite – struggled with the complexity of... a bacon & sausage baguette, butter, no sauce; a bacon and sausage roll, butter, red sauce; and a bacon roll, butter, no sauce. It was all quite jumbled up and, let's just say, I found a blob of something unwanted on my sausage...

Thank God I didn't order any drinks. Anyway, they went down well and the crumbs on the Jeep's floor were proof enough.



We needn't have worried about the 128. It was resplendent, up on the ramp, so that we could marvel at its clean underbelly.

Like a new 1975 Fiat and, probably, with better panel fit. Certainly, better rust proofing, Tony having Waxoyled it to finish off.



With fabric from Cobra to match the front seats, the trimmer did a super job.

A couple of pumps and it fired up into a nice, lumpy idle with fantastic induction noises. Cross country was the order of the day and I took the wheel for the first leg as far as Chipping Norton and then Owen took over, with Lloyd following in the Jeep. It was a rainy, mucky early afternoon, so we winced as the perfect restoration saw its first mud and water but, that's what they are for. Driving.

Oil pressure at just over 4 bar, everything charging and working except for the water temp gauge. Half fixed when we got home with a crimp and a splodge of silicone, the gauge is fine and we could get full deflection with 12 volts across it but the sender is a bit limp so we will pop it on the snag list and change it.

We were struck by how easy it was to drive, with a decent ride (that was a surprise given that it's sat on 7" Campys), comfy Cobra seats, good brakes and very nice, oily, accurate steering. It didn't really feel 'front wheel drive' just very planted. Under the bonnet, the warbling sounds were from a mid-70's rally stage and it provided endless entertainment. Keeping to 4000rpm to run it in, we could cruise at about 60 (your honour) and, once on light throttle, the noise faded back and it was surprisingly relaxing. Almost 'modern'.

In fact, the feeling was less of 'I hope we make it back' and more of 'well this is all sorted, where shall we go'? It's a terrific, usable classic car.

It took me back to 1978 and those rides in the back of the 1300CL 4 door (with slightly Soviet greying plastic bumpers) from Colwyn Bay rail station. 'Radio Cabs' represented all that was glamorous about Italian cars to this petrol veined teenager.

It's a great testament to Tony's team of Anton, Mat and Carlo on the spanners, David as the sourcing supremo and excellent suppliers of parts and services.

Really, it's a showroom fresh Fiat 128. Where else will you see one? And who needs big ticket 'coffee table magazine classics' when you can have an honest, unpretentious, but ground-breaking, former 'Car of the Year', beautifully restored?



Safely home, cleaned up and now with essential Scuderia Filipinetti front wing logos.

I wish the 124 Sport had turned out the same way but, clearly, the starting point was different and so, the end-result, could never be the same. That might be close to a lesson learned.

The final tally for 2020 was...less miles travelled than at any time since out of nappies, no competition at all, one (fantastic) test session at Llandow in the Abarth, one car sold (C63 Black Series), one car up for sale (our brilliant little Elise), one car scrapped (the 124 Sport Coupe), one returned from resto (the 128) and two cars bought – the Merc 350SL and...well I'll tell you next month...

Jones the Speed



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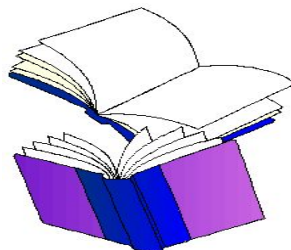
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Quandary

I think we can all agree that without You Tube imprisonment by Covid would be unendurable. Whether surfing for sale sites or watching racing footage – from different eras and countries as well as our own – I have escaped some of the dreariness (and anxiety) of lockdown. Exchanging emails with pals of choice video footage has been marvelously enjoyable; but one particular sequence sent by my Volvo compatriot Kevin Diamond set me thinking...

It is an in-car video of Dickie Meadon securing fastest practice lap at Goodwood's Members' Meeting, driving a Lotus Cortina. As Kevin commented, "Wow". The car control, the commitment, the raw speed – just amazing. But what struck me, as I watched several times, was the style of driving. Meadon is constantly sawing at the wheel – particularly apparent at St Mary's. Is it because the Cortina is on the mandatory Dunlop Racers? Possibly that contributes but I get the impression that currently "young bloods" operate on the knife-edge of adhesion, teasing the car to break away and pre-empting that by sawing/mini opposite locking. And, of course it works brilliantly; so why am I clattering on about it?

The answer lies in other, more historic footage. Is there any enthusiast who has not thrilled to watch Jim Clark and Sir John Whitmore 3-wheeling their Lotus Cortinas at a host of circuits? It appears that their style was to set the car up in a sort of oversteering arc (a drift?) which clipped the apex and maximized exit speed – all very SMOOTH!

Moving forward, Gerry Marshall appeared to throw the car sideways on the approach to a corner so that he could hold it on a set amount of opposite lock which would ideally place the car for maximum acceleration away from the corner. Doesn't sound smooth, but the fact that he tended to drive with only one hand on the wheel indicates to me that it was – SMOOTH!

This leaves me pondering on competition driving techniques. As a young enthusiast I avidly consumed famous drivers' books with advice on braking, cornering – correct lines etc. These pearls of wisdom I took to my early days of sprints and hillclimbs, but when I subsequently ventured into a spot of Banger Racing I had a rude awakening!

A rookie in banger racing was (is?) put at the front of the pack. So it was that I accelerated away at the head of the mass; remembering the lessons of the Greats I approached the first corner of the oval, moved to the left so I could aim the car at the apex and drift through in a perfect sliding arc...Embarrassing isn't it! You know –

and I soon found out – that immediately cars shot through on the inside forcing me off-line. That wasn't the only awakening that bangers afforded me as my ribs remind me, and so I happily returned to sprints/hillclimbs. It seems to me that in some ways we are especially privileged because in our competitions you *can* place the car as advocated by the masters since no one else is disputing the same piece of road...

Back to Dickie Meadon. In hyper competitive circuit racing what chance of setting up the car for a copybook line through each corner? So one must be able to control the car when "off-line"; and to maximize progress through the field the driver will actively dive into bends door-handling through with copious amounts of sawing at the wheel to hold the slide. I would contend that the incredible reactions shown by these young drivers have been honed by kart racing where you are always anticipating and pre-reacting to the physics of the situation.

When we watch amateur racing amongst drivers who own the cars we see more measured less manic styles. Perhaps in that sphere the classic advice which I swallowed still has a place. But as a spectator the racing provided by Dickie Meadon et al at the Revival is truly thrilling...

I feel certain that there are, among our members, those who have much better reasoning on this subject and I would be pleased to hear their views – especially face-to-face. But that will have to wait!

Chris Davies



Gordon Sheddon, who credits six years of radio control car racing for honing his skills as a youngster, leads ex-karter Richard Meadon at Silverstone Classic a few years ago.

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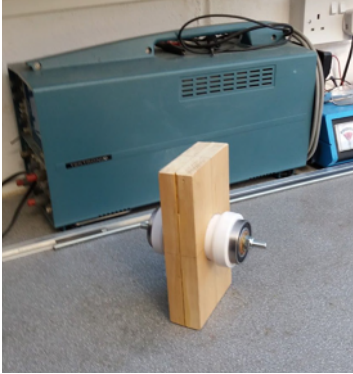
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X2s Sportscar project

Front uprights – the next steps

It's a little early for me to come out of winter hibernation, but I have had some inspiration for the front uprights. These are currently in mock-up form to get an idea of fits and dimensions.



The mock-up uses the actual wheel bearings, but has a wooden body and plastic bearing carriers. A plan is now forming to make a card template from the body and transfer this to sheet metal (S514 spec.).

Last year, I had a delivery of the rest of the steel needed and I intend to chop off a short length of T45 tubing (6 inches or so). After folding the sheet into a box shape, I'll have a go at welding this to the tubing and see what the weld strength

/quality is like. The minimum length when ordering this stuff is one metre, so I can afford the odd mistake here and there...

The remainder of the material is to make the bearing registers (EN14) and the wheel /upright spindles (300M spec). These will need some turning and milling to fairly exacting tolerances. I'm still hopeful of finding a reasonably priced lathe and milling machine to do this. Failing that, I'll have to wait for Lockdown etc to end and call on the professionals.

Another design task will be to work out how to transfer the loads from the steering arms into the fabricated upright. One idea is to use a central internal tube running vertically inside the box section. Hmm, may depend on weld access that one.




I have a tame electrician on hand to put up some safety lighting in the workshop. The old strip lights 'fire' at a certain frequency which could coincide with the speed of a lathe or other rotating machinery. This can make them appear to be stationary even though they are moving at high speed. Also, the garage now has its own ring main so anything I do in the workshop shouldn't affect the house electrics – that's the theory anyway !

I could do some more work on the rear wing elements but, with the present low temperatures, the composite material suppliers suggest waiting until Spring.

The engine/powertrain was due to arrive in February. However, under the present restrictions, this will probably be delayed until we are 'released' again. I don't think the crank has been turned for quite a few years, so, there will be a bit of freeing up to be done, checking of cam lobes, bores etc. What fun awaits...

Dave Cooper



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Backfire Bits

Following the recent announcement of the easing of lockdown it seems likely that we will once again be able to start to organise some competitive events. Whilst we have definitely lost our first Autosolo of the year, we are starting to put things in place to run the Cross Trophy Trial. If you have missed your motorsport and want to try something a little different we would love to see you - most road cars should be able to do the event as long as you don't mind your car getting a little muddy.

At the time of writing Wales has not confirmed the restart of Motorsport, but we have still been working with BMC to put things in place for our Llandow Sprint. The Pegasus Sprint is in it's usual October slot on Saturday the 16th and it would be nice to think this year we will not need as many covid controls in place.

Filled with optimism that we might get to do some events, I renewed my Clubman RS license which will be good enough for Trials and Autosolos. The process (see earlier in Backfire for details) was pretty painless once I had managed to remember my license number. Last year's license was lost, given I had no reason to use it ! Fortunately they had issued me the same license number that I have had for years and I managed to find it in a list from a 2007 Colerne Sprint. If I motivate myself to do a sprint or two I will have to upgrade, but the cost of the license means I will probably not bother for the one or two events I might have done, a bit of a shame.

Away from club activities, I was reading about converting classic cars to electric power. This seemed to provoke many different reactions. Whilst it is an interesting engineering challenge, I am not sure I really see the point. At the same time as long as it is not a particularly rare car, I don't have a problem with people doing this if they enjoy the finished result.

With the date for the end of sale of petrol and diesel cars being moved closer all the time, a more interesting question for me is what internal combustion engined car could I buy and use as everyday transport for twenty or so years. As well as being interesting to drive it would have to be simple to maintain with good parts availability. The obvious choice would be something like an MX5 but what would you go for ?

I am not anti electric, but there do seem to be a lot of practical issues to overcome. At the moment I am not sure any pure electric car could do what I need. Towing is one area where there does not appear to be a workable solution. Charging infrastructure and even electricity supply are going to need massive investment. I see lots of Teslas on the M5 everyday, but despite the marketing, they all seem to be in the inside lane going around 60 mph, I can only assume to maximise range.

In terms of the environment and congestion, I can't help but think we are still looking at the wrong solution - investing in decent public transport is actually a far better and simpler solution than forcing us into self driving electric cars. Perhaps I am just getting too old and grumpy to change ? If you are looking forward to the electric era why not write in and tell us why ?

Andy Moss

2021 Events Calendar

Sun 14th March	Spring AutoSolo - Cancelled	Brightside Aust
Sun 18th April	Cross Trophy Trial - Details Soon	Dundry
Sun 25th April	Breakfast Meet	
Mon 3rd May	Spring Treasure Hunt	TBA 7pm
Sat 8th May	Llandow Sprint	Llandow
Sun 30th May	Breakfast Meet	
Sun 6th June	ACE Classic Tour	
Sun 27th June	Breakfast Meet	
Mon 11th July	Evening Car Tour	7pm TBA
Sun 18th July	Summer AutoSolo	
Sun 25th July	Breakfast Meet	
Sat 21st August	Track Day	Castle Combe
Sun 29th August	Breakfast Meet	
Mon 13th September	Club Night	BAWA
Sun 26th September	Breakfast Meet followed by Treasure Hunt and Sunday Lunch	
Mon 11th October	Club Night	BAWA
Sat 16th October	Pegasus Sprint	Castle Combe
Sun 31st October	Breakfast Meet	
Mon 8th November	Club Night	BAWA
Monday 13th December	AGM & Club Night	BAWA 8pm
Mon 27th December	Bank Holiday Autosolo	Brightside Aust

From The Editors Archive



Mike Cole, MGB GT, Pegasus Sprint, Castle Combe, 2019